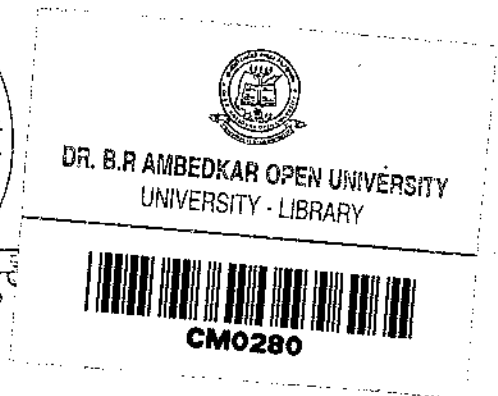
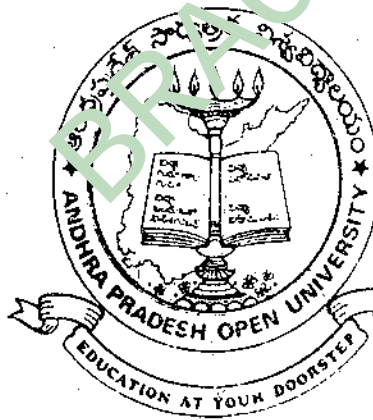


English Literature

**B.A. Degree
Second Year Course**

Course I *DRAMA*

Blocks 1 to 5



**ANDHRA PRADESH OPEN UNIVERSITY
HYDERABAD**

1996

COURSE TEAM

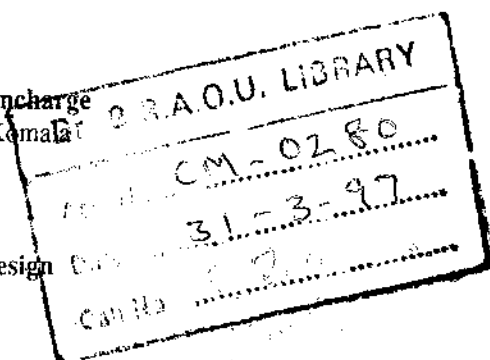
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PREFACE

This volume presents a discussion of the plays prescribed for detailed and non-detailed study under Paper I (Drama) of the Second Year Course in English literature. It includes analyses of individual plays considered in terms of their themes and issues. Its aim is not to ensure mere comprehension but to sharpen the student's critical perception.

The course material offered by this volume is in the form of units, each of which concerns a text included in Paper I (Drama). Blocks 1 & 2 deal with *Julius Caesar* and *The Apple Cart* prescribed for detailed study and the rest (Blocks 3, 4, & 5) with *As You Like It*, *She Stoops to Conquer* and *Sacrifice* prescribed for non-detailed study. It is hoped that this material would help the student to cope with the demands of the course with understanding and confidence.

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BLOCK- I JULIUS CAESAR

William Shakespeare

Block I consists of five units

- Unit - 1 introduces Shakespeare to the learners. It discusses his contribution to the development of English Drama.
- Unit - 2 describes the way Shakespeare combined history and legend of Rome in Julius Caesar.
- Unit - 3 explains certain very important passages from the Text Julius Caesar.
- Unit - 4 deals with major and minor characters in the play.
- Unit - 5 highlights certain issues and problems identified in the play.

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BLOCK I JULIUS CAESAR

UNIT -I SHEKESPEARE'S WORKS AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH DRAMA

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to :

- place Shakespeare and his works within a literary - historical context
- classify the works of Shakespeare into different groups
- recognise the main features of the plays of Shakespeare
- point out the difference between the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries

1.1 CONTENTS

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Contents
- 1.2 Introduction
- 1.3 Shakespeare's works and his contribution
- 1.4 The four periods of Shakespeare's literary activity
- 1.5 Julius Caesar, a Roman Play
- 1.6 Shakespeare's dramatic devices
- 1.7 Shakespeare's relation to his contemporaries
- 1.8 Let's sum up
- 1.9 Sample questions
- 1.10 Answers to self-check exercises

1.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit provides you a background to the study of Shakespeare's plays. It will help you to recognise the context in which Shakespeare wrote. It also introduces you to the other writers of the period and mentions how they differ from Shakespeare. His plays are grouped under different headings and some of their chief features are also mentioned. This unit, thus, provides an introduction to the detailed study of the play prescribed for you.

As you read through this Unit you can check your progress by answering the questions given below. The answers are given at the end for you to verify.

1.3 SHAKESPEARE'S WORKS AND HIS CONTRIBUTION

English drama found its earliest expression in the Miracle and Morality plays of the Church in the Middle Ages. But with the Renaissance, the art of drama experienced a great revival and in the reign of Queen Elizabeth it flourished greatly. This new direction was ushered in by the plays of John Lyly. They were written in prose, a new form of expression for drama at that time. Lyly was

followed by Christopher Marlowe, a young writer of great promise, whose influence on Shakespeare's earlier work was considerable.

Elizabethan drama found its finest expression in the work of the greatest of all dramatists, William Shakespeare. His name is revered all over the world. In his tragedies and comedies characters of every type are portrayed with the utmost skill. Johnson paid a lofty tribute to Shakespeare's skill in characterization. His characters are so convincingly "true to nature" that they give us the illusion of reality. His works mirror human transactions in all their myriad variety.

1.4 THE FOUR PERIODS OF SHAKESPEARE'S LITERARY ACTIVITY

The period of Shakespeare's literary activity extends over twenty four years (1588 - 1612), and this may broadly be broken up into four divisions.

The first period : (1588 - 94) Here his historical plays predominate. He continues the work of Marlowe mirroring the broad national features of Plantagenet life. His *Romeo and Juliet* (1592) is a young man's tragedy, it is full of lyrical beauty but it lacks the grandeur and breadth of vision of his later tragedies. The *Merchant of Venice* (1594) though a comedy, is embedded in the sombre frame work of tragic irony.

Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* (1591) is a noisy and merry farce : *The Comedy of Errors* (1592) is a sentimental romance, *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1591) and *A midsummer Night's Dream* (1594 - 95) are fantastic romances.

Marlowe's *Eoward II* had inspired Shakespeare's *Richard II* and *Richard III*, and *King John*, the first historical plays which show Shakespeare's remarkable ability to depart from his model and follow his own genius for character-drawing.

Shakespeare's earlier poems belong to this period. Even while he was winning his first success as a dramatist (1591-4), he appeared in public as a poet. His *Venus and Adonis* was written in an exuberant and unrestrained vein, but he attained disciplined power and passion very soon. "*Rape of Lucrece*" exhibits his incursion into literature with a fresh and original force.

The Second Period : (1594 - 1600) The finer historical plays of *Henry IV* (1597) and *Henry V* (1598), belong to this period. The *Henry IV* plays are rich in humour and psychological power. *Henry V* shows the complete independence of Shakespeare's creation. The comedies, *The Taming of the Shrew* (1595), and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1599) is written on a higher plane of wit. Humour and Wit are perfectly blended in *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night* (both 1600).

Shakespeare probably wrote most of his sonnets in 1594. The popularity of the sonnet form was then at its height. His sonnets however, show far more maturity than that displayed in his earlier poems.

The Third Period : (1600 - 1608) Shakespeare reached the culminating point of his dramatic power in this period. Tragedy predominates the work of this time. The romances *All's Well That Ends Well* (1595), *Troilus and Cressida* (1603), and *Measure for Measure* (1604) are essentially tragedies though set in a forced comic style

The tragedies are comparatively greater. *Julius Caesar* (1601) is written in a grave style. Reflective poetry is at its height in *Hamlet* (1602). The most superb and compelling trilogy of plays - *Othello* (1604), *King Lear* (1605) and *Macbeth* (1606) show subtle imagination and passionate intensity.

The Fourth Period : (1608 - 12) *Antony and Cleopatra* (1608) is fully ripe in its strength of characterisation though it suffers from a weaker dramatic grip unlike the previous tragedies: *Coriolanus* (1609), *Timon of Athens* (1608), *Pericles* (1608), and *Henry VIII* (1612) which are

fitfully great. The latter three plays are considered Shakesperean only in part. Shakespeare turned to romance in Cymbeline (1610), The Tempest (1611) and The Winter's Tale (1611).

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (1)

1. Shakespeare is best known for his skill in _____ Johnson has praised him for it.
2. Some of the plays of the second period are _____

3. The four great treagedies of Shakespeare are _____

1.5. JULIUS CAESAR - A ROMAN PLAY

Julius Caesar, Antony and Cleopatra and Coriolanus form the group of Shakespeare's Roman Plays. Julius Caesar is based upon Roman history and legend. Shakespeare chose to write about Julius Caesar because he (Caesar) held a particular attraction for the Elizabethans. Caesar was a soldier, scholar and politician and he was murdered by his greatest friend Brutus. He was the first Roman to bring the status of a monarchical state to Rome. The history of Julius Caesar had taken a strong hold upon Shakespeare's imagination. There is no other historical character who is so often alluded to throughout his plays. The historic period of the action of Julius Caesar stretches from February 44 B.C to October 42 B.C. nearly two and three quarters of an year.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (2)

The Roman period of history to which Julius Caesar belongs is from _____
to _____

1.6. SHAKESPEARE'S DRAMATIC DEVICES

Shakespeare's plays progress from Comedy and History to Tragedy and Romance. In the history of literature we see Miracle plays and Mystery plays giving way to morality plays and interludes. They combine instruction with amusement. Morality plays were serious and didactic whereas Interludes were written in a lighter vein meant merely for the amusement of the people. Morality plays were popular till the end of the 16th century. They depicted heaven and hell and the various sins and virtues in personified forms.

The next stage was the beginning of English tragedy. Tragedy was preceded by comedy in England as in Greece. Seneca's tragedies attracted the English writers because of their earnest and strenuous atmosphere. Gorboduc was the first English tragedy modelled on Seneca's plays. It was based on an episode in national history. The first regular English comedy, based on the model of Latin comedy, was produced in 1541. Both comedy and tragedy followed the classical school in the division of the play into five acts and the sub-division into different scenes in each act. Shakespeare introduced certain modifications in this pattern.

"The University Wits" produced plays with love stories emphasizing melodic charm. Kyd and Marlowe used the technique of melodrama for plays.

Shakespeare adopted the classical techniques but enriched them by his poetic genius and innovative characterization. In his drama every phase of the life of his age is mirrored - varying from particular fashions to the general characteristics of the national life. He was of his age but he was also of all ages. In his plays he touches every mood : graceful sentiment in his romantic comedies, delicate fantasy in the fairy plays, philosophic meditation in his tragedies and poignant passion in his later tragedies.

Shakespeare's plays can be said to be of three types - historic, tragic and comic. The direction in theme and plot followed by certain groups of plays helps to categorize them.

The history plays explore the political implications of the great idea of order and chaos in creation. The tragedies explore the human and political results of a retreat from the principle and fact of order. The comedies affirm, at times joyously, the human benefits which result from the natural order. Shakespeare, in his history plays, is considered more a moralistic statesman than a political historian. As a plain historian he exhibits all the faults of his contemporaries - literate as well as illiterate. For his historical plays he depended on chroniclers like Hall and Holinshed. However, it is alleged that he sacrificed historical actuality to psychological and dramatic truth. The Chronicle plays *The True Tragedy of Richard III*, *The Famous Victories of Henry V* and *The Troublesome Reign of King John* appealed to the audience because of detailed and tedious depictions from parts of history. They celebrated the greatness of eminent men, they dealt with the pressing themes of the duties and responsibilities of kingship, they denounced the sin of rebellion.

Shakespeare found the raw material for his history plays in chronicle plays but in history plays he refined all the cruder and grosser matter into polished brilliance.

Shakespeare's early comedies are the product of his reading Latin literature. He manipulated the form and content of the Roman dramatists Terence and Plautus. The University Wits (academically-trained dramatists) influenced him greatly. His greatness lies, not in the technique, but, in his gradually emerging individuality of vision. His contemporaries followed the conventions, but he accepted some of those conventions, and rejected some. In the language of his early comedies he echoed the courtly forms of his contemporaries. He began to find individual characters whereas his contemporaries remained happy with types. He may be said to be a creator where as his contemporaries are artificers.

By the time Shakespeare wrote his Romantic comedies like *Twelfth Night* his conception of comedy matured. His creative activity, language, character, handling of plot and theme all give evidence of his greater energy and natural genius.

Shakespeare tamed the pastoral convention. Pastoral drama is full of frustrated wooers, reluctant lovers, rejected swains, pouting shepherdesses, dispossessed noble ladies, banished Dukes, mistaken identities, wise and witty fools and village wooings. In Shakespeare's hands all this tinsel became gold and he achieved his transformation of the so called 'Pastoral' mode. His most original contribution to English drama is his creation of the professional fool, an unusual but important kind of character.

In his plays he effected a merger between the dramatic version of Elizabethan vernacular speech and rich imaginative lyricism. The customary division between prose and verse was conquered. The spirit of Shakespearean tragedy is essentially different from that of Greek tragedy. He did not conform to convention and rule, in form or expression. He did not accept the classical Aristotelian rules, unconditionally. It was only in his early plays that he followed (in *Titus Andronicus*) the classical tragic models, but even there he pulled himself away from fixed conventions. For him life was more important than death. We are made to feel that there is a reward for the good and damnation for the wicked. His tragedies do not adhere to Christian myth. The importance of man is stressed in his tragedies. The characters have good and bad qualities and the tragic heroes embody universal qualities - both good and bad. They are the emblems of certain unchanging and familiar qualities in human being.

Shakespeare's great theme - the effects of order and disorder, persists in his tragedies too. In his tragedies Shakespeare's greatest interest is in the protagonist's inner catastrophe.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (3)

- 1) What are the three main types of plays that Shakespeare wrote?

1.7. SHAKESPEARE'S RELATION TO HIS CONTEMPORARIES

Robert Greene, one of the 'University Wits' (a professional set of literary men) criticized Shakespeare for copying the ways of the fashionable dramatists of his time. By 1592 Shakespeare was beginning to reveal his great imaginative versatility and originality in the use of dramatic language. He had the ability to take any dramatic genre and form which had been used by his colleagues and transform it into something superior to anything they could achieve.

Lyly, Greene, Peele, Lodge, Nash, Kyd, Marlowe and Ben Jonson were the main contemporaries of Shakespeare. John Lyly's plays were not narrative they were developed on mythological and pastoral themes. He lacked the sense of literary form and polished wit. His plays were less rich in concrete humanity and in stage effectiveness. His dialogues, however were admirable. Shakespeare took from Lyly the characteristic artificial language of punning wit, allegorical reference, alliteration and flowery imagery.

George Peele wrote plays and poems and pageants for ceremonial occasions in London. His plays were richer in beauty than those of any of his group except Marlowe. He shared with Marlowe the honour of introducing blank verse with a musical quality. Later, this talent was raised to remarkable heights by Shakespeare.

Thomas Kyd followed the Senecan element of 'blood and thunder' in his work. This element was the most attractive feature of Pre-Shakespearean drama. There is an extravagance in his play 'The Spanish Tragedy' which is a revenge tragedy with horror scenes. Its ranting style roused contempt in Shakespeare. Kyd and Marlowe contributed to the development of Revenge Plays from which Shakespeare consistently borrowed for his plays. We see the echoes of Spanish Tragedy in Hamlet and in King Lear. Like Kyd, Shakespeare dealt with the motives of 'revenge' and 'justice', in his plays. But he lacked the exhibitionism of Kyd. The Spanish Tragedy and Marlowe's revenge plays are clearly coupled with motives of wordly gain which we do not find in Shakespeare. There is more of melodrama in their plays. Between Kyd and Marlowe we find Robert Greene who is more of a story teller. He could handle a love story better. He excels in the presentation of vigorous humanity of his characterization. This quality was successfully adopted by Shakespeare.

Marlowe's Edward II foreshadows Shakespeare's Richard II and (in some places) King Lear. The abdication scene in Richard II is obviously modelled on Marlowe's, but it falls short of Edward II in its characterization and imaginative power. Marlowe probably had a share in the Henry IV plays of Shakespeare. In Tamburlaine Marlowe seems to have accepted the wheel of Fortune as a tragic symbol. Later writers parodied it. Shakespeare, for instance, put one of his best known speeches on the wheel of Fortune into the mouth of Fluellen, a comic provincial in Henry V. He wished, perhaps, to indicate that nobody else would be expected, a decade after Tamburlaine, to see tragedy in such startling and unsuitable colours. Marlowe's Tamburlaine and Barabas, The Jew of Malta are monstrous. But Shakespeare pictured his Jew as a man. Unlike Marlowe he hated brutality. Marlowe's genius did not incline him much to lyric writing. But his fragmentary narrative poem, Hero and Leander has a fresh, sensitive beauty. One of its lines 'who ever loved that loved not at

first sight" lingered long in Shakespeare's memory. Marlowe found drama crude and chaotic but left it with a great force. He was not profoundly emotional like Shakespeare but he lived in a world of beauty and wonder.

Ben Jonson was an elaborate Painter of London life. Jonson may be inferior to Shakespeare in intensity of imagination but he was a keen observer of detail. Jonson's comedies were better appreciated than the pastoral comedies of Shakespeare and his characters were considered more life-like. Jonson felt that there was no underlying theory or convention in Shakespearean drama. He struck the note of anti-romanticism and sought to establish a satirical comedy of manners framed with a definite plan. He elected to "sport with human follies, not with crimes". But Shakespeare was the supreme poet in an age of great poetry. His poetry was wider in range and deeper in feeling than that of his contemporaries. In his dramatic poetry about primal things like love, hate, hope, despair, courage, and tolerance, Shakespeare towers far above his fellow writers.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (4)

I Make a list of some of the famous plays of Shakespeare under the following headings

Tragi-Comedies	Comedies	History Plays
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.

1.8. LET'S SUM UP

In this Unit you have read about Shakespeare's contribution to the literary tradition. His work has been discussed and categorized into four periods. A very brief introduction to the play Julius Caesar has also been provided in this book. Further, this unit helps you to compare the work of Shakespeare with that of his contemporaries. It also touches upon some of the chief devices used by Shakespeare.

1.9. SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Name four of the great tragedies written by Shakespeare.
2. What changes did Shakespeare introduce into comedy as a form?
3. What did Shakespeare learn from his contemporaries?
4. What was the special feature that Shakespeare introduced into his history plays?

1.10 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

- 1) Characterization
- 2) Your answer is right if you have written the names of any three of these plays - Henry V, The Taming of the Shrew, Much Ado about Nothing, As You Like It, The Merry Wives of Windsor, Twelfth Night.
- 3). King Lear, Macbeth, Othello, Hamlet

Self - Check Exercise - Answer (2)

44 B.C to 42 B.C

Self - Check Exercise - Answer (3)

1. Historic Tragic and Comic plays

Self - Check Exercise - Answer (4)

- Tragic - comedies**
1. All's Well That Ends Well
 2. Troilus & Cressida
 3. Measure For Measure

- Comedies**
1. Taming of the Shrew
 2. Much Ado About Nothing
 3. The Merry Wives of Windsor
 4. As You like It
 5. The Twelfth Night

- History Plays**
- Julius Caesar
Henry IV
Richard II
Richard III
King John

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UNIT -2 SHAKESPEARE'S USE OF HISTORY AND LEGEND IN JULIUS CAESAR

2.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you will be able to :

- relate the events in Shakespeare's play to the actual historical events which have inspired them.
- point out the chronological developments in the play.
- give an account of the main events in the play.

2.1 CONTENTS

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Contents
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 Shakespeare's use of history and legend in Julius Caesar
- 2.4 Julius Caesar : its distinctiveness
- 2.5 Outline of the story
- 2.6 Let's sum up
- 2.7 Sample questions
- 2.8. Answers to self-check exercises

2.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit provides you the historical background which inspired Shakespeare to write his play. It will be useful for you to understand the sequence of the historical events and to see how far Shakespeare has deviated from the historical facts. This will lead you to understand the distinctiveness of the play. This unit also introduces to you the story of Julius Caesar.

2.3 SHAKESPEARE'S USE OF HISTORY AND LEGEND IN JULIUS CAESAR

Shakespeare's purpose in writing Julius (was not simply reconstructing the historical situation in Rome in the year 44 B.C. He made an ing drama out of it. Events over a period of two and three quarter years' of Roman hisotry become the subject matter to Julius Caesar. The main event of this period to which allusion is made in the play and their respective dates are as follows:

The Lupercalia : Caesar's refusal of the crown	Feb 15, 44 B.C.
Caesar's murder	March 15, 44 B.C.
Caesar's funeral	March 19 or 20 44 B.C
Arrival of Octavius at Rome	May 44 B.C.

Formation of the Triumvirate - Octavis, Antony, Lepidus 'Proscriptions' at Rome, in which Cicero falls - November 43 B.C. Battles of Phillipi October 42. B.C.

The events of **Julius Caesar** are supposed to happen on six days, separated by intervals. The arrangement is as follows :

Day 1 : Act I. Scene 1,2 Feb. 15,44 B.C.	(Interval)
Day 2 : Act I. Scene 3. March 14, 44 B.C.	(Interval)
Day 3 : Act II and III, March 15, 44 B.C.	(Interval)
Day 4 : Act IV. Scene 1 November 43 B.C.	(Interval)
Day 5 : Act IV. Scenes 2 and 3	(Interval)
Day 6 : Act V. October, 42 B.C.	

At several points Shakespeare compressed the action, combining events which were really separated by some interval of time. these deviations from history are necessary to sustain interest. Some speeding up of events was a must in a play based on history. Shakespeare ignored, for example, the meeting of the Senate on the day after Caesar's murder and led the readers straight to the funeral speech which was really several days later. In reality a month elapsed between the events portrayed in Scene II and III of Act I, the two battles at Phillipi were separated by an interval of twenty days.

Caesar was known to the Elizabethans as a legendary figure who made Rome a monarchical state. They heard of this great personality in different stories and they received Shakespeare's **Julius Caesar** as one of his most interesting plays.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE - (1)

Give two reasons why Shakespeare made some changes in the historical facts.

.....

.....

2.4 JULIUS CAESAR : ITS DISTINCTIVENESS

Shakespeare made greater use of Plutarch for his plays on Roman subjects. Plutarch wrote his 'Parallel Lives' of Noble Greeks and Romans in Greek about the end of the first century A.D. They were translated into French by Jacques Amyot (1559). Sir Thomas North translated them into English (1579). Shakespeare mainly depended on North's translation though he might have looked into other sources too. He followed the original closely but also retained his originality as a dramatist. It is well known that he directly versified long passages from North's highly workman-like translation.

Shakespeare took his material on Marcus Brutus, Julius Caesar and Marcus Antonius from Plutarch's Lives. He was consistent in making the plot and also in the development of character. He elaborated on the details taken from Plutarch and created the characters in his own terms. In his selection of the source material, in what he added, omitted or changed, and in the imaginative treatment of the plot he excelled himself.

For the forum speeches of Brutus and Antony Shakespeare had no model. They were of his own creation. The Roman mob too was extremely realistic and formed out of his own imagination. The character of Casca was fully developed to be very different from the original. Like-wise he made Octavius a political, efficient and rather cold figure quite unlike the historical figure. With his own deft touch he gave a lively reality to the less important characters of Portia, Calpurnia and Cicero. He delineated his characters in a form profoundly true to Roman life. The personages of Julius Caesar come to life as real human beings.

"In Julius Caesar Shakespeare took liberties with the events of little importance. He shaped the facts of history to his own dramatic ends. He sometimes used the source true to the original, sometimes

enriched it, and sometimes used it to suit his own kind of dramatic consistency. The play concentrates upon the deeds and behaviour of those concerned in it, but not on the abstract political principles involved in the play.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (2)

What are two of the special features of Shakespeare's Play?

.....

.....

2.5. OUTLINE OF THE STORY:

Julius Caesar opens with a street scene in Rome. The tribunes, Flavius and Marullus find the common people enjoying a holiday in honour of Caesar's return to Rome after a victory over Pompey and his sons. They reproach the people for forgetting Pompey so soon and set out to remove all the banners welcoming Caesar.

Caesar appears with his wife Calpurnia and a train of followers to celebrate the feast of Lupercal. Caesar is warned by a soothsayer to 'beware the Ides of March'. He passes on, leaving Brutus and Cassius behind. Cassius sounds Brutus on the position of public affairs basing his fears on the shouts of the people from a distance. Cassius detains Casca from the procession for information about the offer of the crown to Caesar. Cassius decides to join in the conspiracy. Brutus rousing him against Caesar.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (3)

Who warns Caesar about the Ides of March ?

.....

.....

The night turns out to be a horror due to thunder, lighting and other ill omens. Cicero, Casca and Cassius meet in the street and after Cicero has gone, Cassius takes Casca's support to form a conspiracy against Caesar.

Brutus is disturbed as he thinks of the conspiracy and its necessity, Cassius brings five fellow conspirators to see him. Brutus's wife, Portia, asks her husband to tell her about his anxieties so that she may share his burden.

The stormy night disturbs Calpurnia too. She begs Caesar not to go to the Senate that day as she has seen, in her dream, somebody murdering him. At first Caesar yields to her persuasions but very soon he is won over by Decius Brutus and allows the conspirators to lead him to the Senate.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (4)

Why does Calpurnia ask Caesar not to go to the Senate ?

.....

.....

Artemidorous is seen reading a note of warning to be given to Caesar as it has to do with him. Portia comes to know of the danger to Caesar and sends her servant to the Capitol to find out what is happening there.

Caesar reaches the Capitol but refuses to read the paper handed over to him by Artemidorous because it is about himself. When he refuses to accept a petition by Metellus Cimber asking him to revoke a banishment order against his brother the conspirators stab him and he dies with the words 'Et tu, Brute' on his lips. Subsequently Antony makes peace with the murderers and obtains their leave to make a speech at Caesar's funeral.

Brutus explains to the citizens in the Forum the reasons that made Caesar's death inevitable. Antony through his speech, rouses the people against the conspirators. The mob gets wild and indulges in vandalism. They even kill Cinna the innocent poet.

Antony and Octavius take power into their hands. They make a list of their private enemies and treat Lepidus the third Triumvir with contempt.

Brutus and Cassius fly from Rome and get ready for a war in Asia Minor.

Brutus detests Cassius for his methods of raising money. A quarrel breaks out between them but is soon reconciled. The ghost of Caesar warns Brutus that they will meet again at Phillipi.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (5)

Who are the three Triumvirs?

.....

.....

The rival commanders exchange bitter taunts before the battle starts. Cassius thinking that Antony has had him surrounded makes his servant, Pindarus stab him. Brutus overcomes Octavius, but sees the ghost of Caesar again. He comes to know of Cassius' death.

In the renewed battle when Brutus is defeated, he runs upon his own sword held out for him by faithful Strato. Antony and Octavius seeing the body of Brutus pay him the highest tribute saying "This was the noblest Roman of all".

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (6)

How does Brutus die?

.....

.....

2.6 LET'S SUM UP

In this Unit you read about the historical background to the story of Julius Caesar. You also learn of some changes Shakespeare introduced in the historical material he found.

2.7 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. What are the main events of Roman History that Shakespeare refers to in Julius Caesar?

2. Which source material did Shakespeare depend on for developing the Characters?
3. How did Shakespeare show his originality in writing Julius Caesar?
4. How was Caesar Killed ?

2.8. ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

Self-Check Exercise (1)

1. He wanted to sustain the interest of the audience by compressing the action.
2. Speeding up of events is necessary in a play based on history.

Self-Check Exercise (2)

1. The Forum speeches of Brutus and Antony
2. The Roman Mob
3. The Characters of Casca, Octavius, Portia and Calpurnia.

Self-Check Exercise - (3)

The sooth sayer

Self-Check Exercise (4)

Because she has dreamt that some one is going to murder him there.

Self-Check Exercise (5)

Antony, Octavius and Lepidus

Self-Check Exercise 6

He asks his servant to hold out his sword and runs upon it committing suicide.

UNIT -3 JULIUS CAESAR - TEXTUAL EXPLANATION

3.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading through this unit you will be able to :

- identify some of the significant speeches in the play and explain them with reference to the context.
- give the salient features of some of the characters.

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3.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit takes you straight to the original play itself. Some significant speeches from the play are explained in this unit so that you can relate them to the context in which they are spoken. Some of the characters are clearly exposed by their speeches. The entire unit assumes that you have read the original play written by Shakespeare and are now prepared for a detailed study of it.

For the line number of the speeches you may refer to Julius Caesar edited by H.M. HULME, M.A., PH.D. and published by Orient Longman (Price Rs.15/-).

3.3 TEXTUAL EXPLANATION - ACT -I

Seven significant speeches from the three scenes in this Act have been discussed here. As you read them you will find that they are significant either for the development of the plot or the characters.

Act I

Scene : I

Lines 31 to 54 - Wherefore rejoice ?this ingratitude.

When Marullus (Tribune) comes to know through the cobbler that the people have taken a holiday to see Caesar and rejoice over his Victory, he questions the cobbler why the people should feel

happy. He says that Caesar has won over the Romans only. He has not added any new territory to Rome. He hasn't won over the kings and princes who can be made to run along with his (Caesar's) chariot as prisoners to honour him on the eve of his triumph. Marullus recalls how the same people had once waited anxiously to see Pompey passing the streets of Rome. When they had seen his chariot they had all shouted in joy and greeted him. Their shouting had reverberated through the river Tiber, (Pompey and Caesar had been rivals for power. Caesar defeated Pompey at the battle of Pharsalia and Pompey fled to Egypt where he was killed). Marullus wonders how the Romans can now celebrate the triumph of Caesar who has shed Pompey's blood. He asks the people to go back home and pray to God to resist the plague that is bound to overtake them as a punishment for their ungrateful rejoicing after Pompey's death.

Lines - 67-74 : Let no imagesin servile fearfulness.

Flavius (Tribune) and Marullus disapprove of the festivity and gaiety on Caesar's victory. Flavius says that there should be no images or decoration allowed to indicate Caesar's victory. He says that he will go through the town to drive away the common people from the streets. He asks his friend to do the same wherever he sees crowds. He says that they have to clip Caesar's wings of popularity before they fly high (before he becomes stronger and goes out of control). Otherwise he will treat them like slaves and like an eagle he might suddenly come down and attack them.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (1)

1. Who comes and stops the celebrations?

.....
.....

2. Why?

.....
.....

Scene II

Lines - 83 to 90

I would not, Cassius more than I fear death.

When Cassius and Brutus discuss the likelihood of Caesar becoming a king, Cassius takes the opportunity to persuade Brutus to rise against Caesar. Brutus declares that he would not allow Caesar to be a dictator though he loves him. He questions Cassius about what Brutus wants to do if it is to do good to Rome. He sets honour and death side by side. He regards them both with equal calm. He prays to God for success in his future activity as he cares more for honour than he fears death. (The nature of Brutus is revealed here).

Lines 98 to 132

I was born free And bear the palm alone.

Cassius while talking to Brutus expresses his hatred of Caesar in many ways. He says that both Brutus and he were born as free as Caesar. Both of them can endure winter's cold as well as Caesar can. They are in no way inferior to Caesar. Cassius recollects his experiences with Caesar where the latter proved his physical infirmity. On a particular day when the stormy river Tiber was furiously rising against her banks Caesar asked Cassius to jump into the river along with him and swim across to the other side. Accordingly Cassius jumped into the flood and Caesar followed him. For a while both struck against the flooded river using their strong muscles to defy it bravely. Before they could

reach the other bank as agreed upon, Caesar cried for help for fear of sinking. Cassius carried him to the bank on his shoulders just as the Trojan Prince Aeneas (the hero of a Roman Story) carried his old father Anchises away from the burning city of Troy. Brave Cassius has now to be servile before Caesar. Cassius mentions another incident of the past in Spain when Caesar had trembled in a fit of fever. The man, who is God now, shook; his lips turned pale; blood seemed to fly from them as cowards fly from the battle field. Caesar's glance which terrifies the world now, had lost its brightness then. He had groaned and cried for a drink like a sick girl. But the same man commands the people now and his word is the law. Cassius wonders that so feeble a man as Caesar should be so far ahead in the race for power and occupy so high a place in this great world.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (2)

1. Why does Brutus agree to join Cassius?

.....
.....

2. What are the faults Cassius finds in Caesar?

.....
.....

Scene - III

Lines 104 - 116

And why should Caesar And danger are to me indifferent.

Cassius and Casca give vent to their jealousy for Caesar. Here Cassius offers reasons for Caesar's becoming a tyrant. Caesar was not originally capable of becoming a tyrant. He has become the wolf because the people of Rome have been meek like sheep. He would not be a lion if the Romans like deer had not been in such fear of him. Those who wish to light a great fire start it with waste straw. The Romans serve Caesar as if they were the rubbish with which a fire is made. Caesar is hated by Cassius and Casca. Cassius declares that grief has led him to this state. He is prepared to speak against Caesar even in front of a slave. He knows that he will have to pay for his words. But he says that he is armed with honour and he is not scared of any evil outcome of his speech or comments.

Lines 154 to 157 :

Come Casca yields him ours,

Cassius is trying his best to woo Brutus to a conspiracy against Caesar. He asks Casca to come with him to Brutus's house in the early hours of the night. Cassius is confident that Brutus will be on his side. He would like to draw Brutus completely on to his side and he is sure of winning his complete support by the time he meets him next.

Lines 158 to 161 :

O, he sits high and to worthiness.

Casca remarks to Cassius about the greatness of Brutus. Brutus has a good name among the people. If they, (the conspirators) do something it might look offensive on their part. But Brutus is a noble man. If he approves of what his friends Cassius and Casca do, the act will become virtuous and honourable. Such is the credibility he enjoys.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (3)

1. How do Cassius and Casca show their jealousy for Caesar?
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.....
2. What according to Cassius and Casca is the greatness of Brutus?
.....
.....

3.4 TEXTUAL EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT PASSAGES - ACT -II

Eleven important passages from the four scenes of this Act have been explained here. They describe the development of the conspiracy and show how the conspirators convince Brutus to join them. Another important theme, The supernatural element, is introduced in this Act.

Act II

Scene - I

Lines 10 - 34 :

It must be by his death And kill him in the shell.

Brutus while contemplating the need to put an end to Caesar, says that only by Caesar's death can Rome be free. He knows that he has no personal grievance to strike Caesar down. But he wants to join the conspiracy in the interest of the well-being of Rome. Caesar will definitely be crowned by the people. Brutus is sure that kingship will bring about a change in Caesar's nature. It is the bright sun that makes the poisonous snake come out of its hole, and its movement necessitates the cautious movement of the people around. Similarly, crowning Caesar is to make him a venomous snake which is able to sting and be a danger to others. A person can misuse his power when he is devoid of kindness and sympathy. It is true that Brutus has never known Caesar to act more upon the spur of his feelings rather than with his intelligence. But it is also true that an ambitious man starts climbing the ladder of success with an appearance of humbleness at first. As soon as he reaches the top rung - the highest power, he forgets the lowest rung - his humble beginnings. If this attitude is to develop in Caesar he should be prevented from becoming dangerous to the nation. The conspirators have no cause to attack Caesar at present. They have to put forth such an argument to suit their designs. Power for Caesar is like the serpent's egg, which, when hatched, might cause harm. So the serpent in the egg - the power in Caesar, must be nipped in the bud, must be destroyed before it raises its head.

Lines 46 - 58 :

"Brutus, thou sleepest at the hand of Brutus.

Cassius tries to incite Brutus against Caesar by throwing letters supposedly written by Roman citizens through the window of the latter's house. Brutus sees one such letter which says that Brutus should wake up from his slumber, speak on behalf of the people, strike the dangerous man and set right the injustice done to Rome by a dictator. Brutus has received such instigating urges earlier too and he arrives at his decision that Rome shall not suffer under one man's control. He says proudly that his ancestors had driven away Tarquin, the brutal king of Rome. As Brutus understands that he is requested to do the same to the present king, he emotionally promises Rome that she shall have all her needs complied with and her grievances redressed by him.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (4)

1. Why, according to the conspirators, is Caesar dangerous to the nation ?
-
-

Lines 61 - 69 :

Since Cassius first The nature of an insurrection.

Brutus talks to himself saying that he has not slept from the time Cassius persuaded him to stand against Caesar. The time between the first thought of being enemies to Caesar and carrying out the terrible deed, is like a dream changing into different shapes real and imagined. His genius that controls him is at logger-heads with himself, there is a mental conflict in him which is like a civil war in a nation. He wonders whether he should strike Caesar down or allow him to follow his course. (This passage shows how Brutus is different from the other conspirators who are jealous of Caesar for personal reasons).

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (5)

How is Brutus different from the other conspirators?

.....

.....

Lines 76 - 85 :

They are the faction To hide thee from prevention.

Cassius and some other people come to meet Brutus in the night. Brutus knows that they are the conspirators. Brutus addresses 'Conspiracy' and questions whether it is ashamed of showing its hideous face even in the darkness of the night when any evil can be freely performed. He wonders where it is going to hide in the broad day light. He asks Conspiracy to hide its face under the guise of smiles and friendly nature because if it comes out in its original form even Hell cannot give shelter to it from those who prevent its actions.

Lines 114 to 140

No, not an oath that hath passed from him

When Cassius asks all the conspirators to take an oath against Caesar, Brutus says that there is no need to do so. He feels that the way they suffer in their hearts and the evil of the times are sufficiently strong reasons to join the conspiracy. If not they can go back home and allow the tyranny of Caesar to go on a rampage till every individual is struck dead. If the men present there feel that their reasons for conspiracy can rouse even the cowards to anger and make the gentlewomen turn hard hearted, they do not need any other driving force except their own purpose to goad them to find a remedy for the evil. They are Romans and they can hold a secret and they cannot be dishonest to their own cause. They will die for their honest purpose. Those who are deceitful and those who are weak-mindedly fighting for evil are the ones who need to take oaths. Their first cause and their undaunted mettle do not need any oath. If any one of them speaks out the secret against their promise he will not be considered a true Roman.

Lines 155 to 161 :

I think it is not meet Caesar fall together.

Cassius feels that Antony, a great lover of Caesar, should not be allowed to live after Caesar's death. If his power is left uncontrolled he may do great harm to all the conspirators. Hence, he should be killed along with Caesar.

Lines 162 - 183 :

Our course will seem too bloodywhen Caesar's head is off.

Brutus does not support the idea of Cassius to kill Antony along with Caesar. He says that if they kill Caesar first and then Antony it will look as if they first killed Caesar in anger and then Antony out of jealousy. According to him Antony is a mere limb of Caesar, and hence, there is no need to cut the limbs after cutting off the head. Brutus tells Cassius that all of them are sacrificers not butchers. They are all against the spirit of Caesarism. Caesarism has no flesh and blood, so they have to kill Caesar to put an end to his spirit. They should not butcher Caesar angrily. They should not be in a position to feel sorry for what they have done. They should impress on the public that it is necessary to kill Caesar in the interests of Rome. Nobody should feel that they have killed Caesar because they could not stand his greatness and high position. They should not only look like men who purify Rome of all evil, but should also not look like murderers. Brutus believes Antony to be powerless once Caesar is dead. This idea of Brutus proves fatal to him and his men later.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (6)

1. What reason does Brutus give for sparing Antony ?

Lines 202 to 211

Never fear that I will bring him to the Capital.

The conspirators fear that Caesar may not come to Capital on the day they have decided to kill him. Decius assures them that they need not worry about Caesar. Even if he has resolved to stay at home and not go to the Capitol, Decius is sure that he can convince Caesar against his own resolution. Caesar loves to listen to stories. He would tell him stories and trap him like a man who hides behind a tree and catches a unicorn (a one-horned legendary animal) by making it rush at the tree and getting its horn struck in the tree. Similarly a bear could be caught by placing a mirror in front of it. While the bear gazed into the mirror the hunter could aim at it. In the same way elephants could be led into pits covered by branches. It is easy even to drive lions into nets and catch them. Man also can be deceived by flatterers. If Decius tells Caesar that flatterers cannot deceive him this praise would make him feel happy. Decius is confident that he can play on Caesar's character and persuade him to go to the Capitol on that particular day.

Scene II :

Lines 42 - 49

The gods do this in shame And Caesar shall go forth

A servant informs Caesar that the augurs could not find the heart in the animal which had been offered for sacrifice. This was an ill omen so they ask Caesar not to move out of his house that day. Caesar disrespects their words as superstitious. He says that the gods do so (make the heart disappear from the sacrificed animal) to make cowards feel ashamed of their weakness. If he stays back at home people would think him to be a beast without a feeling heart, a coward who is scared of danger to his life. He arrogantly decides to go to the Capitol. He says proudly that he is more dangerous

than danger itself and danger knows this fact. Both danger and he are two lions born at the same time and Caesar, being the elder is more dangerous. Hence Caesar decides to go to the Capitol.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (7)

1. How does Decius plan to make Caesar go to the Capitol ?

Lines 72 - 83 :

The cause is in my will I will stay at home today.

When Decius wants to know from Caesar why he does not want to go to the Capitol the latter answers that the reason is nothing other than his own desire not to go. This reason is enough to satisfy the curiosity of the senators. Because Caesar loves Decius he would like to tell him (Decius) what makes him stay at home. Caesar's wife Calpurnia had a terrible dream the night before. She saw the statue of Caesar, blood gushing out of it as though from many fountains. Many strong and hefty Romans came out from somewhere with smiles upon their faces. All of them bathed their hands in Caesar's blood. Calpurnia believed her dream to be a warning against some great evil. She begs her husband to stay at home away from the imminent danger to his life.

Sene IV

Lines 32 - 38 :

None that I know will be Great Caesar as he comes along.

Portia questions the soothsayer whether he knows of any harm intended against Caesar. He says that he does not know anything for certain, but he fears that something is sure to happen. He says that the street where he stands is crowded with senators, magistrates and the common people. A weak person might easily die in the midst of the suffocating crowd on the street. Hence the soothsayer likes to choose a convenient place from where he can easily approach Caesar to warn him against the impending danger.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (8)

Name the wives of Caesar and Brutus.

3.5 TEXTUAL EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT PASSAGES - ACT. - III

Seven passages from the two scenes of this Act are explained here. They are the crucial scenes of the play as the murder of Caesar takes place in this Act. The famous funeral speeches of Brutus and Antony are also from this Act.

Act III

Scene I

Lines 36 - 49 :

I could be well moved do remain to keep him so.

Metellus Cimber comes forward with a petition to Caesar flattering him and humbling himself before him. Caesar disapproves of his flattery saying that such kneelings and humble bows might make ordinary men feel proud and make them change their earlier decisions. It would be like little children who changing the rules of their games according to their convenience. But Cimber should not be so foolish as to think that Caesar can be provoked to rebel against justice; sweet words, low courtesies and base flattery cannot make Caesar melt from the true and icy justice. Cimber's bother Publius Cimber has been banished by an order of the state and when Metellus Cimber prays for the repeal of the banishment order Caesar declares that he would throw him out of his way as though he were a cheap dog. He should know that Caesar does not do injustice (Publius has been justly banished) and he will not be content to change the sentence against Publius unless he has some convincing reason to do so.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (9)

1. Caesar does not accept the petition of Metellus Cimber because _____

Lines 152 - 167

O mighty Caesar Master spirits of this age.

Antony addresses Caesar's dead body and wonders how Caesar lies there as an unimportant creature. All his conquests and glorious deeds have grown so tiny that they need no more space than the one occupied by him now. Antony says that Caesar has been killed to cure the illness of his ambition. If the conspirators (Brutus and others) feel that Antony should also die he is ready as it is the proper time for him to die when Caesar has died. They can use the same sword that cut through Caesar to kill his friend Antony too. If they hate Antony, they can have the pleasure of shedding his blood as their hands are already red and smelling with the blood of Caesar. Antony, even if he lives for a thousand years will not find so proper a time to die. He sarcastically says that Brutus and his friends are the most powerful men of the time and they should kill Antony so that his body also may lie beside Caesar's.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (10)

1. What important events do you think take place after the petition is refused by Caesar?
.....
.....

Lines 195 - 214 :

My credit now stands Dost thou here lie;

Antony shakes hands with the conspirators first to impress upon them that he is not opposed to them. He says that his position is like that of a man on slippery ground sure to fall this side or that side. The enemies of Caesar are likely to think of him either as a coward or as a base flatterer. He reasserts his love for Caesar and declares that he is sure that Caesar's spirit would grieve less for his death and more because Antony has been shaking hands with Caesar's enemies and trying to make peace with them, that too in front of Caesar's dead body. If Antony were to have as many eyes as Caesar has wounds, and if all those eyes shed tears as Caesar's wounds have bled it would be more

honourable to Antony than to join hands with the enemies. He says that Caesar, like a brave stag, has faced his enemies. The enemies stand there feeling triumphant, with their hands soiled with blood just as hunters do after killing the stag. The whole world is the woodland for the stag. So has Caesar extended his kingdom. He is the centre of the world. He lies there dead as though he were attacked by several princes.

Lines 258 - 279

O pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earthwith carrion men, groaning for burial.

Antony has taken leave of Brutus to carry Caesar's body to the market place and also to make a funeral speech there.

Antony, when left alone with the dead body, makes a soliloquy. He asks the bleeding dead body to pardon him for being so humble before the murderers. He speaks as if Caesar was once a great building which is now in ruins. He desires doom for the hands that struck Caesar. The red wounds of Caesar prompt him to speak out on their behalf and foretell the future of Rome.

There will come a curse upon the men who have killed Caesar. A violent civil war will break out in the state. There will be bloodshed and destruction. People will witness horrible sights. Destruction and cruelty will be so common a spectacle that even mothers would bear with smiles the sight of their sons butchered to pieces. They would get used to constant cruelty in the state and their finer feelings would remain dead. The war would make them unfeeling, and Caesar's spirit would roam about the world along with the Goddess of Mischief (Ate). The ghost of Caesar, fresh from Hell would cry out "Destruction" and let savage men fight like dogs. The earth would reek of death and dead bodies would wait to be buried. Many would die before Caesar's spirit is avenged and satisfied. Such is Antony's desire for vengeance of Caesar's death and, he proves himself equal to the crisis.

Scene II

Lines 20 - 31

Not that I loved Caesar less I pause for a reply

After murdering Caesar, Brutus addresses the Romans to convince them that Caesar's ambition brought him death. Brutus says that he loved Caesar yet he has to rise against him because he (Brutus) loves Rome more than Caesar. In the interest of Rome he had to kill Caesar because if Caesar lived he would have made all the Romans slaves. Now that Caesar is dead the Romans can live free. Brutus had loved Caesar because he had loved Brutus. He respected him because he was brave. Brutus had rejoiced over the triumph of Caesar. But he had killed him because Caesar had grown ambitious and there by became a tyrant. No Roman would like to be a slave. If any one wished to be a slave he could no more be a Roman. Speaking rhetorically, Brutus says he could only have wronged an unpatriotic Roman slave by the killing of Caesar. He then asks if anyone among them feels wronged.

Lines 70 - 104

Friends; Romanstill it come back to me.

Antony makes the famous funeral oration standing by the side of the dead body of Caesar. He says that he has come there to bury Caesar, not to praise his greatness. The evil that a man does lives even after his death. But the good of a man is buried along with his dead body and forgotten soon. Even Caesar's greatness is to be buried with him. Brutus has blamed Caesar for being an ambitious person. If it is so, Caesar committed a crime for which his death is the rightful punishment. Brutus and his friends are all honourable men. And it is with their permission that Antony is making the funeral oration. Caesar has been his good, faithful, and honourable friend. But Brutus calls him an

incarnation of ambition. Brutus being an honourable man, must be right. Caesar brought home many captives who had to pay him heavy ransom to buy their freedom. All that money has gone to the state, not to Caesar himself. Nobody can blame Caesar as being ambitious in this regard. Caesar cried for those who suffered the agony of famine. If Caesar had been ambitious he would have been hard-hearted and would not have had any sympathy for the poor, suffering people. At the festival of Lupercal Antony himself had thrice offered the crown to Caesar and the latter had thrice refused it. Still Brutus calls him ambitious. Antony would not like to disprove Brutus but to tell the facts that he is aware of. Antony asks the Romans why they do not come forward to mourn the death of Caesar whom they had loved earlier. Their capacity to judge good from bad appears to have vanished making them unfeeling and savage. They have lost their capacity to reason. Antony says that he is grief-stricken and his heart has sunk to Caesar's coffin. He must regain it to proceed with his speech.

Antony here indirectly blames Brutus and his friends as murderers by sarcastically calling them honourable men. He tries to put reason into the people's thinking and thereby rouse them against the murderers of Caesar.

Lines 164 - 192

If you have tearsas you see, with traitors.

When Antony sees that he has kindled, in the hearts of Romans, pity for Caesar he further presses his point to prove that the murderers are traitors.

He invites the Romans to shed tears over Caesar's body. He points out Caesar's cloak and says that he remembers when Caesar put it on for the first time. It was the day when Caesar led the Roman army successfully against the warlike people of North-West Europe in a great battle. When Caesar returned to his tent triumphantly he put this cloak on. Antony shows the rents made in it by Cassius's dagger and that of envious Casca. He directs the attention of the people to the grievous cut made by Brutus's sword. When Brutus withdrew his sword blood gushed out of the wound as if hurrying out to see whether it was really beloved Brutus or somebody else who could make so unfriendly a cut. Caesar loved Brutus very dearly. It is the ungratefulness of Brutus that has broken Caesar's heart more than the cut he had made. When Caesar saw him stabbing he stopped resisting the murderers. Covering his face with his cloak he fell down at the base of Pompey's statue which was already bespattered with his blood. Antony says that Rome has had a great fall in losing so great a man. The conspirators have betrayed their country and grown in power thus causing the fall of Rome. Antony says that the tears the Romans shed will express their sympathy for Caesar. He says that they would weep all the more when they actually see the wounds underneath the mantle. Caesar has been brutally stabbed by the traitors.

With this speech Antony is able to rouse the anger of the people against the conspirators as part of his vengeance for Caesar's murder.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (11)

1. Antony takes revenge for Caesar's murder by _____.

3.6. TEXTUAL EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT PASSAGES - ACT IV

Two passages from the three scenes of this Act are explained below. They describe the conflict among the conspirators and mark the beginning of the fall of Brutus.

Act IV

SCENE I

LINES 18 - 27

Octavius, I have seen more days than you And graze in commons.

Octavius opposes the idea of allowing Lepidus to be one of the rulers. Antony tries to convince Octavius that he is older and better experienced than Octavius. Although they load Lepidus with honours and responsibilities it is only done to prevent Octavius and Antony from getting accused of doing some hateful things. Lepidus is to be used as a property to carry honours just as a donkey is used to carry the loads of treasure. The donkey does the hard work but it does not enjoy the fruit of the task. It is driven away to graze on the common land. So also Lepidus will have honour and responsibilities as long as it suits Octavius and Antony. Once their purpose is served they will take away his power and drive him away like the donkey and reap the benefit of his labours.

Antony sounds very practical here and shows his cynical scorn of scruples.

Scene III

Lines 18 - 28

Remember March, the ides of March then such a Roman.

When Brutus does not agree to excuse Lucius Pella from punishment for taking bribes, Cassius quarrels with him. Brutus justifies his action by asking Cassius to remember why they had killed Caesar on the ides of March. Caesar had been killed for justice. Brutus and the others had risen against him because he allowed robbers to go unpunished. For supporting robbers, this great man had to pay the price with his life. The people who killed Caesar for the sake of justice should not soil their hands with corruption. They, the powerful leaders of Rome should not demoralize themselves for riches. Instead of being a corrupt Roman, Brutus would prefer to be a base dog barking at the moon. Brutus tries to persuade Cassius not to support an unjust friend and a corrupt Roman, otherwise their effort will be like sailing in a boat which cannot get beyond shallow water and ill luck will follow them.

This decision of Brutus is ill-timed and it leads him and his friends to ruin.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (12)

1. Which decision of Brutus leads him and his friends to ruin ?

.....
.....

3.7. TEXTUAL EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT LINES - ACT - V.

Five speeches from the five scenes of Act V are discussed here. They describe the battles between the conspirators and the Romans led by Antony and Octavius Caesar.

Act . V

Scene I

Lines 75 - 90

Be thou my witness that against my will ready to give up the ghost.

Cassius tells Messala that Brutus has, against his will led the armies to Phillipi. In the battle between Pompey and Caesar a similar thing had happened. Pompey hoped to wear down Caesar's strength without fighting a battle against him. But Pompey's captains and generals had mocked at his plans and persuaded him to fight the battle. In this battle at Pharsalia Caesar had won the victory. Similarly Cassius advised Brutus not to lead the armies to Phillipi so early. Cassius has been forced to risk the freedom of Rome in this one single battle. He had, till then, followed the principles of Epicurus who said that it was foolish to be superstitious. But now he has started believing in superstitions. When he and his armies were marching from Sardis two great eagles flew down and were fed by the soldiers. They followed them till Phillipi. They had left them only in the morning. In their place some ravens, crows and kites (all birds of prey) had started flying over them looking at the armies as though they were ready to die and become their food. The armies lying under the shadows of those birds that eat carrion appeared as though they were ready to die.

Here Cassius reveals that he has begun to be superstitious though earlier he had mocked at Caesar for his blind beliefs.

Lines 66 - 71

Mistrust of good successBut killest the mother that engendered thee.

When Messala comes to know of Cassius' death he says that Cassius lacked the confidence that Messala would be victorious in battle. His melancholy had made him die. In his sad thought he could not see the reality. Such a mistaken idea enters the mind very fast. Just as when a baby is born, sometimes the mother dies so also a mistaken idea kills the man whose mind creates it. Thus Cassius mistaking success to be defeat makes his slave stab him to death.

Scene V

Lines 36 - 42

I shall have glory by this losing day That have but laboured to attain this hour.

Brutus after his defeat at Phillipi decides to kill himself before his enemy can catch him alive. Then Octavius and Antony will have had a shameful victory over him. Still Brutus feels glorious on the day of his last losing battle. He bids his friends and slaves farewell before his tongue ceases to talk and end the history of his life. His eyes are heavy with sleep and his body which has struggled all through longs for its eternal rest.

Lines 50 - 51

Caesar, now be still ! with half so good a will.

Brutus while running his body into his sword remembers Caesar whom he had killed. Brutus had seen the ghost of Caesar - twice before this and thought that it craved for revenge. Now with his self-inflicted death he feels Caesar's spirit is going to be avenged. He asks Caesar to be quiet in his grave as he must now be content. Brutus says that he kills himself at his will, but he had killed Caesar half-heartedly, as he had respected him.

Lines 69 - 75

This was the noblest Roman "This was a man ".

Antony pays his highest tribute to Brutus on his death. He is the noblest of the Romans. All the other conspirators killed Caesar out of envy. Brutus joined them believing that the death of Caesar would do good to Rome and its people. He led a noble life. Nature had made him with a proper mixture of the elements - earth, air, fire and water. Hence Nature could say to the world that Brutus had been a perfect man.

SELF - CHECKED EXERCISE (13)

What is the tribute that Antony pays to Brutus?

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3.8. LET'S SUM UP

This unit should have helped you to get acquainted with some of the major speeches from the play. These speeches give you an insight into Shakespeare's skill of character development. In the next Unit we shall look more closely at the characters in this play.

3.9. SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Give an account of how Cassius wins Brutus over to the conspiracy ?
2. What points does Antony mention in favour of Caesar in his funeral speech ?
3. What are the supernatural elements mentioned in Act. II ?
4. Why does Caesar decide to go to the Capitol inspite of his wife's pleading?

3.10. ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISES

Self - check Exercise 1

1. Marullus and Flavius
2. They do not approve of Caesar's victory over Pompey,

Self-check Exercise 2

1. Because he cares for the honour of Rome and is not afraid of death.
2. He is physically weak and is not able to swim across the Tiber. He is also prone to getting fits.

Self-check Exercise 3

1. By calling him a tyrant and by planning to instigate Brutus against him.
2. He is a noble man whom the people trust.

Self -Check Exercise 4

They feel that he will misuse his power and the country will lose its freedom.

Self - Check Exercise 5

He is not jealous of Caesar for personal reasons.

Self - Check Exercise 6

Brutus thinks Antony is only a limb of Caesar which becomes powerless once the head is cut off (Caesar is dead).

Self - Check Exercise 7

He plans to use flattery as his weapon.

Self - Check Exercise 8.

Caesar's wife - Calpurnia

Brutus' wife - Portia

Self - check Exercise 9

Sweet words, low courtesies and base flattery cannot make him melt from true justice.

Self - check Exercise 10

The conspirators stab Caesar one by one

Self - check Exercise 11

.. Instigating the mob against the conspirators

Self - check Exercise 12

His decision to punish Lucius Pella for taking bribes breaks the friendship between him and Cassius.

Self - check Exercise 13

Antony calls Brutus the noblest Roman of all.

BRAOU

UNIT -4 THE CHARACTERS

4.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to :

- discuss the chief features of Shakespeare's art of characterization.
- Write about the main characters in the play
- Explain the roles played by some of the minor characters in the development of the plot.

4.1 CONTENTS

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Contents
- 4.2 Introduction
- 4.3 The major Characters
- 4.4 Minor characters
- 4.5 Let's sum up
- 4.6 Sample Questions
- 4.7 Answers to Self-Check Exercises

4.2 INTRODUCTION

In this unit you will read about the major characters and some of the minor characters in the play. You will see how Shakespeare has used the historical facts to develop life-like men and women. You will also notice that we can judge the characters from their own speeches as well as from the speeches of others. It is interesting to see how, at times, the character reveals his innermost feelings without his knowledge.

4.3 THE MAJOR CHARACTERS

We admire Shakespeare's characters as he has made them neither entirely good nor totally bad. As we read the plays we learn what kind of people his characters are. Some critics feel that the dramatist frequently makes his characters speak of themselves with an unnatural objectivity in order that the audience may easily understand the role played by each of them. This dramatic technique is called 'direct self explanation' as well. For example, Caesar reiterates that he is fearless. Brutus declares that it would be an honour to be slain by Brutus.

4.3.1. JULIUS CAESAR

It is believed that Caesar was 'chosen by Providence' to preserve the Roman State from being ruined. It is Caesar's presence, his genius and his thought that dominates the play. Hence the play is fittingly titled as Julius Caesar, Shakespeare perceived and appreciated the greatness of Caesar.

Caesar's power is feared by the tribunes but Artemidorus admires Caesar, as a just man. The soothsayer warns him against the danger that awaits his life but it is ignored. Although Cassius hates him, Brutus likes him; he (Brutus) admits that he has 'no personal cause' to attack him. Caesar's part in the play is small when compared with those of Brutus, Cassius and Antony. He, therefore, cannot

reveal himself fully through his speeches and actions. We learn a lot about him from the remarks and observations of others who differ widely in their opinions of him. Some critics feel that Shakespeare has drawn Caesar merely as "a glorious Vapourer and braggart, full of lofty airs and mock thunder", (H N Hudson, Shakespeare : His life, art and character P 224) Dr. Dover Wilson represents Shakespeare's Caesar as a ruthless tyrant in the decline of his physical and moral powers. He says that Shakespeare has distorted Caesar's moral and physical deficiencies to give them prominence. It is from Cassius that we first come to know of the physical defects of Caesar. Casca elaborates upon them later. Shakespeare made Caesar deaf in one ear. He made him succumb to the 'falling sickness'. Cassius tells stories against him. But we feel that the stories of Cassius are strongly coloured by his rancour. He says that once in a fit of bravado Caesar had challenged Cassius to swim across the swollen Tiber and been proved to be the loser. Once in Spain, Caesar had suffered from high fever, "how he did shake 'tis true, this god did shake" like any other human being, and had cried out for water.

The remarks of Cassius do not successfully belittle Caesar in the eyes of the reader. They only show the jealousy and inferiority complex of Cassius. That is why he magnifies the physical weaknesses of Caesar beyond all reasonable proportion. Caesar's infirmities, according to some commentators cannot be considered as serious faults. He says that Shakespeare has brought out these weaknesses to show the contrast between the self-styled demi-god Caesar and Caesar the man with ordinary human frailties. His hypnotic spell holds the Romans in exaggerated awe of such a ruler.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE 1

Why does Shakespeare tell us about the weaknesses of Caesar?

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Brutus regards Caesar as an admirable person. He is wrongly convinced that the spirit of Caesar, or Caesarism is harmful for Rome and that he has to kill him to protect the peace and freedom of Rome. Caesar is ambitious. That is the conclusion arrived by Brutus. He has been offered the crown three times but he has felt compelled to refuse it though inwardly he would like to accept it. He had been shocked to see the public applauding him when he declined the crown.

Caesar is arrogant but he is a good judge of men. He sees the danger in Cassius' very looks. A man who can judge his fellow men correctly can stand as the helmsman of his nation. We know that he is not deceived because he makes a brilliant character reading of Cassius saying :

Such men as he be never at heart's ease
While they behold a greater than themselves
And therefore are they very dangerous (I II 205 - 7)

Caesar pronounces this judgement with his characteristic arrogance.

I rather tell thee what is to be fear'd
Than what I fear; always I am Caesar

Brutus himself pays a high tribute to Caesar when he states that Caesar is governed by his judgment not by his feelings.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (2)

How does Caesar read the character of Cassius?

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Decius says that Caesar is susceptible to flattery. This is a common weakness even in greatmen. We need not count it as a flaw in Caesar. Commentators have spoken of Caesar as superstitious. If he were superstitious he would have cared for the warning of the soothsayer. Critics say that on the morning of Caesar's assassination (II.ii) Caesar had been vacillating whether to attend the Senate meeting or not. The previous night had been fearful. Calpurnia had horrible dreams and three times in her sleep she had cried out, " Help ho! they murther Caesar!" Caesar is not afraid of these fearful prophesies. He is determined to attend the senate meeting inspite of Calpurnia's fears and requests. Even though he is warned by the augur he remains adamant. "And Caesar shall go forth", We see him asserting his fearlessness :

Cowards die many times before their deaths
The Valiant never taste of death but once.

Then he goes on to speak of himself in inflated terms'.

Danger knows full well
That Caesar is more dangerous than he.
We are two lions litter'd in one day,
And I the elder and more terrible.

His arrogance, that he is too great to fear like ordinary human beings, is emphasized here.

Calpurnia tells Caesar that his "Wisdom is consum'd in confidence". She had knelt before him with the most moving pleas to stay away from the Senate meeting. He does at last agree to stay at home. But when Decius gives Calpurnia's dream an auspicious interpretation he accepts it and once again changes his mind and resolves at once to set out.

How foolish do your fears seem now, Calpurnia!
I am ashamed I did yield to them.
Give me my robe, for I will go (II. ii 105)

Thus here we see a touch of self-deception as well as superstition in Caesar. This self-deception appears again and again in other important matters. He expresses absolute fearlessness.

Of all the wonders that I have yet heard
It seems to me most strange that men should fear (II. ii 34 - 35)

His courage is beyond question. We see and know that he is brave, but his constant harping on his flawless valour makes us suspicious. If he has no fears, he has misgivings regarding Cassius. His anxiety is clear when he consults Antony for his opinion about Cassius as a potential danger. Caesar could be hood-winked by baser men who knew how to play on his self-love. Decius says:

I can o'er sway him : for he loves to hear
That unicorns may be betray'd with trees,
And bears with glasses, elephants with holes,
Lions with toils, and men with flatterers;
But when I tell him he hates flatterers
He says he does, being then most flattered
Let me work (II i. 203)

And Decius persuades Caesar to come to the Senate and he proves his words.

In Act. II Scene (i) we see the conspiracy mounting up. Here we learn more of Caesar from the others, Brutus is pitted against Caesar by Cassius. He decides to kill him for the welfare of the state. In the Senate House we see the courtly and gracious Caesar. He welcomes each of the conspirators. The agony of his last cry :

"Et tu, Brute? Then fall Caesar", awakens our sympathy for him. From the Forum speeches of Brutus and Antony we learn that Caesar is a loving friend, faithful and just to his friends. He is generous and public spirited in filling the general coffers with the captured booty. He leaves a well that benefits every Roman citizen.

Caesar's spirit dominates the second half of the play manifesting itself in many ways. Even his ghost, says Dowden (Shakespeare: His Mind and Art p.288) "serves as a kind of visible symbol of the vast posthumous power of the dictator". His conspirators die with his name on their lips.

Shakespeare wishes us to admire Caesar, he makes Caesar a legendary figure. He points out his follies only to justify the conspiracy against him. The readers remember him as one of the mightiest conquerors in history.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (3)

What are the main qualities of Caesar's character?

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4.3.2 MARCUS BRUTUS

Brutus is the dramatic hero of Julius Caesar. He plays a prominent role in the play. The reader's attention is very often drawn towards his deliberations and decisions. In Plutarch Brutus was shown as a man of good judgement, and integrity of character. He was loved and respected by his co-patriots. But he conspired against Caesar upon the instigation of Cassius, perhaps because he was ambitious and wanted to be the leader of the Romans. Shakespeare too appeared to have been impressed greatly by Brutus. He modified the Brutus of Plutarch's Lives. He made him constant in his intentions. Many commentators discuss the character of Brutus with admiration and approval. Mac Callum says that "It is the personality of Brutus that attracts our chief sympathy and concern".

Shakespeare presents him more sympathetically. He loves his wife and is very kind to his young servant. All men speak of him as noble and honourable. Caesar admires him. His enemies Antony and Octavius respect him. However his judgment is not to be trusted as far as the conspiracy is concerned. He is misled by Cassius and joins the conspiracy believing that he is in the right. He decides not to kill Antony although the other conspirators suggest it. This proves to be a mistaken decision which ruins them later. He does not accept money from people to pay to his soldiers. He accuses Cassius of greed for money. Once he is determined to murder Caesar he is firm though Cassius begins to lose confidence. When he decides to attack his enemy at Phillippi he meets defeat and death because of his faulty judgment.

Brutus is noble but proud of his reputation as a descendant of Brutus who dethroned the last king of Rome. Cassius proposes to work upon the vanity of Brutus and goads him to Caesar's murder. He anticipates that Caesar might score humility and nobility once he achieves his ambition though he himself remarks that Caesar had never let his affections have control over his reason. We hear as much about Brutus from the other characters as we do from him. Caesar declares that he is noble (I.iii, 305). He says that Brutus is one of those men who are by themselves innocent, but may easily be "seduced" by clever and less-honourable men and Cassius does manage to 'seduce' Brutus. Caesar pays Brutus a high tribute:

O, he sits high in all the people's hearts
And that which would appear offence in us,
His countenance, like richest alchemy,
Will change to virtue and to worthiness (I. iii, 157 -60)

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (4)

What are the qualities of Brutus' character which make us admire him?

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All the conspirators respect his opinions. Caius Ligarius calls him a "Soul of Rome". Though Cassius draws him into the conspiracy, he assumes the role of a leader and no one questions his right to the position. Cassius suggests that every conspirator should take an oath but Brutus trusts the sacredness of a Roman promise. Brutus does not see any danger in Antony in spite of Cassius's fear and spares his life. He also allows him to speak at Caesar's funeral. He says that Antony "can do no more than Caesar's arm when Caesar's head is off".

In all these matters Brutus cares for his self-esteem. In his quarrel with Cassius he adopts the tone of an Olympian God, and he sounds more arrogant than Caesar when he says.

There is no terror, Cassius, in your threats,
For I am arm'd so strong in honesty
That they pass by me as the idle wind,

In Brutus the dramatist depicts a man divided against himself, "with himself at war" to quote Brutus' own phrase. He has a great admiration for Caesar's high gifts and noble qualities. He joins the conspiracy because he thinks it his duty to the Roman republic. His reasons are very nearly right but at the end he reaches a wrong conclusion in stabbing Caesar. He goes through an agonizing dilemma before he decides to eliminate Caesar. He thinks that he is acting from pure patriotic idealism. He and his other accomplices bathe their hands in Caesar's blood and shout: "Peace, freedom, and liberty!" Within twenty four hours of Caesar's death Antony takes charge of the city and Brutus has to flee. The deterioration of Brutus starts here. He loses his temper with Cassius. He asks one of his loyal friends to hold his sword and he runs upon it. Even in the hour of death he does not allow his failure to disturb his faith in the purity of his motives; he says:

I am Brutus, Marcus Brutus, I
Brutus, my country's friend

In his personal relationships we see him as a loving husband to Portia, the true mate of his soul. She is noble like him. She is ready to share his experiences and worries. Brutus and Portia lived in perfect union. He is not a man to wear his heart on his sleeve' so bids her farewell when he received the news of her death and plunges into the business of the hour. He prays that he should be worthy of such a devoted wife.

Critics like Mac Callum feel that the play could have been named 'Marcus Brutus' as he is the most prominent figure in the drama and he is the chief representative of the action. Brutus however, is also the most misled of all the characters. By the flaws of judgment that he makes he brings himself to ruin. He is unable to foresee the consequences of his actions.

SELF--CHECK EXERCISE (5)

List some of the flaws in Brutus' Character ?

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4.2.3. CAIUS CASSIUS

Cassius seems to the readers to be a real person as his faults are so naturally human. He is proud and short-tempered. He is jealous and he suffers from an inferiority complex. At first he seems to

have a stronger character than Brutus, but he slowly gives in to the latter in making important and crucial decisions.

Shakespeare has built the character of Cassius from Plutarch's words : "But Cassius being a choleric man, and hating Caesar privately more than he did the tyranny openly "incensed Brutus against him". He believed that men should be ruled by fear not by gentleness. Cassius himself speaks of the "rash humour" that he inherited from his mother (IV iii 119) Brutus, who is in a rage, taunts Cassius with his "rash choler", his waspishness and "testy humour". Shakespeare makes Cassius give vent to his choler on two occasions. In the second scene of the play he denounces Caesar and just before the battle of Phillippi he speaks angrily about the generals. He feels envy and malice towards Caesar "hating Caesar privately". He feels a sense of inferiority to Caesar as the latter is more highly gifted than he himself is. Caesar makes a masterly character sketch of Cassius (I. ii 191) which makes us understand him clearly. He has other qualities apart from those Caesar has mentioned and they are explicitly shown in the second half of the play. Courage in war and generalship, the ability to attract loyal followers, and generous sympathy for an afflicted friend are some of his laudable qualities.

In the early scenes he is shown as a scheming malcontent, a man plotting the murder of a great national leader. He is shown as a thin and unhealthy man, who thinks and reads a lot. He scorns sports and light diversions. He can judge human nature very shrewdly. He is not taken in by Casca's affectation of rudeness and he is not misled by Antony's apparent frivolity. Neither is he overtaken by the glamour of Brutus's virtue, but notes his weakness and plays on it. He is envious of those who are greater than himself. He is bitter and unhappy. He betrays his frustrated nature by the quality of his smile. Caesar feels that Cassius is a very dangerous man.

Cassius is obsessed by his hatred of Caesar. He goes out of control when he expresses his envious feelings. Shakespeare depicts him as an unsteady person, an Epicurean - (One who believes that pleasure is good and pain is evil). He recalls Caesar's want of endurance in swimming and his complaints in his sick-bed. Cassius observes keenly the superstitious lapses on the part of Caesar. He seldom smiles and even when he does he does it with scorn. He finds food for satisfaction in Caesar's physical defects. The following soliloquy of Cassius places him in the ranks of Shakespeare's villains along with Iago and Richard :

Well, Brutus, thou art noble: yet, I see,
Thy honourable metal may be wrought
From that it is disposed; therefore 'tis meet,
That noble minds keep ever with the likes;
For who so firm that can not be seduc'd?
Caesar doth bear me hard, but he loves Brutus:
If I were Brutus now and he were Cassius,
He should not humour me (I. ii 301 - 308)

He is a cynic. He is jealous of excellence, seeks to minimise it and will not tolerate it. Shakespeare stresses upon this characteristic of Cassius. There is no specific grievance that Cassius bears against Caesar. He makes a vague statement, "Caesar doth bear me hard", which only implies a general ill-will. He resents the pre-eminence of Caesar and becomes a malcontent. He grudges Caesar's greatness.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (6)

The main reason why Cassius ruins himself is that he loses control over himself because of This makes him magnify the of Caesar. (Fill in the gaps)

In spite of his envy and spite, Cassius is an attractive character. He is greatly enthusiastic about his cause. His republicanism is no doubt, a narrow creed, but he is prepared to be a martyr to it. When he hears that Caesar is to wear the crown, his resolution is Roman.

I k. I will wear this dagger, then;
Cassius from... bondage will deliver Cassius; (I. iii, 89)

He would pay homage to an individual and admire him if he can stand the test of his biting criticism. He can feel reverence and affection for Brutus's ideal virtue. The best example of his is the scene of their dispute. He knows what would be the right thing to do, and if left to himself, he does it. He makes the right estimate of the danger from Antony, because of his love for Caesar and his talents, but Brutus underates it and prevents him from acting. he disapproves of the permission given to Antony for the funeral oration. When Civil war breaks out he grasps the situation much better than Brutus can:

In such a time as this it is not meet
That every nice offence should bear his comment. (IV. iii, 7)

His sagacity deserves respect. But he is outdone by the impractical Brutus. In many ways he is the more capable of the two. But in great crises Brutus is strong and Cassius is weak. Their professed creeds do not satisfy them. Cassius in his evil fortune falls back on superstitions though he had ridiculed Caesar earlier for his superstitious beliefs.

All said and done, Cassius makes a fine figure. He can inspire love and respect. He becomes more likeable in the later part of the play. In the quarrel scene he has more of our sympathy than Brutus. He makes a move towards reconciliation. He feels deeply for Brutus in the "insupportable and touching loss" of Portia and he whole heartedly joins with him to bury all their unkindness in a cup of wine.

My heart is thirsty for that noble pledge.
Fill, Lucius, till the wine o'erswell the cup
I cannot drink too much of Brutus' love (IV. iii, 159 - 61)

They bid each other farewell in a frank and friendly way before the battle starts. Cassius might have acted from mistaken rather than evil motives. That is why Shakespeare softens and ennoble his character. Cassius believes the worst, loses his head and prepares for suicide. He lacks endurance and that brings about his death. Things are providing better for him but he misjudges the signs and kills himself. As Messala points out:

Mistrust of good success hath done this deed(V.iii 66)

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (7)

What does Shakespeare do to humanise the character of Cassius?

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4.3.4 MARK ANTONY

Shakespeare makes Antony appear realistic by showing us first one side of his character and then the other. In the beginning he is a young man enjoying the pleasure of life. We think, like Trebonius, that there is no danger from him. But he loves Caesar deeply and makes a great effort to win the crowd to his side. He doesn't think at first of what is best for Rome. Next we see him as a calculating ruler, listing the names of the men who are to die. But having won the battle he is kind and generous to the soldiers and servants of dead Brutus.

Antony believes that one should be a child of the time and he carries out his maxim to the end. He is a many-sided man, full of vitality and vigour, At first he was a masker and a reveller. But we

see a gradual change in him, we see him as a shrewd contriver in the play. In 'Antony and Cleopatra' his love of pleasure is much more emphasized. In Julius Caesar he subordinates his pleasure to his schemes. He concentrates his power on overthrowing the conspirators and the enemies of Caesar, and establishing his power.

The character of Antony is well developed in the last three Acts. In the first two he appears as "a limb of Caesar". But by the end of the play he makes himself the avenger of Caesar. He displays his talent as an orator, statesman, and soldier. Moulton (Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist, p 182) says that Antony has shown that he possesses "all the powers that belong both to the intellectual and practical life". Some critics believe that Antony's character is marked by his "unmitigated self-seeking" traits.

We first see Antony as one ready to please and serve Caesar. When Caesar reminds him to touch Calpurnia in the holy chase he replies :

I shall remember;
When Caesar says, "Do this," it is performed.

He speaks very little before Caesar's assassination. In the beginning he is mistaken in the judgment that Cassius is not dangerous, Brutus speaks of his liveliness, his "quick spirit", and says that he is "given to sports, to wildness, and much company". But Brutus dismisses him as ineffectual without Caesar's support.

Caesar refers to his fondness for pleasure and theatres and at Philippi Cassius taunts him with being "a masker and a reveller" but these observations no longer hold good after the assassination of Caesar. In the first two acts we only know him as one who is singled out by Caesar for his special regard.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (8)

How does Antony respect Caesar's word?

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When Caesar is killed Antony is stupefied for a while. But soon after he realizes his responsibility and tactfully sends his servant to the assassins requesting an interview with them. He plans to win the confidence of Brutus. He hopes to plan the vengeance for Caesar's murder. At first he conceals his love and respect for Caesar. He plays upon the vanity of Brutus. He even convinces Brutus that he will join him if he can be satisfied that Caesar deserved death. In spite of the misgivings of Cassius, Antony is allowed to speak to the conspirators at the place of murder. He is surrounded by the bloody hands of the assassins, and he concentrates on the dead body of Caesar as he speaks to them. He declares that he is ready to die by the side of Caesar if the conspirators feel so. Brutus is convinced by his declaration and announces that he has nothing but "kind love, good thoughts and reverence" for him. Cassius reassures him with an appeal to his ambition of offering Antony an equal share with the conspirators "in the disposing of new dignities".

From then on Antony is in full control of the situation. He pretends friendship with the conspirators by using ironical flattery. He gains their trust and respect. He takes their permission to carry Caesar's dead body to the market place and make the funeral oration. With this permission he achieves half his objective. When he is left with Caesar's body his true feelings are revealed. He foresees a fierce Civil war and bloodshed which can be abated only when Caesar's death is avenged. In his love and grief for Caesar he decides to see the doom of the murderers and he achieves it finally. Caesar's assassins die with his name on their tongues. Antony proves himself a great opportunist in his dealings with the conspirators.

Shakespeare's Antony has been very often censured as unstable, immoral and dishonest.

MacCallum (Shakespeare's Roman Plays) writes, " Shakespeare conceives him as a man of genius and feeling but not of principle, resourceful and daring, ambitious of honour and power but unscrupulous in his methods and a voluptuary in his life". Other critics who see nothing but nobility in Brutus, feel that Antony is the villain of Julius Caesar.

We see that Antony is unscrupulous in his methods. But he deliberately plans things in such a way that the actions of the conspirators turn upon themselves. He takes upon himself the sacred duty of vengeance as the blood-thirsty conspirators had butchered the greatest man of the age whom Antony admired and loved greatly. Antony rouses the people of Rome against Cassius and Brutus. He shows single hearted steadfastness of planning in carrying through his vengeance. He does not desire honour and power for himself. He gives vent to his emotion (like Brutus in the quarrel scene and Cassius in the second and third scenes of the play when Caesar dies. The fall of Caesar brings back the strength to Antony and his conduct makes the readers forget their earlier impressions of him.

Critics blame Antony for being callous in bartering his nephew's life for that of Lepidus' brother during the proscriptions. (IV. i. 1-6) His conduct here may, however, be interpreted as just and unsentimental. So also, we do not see any aim of personal gain in his proposal to misappropriate some of the money bequeathed in Caesar's will as it has the full concurrence of his colleagues.

Antony is not a man of baser motives and principles when compared to Cassius and Casca. We can call him a genius in the way in which he exploits every turn in a situation to the advantage of the cause to which he is dedicated.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (9)

Mention how Antony tricks the conspirators.

4.4 MINOR CHARACTERS

4.4.1 CASCA

Casca is the most fully drawn of the subsidiary conspirators. He is a man who shares with Cassius the jealousy of greatness. Antony describes him " as the envious Casca", Casca is inferior to Cassius in consistency and manhood. Brutus recalls that " he was quick mettle when we went to school" (I. ii.300). Casca appears before us at first as the most obsequious henchman of Caesar. When Caesar calls for Calpurnia, Casca is at his elbow: " Peace ho !, Caesar speaks", when Caesar hearing the soothsayer's shouting cries, " Ha ! who calls ?" Casca is again ready: " Bid every noise be still : Peace yet again !; Cassius would never have stooped to that. Plutarch gives no details about the personality of Casca. We only have the information that he was the first to strike Caesar from behind, and that when Caesar turned and grappled with him, he cried out to his brother in Greek for help. Casca pretends to serve Caesar in his presence but speaks jeeringly of him behind his back. Like Cassius he is a malcontent, jealous of Caesar's supremacy. He developed resentment to those who have outstripped him in the craze for power. In his angry bitterness with himself and others he affects a bluntness of speech. This is evident in his description of the scene in the market when Caesar was offered the crown he (I, ii,23 1)" puts on a tardy form" and treats friend and foe with caustic brutality. He lacks both "inward robustness" and "enlightened culture". He is panicky on the tempestuous night and expresses his fear with superstitious fancies. Cassius is contemptuous of his

lack of " those sparks of life that should be in a Roman", (I, iii. 57 - 8) Even at the assassination of Caesar he does not dare face his victim. Describing his action Antony says:

Damned Casca, like a cur, behind
Struck Caesar on the neck. (V. 1- 43)

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (10)

List some of the qualities of Casca's Character

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4.4.2 DECIUS BRUTUS

The character of Decius Brutus is developed through half a dozen speeches he makes in the play. He is self-centred and proud of his diplomatic tactics. When Cassius expresses his doubts about Caesar's coming to the Capitol after a terrifying night, he confidently asserts that he can bring Caesar at the appointed time by using a little flattery:

Let me work
For I can give his humour the true bent
And I will bring him to the Capitol. (II. i 209 -11)

In fact he interprets Calpurnia's dream in a favourable way for Caesar and tells him that he will be considered a coward if he stays at home because of the superstitious fears of his wife. Like the other conspirators he hides his treacherous designs under smiles and pretends solicitude to Caesar's welfare:

Pardon me, Caesar; for my dear love
To your proceeding bids me tell you this,
And reason to my love is liable. (II. ii. 102 - 4)

After betraying Caesar he ceases to play any important role in the play.

4.4.3 CICERO

Among the incidental figures Cicero's character is vividly drawn. He has no place in the actual plot of the play but his presence adds to the historical background of Rome. Cicero is exclusively Shakespeare's creation. He speaks only in the third scene, but in the second scene a few lines give us a clear impression of his personality. When the crowds greet Caesar after his refusal of the crown it is said about Cicero that he

Looks with that he such ferret and such fiery eyes,
As we have seen him in the Capitol,
Being cross'd in conference by some senators.

He cannot hide his disgust at the " foolery " he has witnessed. During the meeting of the conspirators at Brutus's house Cassius suggests that Cicero's mature wisdom and his high standing in Rome will add strength to their design (II, i.144 - 9) But Brutus brushes him aside saying :

O, name him not; let us not break with him,
For he will never follow anything
That other men begin.

When Casca speaks of the tempest quivering with fear, Cicero assumes a philosophic calm. He dismisses the fears of Casca. We do not hear of Cicero any more except that he perished by "the order of proscription" of the Trimvirs (IV. III. 176 - 9). We form a memorable picture " of Cicero from the few episodes with which he is associated.

4.4.4 PORTIA

Portia figures prominently in the play though she appears in only two scenes. She observes with great anxiety that her husband Brutus is preoccupied with some dangerous activities and these activities are affecting his health and temper. Though her husband shows a wealth of affection for her he keeps her away from his anxieties. Portia endures the change in her husband with tact and patience. But when she comes to know of the secret conclave of the conspirators she insists upon sharing the burden of Brutus. Brutus resists her to a great extent but she refuses to be put off. She appeals to his sense and love for his beloved wife:

No my Brutus;
You have some sick offence within your mind.
Which, by the right and virtue of my place,
I ought, to know of; and upon my knees,
I charm you by my once commended beauty,
By all your vows of love, and the great vow,
Which did incorporate and make us one,
That you unfold to me, yourself, your half,
Why you are heavy. (II. i. 276-75)

Brutus answers her lovingly :

You are my true and honourable wife;
As dear to me as are the ruddy drops
That visit my sad heart.

But Portia is not satisfied with the avowal of her husband. She is an ideal wife and a loving soul. As a worthy wife and Cato's daughter she feels that she has to share her husband's secret and support him in his anxieties. She has the physical courage to bear the pain by wounding herself in the thigh and she is morally courageous in her readiness to participate in the grief that weighs her husband down. Brutus, not able to withstand her appeal cries. " O ye gods, render me worthy of this noble wife !" He reveals all his secrets to her. Portia proves herself a woman with love, constancy and dignity. She has inherited all these virtues from her stoic father. Shakespeare has most naturally portrayed her as a lovable woman. When Brutus leaves her to go to Capitol on the morning of the ides of March, Portia, in her distraction, loses control over herself:

O Constancy, be strong upon my side;
Set a huge mountain between my heart and tongue !
I have a man's mind, but a woman's might.
How hard it is for women to keep counsel. (II iv. 6-9)

She is full of fear and she imagines that she hears from the direction of the Capitol, "a bustling rumour, like a fray" and when the soothsayer enters she almost blurts out the secret about the planned murder. After Caesar's assassination Portia realizes that Brutus is fighting a losing battle. In her grief she puts an end to her life by swallowing burning coals.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (11)

How does Portia show herself to be worthy of Brutus ?

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4.4.5 CALPURNIA

Calpurnia is not as well developed a character as Portia. She first speaks out her mind in the Act II, Scene ii, though she had also briefly appeared in the second scene of the play. She is afraid of the portents of the storm and her dreams about the murder of her husband Caesar. She is terrified for him not for herself. She is sure that her premonition points to the approaching death of her Caesar.

When beggars die there are no comets seen;
The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes-

When Caesar makes much of his courage, she says that his "wisdom is consum'd in confidence". She pleads with him not to go to the Senate House saying, "Call it my fear that keeps you in the house, and not your own"; She prevails upon Caesar and makes him agree to stay back for her sake. But Decius interprets her dreams in a favourable way and takes Caesar to the Senate House. In her persuasion of Caesar Calpurnia proves her love for him and the strength of her purpose.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (12)

What does Calpurnia's fear of superstitions show ?

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4.5 LET'S SUM UP

This unit has introduced you to the characters of the play. You should have formed your impressions of them from your reading of the play. The major characters discussed here are those of Julius Caesar, Marcus Brutus and Caius Cassius, and the minor characters touched upon those of Casca, Cicerio, Decius Brutus, Portia and Calpurnia.

4.6 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Sketch the character of Caesar bringing out his greatness.
2. What are the faults that Brutus commits and how do they affect the plot ?
3. What changes does Shakespeare make in the character of Cassius ?

4.7 ANSWERS TO SELF - CHECK EXERCISE

Self-Check Exercise -1

To show the contrast between the great hero Caesar and Caesar the man with ordinary Physical weaknesses.

Self-Check Exercise -2

He recognises the danger in Cassius' looks

SCE - 3

He is arrogant, a good judge of character, susceptible to flattery, fearless, self deceived to some extent, brave, a loving friend, faithful and just to his friends, generous and public spirited.

Self-Check Exercise -4

He is kind to his servant and loves his wife. The people speak of him as noble and honourable. His enemies respect him. He joins the conspiracy because he thinks it is his duty as a Roman citizen to kill Caesar.

Self-Check Exercise -5

Brutus's judgement is faulty, he decides not to kill Antony and he is against taking bribes. He is proud but easily convinced by the conspirators's arguments.

Self-Check Exercise -6

1. His hatred of Caesar
2. Physical defects

Self-Check Exercise -7

Shakespeare softens and ennobles his character making him mistakenly kill himself in the belief that his army is defeated.

Self-Check Exercise -8

He declares that he will do whatever Caesar asks him to do.

Self-Check Exercise -9

Antony tricks the conspirators by pretending to be friendly with them and he seeks their permission to address the mob after Caesar's death.

Self-Check Exercise -10

He was jealous of greatness, malcontented, bitter with himself and others.

Self-Check Exercise -11

Portia is an ideal wife and wishes to share her husband's secret. She is physically and morally courageous. She is constant and dignified. All these qualities make her a suitable wife for noble Brutus.

Self-Check Exercise -12

Calpurnia's fears of the omens show her love for Caesar and her strength of purpose.

UNIT - 5 MAJOR TOPICS FOR STUDY

5.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading through this unit you will be able to :

- identify some of the crucial issues raised in the play
- discuss the controversial topics
- argue in favour of or against some of the problems raised by the treatment of plot and character.

5.1 CONTENTS

- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Contents
- 5.2 Introduction
- 5.3 **Julius Caesar** : a play of emotions
- 5.4 Superstition and the supernatural element
- 5.5 The public and private worlds of the major characters
- 5.6 Relevance to twentieth century readers
- 5.7 **Julius Caesar**: a historical / Roman Play
- 5.8 The real hero of the play
- 5.9 Funeral orations
- 5.10 The mob
- 5.11 Use of prose
- 5.12 Let's sum up
- 5.13 Sample questions
- 5.14 Audio-video support material
- 5.15 Further reading

5.2 INTRODUCTION

In this unit you will examine some of the significant issues raised in this play such as the problem of the real hero of the play and the supernatural element etc. You should be able to take up a point of view and discuss or write about some of these issues convincingly, this unit will show you the direction towards developing some arguments about these topics.

In this unit the self-check exercises do not have the answers provided. You should refer back to the material to see how far you have been successful in writing them.

5.3 JULIUS CAESAR - A PLAY OF EMOTIONS

The entire play centres round the emotions of the major characters. Caesar, the pivotal leader is supposed to aspire to the throne and kingship. He is proud of his fearlessness. In his love for power he is blind to the fact that Cassius and Brutus are planning a conspiracy against him. He thinks that he does not yield to flattery and is therefore superior to his fellow beings. He ignores the words of the soothsayer and declares that "he is a dreamer. Let us leave him".

The Romans are devoted to the ancient Republican ideal. Hence the conflict is between the Republicans and Caesar who is suspected to possess a desire to revive the title 'king'. This causes their anger to rise against him. Brutus associates himself with the conspiracy and becomes its leader not because of any personal ends but because of his stoic belief in 'Republicanism' which has been promoted by his ancestors. He knows that Caesar is great and he loves him yet he decides to put an end to his ambition saying:

It must be by his death: and, for my part,
I know no personal cause to spurn at him,
But for the general. (Act - II, Scene, I, 10-13)

Cassius, Casca, Metellus and others hatch a conspiracy not for any great ideals but due to their jealousy of the great man. Cassius is very vocal in his jealousy. He and his other friends are prompted mainly by "envy of great Caesar". (V.v.70) Cassius has been "hating Caesar privately more than he did tyranny". He dwells upon the striking contrast between his own humble position and the greatness of Caesar. (I, ii. 115-118)

"This man
is now become a god, and Cassius is
A wretched creature, and must bend his body,
If Caesar carelessly but nod on him"

Jealousy speaks plainly in his words and he hopes to whet Brutus to a similar jealousy. (I,ii. 142 - 147) Caesar says of Cassius :

Such men as he be never at heart's ease
While they behold a greater than themselves (I, ii. 208,09)

Cassius suffers from an inferiority complex. His consciousness of inferiority acts as a restraint on his thoughts and behaviour when he is in front of Brutus. If he hates the dictator Caesar "privately", he hates him also as a 'tyrant'. But his purer motive of republicanism is not so strong as his ignoble jealousy. Casca too is envious of Caesar. He pretends to be loyal to Caesar in his presence. In the public place when Caesar speaks it is Casca who asks the people to be silent so that every body could hear what Caesar says. Casca says :

Peace, ho ! Caesar speaks,
.....
Bid every noise be still :- peace yet again! (I, i 82,14)

But he is the first one to stab Caesar in the back. As we can see from his talk of the storm he is a coward. It is a cowardly act to stab in the back, yet it is Casca's jealousy that prompts him to stab Caesar. Metellus Cimber too joins the conspiracy because he has a grievance against Caesar. Personal jealousy and private ends are the basis of most of the conspirators. Brutus alone becomes a conspirator in the interests of Rome and its Republic unlike his fellow conspirators whose intention is to capture power from Caesar.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (1)

Personal jealousy and private ends are the basis for the conspiracy. Discuss.

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5.4 SUSPERSTITION AND THE SUPERNATURAL ELEMENT

It cannot be denied that the supernatural element plays an important role in the play *Julius Caesar*. In fact, it is one of the basic devices used by him to highlight certain very significant aspects of the play.

Calpurnia and Caesar are childless. Caesar asks Calpurnia to stand in Antony's way and be touched by him during the race on the day of Lupercal festival. It was the custom of young Romans to run through the streets on that day with leather strips in their hands. They touched people on the way. Barren women, it was believed, if touched by those runners in their holy chase, would be cured of their infertility. Hence Caesar asks Antony to touch Calpurnia. Later, the soothsayer predicts danger to Caesar's life. But Caesar drives this blind belief away saying that the soothsayer is a mere dreamer and his words need not be taken seriously. Caesar does not seem to believe in such superstitions.

Calpurnia has a dream where in she sees someone murdering Caesar and she cries out in her sleep.

"Help, ho ! They murder Caesar". (II. i.3)

Caesar orders the priests to offer sacrifice and see what follows. Caesar seems to believe that dreams may come true. Calpurnia says that the night watchmen have had some horrible illusions of a lion giving birth to cubs in the streets, the graves opening up and the dead coming up, fiery warriors fighting a big battle in the clouds and blood falling like rain as a result of that war, horses neighing and goats shrieking in the streets, and dying men groaning. All these portend evil, says Calpurnia, and she begs Caesar not to leave the house that day and not to go to the Capitol. In the beginning Caesar brushes her fears away saying that the brave never read death. Calpurnia persists in her pleading that Caesar's wisdom is submerged in his confidence. She persuades him to take note of the bad omens and stay home. She remarks that the heavens send comets indicating the death of a great prince though nothing of that sort happens when beggars die. But Decius interprets Calpurnia's dream differently and succeeds in leading Caesar to the Capitol.

Cassius makes fun of Caesar for his superstitions. But he himself begins to believe blindly in the omens. Originally he had faith in Epicurus whose theory says that it is foolish to be superstitious. But later he believes in signs of bad luck. For example, he says that two eagles have followed him and his army on their way to Phillippi. But at Phillippi the eagles disappear and ravens and crows begin to hover over them. These birds of prey bring bad luck and Cassius fears that they foretell their defeat in the battle. This superstition makes him commit suicide.

Brutus sees the apparition of Caesar twice. He burdened by the guilt of Caesar's murder feels that Caesar's ghost seeks revenge.

Some critics find fault with Shakespeare for incorporating the supernatural element in his dramas. Whether he believed in it or not, he used it as a literary device in dramatic art. This supernatural element is there in the original story of Caesar and Brutus and Shakespeare retains it for dramatic effect. The people of Rome believed in superstitions and Shakespeare reflects this fact in his play. Brutus sees the ghost of Caesar because his mental condition is predisposed to hallucinations. This supernatural element is introduced in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* too.

Let us now consider Shakespeare's attitude towards ghosts. Did he believe in them? Are they real, are they mere segments of the imagination? Although this question has vexed the minds of several critics of Shakespeare in other words, while, in some cases, a ghost may be the mere projection of Character's mental weakness in other cases, he may be a concrete phenomenon.

But what about the ghost in *Julius Caesar*? Here it is surely a creature of Brutus's own fanciful imagination. Let us closely examine scene iii in Act IV in which he sees the ghost of Caesar. Brutus

has just heard the terrible news of his wife Portia's death. A vague feeling of despair over his possible defeat on the battlefield has been creeping all over him.....

"The enemy increaseth every day ;
We, at the highest, are ready to decline

Then, as the night deepens and his servant Lucius falls asleep, he thinks of "Murderous slumber". As 'the taper burns' and he plans to return to his reading, the ghost of Caesar appears, shall we say only before his mind's eye?

"I think it is the weakness of mine eyes
That shapes this monstrous apparition,
It cover upon me. Art thou anything ?
Art thou some god, some angel, or some devil
That makest my blood cold, and my hair to stare ?"

It is obvious that it is only the weakness of his eyes, because he has already descended into depression. As soon as he takes courage, the ghost vanishes quite understandably. Then the ghost says "thou shalt see me at Phillipi". Brutus responds, defiantly, "why, I will see thee at Phillipi then." And at this spiritual challenge the ghost disappears or shall we say retreats?

"Now I have taken heart, thou vanishes"

That explains the nature of this apparition which was merely a manifestation of the crisis that was brewing in his mind, in this case, therefore, the ghost is mere subjective

But now examine certain other parts of the play, (b) the soothsayer's prediction about Caesar's death on the Ides of March. How could any logic explain the awesome truth of his prophecy? Was the soothsayer a spokesman of some supernatural power that could foretell the future? And when Calpurnia tries to dissuade Caesar from going to the senate, because she had seen a horrible dream, he brushes it all aside as an idle thing, not to shake him off his course. Calpurnia thus pleads with her husband :

". the things we have heard and seen,
Recounts most horrid sights seen by the watch
A lioness hath whelped in the streets;
And graves have yawn'd, and yielded up their dead;
Fierce fiery warriors fought upon the clouds,
In ranks and squadrons and right form of war,
Which drizzleth blood upon the Capitol;
The noise of battle hurtled in the air,
Horses did neigh, and dying men did groan
And ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets"
Calpurnia, then almost cries out:
"O Caesar, these things are beyond all use,
And I do fear them".

This passage focusses the readers' attention on the supernatural most forcefully. The various elements of the supernatural - a lioness whelping in the street, graves opening out, blood raining upon the Capitol, dying men groaning and ghosts shrieking about the streets are indeed beyond all use, defying reason as being entirely supernatural. But, then, as we have said before, can we discuss these supernatural phenomena as mere idle things when they do lead Caesar on to his doom precisely on the Ides of March as cannily foretold by the soothsayer.

All this may not necessarily lead us to conclude that Shakespeare believes in ghosts or other supernatural phenomena. That would be irrelevant as Shakespeare never subscribed to any one

theory or dogma. He took life in all its baffling complexities - its rationality and its superstitions, its denials and beliefs. In the words of a commentator, "There are indeed few subjects on which we can hazard any conjecture or to Shakespeare's own feeling, and the supernatural is not one of them."

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (2)

Write a note on Shakespeare's treatment of the ghost in Julius Caesar.

5.5 THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE WORLDS OF THE MAJOR CHARACTERS.

The first thing a reader observes in Julius Caesar is that there is a division in the private and public world of its major characters. It is a play about great public events. The characters are revealed in their private, personal and domestic capacities. The play is a "link between observable events in the public world and their causes in the deeper places of personal life".

Some of the personal details about Caesar's life are revealed to us by the action of the play. Caesar is concerned about his wife's barrenness. He faints in public when Antony offers him the crown thrice. Cassius refers to him as 'sick girl' speaking of Caesar's sickness in Spain. He is deaf and had been unable to swim across the flooded Tiber. He cares for Calpurnia's dreams and fears. But he constantly wears a mask in public. There is a division between Caesar the man and Caesar the ruler. He refers to himself as 'Caesar'. In public he is proud and boastful. He boasts of his 'constancy' and 'fearlessness'. He thinks that he is a good judge of character but he fails to suspect the conspirators.

There is a contrast in the public and private life of Brutus. He makes his wife worry about his health, he remarks about his disturbed sleep. He forgets his public cares and exhibits tenderness when he allows his servant Lucius to enjoy a sound sleep. He suffers from conflicting emotions "passions of some difference". There is a conflict between his love of Caesar and his duty to Rome. In public his love of liberty, his courage and practical ability win him a great measure of admiration. His higher character and his unbending nature make people like Cassius feel ashamed of their baseness and bring out the best in their nature. Brutus loves his wife and he is tender to her. But his public affairs indirectly cause her death. There is a 'parallel divorce' between Brutus the man and Brutus the Statesman. He loves Caesar but he sacrifices his friendship to join the conspirators in the name of Republicanism.

Cassius the man is full of envy and he suffers from an inferiority complex. Cassius, the conspirator is a practical and unscrupulous man. He is able to fight the world with its own weapons' unhampered by scruples. His personal feelings are revealed when he feels that Portia's death is of greater meaning to him than discussions of tactics and strategies of war.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (3)

How is the conflict in the character of Brutus portrayed?

5.6 RELEVANCE TO TWENTIETH CENTURY READERS :

In the theatre Julius Caesar may not appeal to us as a tragedy of the highest kind. But it has the power and ability to seem 'contemporary'. The play provides its readers with points of reference for contemporary political events. It gives the necessary insight into the political world as our curiosity and imagination demands. We are exposed to the inner working and the outer appearances of that world. Coupled with the singularities of Caesar, his weakness as an ordinary man, are delineated with great perfection. In his courage, in his ability to command, in his assumption of absolute power he resembles the dictators of the modern world. In his pettiness of mind, his fears and his expressions of emotions he is like the weakest coward. Both his public and private life are closely described by Shakespeare with the clarity of a keen observer of human nature.

At the beginning of the play we see the citizens enjoying a holiday on Caesar's triumph. Today we see jubilant mobs celebrating the victory of a leader in the elections or when he becomes the prime person to head the government of a state.

Caesar declines the crown in the public and he sees that the public is happy with it. So he lets his double collar open and bares his neck and cries out to his friends that he is ready to offer his throat if any man is ready to cut it. This of course, is his way of impressing the audience. Our politicians of the present day declare in the public meetings that they are ready to sacrifice their lives for the welfare of the people. They sound utterly selfless in their speeches though they are totally self-centred when it comes to action. Lying and forgery is practised in Julius Caesar by Cassius and his friends. We see similar fraud being practised by our politicians.

The death of Caesar is motivated by jealousy and the desire to capture power. They wish to capture power by somehow convincing the mob that they have killed Caesar out of a genuine necessity. But their attempts misfire. In the present day political game some politicians deceive the public and overthrow the leader and step into power for their private ends. They deceive the public by pretending to be their well-wishers.

After the death of Caesar Brutus makes a speech to convince the Romans that he has killed Caesar for the good of Rome. The people believe him and praise him. Antony makes his funeral speech pointing out all the great qualities of Caesar and his love of his people. The mob is easily carried away by his speech and they take his side and rush to burn and destroy things as a mark of their protest against Caesar's murderers. We see similar situations among our masses who are easily led by the speeches of their leaders and they take sides and in their thoughtlessness break, burn and destroy property if they feel that injustice is done to their leader, party or group. We often witness communal riots instigated by leaders. We know that most of our political leaders are great actors and they can feel the pulse of the public as Antony did in *Julius Caesar*. The Roman mob gets wild, dangerous and brutal and kills Cinna, the poet mistaking him to be Cinna, the conspirator. They lose all propriety and capacity to see things in the proper perspective. This resembles the violence, and destruction resorted to by the mob in modern times when enraged or foolishly misguided. We know out of experience that the winning political party behaves vindictively towards its opponents. We have seen in the play that Antony and Octavius turn vindictive and kill their opponents in the name of proscription.

Shakespeare applied his keenness of intellect to human beings, their emotions and conflicts. Ben Jonson's prophecy that Shakespeare 'was not of an age, but for all time' has been wonderfully fulfilled in the latter's work. Shakespeare's sense of politics, of man in society, of the tension between personal sensibility and public necessity, is very accurately illustrated in *Julius Caesar* and the play is an eternal reflection of the ironies, pains and cruelties suffered by the individual in a politically organized society.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (4)

List the similarities between the times portrayed in the play and the twentieth century.

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5.7 JULIUS CAESAR : A HISTORICAL ROMAN PLAY

Julius Caesar is one of the outstanding historical plays of Shakespeare, dealing with an important period of Roman history, the rise and fall of Caesar, and the debate that centred around the theme of democracy versus monarchy. Caesar, as a historical character, had fascinated Shakespeare, there are innumerable references to him in his various plays Measure for Measure, Hamlet, Antony and The Merchant of Venice.

But obviously it is in his play, that Shakespeare portrayed Caesar's character in all its diversity and richness. The main events in the life of Caesar are dramatically represented in his play-his murder at the hands of his close associates (Brutus and Cassius), his funeral at which Brutus and Antony spoke fervently, the arrival of Octavius at Rome and the battle of Phillipi. Most of this information Shakespeare had gathered from a popular source of history available to Elizabethan playwrights-Plutarch's Lives. But the great creative genius that Shakespeare was, he did not closely adhere to his sources. Would he submit his imagination to bold historical facts ? No, instead he modified history, compressed time ranging over months to a mere six days. For instance, (1) Shakespeare makes victory take place on the day of the Lupercalia instead of six months before; he shows Caesar's murder in the Capitol and not in the Curia Pompeiana (2) follows his murder, the funeral orations and Octavius's arrival at Rome to take place on the seventh day. He also combines the two battles of Phillipi while, in history, there is a twenty day interval between one bloody engagement and the other.

These are only a few instances to show how an imaginative dramatist must take liberties with his source material to create a new work of art, since he is not bound by the limitation of a historian. Who could change base matter into gold? In fact, to many people, even students of history, it is the Caesar of Shakespeare who is more real than the historical personage one meets in the pages of history.

We don't know if Shakespeare ever visited Italy - the facts of his life are so meagre. But our casual feeling that his understanding of Rome - its customs, beliefs and superstitions - was as real as that of any historian of the early Italian period. And it is the recreation of a memorable Roman Character that makes the play one of the crowning achievements of Shakespeare.

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (5)

What modifications did Shakespeare make in the historical facts?

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5.8 THE ' REAL' HERO OF THE PLAY

A question that has often engaged the minds of Shakespeare's readers and critics is - who is the hero of this play ? Julius Caesar or Brutus ? It is always one of his dramatic strategies to leave certain issues and mysteries so that each reader may be stimulated into finding the answer for himself. And does not this constitute one of the pleasures of reading literature ?

Some critics suggest that Shakespeare must have intended Caesar to be the hero of this play, otherwise why should he have talked often of this character. Surely, he would have called it Brutus, if he had the other character in mind. But this is too simple an argument since the issue involved is too complex.

Let us first see what can be said in support of Brutus being the hero. Here one may say, originally speaking, that in terms of the entire structure of the play, he seems to be more central than Caesar. After all, while Caesar is assassinated in the third act, it is Brutus who remains on the stage till the end. Surely a hero, one may argue, should be an integral part of the entire play, (although it has been argued by the supporters of Caesar that even after his assassination, his name occurs 89 times, in one context or another) from the beginning to the end and not merely dominate a part of the story. But then it seems it is Brutus who seems to represent the modern concept of democracy, it is therefore closer to our modes of thinking. Let's remember what he says in his famous funeral oration:

"If there is any in this assembly, any dear friend of
Caesar's to him I say, that Brutus's love to Caesar
was no less than his. If then that friend demand
why Brutus rose against Caesar, this is my answer,
Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome
more. Had you rather Caesar were living, and die all
slaves, than that Caesar were dead, to live all free men?

These are heroic sentiments - noble, moving and irrefutable. These words could be pertinent even today, in any political situation in which a political leader may choose to assume the garb of a dictator, an autocrat. Brutus, in truly heroic terms, clinches the choice between slavery and freedom, between absolute monarchy and constitutional democracy.

Do we hear any such heroic words from the lips of Caesar, except words of conceited self-assurance. For instance, when he is warned by the soothsayer, Calpurnia and other well-wishers not to go to the senate, he responds:

Cowards die many times before their death
The valiant never taste of death but once.
Of 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.

Here is another kind of heroism embodied in those words-irrepressible courage in the face of possible death. But it may be interpreted as suggested above as a veiled form of arrogance, which Brutus seems to symbolise a profounder idea of a republic against an empire. So as an idealist Brutus should score over his contender Caesar. It is, however, towards the end, that even Antony, the staunchest follower of Caesar, admits Brutus's moral superiority over all the Romans (even over Caesar), for doesn't he describe Brutus as the noblest Roman of them all, whose 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 "

Well, if such is the stuff heroes are made of, Brutus certainly is the winner for he alone integrates the play, on the moral and political planes. The play might have been retitled Brutus and not Julius Caesar.

5.9 FUNERAL ORATIONS

Now that we have indirectly seen Brutus and Caesar in a comparative light, let us contrast Brutus with another significant character in the play-Antony. Brutus and Antony seem to represent two

opposite ends of the same spectrum.

The distinctive traits of their personalities are rather better revealed in their funeral orations. One has only to hear them address the same audience consisting of the common citizens, to see how each of them is shaped into a different mould. Essentially speaking, if Brutus emerges as an idealist, divorced from reality, Antony carries the day because of his emotional appeal to his listeners.

Let us first examine the oration delivered by Brutus and see how as a speaker he is inferior to Antony. First, he is too demanding, too presumptuous. Why should he start off with an appeal to the audience; "be patient till the last". Such an exhortation can put off any evidence. Let the speaker be dramatically interesting and he will naturally evoke a patient response from his listeners. Then, Brutus lapses into a series of abstractions which go far above the receptive intelligence of his audiences. If a speaker expects to achieve immediate rapport with his listeners he must speak in their language, and not talk down to them. This is what Brutus fails to do. He speaks in terms of abstract causes, more moral than political.

"Hear me for my cause, and be silent
Censure me in your wisdom that you
may be better judge."

Wisdom could Brutus associate with a chaotic crowd of cobblers, and carpenters? What judgement could he expect of his rabble? To expect them to understand the significance of democracy and freedom was politically unwise of Brutus. He should have known that nothing appeals to the commoners more than the Charisma of a leader, even if he lapses into dictator. His speech is full of such abstract concepts as honour, ambition, bravery and wisdom. And then as he finishes off, he commits the fatal mistake of leaving the platform entirely to Antony whose mastery in the art of eloquence swings the audience in favour of Caesar.

For Antony, the seasoned orator the only thing that matters is emotion. And so, instead of speaking in terms of democracy and monarchy he invites his listeners to see the wounds inflicted on Caesar's body by the so-called republicans, including the noble Brutus. And this sweeps the mob:

"Look, in this place, ran Cassius's dagger through
See what a rent the envious Casca made
And when his listeners begin to cry, out of pity, Antony presses on:

these are gracious drops,
kind souls what weep you when you but behold
Our Caesar's vesture wounded?"

This is not the language of logic but of deep emotion, and the sentiments are couched in words which evoke immediate response from Antony's listeners. He also uses Crony as an effective weapon to arouse the commoners' passions, rousing them to immediate revolt.

"Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
And Brutus is an honourable man".

As he moves deeper into his speech, Antony clearly suggests to his audience that Brutus and his associates were really not worthy to be called 'honourable,' for how could such people murder, in cold blood, an innocent man Caesar, who loves his countrymen? As he takes out Caesar's will and tells his listeners how he had intended to benefit his fellow countrymen, the audience rises in revolt. The instantaneous response of the listeners is:

"Revenge ! About ! Seek ! Fire ! Kill !
Slay ! Let not a traitor live ! "

And thus Brutus and his accomplices are branded traitors to Rome and Caesar. The mischief is now afoot and, indeed, it will take care of itself.

As we compare these two funeral orations, we see the genius of Shakespeare at work behind every word, phrase and image. Only a skilled orator could have phrased such powerful orations, bringing into sharp juxtaposition two characters, Brutus and Antony, so dissimilar in their attitudes.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (7)

Why does Brutus's speech not impress the mob much ?

.....
.....

5.10 THE MOB

If Antony was able to sway the mob so easily, without offering them any concrete arguments in support of Caesar, what kind of impression did Shakespeare want to create on his readers about the common citizens ? Did they have any sense of discrimination, any capacity to think or weigh the pros and cons of an issue? Obviously the answer is in the negative. If this Elizabethan audience could be swung from one response to another shouldn't it be accused of blatant fickle mindedness? How could anyone take seriously a commoner's loyalty when he could be swayed so easily ? If one accepts this point of view, surely Shakespeare doesn't seem to be an ardent admirer of democracy which would be a sort of mob rule. Let us also see how Shakespeare describes the common people who constitute an important part of the play. We encounter them first in the opening scenes of the play. Casca has been reporting to Brutus, how the citizens offered the crown to Caesar : As he refuses to accept the crown for the third time.

"The rabblement shouted and clapped their chopped hands,
and threw up their sweaty nightcaps, and uttered
such a deal of stinking breath that it almost
choked Caesar"

One wonders if Shakespeare was here contrasting the delicate, sophisticated Caesar with the dirty, noisy commoners whose loyalty would be no comfort to any leader. Later, we encounter the commoners switching their loyalties from Brutus to Antony as one speaker leaves the platform to the other. And once aroused, the mob is seen in its stark brutality, out to kill and burn indiscriminately. One cannot, therefore, help thinking that the dramatist was not too enamoured of the system of government which allow any freedom to such rowdy citizens as freedom in their case would invariably lapse into license and unbridled wantonness.

But to say that Shakespeare was an imperialist would be as fallacious as to brand him a Republican. Perhaps the truth lies somewhere between these two extremes. All that Shakespeare wanted to suggest was the inadequacies and limitations of both forms of government leaving the final choice to the readers themselves.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (8)

What is Shakespeare's attitude to the mob in this play ?

.....
.....

5.11 USE OF PROSE

Let us now round off our discussion of the play with a brief comment of his use of prose in Julius Caesar. A close reader of the play must have noticed that Shakespeare uses prose and verse to create certain dramatic effects. It should be possible to summarise his use of prose under the following heads:

- (a) He uses prose as a mere medium of communication - to pass on some basic information from one character to another. The soothsayer, for instance, uses prose in his prophecy which is merely intended as a warning to Caesar.
- (b) Prose is also used where intellect and not emotion is the keynote. No wonder Brutus delivers his speech in prose, because his argument is too logical and abstract. On the other hand, Antony flies on the wings of verse by playing on Caesar's thirty three wounds to arouse the passions of his listeners.
- (c) Otherwise while verse is reserved for the high-born illustrious characters, prose is assigned to the commoners - cobblers, carpenters - in brief, the ordinary men of the crowd.
- (d) Lastly, Shakespeare often alternates prose and verse merely to create the dramatic effects of contrast. For what is drama, if not tension generated through collision of wills, sudden shifts of mood, and confrontation of the opposites?

With respect to the special dramatic effects Shakespeare has created in Julius Caesar, no body can deny that it is one of Shakespeare's most significant plays.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (9)

For which of his characters does Shakespeare use prose?

.....

.....

5.12 LET'S SUM UP

In this unit you have learnt of some of the major issues of this play. Discussion of these issues, initiated here, should help you to develop your own arguments in support of the points you make.

5.13 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- 1) Justify the use of the supernatural in Julius Caesar.
- 2) The title of the play should have been Marcus Brutus. Discuss.
- 3) What are the special features of the mob in Julius Caesar?

5.14 AUDIO - VIDEO SUPPORT MATERIAL

1. Three facets of Julius Caesar.
2. Julius Caesar, an introduction.

5.15 FURTHER READING

1. Derek Traversi : Shakespeare's Roman Plays
2. M.W. Mac Callum : Shakespeare's Roman Plays and their background

3.	The Arden Shakespeare	:	Julius Caesar Edited by T.S. Dorsch
4.	L.C. Knights	:	Personality and Politics in Julius Caesar
5.	Virgil K. Whitaker	:	Brutus and the Tragedy of Moral Choice
6.	J. Dover Wilson	:	Ben Johnson and Julius Caesar
7.	John Palmer	:	The Character of Caesar
8.	Harley Granville - Barker	:	Mark Antony
9.	Mark Hunter	:	Brutus and the political context
10.	Samuel Johnson	:	Johnson on Shakespeare
11.	Gareth L. Loyd Evans	:	The Upstart Crow
			An introduction to Shakespeare's Plays

V.KOMALA

BRAOU

BLOCK II: THE APPLE CART

George Bernard Shaw

Block II has been divided into four units.

Unit 1 discusses generally drama as a form of literature

Unit 2 brings about humour in G.B. Shaw's plays.

Unit 3 attempts an analysis of the play The Apple Cart.

Unit 4** deals with the skill of the playwright in characterization and also it discusses important characters in the play.

BLOCK II - THE APPLE CART

UNIT -1 A BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY OF THE PLAY

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit you will be able to:

- explain the dramatic significance of the plays of Shaw
 - describe his skill as a dramatist
 - analyse the Preface to The Apple Cart and study its relevance to the play
-

1.1 CONTENTS

- 1.0 Objectives
 - 1.1 Contents
 - 1.2 Introduction
 - 1.3 Drama as an art form
 - 1.4 Shaw's life and times
 - 1.5 Shaw's contemporaries
 - 1.6 Relevance of the Apple Cart to the present day
 - 1.7 Influences
 - 1.8 Shaw's distinctiveness as a dramatist
 - 1.9 Let's sum up
 - 1.10 Sample questions
 - 1.11 Answers to self-check exercises
-

1.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit is introductory in nature because it tells you about the background to the play. It described the dramatic art of Shaw, his life and times and the influences which moulded his plays. You will also read about the relevance of this play to the modern times.

1.3 DRAMA AS AN ART FORM

Drama is a form of art, says The Encyclopaedia Britannica, in which the artist imagines a story concerning persons and incidents. The author however, does not himself describe, narrate or explain what is happening. He uses words to express the thoughts and emotions of the characters, interaction with each other and it is by using words that the dramatist creates his characters, background and conflicts. Dramatic relationship among characters is based on conflict.

Some critics are of the view that a drama can only be fully appreciated as a work of art when it is theatrically presented. Theoretically, any person with imagination and a background of culture can experience a play just by reading it. But he would be able to experience it all the more, if it is performed. The plays of Shaw and a few others are meant to be read as well as enacted. In Shaw the Preface and the copious stage directions are proof enough of this. Strictly speaking, drama proper is restricted to what is designed for being performed on the stage.

It is only an exceptionally great humanist like Shakespeare, who can create plays which can be performed as well as read and appreciated hundreds of years later, without an understanding of humanity and human relationships, an author's creations are not likely to be a success. Shaw was a great humanist who observed, understood and represented his times with words, thoughts and themes.

Each age has its own individual background, its peculiarities, and conflicts of social order. For instance, two decades ago man was not sure of reaching the moon and four decades ago man could not penetrate the stratosphere; five decades ago general elections were not possible in many countries. Even, the Houses of Commons and Lords exercised their power, but their members themselves were nominated. If one examines the literature of that period one would find that words like "Poll" and "Franchise" are hardly used and if found they would have connotations which are very different from those they have acquired today.

Similarly, the thoughts which produce these words and the themes which activate these thoughts are conditioned by the age and its socio-cultural backgrounds.

1.4 SHAW'S LIFE AND TIMES

England, in the late nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century, enjoyed a period of peace and plenty. Britain ruled three quarters of the world. Rapid industrialisation, progress in technological advancement, compulsory primary education and quicker transport facilities besides the quest for power and knowledge had widened the horizons of the common man and emancipated him. The common man, whether a clerk or a labourer, became more and more aware of his rights as well as responsibilities. Groupism again, as in the old days of tribes, clans and guilds manifested itself in trade unions and political parties. Socialism and Communism flourished in the land where monarchy had reigned supreme and where monarchs still flourish.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (1)

What is the purpose that the Preface of Shaw serve?

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.....

George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950), an Irishman, was born in Dublin on July 26, 1856. His family belonged to the Protestant landed gentry. His father was a minor civil servant who later resigned his job to become a wholesale merchant. Unfortunately he was not successful as a merchant and Shaw's family lived in "polite urban indigence". Consequently, Shaw's formal education suffered. He had to acquire knowledge himself. His mother was a moderately accomplished practising musician. Because of this background, he acquired wide knowledge of music and developed his interest in the allied visual arts of painting and literature. He expressed this interest even at the school going age by frequenting the National Gallery of Ireland.

Shaw continued to improve his education, even after he came to England in 1876. His mother and his sisters had preceded him there. His mother had begun to take in students for tuition in music, assisted by the music master who had also come from Ireland. Later the music master parted from them but Shaw's mother continued to give lessons in music. Shaw often assisted her and developed his interest in music further. His interest in music is reflected in almost all his plays, in his use of technical terms referred to in music, like the word crescendo (meaning gradual increase in loudness). Till 1893, when he got married, he continued to live with his mother.

Shaw was a good orator also, and he perfected his speeches before delivering them. Public speaking, after all, is a part of theatrical experience and Shaw co-ordinated and co-related his playwriting and

public speaking. As an active member of the Fabian Society, comprising of socialists, he toured England and Scotland delivering speeches, and expounding the principles of socialism. In his plays, this particular aspect of his deep rooted conviction is often mentioned. The Abbey Theatre was formed by his contemporaries. W.B. Yeats, Lady Gregory and others for the propagation of Irish nationalism. Shaw also achieved the dissemination of his theories through his plays. Though most of Shaw's contemporary literateurs were deeply nationalistic, they were mostly pacifists who did not believe in violence. In 1885, a number of his book reviews were published and he also officiated as an art critic for three newspapers. As he had a good acquaintance with music, particularly the opera, his opinion was sought and respected. From 1895, his talent as a critic of drama was recognised. As an active socialist and dramatist, he was fond of declaring that he was a "social reformer and doctrinaire first, last and all the time". He continued to be among the intellectuals and also in the public eye by his "intellectual clowning". He was, in "every sense, a showman". When he died in 1950, he had long been the greatest living man of letters in the English speaking world.

In 1925, he received the Nobel Prize of literature. His plays were translated and performed in European countries, sometimes. Even before they were performed in England. A few of his plays, dealing with controversial topics, like prostitution in *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, were denied the licence for performance in England for nine years altogether. It was only after his merit was recognised outside England, that they were performed in England. *WIDOWER'S HOUSES*, which deals with the problems of London slum-dwellers was banned for sometime. No wonder then that he categorised his plays as Plays, Pleasant and Unpleasant. Shaw called these plays unpleasant because this dramatic power is used to force the spectator to face unpleasant facts. But nowhere do we find a tragic ending. Shaw appears to have avoided tragedy, except probably in *The Doctor's Dilemma*.

In his personal life, it was wellknown that he was a very strict vegetarian. He said if one buries meat in the earth, it putrifies; if one buries an oak acorn, it becomes a giant tree. So he argued that if that could happen when it was buried in mud, what wonderful things might happen if man consumed it? He is also well-known for his prompt repartees. He was once addressed by a beautiful actress who suggested that if they married and had a child, with her looks and his brains, what a wonderful thing it would be. He immediately replied, "Madam, if it had my looks and your brain, how would it be?"

He also believed that spoken and written English should be correlated. His popular play *Pygmalion*, screened as the film *My Fair Lady*, develops this thought, apart from including many other philosophic concepts. Once somebody remarked "Mr. Shaw, arent *sugar* and *sumac*, the only two words in English which are spelt with an "s" and pronounced "sh"? "Sure" replied Shaw. Similar anecdotes are innumerable. Shaw actually left his estate worth 700,000 pounds to the development and improvement of the English language.

Life Force is something that Shaw had thought of as the force which makes life bearable and continuous. He believed that life-force is incarnate in mother-woman. Sometimes, as in *Candida* the mother-woman transcends both morality and art. Shaw believed that the life force can be passed on from generation to generation enabling men to evolve into better beings. This life force should make a person desire, with great will-power and strength of mind, to become a better and a finer person. This desire to improve oneself is stronger in women and they tend to impress their children and help them to develop into finer beings. This particular life-force is not as evident in *The Apple Cart* as in *Candida*. If the term can be stretched, it may be applied to King Magnus as the central figure who is trying to keep his position as well as make other evolve into better beings. "I have taught him how to behave. I have to valet all the beginners; but that does not tame them: it teaches them how to use their strength instead of wasting it in making fools of themselves".

Shaw illustrated this Life Force or God as the Central theme in whatever he wrote, through every phase of life, from education and social conditions to politics, international affairs and religion. The "Life Force" would not tolerate men perpetuating cruelty, corruption or ineffectuality. Magnus in *The Apple Cart* succeeds because he is effective and astute. "Creative Evolution" says A.C. Ward, "was the doctrine commended by Shaw as a means through which the desire of Man and the purpose of the Life Force might be made identical".

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (2)

What is the theme of *Widower's Houses*?

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.....

1.5 SHAW'S CONTEMPORARIES

Just before Shaw acquired eminence, two dramatists, Henry Arthur Jones and Sir Arthur Pinero, were quite popular. Pinero was an actor and he wrote in the conventional manner. Jones initially wrote melodramas but later his sense of comedy made his dialogues more natural than Pinero's though Pinero's intellect was sharper. In Europe, just before this period, Henrik Ibsen was the most popular dramatist, as his plays were written in a realistic style and dealt mostly with social problems. Ibsen influenced Shaw greatly. Many of the early plays of Shaw display this influence, especially his *Plays Unpleasant*.

The popularity of Shaw's plays in the English speaking world is undoubted. Shaw's zeal for social reformation, his impeccable style, his scintillating wit, and his overwhelming sincerity have made him a much admired dramatist. The influence of Shaw on dramatists of his age, as well as the succeeding generation has been profound. Though the second World War had created chaos in the literary world and brought in stark realism and brutality and violence in the delineation of characters, the subtlety of Shaw's inimitable style is still appreciated. The problems that he had brought forward to the notice of the intelligentsia and the general public are the problems that face society universally whether they are prostitution, slum-landlordism, or sheer skulduggery and man's acceptance of religion in his daily life. Shaw had proved to the world that if one had sincerity and dedication as well as good style, one can teach a man to laugh at himself and his affectations and consequently improve himself. "Every Shaw play yields its quota of his characteristic philosophy of evolution, satire and wit".

1.6 RELEVANCE OF THE APPLE CART TO THE PRESENT DAY

The *Apple Cart* as Shaw takes particular care to state in his Preface, is not a conflict between the monarchical system of government and the elective system. He calls his play a political extravaganza that stands between both and plutocracy. Money talks; money prints; money broadcasts; money reigns". "Democracy is no longer bought; it is bilked". He points out that the ministers who are socialists, as well as ministers who are encouraged by Breakages Ltd. like Crassus, are in the grip of Breakages Ltd. Shaw makes the audience realize that "freedom, power and responsibility are its own inalienable privileges, whatever circumstances are given".

Shaw cautions everyone about the problems in the present form of democracy and the dictatorial form of government. He feels that even though Magnus is a constitutional monarch or leader who is very capable it may be just as advantageous to have a person like Boanerges heading the republic as President. Also, the danger of having representatives with vested interests, like Crassus as members of the executive, is equally great. Ultimately, and for all time, Shaw affirms that a clever man with a "social conscience" like Magnus should lead the government.

The warnings that he had extended to his generation are unanswerable. Comedy, the weapon with which he argued fiercely, satirising the hypocritical attitudes of mankind, was effectively used by him. It had a profound effect on his generation and even now, three decades later, we find that his sentiments are appropriate. His outward lack of respect was not for the institutions but for the attitudes of the people towards them. The sincerity and honesty of his expressions were esteemed

all over the world. As a critic remarks, "Shaw's comedies express a fearless intellectual criticism of his age, sugar-coated by a pretended lightness of tone. Aware of the discrepancy between the accepted conventions of life and what really lies underneath, Shaw rebelled against muddled thinking and smug prudishness. He hoped to puncture men's hollow pretensions and restore their intellectual courage". These are the reasons, apart from many more why Shaw is still being read and discussed and not just being relegated to the class of much admired classic writers, but considered a vital force in shaping men's thoughts.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (3)

What does Shaw say in his Preface about the theme of *The Apple Cart*?

.....

.....

Shaw usually used his Prefaces to explain how his characters had evolved and why he was impelled to write a particular play.

In the Preface to *The Apple Cart*, he states that he wanted to write about the natural superiority of a person. In the interlude, Orinthia repeats this theory of being "born great." Shaw explains his theory of democracy and also the phenomenon of huge concerns taking over the lives of men, like *The Breakages Limited* does in this play.

Democracy

Shaw expresses the opinion that democracy in the truest sense of the word cannot function. It has to be controlled by bureaucracy only or, he says, a dictator will rise to rule the country with absolute power in his hands, and most often misuse it. He illustrates this point by speaking of people who vote for a man just because they like him and do not go into an analysis of whether he qualifies for the position or not. He says it is like an illiterate man getting elected to be a postman. He has to hire somebody to read the addresses. After his retirement, another man gets elected and also hires the same man to do the work for him. Thus, the civil servant does the work while the elected person who is not qualified to the work gets the credit for the work done. He says the people, "By chance rather than by judgement find themselves represented in parliament by a fortunate proportion of reasonably honest and public spirited persons who happen to be also successful public speakers".

Democracy is a government of the people and for the people. Shaw agrees with Dean Inge that "Democracy is a form of society which means equal consideration for all". But he says the people cannot govern themselves as they are not qualified. He says that it can be a government "by consent of the governed". If private management takes over the huge organisations like ways, water supplies, lighting and schools, Shaw feels that there will be chaos and only a few will profit. He says that corporate bodies under absolute government control is true democracy. The goal should be towards socialism.

Socialism

Shaw says that socialism is that which levels the income of every person. Except by paying the government there is no other way of equally distributing money. Creation of equal opportunities should be another objective of socialism. Shaw had joined the Fabian society in 1884, and was bent on propagation of socialistic ideas. He felt that marriage is a social contract, like other programmes of reform, and it is workable only. If the common human realities of affection, respect and honesty exist between the partners in marriage. He feels that socialists should act "until the men of action clear out the talkers, we who have social consciences are at the mercy of those who have none". Shaw no doubt respected power and success as "testimony to fitness on the evolutionary struggle". Still his Fabianism is distinguishable in that he believes in more efficient capitalism, with a more bureaucratic form".

He reiterates in his Preface to *The Apple Cart* that democracy, however, well organised, is ultimately in the hands of a few people. "Civilisation will still be dependent on the consciences of the governors and the governed".

1.7 INFLUENCES

Shaw was deeply influenced by Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906) and a few others, especially Houseman. It was *The King of Jingo* which had been the primary source for the *The Apple Cart*, and has developed into an improved version of it.

In Shaw's times, burlesques were very much in demand. Though Shaw had tried to keep his plays at a highly intellectual level, he did not avoid physical rudities in his plays. For instance, in *The Apple Cart*, the king delivers two long speeches in Act 1. But in the interlude, he is held by Orinthia and pulled to the ground to roll along with her. The Cabinet ministers are all in resplendent uniforms. The American Ambassador hopes to come in court dress soon. Burlesque, says a definition, is "that species of composition which excites laughter by caricature of serious works or ludicrous treatment of these subjects; a literary dramatic work of this kind". this particular aspect is evident in almost all his plays.

Henrik Ibsen, a Norwegian dramatist, had from his childhood, been a rebel of a kind. He attacked the narrow-mindedness of the times. Today Ibsen is not considered a social moralist but he was initially stimulated by his sensitivity to the moral and social stagnation of the contemporary world.

Shaw appreciated the social plays of Ibsen such as *A Doll's House* and *Ghosts*. Shaw studied the playwright in his *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* (1881) expressed his approval of Ibsen's themes and method of treatment. Shaw saw drama "as a vehicle for presenting in entertaining and provocative form his views of the abuses and contradictions of the social order and his suggestion of the true way in which to view human experience and institutions" (David Daiches). Shaw's plays incorporated two features of Ibsen: (1) realistic presentation of contemporary life and (2) introduction of discussion into drama.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (4)

What is common in themes of Ibsen and Shaw?

.....

.....

1.8 SHAW'S DISTINCTIVENESS AS DRAMATIST

Shaw, some critics feel, would have been better as a dramatist if he had not introduced his anti-climaxes and an odd sense of humour. When the entire individuality of Britain is threatened, the American Ambassador states that he would be coming in a "court-dress" the next time. The queen graciously comments, "You would look nice in it", whether the Ambassador would look nice in court clothes or not is of little significance. For that matter discussion of the Ambassador's dress at such a moment is highly irrelevant. Shaw brings it in as an anticlimax. the audience has a good laugh and relaxes.

Shaw is never crudely violent. there is tenderness in his laughter, as king Magnus accepts defeat unable to convince his queen we are told that "with a grimace of hopeless tenderness he allows himself to be led away".

Through laughter, Shaw aims to make man accept his fault gracefully. If he makes an effort, to improve himself by laughing at his faults, the progress would be faster than by chiding himself. Laughter heals wounds, unlike sarcasm. Laughter, as Shaw has remarked is no sin.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (5)

Shaw's aim in introducing laughter is to.....
.....

1.9 LET'S SUM UP

This unit has provided you the background to the play, The Apple Cart. As a part of the background you have read about the life and times of Shaw and his dramatic art. A brief note on the writers who influenced Shaw is included. the special features of Shaw as a play wright are also brought out here.

1.10 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Comment on the main theme of the play as described by Shaw in his preface.
2. Write a note on the contemporaries of Shaw
3. What are the views of Shaw on democracy?
4. What are the features of a dramatic work which make it different from other literary forms?
5. Why did Shaw choose to write comedies?

1.11 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

1. Shaw uses the prefaces to express his views and to justify his stand.
2. It deals with the problems of London slum-dwellers.
3. Shaw says that it is not a conflict between the monarchical system of government and the elective system. He calls it a political extravaganza that stands between both and plutocracy.
4. They both make a realistic presentation of contemporary life.
5. Make man accept his faults **gracefully**.

BLOCK II

UNIT-2 SHAW'S HUMOUR

2.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading through this unit you will be able to :

- identify and describe some features of the play which contribute to its humor.
- discuss the playwright's choice of material and language
- distinguish between his treatment of humour and that of other writers.
- elaborate upon his attitude to the English people, their social customs and traditions.
- discuss the importance of the title and the interlude.

2.1 CONTENTS

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Contents
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 Humour in the language
- 2.4 Shaw's comments on the English
- 2.5 Shaw's humanism
- 2.6 Humour in the choice of title
- 2.7 The interlude - its importance
- 2.8 Let's sum up
- 2.9 Sample questions
- 2.10 Answers to self-check exercises

2.2 INTRODUCTION

You will read more about Shaw's play - The Apple Cart in this unit. You will also study the devices he uses to evoke humour. Some of these devices are the choice of title, selection of material, and its presentation. You will also examine Shaw's attitude to the English people and their customs and mannerisms.

Here again, as in Block I, it is assumed that you have read the original text-Shaw's The Apple Cart (available in an Orient Longman edition edited by A.C Ward-Price Rs. 12.00) and are now ready for detailed analysis and study of the play.

2.3 HUMOUR IN THE LANGUAGE

There are innumerable examples of Shaw's humour. In each and every page, if not in every line, Shaw's scintillating wit is evident. Sempronius declares that his father was a ritualist, and that he assisted in all the royal pageants but he sincerely believed in them as realities. When Pamphilius expresses his surprise at this, Sempronius retorts, "Do you suppose a baker cannot believe sincerely in the sacrifice or the Mass or in Holy Communion because he had baked the consecrated wafers?"

The sharp retorts of the king to Boanerges though couched in polite language are thoroughly amusing. Once Boanerges tells the king that he is going to tell him things that have not been said to a king before. The King replies, "I am very glad indeed to hear it, Mr. Boanerges. I thought I had

already heard everything that could possibly be said to a king. I shall be grateful for the smallest novelty" and later again ironically "You have no time to read them, luckily for you. But I am expected to read everything."

SELF - CHECK EXERCISE (1)

Give one example of humour from the first meeting of Boanerges and King Magnus.

2.4 SHAW'S COMMENTS ON THE ENGLISH

2.4.1 SOCIAL CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS.

Shaw has commented on a number of aspects of life in England, provoking his readers to laugh every time. The English habit of drinking tea at precisely five or earlier in the evening is well-known. The queen sends word to the king asking him to come for tea, knowing fully well that he is with his mistress. She can condone the presence of the mistress within the palace and the scandal it is causing but cannot accept that the king miss his evening tea. The king also is equally outraged by the behaviour of Orinthia who might make him late for "tea".

Another amusing aspect of the English outlook on life is that they still think of the Scots as outsiders, even though in the small island of Great Britain, the entire length does not exceed 600 miles and the width at its broadest portion is only 300 miles. Edinburgh, the capital of Scotland is less than 350 miles from London. In the heated altercation over the crisis, Proteus and Lysistrata exchange remarks. Proteus says that his people came from Scotland and Lysistrata adds that she wished that they had stayed there. Immediately Proteus retorts, "God help England if she had no Scots to think for her." Its attitude to Ireland which has not yet accepted the overlordship of England, is similar. Shaw, an Irishman, says that the English have not subdued the Irish. The American ambassador says that the idea of the annexation of England was given to the American President by Mich O'Rafferty, the President of the Irish Free State. The King is scandalised, "The rascal Jemima. We shall have to live in Dublin. This is the end of England. Nowadays people should not be allowed to go from England to Ireland. They never come back." When the American Ambassador remonstrates, she adds, "No, it is not the climate. It is the Horse Show." The English-weather is jibed at, as weather is the common topic of conversation and English weather, in particular, is quite unpleasant. The custom of the Englishmen, to dress for dinner is also ridiculed. At the end of the play the king is quite depressed and does not want to go in for dinner. The Queen cajoles him and takes him inside saying, "Now Magnus, it's time to dress for dinner" and then, "Now, now, now! don't be naughty. I mustn't be late for dinner. Come on, like a good little boy."

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (2)

Mention some of the subjects which are treated humorously in the play.

2.4.2 ENGLISH POLITICS

Shaw treats politics lightly as well as seriously. The democrats want monarchy and the monarch wants democracy. The trade union leader is the most ardent supporter of the king, and when the king

threatens to abdicate and stand for election, he supports him and says that the common man is the superior, not the inferior, of the titled man." The king feels that the common man is better off as he can freely speak out his mind and not be inhibited by his position. About elections, Shaw makes Boanerges remark, "Have you thought of the expenses?" The king replies that his expenses will be paid by the State. Boanerges retorts, "Paid by the State! Is that all you know about electioneering in England?"

2.4.3 THE ENGLISH PRESS

The power of the press and their methods of obtaining information by various methods are caricatured. The king is accused of leaking out information through the "backstairs." The Prime Minister in his denunciation of the king, reiterates this idea, "The working of the Press from the palace backstairs must cease." The king and the Prime Minister exchange remarks that they write to the Press under pseudonyms and that the columns are easily recognisable by the phrases "Singularly enough" and "Once for all". Proteus says that the king's columns are written by Sempronius: They get amusing articles, spiced with exclusive backstairs information, that don't seem to them to have anything to do with politics. The next thing they know is that their pet shares have dropped fifteen point; that capital is frightened off their best prospects; and that some of the best measures in our party program are made to look like city jobs".

The king tells the American Ambassador "Thank you for bringing me the news before the papers got it. That seldom happens now". The power of the Press is admitted when both Proteus and Magnus agree that the men who own the Press are richer than the king of England.

The English have always valued their freedom of speech as well as respected the freedom of the Press. Allusions to Magna Carta and the beheading of Charles the first are made as an illustration of the power of the English public and their power of oratory. Actually the entire play revolves round the king's power to veto. The crisis arises because the king states that he would use his rights as a common man and stand for the elections. The last act is hilarious when the Cabinet realises that he had outwitted them all by threatening to turn into a common man and not be a hereditary ruler, that is a constitutional monarch.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE -3

How does Shaw make fun of the press?

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.....

2.4.4 THE ENGLISH AND THE AMERICANS

The traditional resentment of the English for the Americans is displayed in the scene where the American Ambassador announces the proposal of the merger of America with Britain. Every statement and action of the Ambassador is ridiculed. The queen resents his being given an appointment without having been made to wait a week for the audience with the king. When he shakes the hand of the queen effusively, the king remarks, "What on earth is the matter, Mr. Vanhattan? You are shaking Her Majesty's rings off." When Vanhattan talks of a historic occasion Magnus counters with "Have you had tea?" This refers not only to the English custom of tea, but the original trouble with the American settlers when they threw the English tea crates into the sea. The talk of frontier makes the king remark that the frontier is the ocean expensively guarded. The American Ambassador remarks that "The frontier no longer exists". Magnus immediately retorts "Am I to understand, Mr. Vanhattan, that by some convulsion of Nature, the continent of North America has been submerged in the Atlantic?" This snipping continues and finally the Queen says "We shall civilize these Americans", and the king remarks "England will be just a reservation". The Queen says that the Americans know that the English are their natural superiors and that the

Americans love and reverence royalty where as the English peeresses are hardly civil. Earlier in the interview, Vanhatten states that the "English people, the real English people who take things as they come instead of reading books about them, will be more at home with us than they are with the old English notions which our tourists try to keep alive. When you find some country gentleman keeping up the old English customs at Christmas and so forth, who is he? An American who has bought the place. Your people put up the show for him because he pays for it, not because it is natural, to them." Not even the relationship of married life is spared. The king and the queen have their friends and respect each other. But the king and the queen think it is perfectly normal for the king to bring his mistress expenses on the king's mistress. But the king and the queen think it is perfectly normal for the king to bring his mistress into the palace and keep her there in a suite. The cabinet accepts the expenses on the king's mistress. But the sanctity of married life is extolled and the king refuses to divorce the queen though he accepts she is a cabbage. The Englishman's home is his castle.

In this attack on social customs and traditions, Shaw has not spared English pronunciation. Boanerges calls himself Bo Annergees and Lysistrata as Lizzie Traitor. The American Ambassador corrects himself "impossible" to "impawsible". Shaw makes fun of the Irish language fanatics, whose names nobody can spell or pronounce.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (4)

Explain Magnus' remark about tea and its significance to the conversation.

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.....

2.5 SHAW'S HUMANISM

Shaw's humour is tinged with humanism. There is no humiliation of any character or holding up a particular person to ridicule. Foreigners comprising of "Scots, Welsh, Irish and the Jews" form the Cabinet of the government of Great Britain representing England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. In the Preface Shaw had mentioned that new inventions for improving the transport of goods were being neglected. In the play, Shaw introduces a company called Breakage Limited which either sabotages new and helpfull inventions or buys off the inventors. Lysistrata breaks down when she talks of it. The entire Cabinet agrees and so does the king that the company is corrupt. Shaw feels that as a social humanist, every individual must have equal opportunities for expressing himself and living a free life, instead of being conditioned to work under monopolies.

Like Shakespeare's plays, Shaw's plays allow for the improvement of perspective with each reading. New meanings, different perceptions, better understanding of one's fellow beings and tolerance of others' views are developed. Shaw develops tolerance and understanding in the reader, through the apt use of words and by appealing to his readers' ability to laugh. For, as he says, "A sense of humour is not a crime" and "You don't expect me to know what to say about a play when I don't know who the author is, do you? ... If it's by a good author, it's a good play, naturally. That stands to reason".

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (5)

Shaw's humour is not bitter because.....

.....

2.6 HUMOUR IN THE CHOICE OF TITLE

An apple cart refers to the handcart of olden days, used by farmers for carrying garden produce. Usually apples are handpicked and trundled down to the store-house or market. Usually the apples would be piled high, so that even the slightest jerk will upset it. It also implies, in the idiomatic sense, that the various projects put together will get upset, like the apples rolling away in different directions when the cart is upset.

The plan of the Prime Minister is to divest the king of the veto power, so that the king remains only as a constitutional monarch with no power whatsoever, a "dumb king", who can occasionally give a speech after laying a foundation stone. The astute king guesses this. He also sees that Proteus, an extremely clever man, has won over the entire Cabinet even the admirers of the king the two lady ministers, to his side. Boanerges the Trade Union Leader, who is impressed by the king, still believes that the ultimatum to the king is valid. He thinks that the king would be better off as a common man. The king suddenly surprises the Cabinet by saying that he will sign the pledge. The threat that he counters the cabinet with, is that he will abdicate and stand for elections like any other common man. The Cabinet realises that he will win hands down and the country will be completely ruled by him as his son would be the king. They immediately withdraw the ultimatum and tear it up. The apple cart, that is their project, are not upset.

But the king realises that Breakages Ltd. have upset the apple cart by persuading the Irish leader O'Rafferty to meet the American President to propose a merger of Britain which would be one more star on the flag". The Cabinet does not realise that the apple cart has really been upset.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (6)

Why is the play given the name "The Apple Cart"?

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2.7 THE INTERLUDE - ITS IMPORTANCE

The interlude provides relief to the seriousness of the two acts between which it is placed. In the interlude we see the king in a relaxed mood, engaged in playful banter with Orinthia, much like any common man with his mistress. He is shown as a normal person but we are also told of his views on the institution of marriage. In joking playfully with Orinthia he declares that he would not choose to exchange his wife for Orinthia even though she is plainlooking (a cabbage) and Orinthia is beautiful (a rose). He very sensibly says "Besides, all these old married cabbages were once roses, and though young things like you don't remember that, their husbands do".

This scene is also important because it shows us the other side of Magnus' life, his private life. Shaw has very cleverly shown us that Magnus is equally sensible, practical and realistic in this aspect of his character. He makes Magnus say categorically "What I come here for is to enjoy talking to you like this when I need an hour's respite from royalty: when my stupid wife has been worrying me, or my jolly lumps of children bothering me, or my turbulent Cabinet obstructing me: when, as the doctors say, what I need is a change". Thus, the interlude is useful for its humorous language and relief and also for describing Magnus' character and life in its wholeness. Of course, Shaw does use the scene as an occasion to discuss his view on partnership and marriage, governments and monarchy.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (7)

Why is the interlude important? Give two reasons.

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.....

2.8 LET'S SUM UP

In this unit you have read about Shaw's technique as a humorous dramatist. You have been given an account of some of the themes which chooses to describe humorously in this play. Apart from the subjects chosen, very often the language and presentation create the comic effect and relieve tension. In the play **The Apple Cart** the choice of title and the insertion of an interlude are also significant. This unit has discussed these aspects of the play and has also touched upon Shaw's humanism.

2.9 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Explain the humour in the choice of the title *The Apple cart*
2. Explain the significance of the interlude in the play.
3. What does Shaw say about the English people in general?

2.10 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

Self-Check Exercise 1

You are welcome to my little place. M. Boanerges, Won't you sit down?

B- I am sitting down.

Magnus is trying to point out politically and humorously, that Boanerges should get up when the king comes in, so that he can then say "sit down"

You may have given some other examples but should clearly explain why they are humorous.

Self-Check Exercise 2

The English habit of drinking tea, their discussion of the weather, their frequent disagreement with the Scottish and the Irish, their custom of dressing for dinner are some of the subjects which are treated humorously.

Self-Check Exercise 3

Shaw makes fun of the power of the press and their way of getting information, and also the king's secretaries who write columns under fictions or assumed names.

Self-Check Exercise 4

Magnus refers to tea with a double meaning - one, to the tea which he has just been having and which Vanhattan's arrival has interrupted, and the other to the historical incident of the Boston tea party when crates of English tea had been thrown into the sea in protest by the American settlers.

Self-Check Exercise 5

He does not make fun of individuals or their mannerisms.

Self-Check Exercise 6

The play is called the *Apple Cart* because there is a saying 'upsetting the apple cart' which means upsetting someone's plans. Apples were taken in hand-carts to the market and were piled up high so that a slight jerk would topple them. The cabinet tries to upset the king's plans; the king, in turn, upsets theirs and in fact, the company, Breakages Limited, upsets every one else's plans

Self-Check Exercise 7

The interlude shows us the private life of Magnus and relieves the tension created in the first Act.

BLOCK - II

UNIT -3 ANALYSIS OF THE PLAY

3.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading through this unit you will be able to :

- describe the events in the play in the order in which they occur.
- discuss the relevance of some of the events.
- elaborate upon the language used by some of the characters
- place some of the significant speeches in the context and explain them.
- comment on the dramatic significance of certain passages.

3.1 CONTENTS

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Contents
- 3.2 Introduction
- 3.3 Act I - a brief summary
- 3.4 The interlude
- 3.5 Act II
- 3.6 Discussion of few passages from the play
- 3.7 Let's sum up
- 3.8 Sample questions
- 3.9 Answers to self-check exercises

3.2 INTRODUCTION

In this unit you will first be given a brief summary of the events in the play. This is necessary in order to have a point of discussion before moving on to the specific speeches which are important. The speeches which are discussed in this unit are dramatically significant either to the plot or to characterization, that is, they either tell us about something which is going to happen in the play or they tell us about some of the characters in the play. Such a discussion of the speeches also helps us to understand Shaw's technique of applying language for humorous purposes. Very often the suggested meanings evoke humour in the situation. You will need to examine this aspect of the play carefully.

3.3 ACT - I - A BRIEF SUMMARY

The play consists of two acts and an Interlude which occurs between the two acts. One scene is set in Orinthia's suite and the anteroom of the palace where the dignitaries wait and the secretaries sit, is used for the major part of the play. The others are set in the king's palace. The props and the stage settings are much the same in all the scenes. Shaw has manipulated the scenes so that only a few chairs have to be added or removed. The lighting also remains much the same throughout the play. The entire atmosphere, as well as the effect to a large extent is created by the dialogues.

The Apple Cart is a play in which even apparently humorous dialogues have a deeper meaning than that which appears on the surface.

Act 1: The two secretaries of the king are seated at their respective desks. Suddenly one of them, Pamphilius, asks the other Sempronius, what his father was. This suprisingly brings forth a long explanation of who a ritualist is. Sempronius explains that a ritualist believes in the rituals so much that he ultimately believes in the concept behind the rituals. Semproniu's father believed in pageantries and processions and ultimately believed in the system of monarchy.

The discussion leads on to the private affairs of the king and his affair with Orinthia. Sempronius says that he does not open the letters of Orinthia and cautions Pamphilius against passing any comments about Orinthia. The other man says that the bull roarer Boanerges has been taken into the Cabinet as a minister. Shaw thus introduces the characters only after the audience has heard about them. Here he contrasts monarchy with labour government.

Boanerges comes in and asserts his authority by objecting to the behaviour of the palace attendants. He wears a Russian peasant's blouse to emphasize the fact that he belongs to the labour class. Also, when the king comes in he remains seated.

The play then proceeds to the dialogue between king Magnus and Boanerges. The king, very cleverly and indirectly without hurting the feelings of Boanerges, puts him in his place. All through the conversation Boanerges is under the impression that the king is impressed by him and fears him. The king indirectly makes the labour leader feel that he is as much an India rubber stamp as the constitutional monarch. Slowly he instils the idea into Boanerges that his position is precarious whereas his own position is secure. The former depends on elections, where as the latter, the king does not depend on the whims and fancies of the people. Shaw gradually develops the idea that the king is a very clever man and that whether in a monarchy or a republic, as is found later, he will be at the top.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (1)

How does Magnus make Boanerges feel uncomfortable?

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The princess Royal..... is interesting.

3.4 THE INTERLUDE

In the Interlude, the king is a normal relaxed person without any facade of superiority. Orinthia, his mistress has the ambition to be the queen. Shaw, the conservative who believes in old values of the sanctity of marriage makes the king reject her offers of glory and grandeur. The king prefers his "cabbage" wife and "jolly lumps" of children and not a grand life with a "rose" of a woman. Shaw points out that some people are born great and if the opportunities occur, they may be acknowledged as great but even otherwise the fact remains that they are great. The king leaves the room satisfied that he is great. Orinthia is satisfied that the scuffle on the ground between her and the king has been noticed by Sempronius. She feels that her power over the king is undoubted as she has made him behave like a besotted lover.

3.5 ACT II

The second act begins with a tete-a-tete between the king and the queen. The American Ambassador Vanhattan comes in without a previous appointment. The queen feels affronted and the king reflects her mood. The Ambassador has come to announce the proposal of a merger between America and

Great Britain, with America accepting Dominion Status. The king would be entitled the emperor. This would mean, the king realises the subjection of England to America and the utter submission of England's individuality. After some time, the king tells the Ambassador that he would put it up for consideration to the Cabinet. Here Shaw laughs at women, for Orinthia wants to be a queen and Jemima wants to be an empress. The king is slightly upset when the Ambassador leaves. Soon the members of the entire Cabinet enter. The king threatens to abdicate in favour of his son, renounce his title and stand for election as a common man. Proteus realises that this will pose a graver threat than the right to use the veto, as the king threatens to form a party and get elected as the prime minister. He takes the ultimatum and tears it up. Then he leaves the room in a huff. The rest of the Cabinet follow him, some get upset and the others like Boanerges gets upset only by the behaviour of Proteus. The king is astonished that none is bothered about the merger proposal from America. The queen enters and the drama ends prosaically with the king and the queen going in for dinner.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (2)

What does the king threaten to do?

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.....

3.6 DISCUSSION OF A FEW PASSAGES FROM THE PLAY

The reference to the passages given below is taken from the Orient edition of *The Apple Cart*, published as a reprint in 1983 by Orient Longman, India.

3.6.1.

"Now you.....to roar the palace down" Sempronius is explaining his father's attitude to life. "The same with men and women : they were nothing to him until they were dressed up in fancy costumes and painted and wiggèd and titled. Most of the human beings, Shaw feels are like the old gentleman, who would not look at a horse but was dazzled by the trappings and more so, if the horse was part of a procession. So is Boanerges fascinated later by the debonaire manners of the king. Moreover, Sempronius states that "My father found that where there is nothing a man loses his reason and dies". Similarly the king who has nothing, loses his rights. This theme is developed later by Shaw in making King Magnus threaten to abdicate. Then he would lose his right as a monarch and would stand as an ordinary man for election.. There are some trivialities discussed such as the letters received by the king, and how Sempronius, as the secretary, opens even the love letters. Then he adds that these letters are sent to the Queen who is amused by them. But, when it comes to the really serious matter of letters from Orinthia, he says that he "forgets to open her letters". After the matter of Orilnthia's love and Sempronius cautioning Pamphilius that they would lose their jobs if anything derogatory is said of Orinthia, Pamphilius casually mentions that a new person, Boanerges has been included as a minister in the king's Cabinet. Sempronius epually casually remarks about the king that "he'll turn Boanerges inside out after letting him roar the palace down". The two secretaries are made to utter an elaborate explanation of the foolishness of people and their inability to grasp the main principles of life and of the loose behaviour of the king, not as an anointed person, but as an ordinary man who deceives his wife. But when the important matter of a Cabinet minister is mentioned, he is dismissed summarily in two sentences which indicate the abiding and deep seated loyalty to the king and their confidence and trust in the king that he can deal with any kind of person and succeed in establishing his superiority over them. Shaw delivers his punch-lines in simple sentences and short speeches. His longer statements are reserved for trivialities. The oratorical capacity of Shaw is in evidence here.

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3.6.8 ACT II

Act II is a masterpiece in denouement. The king threatens to abdicate and stand for elections. The ministers are frightened that he will win. The American Ambassador announces that America and Britain will merge and the king will be entitled an emperor. The queen, a very affectionate lady, treats the king like a young boy. Finally, the king accepts that he always does only what his wife wants. The king says, "So I have not upset The Apple Cart after all" and "you know, sir, nothing ever really does happen in the Cabinet".

The reference here, to the apple cart, is to the government and its system of ruling which has not been upset. Actually, the apple cart can never be upset as "the individuals in the Cabinet do not differ with each other but are absolutely under the control of the cartman, the Prime Minister. The king, the outsider, but actually the person in charge of the cabinet, tries to overcome his opponents but he does not actually do so. As Pliny points out, "Nothing ever happens in the Cabinet".

Shaw has introduced the long passages sparsely. Most of the movement in it is quick, sharp and witty with one sharp mind trying to out manoeuvre the other. The audience and the reader will never be bored. Actually, if they are not sharp enough, they tend to miss the main points of the speeches.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (7)

Explain what the statement 'so I have not upset the apple cart after all' means.

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3.6.9

"If you all start quarelling and scolding and bawling, which is just what he wants you to do, it will end in his having his own way as usual, because one man that has a mind and knows it can always beat ten men who haven't and don't. If a man knows his mind, like Magnus does, he can progress ahead in the world and show himself to be better than the others around him. Proteus recognises that Magnus is superior to them all and matters can shape out as he plans, especially if the members in the cabinet show confusion and a lack of unity.

3.7 LET'S SUM UP

This unit has discussed some of the passages from the play and highlighted their significance. This play does not have many long passages which can be explained, however some of the short speeches are crisp and pointed, often holding a lot of meaning in them. A few such speeches have been selected and discussed. When you make a closer reading of the play you can also find some other such lines and explain how they help in the development of plot and character.

3.8 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Explain the lines "Many men would hardly miss their heads, there is so little in them"
2. What is the significance of the remark "He'll turn Boanerges inside out after letting him roar the palace down".
3. "Because one man that has a mind and knows it can always beat ten men who haven't and don't" Proteus - about whom does Proteus say this and why?

3.9 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

Self-Check Exercise 1

Magnus makes Boanerges feel uncomfortable by indirectly suggesting that he depends on elections whereas a king is a king by birth.

Self-Check Exercise 2

He threatens to give up his throne to his son and stand for election as a common man.

Self-Check Exercise 3

They speak about the loose behaviour of the king and also refer to his ability in dealing with all kinds of people and establishing his superiority over them.

Self-Check Exercise 4

1. The king indirectly makes fun of Boanerges' s lack of manners by asking him to sit down when he hasn't got up at all.
 2. He also hits at Boanerges by speaking about some men who would hardly miss their heads because there is very little in them.
The implication is that Boanerges is like these men and has very little sense in his head.
-

Self-Check Exercise 5

Lysistrata is the power mistress Royal in the Cabinet headed by Proteus. She speaks about the powerful private companies like Breakages Limited which monopolize industries and actually wield a lot of power.

Self-Check Exercise 6

She thinks Magnus has all the qualities of a first-rate woman. He is less of a fool and less of a moral coward than other men she has known.

Self-Check Exercise 7

This statement, uttered by Magnus refers to the fact that there has been no crisis in the government although at one point of time it appeared as if there would be one. Magnus succeeds in restoring everything to its earlier position and the Cabinet withdraws its ultimatum. Therefore the apple cart is not upset.

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Ministers because I am good for nothing else. But I can keep to the point when it suits me. And I can keep you to the point, sir, whether it suits you or not". The king respects him as a highly capable person and his colleagues accept his policies without questioning them. The moment he realises that if they force the king, he will abdicate and be re-elected as Prime Minister, he tears up the ultimatum. He is a competent Prime Minister who, in spite of his short temper, tantrums and dramatic exhibitions, manages to keep his country's interests first and foremost and consequently holds his position as a Prime Minister

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (2)

Why is Proteus a competent Prime Minister?

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.....

4.6 BOANERGES

Boanerges, who was a foundling brought up by a policeman's grandmother, had become a trade union leader and then a minister of the Cabinet, as president of the Board of Trade. Sempronius calls him a bull-roarer and Boanerges proves it by being offensive to the clerks. He thinks that he being forceful and crude, people will listen to him. Though his name, Boanerges appears to be derived from the Bonner, from Old French bonaira, meaning "gentle, courteous", he is quite the opposite. Shaw has given him this name ironically. But at the end of the play, Boanerges is courteous though he is not gentle. The king tells the queen that he has to "valet all the beginners; but that does not tame them; it teaches them how to use their strength. Instead of wasting it in making fools of themselves". The king has "tamed" him quite well. In the beginning, Boanerges makes it a point to be seated when the king enters the room and also draws attention to that fact. Later, he, like the others, automatically rises and then seats himself. He addresses the king as Magnus in the first act and by the end of the second act he addresses him respectfully as "Sir", and offers to remonstrate with the Prime Minister for leaving the meeting hastily. The Trade Union Leader prided himself on the principle of equality for all beings. The ornamental Russian peasant blouse is discarded and he is wearing the resplendent uniform of a diplomat. The princess, the queen, his colleagues and others criticise his dress, but he is proud of what he is, and what he has made of himself. He respects strength as he has conceived it. Strength, he thinks, comprises of aggressiveness as well as tenacity. He thinks that the king is also quite strong as he has outwitted them all. He respects sincerity and as he himself is outspoken, he is not able to understand that others can be devious. His colleagues respect him for his integrity though they ridicule his simplicity and naivety. On the whole, Boanerges is a character who is not as shadowy as the other Cabinet ministers and one who is a symbolic representative of what a labour leader should be. He is a good man in as much as he is not ashamed of his origins nor of the fact that he represents the labour class and not the governing class. Shaw projects the idea that ultimately good manners are as important as good actions.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (3)

Why is Boanerges given that name?

.....
.....

4.7 CABINET MINISTERS

The Cabinet Ministers are given names which are symbolic of their characters. Nicobar, the Foreign Secretary has been named after a remote tribal colony of Britain, the Nicobar Islands. He plays an

equally insignificant part in the play and Shaw refers to him as "shaky and censorious". The Colonial Secretary is Crassus, who is equally insignificant. The name is derived from the adjective crass meaning complete in stupidity and ignorance. There is no need to go into it further. Balbus, the Home Secretary, is rude and thoughtless and the king designates him a bungler. This is proved in the last scene, where the king is doubtful whether a monarchical government would continue as America wants to merge with Britain. While leaving the room, he turns to the king, saying "Now they're all gone I don't mind saying that if anything should ever happen to the throne and your Majesty should become a President with a Cabinet to pick, you might easily find a worse Home Secretary than me, with all my faults". Pliny, named after the Roman historian of natural history, is the Chancellor of Exchequer. He plays an even lesser part than Nicobar. He defends his actions by stating that the manufacture of Christmas crackers, is vital to the industrial progress of the country.

4.8 WOMEN CHARACTERS

There are only four women characters in this play. Lysistrata and Amanda are Cabinet ministers who are staunch supporters of the king. Shaw has displayed subtlety in selecting names for his characters. Lysistrata is the name of the central figure of the play, *Lysistrata*, written by Aristophanes. Lysistrata was an extremely clever lady who organised the other women of the city into a band who refused to have sex with their husbands as a punishment because the men had left them alone for a long time. Here we find Lysistrata, dressed as an academician and very jealous of her power. Amanda, the Post Mistress General, is a 'merry lady' who won her seat in the election by mimicking the rival candidate. They are depicted as foils to each other. Amanda, which means "fit to be loved", is quite friendly while Lysistrata is grave and serious.

The Queen, Jemima, meaning "dove" is gentle and gracious but arrogant where her rights are concerned. She does not like the American Ambassadors advising them informally without an appointment, nor does she permit her husband the king to be absent from the "English Tea" even though he is with his mistress. She is gentle and affectionate and when the king is very fond of her, and he realises her limitations but recognises her courtesy, breeding and her virtues are a wife and a mother.

Orinthia, an exotic name, on the other hand, is a good contrast to the queen. She is a vamp, extremely vain of her beauty, ambitious and quite selfish. She wants to be a queen with an unlimited amount of money and power. She is not scrupulous about the methods of achieving her objective and she asks the king to get rid of his "cabbage wife" and his children who are "common, healthy, jolly lumps". The king is fascinated by her, but he calls her "amusing". The part played by the queen and Orinthia is to contrast security with excitement and instability.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (4)

What are the positive qualities of Jemima?

.....
.....

4.9 MINOR CHARACTERS

More attention is devoted to the King's two secretaries who have completely Latin names. Sempronius which sounds like sempiternal (meaning eternal or continuing) and Pamphilus which

sounds like pamphlets (and originally meaning love poem) are like twins, always present and always subservient to the king. They take care of the king's person, his correspondence and the smooth conduct of the household as well as the love affairs of the king. They listen to the discussions of the ministers and admit that they do so, of course, in the interests of the king. "The king's private secretaries must hear everything, see everything, and know everything".

The two other men who are mentioned are Robert, Prince of Wales and Bossfield, President of America. Robert is an alert and practical young man as his name implies fame and brightness. Bossfield is evidently the boss in the field. Vanhattan to rhyme with Manhattan signifies the Dutch settlers in America, implying that the British were not the only ones who colonised America. Ultimately, as Lysistrata points out, "Nowadays men all over the world are as much alike as hotel dinners", and Magnus agrees, "yes, we live in a world of wops, all melting into one another". Shaw is emphasising his conviction of socialistic philosophy that all mankind is one and that there should be no class distinctions.

4.10 THE THEME OF THE PLAY

The main theme converges on the unity of mankind and how a ruler whether he is a Prime Minister of a king, is bred to the profession. The Prime Minister, in the Apple Cart is a professional politician and so is the king who comes from a long line of royal statesmen. Even Boanerges, a labour leader has been practising politics for more than a generation. We also find that the king has an impeccable lineage and Boanerges is a foundling discarded near the statue of Coram, and found by a patrolling policeman. One is born to rule and the other trains himself to it. Shaw, who is an ardent socialist is proving that both classes can get on well together as their objective is the progress of England. Lysistrata states that she would help the king to break the monopoly of Breakages Ltd. All the politicians are able to grasp the fact that whether they get elected or whether they are born to govern, it is ultimately the huge business concerns that rule the country. As an illustration Shaw has humorously pointed out that America will be under the British Commonwealth. This amalgamation, as the king envisages will be like a big business swallowing up smaller concerns. Britain will lose her individuality and they would have to settle down in Ireland, which is a small Free State, and which has been constantly warring against Britain. Entire Europe had come under Russia's sway and had been federated into a union. Democracy in England is under a monarch. So the monarch says that he will abdicate and be an ordinary person without hereditary titles and stand for elections. The ministers who have been elected by the people, remark that the king's candidature is "Treachery", "a dirty trick", "The meanest on record", "There won't be any poll: it will be a walk-over" and call him names, "hypocrite", "humbug". Only Lysistrata realises that true democracy will function when everyone has equal rights. The matter of the right to veto and ultimatum of the ministers, are brought in to depict the fact that when it is a matter of an Englishman, even though he may be a Scot, is a follower of tradition. A serious theme is treated lightly but with sincerity.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (5)

When, according to Lysistrata will true democracy function?

.....

.....

4.10 LET'S SUM UP

In this unit we discussed the significance of the characters and the theme in The Apple Cart. We described the characteristics which make Magnus stand out as superior to others in the play. The

serious theme which Shaw has touched upon under cover of light-heartedness was elaborated upon in this unit.

4.12 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Write a character sketch of Magnus bringing out his greatness as a man.
2. Compare and contrast Jemima and Orinthia.
3. What are the chief differences between the characters of Proteus and Boanerges.
4. Discuss the theme of the play.

4.13 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

Self-Check Exercise 1

He believes that ultimately there will be no monarchy or democratic rule but only a control of the government by rich businessmen.

Self-Check Exercise 2

Proteus, despite his faults, keeps the interest of the nation uppermost in his mind and is regarded as a highly capable man by the king and his colleagues.

Self-Check Exercise 3

Shaw, ironically, calls him Boanerges a word which in French means polite, courteous, and gentle. Actually Boanerges does not possess these qualities.

Self-Check Exercise 4

Jemima is gentle and affectionate and a good wife and mother.

Self-Check Exercise 5

The democracy, she says, will function when all citizens have equal rights.

4.14 SUGGESTED READING

You can read other plays of Shaw to have a thorough understanding of the dramatist.

4.15 AUDIO-VISUAL SUPPORT

An audio lesson on G.B.Shaw as a support to the print material is available.

BLOCK - III : AS YOU LIKE IT

William Shakespeare

Block III is meant for Non-deadited study and it has two units.

- Unit - 1 Deals with the Romantic plays of Shakespeare with special reference to As You Like It.
- Unit - 2 Analyses the structure and content of the play.

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UNIT -1 THE MAIN THEMES OF THE PLAY

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading through this unit you will be able to:

- identify and discuss the main themes of the play
- differentiate between *As You Like It* and other comedies
- list the characteristic features of Romantic comedy.
- distinguish between the main and sub-plots
- comment upon the treatment of love and the atmosphere of the play.

1.1 CONTENTS

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Contents
- 1.2 Introduction
- 1.3 **As You Like It** : a romantic comedy
- 1.4 Realistic sub-plots
- 1.5 Treatment of love in **As You Like It**
- 1.6 The Forest of Arden - the atmosphere of the play
- 1.7 Let's sum up
- 1.8 Sample questions
- 1.9 Answers to self-check exercises

1.2 INTRODUCTION

In this unit you will read about *As you Like It* as a romantic comedy and study the features which make it so. This unit will also examine the treatment of love and the atmosphere of the play. A detailed analysis of the speeches or lines has not been made as this play is not meant for detailed study. The main themes have been identified and discussed.

1.3 AS YOU LIKE IT : A ROMANTIC COMEDY

As you like it is considered the sweetest, the happiest and the most cloudless of all Shakespeare's Comedies. No one suffers here, none lives a life of anxiety or distress. The play is full of graceful and unalloyed mirth. In other comedies the joy of youth and the romance of love are somewhat spoiled by the presence of jealous, spiteful and maladjusted characters: We may cite as illustration 1) Malvolio, the Puritanical killjoy and Sir Toby, the riotous reveller in *Twelfth night*; 2) Don John, the malicious viper and Claudio the credulous and weak-minded fool in *Much Ado*; and 3) Shylock, who rocks the comic equilibrium of *The Merchant of Venice*. The happy ending of these plays does not altogether efface the unhappy impressions left by these elements.

You will note that *As You Like It* is an exceptionally bright comedy without any such gloom. Of course, villains are there: Duke Frederick the usurper and Oliver, the inhuman brother. But their activity is confined to the urban world of the Court which is abandoned after the First Act. By the time we hear of them next they are thoroughly reformed. Duke Frederick is filled with remorse and converted; the junior Villain is rescued from the jaws of death and in his 're-birth', rewarded by love.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (1)

As you Like It is called a happy comedy because

Produced by Shakespeare at the height of his power, **As You Like It** is a romance at its purest, having all the elements of romantic comedy. First there is the element of **romantic friendship** between the inseparables Rosalind and Celia. Next comes the **romance of Adam's devotion** to his Patron's family -an old world trait. Then we have the dominant idea of the play: **Whoever loved that loved not at first sight?** It is the mainspring of the plot. When Orlando wrestled he overthrew more than his enemies. He won the heart of Rosalind without meaning or knowing it. She falls in love with him in spite of Celia's warning. Orlando, the typical romantic lover, the love-shaken sonneteer plays a crazy role by hanging odes upon hawthorns, elegies upon brambles and carving **ROSALIND** on the barks of trees. Oliver and Celia, Silvius and Phebe behave similarly. Orlando fights with a hungry lioness just to rescue a brother who has wronged, humiliated and plotted against him- an adventure which outtops all romance. The exiled Rosalind dresses herself as a young man, armed with a curtle-axe on her thigh and a boarspear in her hand goes out undaunted by the terrors of banishment. Her cousin Celia and Touchstone, the Clown throw their lot with her and accompany her into the uncharted realm of romance. And as in dream land, Rosalind meets her lover Orlando there. Her wit, audacity, tenderness and grace turn the Forest of Arden into an enchanted region. The surprises that follow Orlando's successful fight with the hungry lioness to save Oliver of all people; Oliver's penitence; the conversion of the usurper Frederick and his apologetic return of the usurped Dukedom and estates to the Duke Senior and his faithful Lords-have all to be attributed perhaps to Rosalind's angelic charm.

More splendidly romantic than these is the role of the Forest of Arden in **As you like It**. It is not just a scenic background; it is a spiritual force bringing medicine to the hurt souls of men. The residents enjoy unlimited freedom here almost as recompense for the lost comforts of life. Selfishness, envy, ambition are left in the city. Love alone, of all human passions, finds entrance into his wilderness. The chivalrous youth and the simple Shepherd use the same language of love. Troubles of the past are only vaguely remembered. Thus they qualify for the enjoyment of present pleasures. Adversity turned into sweetness, reveals to them good in everything.

In this way Shakespeare's romantic comedy: **As You Like It** deals with incidents and scenes which are remote from life and full of improbabilities. But Shakespeare combines these idealistic pictures of romance with realistic subplots and provides not only comic relief but a wider background to the action.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (2)

What are the elements of romantic comedy in **As You Like It**?

.....

.....

1.4 REALISTIC SUB-PLOTS

A running commentary by the characters of the play enlarges our vision of life by pulling us down to the world of reality. Seen from the Court Arden appears remote from the discontents of life but a closer scrutiny will make us realise that the Forest of Arden is no Elysium. It has some disagreeable characters. Corin's master is rude and ill-tempered; Sir Oliver Martext is far from sweetnatured; Williams is a stupid fellow and Audrey is graceless.

The weather is not always sunny, it has a bitter winter too. Touchstone's comment: "Ay, now that I am in Arden the more fool I; When I was at home, I was in a better place, but travellers must be content:" shakes us out of our illusions regarding the Forest of Arden. Again Jaques' scathing attack that the Duke Senior may not slay and kill man but he kills the poor beasts, the natives of the forest. The implication is that he is no less a usurper than his brother Duke Frederick. Points of view put forward by one character find contradiction or correction by another so that the whole play is a balance of sweet against sour, of the cynical against the idealistic. The comic vision of life is thus modified. Orlando the writer of love poems and Touchstone their parodist, go together. Orlando's ideal world of romantic emotion needs to be corrected, supplemented and balanced by Rosalind's comments from the plane of every day reality. Romance and comedy, sanity and absurdity are thus presented as two sides of the shield of life. Minds innocent and quiet can find happiness in a court or a country. Arden is the enchanted place for this great discovery and people who realised this truth cheerfully return to the Court with riper minds and better self-knowledge.

1.5 TREATMENT OF LOVE IN AS YOU LIKE IT

Love, as you know, is a very exciting theme and people of all age groups enjoy the experience and its description in books or presentations on the stage. But the greatness of a dramatist depends on the skill and delicacy with which he portrays it. The slightest carelessness or indiscretion on his part spells the play's failure and makes the performance ridiculous, indecent or shameful.

Shakespeare achieves the miracles of making romantic love the engrossing theme of his comedies after a few semi-successful attempts in the beginning. *Much Ado*, *Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It* have proved an astonishing success on the stage because of his masterly dramatisation of the story of courtship.

As you Like It derives its strength from the technique of parallelism and contrast. The main plot of love between Orlando and Rosalind shines against the background of two underplots. i) the love of the Shepherd Silvius and Phebe and ii) the love of Touchstone for Audrey.

1.5.1 CONVENTIONAL-PASTORAL LOVE

The first of these is the exaggerated courtship of the conventional Shepherd and his scornful mistress. Silvius is infatuated with the country lass Phebe and pines away because she is unresponsive and scornful. Thus he makes an ass of himself. Rosalind notices this and pities him but pronounces him a fool for his lack of restraint. Phebe behaves like a proud and disdainful coquette. She in turn becomes the butt of ridicule by instantly falling in love with a woman (Rosalind) in the guise of a man. Rosalind makes use of this to change her attitude to Silvius and unites them finally. We may call this love-conventional. To heighten the contrast Shakespeare uses blank verse for this sub-plot illustrating the folly of love, and employs prose for the mock courtship (probationary love-making) of Orlando and Ganymede (Rosalind in disguise). Incidentally he parodies the pastoral lovemaking in vogue at the time and provides capital comic relief.

1.5.2 MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE

Another comic counterpart to the romance of Orlando and Rosalind is the funny love-making between Touchstone and Audrey. The plain and mindless peasant girl does not fascinate him at all. But Touchstone undertakes the experiment just to laugh at the strange disease of love from which the Court-bred people suffer. This marriage of convenience reduces marriage to a big joke and takes romance to dull earth.

While the comic interlude of Silvius and Phebe depicts one extreme of conventional pastoral courtship, that of Touchstone and Audrey represents the other extreme of crude, physical passion-mindless animality.

1.5.3 TRUE AND GENUINE LOVE

True and genuine love lies midway between these extremes. Orlando and Rosalind loved each other at first sight during the wrestling contest (Act I). This love grows in their banishment, in the forest like all conventional romantic lovers (Silvius is one of them) Orlando hangs verses on the trees. Naturally they become the object of mockery by Rosalind, Celia and Touchstone as proof of love's folly. But soon Rosalind identifies the author and reciprocates his emotion. Under the pretext of curing the disease of love, she devises an intelligent plan. She lures him into an unconscious courtship and shows him the strength of her love without revealing her identity. He confesses his love and devotion to her. However, she poses as an analyst of love, studying its follies and the infirmities of women. Her intelligence and character enable her to exercise a controlling influence on the events of the play and on the lives of other characters. She thus becomes the supreme romantic heroine of comedy combining in herself seriousness and levity, intellect and sincere feeling.

There is a marriage of true minds illustrating Marlowe's famous line "Whoever loved that loved not at first sight?"

1.5.4 STRATEGIC LOVE

The love of Celia and Oliver may be called strategic love. It is neither love at first sight nor love of the conventional type, nor even a crude physical sport. Their love makes us wonder at the ironies of sex-magnetism. Probably to contribute to the marital bliss of Orlando who gets reconciled to his brother Oliver, Celia consents to be married to the chastened Oliver, in the hope that his finer self would assert itself. Moreover, the inseparables can so continue even after marriage.

1.5.5 OTHER RELATIONSHIPS OF LOVE

Lastly love in its large sense is also introduced in this play: Love between Rosalind and Celia, the inseparables, is sisterly affection.

The love of Adam for his master is loyalty and devotion:

The affinity (love) between Touchstone and Celia and Rosalind, is love in the form of faithful service

Thus Shakespeare gives us a many-sided view of people in the condition of love, seen through each other's eyes and hence a multiple view of love itself. His creations are timeless and spaceless. With a slight variation these types may greet us anywhere, anytime.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (3)

List the different types of love described in *As You Like It*.

.....

.....

1.6 THE FOREST OF ARDEN - THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE PLAY

From the beginning of Act II, the Forest of Arden is the scene of action (Scenic background) of *As You Like It*. It exercises the most wholesome influence on the banished courtiers who come here in quest of peace and solace and freedom from the oppressive atmosphere of the Court. We should

not, however, identify the Arden of **As You Like It** with either the French Forest of Arden or the Warwickshire forest bearing the same name. Our forest belongs essentially to the world of imagination. It unites the climate, flora and fauna of different zones and provides a quiet atmosphere favourable for the restoration of troubled souls. Compared to the artificial life of the Courts, it is free from the false values and discontents of life. It is a place where people can pass their time as carelessly as they did in the golden age and enjoy present pleasures without regret for the past or fears about the future.

The exiled Duke Senior describes life in the forest from his personal experience. It is far more pleasant than Court life because it is more natural. It is safer too because it is free from envy and spite which often cause people to harm one another. Winter is cold but not painful or harmful like the flatter of courtiers. Seasons change here too but the bitter sky is never so biting as benefits forgotten. Hardships occur but they whip people into producing something useful. Lastly nature is a stern teacher instructing forest-dwellers to turn any misfortune into a blessing. Men have to struggle for their existence and hunt for their food. But labour is pleasant and productive and causes no weariness because there is no slavery. The Duke sums it up beautifully thus:

"And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones and god in everything".

Ammiens, Duke's admiring companion pays him a warm tribute for translating the stubbornness (hostility) of fortune into so quiet a style (of living and moral contemplation).

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (4)

What lessons does the forest of Arden teach the people who live there?

.....

.....

All the same the Forest of Arden is no Eden. The second Golden age has not filled this forest with all good people. Some disagreeable human beings live here. Corin's master is ill-tempered. Sir Oliver Martext, the Vicar is far from sweet-natured. William, Touchstone's rival in love is a foolish man rejected by Audrey. Phoebe is a heartless coquette toying with the emotions of Silvius, a sincere lover. Audrey is illfavoured and graceless. In short, the natives of the forest are in no way better humans than the exiles from court. (Corin with his rural contentment and humility is the solitary exception). Further, eternal spring does not reign here. Winter is bitter and man must work hard for food and clothing. The laws of nature are inviolable, here or elsewhere. Life preys on life, Jaques notices and comments upon the indifference of the shepherd to the wounded deer. He portrays his joyless picture of human life passing from futility to futility and ending in the nothingness of senility-sans everything. For him most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly. This is in sharp contrast to the glowing account of the Duke. To disprove this, as it were, we have the shining examples of gratitude. Adam, Celia and Touchstone, besides the faithful Lords who have exiled themselves to join their worthy master, Duke Senior. Love, sweet society and companionship, communal dinners enjoyed by the group under the greenwood tree and the wonderful poetry and music present a delightful image of life in the forest.

Thus the Forest of Arden provides a congenial environment, a charming outdoor life for the exiles and contributes to their happiness and enlightenment. All of them learn the philosophy of cheerful acceptance, accepting everything that comes in life. Banishment (even the self-imposed type of the Lords) teaches them patient endurance, love, charity, humility and forgiveness and the right perspective of life. They evolve spiritually to learn the greatest lesson of life-loving the enemy. They even realise that in the world both happiness and sorrow can be hallowed. Orlando saves his cruel brother from a lioness and transforms him. Celia stoically accepts the penitent as her life-partner.

Now they understand that minds innocent and quiet can find happiness in a court or a country. Jaques, however, is an exception to this rule; his melancholy and cynicism even Arden cannot cure. All these near miracles are accomplished by the Forest of Arden. It is certainly more than a mere scenic back-ground. It is a spiritual force. No wonder then that, at the end of their interlude in the green wood, all the exiles, except Jaques the incorrigible, return to the court purged of envy, malice and meanness.

The Duke and his retinue with the newly-weds propose to go back to their dukedom to enjoy the fortune so unexpectedly returned by the converted usurper. Since they have all shed their envy, malice and such other virtues of the Court after coming to the Forest of Arden, we hope the Court will no more be as bad as before.

We hear from the second brother, Jaques de boys that the usurper's conversion took place all of a sudden and on the outskirts of the Forest of Arden. The villain that has planned to invade and put an end to the most popular brother in exile approaches the Forest, accidentally meets an old religious man, gets miraculously converted and bequeaths the crown (Dukedom) and the land to his elder brother and the attendant Lords. On the face of it, this sudden transformation is absurd and unbelievable. Shall we attribute it to the Forest and its enchantment? Why then does Jaques decide to stay away and keep company with the nascent convert?

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (5)

Who gets converted when he goes to the forest of Arden?

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.....

1.7 LET'S SUM UP

In this unit We have established that *As You Like It* is a romantic comedy as it has all the elements of a romantic comedy. We have further discussed the atmosphere of the Forest of Arden and its influence on the characters.

1.8 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. What are the characteristic features of a romantic comedy?
2. Comment on the atmosphere of the Forest of Arden
3. What are the different types of love discussed in the Unit? Give examples of each.

1.9 ANSWERS TO SELF - CHECK EXERCISES

Self-Check Exercise 1

It is full of the joy of youth and the romance of love and even the villains are reformed at the end of the play.

Self-Check Exercise 2

In *As You Like It* we find romantic friendship between Rosalind and Celia, the devotion of Adam for his master's family and the typical romantic love of Orlando for Rosalind.

Self-Check Exercise 3

1. Conventional pastoral love
 2. Marriage of convenience
 3. True and genuine love
 4. Strategic love
 5. Other relationships such as sisterly affection, friendly devotion.
-

Self-Check Exercise 4

It teaches them to turn any misfortune into a blessing.

Self-Check Exercise 5

The usurper, the younger brother of the Duke, gets suddenly transformed when he goes to the forest of Arden.

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BLOCK III

UNIT -2 ANALYSIS OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE PLAY

2.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to :

- Describe the main and sub-plots in the play
- point out the relationship between the main and underplots
- comment critically on the scenes in the play

2.1 CONTENTS

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Contents
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 Analysis of the structure of the play
- 2.4 Preliminary scenes
- 2.5 Background scenes
- 2.6 The underplots
- 2.7 Let's Sum Up
- 2.8 Sample Questions
- 2.9 Answers to self-check exercises
- 2.10 Audio-video support material
- 2.11 Further reading

2.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses the plots and action of the play. It examines the main and sub-plots and their relationship. In describing the plots, mention is also made of the scenes in the play and their unity.

2.3 ANALYSIS OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE PLAY

Every well-constructed play has a unity of action. All the constituent plots are closely knit so that the artistic design as a whole produces the desired emotional effect. No sub-plot can be removed without damaging the structure of the play or spoiling its final impression. As you like it is the most radiant of Shakespeare's Romantic comedies. But critics point out that the main and under plots are not so well dovetailed as in the other plays; that the sub-plots of Silvius and Phebe, and Touchstone and Audrey hang loose and do not advance the action of the play. However, we feel that they are related to the main 'love theme' of the play and add a new dimension to it by contrast.

The introduction of magic as a means of resolving the complication (caused by the courtship of Rosalind in disguise) does no credit to a master-dramatist. Further, Orlando and Ganymede indulge in mock love-making for hours together; yet the brilliant hero fails to see through the disguise.

An ingenious explanation would be that Shakespeare concentrates more on the sparkling dialogue than on the probability of action or psychological probability.

J.C. Smith gives a beautiful analysis of the structure. He studies it from the view point of Unity of Design rather than Unity of Action. He divides the play into i) Preliminary scenes i.e., "Scenes needed to explain how they meet again in new scenes amid new circumstances", ii) Background scenes which describe the natural and social milieu of the action and iii) Sub Plots which serve to strengthen the main plot by way of comparison or contrast.

*Adapted from J.C. Smith's *As You Like It*, in *Warwick Shakespeare*.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (1)

How do the sub-plots in this play relate to the main plot?

.....
.....

2.4 PRELIMINARY SCENES

The preliminary scenes are outside the actual play and only mentioned in the exposition, the first movement of the play describing the initial circumstances. In this play the exposition refers to two past events having a bearing on the action of the drama : i) Sir Rowland's will which, for reasons unknown, bequeaths a poor thousand crowns to worthy Orlando. ii) the deposition of reigning Duke by his younger brother and his exile. We are not told of the motive behind this banishment nor does the victim speak bitterly of the usurper.

The other scenes come under **Exposition**. The unnatural circumstances resulting in the main action of the play - the unhappy relation between two sets of brothers : i) Orlando and Oliver and ii) the banished Duke, and the usurper Frederick. The wrestling match is the principal event resulting in love at first sight (between Orlando, the victor, and Rosalind, the sprightly daughter of the banished Duke) and the consequent banishment of the lovers. Duke Frederick's strange villainy starts the play and his stranger conversion ends the play in happiness. Oliver's unnatural treachery drives his brother to the forest and to the fruition of his love (main plot). His own rescue from death and marriage comes under the sub-plot.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (2)

What is the purpose of the preliminary scenes in the play?

.....
.....

2.5 BACKGROUND SCENES

The scenes creating the atmosphere of the Forest and the social environment favourable for the main action come under this classification. The moral fibre of the natives of the Forest, their pure and untainted hearts are admired by the banished Duke. The songs of Amiens and his tribe have a tranquillizing beauty and melody in them. Jaques' sentimental melancholy and Touchstone's genial mockery complete the background. They contribute to the enhancement of the Forest and make the events convincing.

2.6 THE UNDER - PLOTS

The three under - plots in the play strengthen and support the main action by providing relationships of contrast and comparison.

2.6.1 OLIVER AND CELIA

Shakespeare introduces this i) to secure parallelism in construction ii) to make the exile of Rosalind whom she can outshine in every way iii) to highlight the characters to the hero and heroine. Orlando wrestles not only with the lioness but also with the average human impulse of allowing a villainous brother to have his nemesis (just punishment). Rosalind hears the account of the adventure from Oliver himself and enquires anxiously whether Orlando abandoned his brother to become the prey of the hungry lioness. She thus rises in our estimate iv) to set off the main love-theme. We should carefully note the interdependence of these two stories. If Celia had not accompanied Rosalind into the forest, her love story would have no place. Oliver goes into the forest as an exile because he illtreats his brother. Orlando rescues the wicked Oliver from the lioness and causes remorse in him. Because of the injury to his arm in his scuffle with the lioness, Orlando cannot keep his appointment with Rosalind. Instead, Oliver conveys his apology to Rosalind. In proof of this, he shows his bloody kerchief which makes her swoon. And the swoon provides an opportunity for Oliver and Celia to love each other.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (3)

Why does Shakespeare introduce this sub-plot?

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.....

2.6.2 SILVIUS AND PHEBE

Rosalind's disguise creates a funny situation. Orlando has to pretend to love one whom he really loves and Phebe earnestly loves one (Rosalind disguised as a boy) whom she cannot. Orlando's dream turns to reality and Phebe's reality proves a dream. Rosalind's disguise is an invitation to Orlando and a rebuke to Phebe. Rosalind (Ganymede) takes this opportunity to educate Phebe out of her folly and brings happiness to the steady lover Silvius. Further this sub-plot unfolds the truth that worth and pride can be found in unexpected places.

2.6.3 TOUCHSTONE AND AUDREY

This serves as a spicy comment on romantic love and marriage. Marriage is a big joke, as Touchstone views it. Romantic lovers tend to regard each other as paragons of beauty as an enemy of honesty (Virtue). Horns are the dowry that a man receives from a beautiful wife. In this case he is clear-headed. Audrey's plainness, want of beauty makes her his own and ensures his happiness. He thus de-romanticizes his attachment with Audrey. The unreality of the pastoral convention is thus exposed and ridiculed.

Thus the structure of *As You Like It* appears somewhat loose. The pastoral themes may safely be detached without affecting the main plot. Shakespeare may have disregarded the usual critical canons but he gives the play a unity of design.

This presents all these episodes on a wider canvas and gives each of them a significance. The play remains radiant and sunny, despite these minor technical flaws.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (3)

Why does Shakespeare introduce this sub-plot?

.....

.....

2.7. LET'S SUM UP

This unit has discussed the structure of the play in relation to its theme. We have examined the main and sub-plots and highlighted their relationship. We have also commented upon the significance of the preliminary and background scenes.

2.8 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Write a note on the structure of the play.
2. Explain why the sub-plots have been introduced.
3. Briefly comment on the preliminary scenes.

2.9 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

Self-Check Exercise 1

The sub-plots add a new dimension to the main plot by contrast.

Self-Check Exercise 2

The first few scenes give us the background to the action in the play.

Self-Check Exercise 3

There are 4 reasons for introducing this sub-plot.

- (i) for contrast with the main plot
- (ii) to provide a suitable companion for Rosalind
- (iii) to bring out the characters of Orlando and Rosalind
- (iv) to set-off the main love theme.

2.10 AUDIO-VIDEO SUPPORT MATERIAL

Audio lesson is available on As You Like It - a romantic play.

2.10 FURTHER READING

- | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|
| 1. Edward Dowden | : | Shakespeare : His Mind and Art |
| 2. E.K. Chambers | : | Shakespeare - A Survey |
| 3. H.B. Charlton | : | Romanticism in Shakespearean Comedy. |
| 4. J.C. Smith | : | Edition of As You Like It in 'Warwick-Shakespeare'. |
| 5. Stafford Brooke | : | On Ten Plays of Shakespeare |
| 6. J.I. Priestley | : | The English Comic Characters. |
| 7. Scott Elledge | : | Teaching Shakespeare |
| 8. C.L. Barber | : | Shakespeare's Festive Comedy |
| 9. Helen Gardner | : | More talking of Shakespeare |
| | | 'Alliance of Seriousness and Levity' |

BLOCK IV : SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER

Oliver Goldsmith

Block IV consists of three units:

- Unit -1 elaborately discusses the age of Goldsmith, the literary trend of that age etc.
- Unit -2 analyses the play giving a detailed account of the theme of the play.
- Unit -3 deals with major and minor characters in the play.

BLOCK IV SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER

UNIT -1 A BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY OF THE PLAY

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading through this unit you will be able to :

- describe the age of Goldsmith
- relate the play to its literary background
- recount the life of Goldsmith and comment on his literary contribution.
- discuss She Stoops to Conquer as a anti-sentimental comedy
- comment on the dramatic art of Goldsmith.

1.1 CONTENTS

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1.2 INTRODUCTION

In this unit you will study the background to the play, She Stoops to Conquer. As in the case of Shakespeare's As You Like It you do not have to make a detailed study of the play.

This unit will provide you information about the age of Goldsmith and the literary activity of that period. It also discusses the features of anti-sentimental comedy and relates them to the play, She Stoops to Conquer.

1.3 THE AGE OF GOLDSMITH

Towards the end of the reign of George II literary patronage also came to a close. Writers began to depend upon the reading public using all their resources. They were in close touch with the life around. As a result literature started relating the harsh realities of life more and more. Writers too evinced keen interest in the dynamics of social change. They were in a position to appreciate gaiety and glitter of social life.

There was a marked impact of political and economic condition of England on the quality and degree of social consciousness. There were no religious tensions or social turmoil. In literature it was the age of prose and reason. Social tranquillity and political stability despite disturbances had its own impact upon the writings of the day. Reason and good sense characterized the evolving social order.

Allround prosperity was the hall mark of the day. It fosters the general acceptance of the organic conception of society, public interest in the management of the social affairs increased. Industrialists and businessmen contributed a lot to the phenomenal increase of national prosperity. Traders and merchants came to occupy an important place in the society.

It was the rise of the middle class that affected the age profoundly. Its emergence gave a new thrust to the social change. The middle class contributed a lot to the progress of "England in several fields. London became the centre of commercial activity which brought immense wealth. As a result of the growing prosperity of some and the leisure they enjoyed, literature too reflected the elegant manners of these sections. Englishmen started going round the globe in search of commercial overtures for prosperity. This spirit found its expression in the setting up of the South Sea Company in 1711. Commodore Anson sailed round the globe during the years 1740-1744.

1.4 THE LITERARY SCENE

The literature of the period reflected a deep desire for rule and order. Reason was the order that was intended to be realized. The virtues of "plain truth" and good sense were extolled. The conception of wit too had undergone considerable change. Dryden defined wit as a propriety of words and thoughts adopted to the subject. Johnson considered it as something natural. In prose and poetry propriety, elegance and cadence came to be valued high. The writer's aim was clarity of expression without hiding the sense in several rhetoric or stylistic devices. The writing of Horace and Boileau influenced the literary models of the writers. Good manners and elegant talk were given much importance. The age marked a happy blend of literature and polite manners.

In this age the main divisions of the drama were heroic drama, comedy of humours and comedy of manners. The heroic drama had no connection with reason and good sense which were greatly applauded. For instance, Buckingham in his play, *Rehearsal* satirized the heroic drama. The heroic drama was an opposite to the licentiousness which marked some of the works of the Restoration period. The comedy of humour and comedy of manners had not received the attention they deserved. The distinction was not maintained throughout. Comedy gave place to farce. This is seen, for instance, in a play like Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*. This play mirrors some of the features of the traditional drama.

Slowly sentiment began to gain the upper hand in the plays of the day. Cibber and Steele played an important role in the development of sentimental comedy. Sentimental comedy grew to maturity by 1750. The absence of 'plain truth' and 'good sense' in the contemporary drama paved the way for the growth of the sentimental comedy. Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* embodies the serene spirit of comedy without the excesses of either humour or sentiments.

There was reaction against the heroic drama. It was the comedy of manners that reflected the spirit of the times. Social behaviour and etiquette formed its theme. It was a criticism against the ethical emptiness of social manners. The comedy of manners held up a mirror to all the triviality and vulgarity of the cosmetic manners of the men and women. Sentimentalism slowly found its way into the plays of playwrights. As the eighteenth century progressed, reason and good sense, the sovereign virtues slowly got eclipsed with the flood of sentiment of all hues. Novels of sentiment found much favour especially with the middleclass readers. Sentimentality in various forms of literature got a good boost with the bourgeoisie concept of respectability and widespread commercialism. Slowly sentimentalism became a synonym for pity. At times it became a mask for 'puritanical hypocrisy'. Sentimentalism without the sense of humanism and reason became cheap and shallow stuff.

Slowly the comedy of sentiment started losing its ground as it was divorced from realism. Emotions and sentiments without reason or harmony with the context made the readers or audience sick. Such emotions and sentiments could not convince the readers. The very end of the sentimental comedy making men noble, appeared to be forgotten by the playwrights. At this juncture Sheridan and Goldsmith spearheaded the movement against the sentimental comedy.

Goldsmith in the preface to *The Good Natur'd Man* confesses his 'favour' for the poets of the last age. Indeed he strove to 'imitate' them. He proposed to restore humour and reality to comedy. The excessive preoccupation of the playwrights of sentimental comedies made the plays dry and drab with no genuine humour and the vigour of realism. Goldsmith gave importance to portraying comic situation based on life. Character portrayal too received its due place in his plays.

1.5 LIFE OF GOLDSMITH

Oliver Goldsmith son of a poor Protestant curate of Ireland was born on November 10, 1728. He spent his boyhood in the little village of Lissoy. He attended the village school and the local grammar school. Later he joined the Trinity College. Neither at school nor at college did he show the marks of a would-be man of letters. He took his degree in 1749. When his father died in penury his mother brought him up. Goldsmith proved to be a spendthrift. His relatives helped him to support himself. But their help proved a waste. In 1752 he went to Edinburgh to study medicine. Soon he left Edinburgh and spent two years in wandering about the countryside. He also toured France and Switzerland. He went as far as Italy.

Returning to England in 1756 he worked as a bookseller's hack for some time. He left it soon and took to teaching and acting. He was not successful in either. He tasted the dregs of poverty sharing lodgings even with beggars. He failed to become a surgeon's mate at a hospital. Then he took to writing and contributing articles to a number of magazines. He wrote on a variety of subjects even though he had no grip over them.

Goldsmith came into contact with Samuel Johnson in 1761. He was admitted to the literary coterie of Johnson. The latter found the makings of a great writer in Goldsmith and encouraged him. Goldsmith's publication of *The Traveller* in 1764 brought him immense fame. It was replete with reflections of its author, cast in the mould of a poem. This poem reveals the rich experiences of Goldsmith. Soon Goldsmith became a popular writer. It was his novel *The Vicar of Wakefield*, published in 1766 that gave him a permanent place among the English writers. It was hailed as a classic. The long poem *The Deserted Village* was published in 1770. It was a descriptive poem devoid of artistic elegance.

Besides a novel and poems Goldsmith wrote two comedies. They are, *The Good Natured Man*, *She Stoops to Conquer* published in 1768 and 1774 respectively.

The coveted place of Goldsmith among English writers is greatly due to his novel *The Vicar of Wakefield* and the play *She Stoops to Conquer*. The publication of the novel was a landmark in the growth of English novel. What contributes to its lasting literary value despite slack construction is its characterization. Every character is portrayed in its simple piety and exceeding good humour. His two plays especially *She Stoops to Conquer* came as a sort of relief to the English audience bored with artless sentimental comedies which were in vogue. Before Goldsmith's appearance on the scene the English comedy had touched the rock bottom of artlessness. Farce and sentimentalism were occupying good sense. The sentimentalism which took birth on the English soil slowly came under the influence of contemporary French sentimentalists.

1.6 ANTI-SENTIMENTAL COMEDY

Sentimental comedy which lost its credibility became the target of attack from every quarter especially from Goldsmith and Sheridan. The playwrights who wrote sentimental comedy filled every scene with tears. They delineated every situation without any respect for realism and good sense. In a way, they were greatly obsessed with shallow sentiments concerning several household issues and personal attitudes. At this stage Goldsmith and Sheridan taught the audience how to laugh

whole heartedly and spontaneously. In a way, the reaction that they initiated against the degenerated sentimental comedy is a commendable move to revive the old elegant spirit of the comedy of earlier times.

Goldsmith in his *Essay on the Theatre: Or A Comparison Between Laughing and sentimental Comedy* published in 1772 raised his voice against Sentimental Comedy. He concerns himself with Aristotle's definition of comedy as picture of the frailties of the lower part of mankind. He held that the sentimental comedies had met with success due to the novelty they exhibit in flattering every man in his 'favourable foible'. He accused the playwrights of these comedies for making the audience applaud the characters despite their faults for the 'goodness of their hearts'. In the essay Goldsmith focuses our attention on the loopholes of sentimental comedies.

In an anti-sentimental comedy the characters are neither the paragons of virtue nor the loathsome creatures of vices but ordinary men and women whom we meet in our daily life. They are depicted in normal situations but are of some special dramatic significance when viewed from an aesthetic angle. Goldsmith chose ordinary men and women involved in problems that plague them. He brought back the pristine 'spirit' of Shakespeare. The antisentimental comedy he evolves 'expresses the return to nature'.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (1)

What are the features of anti-sentimental comedy?

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1.7 INTRODUCTION TO SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER

Goldsmith's play *She Stoops to Conquer* provides wholesome laughter, the essence of comedy. The playwright aimed at entertaining the audience by depicting real life-situations. It is a simple story, full of dramatic strength. Mrs. Hardcastle has a daughter and son-Kate and Tony Lumpkin. Tony is her son by her first husband. She wished that her son should marry her niece Constance Neville but Constance is in love with Hastings, a young man of London. Tony is more interested in a country girl. Mr Hardcastle proposes to marry his daughter to a young man Marlow, the son of his friend. Mr Marlow, who is shy of the company of women brings Hastings to Mr Hardcastle's house. On the way they are directed by Tony Lumpkin to the house of Hardcastle saying that it is an inn. Miss Neville visiting Hardcastle's house recognises her lover Hastings. They arrange an interview between Kate and Marlow. Kate observes the nervousness of Marlow. She decides to stoop in order to conquer the heart of Marlow by pretending to be the bar maid. Marlow behaves in a free manner. Hastings and Constance decide to elope. Tony expresses his readiness to help them. Mrs Hardcastle comes to know about Constance's love affair. Marlow discovers the identity of Kate. Tony renounces Constance enabling the latter to marry Hastings. Now he is free to marry his country girl.

She Stoops to Conquer is the most popular comedy of the Eighteenth century. The strength of the play lies primarily in the 'vigour of its broad humour'. It abounds in innocent 'wit' and 'frank good nature'. Goldsmith makes a deliberate attempt to take back the English drama to the Elizabethan times. In its atmosphere the play approaches more closely the salient traits of a Shakespearean romantic comedy. The sentiments that enliven various situations in the play are devoid of the flaws that make the sentimentalism of the contemporary playwrights a synonym for sickening pity attending the abject helplessness of persons in different situations in life. The romantic atmosphere is created by the serene longings of the young men and women in life teased by the sly turn of events at every step but resolved in fulfilment in the end.

The play is full of farce. The exaggeration of situations is not out of tolerable limits. For instance, Mrs Hardcastle's excessive timidity borders upon farce. Improbabilities in plot construction and

characterization are not so glaring as to eclipse the other artistic excellences that give a special place to the play. The play is a natural comedy. The 'native simplicity' and transparent sincerity of Hardcastle contribute a lot to the sweet serenity of the natural comedy.

The subtle humour underlying all the tricks of the characters are not sentimental. The play is a pure comedy appealing to the good sense of the audience. It does not concern itself with the refinements of either humour or manners. The incidents are presented in a natural way. There is spontaneity in the attitudes and incidents that fill the scenes. It is the unrestrained laughter of the audience that lends credibility to the naturalness of the dramatic art of the playwright. Goldsmith does not bother either to moralise or idealise anything. His aim was to write a comedy for the delight of his audience.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (2)

What is the special quality of the humour in the play?

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1.8 LET'S SUM UP

In this unit you read about the age of Goldsmith and the literary background to the play *She Stoops to Conquer*. You have also learnt about Goldsmith's life and works. This unit further discussed the chief features of anti-sentimental comedy.

1.9 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. What are the characteristic features of anti-sentimental comedy?
2. How far is *She Stoops to Conquer* an anti-sentimental comedy?

1.10 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

Self-Check Exercise 1

1. Characters are ordinary men and women with virtues and vices.
2. The situations are normal as also the problems faced by the characters.
3. Anti-sentimental comedy tries to be realistic.

Self-Check Exercise 2

The humour is subtle and un-sentimental. The play is a pure comedy which appeals to the audience because of its naturalness.

BLOCK IV

UNIT -2 AN ANALYSIS OF THE PLAY

2.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to :

- Give an account of the Acts and scenes of the play elaborating upon the events in them.
- Comment on the significance of the different scenes.
- Discuss the incident which creates humour in the play
- Describe the roles played by the characters.

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- 2.6 Act IV
- 2.7 Act V
- 2.8 Let's sum up
- 2.9 Sample questions
- 2.10 Answers to self-check exercises.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit analyses the play in detail. It does not take up each speech or conversation for study but describes the events in a sequence focussing upon the main action. The main incidents are described and the role of the characters is defined.

2.3 ACT I

Act I has two scenes, one set in Mr. Hardcastle's house and the other in Three Pigeons a roadside ale-house.

2.3.1 SCENE 1

It is the house of Mr. Hardcastle. As the curtain rises Mr. and Mrs. Hardcastle are found engaged in conversation. Mrs. Hardcastle complains about the monotonous life in the country. Tony is her son by her first husband born when she was hardly twenty. She likes her son very much. She feels that Tony is not yet come of age. But Hardcastle has a different view of Tony. Mrs Hardcastle thinks that her son is consumptive and so she cannot think of sending him to school. Hardcastle has poor view of Tony's abilities. Tony enters. He is running away to Three Pigeons-the alehouse. Hardcastle

says that Tony is addicted to drinking. Miss Hardcastle enters prettily dressed. ~~She is~~ goin out. Her father, Hardcastle tells her that he is expecting a young gentleman called Marlow to whom he is proposing her-Miss Hardcastle in marriage. He tells her that Marlow is a well-bred scholar, handsome and generous. He adds that Marlow is a man of excellent understanding. He says Hardcastle is one of the most bashful and reserved young fellows in the world. This observation about Marlow makes Miss Hardcastle reflective.

Miss Neville, Mrs Hardcastle's niece enters. She gives an account of Marlow, a good friend of Hastings whom she admires. She says that Marlow feels quite awkward especially in the company of women of reputation. That is, Marlow feels embarrassed in the company of ladies. But he feels at home in the company of those of a lower order. These observations of Miss Neville worry Miss Hardcastle very much. Mrs. Hardcastle is bringing up Miss Neville and managing her fortune to make her her own daughter-in-law. But Miss Neville is in love with Hastings. Tony too is not in favour of the marriage with her (Miss Neville).

The first scene serves as a sort of exposition. It introduces the main characters-Mr. and Mrs. Hardcastle, Tony the son of Mrs. Hardcastle by her first husband, and Miss Hardcastle, their (Mr. and Mrs. Hardcastle) daughter and Miss. Neville niece of M. s. Hardcastle, Mr. Marlow and Mr. Hastings, two young men are introduced indirectly. Mrs. Hardcastle wants to get her son Tony married to Miss Neville. The main issue of the play is dealt with. It is the marriage of Miss Hardcastle with Mr Marlow, a young man. As it appears the main action of the play centres round Tony and Miss. Hardcastle, Mrs. Hardcastle has her own plans about Tony so she does not send him to school. The outline of Tony's character is drawn clearly. Miss Hardcastle's intentions are clear. She feels that she has to mend the bashful and reserved nature of Marlow. Tony has no intention of marrying Miss Neville as wished by his mother. Miss Neville loves Mr. Hastings. Thus the two central issues of the play are clearly sketch in the framework of the attitudes and intentions of the characters concerned. The first scene of the first Act lances the readers to the main atmosphere of the play which serves as a sort of background to the core issues.

Self-check exercise -1

Why does Mrs. Hardcastle want her son, Tony to marry Miss Neville?

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2.3.2 Scene 2

In the Three Pigeons Tony is found in the company of his carefree friends. He sings a jolly song praising wine and condemning preaching and learning. his friends applaud him. Then the landlord of the alehouse announces the arrival in a postchaise of two gentlemen who have lost their way. He tells them (Tony and his friends who are in a merry making mood) that the two gentlemen desire to be directed to the house of Mr. Hardcastle. Then Tony realises that one of the young men must be Marlow whom his sister is to marry. He makes up his mind to guide them. So, he asks the landlord to send the young men there. He asks his friends to withdraw. Marlow does not allow his friend Mr. Hastings to ask any one the way to Mr. Hardcastle's house. Tony offers his help. He tells them that Mr. Hardcastle is an old fashioned and whimsical gentleman who had a son and daughter. He tells them that the daughter of Mr. Hardcastle is a tall untidy and talkative girl and the son is a well-bred agreeable youngman. Marlow tells them that the reverse is true. Tony does not reveal his identity. Tony says that he is not in a position to direct them to the house of Mr Hardcastle. The landlord, as instructed by Tony, gives them some confusing directions. The two young men make out nothing. They feel they are helpless. Then Tony directs them to the Buck's Head, one of the best inns. In fact, it is the Hardcastle's house. Tony describes it as a large old house by the roadside with a pair of large horns at the entrance.

This scene serves two purposes: one, it presents Marlow and Hastings the two youngmen who lost their way to Mr. Hardcastle's house ,secondly,it reveals the character of Tony. Tony udnerstands the purpose of the visit of Marlow and Hastings to his (Mr. Hardcastle's) house. Without revealing his identity he directs them to the house of Mr. Hardcastle saying that it is an inn. He also describes the son and daughter of Mr. Hardcastle.

Self-Check Exercise - 2

Why does Tony guide the two young men to Mr. Hardcastle's house?

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2.4 Act II

Act II has only one long scene set in Mr. Hardcastle's house.

Hardcastle is busy instructing his servants to make arrangements for the reception of the two young men-Marlow and Hastings. He assigns various duties to them. He warns Diggory not to be too talkative. He asks his servants not to burst out laughing when he is telling the guests a funny-story. He wants the servants to be attentive to the guests. He hears a coach approaching. he asks the servants to be ready at their posts. The servants get in one another's way. Hastings and Marlow enter. They are pleased with the spacious neat room. They enter with the thought that it is an inn. They feel that they may have to pay more for the greater comfort. Hastings remarks that Marlow should be wanting in self confidence with his experience. Marlow replies that he spent most of his time in a college or an inn. He says that he is acquainted with only one woman i.e. his mother. But he says that he can move freely among women of another class. Hastings knows that his friend Marlow is a fish out of water especially among ladies from good families. He also knows that Marlow feels quite nervous in their company. Marlow confesses that he can move very freely in the company of a bar-maid of an inn. He says that he can express his feelings very freely before a bar maid. He dreads the very idea of courtship. He says that to all the questions (queries) of Miss Hardcastle he will say 'yes' or 'no'. He has no courage to look into her face, But he expresses his readiness to help Hastings in winning the hand of Miss Neville. Hastings confesses that he is deeply in love with Miss. Neville. He says that he is not at all interested in the property of Miss Neville. Marlow admires the talent and art of Hastings to capture the heart of a young lady.

Hardcastle enters and welcomes them. Marlow and Hastings who think that it is an inn and that he is the landlord, feel surprised on being addressed by their names. The young men go on talking paying little attention to Hardcastle. Hardcastle tells them that it is "liberty-hall" to them and they may feel quite at home. Hardcastle starts telling the story of the Duke of Marlborough. Marlow is not interested in the story. He demands punch from Hardcastle. Hardcastle mixes freely with them which they do not like. Marlow likes the drink offered to him. He supposes that his landlord (Mr. Hardcastle) will have good business at the time of the elections. Then he starts telling the story of Prince Eugene, Marlow feels annoyed and demands supper. Hardcastle is suprised to find his guests taking liberties with him-the master of the house. Marlow leaves with Hardcastle.

Miss Neville enters. Hastings is surprised to find his love there in an inn. She tells him the truth about it. She imagines that it is the trick of Tony to keep them under the impression that it is an inn. She tells Hastings that he should not be afraid of Tony who is not at all interested in her. But it is her aunt (Mrs. Hardcastle) who is proposing to her to marry Tony. Hastings proposes that they should run away to France at once. But Miss Neville says that she is not willing to leave, leaving her fortune behind her in the custody of her aunt. Her fortune, she says consists of her jewels. They

decide to let Marlow continue under the impression that the house is an inn. Marlow enters complaining about the conduct of Hardcastle whom he supposes or be the landlord of the inn. Hastings introduces his lady love Miss Neville to him and tells him that Miss Hardcastle too is there. Marlow feels embarrassed. He wants to change his dress. Miss Hardcastle comes in. Hastings introduces them. Miss Hardcastle speaks to Marlow, in the company of Hastings. Marlow replies to her in a suitable manner. But when Hastings withdraws, he starts stammering. He runs off to join Hastings and Miss Neville. Miss Hardcastle understands his bashfulness.

Miss Neville courts Tony but the latter repels her. Mrs Hardcastle watches this. Mrs. Hardcastle finds Hastings quite entertaining. Hastings praises Mrs. Hardcastle for her refinement. The latter wants to know what the most fashionable age for a woman about town is. Hastings replies that now it is going to be fifty. He tells her that jewels are going out of fashion. He pretends that he doesn't know about her niece Miss Neville till then. The scene shifts to Tony. We find Tony complaining to his mother about being pestered by Miss Neville. He demands his fortune : Mrs. Hardcastle reproaches him for being ungrateful to her for all the care she has been taking of him. Tony is not in a mood to listen to her. Hardcastle says that he will be in good spirits when he goes to the ale house. Hastings lectures to Tony. He finds that Tony is not going to stand in the way of his love of Miss Neville. He finds Miss Neville a pretty good tempered girl. He offers to take Miss Neville off his hands and whisk her off to France.

In this Act the love between Hastings and Miss Neville begins to take a new turn. Miss Hardcastle comes face to face with Marlow. She understands him. Mrs. Hardcastle experiences a sort of disillusionment at the sight of her son Tony acting against her wishes. He is not favouring the hand of Miss Neville in marriage. Marlow continues under the impression that it is an inn. Tony is ready to get rid of Miss Neville.

Self-check Exercise -3

What is Marlow's attitude to women?

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2.5 ACT III

The action in Act III again takes place in the house of Mr Hardcastle ,

The outrageous behaviour of Marlow pains Mr. Hardcastle. He reflects over his conduct, His friend the farther of Marlow had described him as a modest young man. He feels happy at the sight of his daughter dressed in plain clothes. Miss Hardcastle tells her father how she was received by Marlow with respect and a downcast gaze. Hardcastle on the contrary found him arrogant and shocking. He declines to give his consent finding him thus, but Miss Hardcastle wants to have further acquaintance with Marlow before her father reject him totally. Hardcastle relents. He feels he is right in his assessment of Marlow and his daughter wrong.

Tony gets Miss Neville's casket of jewels to Hastings. He assures Hastings that he need not worry about the reaction of his mother on finding the casket missing. Then Mrs. Hardcastle enters with Miss Neville. Both of them argue about the jewels. Mrs. Hardcastle tells her that jewels are out of fashion . Further, she can do without them, as she (Miss Neville) has her own natural beauty. Tony tells them that the jewels are missing. Mrs. Hardcastle whispers to Tony that she had been keeping those jewels for him. Miss Neville understands this. She does not believe that they have been lost. Tony sees that the jewels are lost. Mrs. Hardcastle expresses her readiness to lend Miss Neville

her garnets. Miss Neville refuses them. Mrs. Hardcastle goes in and the next moment reenters complaining about the loss of jewels. Tony is ready to bear witness to the loss of the jewellery. He goes on laughing at the state of his mother.

Miss Hardcastle is found with a maid. The latter tells her how Marlow mistook her (Miss Hardcastle) for the bar maid. Miss Hardcastle feels happy. She tells the maid that she wants to find out how Marlow addresses a common girl. She can speak like a bar maid. The maid tells her that she can play the part of a bar maid well. Marlow approaches there. The maid leaves the scene. He is in a hurry to run away from his host and hostess who, he feels, have been pestering him. He wants to get away from her too. But he is struck by her (Miss Hardcastle in the guise of a bar maid) beauty and grace. He attempts to kiss her but she keeps away from him. She tells him that she does not want to be acquainted with him for he treated Miss Hardcastle in a different way. Marlow tells her that he is a great favourite among ladies who call him the agreeable Rattle. He says that he frequents a ladies club where he is as merry as supper, wine and old women can make him. Miss Hardcastle laughs at him. He wants to help her in her needle work. He seizes her hand suddenly and she struggles to get away from him. When Mr. Hardcastle enters Marlow leaves. Miss Hardcastle tells her father that she has not yet given up hope that she will prove him to be a modest lover. She begs her father to give Marlow an opportunity to prove his worth in taking her hand. Mr. Hardcastle agrees on the condition that everything must be fair and candid. She assures him worthy of his expectations.

The Second Act ends with an understanding between Tony and Hastings. The former is ready to assist Hastings in running off with Miss Neville. He offers to get Miss Neville's Jewels. At the outset of the Third Act he hands over the casket of Jewels to Hastings. The plan for the flight of the lovers is ready. Mrs. Hardcastle looks through the plan of her son. Another important facet of action centres round the other pair-Marlow and Miss Hardcastle. Miss Hardcastle devises a plan to capture the heart of Marlow. So she stoops to pretend as the bar maid to pull Marlow out of the bashfulness. She is able to attract Marlow. Mr. Hardcastle finds Marlow seizing Miss Hardcastle by the hand. He gets angry. But he agrees to Miss Hardcastle's request to give Marlow another opportunity to prove his modesty and gentleness. Two love intrigues are at work. The title of the play stems from Miss Hardcastle's determination to stoop to disguise herself as a bar maid to win over the hand of Marlow who feels embarrassed especially in the company of ladies.

Self-check exercise - 4

How does Mr. Hardcastle assess Marlow? Why?

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2.6 Act IV

Hastings is in a hurry to leave for France along with his love Miss Neville. He doesn't want to disclose his designs to Sir Charles Marlow the father of his friend Marlow. But Miss Neville doesn't want to leave until she gets back her jewels. Hastings tells her that the jewels were sent to Marlow. He is waiting for the horses to be sent by Tony.

Marlow is thinking about the bar maid who conquered his heart. He wants to marry her. Hastings enters and finds Marlow in amorous spirits. Marlow speaks about his new discovery. He tells him that he must have the hand of that charming bar maid. To a question of Hastings Marlow replies that he puts little value on the honour of bar maids. Hastings argues saying that even that bar maid

may have her own virtues. In such a case, Marlow promises that he is not going to corrupt her. Marlow tells him that he sent the casket to the custody of the landlady.

Mr Hardcastle now enters complaining about the drunken behaviour of the servants. One of the drunken servants appears on the scene. Mr. Hardcastle tells Marlow that he has tolerated their licentious conduct till then. He says that he is going to assert himself as the master of the house. Marlow takes this warning lightly. He tells Mr. Hardcastle that he cannot leave the house late at night. Hardcastle insists that he must leave the house. He tells Marlow how he (Marlow) insulted him and his family in his own house. Marlow claims the house to be as much as his own. He demands his bill. Then Hardcastle gives a hint how his (Marlow's) father's letter led him to expect a well-bred modest man whom he finds to be a coxcomb and bully. This comes as a sort of revelation to Marlow who by now realises his mistake.

Miss Hardcastle enters. To a question of Marlow she replies to him that she is a poor relation of the family. She is not a bar maid. It is Mr. Hardcastle's house but not an inn. Marlow feels ashamed of his silly conduct. He wants to quit the house at once. Miss Hardcastle begs him to excuse her for anything she did to wound his feelings. She is in tears. Marlow is moved. He confesses his love for her. She tells him that her family is as good as that of Miss Hardcastle. She also tells him that she never considered poverty a misfortune. Marlow tells her that he would have preferred her if he had been at liberty to do so. But he has to submit to the authority of his father.

The jewels are in the possession of Mrs. Hardcastle. Tony wants to keep off the whole affair. But Miss Neville requests him not to desert them. Tony is ready to provide them a pair of horses. Mrs. Hardcastle enters and finds Miss Neville and her son Tony playing the game of love. She feels quite happy. Diggory brings a letter to Tony. Mrs. Hardcastle is furious to learn about the proposed elopement of Hastings and Miss Neville. She wants to carry off Miss Neville to her old aunt Pedigree. She also wants to take Tony. She leaves the stage.

Hastings and Marlow enter. Hastings accuses Tony of betraying them. Marlow complains of having been duped. He feels sorry that he is making himself contemptible. Miss Neville accuses Tony for the entire mess. The servants come and ask Miss Neville to get ready for the journey. Marlow accuses Hastings allowing him to continue under the impression that the house of Hardcastle is the inn. Miss Neville is called from within. Tony asks Hastings to meet him two hours later at the bottom of the garden when he will find everything ready for the flight.

The Act II presents every crucial issue in a climax. Marlow realises his mistake. He feels repentant. The casket of jewels sent to Marlow is handed over to Mrs. Hardcastle thinking that she is the landlady of the inn. Hastings' letter to Tony falls into the hands of Mrs. Hardcastle who thereupon decides to take Miss Neville to her old aunt Pedigree. Miss Hardcastle who acts as a bar maid tells Marlow that she is a poor relation of Mr. Hardcastle. Everybody accuses Tony for the muddle they are in. Tony devises a plan to give succour to Hastings and Miss Neville. Everything in the plot appears to revolve round Tony. Marlow too accuses Tony for misleading him.

Self-check exercise - 5

Why does Mrs Hardcastle want to take away Miss Neville to her old aunt?

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.....

2.7. Act V

In the three scenes in the Act the loose ends of the plot tied up and all the misunderstandings cleared. Every issue is resolved and the play ends on a happy note.

2.7.1

Hastings learns from a servant that Mrs. Hardcastle and Miss Neville have set forth in a post-coach. He learns also that Sir Charles, the father of Marlow has arrived. He withdraws as Sir Charles and Mr. Hardcastle approach laughing over the silly mistakes committed by Marlow. Both of them welcome the idea of the marriage of Marlow with Miss Hardcastle. Mr. Hardcastle assures Sir Charles that the two young people like each other.

Marlow enters and begs Mr. Hardcastle to pardon him for his high-handed behaviour. Mr. Hardcastle tells him that he knows all that has passed between his daughter and him (Marlow). Marlow denies this. He is not sure that Miss Hardcastle is in love with him. Sir Charles asks Marlow whether he ever took the hand of Miss Hardcastle and expressed his love. Marlow denies it. He withdraws.

Miss Hardcastle then enters. She confirms that Marlow has exhibited his love for her and she has had a number of interviews with him. She speaks very high of Marlow. Sir Charles doesn't believe in this. Then Miss Hardcastle says that she is prepared to demonstrate his love for her giving the elders an opportunity to watch the scene from behind

Self-check exercise - 6

What plan does Miss Hardcastle propose to show the elders that Marlow truly loves her?

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.....

2.7.2 Scene 2

As suggested by Tony, Hastings waits at the bottom of the garden. Tony joins him soon. He tells him that he has been shaken by the fast riding. He also tells him that he has left his mother and Miss Neville behind. Hastings perceives that Tony has taken them round and round. His mother believes that she is forty miles away from home. Hastings goes away to look after Miss Neville.

Mrs. Hardcastle comes in and feels that she is far away from home. On the way Tony frightens his mother saying that someone in a black hat is approaching them from behind. Tony tells her to hide in the thicket while he deals with that stranger. It is Hardcastle. Mrs. Hardcastle gets frightened and comes from running in. It is discovered as a trick that Tony has played. Mrs. Hardcastle is wild with Tony. She wants to teach him a lesson.

Miss Neville refuses to run away with Hastings. She prefers to wait for two or three years when she will become a major to be in full possession of her jewels. But Hastings says that they can do without that fortune. Miss Neville resolves to appeal to Mr. Hardcastle to do the right for her. Hastings doubts the competence of Mr. Hardcastle. Anyhow Miss Neville expresses her readiness to count on his influence. As a result of this decision their flight is postponed.

As the play progresses and is about to come to a conclusion the importance of the role of Tony increases. In the beginning of the play Tony sends Marlow and Hastings to his own house giving an impression that it is an inn. It lands them especially, Marlow in hot water. Now he hoodwinks his mother paving the way for the elopement (flight) of Hastings with Miss Neville. But Hastings is obliged to postpone their flight on the advice of Miss Neville.

Self-check exercise - 7

Why does Miss Neville refuse to run away with Hastings?

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.....

2.7.3 Scene 3

Miss Hardcastle asks her father and Sir Charles to hide behind the screen and overhear Marlow's confession of love for her. They agree to do so. Marlow enters. He meets Miss Hardcastle to take leave of her. Miss Hardcastle begs him to stay on for a day or two. She hopes everything would come to a good end. He is greatly impressed by her. But he thinks of the difference in status between them. He thinks of the disapproval of his father to his marriage with a woman of low status.

Marlow waxes eloquent on her beauty. He says that he is immensely impressed by her refined simplicity, Sir Charles is surprised to overhear his confession of love. Marlow goes on saying that his father will approve his choice of her. He declares that his happiness completely rests with her and he is going to stay there longer. Sir Charles and Mr. Hardcastle enter the scene. Marlow realises that he has been addressing (courting) Mr. Hardcastle's daughter. Marlow and Miss Hardcastle retire.

Mrs. Hardcastle and Tony enter. The former tells Mr. Hardcastle that her niece Miss Neville has run away with Mr. Hastings. Sir Charles praises Hastings and says that Miss Neville has made a better choice. Mrs. Hardcastle says that she is in possession of her (Miss Neville) fortune. At this juncture Hastings and Miss Neville enter, the former requesting Mr. Hardcastle to be considerate. Miss Neville appeals to Mrs. Hardcastle to restore her fortune. Tony renounces Miss Neville and leaves her free to marry the man of her choice. Hardcastle gives the hand of his daughter to Marlow in wedlock and wishes them all health and happiness.

In this last scene of the play every issue is resolved harshly. Miss Hardcastle takes the initiative to convince her father and Sir Charles about the sincerity of Marlow's love for her. She arranges the scene asking the elders to stand behind the screen watching young Marlow's affirmation of his love for her. She succeeds in this. Hastings and Miss Neville appear on the scene to appeal to Mr. Hardcastle's humanity. Tony declares that Miss Neville is free to marry any one of her choice. Thus the decks are cleared for Miss Neville's marriage with Hastings. This last scene of the play throws vivid light on the character of Miss Hardcastle and Mr. Hardcastle. Miss Hardcastle pursues her ends with a sincerity of purpose without allowing herself to be swayed by the circumstances. Mr. Hardcastle understands the young people and resolves everything to the happiness of all.

Self-check exercise - 8

Why does Tony agree to let Miss Neville marry Hastings?

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.....

2.8 LET'S SUM UP

In this unit you have read about the main action in the play and the roles of the different characters based on the discussion of scenes and incidents described here. We shall be making detailed study of the characters in the next unit.

2.9 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. What is the significance of the last scene in the play?
2. What are the crucial issues presented in Act IV.
3. Comment on humour in the situation created by Tony's trick played upon Marlow and Hastings.

2.10 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

Self-Check Exercise 1

She wants her son to get the fortune which Miss Neville is to inherit when she becomes a major.

Self-Check Exercise 2

He realised that one of the men is Marlow, who is supposed to marry his sister and decides to trick them.

Self-Check Exercise 3

Marlow feels uncomfortable in the company of ladies from well-to-do families but feels he can be free with bar-maids.

Self-Check Exercise 4

Mr Hardcastle thinks that Marlow is arrogant and shocking because Marlow's behaviour towards him is outrageous. Marlow believes Mr. Hardcastle to be the inkeeper and speaks to him harshly.

Self-Check Exercise 5

She suspects that Miss Neville will elope with Hastings if she is not taken away somewhere immediately.

Self-Check Exercise 6

She asks her father and Sir Charles to watch her and Marlow while he demonstrates his love for her.

Self-Check Exercise 7

She wants to run away and marry him only after she gets back her jewels from Mrs. Hardcastle.

Self-Check Exercise 8

He wants to marry another girl whom he is in love with.

BLOCK IV

UNIT -3 CHARACTERS

3.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to :

- describe the roles played by the different characters in the play.
- critically analyse Goldsmith's skill of characterization.
- relate the characters to the different events in the play
- compare and contrast different characters.

3.1 CONTENTS

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Contents
- 3.2 Introduction
- 3.3 Mrs Hardcastle
- 3.4 Miss Hardcastle
- 3.5 Marlow
- 3.6 Tony
- 3.7 Hastings
- 3.8 Let's sum up
- 3.9 Sample questions
- 3.10 Answers to self-check exercises

3.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses the roles played by the different characters and their significance in the action of the play. We also comment on Goldsmith's skill as a dramatist. You will also be able to describe the role of Miss Hardcastle and its relationship to the title of the play.

3.3 MRS HARDCASTLE

Mrs. Hardcastle is one of the central characters of the play *She Stoops to Conquer*. Tony is her son by her former husband Mr. Lumpkin. She doesn't bother about the schooling of her son. She thinks that Tony can do without education for he is the heir to fifteen hundred pounds a year. Tony takes his mother's love as lenience. She coddles (treat with great care and tenderness) him. Her love for him lands her in difficulties. It is this kind of treatment that gives him the chance to play tricks on her. In a way Mrs. Hardcastle's excessive maternal care is responsible for Tony's irresponsible behaviour.

Mrs. Hardcastle's country life doesn't inconvenience her much. She likes to have a trip now and then to the town. She has a great liking for the latest fashions. That's why she goes through fashion magazines and tries to dress herself in the latest styles. She apes the fashions of London. This shows her aesthetic sense unclipsed by her advancing age.

Mrs. Hardcastle is a self-centred woman. She plans that her son should marry her niece Miss Neville who is under her guardianship. She is the custodian of the jewels of Miss Neville. But Miss Neville is in love with Hastings. Mrs. Hardcastle, even after learning about Miss Neville's love affair with

Hastings tries her best to stop her by withholding her jewels. This shows her desperate attempts to thrust her will upon Miss Neville. In the end she has to bow down before the wishes of Tony and Miss Neville who go according to their plan of action.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (1)

What makes Tony an irresponsible young man ?

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.....

3.4 MISS HARDCASTLE

Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* was produced in the heyday of the Neo-classical age. Neo-classicism like the Romanticism is concerned more with types than with individuals. Obviously Goldsmith is hoping for the emergence of a new type of woman who would be self-confident, self-assured and without any trace of feminine fickleness of mind.

Miss Hardcastle (called Kate) the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hardcastle plays a major role in the play *She Stoops to Conquer*. She is always calm and cool. At the same time she is shrewd and dynamic. Mr. Hardcastle proposes to give her hand in marriage to a young man named Marlow. She listens to the account given by Miss Neville about him. She and her father have a good understanding of each other. Mr. Hardcastle too has a complete trust in her sense of discretion.

Miss Hardcastle speaks less. She has to manage her own affairs. She understands her problem when her father speaks about the bashful and reserved nature of the young man she has loved. Though she has problems she is not discouraged. She thinks over the problems and devises her own ways to get over them. In her first meeting with Marlow she observes his timid and bashful nature. She understands the good sense animating his bashfulness. She observes him from close quarters.

Miss Hardcastle determines to see that Marlow overcomes his reserve. By her resourcefulness she wants to conquer his heart. She is able to see deep into his heart. She thinks that Marlow is the modest 'man alive' among women of reputation and virtue. But she feels that Marlow is at home in the company of those women who occupy the lower rungs of the social ladder. So, she describes to stoop to the level of a bar maid to capture his heart. She dresses as a bar maid and appears before Marlow. Marlow doesn't suspect her to be Miss Hardcastle. So, he feels at ease in her company and is found very soon begging for the nectar of her lips. He attempts to kiss her. Miss Hardcastle thus succeeds in getting him out of the shell of his reserve. She keeps her distance protecting her modesty.

Miss Hardcastle is clear in her aims. With single-minded devotion she proves contrary to what her father thinks about Marlow (as arrogant and aggressive). She tells her father that Marlow is a modest young man. Then Mr. Hardcastle takes up this challenge and asks her father and Sir Charles, father of Marlow to observe everything from behind the screen. She succeeds in making Marlow confess his love to her - a poor relation of Mr. Hardcastle. She tells him that she is a poor relation of Mr. Hardcastle.

Miss Hardcastle remains unruffled throughout the play. She is calm and unperturbed. She is a highly resourceful lady.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (2)

What are the positive features of Miss Hardcastle's character?

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3.5 MARLOW

Marlow is the son of Sir Charles Marlow, a good friend of Mr. Hardcastle. Marlow's father sends him to Mr. Hardcastle to court Miss Hardcastle. Marlow goes along with his friend Hastings. Both of them don't know Miss Hardcastle's place. They meet Tony on the way. The latter understands everything and directs them to Mr. Hardcastle's house saying that it is an inn.

Taking Miss Hardcastle's place to be an inn Marlow behaves as a rich customer. He behaves as a self-centred young man. He feels at ease in the company of his friend Hastings and also with the low class women. He feels quite nervous in the presence of ladies or other respectable women. He has spent most of his years either in a college or an inn. That's why he doesn't know how to conduct himself with grace in the company of ladies. Miss Hardcastle disguised as a bar maid appears before him. Marlow fails to recognise her for he didn't look into her face in the first interview. He doesn't feel shy in the company of the bar maid. He is even bold. He tries to kiss her. He seizes her by the hand. He is greatly impressed by her attractive looks. He gives a graphic account of her tantalising looks, to his friend Hastings. When Hastings speaks about her (the bar maid's) honour, Marlow consents to behave towards her in a decent manner. He exhibits his sense of honour.

Marlow realises his mistake in taking Mr. Hardcastle's house to be an inn and he asks Miss Hardcastle to pardon him for taking her to be a bar maid. He wants to run away from there. But Miss Hardcastle's tears hold him back. His love for her grows unabated. Everything is discovered by Mr. Hardcastle and Sir Charles. Marlow behaves rather rashly as long as he thinks that Mr. Hardcastle's house is a tavern. He behaves in a repentant manner when he realises his mistake. Miss Hardcastle's plan conquers his heart.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (3)

Why does Marlow not know how to conduct himself well in the company of women?

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3.6 TONY

Tony Lumpkin plays a major role in the play *She Stoops to Conquer*. He is the son of Mrs. Hardcastle by her former husband. He is a carefree, jolly young man given to mirth and fun in life. It is Tony who gives a major turn to the course of events in the play. It is he who resolves the complications. He is fond of tavern-life. He keeps the low company. He has no formal schooling.

Tony is fond of mischief making. He directs Hastings and Marlow to the house of Mr. Hardcastle saying that it is an inn. This is a new turn to the action of the play. He misdirects the young men thus to take revenge upon Mr. Hardcastle who has been calling him a 'whelp'. Tony is clever enough

not to figure directly in the affairs of Hastings and Miss Neville, Marlow and Miss Hardcastle. He has no interest either in Miss Neville or in her jewels. He cares the least for all this.

Mr. Hardcastle observes Tony to be a mixture of tricks and mischief. Tony once plays a trick on Mr. Hardcastle. He is a good friend. He understands Miss Neville's love for Hastings. So he is prepared to help them to elope. He arranges everything for their flight. But Miss Neville's love of her jewels in the custody of Mrs. Hardcastle hold her back. Tony decides to give up Miss Neville for the sake of Hastings. He is fair and frank in his dealings with Miss Neville and Hastings.

Tony steals Miss Neville's casket of jewels from his mother and hands it to Hastings. But Hastings gives it to his friend Marlow who, in turn, gives it to Mrs. Hardcastle thinking that she is the landlady of the inn. So, without Tony's knowledge events take a worse turn. When Mrs. Hardcastle takes Miss Neville to her old aunt Pedigree everybody blames Tony for their miserable plight. Then Tony promises to restore Miss Neville to Hastings. He makes plans to frighten his mother. Mrs. Hardcastle realises the mischief of her son. Tony reminds her how everybody in the parish blames her for spoiling him. Tony possesses good sense. The last Act of the play throws a vivid light on the essential success of Tony.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (4)

Why does Tony mislead Marlow and Hastings?

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3.7 HASTINGS

In the play Hastings pairs off with Miss Neville. He is a good friend of Marlow. He accompanies his friend to the house of Mr. Hardcastle where he meets Miss Neville, niece of Mrs. Hardcastle. Miss Neville who is his love tells him that they are in the house of Mr. Hardcastle, not in an inn. Hastings withholds this secret from his friend Marlow. He proposes to Miss Neville that they should elope to France. But the latter is worried more about her jewels in the custody of her aunt Mrs. Hardcastle. Hastings is a sincere lover. He never bothers about her fortune.

Hastings is rather worldly wise in making matters smooth to serve his personal ends. For instance, he meets Mrs. Hardcastle and humours her in her weakness for town fashions. This he does to have good rapport with Mrs. Hardcastle who is the guardian of his lover. Hastings understands Tony well. He moves with him closely. Tony promises to assist Hastings to run away with Miss Neville. Tony hands over the casket of jewels to Hastings. Hastings by mistake hands it over to his friend Marlow. This shows more of his disinterestedness in the jewels of his lover than his negligence. His sole aim is to fly away with Miss Neville. At last Hastings succeeds in winning the hand of Miss Neville in marriage not because of his tact and dynamism but because of the helping nature of Tony and good sense of Mr. Hardcastle. Hastings is a good friend and a sincere lover who does everything to see that his love, Miss Neville is released from the guardianship of Mrs. Hardcastle.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (5)

What does Hastings humour Mrs. Hardcastle for?

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3.8 LET'S SUM UP

In this unit different characters are discussed. It is said that each character plays a significant role to promote the action of the play. This unit is an example of Goldsmith's skill in character portrayal. In this unit the prominent role of Miss Hardcastle is brought out and its relationship to the title of the play is relevantly discussed.

3.9 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Compare and contrast the characters of Miss Hardcastle and Miss Neville.
2. Compare Marlow with Hastings.
3. Write a note on the relationship between Mrs Hardcastle and Tony Lumpkin.

3.10 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

Self-Check Exercise 1

His mother's excessive care and love are responsible for his behaviour.

Self-Check Exercise 2

She is a self-confident, self-assured woman who shows none of the weaknesses of her sex.

Self-Check Exercise 3

Because he has spent most of his life either in a college or an inn and has met only of a low class women.

Self-Check Exercise 4

He does so, to take revenge on Mr. Hardcastle who has criticised him for his irresponsible behaviour.

Self-Check Exercise 5

Hastings humours Mrs Hardcastle in her weakness for town fashions.

BLOCK IV

UNIT -4 MAJOR THEMES

4.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading through this unit you will be able to

- list the major themes in the play
- analyse the play as an anti-sentimental comedy
- comment on the plot-construction.
- justify the title given to the play.

4.1 CONTENTS

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Contents
- 4.2 Introduction
- 4.3 **She Stoops To Conquer** as an anti-sentimental comedy
- 4.4 Plot construction
- 4.5 Let's sum up
- 4.6 Sample questions
- 4.7 Audio-visual support

4.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit discusses some of the major themes of the play. We critically examine how far this play is an antisentimental comedy and also study the devices used by Goldsmith in plot construction.

4.3 'SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER : AN ANTI-SENTIMENTAL COMEDY

The age of Goldsmith was an age of heroic drama and the comedy of manners. The heroic drama came as a sort of unconscious protest against Restoration, immorality and frivolity. But it was far from the plain truth and good sense which were gaining ground slowly. On the other hand, the comedy of manners held up a mirror to the foppery and frivolity, shallowness and licentiousness that characterized the aristocracy of the times. Good sense and plain truth were associated with the power classes of the society. As a result the lower classes who were considered to be sober in their attitudes and simple in their habits were held in more esteem than the fashionable circles of the aristocratic class.

Reaction against the sentimental movement started to a great extent with Fielding's Tom Jones. Fielding satirizes the pseudomorality of the age. He condemns the hypocritical and calculating virtue. Some writers presented immorality and shallowness of feelings and thought in the guise of sentiments. Sentiments as portrayed by the playwrights lacked the veracity to make them serious enough to impress the readers. As a result of this, comedy was looked down upon by the audience.

Anti-sentimental comedy started with Sheridan and Goldsmith. The latter wanted to revive the spirit that animated the comedies of Shakespeare. *She Stoops to Conquer* is Goldsmith's best play. It

centres round some situations which assume the character of intrigues. Goldsmith through the attitude of Marlow, reflects the respect in which people occupying the lower rungs of the social ladder were held. For instance, he feels more at ease in the company of low class women than the ladies of aristocratic families. No doubt it is the temperament of Marlow, but at the same time his attitude is in tune with the social ethos of the day. Miss Hardcastle stoops to the level of a bar maid to win over the heart of Marlow. Later on, to tune herself to him she tells him that she is a poor relation of Mr. Hardcastle. She succeeds in her scheme.

Wit and humour mark the development of character and situation at every stage. The outcome ultimately depends upon intrigues. Goldsmith succeeds in writing a pure, simple anti-sentimental comedy restoring the true spirit of comedy.

4.4 PLOT CONSTRUCTION

On the surface the play appears to be complicated but a closer look reveals the clarity enlivening the skill in the plot construction. In the very first scene of the play, the main issues intertwined with the attitudes of the characters concerned, are outlined. There is no ambiguity in the exposition. Tony Lumpkin, the son of Mrs. Hardcastle by her former husband seems to have been spoiled by his mother. He is all tricks and mischief. Mr. Hardcastle speaks about Marlow the young son of his friend who is going to visit them soon. Miss Hardcastle learns that Marlow, who is proposed to her, is a bashful and reserved young man. Then she starts to think about him.

Tony plays a trick on Hastings and Marlow who are on the way to Mr. Hardcastle's house. He directs them to Mr. Hardcastle's house saying that it is an inn. Marlow's basic mistake stems from this trick of Tony's. Hastings soon comes to know the truth through his love, Miss Neville. But he keeps his friend under the same impression. As a result of this Marlow as a customer in an inn, tries to lord over everybody. He even behaves rather harshly. This overbearing behaviour of Marlow comes as a shock to Mr. Hardcastle who then learnt from his friend (Marlow's father) that he is modest. He exercises the utmost patience.

Another interesting intrigue of the play is Hastings's proposal for elopement with Miss Neville. But the latter's fascination for her jewels which are in the custody of Mrs. Hardcastle, delays the action. Mrs. Hardcastle who wants to see Miss Neville as the wife of her son Tony, plans to tighten her grip over Miss Neville. Meanwhile Miss Hardcastle who understands the heart and head of Marlow determines to win him over by disguising herself as a bar maid. She succeeds in turning him to her. Tony is prepared to help Hastings.

When Marlow comes to know that it is not an inn but the house of Mr. Hardcastle he repents and tries to leave the place at once. But his growing emotional attachment to Miss Hardcastle prevents him from doing so. Miss Hardcastle tells him that she is a poor relation of Mr. Hardcastle. At every step she stoops, though not at the expense of her honour, to conquer him. But Mr. Hardcastle thinks about him as a rash young man. Miss Hardcastle arranges a scene to prove his modesty and love. She asks her father and Sir Charles to hide behind the screen watching them. Thus she succeeds in proving the modesty of Marlow.

The real crisis in the play occurs when Mrs. Hardcastle discovers the plot of Hastings to elope with Miss Neville. Mrs. Hardcastle decides to keep Miss Neville under the control of her aunt Pedigree. Tony takes his mother and Miss Neville and drives them round and round until Mrs. Hardcastle is terribly shaken. Thus Tony makes his mother relent. Mrs. Hardcastle is defeated in her game of keeping Miss Neville and her fortune under her thumb.

Every intrigue is delineated keeping the spirit of suspense spiced with the sweetness of a pure comedy intact. Nowhere in the play the growing interest in the series of situations sacrificed for

the sake of fun or laughter. Every situation and character is portrayed in tune with the development of the action. Balance is the key trait of Goldsmith's artistic skill underlying the plot construction of the play *She Stoops to Conquer*.

4.5 LET'S SUM UP

In this unit we discussed, some major themes in the play. We critically examined the features which make it an anti-sentimental comedy. We also described Goldsmith's technique of plot construction focussing on his attempts to balance the situations in the play. At the same time he used different devices like situation and character to produce humour.

4.6 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- 1) Bring out the humour in *She Stoops to Conquer*.
- 2) Examine the play as a comedy of errors.
- 3) Write a note on plot construction.
- 4) Why is *She Stoops to Conquer* considered an anti-sentimental comedy?

4.7 AUDIO - VIDEO SUPPORT

Audio - lesson is made on
She Stoops to Conquer: an anti-sentimental Comedy.

Dr. S. LAXMINARAYANA

BLOCK V : SACRIFICE

Rabindranath Tagore

Block V has two units.

Unit - 1 is an introduction to the age of Rabindranath Tagore and it also discusses his contribution to the Indian literature.

Unit - 2. Analyses the play, discusses the issues and the problems posed in the play.

BRAOU

BLOCK V SACRIFICE

UNIT -1 INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAY WRIGHT

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After Reading through this unit you will be able to :

- identify and discuss the Literary period of Rabindranath Tagore, his poetic and dramatic output on a variety of themes.
- identify his techniques in writing poetry, fiction, drama and prose pieces.
- discuss his association with the theatre.
- comment upon the extreme variety in playwright's purpose, theme, structure, language and treatment of the characters

1.1 CONTENTS

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Contents
- 1.2 Introduction
- 1.3 Introduction to the playwright.
- 1.4 Let's sum up
- 1.5 Sample questions
- 1.6 Answers to self-check exercises

1.2 INTRODUCTION

In this unit you will study the background to the play Sacrifice. As in the case of Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* you do not have to make a detailed study of this play.

This unit will provide you information about the playwright, his varied themes as well as the techniques employed. It also discusses the point that Tagore's approach to drama was individualistic and innovatory, thus constituting an important land mark in the history of Indian drama.

1.3 INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAYWRIGHT

"I can find no other figure in world history who compares with Tagore in the fine balance of his genius : on the one hand an introspective mystic and a poet of supreme national importance and influence: and on the other, an extroverted thinker in touch with the heart of his own people, the breadth of whose vision yet belongs to the whole of mankind". One of the countless tributes paid to Tagore on the occasion of his birth centenary in 1961, this estimate underlines the scope and significance of Tagore's multifaceted achievements in the fields of literature, culture and thought. Not only was he the creator and inspirer of modern Indian literature but also its interpreter, through his *Gitanjali* and other translations, to the world outside. As a writer, there was practically no genre that he did not attempt and achieve merit in. From his ceaseless pen flowed an immense variety of poetry, fiction, drama and prose writings. He was a gifted musician and towards the end of his life

he achieved fame as a painter. He had a life-long interest in education and founded the famous Santiniketan school which later blossomed into the international Viswa-Bharati University. In his desire to ensure that schools and universities do not remain mere ivory towers of learning, he also started the Sriniketan, as an adjunct to his rural school to serve the villagers. For sometime he took an active part in the struggle for independence and was the first Indian to protest against the Jalianwallahbagh massacre by renouncing his knighthood. Tagore also made his mark on the international scene by winning the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913 and by ceaselessly striving for international peace and understanding. Hailed as Gurudev in his homeland he is known as a great humanist and internationalist abroad. He is one of the greatest personalities of our country.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (1)

How did Rabindranath Tagore protest against JalianWallahbagh?

.....

Tagore is basically a poet - *Kavi* - and his poetic output displays an astonishing variety of theme and technique. There was no aspect of human existence - either man's relationship with his creator or man's relationship with society and nature - that did not form the subject matter of his poetry. As regards poetic forms, he wrote songs, lyrics, odes, sonnets, narrative poetry, blank verse and even vers libre. His poems written in Bengali over six decades run into many volumes. As much of this poetry has remained untranslated, Tagore is known to outsiders only as the poet of Gitanjali, a mystical seeker of the Divine. The English Gitanjali with its superior writing of mood and melody, won universal acclaim and made Tagore a poet of world stature.

Tagore's contribution to the development of Indian fiction is of utmost significance. He pioneered the modern psychological novel with his *Binodini* in 1903 and created a new fictional idiom to portray the new social stirrings of post - Renaissance Bengal. The variety of themes that figure in his novels - widow remarriage, consequences of arranged marriages, Swadeshi Movement, political terrorism, religious revivalism, man-woman relationship, indicates the immensity of Tagore's range of interests and concerns as a writer. His novels like *Gora*, *The Home and the World*, *Chaturanga* and *Four Chapters* apart from being works of art serve as signposts in the development of Indian society and sensibility. As a short-story writer, Tagore's achievement remains unsurpassed. Not only was he the first Indian to write in this new genre but he also gave it a new design and direction by writing about the most ordinary people. His short stories which number more than a hundred afford us rare insights into human psychology and behaviour. Gifted thus with 'Protean plasticity' of genius, Tagore proved to be a giant among literary figures.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (2)

What are the special features of Tagore's short stories?

.....

Among the many facets of Tagore's myriad-minded genius was his intense love of drama. His association with the theatre began quite early in his life when he used to take part in the production of plays in his ancestral home which was a centre of artistic and literary activities. At the age of twenty he wrote his own play *Valmiki Pratibha* and acted in it. His last play, *Shyama*, was staged in 1940, the year before he died. Thus, Tagore's interest in drama was life-long and quite often, he performed the roles of dramatist, actor, composer and director. Tagore's approach to drama was individualistic and innovatory. Most of the plays are highly poetic in content and "Rabindranath the playwright rarely ceases to be Rabindranath the poet". In some plays, music and dance become

predominant and some are highly symbolic. Among his plays, **Valmiki Pratibha**, **Rituranga**, **Phalguni** and **Sesh Darshan** are musical plays, operas with more songs than dialogues. **Chandalika**, **Tasher Desh**, **Chitrangada** and **Shyama** are dance dramas. Though all these came to be popular on the stage, they can hardly be classified as legitimate dramatic works. Hence, it is said that Tagore did not write plays for the public but created a public for his plays. Tagore also wrote a cycle of symbolist plays-Raja ("The King of the Dark Chamber"), **Dakghar** (The Post Office), **Rakta Karali** ("The Red Oleanders"), **Achalayatan** and **Muktadhara**. Lastly, there are light-hearted comedies like **Chirakumar Sabha** ("Bachelor's club") and plays like **Sacrifice** in which social action is important. As in the case of other literary forms, Tagore's plays show extreme variety in purpose, theme, structure, language and treatment. They constitute an important landmark in the history of Indian drama.

1.4 LET'S SUM UP

In this unit you read about Tagore as a poet, as an educationist, a great humanist and a towering personality in the field of Indian drama. This unit further discussed the variety of purpose, theme, structure and language in Tagore's plays.

1.5 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. What made Tagore found the famous Shantiniketan and how did it flourish?
2. List some of the plays written by Tagore?
3. Write about the achievements of Tagore?

1.6 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISES

Self-Check Exercise 1

Tagore protested against the Jallian Wallahbagh massacre by renouncing his knighthood.

Self-Check Exercise 2

His short stories gave us rare insights into human psychology and behaviour. They are written about the most ordinary people but in a new design and direction.

Self-Check Exercise 3

Tagore performed the roles of dramatist, actor, composer and director.

BLOCK V

UNIT -2 ANALYSIS AND ISSUES OF THE PLAY

2.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to :

- discuss the play as a powerful plea for the religion of love and compassion
- identify the dramatic conflict in the plot
- can conclude that the characterization in the play is psychologically impressive
- comment critically the roles played by important persons.

2.1 CONTENTS

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Contents
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 Analysis and issues of the play
- 2.4 Let's sum up
- 2.5 Sample questions
- 2.6 Answers to self-check exercises
- 2.7 Further reading

2.2 INTRODUCTION

The unit discusses the theme into parts - one, all that happens before the entrance of Aparna as a prologue, with her anguish for her pet goat sacrificed before the goddess really starts the dramatic action.

All the incidents are supposed to take place in front of or within the temple of Goddess Kali, and the action is continuous without any division into acts and scenes; in about two days without any interval. There are episodes, but they constitute a single action.

2.3 ANALYSIS AND ISSUES OF THE PLAY

Among the forty odd plays that Tagore wrote, Sacrifice is perhaps the most significant play as it deals with a theme which is of the highest importance to man, society and nature-namely, the role of religion in life. There is an interesting story about its composition, to quote Tagore:

I wanted a serial for Balak, and was thinking about one. I was going to visit Ramnarayan Basu. The train was crowded, and an Englishman wouldn't allow the lamp to be hidden, so it burnt brightly all night and I couldn't sleep. But dozed, and dreamed of a father and a girl before a temple. Blood was running out over the steps, and the girl was deeply pained 'Why is this blood? Why is this blood?' she kept asking, and tried to wipe it away. Her father was very troubled, and couldn't answer her, so tried to silence her, really to silence his own mind. I woke up and determined to put this in my story. And I used also the story of the Raja of Tripura who introduced Vaishnavism into his state, and was banished by his brother.

Thus he came to write the novel, 'Rajarshi' in 1884 and later dramatized it as a verse-play in Bengali in 1890 called Visarjan. The English play Sacrifice is a translation of Visarjan with some changes and was published in 1917.

The play is an indictment of the sacrifice of blood in the name of religion and revolves round the worship has a frightening and cruel aspect to it. She is depicted as terrible and bloodthirsty and her position as the patron goddess of things and her association with Tantric rituals have given her a reputation of evil though according to legend, she assumed the frightening form to destroy the demon, Mahishasura and save the world from evil. She is the most popular deity of Bengal and the name of Calcutta is derived from her. Tagore shows rare moral courage in denouncing the gruesome worship associated with her cult while taking care to reveal the benign aspects of the deity in her other manifestations as Durga, Katyayini, Tripura Sundari, Shyama. Worship when indulged in ignorance, superstition, fear or greed becomes bloodthirsty and dehumanizes man. Worship which results from true love and devotion illumines the human heart and fills it with compassion. The first one involves taking of life i.e., sacrifice in its negative meaning of offering blood to appease or please a deity. The other is manifested by giving or renouncing life in the spirit of true sacrifice. Tagore explains:

When religion was materialistic, when men worshipped their gods for fear of their malevolence or for greed of wealth and power, then the ceremonies of worship were cruel and sacrifices were claimed without restraint. With the growth of man's spiritual life, our worship has become the worship of love.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (1)

How does Tagore express his moral courage in the play?

The play 'Sacrifice' is a powerful plea for the religion of love and compassion as against the dehumanization of man in its name. The play opens with Queen Gunavati of Tippera (modern Tripura) making a vow to Goddess Kali with the blessings of the priest Raghupati to sacrifice one hundred buffaloes and three hundred goats if she is blessed with a child. The piteous appeals of the beggar girl Aparna whose pet goat had been sacrificed to the goddess move the heart of king Govinda who forthwith forbids the shedding of blood for worship. The King's command is challenged by Raghupati on the plea of ageless tradition, historical perpetuity, scriptural sanction and sole prerogative in matters ecclesiastical. The king refuses to recant his order and Raghupati plots to kill the king with the support of the commander-in-chief Nayan Rai and the king's brother, Nakshatra who are dumbfounded by the king's order but afraid to protest openly. Raghupati wins even the Queen's support in his rebellion against king Govinda. These deeds of Raghupati repulse and shock the tender heart of Jaisingh, his adopted son and the temple acolyte. He undergoes great conflict of mind as it is not easy for him to choose between the king and his foster father. He feels drawn to Aparna who begs him to leave the heartless goddess.

When called upon to use his soldiers to prevent sacrifice of animals in the temple of Kali, the commander-in-chief Nayan Rai pleads his inability and surrenders his sword to the king. Raghupati tries to tempt the king's brother, Nakshatra, with the throne provided he can satisfy the thirst of the goddess for the king's blood. He also threatens Nakshatra that the Goddess is firm about blood from the king's house. Their plot is discovered and they are both exiled, for eight years. Raghupati with another scheme in mind begs the king though reluctantly for one day's time. He now commands Jaisingh to bring kingly blood to the altar of the goddess before midnight. Jaisingh unable to make up his mind between his awareness of the injustice of his foster father's demand and his duty to him, offers himself as sacrifice to the goddess as he is also of a royal line. Even the stony heart of Raghupati breaks at the sight of his dead disciple and adopted son. He now fully realises how utterly

merciless and selfish he had been in his worship of the bloodthirsty goddess. He unceremoniously lifts the image of the goddess and throws it away. When Gunavati comes with her offerings, Raghupati informs her that there is no goddess to receive her sacrifice. Jaisingh's sacrifice has not been in vain. The king and the queen are reconciled and Raghupati now, fully repentant after his folly takes Aparna whom he has detested earlier, to his bosom. There is a sub-plot about queen Gunavati's plans to get the child Druva murdered but it is not developed.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (2)

What does the play, Sacrifice oppose?

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Though the play deals with Kali worship prevalent in the past in Tripura, it has a universal and timeless appeal. It is significant that the English version of the play was written and enacted in 1917 during the course of the First World War and dedicated to "those heroes who bravely stood for peace when human sacrifice was claimed for the goddess of War". Tagore, one of the greatest humanists of all time, thus universalises his protest against the shedding of blood anywhere or at any time in the name of religion or race. The play echoes and affirms the great message of the Buddha for compassion and reverence for life, both human and animal. As a humanistic playwright, Tagore fully imbibed the message of Buddha about Ahimsa and kinship of all living things. Any religion or way of worship which veers away from this principle of love can only be false and inhuman. Tagore is not opposed however, to true religion. What the play denounces is only the blood thirsty idolatry reindulged in the name of the goddess, Kali.

As a play, Sacrifice is full of dramatic conflict-both internal and external and tragic passion. The dramatic possibilities of the conflict between dogmatic religion and true faith, between ossified ritual and the universal law of humanity between selfish priestly authority and humane secular power are fully exploited by Tagore. There are also the moving conflicts between wife and husband, between father and child, between brother and brother not to mention the agonising conflict in the heart of Jaisingh. All the conflicts get resolved with the self-sacrifice of Jaisingh which reconciles the opposing forces and illumines the heart of the contenders.

The characterization in the play is psychologically impressive. It is the character of Raghupati which dominates and directs the play. His audacious challenge of royal authority, his Brahminical arrogance, his Machiavellian manipulations and his poignant repentance at the end make him the outstanding character in the play. His conduct shows how, over the ages religion has been debased as an instrument of oppression and selfish authoritarianism. Raghupati's insensitivity to the sufferings of others is efficiently brought out in the callous way he justifies the orgy of butchery in the temple of Kali.

"Sin has no meaning in reality. To kill, it is neither sin nor anything else. Do you not know that the dust of this earth is made of countless killings? Old Time is ever writing the chronicle of the transient life of creatures in letters of blood. Killing is in the wildness, in the habitations of men, in birds nests, in insects holes, in the sea, in the sky; there is killing for life, for sport, for nothing whatever. The world is ceaselessly killing : and the great goddess Kali, the spirit of ever changing time, is standing with her thirsty tongue hanging down from her mouth, with her cup in hand, into which is running the red life-blood of the world, like juice from the crushed cluster of grapes". The depths to which he descends in his efforts to retain his priestly power are revealed in the way he stoops to deceit and cunning in his efforts to tempt Nayan Rai and Nakshatra. He uses many wiles-pleadings, threats, persuasion and commands - to defeat the king. The life of the innocent boy, Druva, who is a favourite of the king, is also threatened. When Nakshatra is hesitant to offer the boy to Kali, Raghupati tells him :

Prince, it is nothing. It takes only a moment, - not more than it does to sniff a candle. That life's light will die in the flash, like lightning in the stormy night of July, leaving its thunderbolt for ever deep in the king's pride.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (3)

How could Raghupati, the priest dominate and direct the play?

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The humiliation that he suffers when he has to beg the king for favour makes him more determined for revenge :

My pride wallows in the mire. I have shamed my Brahminhood. That light is extinct in me, which gave me the right to defy the king's power. The Eastern lamp can be replenished and lighted again and again, but the star once extinguished is lost for ever. I am that lost star. Life's days are mere tinsel, most trifling of God's gifts, and I had to beg for one of those days from the king with bent knees. Let its infamous black brows be red with king's blood before it dies.

But all the arrogance, adamancy and craftiness vanish when he is confronted with the scene of Jaisingh's sacrifice. He realizes the importance and inertness of the idol he has worshipped to ruin. He addresses the image:

Look how she stands there, the silly stone - deaf, dumb, blind - the whole sorrowing world weeping at her door, the noblest hearts wrecking themselves at her stony feet. Give me back my Jaisingh. Oh, it is all in vain. Our bitterest cries wander in emptiness - the emptiness that we vainly try to fill with these stony images of delusion. Away with them.

It is important to realize that Tagore is not advocating here the total abolition of religious worship but only a creative renovation of it without its inhuman excesses. This view is projected through the character of King Govinda, who is an embodiment of humanism and compassion. The king is depicted as so humane that the sorrow of a mere beggar girl, Aparna, for her pet goat - just an animal - moves his heart. He courts unpopularity, danger and even alienation from his wife by prohibiting the sacrifice of animals to Kali. When his wife, Queen Gunavati pleads with him to leave religious matters to the Brahmins he replies:

It is not the Brahmin's right to violate the eternal good. The creature's blood is not the offering for gods. And it is within the rights of the king and the peasant alike to maintain truth and rightness. The king remarks that man loses his humanity when it concerns his gods. We have innumerable instances of the most horrendous crimes committed in the name of religion. How many lives - both human and animal - have been taken in the name of one god or another. What we need is the religion of love and brotherhood. The king appeals to the goddess:

Accept these flowers, Goddess, and let your creatures live in peace. Mother, those who are weak in this world are so helpless, and those who are strong are so cruel. Greed is pitiless, ignorance blind, and pride takes no heed when it crushes the small under its foot. Mother, do not raise your sword and lick your lips for blood; do not set brother against brother and woman against man.

The opposing forces of good and evil, humanism and religious obscurantism personified by the characters of Govinda and Raghupati find a battleground in the conscience of young Jaisingh whose selfless sacrifice leads to a reformation in the worship of Kali. He is at first benumbed by the conflicting claims of love for Aparna and the king on the one hand and on the other, his filial obligations to Raghupati and his unflinching devotion to the goddess and the repellant fact of her bloodthirstiness. He confesses to the image:

I have served thee from my infancy Mother Kali, yet I understand thee not.

The duality of her nature confounds him. She is the loving and maternal goddess. The Mother thirsting for our love. She is also the blood-thirsty ogress.

The citizens eulogize her thus:

The dread Mother dance naked in the battlefield
Her lolling tongue burns like a red flame of fire,
Red streams of blood run from her cloud-black limbs,
And the world trembles and cracks under her tread.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (4)

What do you know about the nature of king Govinda?

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His doubts and vacillations vanish as he watches the machinations of Raghupati. His association with Aparna infuses in him the qualities of affection and compassion. He is, however, unwilling to rebel against his foster father. When his master demands that he should bring kingly blood to the altar of the goddess, he cries out in anguish.

Listen to the cry of these children, Mother. Let there be only flowers, the beautiful flowers for thy offerings - no more blood. They are red even as blood - these bunches of hibiscus. They have come out of the heart - burst of the earth, pained at the slaughter of her children.

Finally, by killing himself at the feet of the goddess, Jaisingh kills the falsehood "that sucks the life blood of man".

The character of Queen Gunavati and the beggar girl Aparna represent in a way the dead nature of Kali herself. While Aparna is the embodiment of love and kindness, Queen Gunavati, in her craving for a child, plots to sacrifice the innocent child Druva to Kali. Life for life seems to be her motto. She supports the priest, Raghupati in his defiance of the king and tries her best, though in vain, to get the king's command forbidding sacrifice revoked. It is only towards the end when Jaisingh had brought about a reformation in Raghupati that she is reconciled to her husband by realizing her error. Aparna plays a pivotal role in the play. She is instrumental in changing the hearts of king Govinda and Jaisingh. She is bold enough to defy the tradition of ages and is desirable to the goddess as "Not mother, but demon". It is her presence and her persuasion that convince Jaisingh that he had been venerating the "unanswering void-truthless, merciless, and motherless". She is forgiving by nature and consoles the heart-broken Raghupati when Jaisingh dies by addressing him as "father", despite his earlier inimical conduct towards her.

The play 'Sacrifice' calls upon us to reexamine our ossified views of religion and proclaims that there is no law or custom superior to the 'Law of love and Compassion'.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE (5)

Why does Queen Gunavati plot to sacrifice the innocent child Druva to Kali?

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2.4 LET'S SUM UP

The unit has discussed the structure of the play in relation to its theme. It discussed the plot as adequate to its theme. It discussed how the action in the play took a sudden dramatic turn with Aparna's denunciation of animal sacrifice and swiftly moves to a crisis in that the attempted murder of Druva. The unit also discussed how, in spite of Govinda being the titular hero, the central character of the tragedy was his antagonist, who grips your attention from beginning to end. The unit also discussed that the turmoil created by conflicting loyalties ended in the sacrifice of Jaising.

2.5 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. What is the weakness of Raghupati as exposed in the play?
2. Why does Jaising kill himself?
3. What is the eternal conflict in Govinda, how does he overcome it?

2.6 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK EXERCISE

Self-Check Exercise 1

Tagore expresses his moral courage in denouncing the gruesome worship associated with goddess Kali.

Self-Check Exercise 2

The play, Sacrifice opposes the shedding of blood for worship and dehumanization of man.

Self-Check Exercise 3

Raghupati, the priest could dominate and direct the play through his Brahminical arrogance and his Machiavellian manipulations.

Self-Check Exercise 4

King Govinda is an embodiment of humanism and compassion. He even courts unpopularity, danger and alienation from his wife by prohibiting the animal sacrifice to Kali.

Self-Check Exercise 5

Queen Gunavati plots to sacrifice Druva to Kali because:

She is childless and yearns for one,

She is jealous of the boy,

She blindly believes that Kali will bless her with a son if she gives the human sacrifice.

2.7 AUDIO-VISUAL SUPPORT MATERIAL

Rabindranath Tagore, the poet and the dramatist. (audio lesson)

2.8 FURTHER READING

- * Edward Thomson, Rabindranath Tagore:
Poet and Dramatist (Oxford University press, 1948)
- * S.C.Sen Gupta, The Great Sentinel:
A study of Rabindranath Tagore
(A. Mukherjee & Co. Calcutta, 1948)

ANDHRA PRADESH OPEN UNIVERSITY
B.A.DEGREE
SECOND YEAR COURSE IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

COURSE - I DRAMA

Block I	Julius Caesar	--- William Shakespeare
Block II	The Apple Cart	--- G.B.Shaw
Block III	She Stoops to Conquer	--- Oliver Goldsmith
Block IV	As you like it	--- William Shakespeare
Block V	Sacrifice	--- Rabindranath Tagore.

COURSE - II PROSE

Block I	Of Studies, Of Friendship	--- Francis Bacon
Block II	Mischief's of Party Spirit	--- Joseph Addison
Block III	Old China	--- Charles Lamb
Block IV	Sweetness & Light	--- Matthew Arnold
Block V	Venana (a radio talk)	--- C.R.Reddy
Block VI	Prose for our Time	--- Ed.Shahane.

BRAOU

BRAOU

ANDHRA PRADESH OPEN UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF ARTS

B.A. II YEAR (3 YEAR DEGREE COURSE) ENGLISH

COURSE — I : DRAMA

ASSIGNMENT—I

N.B.

1. Do not copy the answer directly from any of the books.
2. As far as possible try to answer the questions independently, in your own words.
3. If it is necessary to quote from any source give the correct reference.
4. Use your own foolscap pages for writing the assignment.
5. Leave sufficient margins for the comments of the evaluator.
6. Completion of this assignment normally should not take more than an hour.

SECTION—A

Answer the following questions in not more than 250 words each.

1. Consider the role of supernatural element in Julius Caesar
2. Why is the play called The Apple Cart?

SECTION—B

Explain the following passage with reference to context in not more than 125 words.

- (a) 'Brutus' and 'Caesar' : What should be in that, 'Caesar'?
Why should that name be sounded more than yours?

ANDHRA PRADESH OPEN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF ARTS

B.A. II YEAR (3 YEAR DEGREE COURSE) ENGLISH

COURSE I : DRAMA

ASSIGNMENT—II

N.B:

1. Do not copy the answer directly from any of the books.
2. As far as possible try to answer the questions independently in your own words.
3. If it is necessary to quote from any source give the correct reference.
4. Use your own foolscap pages for writing the assignment.
5. Leave sufficient margins for the comments of the evaluator.
6. Completion of this assignment normally should not take more than an hour.

SECTION—A

Answer the following questions in not more than 250 words each.

1. How does Antony turn the Roman mob against the conspirators?
2. Who calls the king an India rubber stamp and why?

SECTION—B

Answer the following passage with reference to context in not more than 125 words.

- (a) It is certainly a consoling thought that if we were peacefully blockaded by the League of Nations we could live for at least three weeks on our Chocolate creams.

ANDHRA PRADESH OPEN UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF ARTS

B.A. II year (3 YEAR DEGREE COURSE) ENGLISH

COURSE I : DRAMA

A

ASSIGNMENT —III

N.B:

1. Do not copy the answer directly from any of the books.
2. As far as possible try to answer the questions independently, in your own words.
3. If it is necessary to quote from any source give the correct reference.
4. Use your own foolscap pages for writing the assignment.
5. Leave sufficient margins for the comments of the evaluator.
6. Completion of this assignment normally should not take more than an hour.

SECTION —A

Answer the following questions in not more than 250 words each.

1. Consider the situation created by Rosalind's disguise in her relations with Orlando.
2. Consider the role of Apama in the play, Sacrifice.

SECTION—B

Answer the following question in not more than 125 words.

- (a) Which of the traits of the character of Tony Lumpkin do you find amusing and why?

ANDHRA PRADESH OPEN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF ARTS
B.A. (II YEAR) (3 YEAR DEGREE COURSE) EXAMINATION
MODEL QUESTION PAPER

COURSE 1 : DRAMA

Time: 3 Hours

Max.Marks - 100

Min.Marks - 35

Section A - 4 x 15 = 60

Answer any four questions in not more than 250 words each.

1. Describe how the conspiracy to murder Caesar was hatched and carried out.
2. Attempt a character sketch of Brutus.
3. Examine the character and role of Cassius in Julius Caesar.
4. What is the principal theme of The Apple Cart ?
5. Attempt a character sketch of Boanerges.
6. Is 'She Stoops to Conquer' a comedy of errors? Give reasons for your answer.
7. Trace the course of love between Orlando and Rosalind.
8. What is the principal conflict in Sacrifice?

Section B - 5x8 = 40

Answer any five of the following questions in not more than 125 words each.

9. "Ay, Casca, tell us what hath Chanc'd today. That Caesar look so sad." Explain with reference to context.
10. "Here comes a Caesar. When comes such another?" Explain with reference to context.
11. "He'll turn Boanerges inside out after letting him roar the palace down." Explain with reference to context.
12. "Do not let us quarrel about words, gentleman I cannot resign. But I can abdicate." Explain with reference to context.
13. Discuss Antony's funeral oration and its importance to the action in the play Julius Caesar.
14. Write a note on the relationship between King Magnus and Orinthia.
15. Write a note on Breakages Limited.
16. Consider the appropriateness of the title, *She Stoops to Conquer*.
17. How does Shakespeare present the theme of love in *As You Like It* ?
18. Analyse the character of Raghupathi in *Sacrifice*.