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**Core Paper – VII INDIAN WRITING IN ENGLISH**

**DRAMA:**

**Detailed:-**

**Chitra – Rabindranath Tagore**

**Non-deatiled:-**

**Tughlaq – Girish Karnad**

**POETRY:**

**Detail:**

- **Electra - Sri Aurobindo**
- **Stone Goddess – Sri Aurobindo**
- **River - A.K.Ramanujam**
- **My Grandmother's house - Kamala Das**

**Non-Detail:**

- **Lotus – Toru Dutt**
- **Indian Weavers – Sarojini Naidu**
- **Breezy April – Rabindranath Tagore**
- **In a night of train – Jayanta Mahapatra**
- **Indian Women – Shiv K Kumar**

**FICTION:**

- ❖ **Cry the Peacock – Anita Desai**
- ❖ **English Teacher - R.K. Narayan**

**PROSE:**

**Indian Speakers – Parvathi Vasudevan (Macmillan)**

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POETRY





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## POETRY

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One of the most popular definitions remains that made by William Wordsworth in the introduction to the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads* in 1802: 'Poetry is the spontaneous outflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origins from emotion recollected in tranquillity'.

A type of literature in which ideas and feelings are expressed in compact, imaginative, and often musical language. Poetry in general seems to have sprung from two causes, each of them lying deep in our nature. First, the instinct of imitation is implanted in man from childhood, one difference between him and other animals being that he is the most imitative of living creatures, and through imitation learns his earliest lessons; and no less universal is the pleasure felt in things imitated. We have evidence of this in the facts of experience. Objects which in themselves we view with pain, we delight to contemplate when reproduced with minute fidelity: such as the forms of the most ignoble animals and of dead bodies. The cause of this again is, that to learn gives the liveliest pleasure, not only to philosophers but to men in general; whose capacity, however, of learning is more limited. Thus the reason why men enjoy seeing a likeness is, that in contemplating it they find themselves learning or inferring, and saying perhaps, 'Ah, that is he.' For if you happen not to have seen the original, the pleasure will be due not to the imitation as such, but to the execution, the colouring, or some such other cause.

### THE ERA OF INDIAN RENAISSANCE:

In the sphere of Indo-Anglian poetry, the era of Renaissance may also be termed “the age of Dutts” because of the two sisters- Aru Dutt and Toru Dutt and the renowned intellectual Romesh Chandra Dutt dominated the poetical scene of this period.

Toru Dutt had a different order of intellect and exhibited great ability and originality in bringing Indo-Anglian poetry on a high level of poetic excellence. She had remarkable command over English as none of her predecessors had. She could successfully use English language to express varied human emotions. In her finest work *THE ANCIENT BALLADS AND LEGENDS OF HINDUSTAN*, she glorified the cultural heritage of India and imparted Vedic solemnity and simplicity to her poetry. Toru Dutt was a promising and talented poetic artist among nineteenth century Indo-Anglian poets. She has no parallel and a few peers in narrative and descriptive verse.

### THE ERA OF POLITICAL AWAKENING or GANDHIAN ERA:

The poetry of this period is suffused with intense patriotism and poetical awareness. The stalwarts of twentieth century Pre-Independence Indo-Anglian poetry—Rabindranath Tagore, Sarojini Naidu, Sri Aurobindo and H.N. Chattopadhyaya—belong to this period. Since Tagore, Naidu and Aurobindo are dominant poets of this period, we call this period as the Age of Tagore, Naidu and Aurobindo.

### **SAROJINI NAIDU:**

Sarojini Naidu, the nightingale of India, occupies a unique place in Indo-Anglian poetry. Her early poetry is mostly imitative of English poets-Shelley, Keats and the pre-Raphaelites. It was artificial and stilted. Her poems seal the aroma of the Indian atmosphere. She has given poetic and picturesque expression to the India of temples, wandering pilgrims and singers, palanquin bearers, grinders and weavers. Sarojini Naidu is a lyric poet par excellence in Indo-Anglian poetry. Due to her flawless poetic art, three of her poems "*The Soul's Prayer*", "*To a Buddha Seated on a Lotus*" and "*In Salutation to External Peace*." Have been included in **THE OXFORD BOOK OF ENGLISH MYSTICAL VERSE**.

### **THE ERA OF INDEPENDENCE or THE MODERN ERA:**

The body of Indo-Anglian poetry has certainly been greater in this period than in any preceding epoch. The poetry of this period ranges from personal emotion and lyricism to complex linguistic experiments, dry intellectual tone, pungent satire and nursery rhyme. In the poetry of this epoch the poets desire to discover a new idiom. The poets do not slavishly imitate English and American poets in respect of style, diction and technique. Their main aim is to make poetry modern. The modern Indo-Anglian poets—Dom Moraes, Nissim Ezekiel, P.Lal, Kamala Das, K.N.Daruwalla and A.k.Ramanujam—form a distinctive group.

### **KAMALA DAS:**

Kamala Das is the pioneer who gave clear frank and straight-forward expression to feminine sensibility in all its varied manifestations. In this respect, she enjoys a high place in Indian English poetry. Her poetry is confessional and autobiographical. An analysis of her poetry will enable us to understand her poetic art and the main themes of her poetry. Her poetic output is very slender and consists only three volumes- **SUMMER IN CALCUTTA**, **THE DESCENDANTS** and **THE OLD PLAYHOUSE AND OTHER POEMS**. Her poetry is characterized by frankness, clarity and openness.

## THE LOTUS

- Toru Dutt

### WHAT IS INDO-ANGLIAN POETRY?

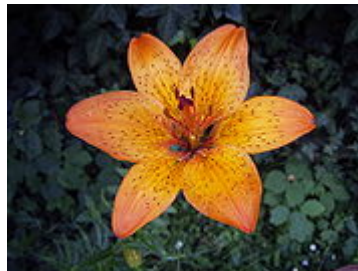
The term Indo-Anglian poetry implies poetry written in English by Indian poets. The origin and development of such poetry flows along with the introduction of English in India. Toru Dutt was a promising and talented poetic artist among the nineteenth century Indo-Anglian poets.



*Love came to Flora asking for a flower  
That would of flowers be undisputed queen,*



*The lily and the rose, long long had been  
Rivals for that high honour. Bards of power  
Had sung their claims. "The rose can never tower  
Like the pale lily with her Juno mien" -*



*"But is the lily lovelier?" Thus between  
Flower fractions rang the strife in Psyche's bower.  
"Give me a flower delicious as the rose  
And stately as the lily in her pride"-  
"But of what colour?"- "Rose red," Love first chose,  
Then prayed, - "No, lily-white, - or both provide";  
And Flora gave the lotus, "rose red" dyed  
And "lily white," queenliest flower that blows*



## ABOUT THE POET:



Toru Dutt, the “inheritor of unfulfilled renown”, is one of the most talented poetesses in Indo-Anglian literature. As an interpreter of Indian thought and scene, Toru Dutt is the precursor of Rabindranath Tagore, Sir Aurobindo and Sarojini Naidu (The Nightingale of India). Toru Dutt rises up as a great poet if nature through her poems like- “THE LOTUS”, “BAUGMAREE”, “NEAR HASTINGS” and “OUR CASURINA TREE.” Through such nature poems, she unveils her sharp power of observation and sensitiveness to colour. Though Toru Dutt does not possess the metrical excellence and felicity of diction compared to Sarojini Naidu, she enjoys a privileged place in the arena of flawless spontaneity and lucidity in expression.

## THE LOTUS:

“The Lotus” is a studded sonnet. It reveals Toru’s keen sensitiveness to nature and colour. We come across many instances where we fight for “positions” which may be bubbly too. This poem can be viewed in a perspective that one should notice and bear with both the positive qualities and negative qualities. But when the positive qualities are weighed and intertwined, we get an admirable quality. This poem can be considered as one with a moral. It educates us.

Though superficially, we get to know that the poet has highlighted the birth of a flower named Lotus, there is a wide area for contemplation.

Toru Dutt has personified the flowers and has given them the humanistic nature of quarelling.

## SUMMARY:

Once Love went to Flora (the Goddess of Spring and Florescence) and asked for a flower which be a challenging queen among flowers. The lily and rose had been rivals for long particularly for this cause. Poets have sung about the “delicious rose” and the “stately lily”. One half of the flower population claimed that the rose can never “tower” as the lily. (The lily plant and lily flower usually stands upright). While the rest emerged claiming that the lily cannot be so “delicious” as the rose appears (the rose captures the attention of

every individual through her colour. This hits the usage of delicious). The harmony was lost again. Finally, Love decided and requested Flora to give a flower that was DELICIOUS as the rose and STATELY as the lily. Flora gave the birth to a LOTUS which was a mix of both red and white. The rose and lily on looking at this turned red in shame and pale in sorrow and humiliation. From then, the LOTUS is considered as the loveliest of all flowers.

### **RECAP:**

- **Love went to Flora asking for a flower.**
- **It had to be the queenliest of all flowers.**
- **The quarrel began between the supporters of Rose and Lily.**
- **Love requested Flora to produce a flower which had both the qualities.**
- **The Lotus was born which still remains the loveliest and queenliest of all flowers.**

### **REFERENCES:**

FLORA - The Roman Goddess of spring and florescence.  
JUNO - The Roman Goddess of moon.  
MEIN - person's appearance or bearing.  
PSYCHE - Goddess of soul.

### **ANNOTATIONS:**

1. **“The lily and rose, long, long had been  
Rivals for that honour.”**
2. **“..... “the rose can never tower  
Like the pale lily with her Juno mien”—**
3. **“Give me a flower delicious as the rose  
And stately as the lily in her pride”—**
4. **“And Flora gave the lotus, “rose red” dyed  
And “lily-white,” queenliest flower that blows.”**



### **PEN DOWN:**

You must have listened to your grandparents teaching you many stories. Have you ever wondered how certain creations came into existence?

List out some flowers which you see around you that relate to the qualities of other flowers and try to pen down a new episode.

Can you bring into combinations of other flowers and relate it to the lotus?

Do you accept Toru Dutt's conception of THE LOTUS being the queenliest of flowers? If not, which flower could occupy that position?

Imagine that you are to support and oppose two flowers. Which of them would you choose and jot down both the positive qualities and negative qualities. Instigate the poet in you to create a flower that has the positive qualities of both flowers.

### **FRAME IT YOURSELF:**

- *flower for came Flora asking a Love to*
- *"The rose can never lily  
Like the pale with her Juno mien tower " –*
- *"Give me a stately flower as the rose  
And delicious as the lily in her pride"-*
- *The lily long long had been and the rose,  
high honour rivals for that.*

### **RACK YOUR BRAINS:**

1. Lily and Rose were the friendliest among all flowers.
2. No one accepted that the Lily was stately and pure as white.
3. Rose is the delicious to our eye.
4. Flora asked Love to give her the queenliest flower.
5. The Lotus was born from Rose.

### **ANSWERT IT:**

Toru Dutt's achievement here in presenting the Indian attitude to life and the image of the lotus as the central symbol.

### **BOOST UP:**

- This poem has metaphysical elements in it. Eg: "flower factions"
- "THE LOTUS" is a sonnet.
- Rose is associated with deep passionate love.
- Lily is associated with Christianity, purity-usually considered as a flower of light.
- The poet involves in myth-making: eg: the lily combines with the rose to create the lotus.

## LITERARY FORM:

### *Alliteration:*

- But is the lily lovelier?
- Flower-factions rang the strife in Psyche's bower.
- "But of what colour?"—"Rose-Red," .....

### *Metaphysical Conceit:*

Flower-factions: flower is usually associated with beauty, peace and represents everything that is gentle. But in the poem, the word "faction" refers to the nature of quarrel.

## FEED YOUR BRAINS:

### Sonnet:

The sonnet is one of the poetic forms that can be found in lyric poetry from Europe. The term "sonnet" derives from the Occitan word *sonet* and the Italian word *sonetto*, both meaning "little song". By the thirteenth century, it had come to signify a poem of fourteen lines that follows a strict rhyme scheme and specific structure. The conventions associated with the sonnet have evolved over its history. The writers of sonnets are sometimes referred to as "sonneteers," although the term can be used derisively. One of the best-known sonnet writers is Shakespeare, who wrote 154 of them. A Shakespearean sonnet consists of 14 lines, each line contains ten syllables, and each line is written in iambic pentameter in which a pattern of a non-emphasized syllable followed by an emphasized syllable is repeated five times. The rhyme scheme in a Shakespearean sonnet is ABAB CDCD EFEF GG in which the last two lines are a rhyming couplet.

Traditionally, English poets employ iambic pentameter when writing sonnets. In the Romance languages, the hendecasyllable and Alexandrine are the most widely used metres.

### In a traditional Sonnet:

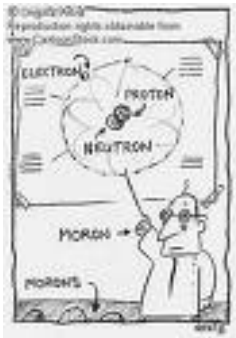
- There are 14 lines.
- The poet introduces at least one *volta* (or a jump or shift in direction of the emotions or thought), usually somewhat after the middle of the Sonnet.
- If the poet writes in the form of the Sicilian Sonnet, Italian (or Petrarchan) Sonnet, or French Sonnet, she begins with an octave and concludes with a sestet. She places the *volta* between the octave and the sestet. She may indicate the *volta* by a stanza break.

- In English, we are especially familiar with the English (or Shakespearean) Sonnet and the Spenserian Sonnet. In both, the poet groups lines in three quatrains followed by a closing rhymed couplet. She places a *shift* (a more subtle change than the *volta*) between the second and third quatrains.
- In addition to the above, the English (or Shakespearean) Sonnet:
  1. Has an alternating rhyme scheme in the quatrains (e.g., "a b a b").
  2. Has a *turn* between the third quatrain and the concluding couplet. Often this marks a change from the presentation of images and the building of a case (in the quatrains). After the *turn*, the poet often states a conclusion, sometimes the "meaning" or "purpose" of the poem.
  3. Often has its greatest power in the concluding couplet.
- Meanwhile, the Spenserian Sonnet (in addition to features shared with the English (or Shakespearean) Sonnet) has an envelope or kissing rhyme, "abba".
- The original Sicilian Sonnet arrived in the early thirteenth century at the Sicilian court of Frederick II. The Sicilian Sonnet has an octave of *rima alternata* ("alternating rhyme"). In the initial version, the same word was repeated instead of new words being introduced in rhyme.

#### Sonnets

- 14 line lyric
- Single stanza
- Iambic pentameter line
- Intricate rhyme scheme
- Often written in narrative sequences—**sonnet** sequence
- Often concerned with love and desire
- Diversity of **sonnet** models

**ELECTRON**  
**- Sri Aurobindo**



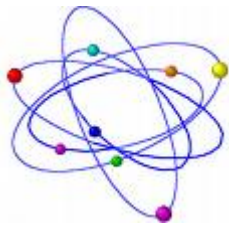
The electron on which forms and worlds are built,  
Leaped into being, a particle of God.  
A spark from the eternal Energy spilt,  
It is the Infinite's blind minute abode.



In that small flaming chariot Shiva rides.  
The One devised innumerably to be;  
His oneness in invisible forms he hides,  
Time's tiny temples of [or: to] eternity.

Atom and molecule in their unseen plan  
Buttress an edifice of strange oneness,  
Crystal and plant, insect and beast and man, -  
Man on whom the World-Unity shall seize,

Widening his soul-spark to an epiphany



**Of the timeless vastness of Infinity.**

### About the poet:



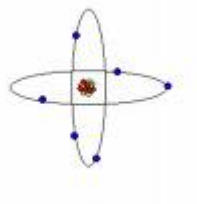
Sri Aurobindo was perhaps the last of the Indian sages, a sage with a poetic vision. Aurobindo had a brilliant career at Cambridge where he stood first in Greek, Latin and Sanskrit. He was involved in the national liberation movement and was jailed for his anti-British activities in Alipore prison where he is said to have experienced the Narayana Darsanam.

Aurobindo's SAVITRI is considered a modern epic in its sweep and vision. His complete work runs to 29 volumes. THE LAST POEMS is a collection of sonnets. These sonnets reflect the poet's vision and craft in their sculptured form. Here we find mysticism clarified into poetry, to transform *jnana* into *bhakti*.

### Summary:

*ELECTRON* shows Aurobindo's awareness of scientific temper and the disaster of a total dependence on science in the modern world. The poet begins by bringing out the characteristic feature of an electron. Aurobindo accepts that it is the basic form on which everything is built on. He claims that it is the negative particle found inside an atom. But this negative particle has its impact on everything. He adds on that this negative particle has "leaped into being, a particle of God" he symbolically claims that this is now considered equal to God, the Supreme power. Aurobindo brings in the reference of LORD SHIVA who rides in a "small flaming chariot." He claims that it is not the size but the substance that matters. Similarly, an atom, though small, can support a large imposing building. Such is its power. Further, it has its influence on everything including-"crystal and plant, insect and beast and man,-". Finally, Aurobindo concludes by saying that this small particle has its boundaries spread across "the timeless vastness of Infinity."

Note how the phrase "leaped into being, a particle of God" "flaming chariot" where "Shiva rides" are used to compare the electron with all the potential nuclear energy.



### **GLOSSARY:**

- Electron- smallest negative particle found inside an atom.
- Innumerably – cannot be counted
- Buttress- support
- Edifice- large, imposing building

### **ANNOTATE THE FOLLOWING:**

- A spark from the eternal Energy split
- His oneness in invisible forms he hides,  
Time's tiny temples to eternity.
- Widening his soul-spark to an epiphany  
Of the timeless vastness of Infinity.

### **RACK YOUR BRAINS:**

1. What is a flaming chariot?
2. Is this poem on atoms or spiritual consciousness?

### **ANSWER IT:**

How does the poet relate electron to Godhead?

### **LITERARY FORM:**

*Personification:*

- The electron on which forms and words are built,  
Leaped into a being, .....
- Atom and molecule in their unseen plan

*Alliteration:*

- A spark from the eternal Energy spilt,
- Times's tiny temples to eternity.
- Widening his soul-spark to an epiphany



## **FEED YOUR BRAINS:**

Mysticism of SRI Aurobindo:

Sri Aurobindo (August 15, 1872–December 5, 1950) was an Indian nationalist, scholar, poet, mystic, evolutionary philosopher, Yogi and spiritual Guru. After a short political career in which he became one of the leaders of the early movement for Indian independence from British rule, Sri Aurobindo turned to the exploration of the subtle realms of human existence and, as a consequence, developed a new spiritual path which he termed Integral Yoga.

The Times Literary Supplement wrote of Aurobindo:

"In fact, he is a new type of thinker, one who combines in his vision the alacrity of the West with the illumination of the East. To study his writings is to enlarge the boundaries of one's knowledge... He is a yogi who writes as though he were standing among the stars, with the constellations for his companions".<sup>[2]</sup>

The central theme of Sri Aurobindo's vision<sup>[3]</sup> is the evolution of life into a "life divine". In his own words:

"Man is a transitional being. He is not final. The step from man to superman is the next approaching achievement in the earth's evolution. It is inevitable because it is at once the intention of the inner spirit and the logic of Nature's process".

Sri Aurobindo argues that humankind as an entity is not the last rung in the evolutionary scale, but can evolve spiritually beyond its current limitations associated with an essential ignorance to a future state of supramental existence. This further evolutionary step would lead to a divine life on Earth characterized by a supramental or truth-consciousness, and a transformed and divinised life and material form.

By a curious stroke of fate it was in a British jail that Sri Aurobindo began to be seriously awakened to the inner life. Confined to his own prison cell Sri Aurobindo was able to practice meditation and read about the ancient principles of yoga, undisturbed by outer commitments. Sri Aurobindo began to have profound meditations. Entering into higher realms of consciousness he became aware of the omnipresence of God

He offered a new vision of yoga and a spiritual path that could be followed by sincere seekers. However Sri Aurobindo never desired to have a large numbers of disciples or followers. He admitted his path was not always easy and could be quite arduous. But to attain a real transformation of one's nature was not possible without maintaining certain spiritual standards and spiritual discipline.

## THE STONE GODDESS

- Kamala Das



In a town of gods, housed in a little shrine,  
From sculptured limbs the Godhead looked at me,  
A living Presence deathless and divine,  
A Form that harboured all infinity.

The great World-Mother and her mighty will  
Inhabited the earth's abysmal sleep,  
Voiceless, omnipotent, inscrutable,  
Mute in the desert and the sky and deep.



Now veiled with mind she dwells and speaks no word,  
Voiceless, inscrutable, omniscient,  
Hiding until our soul has seen, has heard  
The secret of her strange embodiment,  
One in the worshipper and the immobile shape,  
A beauty and mystery flesh or stone can drape.

## KAMALA DAS:



Kamala Suraiya (born Kamala Das on March 31, 1934), is a well-known Indian writer who writes in English as well as Malayalam, her native language. She is considered to be one of the outstanding Indian poets writing in English, although her popularity in Kerala is based chiefly on her short stories and autobiography. Much of her writing in Malayalam came under the pen name Madhavikkutty. She was born in Malabar in Kerala, India.

For Das, poetry (or love?) is “The April sun squeezed like an orange juice”, the heat permeates into the reader’s mind. When she is moving to a new city, “Sadness becomes a silent stone in the river’s unmoving core”. She bid farewell to “the shadows behind the windowpane, the rain, the yellow moon, the crowd and the sea”. This sensitivity is the strength of her poetry.

## THE STONE GODDESS

The image of Durga Matha is seen in Calcutta during pooja season. The image in a small shrine which ultimately represents the one death has been existing from the beginning of creation and therefore defies the concept of the ‘origin’ skilled, sculptors and great artisans had touch this infinite, divine spirit and harbored it in the stone.

In stanza 2 the poet once again asserts the fact that his divine spirit is the mother of the world. The world exist because of this infinite spirit which is threw from time immemorial and whose divine will has brought about the existence of the world. The mother’s mighty will is the silent, mysterious, all powerful force seen in the desert, the wind and the ocean.

In stanza 3, the poet returns to the fact that the divine spirit has now acquired the stone goddess is the idol or Perfect. It has been made by man who has visualized his thought of divine into a form. Her power which is visible is the elemental forces lie dormant in the stone. Thus he remains voiceless, inscrutable and omniscent in the form given to her by man, functioning as the mother to whom man looks up to for comparison and cancellation. Her apparent silence baffles man.

The poet concludes by saying that only one who leaves in harmony with the elements and with one own self will be able to hear and withstand the secret of her strange embodiment. One can know her only if one listens to one’s own soul because the divinity which his every is within one self also. Only an enlightened seeker will understand that the distinction between the worshipper and immortality shape is outward, one is made of flesh and the other a stone, beyond this lies and mystery mainly the oneness of the pivarma ( The individual soul) and paramatma ( the divine soul).

Thus this sonnet which is the quintessence of vedantic philosophy illustration Sri Aurobindo's belief in the ascent of man and descent of divine through ennobling of the self is order to attain God head. For Sri Aurobindo, poetry was a mode of meditation or 'ohynamantra' and he used the English language effectively to accommodate his mystic



experience.

### GLOSSARY:

1. Abysmal: bottomless
2. omnipotent: all-powerful
3. inscrutable: difficult to decipher
4. omniscient: all-knowing

### ANNOTATE:

- A living Presence deathless and divine,  
A form that harboured all infinity.
- Mute, in the desert and the sky and deep.
- One in the worshipper and the immobile shape,  
A beauty and mystery flesh or stone can drape.

### RACK YOUR BRAINS:

1. Explain "hiding until our has seen" in the context of the poem.
2. Bring out the poet's suggestion that the mystery and beauty lies in the eyes of the onlooker also.
3. Write a paragraph on your own experience of viewing a deity or a sculpted image.

### ANSWER IT:

**How does the poet describe the Goddess?**



### **BOOST UP:**

- This is a mystic poem- man and God relationship
- Cosmic power is the central theme.
- Cosmic power is mentioned as a mysterious one.
- The word “mother” denotes “power”

### **LITERARY FORM:**

#### *Personification:*

1. From sculpted limbs the Godhead looked at me,----
2. Inhabited the earth's abysmal sleep,
3. Hiding until our soul has seen, has heard...

#### *Irony:*

- **Mute, in the desert and the sky and deep**

### **FEED YOUR BRAINS:**

#### ***CONFESSIOAL POEM?***

What is Confessional Poetry? It is when you set yourself up for the big fall, when you get daring enough to tell all. Often the “I” is used or “You” in Confessional poetry. One must eliminate meekness, modesty, or discretion. The poet comes out on top; because of self-revelation while in the process of creating this style of poem—especially if it is free verse.

Confessional poetry traffics in intimate, and sometimes unflattering, information about details of the poet's personal life.

A confessional poet usually gives the psychological equivalents for his/her mental state in poetry. Confessional poetry is Autobiographical.

Like other confessional poets-Nissim Ezekiel and A.K.Ramanujan, Kamala Das makes her own life, her personal emotional experiences, disillusionment and frustrations the centre of her poetry. Kamala Das' poetry reveals her experiences, her anguishes and her frustrations. It is a mirror of her life. Kamala Das always deals with private humiliations and sufferings which are stock themes of confessional poetry. Her frank admission and bold treatment of private life have nothing exceptional about them and are perfectly in keeping with the nature and themes of confessional poetry.

Her confessional poetry has been compared with that of Anne Sexton, Sylvia Plath and Judith Wright.

## INDIAN WEAVERS

- Sarojini Naidu



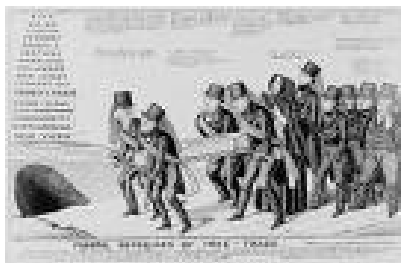
WEAVERS, weaving at break of day,  
Why do you weave a garment so gay? . . .  
Blue as the wing of a halcyon wild,



We weave the robes of a new-born child.  
Weavers, weaving at fall of night,  
Why do you weave a garment so bright? . . .  
Like the plumes of a peacock, purple and green,  
We weave the marriage-veils of a queen.



Weavers, weaving solemn and still,  
What do you weave in the moonlight chill? . . .  
White as a feather and white as a cloud,



We weave a dead man's funeral shroud.

## Indian Weavers



The poem (Indian Weaver's) by Sarojini Naidu covers the entire life span of a human being. She brings out the joy and sorrow of creation through the symbol of weaving. She was fond of exotic and romantic life which bordered sentimentality. The poem covers the entire life-span of a human being. The joy and sorrow of creation is brought forth effectively through the symbol of weaving.

In the poem she creates different time, moods and colour. The poem is in the form of question – answer patterns. The first two lines form the question asked to the weavers and the next two lines form the answer by the weaver. According to Greek mythology, there are three sisters: Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos. The work of the first sister is to spin the thread, the second measures the thread, and the third cuts (ship) the thread. Here it indicates the birth, life and death.

Some critics associate the poem with the Indian Gods, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. Brahma, like the creator on lotus, which emerges in blue water. Here Sarojini Naidu compares it with the holy conch shell which refers to the break of the day and the birth of the new child. Vishnu, the sustainer, gives of wealth and splendour. In this 2<sup>nd</sup> stage her imagery refers to the colourful plumes of the peacock while describing the marriage veil of a queen, Shiva who symbolizes the end of life's journey. The weavers weaving a dead man's funeral shroud in the cold moonlight connected with Shiva are symbolically allocated with the end of life.

Theme:

The deal with a common life of weavers she also refers to cycle.

#### GLOSSARY:

HALYCON: Kingfisher—also a mythological bird thought to breed in a nest floating in the sea, during the winter solstice, charming the wind and waves into calm.

#### ANNOTATE:

- Blue as the wing of a halcyon wild,  
We weave the robes of a new-born child.
- Like the plumes of a peacock, purple and green,  
We weave the marriage-veils of a queen.
- White as a feather and white as a cloud,  
We weave a dead man's funeral shroud.

#### RACK YOUR BRAINS:

1. Comment on the colours of the fabric to show the age of the person.
2. What do the three stages of man indicate?
3. Is weaving connected with the web of life?
4. What are the different moods that you notice in the poem.

#### ANSWER IT:

Sarojini Naidu's view of life.

#### BOOST UP:

- MOOD OF THE POEM—light in the beginning and gloomy towards the end.
- This poem is a Lyric.
- The poem is symbolic, rhyming and employs literary devices such as Alliteration and Simile.
- A reference of the FATE SISTERS from Greek mythology is mentioned: CLOTHOS (spins the thread of life), LACHESIS (measures the thread of life) and ATROPOS (cuts the thread of life)
- Reference to Indian mythology is lucid: BRAHMA (the creator), VISHNU (sustains life) and SHIVA (associated with the colour white refers to Death symbolically)
- Weakness in the poem: too sentimental and too flowery(rhetorical)



## LITERARY FORM:

### *Simile:*

- Blue as the wings of a halcyon wild,
- Like the plumes of a peacock, purple and green,
- White as a feather and white as a cloud,

### *Alliteration:*

- Weavers, weaving at break of day,
- Why do you weave a garment so gay?....
- Like the plumes of a peacock, purple and green,
- Weavers, weaving solemn and still

### *Elliptical:*

- Why do you weave a garment so gay?.....
- Why do you weave a garment so bright?.....
- What do you weave in the moonlight chill?.....

## **BREEZY APRIL**

**-Rabindranath Tagore**

Breezy April, vagrant April  
Rock me in your swing of music  
Thrill my branches with enhancement  
At your touch of sweet surprises.



In my life dream by the wayside  
You come startling me from slumber  
Willful in your mood fantastic  
Courting, teasing, and inconstant.

Breezy April, vagrant April  
Living with my lonesome shadows,  
I know all your fitful fancies  
Leafy language, fitting footsteps.



All my boughs break into blossom,  
At your passing breath and whisper,  
All my leaves break into tumult  
Of surrender at your kisses.

**RABINDRANATH TAGORE:**



Rabindranath Tagore (7 May 1861 – 7 August 1941), also known by the sobriquet Gurudev,<sup>1</sup> was a Bengali mystic, Brahmo poet, visual artist, playwright, novelist, and composer whose works reshaped Bengali literature and music in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He became Asia's first Nobel laureate<sup>[1]</sup> when he won the 1913 Nobel Prize in Literature.

Tagore wrote novels, short stories, songs, dance-dramas, and essays on political and personal topics. Gitanjali (*Song Offerings*), *Gora* (*Fair-Faced*), and Ghare-Baire (*The Home and the World*) are among his best-known works. His verse, short stories, and novels, which often exhibited rhythmic lyricism, colloquial language, meditative naturalism, and philosophical contemplation, received worldwide acclaim. Tagore was also a cultural reformer and polymath who modernised Bengali art by rejecting strictures binding it to classical Indian forms. Two songs from his canon are now the national anthems of Bangladesh and India: the Amar Shonar Bangla and the Jana Gana Mana respectively. Tagore brought to his poetic world both Romantic lyricism and a deep awareness of the ancient Indian tradition, fusing its legends and myths into his poetry and drama.

## **Breezy April**

Rabindranath Tagore is one of true represented tires of Indian culture through his poems. When we analyse in depth, we can find that he actually means something else. “Breezy April” is one such poem of Tagore which if we take the literal sense of this poem; it explains to us how a tree is longing for the arrival of a breeze. The tree wants the breeze to gently enchant, charm and delight its branch with its (Sweet touches)

All day long the tree is waiting on the side of the road aimlessly. It is rooted there as if it is possessed no life in it. But as the gentle wind of the month of April blow, it is awakened from its slumber of the inconsistent touch to the wind which makes the tree gift exited.

Because the tree is living a solitary life it only solace is the arrival of the breeze .The tree is aware of each and every movement of the breeze.

All its buds bloom when the breeze passes the tree suddenly. All the leaves of the branch come back to life and suddenly there arises confusion as to who will surrender kisses to the breeze.

Though literally the meaning of the poem is as said, when we analyse the poem in depth we can find that what actually the poet means is something else. The tree and the breeze are supposed to be lover and a beloved in original sense. The tree represents the lover. This poem simply explains to us the feeling of a beloved who all day long is longing and waiting for the arrival of her lover. And because she is lonely all day long she known each and every movement of her lover and finally, when her lover arrived, she is enhanced by his unconditional love.



## **GLOSSARY:**

Vagrant: wandering

Tumult: commotion

## **ANNOTATE:**

- **In my life-dream by the wayside  
You come startling me from slumber**
- **I know all your fitful fancies**



- **All my boughs break into blossom**

## **RACK YOUR BRAINS:**

1. Sketch the character of “breezy April”
2. Bring out the relationship between “T” and breezy April in the poem.
3. What are fitful fancies?
4. Explain the phrase “leafy language”

## **ANSWER IT:**

The tone of the poem and its effect on the reader.



### **BOOST UP:**

- Language is crisp and concrete.
- The voice is living and attuned to nature.
- The language is passionate.
- Trees and Wind are personified.
- Involves sensuous imagery-TREE- beloved and WIND-lover.
- Man and woman relationship is hinted as holy and sacred.
- Brings in the scientific fact that : For a flower to bloom, wind and sunshine is essential.

### **LITERARY FORM:**

#### ***Alliteration:***

- At your touch of sweet surprises.
- I know all your fitful fancies
- Leafy language, flitting footsteps.
- All my boughs break into blossom,

#### ***Image:***

**Pictorial representation of lover and beloved.**

# RIVER

- A. K. Ramanujan



In Madurai,  
city of temples and poets,  
who sang of cities and temples,  
every summer  
a river dries to a trickle  
in the sand  
baring the sand ribs,  
straw and women's hair  
clogging the watergates  
at the rusty bars  
under the bridges with patches  
of repair all over them  
the wet stones glistening like sleepy  
crocodiles, the dry ones  
shaven water-buffaloes lounging in the sun



The poets only sang of the floods.  
He was there for a day  
when they had the floods.  
People everywhere talked  
of the inches rising,  
of the precise number of cobbled steps



run over by the water, rising  
on the bathing places,  
and the way it carried off three village houses,  
one pregnant woman  
and a couple of cows  
named Gopi and Brinda as usual.



The new poets still quoted  
the old poets, but no one spoke  
in verse  
of the pregnant woman  
drowned, with perhaps twins in her,  
kicking at blank walls  
even before birth.

He said:  
the river has water enough  
to be poetic  
about only once a year  
and then  
it carries away  
in the first half-hour  
three village houses,  
a couple of cows  
named Gopi and Brinda  
and one pregnant woman  
expecting identical twins  
with no moles on their bodies,  
with different coloured diapers  
to tell them apart.

### **A.K.RAMANUJAM:**



Attipat Krishnaswami Ramanujan (1929-1993) was a scholar of Indian literature who wrote in both English and Kannada. Ramanujan wore many hats as a scholar and author, those of a philologist, folklorist, translator, poet and playwright. His academic research ranged across five languages: Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, Sanskrit, and English. He published works on both classical and modern variants of these literatures.

- A. K. Ramanujan's theoretical and aesthetic contributions span several disciplinary areas. In his cultural essays such as "Is There an Indian Way of Thinking?" (1990) he explains cultural ideologies and behavioral manifestations thereof in terms of an Indian psychology he calls "context-sensitive" thinking. In his work in folklore studies, Ramanujan highlights the intertextuality of the Indian oral and written literary tradition. His essay "Where Mirrors Are Windows: Toward an Anthology of Reflections" (1989), and his commentaries in *The Interior Landscape: Love*



Poems from a Classical Tamil Anthology (1967) and Folktales from India, Oral Tales from Twenty Indian Languages (1991) are good examples of his work in Indian folklore studies. His ideas about Indian sociolinguistics, language change, and linguistic creativity can be found in his 1964 essay written with W. Bright, "Sociolinguistic Variation and Language Change." Finally, a collected works of his poetry was posthumously published in 1995, The Collected Poems of A. K. Ramanujan, which includes poems from several previously-published volumes of poetry as well as some previously unpublished poems.

## SUMMARY:

“A River”, one of Ramanujan’s finest poems, appeared in “The striders” in 1966. It is a poem on the river Vaikai which flows through Madurai, a city that has for long been the seat of Tamil culture. The poem is an evocation of a river. The poet clearly reveals the attitudes of both old and new Tamil poets who have shown utter indifference and callousness to human suffering at the time of devastating flood and who are totally unconcerned for the devastation and suffering they cause to the people, clear and lucid style, vivid and picturesque description, and precise and suggestive images.



Ramanujan’s sensibility is Indian. “A River” expresses his recollection of his past. Madurai is city noted for its temples and poets who always sang of cities and temples. Here the poet ironically suggests that the poets ignored human beings and their sufferings. The river Vaikai flows in Madurai. It dries in every summer.

Bearing the sand-ribs

Straw and womens hair

Clogging the water gates

But no poet sang of the river that dried. “The poet sang only of the floods”. The contrast between the dry river and river in flood is vividly and picturesquely described. The river in flood.....

Carried off three village houses

One pregnant woman

And a couple of cows

Named Gopi and Brinda, as usual.

Ramanujan makes an ironic dig at poets who sang only of floods and ignored human concern:

But no one spoke

In verse

of the pregnant woman

drowned, with perhaps twins in her

kicking at blank walls

even before birth.

The river becomes poetic once a year when it has enough of water. How ironically the devastating power of the river is described:

People everywhere talked

Of the inches raising,

Of the precise number of cobbled steps

Run over by the water,raising

On the bathing places

And the way it carried off three village houses,

One pregnant woman

And a couple of cows

Named Gopi and Brinda, as usual.

“A River” is also remarkable for the creation of tableau affects, for example:

every summer a river dries to a trickle

in the sand,

baring the sand ribs,

straw and womens hair

clogging the Watergates

at the rushy bars.

The imagery is suggestive and picturesque. The dryness of the river, described in the following lines also suggests the emotional sterility and want of human concern of poets:

Straw and woman’s hair

Clogging the water gates

At the rusty bars.....

“A River” is a fine poem which reveals A.K.Ramanujan’s ability as a flawless poetic craftsman.

GLOSSARY:

- Clogging: getting stuck
- Glistening: shining
- Cobbled: paved

ANNOTATE:

- ❖ ...every summer  
a river dries to a trickle
- ❖ the poets sang only of the floods
- ❖ the new poets still quoted  
the old poets, but no one spoke

RACK YOUR BRAINS:

1. What is the significance of the title?
2. Comment on the narrative tone of the poem.
3. In what sense is it an Indian poem?
4. How does the poet draw our attention to the tragedies in life?

ANSWER IT:

- How is the river described in the poem?



BOOST UP:

- THE POET HAS BROUGHT IN A GRAPHIC STRUCTURE OF A RIVER.
- IT IS AN INVOCATION TO THE RIVER.
- THE WORLD OF SCIENCE IS CONTRASTED WITH THE WORLD OF SUPERSTITIONS.
- FAITHFUL DESCRIPTION OF INDIAN RURAL LIFE.
- THE LAST TWO LINES SHOW THE INDIAN SENSIBILITY.

## LITERARY FORM

### *Personification:*

- baring the sand-ribs

### *Simile:*

- the wet stones glistening like sleepy crocodiles, .....

### *Alliteration:*

- and a couple of cows.....
- with different-coloured diapers

### *Irony:*

- named Gopi and Brinda, as usual.
- the river has water enough  
to be poetic  
about only once a year

### *Metaphor:*

- ....., the dry ones  
shaven water-buffaloes lounging in the sun.

## MY GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE

- Kamala Das

There is a house now far away where once  
I receive love... That woman died,



The house withdrew into silence, snakes moved  
Among books I was then too young  
To read, and my blood turned cold like the moon.  
How often I think of going



There, to peer through blind eyes of windows or  
Just listen to the frozen air,  
Or in wild despair, pick an armful of  
Darkness to bring it here to lie  
Behind my bedroom door like a brooding  
Dog. . You cannot believe, darling,  
Can you, that I lived in such a house and  
Was proud, and loved... I who have lost  
My way and beg now at strangers' doors to  
Receive love, at least in small change?



## KAMALA DAS:

Kamala Das is a bilingual poet who writes in her native Malayalam and English with equal ease. Her poetry is characterized by frankness, clarity and openness. Kamala Das is a pioneer who gave clear, frank and straight-forward expression to feminine sensibility in all its varied manifestations. In this aspect, she enjoys a high place in Indian English poetry. Her poetry is both confessional and auto-biographical.



“MY GRANDMOTHER’S HOUSE” was published in 1965 in “Summer” in Calcutta. This poem gives a life to the poet’s nostalgic mood. She remembers passionately her family home in Malabar where she spent some years of her early life in the affectionate and sheltering care of her grandmother. Kamala Das spent some happiest days of her life in her grandmother’s company. The old family house and the grandmother are closely identified. She throws emotional rays of the family house and the grandmother in this admirable lyric.

The poetess has gone to live in a different city, quiet far from her “grandmother’s home”. But she wistfully remembers the family home where she lived as a girl and her grandmother who showered love and affection on her. The past cannot be relieved. So, the poetess is sad and melancholic. Her heart is choked with the intensity of emotions. She vividly recalls her grandmother and the day she died. When she died, even the great house shared the grief. The house comes to life. It is bestowed with individuality. The house symbolizes collectively all the members of the family. The poetess was very young at that time. The poet breaks here and gives life and form to inanimate things to express her emotions. There were a large number of books in the house, which seemed to be repulsive and horrible like snakes. The grandmother’s death shocked her. She became pale and cold like the moon. She claims that even “the house withdrew”.

This is highly poetic and suggestive in expression that the house was so stunned in expression which implies that the house was so stunned by her death that it no longer wanted to stay there.

The poetess passionately yearns to go to the great house and to look once again through its windows which are “blind”. The house is now highly deserted and no one can look through the windows. She longs to sit there by herself and to listen to the dreary music of blowing cold winter. She longs to sit there by herself and to listen to the dreary music of blowing cold winter winds, which would revive memories of her dear Grandmother. She wants to articulate her intense grief once again.

The poetess sends a ghostly scene in our minds.

The “window” image in this poem is very remarkable and suggestive. It suggests a link between the past and the present. It also underlines the languishing desire of the poetess for a sentimental peep into her past and resurrection of her dreams and desires.

At the end of her visit to her old family home, she would like to return to her new home in a distant, far off place, but the sad and painful memories of the bygone days would accompany her. The ellipses (dots) reveal the intensity of her grief.

The poetess got love from her grandmother in her girlhood. Now she yearns for love and begs it even from strangers, but fails to get it. She is hungry of love. Unfortunately, nobody fills her heart with the life-nourishing emotion of love.

“THE GRANDMOTHER’S HOUSE” is a symbolic retreat for the poetess to a world of innocence, purity, love and simplicity from a world of corruption, sterility exploitation and cunningness. It is a sanctuary of love which is conspicuous by its absence in the harsh world of reality.

#### GLOSSARY:

- Despair – helplessness
- Brooding – being thoughtful

#### ANNOTATE:

1. ....Tat woman died,  
The house withdrew into silence.
2. ....my blood turned cold like the moon.
3. How often I think of going there....

#### RACK YOUR BRAINS:

- Do you find your nostalgic moments instigated through this poem? Throw out the poet in yourself.
- Have you noticed any comparisons between the experiences of Kamala Das and yours?
- Is there a ghostly touch to the poem? If so, what are the words you find creates horror in the poem?



ARRIVE AT:

- What do the last two lines suggest?
- In what sense is it a love poem?
- What is the tone of the poem? Nostalgic? Frustration?

ESSAY:

- The nostalgic element in the poem.



BOOST UP:

- Kamala Das is a confessional poet.
- The poem is very nostalgic in the first few lines and confessional in the end.
- Diction- elementary words are used very economically.
- Images- very effective-most of them are visual, vivid, concrete and clinical(cold and detached).

LITERARY FORM:

*PERSONIFICATION:*

- The House withdrew into silence, snakes moved,
- Darkness to bring it here to lie  
Behind my bedroom door like a brooding  
Dog .....

*SIMILE:*

- To read, and my blood turned cold like the moon.
- Behind my bedroom door like a brooding  
Dog .....

*CONFESSION:*

- ..... I who have lost  
My way and beg now at strangers' door to  
Receive love, at least in small change?



## IN A NIGHT OF RAIN

- JAYANTA MAHAPATRA



A time of rain, and the old town  
stinks of mould and wet dogs' skins.  
A mist of embarrassed thoughts slowly sweeps  
the dark space at the river's edge  
where our homeless women have put up their huts.  
There's a sound of crying in there,  
of an evening jasmine being born,  
the sounds of satisfaction after love's been made.  
Who cares why a frail flower raises its head  
and smiles? Or when one loves  
one quickens one's death? On a night such as this  
something goes far away, into a world where  
no one can follow anyone. An hour  
when remembrance is vague, the unknown coastline  
of a land disappearing into the sea. A time  
when indecipherable words of a lost language  
filter down mossed stairs  
from the empty mouths of men. Here  
a man's heart is moved, but the feeling is needless  
like that of serving one's country which hangs  
like a tall, rosewood-framed portrait of an ancestor  
that had lost its light and meaning:  
man's mourning dispirited, his concern a stale caress,  
a rain that doesn't wet the earth any more,  
lost of purpose, like a benediction.

## POET:

Jayanta Mahapatra is one of the best known Indian English poets. Mahapatra has authored 16 books of poems. His poetry volumes include *Relationship*, *Bare Face* and *Shadow Space*. Mahapatra is a Sahitya Akademi awardee, and also a recipient of the Jacob Glatstein award conferred by *Poetry* magazine, Chicago. Besides poetry, he has experimented widely with myriad forms of prose. His lone published book of prose remains *Green Gardener*, an anthology of short stories. Besides being one of the most popular Indian poets of his generation, Mahapatra was also part of the trio of poets who laid the foundations of Indian English Poetry. He shared a special bond with A. K. Ramanujan, one the finest poets in the IEP tradition. Mahapatra is also different in not being a product of the Bombay school of poets. Over time, he has managed to carve a quiet, tranquil poetic voice of his own--distinctly different from those of his contemporaries. His wordy lyricism combined with authentic Indian themes put him in a league of his own.



In a way, Jayanta Mahapatra is not just an Indian English Poet. He is a school of poetry that has inspired many younger generation poets.

## SUMMARY:

Rain in this poem is associated with both the grace of life and the inexplicable loss and pain. After a series of striking images like “an unknown coastline of a land disappearing into the sea” and “words of a lost language” the poet compares rain to a benediction, lost of purpose.

Rain brings joy to our mind and leads to a kind of relaxation. We have heard poets singing about the wonders of rain and the beauty of rain. In this poem, the poet creates a mental picture of the rain. The poet expresses her views by rousing our nasal sense-“stinks of mould and wet dogs’ skin”. The poet transfers the thought by introducing to us the “dark space” where homeless women have put up their huts. The poet brings the mood of loss and pain by informing us about the birth of a baby in the hut. This is an indication of the joy in life. The rain brings in such an atmosphere where nobody is aware of what to do and how to do it. He adds on by saying that the hour has come where the coastline disappears due to heavy rain. This is an indication of the destructive quality of the rain and

the loss and pain it brings in. The poet brings in the notion of patriotism by comparing his nation to a “rosewood framed portrat” whichs hangs on a nail havung lost of its “life and meaning”. The poet finally claims that this rain does not wet the earth( it does not bring in any fortunes-it has only miseries) The fortunes of the land are wiped out. The rain is considered as a blessing which does not have any purpose.

### **GLOSSARY:**

1. Benediction: blessing
2. Indecipherable: not clear
3. Mossed: trees covered with fungus.



### **ANNOTATE:**

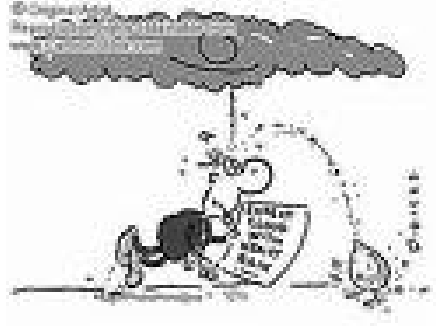
- There’s a sound of crying in there
- .....On a night such as this something goes far away
- lost of purpose, like a benediction.

### **RACK YOUR BRAINS:**

1. Why is the benediction lost of purpose?
2. What is the poet’s notion of Patriotism and why is it compared to rain?
3. What are the images used by the poet to suggest love?
4. What does the poem communicate ultimately?
5. Write a short note on your own experience of rain.

## ESSAY:

The images of a rainy night found in the poem.



## LITERARY FORM:

### *SIMILE:*

- ..... but the feeling is needless  
Like that of serving one's country which hangs  
Like a tall, rosewood-framed portrait of an ancestor
- lost of purpose, like a benediction.

### *PERSONIFICATION:*

- Who cares why a frail flower raises its head  
and smiles? .....

## INDIAN WOMEN

- Shiv K.Kumar



In this triple – baked continent  
Women don't etch angry eyebrows  
On mud walls  
Patiently they sit  
Like empty pitches



On the mouth of the village well  
Pleating hope in each braid  
Of their Mississippi – long hair  
Looking deep into the water's mirror



**For the moisture in their eyes**

With zodiac doodling tattooed thighs  
Waiting for their men's return  
Till even the shadows  
Roll up their contours  
And are gone beyond the hills.



### Indian women

Shiv. K.Kumar (1921) is a profile writer with two novels and more than four poetry collections to his credit 'Colavobs in the Sun" and "Wood peckers' among them. His poetry often reveals the theme of boredom, humor and restlessness of modern man, he is a poet of 'cultural interaction' He is influenced by T.S. Eliot, W.B. Yeast & Lowell. The working of the native condition can also be seen in his poems. Love is an absorbing passion with this poet of the language is **often vigorous and quick.**



### SUMMARY:

In this extremely hot country, Indian women do display their anger or dissatisfaction on their faces. They are very uncomplaining and ideally they sit like a empty pots, their hopes hot fulfilled. There is no water or moisture in their life and they sit on the mouth of the village was and pleating hope along with hair.

### Summary

Kumar starts with the description of India which he refers as a 'triple – baked continents since, India is some what triangular in shape with three sides surrounded with water. He says that "Indian women" patiently sit in their house empty like the pitches at the village well, they dictate even get angry sitting alone.

The sit in their houses and pleat hair with hope of their man folk returning back home safely in their long hair which is compared by Shiv.K.Kumar to the longest river in North America-Mississippi considering the water infant of them as the mirror which would also give a coal effect for their eyes.

They draw Zodiac signs on the sand which shows their belief in the Zodiac signs and astrology. They sit with their thighs covered in which tattoos are struck; this is a normal custom of village folk to tattoo their thighs with powder of the leaves.

They sit in the house patiently the whole day from sunrise to dusk waiting for their men folk, who has given beyond the hills to work in the fields to return back safely till the evening shadows rise.

### **Critical and stylistic approach**

Kumar carefully depicts the Indian heritage and culture in their poem. “Indian women”. This poem gives the Indian scenery. The words “mud walls’ ‘empty pitches’ ‘village well’ “zodiac doodling’ ‘tattooed thighs’ waiting for their men’s return’ ‘contours of are gone beyond the hills”. The Indian scenic we see (mud walls) mud built houses only in Indian villages, the pitches the well which seen only in India. The belief in zodiac signs and the tattooed thighs and the arms covered with the powder of leaves clearly depict the Indian village culture. Mainly in India, we see agriculture and farming and women folk going to work. These all show the Indian scenery in the poem. The choice of words is very simple.

The choice of words is very simple easy to understand and the diction is simple. The astral theme focused in “Indian rural life’. The use of the literary devices shows how skilled the poet is woman like empty pitches is a simile to compare women.

Long hair, a metaphor which is compared with the longest river “Mississippi” in North America to show how village women have long hair.

Tattooed is alliteration. India compared to the triple baked continent, the poetic skill of Shiv.K.Kumar is great. The use of water as the mirror shows the poor life, where they are poor unable even to buy a mirror, the sad of rural life.

The tone of the poem is the sympathy of the poet for Indian women’s rural life” this is a single poem from the collections of poems” cobwebs in the sun. He is a typical Indo Anglian writer.

This poem of Shiv. K.Kumar can be compared with and is of a similar thought of “Nissim Ezekiel” another Indo Anglian writer in his poem “ In India”

## Conclusion

Thus Shiv. K. Kumar is a prolific Indian writer. He has the “Indian” in his writings. This poem also reveals his concern towards the Indian women. Shiv.K.Kumar has therefore skillfully portrayed the plight of rural women in India.

## GLOSSARY:

- Tattoo: figures etched on the skin
- Doodling: careless drawings

## ANNOTATE:

- In this triple-baked continent  
Women don't etch angry eyebrows  
On mud walls
- Pleating hope in each braid  
Of their Mississippi-long hair
- And are gone  
Beyond the hills



## RACK YOUR BRAINS:

1. How does the poet show the Indian woman's loyalty to her husband?
2. What picture of the Indian woman is portrayed here?
3. Do you think the poet's use of the phrase “Mississippi-long hair” is appropriate?
4. What does “moisture in their eyes” indicate?

## ANSWER IT:

The plight of Indian women as described in the poem.





### **BOOST UP:**

- Theme of the poem-waiting, futile waiting, unfulfilled waiting and hopeless.
- Images of fertility are shown in this poem.
- Images used are water and dryness.
- The phrase “empty pitchers” brings in three derivations- (i) there is a close proximity between women and earth. (ii) the women are living unfulfilled lives: living idle lives and (iii) nobody cares about them or their life.
- Symbol of life is water.
- The poet is objective and not sentimental.

### **LITERARY FORM:**

#### ***SIMILE:***

- Patiently they sit  
like empty pitchers

#### ***METAPHOR:***

- of their mississippi-long hair

#### ***PERSONIFICATION:***

- till even the shadows  
roll up their contours  
and are gone  
beyond the hills.

### **FEED YOUR BRAINS:**

#### **NISSIM EZEKIEL:-**

Considered to be the Father of post independence Indian verse in English, Nissim Ezekiel was a prolific poet, playwright, critic, broadcaster and social commentator. He was born on December 24, 1924 in a Jew family. His father was a professor of botany and mother was principal of her own school. Ezekiel was inclined to the poets such as T.S. Eliot, Yeats, Ezra Pound in his school days. The influence of all these literary personalities was apparent in his early works. His formal use of the English language was linked to colonialism and resulted in controversy.

His first collection of poetry 'Time To Change' was published by Fortune Press (London) in 1952. His poetry has all the elements of love, loneliness, lust, and creativity. Nissim Ezekiel went on to join The Illustrated Weekly of India as an assistant editor in 1953. 'Sixty Poems' was his next book followed by 'The Unfinished Man'. Nissim Ezekiel started writing in formal English but with the passage of time his writing underwent a

metamorphosis. As the time passed he acknowledged that 'the darkness has its own secrets which light does not know.' His poem 'The Night Of Scorpion' is considered to be one of the best works in Indian English poetry and is used as a study material in India and British schools.

Nissim Ezekiel worked as an advertising copywriter and general manager of a picture frame company . He was the art critic of The Times Of India (1964-66) and editor of The Poetry India(1966-67). He was also the co-founder of the literary monthly Imprint. Ezekiel was awarded the Sahitya Akademi award in 1983. In 1988 he received another honor,Padma Shri, for his contribution to the Indian English writing

He passed away on January 9, 2004, in Mumbai after a prolonged illness.

Major works of Nissim Ezekiel:

- Time To Change
- Sixty Poems
- The Third
- The Unfinished Man
- The Exact Name
- The Three Plays
- Hymns In Darkness
- The Night Of Scorpion
- The Professor
- Case Study
- Poster Prayers

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## LITERARY FORMS

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### **SIMILE:**

A figure of speech that expresses a resemblance between things of different kinds (usually formed with `like' or `as')

A simile is used to compare two things, usually with the words “like” or “as”.

Compares two objects which usually uses like or as. (Ex: He is as loud as thunder)

### **METAPHOR:**

a figure of speech in which an expression is used to refer to something that it does not literally denote in order to suggest a similarity

Compares two objects that may use words such as is or was (ex: This house is a dump)

A figure of speech in which a word or phrase denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness (drowning in money)

### **ALLITERATION:**

Use of the same consonant at the beginning of each stressed syllable in a line of verse; "around the rock the ragged rascal ran"

Repeated consonant sounds occurring at the beginning of words or within words. Alliteration is used to create melody, establish mood, call attention to important words, and point out similarities and contrasts. Example: wide-eyed and wondering while we wait for others to waken.

Repetition of a consonant in a phrase. E.g. fat Fred's football.

### **METAPHYSICAL CONCEIT:**

A comparison, often elaborate, extended, or startling, between objects which are apparently dissimilar. A type of extended metaphor

### **IRONY:**

Irony is a literary or rhetorical device, in which there is an or discordance between what a speaker and writer says and what he or she means, or what is generally understood. Irony is a mode of expression that calls attention to the character's knowledge and that of the audience.

### **PERSONIFICATION:**

Personification is an ontological metaphor in which a thing or abstraction is represented as a person.<sup>[1]</sup>

**The term "personification" may apply to:**

1. A description of an inanimate object as being a living person or animal as in: "The sun shone brightly down on me as if she was shining for me alone". In this example the sun is depicted as if having the possibility for intent and if referenced with the pronoun "she" rather than "it".
2. The act of personifying.
3. A person or thing typifying a certain quality or idea; an embodiment or exemplification: "He's invisible, a walking personification of the Negative" (Ralph Ellison).
4. An artistic representation of an abstract quality or idea as a person, for example the four cardinal virtues or nine Muses.

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## **INDIAN WRITERS, THEIR POSITIONS IN THE LITERARY HISTORY OF INDIAN WRITING IN ENGLISH**

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Though foreign in its origin, English has been adopted in India as a language of education and literary expression besides being an important medium of communication amongst the people of various regions. The beginning of Indian literature in English is traced to the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th, by which time English education was more or less firmly established in the three major centers of British power in India - Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. Ram Mohan Roy (1774-1833), a social reformist from Bengal who fought for widow remarriage and voting rights for women, was the pioneer of Indian writing in English. Roy insisted that for India to be included among the world's nations, education in English was essential. He, therefore, campaigned for introduction of scientific education in India through the English medium.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was followed in the early 19th century in Bengal by the poets Henry Derozio and Michael Madhusudan Dutt. Dutt started out writing epic verse in English, but returned to his native Bengali later in life. The poems of Toru Dutt (1855-1876), who died at a tender age of 21, and the novel *Rajmohan's Wife* by Bankimchandra Chatterjee have received academic acceptance as the earliest examples of Indian literature written in English. Toru Dutt not composed poetry in English, but more interestingly, translated French poetry as well. Her best works include *Ancient Ballads* and *Legends of Hindustan*. However, the most famous literary figure of this era was Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), who won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913 for his book *Gitanjali*, which is a free rendering of his poems in Bengali.

Sarojini Naidu (1879-1949) was a great poetess whose romanticism charmed readers in India and Europe. Her *Golden Threshold* (1905) and *The Broken Wing* (1917) are works of great literary merit. Aurobindo Gosh (1872-1950) was a poet philosopher and sage, for whom poetry was akin to a form of mediation. His epic, *Savitri* and *Life Divine* (2 vols.) are outstanding works in English literature. It may be mentioned that most Indian writers in English from the early period hailed from Calcutta, the first stronghold of the British, than other places in the country.

The freedom struggle resulted in a revolutionary brand of writing that voiced sentiments against the British Empire. Several political leaders from different parts of the country emerged as literary figures such as Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpath Rai, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar and T. Prakasham. The English language became a sharp and strong instrument in the hands of Gandhiji, who edited and wrote for papers like '*Young India*' and '*Harijan*'. He also wrote his autobiography, '*My Experiments With Truth*', which is known for its literary flair. Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964) stands out as another prominent leader who excelled in writing prose. He is particularly remembered for his *Glimpses of World History*, *Discovery of India* and *An Autobiography* (1936).

Mulk Raj Anand, R K Narayan and Raja Rao were among the earliest Indian novelist writing in English, who began to write in the early thirties. Mulk Raj Anand (b.1905), best known for his short story '*The Lost Child*', has written numerous works of prose, poetry and drama. His novels *Coolie* (1933), *Untouchable* (1935) and *The Woman and the Cow* (1960) reveal his concern for the downtrodden and underprivileged in India. R.K. Narayan is another prolific figure in Indian English writing. Most of his work, starting from his first novel *Swami and Friends* (1935) is set in the fictional town of Malgudi, which captures the Indian ethos in its entirety while having a unique identity of its own. Malgudi is perhaps the single most endearing "character" R.K.Narayan has ever created. *Bachelor of Arts* (1937), *The Financial Expert* (1952) *The Guide* (1959) and *Waiting for the Mahatma* (1955) are his other popular novels. The last of the harbingers of Indian English literature is Raja Rao (b.1909), whose novel *Kanthapura* (1938), set in rural India, established him as a major figure on the Indian literary scene. Raja Rao's other three novels are *The Serpent and the Rope* (1960) and *The Cat and Shakespeare* (1965). Nirad Choudhuri (1897-1999) was another internationally renowned Indian writer whose autobiography *An Unknown Indian* (1951) catapulted him into a celebrated international author.

Later novelists like Kamala Markandaya (*Nectar in a Sieve*, *Some Inner Fury*, *A Silence of Desire*, *Two Virgins*), Manohar Malgaonkar (*Distant Drum*, *Combat of Shadows*, *The Princes*, *A Bend in the Ganges* and *The Devil's Wind*), Anita Desai (*Clear Light of Day*, *The Accompanist*, *Fire on the Mountain*, *Games at Twilight*), and Nayantara Sehgal captured the spirit of an independent India, struggling to break away from the British and traditional Indian cultures and establish a distinct identity.

In the 1980's and 90's, India emerged as a major literary nation. Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* became a rage around the world, even winning the Booker Prize. The worldwide success of Vikram Seth's *The Golden Gate* made him the first writer of the Indian Diaspora to enter the sphere of international writers and leave an indelible mark on the global literary scene. Other novelists of repute of the contemporary times include Shobha De (*Selective Memory*), G.V. Desani, M Ananthanarayanan, Bhadani Bhattacharya, Arun Joshi, Khushwant Singh, O.V. Vijayan, Allan Sealy (*The Trotternama*), Sashi Tharoor (*Show Business, The Great Indian Novel*), Amitav Ghosh (*Circle of Reason, Shadow Lines*), Upamanyu Chatterjee (*English August, The Mammaries of the Welfare State*), Raj Kamal Jha (*The Blue Bedspread*), Amit Chaudhuri (*A New World*), Pankaj Mishra (*Butter Chicken in Ludhiana, The Romantics*) and Vikram Chandra (*Red Earth and Pouring Rain, Love and Longing in Bombay*). The latest Indian writer who took the world with a storm was Arundhati Roy, whose *The God of Small Things* won the 1997 Booker Prize and became an international best-seller. Rohinton Mistry, Firdaus Kanga, Kiran Desai (*Strange Happenings in the Guava Orchard*), Sudhir Kakar (*The Ascetic of Desire*), Ardeshir Vakil (*Beach Boy*) and Jhumpa Lahiri (*Interpreter of Maladies*) are some other renowned writers of Indian origin.

Former Prime Minister P.V.Narasimha Rao's *The Insider*; Satish Gujral's *A Brush with Life*; R.K.Laxman's *The Tunnel of Time*, Prof. Bipin Chandra's *India After Independence*, Sunil Khilnani's *The Idea of India*, J.N.Dixit's *Fifty Years of India's Foreign Policy*, Yogesh Chadha's *Rediscovering Gandhi* and Pavan K.Varma's *The Great Indian Middle Class* are notable works of the recent times.

The mid-20th century saw the emergence of poets such as Nissim Ezekiel (*The Unfurnished Man*), P Lal, A K Ramanujan (*The Striders, Relations, Second Sight, Selected Poems*), Dom Moraes (*A Beginning*), Keki Daruwalla, Geive Patel, Eunice de Souza, Adil Jussawala, Kamala Das, Arun Kolatkar and R. Parthasarathy, who were heavily influenced by literary movements taking place in the West such as Symbolism, Surrealism, Existentialism, Absurdism and Confessional Poetry. These authors used Indian phrases alongside English words and tried to reflect a blend of the Indian and the Western cultures.

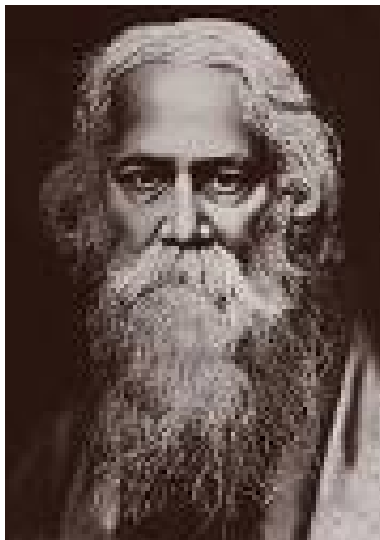
- Indian English Literature has grown from a sapling to a strong rooted tree in full bloom. Indians, however, did not start writing in English in a day – it took several historical events and distinguished personalities to bring Indian writing in English to its present eminence. Historical Perspective is an effort to contextualise the growth and rise of Indian English Literature, from its inception to its present glory.
- The Beginnings
- Raja Ram Mohan Roy
- The Renaissance in India
- Toru Dutt
- Romesh Chander Dutt and Manmohan Ghosh

- Rabindranath Tagore
- Sri Aurobindo
- Sarojini Naidu
- Indian English Drama
- Mahatma Gandhi
- Jawaharlal Nehru
- Indian English Novel
- Mulk Raj Anand
- R. K. Narayan
- Raja Rao
- Bhabani Bhattacharya
- Manohar Malgaonkar
- The Indian Women Novelists
- Indian English Prose
- Three Prose Writers: Radhakrishnan, Raghunathan, Nirad Chaudhuri
- Indian English Poets
- The 'New' Poets

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## DRAMA

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## **What is DRAMA?**

Drama comes from Greek words meaning "to do" or "to act." A play is a story acted out. It shows people going through some eventful period in their lives, seriously or humorously. The speech and action of a play recreate the flow of human life. A play comes fully to life only on the stage. On the stage it combines many arts those of the author, director, actor, designer, and others. Dramatic performance involves an intricate process of rehearsal based upon imagery inherent in the dramatic text. A playwright first invents a drama out of mental imagery. The dramatic text presents the drama as a range of verbal imagery. The language of drama can range between great extremes: on the one hand, an intensely theatrical and ritualistic manner; and on the other, an almost exact reproduction of real life. A dramatic monologue is a type of lyrical poem or narrative piece that has a person speaking to a select listener and revealing his character in a dramatic situation.

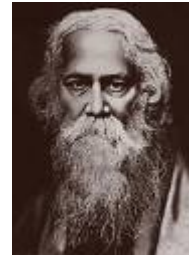
Structure - a play's story and the way of placing it onstage - is the key element in determining effective character and dialogue.

Although the origin of Western theatre itself does not strictly fall within the scope of the study of classical drama, Greek drama is the earliest form of theatre attested in the West and so it behooves students of classical drama to review what constitutes the background of the subject they are exploring. Furthermore, the question of the origin of Western theatre makes an excellent test case for the theories explored in the previous chapter, a chance to apply the definition of "theatre" constructed there to the issue of where and when theatre as such arose. In other words, using the definition of "theatre" constituted above lends focus to the search for its origin, especially when we look for art forms antecedent to the earliest Greek drama which center on language, impersonation, and audience and which led to, or may have led to, theatre.

This also predicates a certain approach to the question. While we are looking for audience, impersonation, and spoken language in performance, we will not be looking for other things which from a modern perspective one might presume are prerequisite to drama. Theatre buildings, for instance, are not absolutely obligatory, nor are dramatic scripts. Even more important, we must not seek "progress" across time, especially the sort of advancement measured by modern technological standards. And we must avoid seeing merely theatrical elements in society as evidence of theatre as an "autonomous activity." We are looking for the institution of theatre, not just presentational devices of any sort, because all societies, even those without the custom of institutional performance, have viewers and viewed but do not necessarily have "theatre." Our sources are nothing less in scope than society itself. Any autonomous activities that involve impersonation, audience, and language, such as festivals, celebrations, rituals, and the like where people watch other people speaking and playing roles, may give evidence of where theatre came from.

***You must know about the epic-Mahabharata. Have you come across the character of Chitra? If she is not a solid character in your mind, here is something about her that would make her so.***

## **Chitra**



A Play in One Act is a play written by Bengali poet and Indian guru Rabindranath Tagore. Works by Tagore were largely based on classic Indian literature and ancient Sanskrit scriptures. Chitra is based on a story from the Mahabharata and is about the characters Arjuna and the King's daughter, Chitrangada. Arjuna asks the king, Chitravahana, for his daughter's hand in marriage. Arjuna and Chitrangada set out to have a child who will in the future take the throne and one day be king. Chitra is a highly recommended play for those who are interested in the writings of author Rabindranath Tagore and also for those who enjoy works based on ancient Indian stories.

It beautifully describes how the princess is spurned by Arjuna giving his celibacy vow as an excuse when she meets him first in her true form and thus she gets a beauty as a boon from gods for a year and when Arjuna breaks his vow on seeing her she is disillusioned. But then the gods persuade her to keep the disguise for the year.

A play in one act "an allegory of love's meaning, clear as a pool in the sunshine.. Little world of beauty".

### **THE CHARACTERS**

#### **GODS:**

**MADANA (Eros).**

**VASANTA (Lycoris).**

#### **MORTALS:**

CHITRA, daughter of the king of Manipur.

ARJUNA, a prince of the house of the Kurus. He is of the Kshatriya or "warrior caste," and during the action is living as a Hermit retired in the forest.

VILLAGERS from an outlying district of Manipur.

## PREFACE

THIS lyrical drama was written about twenty-five years ago. It is based on the following story from the Mahabharata.

In the course of his wanderings, in fulfillment of a vow of penance, Arjuna came to Manipur. There he saw Chitrangada, the beautiful daughter of Chitravahana, the king of the country. Smitten with her charms, he asked the king for the hand of his daughter in marriage. Chitravahana asked him who he was, and learning that he was Arjuna the Pandara, told him that Prabhanjana, one of his ancestors in the kingly line of Manipur, had long been childless. In order to obtain an heir, he performed severe penances. Pleased with these austerities, the god Shiva gave him this boon, that he and his successors should each have one child. It so happened that the promised child had invariably been a son. He, Chitravahana, was the first to have only a daughter Chitrangada to perpetuate the race. He had, therefore, always treated her as a son and had made her his heir.

Continuing, the king said:

"The one son that will be born to her must be the perpetuator of my race. That son will be the price that I shall demand for this marriage. You can take her, if you like, on this condition."

Arjuna promised and took Chitrangada to wife, and lived in her father's capital for three years. When a son was born to them, he embraced her with affection, and taking leave of her and her father, set out again on his travels.



## SUMMARY:

As the play opens, we are introduced to Chitra, the protagonist of the drama. Chitra addresses to Madana and Vasanta. The real character of Chitra is expressed. She reveals her identity as a woman who was dresses and courageous as a man until she met Arjuna. The womanhood in Chitra rings and she now finds in herself a woman longing for Arjuna. It was love at first sight. But when she met Arjuna, he was not so impressed about Chitra. For Chitra, it was love at first sight. The love kept on lingering in her. She realized that it was unable to break the penance which Arjuna follows. Hence, she seeks the help of

Madana and Vasanta ( Lord of Love and King of Seasons). She asks for a boon so that would be beautiful for a day so as to attract Arjuna. The Divine Beings grant her a boon in which she would be attractive for a year. In the second scene, we find Arjuna identifying a beautiful maiden with whom he falls in love. Both indulge in a marital promise and they live a happy life. But, Chitra realizes that her beauty would not stay for long and approaches Madana and Vasanta to break the boon. But they are helpless. In the meantime, Arjuna hears about Chitra-the king's daughter who is mightier than their warriors. He realizes his longing for such a woman. But the fear that Arjuna would leave the "disguised Chitra" immediately after her true self is revealed, keeps running in her mind. She accepts that beauty is not a solution and waits to see what would happen next. At the end of a year, we find Chitra in her true form. Arjuna, who was attracted by the beauty stands stunned for a minute on realizing that it was not the real beauty. But on knowing that it was Chitra, his joy knew no bounds. He left in joy claiming that his thoughts have come true. Chitra asks for forgiveness which is immediately granted. The drama suggests that one should not act in any artificially for the sake of temporary happiness. It's not the external beauty but, the internal beauty and character which count.

## **SCENE-WISE SUMMARY:**

### **CHITRA**

As the play unveils, we find Chitra, the protagonist addressing to VASANTA and MADANA-the King of seasons and the Lord of Love. Chitra, describes her "self" as the daughter of the King who has brought up her as a son. She claims herself "dressed in man's attire". She brings a request to the GODS that she realized the woman in her on seeing Arjuna. She brings out her experience claiming that she encountered Arjuna whom she found in the forest. With her manly gestures, she pricks Arjuna who was lying in the path. It was at this moment that she understood her natural form. It was love at first sight. But then, she learnt that Arjuna belonged to the Kuru clan and had taken a vow of celibacy for twelve-years. Her heart longed to own him at the earliest. It is for this purpose that she had to meet Madana and Vasanta. She wanted a boon through which she would be the most beautiful maiden so as to attract Arjuna. It is evident from her lines-

"...take from my young body this primal injustice, an unattractive plainness. For a single day, make me superbly beautiful,even as beautiful as was the sudden blooming of love in my heart. Give me one brief day of perfect beauty ....."

She indeed gets the boon not for a single day, but for a year. This is the outcome of her previous knowledge about great Saints who threw away their penance for the sake of a woman.

As the Second scene opens up we find Arjuna in a state of confusion. He is unable to believe that he has witnessed "an apparition of beauty in the perfect form of a woman." He brings in a lot of comparisons to describe the beauty of the form he had seen. As he is thinking about it, he finds the beautiful form-"Chitra". He admires her beauty and wishes

to own her. Arjuna enquires about her whereabouts in return of which she says that she had taken a stern vow to live in the temple, isolated from the world in order to win the heart of her beloved. When Arjuna questioned her of her hero, she pours out her love for Arjuna indirectly by referring to the house of the Kurus. As Arjuna realized that he was the man, his joy knew no bounds. When he expresses his wish to marry “Chitra”, “... I am he, the love-hungered guest at your door.” she is dumb-struck and she gets a reformed thought. She pleads to him not to fall a prey to falsehood/illusion (she is a maiden because of the boon. So, she is not her true self. She is an illusion Chitra. “Woo not falsehood, offer not you great heart to an illusion! Go.”

In the third scene, we find Chitra brooding over the misery that had fallen over her the previous. She is filled with guilt to the brim. “ .... What fearful flame is this with which thou has enveloped me! I burn, and I burn whatever I touch.” Just then, Madana and Vasanta appear. On seeing them, Chitra begins to point out that it is their mistake to have granted the boon and begs them to take back the boon. But the Gods say that once, a boon is granted, it cannot be taken back. When questioned of Arjuna’s reaction on knowing the real form of Chitra, she responds saying that she is willing to accept any kind of punishment for the illusion she created. She reveals that Arjuna and she had fallen a prey to the physical pleasures of life, the previous evening. But Vasanta convinces Chitra that Arjuna would still love her for her real form.

In the next scene, we find Arjuna and “Chitra” in love. Arjuna admires the beauty of “Chitra”. When questioned, he says that he is waiting for the day when he would take her to the palace. But “Chitra” rejects this offer thrown by Arjuna to live with him forever. She says, “...leave the little wild flower where it was born.” She gives a negative picture for their relationship which is hard for Arjuna to digest. But Chitra adds, “.....joy turns to pain when the door by which it should depart is shut against it.”

The next scene leads us to Madana and Vasanta who indulge in a short discussion hereby announcing that the boon is going to end as it is nearing a year.

Arjuna is found disturbed as an outcome of his dream in the sixth scene. When requested by Chitra, Arjuna brings back his past activities of going hunting with his brothers. It is a rainy day, and Arjuna’s heart longs to go for hunting. As a reply to this, Chitra informs Arjuna to go in search of an enchanted deer which runs in the rain. She adds on that the deer is being chased by the rain which sends out arrow-like droplets. Similarly, when Arjuna chases the enchanted deer, it will never be wounded by the arrow but it keeps on running. Immediately Arjuna asks Chitra whether she has no home where “kind hearts” would be waiting for her return. She gives a comparison saying that the dew which falls on the Kinsuka flower has no name or destination. She claims herself to be the dew. When Arjuna tries to convince her of taking the latter to his land, she denies the fact. She is aware that the beauty is going to be worn-out. The day has come where she is going to get her natural form. She is worried over it. She adds on that once this beauty goes away, Arjuna would be “like a thirsty bee when summer blossoms lie dead in the dust.”

In the next scene, we find Madana and Vasanta in a conversation where Madana signifies that the night would be the last night indicating that the boon given to Chitra would end. To this, Vasanta adds on that the loveliness of her body would return to the spring and her lips would be turned into a pair of Asoka leaves and that her white glow of skin would be born as a hundred fragrant jasmine flowers. Chitra requests that her beauty would flash just as the final flicker of a flame would flash. This is granted by Madana.

As the eighth scene, opens, we find villagers pleading for help. Arjuna steps in to enquire whether there was no one to protect their kingdom. In reply to this, a villager states that there was Princess Chitra who saved them from such evils. He added on that the Princess was the terror of all evil-doers in the society. Now, that she had gone on a pilgrimage, no one is able to find her. Arjuna was surprised to find that the warden of the kingdom was a woman. To this, the villagers replied that, “Yes, she is our father and mother in one.” As the villagers leave, Chitra enters the scene and enquires Arjuna what made him sit alone and think of. Arjuna says that he had heard of Princess Chitra and wonders what kind of Princess she would be. In reply to this, Chitra pours out that the Princess is not so beautiful and attractive as “Chitra”. She tries to take off the thought from his mind. But Arjuna’s mind keeps thinking of how she would be. Finally, “Chitra” pours out her life as a narrator to Arjuna. She then asks Arjuna whether the latter would accept her if at all her beauty would be worn-out? In reply, Arjuna claims that, “illusion is the first appearance of truth.” As he speaks, he adds that nothing would separate them. On hearing this, “Chitra” weeps and when questioned about the reason, she spits out the truth. She unveils in her original male attire. She is now ready to accept any punishment. She spits out the truth that she was in love with Arjuna at the first sight and that her love for him made her choose the different path. She adds on that she carries the son of Arjuna in her womb and when he grows up, Arjuna would realize the truth. Finally Arjuna stands silent and utters, “beloved, my life is full!”

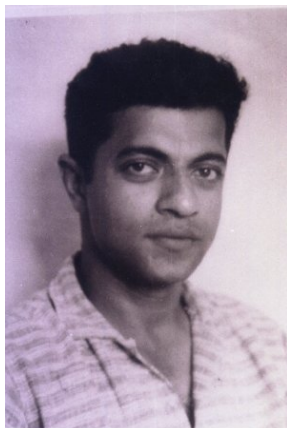
### **BRUSH UP:**

Princess Chitra did all things boys of her age did. She knew how to use a sword and protect her subjects. Due to this, she grew up to have a body that is not very attractive and lady-like.

One day, she sees Arjuna in the forest and falls in love with him. But then, she cannot get him to take interest in her because of her manly appearance. So, she asks her friend Madana who is a God, to bless her with a lady-like body for sometime. He does and Arjuna does get bowled over.

They happily live together. Just at the time her boon is about to expire, Arjuna hears about this princess called Chitra and her tales. He is awed by her and stops paying attention to this “lady”. Finally, this “lady” reveals that she herself is Chitra and there is a happy ending with Arjuna saying - “I’m a complete man.”

## TUGHLAQ



## GIRISH KARNAD



*Can you recollect your knowledge about Muhammad bin Tughlaq and his role in Indian history? Here is a supplementary for your knowledge.*

### **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

### **GIRISH KARNAD—A LIFE-SKETCH**

Girish Karnad, is noted stage actor, playwright, film actor, television artist and a creative figure. He was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford from 1960 to 1963. He also acted as a visiting Professor and resident scholar at the Chicago University. From 1970 to 1972 he was a Bhabha Fellow.

Initially Girish Karnad wanted to be a poet. But as luck would have it he was destined to be a playwright Influence of the theatre was immense on the making of Karnad as a playwright. When he lived his early life in the small town called Sirsi, he happened to see

with his father the performances of the touring Natak Companies. These Natak Companies were the off-shoots of the Parsi theatre.

Girish Karnad is a noted film actor. He has earned a number of laurels in the field of films. He is also a very popular artist on the T. V. screen. He is seen in a leading role in the film *Samskara* which won the President's Gold Medal. Likewise, his other films, namely, *Vamsa Vriksha* and *Tabballyu Niinaade Magane* also won the President's award. *Kaadu* for which Karnad himself wrote the scenerio and which he directed himself also won the Golden Lotus. Karnad has been working with such internationally famous film makers as Shyam Benegal. Before making his active debut in Hindi film, Girish Karnad also served as the Director of the Central Institute of Film and Television Technology at Pune.

### **An Existentialist Dramatis**

Girish Karnad is an existentialist. He concerns himself with the problems of existence of self, search of identity and the problems of isolation and frustration. Existentialism implies the quest of the individual for the assertion of self-despite his limitations and failures. This branch of thought upholds that man can transcend reality in his own consciousness. In fact, existentialism asserts humanism or the dignity of man. This philosophy is well exemplified in all the three plays of Girish Karnad. The major theme of these plays is that of responsibility and the search of identity. For example, in *Yayati* it is the theme of responsibility; in *Tughlaq* it is the search of identity. Even the theme of *Hayavadana* is that of the search of identity and human relationship.

### **A Historical Dramatist**

Girish Karnad is a great historical dramatist. His grasp of the Indian history is quite strong and deep. Obviously he has taken his themes from history. But there is a convincing blend of fact and fiction in his plays. *Tughlaq* is his best historical play. Its plot centres round the famous historical figure of Muhammad Tughlaq. There are a number of historical characters in the play but there are some invented characters like Aziz and Aazam. Karnad is quite adept in selecting the relevant material from history for his plays. In *Tughlaq* he has taken up only the last five years of the reign of Tughlaq. For his dramatic necessity, Karnad has flouted the dramatic unities because he concentrates on the five years of the Mughal period when Tughlaq shifted the capital from Delhi to Daulatabad. In fact Karnad's concentration is more on history and its contemporary implications than on the observance of dramatic techniques. That is why technically *Tughlaq* is a weak-structured play.

For his historical plays Karnad read Indian history quite deeply. He is well-acquainted with the historical authority Dr. Ishwari Prasad. But he has also read other works of eminent historians, such as *Tarikh-a-Firuz Shahi* of Zia-ud-Din Barani, *Mashik-al-absar* of Al Marshi, *Travels* of Ibn Batuta and *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi* of Badauni. Karnad tries to maintain fidelity to history but when artistic necessity requires he does not hesitate to deviate from history as is seen in *Tughlaq*.



## BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE PLAY



### The Rumours about the Sultan

Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq, popularly known in history as 'the mad Tughlaq', ruled Delhi in the 14th century. Tughlaq was a visionary and an idealist. He had the whim of doing things without giving considerable thought to his actions with the result that he had to face shameful situations in his own actions.

Karnad's play reveals that Tughlaq is suspected by his subjects. There are rumours that their Sultan has occupied the throne after killing his own father and brother. At that time people were made to believe that at the time of prayer an elephant had gone mad and a great confusion and chaos was created with the result that a large number of people were killed. Among them were the Sultan's father and brother also. On account of the Sultan's suspicious act of murder, the Sultan's own mother did not even talk to him. However, his step-mother liked him, though she too had her own suspicions about him.

### Tughlaq Known for His Impartiality

Tughlaq has given the impression that he is impartial but people think that it is only a hypocritical gesture on the part of the Sultan. He has exempted the Hindus from the customary *jizia* tax which the Muslims do not approve it. In the opening of the play, we learn from the conversation of the common people that the Sultan is not liked by them. Some of them even call the Sultan as anti-religion. But the Sultan has given people freedom to criticize him and the people have taken advantage of this. For example, a great Muslim saint Imam-ud-din at Kanpur has been speaking much against the Sultan with the result that half the city is up against the policies of the Sultan. The Muslims think that the Sultan has an undue soft corner for the Hindus, even though he prays five times as dictated in the Koran. The Muslims do not approve the Sultan's decision of shifting the capital from Delhi to Daulatabad. They think that Daulatabad is a Hindu city, and the Sultan has leaning towards the Hindus, therefore he had decided to shift the capital. On the other hand the Hindus consider the Sultan as a hypocrite. They do not consider him their real well-wisher. They consider the Sultan a devout Muslim at heart.

## **The Case of a Brahmin**

People are eagerly waiting for a court verdict in a case of a Brahmin, named Vishnu Prasad, who has filed a suit against the government. According to his suit, his land has been confiscated by the government officials illegally. The case is heard by the Supreme Judge, Kazi-i-Mumalik, who after hearing the case and deliberations thereupon, declares that the claim of Vishnu Prasad is just and that he would get five hundred silver dinars as compensation from the treasury and that he would be given a civil service to ensure a regular income. This shows that the justice of the Sultan is impartial. At this time the Sultan also arrives on the scene. He praises the Kazi for his impartial justice. He tells his subjects that he himself stands for justice without any consideration of caste or religion. He tells his people : "My beloved people, you have heard the judgment of the Kazi and seen for yourself as to how justice works in my kingdom—without any consideration of might or weakness, religion or creed. May this moment burn bright and light up our path towards greater justice, equality, progress and peace—not just peace but a more purposeful life."

## **Sultan's Proposal to Shift the Capital**

At this very time, the Sultan makes a declaration that he had planned to shift the capital from Delhi to Daulatabad in order to strengthen the unity and prosperity of his kingdom. He says to his people : "And to achieve this end I am taking a new step in which I hope I shall have your support and cooperation. Later this year the capital of my empire will be moved from Delhi to Daulatabad." At this declaration the crowd reacts with bewilderment. The Sultan tells the crowd that he has taken this decision of shifting the capital in order to maintain the unity of Hindus and Muslims. Moreover such a large empire needs a capital in the centre where it will be more safe. This decision, however invites criticism of the people who consider it a wrong and mad step of the Sultan. The conversation of the people in the crowd reveals that they are convinced of the Sheikh Imam-ud-din's public charge over the Sultan that he had killed his father and brother.

## **The Reality of the Brahmin**

When the crowd is dispersed, only two persons remain behind. They are Aziz and Aazam. In fact Aazam wants to see the Brahmin who has won the case against the government. When the Brahmin comes out, Aazam recognizes him to be his old friend Aziz. Both embrace each other. Aziz tells Aazam that he had gone to the Brahmin's place and purchased and confiscated his land with the help of a back-dated contract. Then he disguised himself as a Brahmin and filed a suit against the government and finally won the case against the Sultan. As a reward he has also got a government job. Aziz invites Aazam to come with him and work as his subordinate. However, Aziz requests Aazam to keep the whole thing a secret.

## **The Sultan with his Step-Mother**

In a room of his palace the Sultan is seen playing chess. At this moment his step-mother arrives. When the Sultan asks her the reason of her coming she tells that she is anxious to know the cause why he is having sleepless nights. The Sultan tells her that he is much concerned about the welfare of his people. He wants to do something which no king has done so far. He wants to work for the Hindu-Muslim unity brotherhood, justice and peace of his kingdom. He has his ideals for which he wants to fight till the end of his life. He tells his step-mother : "But then how can I spread my branches in the stars while the roots have yet to find their hold in the earth ? I wish I could believe in recurring births like the Hindu but I have only one life, one body and my hope, my people, my God, are all fighting for it. Tell me, how dare I waste my time by sleeping ? And don't tell me to go and get married and breed a family because I won't sleep."

Then the Sultan tells her about his mounting problems. He tells her that in Kanpur Sheikh Irnam-ud-din is turning the people against him and that his boyhood friend Ain-ul-Mulk has revolted and is marching on Delhi with an army of thirty thousand soldiers. The Sultan is greatly worried because he has hardly six thousand soldiers to face the enemy.

It is told that Sheikh Imam-ud-din has arrived in Delhi and Najib, the vazier, hints to the Sultan that the Sheikh should be killed because he has instigated people in Kanpur against the Sultan. Barani, the historian, tells that the Sheikh very much resembles the Sultan. Hearing this, the Sultan decides his future course of action in his own way. The Sultan asks Najib to get the army ready to march to Kanauj. He asks his mother that in his absence Najib will stay in Delhi to look after the affairs. He also tells that he has called Shahib-ud-din also to look after the administration in his absence. Barani does not approve this plan of the Sultan, but the Sultan says that he would act in his own way.

## **The Plan of the Sultan**

According to his own plan the Sultan makes an announcement that Sheikh Imam-ud-din would address the people of Delhi and that the Sultan would himself attend the gathering. But strangely enough, no one turns up to hear the Sheikh. Only the Sultan, the Sheikh and a few attendants are present there. The Sultan expresses his regrets that people have not come to hear him. He however orders the sergeant to call all the courtiers, Khans and Amirs to listen to the Sheikh, but the Sheikh denies saying that he would like to address the common people because it is they who would do anything for the sake of Islam. The Sultan then tells the Sheikh that he himself has never violated the tenets of Islam. At this the Sheikh tells that he can recount a number of transgressions of the Sultan. He also tells that the Sultan does not understand the Koran. He does not want to take the advice of the Sayyids and the Ulemas. On the other hand he has put them into prisons. But the Sultan replies that he has put them behind the bars only because the Sayyids and the Ulemas were interfering into political affairs of the kingdom. He calls himself as an humble slave of God.

The Sultan then persuades the Sheikh to go as his envoy to Ain-ul-Mulk so that the precious blood of the Muslims may be saved from shedding. Moreover, Ain-ul-Mulk is his boyhood friend and so he does not want to fight him. The Sultan tells the Sheikh : "I am willing to make peace but how can I do it"? I don't even know why he has turned against me. He won't even see my envoys. But he will see you. He respects you as every Muslim in India does. He will trust your word. That's what I'm asking you—will you please go as my envoy and dissuade him from this folly." The Sheikh falls into the trap of the Sultan and agrees to act as his envoy. He, however, now admits that the Sultan is the cleverest man in the world.

### **The Death of the Sheikh**

On the battle-field of Kannauj, the Sheikh Imam-ud-din looks almost like the Sultan because he is dressed in royal robes. He is seated on a gorgeous elephant. He gets ready to meet Ain-ul-Mulk as the royal envoy for peace. But soon the trumpets are sounded as a signal attack. At once the soldiers pour out of the hills and attack the army of Ain-ul-Mulk. But the soldiers of Ain-ul-Mulk take the Sheikh to be the Sultan and hurl so many arrows at him causing his instant death. In fact it is the Sultan who gave the call of attack and not Ain-ul-Mulk. In this cunning manner the Sultan gets rid of the Sheikh.

The Sultan returns victorious amidst public rejoicing. He, however, shows grief at the death of the Sheikh. He tells : "It was a terrible sight. They brought his body into my tent and I felt as though it was I who was lying dead there and that he was standing above me looking at me. I should have been there in his place. It's a great loss to Islam." The Sultan pardons Ain-ul-Mulk and sends him to Avadh as Governor. About him the Sultan tells, "You remember the chess problem I solved the other day ? Well, when they brought Ain-ul-Mulk before me, I said, 'Look, I have solved the famous problem set by Al-Adli!' He didn't say a word. I drew a sketch on the floor and showed him the solution. He said he liked it then looked harder for a couple of minutes and said, 'No there's a flaw here.' And he actually showed me where I had gone wrong! Think of that, I had spent days on that wretched problem and he spotted a flaw within half a minute. I had to forgive him." Barani and Najib, however, are not pleased by this decision of the Sultan. Ratan Singh also expresses his displeasure by calling the Sultan an honest scoundrel who murders a man calmly and then poses to be stricken with grief.

### **The Revolt of the Amirs**

In a house in Delhi, a number of Amirs, Sayyids, Shihab-ud-din, Ratan Singh and several other citizens have assembled to discuss their course of action against the maladministration and the tyranny of the Sultan. All these people have by now understood the crafty nature of the Sultan. Shihab first declines the invitation of Ratan Singh to participate in this meeting. But all the Amirs are of the opinion that Shihab can help them in the present situation. It is proposed that at the prayer time when all the soldiers have also to pray, they will be unarmed. At that time they would rise together and kill the

Sultan. The call of the muezzin would be considered as the signal for attack. When the prayer time arrives, the Sultan decides that they would not go to any mosque but pray in that very room. So as soon as the rebels get ready to attack, the hidden Hindu soldiers retaliate and there is a lot of bloodshed. The rebels have to take to their heels but only a few are able to escape. Ratan has acted very cunningly. He has a grudge against Shihab-ud-din because his father had killed Ratan Singh's father and usurped his kingdom. So he shows all the damaging letters of Shihab to the Sultan, and in a frenzy, the Sultan stabs Shihab to death in a very cruel manner. Thus Ratan Singh takes his revenge and then he disappears. Najib, however, tells the Sultan that the father of Shihab is a very powerful man. At this the Sultan asks Najib to make a public announcement that while defending the Sultan from the attack of the Amirs, Shihab has been killed and thus he has become a martyr. The Sultan orders that Shihab be given a grand funeral and his father should be invited to attend it.

### **Order to Vacate Delhi**

Then the Sultan gives order to vacate Delhi. He orders that all the people of Delhi should at once vacate Delhi and proceed to Daulatabad. He tells Najib, "Najib, I want Delhi vacated immediately. Every living soul in Delhi will leave for Daulatabad within a fortnight. I was too soft. I can see that now. They'll only understand the whip. Everyone must leave. Not a light should be seen in the windows of Delhi. Not a wisp of smoke should rise from its chimneys. Nothing but an empty graveyard of Delhi will satisfy me now." The Sultan also passes strict orders that there will no more be any prayers. Anyone caught praying will be severely punished. But at the suggestion of Barani, the Sultan revokes this order and allows prayers but only on the arrival of Ghias-ud-din. In his opinion the kingdom will be purified only on the arrival of Ghias-ud-din.

### **The Scene of a Camp**

The Sultan has declared that all arrangements of the comfort of the citizens have been made on the Delhi-Daulatabad route. In a camp a Hindu woman is seen kneeling before Aziz who is still dressed as a Brahmin. Her child is seriously ill and she is requesting Aziz to be allowed to take her child to a doctor and that she would return the next day. But Aziz wants money from the woman which she is not able to pay. In fact, Aziz and Aazam are rogues and make a lot of money in the camp. Aziz is the in-charge of the camp. Both of them decide that they would no more indulge in petty roguery. They plan that they would mint counterfeit copper coins and exchange them for silver coins. When they are thus planning, the crying voice of the woman is heard. Her child is dead.

## **The Fort of Daulatabad**

After five years the scene shifts to the fort of Daulatabad. Two watchmen are seen standing at the ramparts of the Daulatabad fort at past midnight. They are talking about the height of the fort. One of them suggests that if ever the fort fell it will fall from within because no enemy from outside could overcome the fort. The fort has a big dark passage coiled like an enormous hollow python inside its belly. This passage may swallow everyone of them—every man, woman, child and beast.

Just at that moment, the Sultan arrives and looks down the fort. The young watchman urges the Sultan not to do so because the wall is quite steep. The Sultan tells the young man that he built the fort when he was only twenty-one. He also recounts some visionary experiences which he had at the time of the construction of the fort. Then Barani arrives. The Sultan tells him that he is not able to sleep, for he is quite vexed. He feels spiritually lonely and anguished. He tells about other troubles. He tells Barani that Fakr-ud-din has revolted in Bengal. In Malabar, Ehsanshah has also declared himself independent. Bahal-ud-din Gahstasp is collecting his forces to march over Delhi. Besides this there is draught in Doab which is gradually spreading. The Sultan is also worried about the counterfeiting coins in the kingdom. He tells Barani that he wants to go to Mecca and sit by the Kaaba in search of peace. He is tortured by the fact that people call him 'mad Muhammad'. Barani however consoles the Sultan saying that he is known for his scholarship and knowledge of philosophy and poetry. Therefore he must uphold the ideals of love and peace. But he is not doing such things. The Sultan however says, "It isn't as easy as leaving the patient in the wilderness because there is no cure for his disease. Don't you see—this patient racked by fever and crazed by the fear of the enveloping vultures can't be separated from me? Don't you see that the only way I can abdicate is by killing me? I could have done something if the vultures weren't so close. I could have crawled forward on my knees and elbows. But what can you do when every moment you expect a beak to dig into you and tear a muscle out?"

## **Aziz and Aazam**

In a hideout in the hills, Aziz and Aazam are seen. Aazam talks about the boring life of roguery that they are leading. He is fed up of thieving/ killing and plundering. He wants to lead a peaceful life. But Aziz tells that a man must commit crimes. He strongly advocates the life of sin and crimes.

After some time, their attendant Karim arrives with a man who is tied and gagged. This man is none but Ghias-ud-din Abbasid, the descendent of Khalif Abbasid, the last of the Khalifs. Ghias was invited by the Sultan. But Sultan has never seen him. Ghias threatens Aziz and Aazam that he would report to the Sultan that he is being treated in such a manner. Aziz tells Ghias that the Sultan has flogged several persons who claimed to be the descendents of the Khalif. At this Ghias shows Sultan's letters and the ring that he had sent him as a sign of recognition. This is what Aziz wanted. He grabs the ring and the letters. Aziz wants to go to the Sultan as Ghias-ud-din. Therefore he kills Ghias and himself wears his clothes and imagines that the palace doors are opening for him. Aziz is dressed as Ghias-ud-din and Aazam appears as his follower.

### **The Sultan and the Step-mother**

The Sultan is seen looking out of the window of his palace. Just then his step-mother arrives. She shows her deep concern at the killings, deaths, starvation and loot and plunder going on in the kingdom. She also shows her anxiety about the counterfeit coins. But the Sultan says that he cannot withdraw the currency because it was issued by his own orders. He tells his step-mother that he wanted to be an idealist but he has miserably failed. He is much grieved at the murder of Najib. He is trying to find out who the murderer was. But the step-mother tells that she is happy at the death of Najib. The Sultan gets annoyed at this attitude of the step-mother and sternly asks her who killed Najib. She then tells the Sultan that she herself killed Najib because in her opinion he was the cause of the ruin of the kingdom. The Sultan was blindly acting on the advice of Najib. At this revelation the Sultan becomes stern and says that the punishment for treachery is death. He scolds his step-mother saying that she is an adulteress and she should be put to death. The Sultan orders the soldiers to take her to prison and stone her to death. Just then Barani enters. The Sultan informs Barani that he has condemned his mother to death. He then prays but feels that he would go mad.

### **The Arrival of Ghias-ud-din**

The arrival of Ghias-ud-din is announced. In fact it is Aziz in disguise with Aazam as his follower. Ghias is supposed to purify Daulatabad. Therefore the people are asked to assemble in large numbers, it being a holy day for the kingdom. Consequently a large number of citizens gather in front of the fort. But to them the arrival of Abbasid is just meaningless because they are almost starving. They have to pay twenty silver coins for a meagre quantity of wheat. They have to eat even the bark of trees and the dried skin of animals. The roads abound with corpses. So they want food, not prayers. The sounds of the trumpets declare the arrival of the Sultan from one side and that of Abbasid from the other. The Sultan looks at Aziz whom he takes to be Abbasid and embraces him. But the woman whose child had died seems to recognize Aziz, as she stares at him. The Sultan says to Abbasid that only he can save his country. "Only the dust of your feet on my head can save me now."

When the Sultan departs, the woman cries that this is the man who killed her child. She screams but the people do not understand her. On the other hand they think that the Sultan had killed her child. There is confusion all around. The soldiers are mobbed and beaten. The riot starts.

### **The Murder of Aazam**

Aazam tells Aziz that he is fed up of cheating people. He is also fed up of the nature of the Sultan. He has visited the city twice through a secret passage. About the city he tells Aziz, "The streets there are like little fingers and littered with dead bodies. There are corpses and flies. It all stinks. The Sultan is mad." Aazam is so frightened that he wants to leave. He also bribes two soldiers to bring two horses, but Aziz is not ready to go. So Aazam leaves the fort, but subsequently he is found murdered in a secret tunnel.

## The Identity of Aziz Known

When a soldier informs the Sultan about the murder of Aazam, the Sultan asks the soldier to keep it a secret. He then orders the doorman to fetch Ghias-ud-din at once. When Aziz disguised as Ghias comes before the Sultan, the Sultan asks him who he really is. Aziz is so frightened that it is now useless for him to befool the Sultan. So he reveals his identity telling him that he is a *dhobi*. But he begs pardon of the Sultan saying that he is his most obedient follower. At first the Sultan is enraged but he is calmed down because he is quite impressed by the trickery of this ordinary man. The Sultan considers Aziz a man of genius. The Sultan says that his punishment is that he is made an officer with the Governor of Deccan. Next he will go to Arabia and disappear in the way. Aziz has no option but to agree to the judgment of the Sultan.

Barani warns the Sultan that he has taken a wrong impression of Aziz. Aziz will certainly hit him in the back. Barani suggests that the *dhobi* should be awarded with tortures but the Sultan only says, "I doubt if even a dhobi could have thought of so many tortures." Barani then asks the Sultan to give him permission to go to his home-town. The Sultan gives him permission.

## The End of the Play

In the end the Sultan is seen with closed eyes. He appears to be falling asleep with his head hanging over his chest. But when he hears the *Muezzin* call he is startled. In fact he is dazed and frightened. He appears to be lost. He is not able to understand his real situation.

Bring out the symbolism in Girish Karnad's play *Tughlaq*.

Or

What are the different symbols that are used by Karnad to make his play *Tughlaq* more effective and meaningful?

Ans. *Tughlaq* is basically a historical play. But Karnad was not satisfied with only giving the history of the reign of Muhammad Tughlaq. He seemed to make the play more and more relevant to the modern Indian context. Every great writer is not satisfied with the surface meaning of his work. He always seeks to infuse some hidden or deeper meaning in his work. For this purpose he often makes use of symbols and images. Symbols are often used in the form of such words as have greater emotional and associative significance. Girish Karnad had made his play symbolically quite significant. The play should be read as more than a mere piece of history.

## As a political allegory

The play *Tughlaq* is a political allegory. It can be seen as a symbol of the contemporary political situation of India. Karnad himself wrote, "What struck me absolutely about Tughlaq's history was that it was contemporary. The fact that there was the most idealistic, the most intelligent king ever to come on the throne of Delhi..... and one of the greatest failures also. And within a period of twenty



years this tremendously capable man had gone to pieces. This seemed to be both due to his idealism as well as the shortcomings within him, such as his impatience, his cruelty, his feeling that he had the only correct answer. And I felt in the early sixties India had also come very far in the same direction—the twenty years' period seemed to me very much a striking parallel." But Karnad did not make his play deliberately symbolical. According to him contemporariness was only incidental. He writes about this aspect of the play, "I did not consciously write about the Nehru era. I am always flattered when people tell me that it was about the Nehru era and equally applies to developments of politics since then. But I think, well, that is a compliment that any playwright would be thrilled to get but it was not intended to be a contemporary play about contemporary situation. I think if one gets involved with one's characters or one's play then it should develop into some kind of a true statement about oneself. I think a play can only be contemporary as the playwright is. If the writer does not have contemporary convictions or is not committed, the play will not be contemporary. You cannot be fashionably committed or fashionably involved. If you are involved, the issues will come which if you are not involved, don't emerge." There is little doubt that Karnad's play reflects the mood of disillusionment that followed the Nehru era in India. The critic U. R. Anantha Murthy also comments that *Tughlaq* "reflects as no other play perhaps does, the political mood of disillusionment which followed the Nehru era of idealism in the country." The very opening sentence of the Old Man in the play reflects this contemporary situation— "God, what's this country coming to !"

## The Chess Symbol

It is the most important symbol that has been used by Karnad. Muhammad Tughlaq plays the game of chess not as a pastime but as a means of solving intricate problems. When in Scene Two, he is seen concentrating over a chess-board, the stepmother arrives and looks inquisitively. Tughlaq looks at her smilingly and tells her—"I have just solved the most famous problem in chess. Even Al-Adli and Sarakhi said it was insoluble. And it's so simple." In fact, through the symbol of chess, Karnad has highlighted Tughlaq's high manipulative skill of dealing with political rivals and opponents. Muhammad Tughlaq considers his critics and opponents merely as pawns of chess which he can use at his will.

This is seen in Tughlaq's dealing with Ain-ul-Mulk and Sheikh Imam-ud-din. Tughlaq has been facing the problem of rebellion of Ain-ul-Mulk. While playing the game of chess, he seems to have solved this problem. He uses Sheikh Imam-ud-din as his pawn to solve the problem of Ain-ul-Mulk. The Sultan knows that the Sheikh has been inciting rebellion against him in Kanpur. The solution which he finds while bent upon the chess-board is that he invites Sheikh Imam-ud-din to address the citizens of Delhi and to enlighten the people about the shortcomings of his rule. But when the Sheikh arrives in Delhi, no one turns up to listen to him. Before him he orders his soldiers to call the Amirs and courtiers to listen to the Sheikh. But the Sheikh denies to address the 'boot-lickers'. Muhammad Tughlaq is a skilled chess-player. He knows every move of the game. Therefore, he takes advantage of another situation. The Sheikh resembles Muhammad Tughlaq in appearance. Therefore he humbly requests Sheikh Imam-ud-din to go to Ain-ul -Mulk as his envoy of peace and to dissuade Ain-ul-Mulk from his foolish act of rebellion. The Sheikh feels

flattered and is ultimately caught in the trap of Tughlaq. Very diplomatically he says to the Sheikh—"Please, Sheikh Saheb, I'm not asking you only for my sake but for all the Muslims who will die at the hands of Muslims if there is war." At once the royal robes of an envoy are brought and the Sheikh puts on the garments. He looks very much like the Sultan in the royal robes. When the Sheikh stands on his royal elephant face to face before the enemy, suddenly trumpeter on the side of the Sultan sounds the charge. The battle begins and the Sheikh is killed. The crafty and manipulator Sultan overthrows the fearless and tireless fighter of Islam. Ain-ul-Mulk surrenders and is eventually forgiven. When the stepmother expresses her disapproval about this step of Tughlaq, he explains to her, "I'll tell you what happened. You remember the chess problem I solved the other day. Well, when they brought Ain-ul-Mulk before me, I said, 'look, I have solved the famous problem set by Al-Adli'. He didn't say a word. I drew a sketch on the floor a couple of minutes and said, 'No, there is a flaw here'. And he actually showed me where I had gone wrong. Think of that. I had spent days on that wretched problem and he spots a flaw within half a minute. I had to forgive him." Thus chess symbol has been used quite significantly.

### **Aziz and Aazam—Their Symbolic Significance**

The two rogues, Aziz and Aazam, are also used as symbols of a particular class of people. They symbolize unprincipled and opportunistic people's exploits. Such people exploit the liberal ideals and policies and the welfare activities of the government. They are interested in fulfilling their own pockets. Aziz, the dhobi, disguises himself twice to take advantage of the situation in his own favour. First he appears in the guise of the Brahmin Vishnu Prasad and wins the case against the Sultan himself. Secondly, he murders Ghiyas-ud-din Abbasid and in the guise of the saint, appears before the Sultan to bless him and purify Daulatabad. Aziz is a great opportunist. Politics attracts him beyond any other profession. He tells Aazam, "My dear fellow, that's where our future is —politics. It's a beautiful world—wealth, success, position, power—and yet it is full of brainless people, people with not an ideal in their head. When I think of all the tricks I used in our village to pinch a few clothes from the people—if one uses half that intelligence here, one can get robes of power. And not have to pinch them either—get them. It's a fantastic world."

### **Prayer as Symbol**

Prayer, in Karnad's play *Tughlaq*, can be seen in symbolic significance. U.R. Anantha Murthy writes, "The use of prayer for murder is reminiscent of what Tughlaq himself did to kill his father. That prayer, which is most dear to Tughlaq, is vitiated by him as well as his enemies, is symbolic of the fact that his life is corrupted at its very source". The Amirs, some courtiers, Sheikhs, led by Ratan Singh and Shihab-ud-din conspire to kill Muhammad Tughlaq at the time of prayer. When Sayyid and Amir I express their reluctance at killing Tughlaq at prayer time, Ratan Singh ironically says, "Where's your

Holy: Koran ? The tyrant does not deserve to be considered among the faithful. And then, he killed his own father during prayer time after ah'. The following conversation is equally significant:

Sheikh—You can't pollute the time of prayer. It's a sacred time. We can't stain it with the blood of a Mussulman.

Amir II — Of course, we can always make up later. Do penance for it. Sheikh—But prayer isn't penance. Remember we are here to save Islam,

not to insult it.

Amir I—Don't get excited. Islam will benefit in the long run.

Even Shihab-ud-din ultimately supports Ratan Singh's proposal. He says, "Does your Islam work only at prayer ? You have persuaded me to do what I had sworn never to do, your Holiness, I'm sure the Lord will not mind an interrupted prayer."

Muhammad Tughlaq is so disillusioned that he prohibits prayer in his kingdom. He makes a declaration:

'I had wanted every act in my kingdom to become a prayer, every prayer to become a further step in knowledge, every step to lead us nearer to God. But our prayers too are ridden with disease and must be exiled. There will be no more praying in the kingdom. Najib, anyone caught praying will be severely punished. Henceforth let the moment of prayer walk my streets in silence and leave without a trace.'

The prayer is revoked only after five years when the arrival of Ghiyas-ud-din Abbasid is announced. In the end Muhammad Tughlaq falls in sound sleep and gets up only when the Muezzin's call fades away. Tughlaq looks around dazed and frightened. He fails to offer prayer at the right time. Thus, prayer symbol has been used as the basis of the play.

## Other Symbols

Among some other symbols, there is a reference to python. In Scene Eight, the Young Man and the Old Man talk about the strange and secret passage in the fort of Daulatabad :

Young Man—Tell me more about this fort, grandfather. Is it true there is a strange and frightening passage within this fort ? Dark, they say, like the new moon night.

Old Man—Yes, it's a long passage, a big passage, coiled like an enormous hollow python inside the belly of the fort. And we shall be far, far happier when that python breaks out and swallows everything in sight— every man, woman, child and beast."

This python can be seen as a symbol of the Sultan's increasing fierceness and brutality. The Sultan had been growing more and more inhuman and blood-thirsty. Thus the python is symbolic of complete degeneration of the personality of Muhammad Tughlaq. The suggestion is that Tughlaq has degenerated himself into a beast like a python.

In his moments of utter dejection, Muhammad Tughlaq says to Barani—"It isn't as easy as leaving the patient in the wilderness because there's no cure for his disease. Don't you see—this patient, racked with fever and crazed by the fear of the enveloping vultures, can't be separated from me ? Don't you see that the only way I can abdicate is by killing myself ? I could have done something if the vultures weren't so close. I could have crawled forward on my knees and elbows. But what can you do when every moment you expect a beak to dig into you and tear a muscle out?" The reference of the vultures is quite significant because they indicate that Muhammad Tughlaq has lost all peace of mind. His noble ideals and aspirations have all been frustrated. His critics and opponents are trying to throw him out. Thus the vultures and other birds of prey symbolize the frustration of the idealist Tughlaq.

Even Daulatabad may be seen to have a symbolic significance. This city is the symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity which Muhammad Tughlaq has been seeking for. The intentions of Tughlaq behind the idea of shifting the capital were honest, but the plan failed miserably because of the dishonest people in his kingdom.

Thus the play has some relevant symbols. Girish Karnad has made use of these symbols in such a deft way that the play has acquired force and beauty.

### **PARAGRAPH:**

- Write a note on Muhammad Tughlaq's scheme of Token Currency and its consequences
- Write a note on the relationship between Muhammad Tughlaq and his stepmother.
- Trace the element of humour and fun in Karnad's play TUGHLAQ.
- The chess symbol in TUGHLAQ.

### **RACK YOUR BRAINS:**

1. Discuss TUGHLAQ as a political allegory.
2. Consider Muhammad Tughlaq as the hero of Girish Karnad's play TUGHLAQ.

### **ESSAY:**

**Bring out the style of Girish Karnad with reference to this play.**



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## FICTION

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### **Fiction:**

- an extended work in prose; usually in the form of a story
- fresh: original and of a kind not seen before; "the computer produced a completely novel proof of a well-known theorem"
- pleasantly new or different; "common sense of a most refreshing sort"
- a printed and bound book that is an extended work of fiction; "his bookcases were filled with nothing but novels"; "he burned all the novels"
- a work of 40,000 words or more.

Fiction is an imaginative form of narrative, one of the four basic rhetorical modes. Although the word *fiction* is derived from the Latin *finco*, *finere*, *finxi*, *fictum*, "to form, create", works of fiction need not be entirely imaginary and may include real people, places, and events. Fiction may be written or oral or may be presented as a film or in theater or on radio or television. Although not all fiction is necessarily artistic, fiction is largely perceived as a form of art or entertainment. The ability to create fiction and other artistic works is considered to be a fundamental aspect of human culture, one of the defining characteristics of humanity.

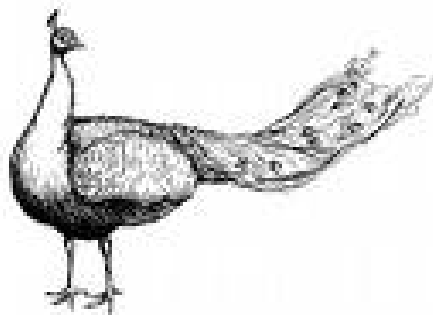
Even among writing instructors and bestselling authors, there appears to be little consensus regarding the number and composition of the fundamental elements of fiction. For example:

- "Fiction has three main elements: plotting, character, and place or setting."
- "A charged image evokes all the other elements of your story—theme, character, conflict, setting, style, and so on." ("For writers, the spices you add to make your plot your own include characters, setting, and dialogue.")
- "Contained within the framework of a story are the major story elements: characters, action, and conflict."

## **CRY, THE PEACOCK**



***ANITA DESAI***



Have you ever heard a peacock cry? If so, in which circumstances have you noticed it?

## **CRY, THE PEACOCK**

Anita Desai is one of the prominent Indo – Anglian Novelists. She is a prolific authoress. A study of her works will reveal that she tries to explore the psychological state of her characters, because she thinks that the inner life of a man or a woman decides his or her character more than the external conditions of life. The novelist has a deep insight in the psychological and social problem of modern life. Her characters have firm basis of convictions and faith. She uses symbols and images to portray the sufferings in the mind. Her characters are not political big – wigs or socialities. They are concerned mainly with their personal problems born of their psychological distress. Her characters are, in fact, fighting for an existence in a hostile world. But their problems remain unresolved. Hence, all her novels breathe in the air of tragedy. Her style is remarkable for her portic images as she has used to communicate her feelings. References to the “cry” of the Peacock are made to express May’s desirer for love of her husband. The characters speak in first person which makes the style straight, direct and without any involvement. These salient features of her novels make her a unique figure among the host of Indo - Anglian novelists of the modern times. In some relationships, she shows relationship with the famous novelist, Virginia wolf.

Anita Desai has presented a pen – portrait of May who was brought up and nurtured in opulence by a doting father but had been married to an advocate who had little regard for emotions as reasons and arguments were his forte. To Maya, love is the premium mobile. But for her husband Gautama, he preached the principle of detachment. This is evident to justify that they were poles apart. This contra city hurt Maya’s emotions so much that she was led gradually to the verge of nervous break down.

Maya’s father lived a lavish life. His wife was dead. Therefore, he had showered his love on his daughter, Maya. She lived a life like the princess of the Arabian Nights. Her father gave her a princely life of comfort and love. She also loved her father. The thought, “No one, no one else loves me as my father” – was deep rooted in her. May was married to Gautama, an advocate, who was an intellectual, bereft of sentiments and emotions. Maya claims that her in – laws were of the same nature and nobody demanded or spoke of love. Gautama’s mother was an awfully busy woman. She looked after a dispensary, a creche, a workshop for blind, the disabled and the unemployed. She talked of nothing but impersonal matters. Gautama’s father was deeply engrossed in Gandhi’s movement and talked only about political problems when he was out of prison. Maya considered herself as a toy in the hands of her in – laws for, she had no one to speak and no one tried to hear to her silent outburst.

Naturally, Maya felt as if she was brought from the shade and protection of a banyan tree into the heat of a desert. She was hungry for love. She didn’t have any child. She had her dog. Toto, to whom she gave her love to. But a state would have it, Toto died leaving her alone. She had the desire of giving it a decent burial but when Gautama returned in the evening, he rang up to the Municipality which took away the carcass. This unsentimental and unemotional attitude of Gautama sent shock waves into her nerves. Maya became desperate like a gentle soul among the boors. At times, she has thought of leaving the

place, never to return. But she remembered her friend Leila who managed to take life in her stride. She managed to live in spite of trying circumstances. Leila's husband was suffering from tuberculosis and her parents never visited her because she married against their will. Leila did not find enjoyment outside. Maya had another friend named Pom, who had all the luxuries in life yet, she was greedy. This deduced to Maya that one has to adapt and adjust to the situations around them to find contentment.

But Maya found it hard to adjust to the pettiness of men and women. She went to attend a party headed by Mrs. Lal, where the ladies tried to show off their wealth, laughed at the poverty of others and openly admired vulgarity and depravity. She was deeply shocked by the vulgarity of the cabaret dancers. The events in the party oppressed her.

Each of the events in the novel reveals a new fact of Maya's Personality. A party was going on in the lawn outside her room and the men tried to recite Urdu Couplets. She had a strong willingness to attend the party as she has heard Ghazals from her father. But she realised that she was not allowed to make her presence there. She was appalled by this gender discrimination. She was not allowed equality even by her husband, Gautama. Maya was demoralized so much that she didn't have the intellectual force which could attract Gautama. In fact, she was more urbane, sensible and spirited than her husband, but she was shocked to know the reality that women were not treated as companions by their husbands. She knew the fact that women were considered sex-symbols. Nobody in the family of Gautama valued her viewpoint. Maya's helplessness distressed her. There was not one, but several important issues on which Gautama differed from Maya. Gautama thought that Maya's upbringing in opulence had insulated her from the hard realities of life. He preached from the Gita and thought that one should weigh everything in the balance of logic, argument and condemned faith.

Maya's brother, Arjuna also decided her way of life. He had his friendship with poor boys and denounced the wealthy father and ran to America where he worked tough in a canning factory to make both ends meet. He ridiculed Maya for being married to Gautama in spite of the predictions that Maya or her husband would die four years after their marriage. He too, like Gautama believed that emotions were degenerating. In a channel, Maya was antagonized by her brother also. He had never played any positive role in her life. But he appeared from nowhere to tell her that she was wrong in believing in faith and emotions.

Indeed, Gautama's mother and sister Nila, gave her support. They realized that Maya was alone and took her out for shopping, but this support was only transitory. They soon left her to herself. Gautama's mother and sister could do nothing except being sorrowful for the tragedy that loomed large.

Maya was humane and charitable by nature, while Gautama did not take notice of the sufferings of others. Maya went to the railway station to receive her husband's mother and sister, where she happened to see a train – load of monkeys taken to a laboratory at Bombay. She was agonised to see the cruelty of the idea and the plight of the monkeys which were packed in cages without sufficient room to move.



The gulf between Maya and her husband widened when she thought that her husband might put her life in jeopardy if he came to know about the astrologer's prediction. When Maya appreciated the beauty of the Moon, her husband made the fatal mistake and fell down from the parapet to meet his death.

Maya like a tragic heroine thought that she was responsible for her husband's death and lost the equilibrium of her mind and died.

### **Title of the novel**

*Cry, the Peacock* is a novel depicting the character of a love-hungry Maya. The peacock's cry, Pia, Pia, seemed to her as the cry to a lover. Maya was fed on the love of her father, but was married to a man who thought love was another name for attachment which is denounced by the Gita. Maya's desire for love remained unsatisfied — she died childless. Moreover, her husband shocked her sensibilities by his lack of human values like kindness to animals and grace of good tastes. Consequently, she lost the equilibrium. The prediction that either she or her husband would die within four years of their marriage also gave her nightmares. Her desire for love of her husband remained unsatisfied. The title of the novel describes her ardent desire for love.

### **Message**

The message of the novelist is loud and clear. Mis-matched marriages will bring misfortune to both, may even kill both husband and wife. If they don't die, they will be worse than dead. Secondly, the parents should not step aside as Maya's father has done. Thirdly, love is not the sin of attachment as Gautama thinks. Finally, the wife of any woman for that matter, should not be confined within the four walls of the house.

### **CONTRAST BETWEEN MAYA'S LIFE IN HER FATHER'S HOME AND HER IN-LAWS HOME**

Contrast between Maya's father and her in-laws

Or

A CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF *CRY, THE PEACOCK* Love-bird

"Cry, the Peacock" lays bare the trauma of Maya, caused to her mainly by her lawyer husband Gautama, who is bereft of emotions. His success in legal profession has given him the idea that the intellectual approach is the right approach, while Maya is fed and brought up on emotional diet.

Maya was brought up by a father, who would not say 'no' to any of her demands.

### **Love and Comfort at her father's house**

Her father was like a "silver oak with his fine, silver-white hair" and she loved him instinctively as he crinkled the corners of his eyes. Like an oak tree he would give her protection and care. He would fondle her cheeks, and say to her, "It is getting warm. Time for us to retreat to the hills.....Where shall we go this year, Maya ? Choose !" People said that he was spoiling her.

When she was living with her father, the servants would bring the breakfast "out into the flower-beds" which savoured like "a revel of elves and fairies who feast on melons and syrups by moon-light". She reminisced. "As a child, I enjoyed, princess-like, a sumptuous fare of the fantasies of the Arabian Nights, the glories and bravado of Indian mythology, long and astounding tales of princess and regal queens, jackals and tigers, and being my father's daughter, of lovely English and Irish fairy tales as well, that were read out to me by him, that inveterate-reader-aloud, so that a doll dressed in pink I named rose rather than Gulab, and the guards of Buckingham Palace were nearly as real to me as the uniformed cavalry officers who practised, in magnificent vestige of yellow dust on the maidan in the army cantonement where I was sometimes taken for a drive, in the evenings." Her table was laid beside a mandarin orange tree, with bright globules of fruit, which looked "like miniature lanterns on a carnival night." When she played battle door-and-shuttlecock with small oranges as shuttlecocks which broke like eggs, her father laughed to see her leap and fly.

### **Maya's love for her father**

As her father loved her dearly, she also loved him with the same intensity. He was to her nothing short of a god —"....his thoughts, his life, his attitude, his learning and his career," presented as formal a picture as "a Mughal garden, gracious and exact, where breeding, culture, leisure and comfort have been brought to a nice art, where no single weed is allowed to flower, no single flower to die and remain on the stalk, no single stalk to grow out of its pruned shape." Maya became poetic as she continued to praise the graces of her father. She reminisced, "As the streams in Mughal garden flow musically through channels of carved marble and sandstone, so his thoughts, his life flow, broken into small, exquisite patterns by the carving, played upon by altering nuances of light and shade, but never over-stepping their limitations, never breaking their bounds, always moving onwards with the some graceful cadence."

### **Contrast between Maya and her husband**

Such a daughter was married to Gautama, who was a lawyer by profession, too busy and too intellectual to care for the tender, delicate emotions. It was a sea of change in her life style.

Unlike Maya, her husband lived a life of want and poverty. He studied at a school which had "small, airless, chalky class-room.....trips to the zoo with bags of pea-nuts was as far from it as elephant rides in a jungle." His body was slender and anaemic. His cage-like

ribs were made prominent and aroused pity in the heart of Maya. His skeleton was in sharp contrast with his attachment for solid substances of materialistic world.

It was, of course, a mis-matched marriage. The wife was brought up like a princess with all amenities of life and in an atmosphere of warmth of emotions, while the husband was brought up in poverty and was a lawyer with purely intellectual approach, without having even appreciation for emotions.

### **Gautama was a cold intellectual**

But Maya is right to ask people not to presume "that our marriage was an empty one, a failure", though it is true that Maya could not get emotional support from Gautama which she was in need of. Maya's world was completely shattered. She did not have mother, or a child. She, therefore, gave all her love to her dog, Toto. When the dog died, her husband Gautama was not at home. She was alone without anybody to console her in her hour of bereavement. When her husband came in the evening he made a short work of the whole affair. He rang up to the Municipality which sent the truck to remove the carcass, without caring for the emotions of Maya who wanted to give a befitting farewell to the dog. There was nothing amiss in her desire to do so. People generally love their dogs like a member of the family and build their tombs with an epitaph written on it. Certainly did the dog deserve this much. Maya was hurt to know that Toto's body was taken away by the truck of the municipality to be buried.

### **Gautama's refusal to go out in summer**

Gautama was not only a cold intellectual, he was cold to the idea of going out in summer, while her father would ask her affectionately every summer to choose the hill station she would like to go. A girl who had enjoyed the honey of such lavish living felt stifled. She said to her husband once, "If only we could go away for the summer", he reacted in the expected way. He stiffened immediately and said in a cold astringent tone. "Why don't you ?.....Your father would take you wherever you wanted to go. He can." His tone was sarcastic, The denial of the luxuries which she had enjoyed at her father's house weighed heavy upon her mind, and the rancour of irony and sarcasm was like vitriol on a singed psyche.

But it will be a folly off the mark if it is presumed that Maya had no love for her husband. She said to him that it would not be possible for her to go away to the hills, leaving him behind in the heat. But Gautama snapped that he would be able to manage as he was doing before marriage. Gautama did not reciprocate her feelings.

Maya still tried a bit to persuade him to find time. She asked him : "Is there so much work to be done this summer ? Couldn't you get away-just for a short holiday?" Gautama refused to be cajoled. He told her straight that he had lot of work to do in summer. Still he asked her whether she would like to go to Darjeeling. When Maya admitted in a candid

manner that her father would be at Darjeeling. Gautama said sarcastically 'that he knew that much. This remark hurt Maya "more than if it had been a loo ! of unmasked misanthropy." However, Maya said that she wanted to go to Travancore, Cochin, Mysore, Malabar, to see the Kathakali dances. But Gautama dropped the issue for ever saying that she should wait till winters when he hoped that some Kathakali dance troupe would come to Delhi.

### **Gautama's family was devoid of love**

Maya soon realized that she was in a different world where her word was not law, as it was in her father's house. A- girl who had the up-bringing of a princess failed to compromise with the changed circumstances, more so because she had the expectation that her husband would love her even more than her father. But now it was clear to her, "No one, no one else loves me as my father does."

To make matters worse, no one in Gautama's family ever spoke of love —"They spoke of debates in Parliament, of cases of bribery, and corruption, revealed in Government, of newspaper editors accused of libel, and the trials that followed, of trade pacts made with countries across the seas, of political treaties, with those across the mountains," etc.

Gautama's mother had innumerable engagements. She had no time to spare for Maya "She knew so many people, gathered from such diverse backgrounds and situations that I wondered how I could mean anything more to her than yet another human being to be made comfortable in a hostile world." She would rush to her dispensary, or her crèche, or her workshop for the blind, the disabled. Even the pariah pups she had picked up from the streets got greater love as they clambered over her.

She paid little attention to her children and her children also did not care much about her. She had several children-two of them were still studying, while the others were journalists, teachers, scientists etc. Gautama, the eldest of them, was a lawyer. They discussed everything with gusto except their private personal matter. And Gautama wanted to discuss nothing but a legal case with his wife. They treated Maya, "like a toy", with indulgence, considering her fit to discuss only such matters as babies, meals, shopping, marriages. They did not include her in discussions of what they considered serious. And they thought that the world she came from was a luxury which "they considered a crime to suffer."

Gautama's father was actively working for the independence of India which was then like an unfurled flag at half mast. Therefore he toured most of the time. He had peace only when he was in prison. His only concern was the ushering of a new epoch, which, he seemed to know, would have its own "irritations and failures, its red tape and corruption, its small pale hopes and frustrations and, above all, its great glory, its effect upon the countless villages and cities that he visited." He was a man who had time and energy to think of the future of India, but not of his own family.

In a way everybody was a stranger in this family. All of them had interest in the affairs of the state and the humanity at large, but they had no interest in the welfare of the members of the family. Maya felt as if she had come in a house the inmates of which had no love lost among them since none cared for the emotions of others. Maya felt that she had her relations "whose names I knew, whose hands I touched, and found there was not one amongst them to whom I could cry, 'Look, look —there is a moon in the sky.'"

### **Maya's failure to arouse love**

She was so much disgusted with these people that she swore, "I will never go there again." Maya had dreamt of life in which people were inter-twined with the chords of love and affection. She wished "to kiss the mother's hand, and each separate calloused knuckle, and hold the baby in the cradle of my arm, rejoicing in its weight, and listen to the many voices, their varied tones, their gay inflections, to their loud, quick rasping over my eardrum, all those seething human sounds...." But to her dismay she found that the members of her family lacked in the basic human emotions of love. "Now when I surged, open-armed towards them, all receded to some distant background, and were merely a part of that multitude for which I ardently and futilely longed, to whom I was about to say goodbye, for I might never see them again."

### **Helpless father of Maya**

Her indulgent father advised her to accept things as they were, with the assurance that in course of time everything would turn out to be good. Her father would say—"It is best to accept Maya. What good does it do to cry? Why must you get so upset? Surely it is all for the best. It cannot be undone now, and it must be accepted as it is —you will find that to be the best course." What other advice could a father give to his dejected daughter. Marriage is not a bond which can be broken at will and the girls after the marriage have no option but to accept the *fait accompli*. But only minor adjustments can be made. Maya was a girl of a different mettle; she was hungry for love on which she had been fed by her loving father. How then would she live a life of hunger and starvation?

Her father knew well that Maya was in a difficult situation. He was not unscathed. As he advised his daughter to adjust in the new circumstances he tried to conceal his tears. But how could she adjust when it was a question of death —"When he turned to smile at me, there was all the pain of parenthood upon his lips, chastening and subduing." Fatalism, which was writ large on his face gave the resignation to his sighs and the gentleness to his voice.

### **Maya visited her friends**

She tried to draw consolation and courage from the example of her one time friend, Leila and her husband, who made all sorts of adjustments with life without any grouse or

grudge. Leila's parents would not see her, or write to her, have any communication with her since she had eloped and married a man without the sanction of her parents. To make matters worse, her husband lay dying with tuberculosis, yet she took upon herself to minister to the wants of her sick husband — "When I saw her in her movements an aching tenderness subdued, by a long sadness, into great beauty and great bitterness." Her husband was also an embodiment of patience as he was like "an animal, a ferocious and wild beast that had allowed itself to become a house pet for its own reasons and he accepted the food and-drink she earned for him, as his due."

Leila never lost control and composure. When Maya went to see her, her husband had another attack and was lying stupefied. Leila was found sitting at the foot of his bed, correcting papers of her students in a frenzy. Maya's presence had no doubt calmed her, to a great extent, yet she could not help being upset. She said, "I don't know why I rave" and with a resignation, she added, "It was all written in my fate long ago."

Leila had no desire for any sort of diversion. Maya invited her to come to her and go out on a long drive, but she said that her life had pleasures of its own — "You cannot imagine what fun it is laying bare the ignorance of my pretty little dunderheads." Saying this she laughed "as vividly as only those who laugh seldom." In spite of so much of ill-luck Leila was patience and loveliness personified — "But when I saw her tend him, and the loveliness that entered her closed face as she did so, I could not grudge her the meaning of her life. Leila was one of those who require a cross, cannot walk without one."

As opposed to Leila, Maya's another friend, Pom never spoke of fate, had never been ill, or over-worked or bitter. Pom was fashionable, painted her mouth, the outlines of her eyes, her finger and toe nails. She had a lust for new things, and even for a new house. She wanted a brand new flat in a new colony. She had a very good house and a luxurious living, yet she spoke of herself "as a timid, crouching mouse in a hole", though she did not mind when Maya said teasingly that she was "so sleek a mouse, with so bright a mouse-hole, with livid pink counterpane, the pile of glossy fashion magazines" etc. Her mother-in-law worked whole day in the kitchen "as if she was born in it, and married at its door", yet she complained against her in-laws. She dreamt of delicacies that would be provided for tea, the sweet meats she loved, and the film she would go to see with her husband. She went to Birla Mandir because she wanted a son.

The two friends of Maya presented the philosophy that contentment and happiness arise from within and not from without. One can be contented without any comforts of life and one can be discontented in spite of all the comforts of life. But Maya's is a different case. Love is a basic necessity not only of human beings, but of all the living beings, including animals and trees. How can anybody do without it ? Her hunger for love makes her a neurotic.

### **Maya's pity for the monkeys**

Maya was a girl of a very delicate conscience while her husband was a hard core realist. She went to the Railway station with her husband to receive her mother-in-law and sister-in-law. There she had the chance to see the plight of monkeys being taken to a laboratory at Bombay. She was pained to learn that monkeys would be subjected to all kinds of experiments, but their being packed in cages like surdins in boxes gave her hysterics. She asked her husband to look for her father because she believed that her father alone had the kindness for animals and he would arrange for water for the monkeys. Her husband, she knew, was apathetic to the woes of the monkeys, devoid of emotions as he was.

### **Gautama's frigidity**

Maya's desire for love of her husband remained a far cry. She made advances several times but without avail. The cries of Peacocks "Pia, Pia" caused ripples in her heart, but her husband Gautama was frigid. He exhorted her to practice detachment which, he wrongly thought, was based on the teachings of the Gita.

Maya, therefore, lived within the four walls of the house, almost like a prisoner. Her mother-in-law and her sister-in-law, rightly diagnosed her problem, took her out for shopping, but it was a temporary reprieve as they had come for a short stay.

### **Arjuna's reference to the horoscope**

Her brother, Arjuna, who had left house when he was only twenty two, wrote to her from America. His letter reminded her of several past incidents, but most important of them all was a reference to a horoscope and the prediction of the astrologer that either she or her husband would die within four years of their marriage. Maya had kept it a guarded secret because she thought that her frigid, unemotional husband's logic might goad him to kill her.

### **Gautama's death**

Gautama's indifference to art and beauty further widened the gulf between husband and wife. In the final phase, when they were walking on the parapet, Gautama came between her and her worshipped Moon, made a mistake and fell down dead.

### **Maya's death**

Maya thought that she was guilty of Gautama's death. She lost the equilibrium and died; but not unsung. Nila and her mother had full sympathy with the innocent Maya, suffering for no fault of hers. Her only fault was that she was a woman of delicate conscience and very refined tastes.

### ESSAY:

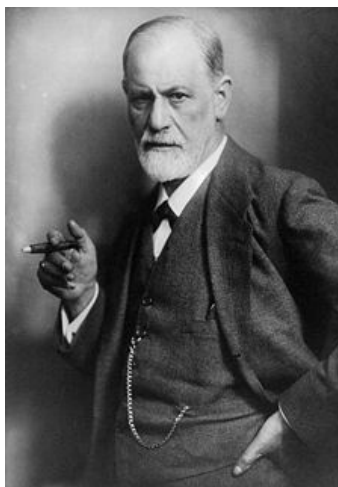
- Maya was an over-protected child. Discuss.
- CRY, THE PEACOCK as a psychological novel.

### PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:

1. Contrast between Maya and Gautama.
2. Character of Maya.
3. Character of Gautama.

### FEED YOUR BRAINS:

Sigmund Freud (6 May 1856 – 23 September 1939), was an Austrian psychiatrist who founded the psychoanalytic school of psychology.<sup>[1]</sup> Freud is best known for his theories of the unconscious mind and the defense mechanism of repression and for creating the clinical practice of psychoanalysis for curing psychopathology through dialogue between a patient and a psychoanalyst. Freud is also renowned for his redefinition of sexual desire as the primary motivational energy of human life, as well as his therapeutic techniques, including the use of free association, his theory of transference in the therapeutic relationship, and the interpretation of dreams as sources of insight into unconscious desires. He was also an early neurological researcher into cerebral palsy. While of significant historical interest, many of Freud's ideas have fallen out of favor or have been modified by Neo-Freudians, although in the past ten years advances in the field of neurology have shown evidence for many of his theories. In clinical practice, Freud's methods and ideas remain important in psychodynamic approaches. In the academy, his ideas continue to be influential in the humanities and some social sciences.





Psychoanalysis is a body of ideas developed by Austrian physician Sigmund Freud and his followers, which is devoted to the study of human psychological functioning and behavior.

It has three applications:

1. a method of investigation of the mind;
2. a systematized set of theories about human behavior; and
3. a method of treatment of psychological or emotional illness.<sup>[1]</sup>

Under the broad umbrella of psychoanalysis there are at least 22 different theoretical orientations regarding the underlying theory of understanding of human mentation and human development. The various approaches in treatment called "psychoanalytic" vary as much as the different theories do. In addition, the term refers to a method of studying child development.

Freudian psychoanalysis refers to a specific type of treatment in which the "analysand" (analytic patient) verbalizes thoughts, including free associations, fantasies, and dreams, from which the analyst formulates the unconscious conflicts causing the patient's symptoms and character problems, and interprets them for the patient to create insight for resolution of the problems.

The specifics of the analyst's interventions typically include confronting and clarifying the patient's pathological defenses, wishes and guilt. Through the analysis of conflicts, including those contributing to resistance and those involving transference onto the analyst of distorted reactions, psychoanalytic treatment can clarify how patients unconsciously are their own worst enemies: how unconscious, symbolic reactions that have been stimulated by experience are causing symptoms

*Carl Gustav Jung* (26 July 1875 – 6 June 1961) was a Swiss psychiatrist, an influential thinker and the founder of analytical psychology. Jung's approach to psychology has been influential in the field of depth psychology and in countercultural movements across the globe. Jung is considered as the first modern psychologist to state that the human psyche is "by nature religious" and to explore it in depth.<sup>[1]</sup> He emphasized understanding the psyche through exploring the worlds of dreams, art, mythology, religion and philosophy. Although he was a theoretical psychologist and practicing clinician, much of his life's work was spent exploring other areas, including Eastern and Western philosophy, alchemy, astrology, sociology, as well as literature and the arts. His most notable ideas include the concept of psychological archetypes, the collective unconscious and synchronicity.



Jung emphasized the importance of balance and harmony. He cautioned that modern people rely too heavily on science and logic and would benefit from integrating spirituality and appreciation of unconscious realms. His overarching goal for the person, called individuation, was becoming whole (as opposed to moral or perfect) which involves a struggle to integrate and relate to the unconscious shadow side while still maintaining conscious autonomy.

## **THE ENGLISH TEACHER**



**R.K.NARAYAN**



### **THE INDO-ANGLIAN FICTION**

The Indo-Anglian literature is different from the Anglo-Indian literature. The former is the genre written and created by the Indians through the English language; the latter is written by the Englishmen on themes and subjects related to India. The Indo-Anglian literature, therefore, is very much associated with Indian English – “the evolution of a distinct standard – a standard the body of which is correct English usage, but whose soul is Indian in thought, colour and imagery, and now and then, even in the evolution of an idiom, which is expressive of the unique quality of the Indian mind while conforming to the correctness of English usage. It is illustrative of a social type of language phenomenon – a language foreign to the people who use it but acceptable to them because of political and, recently, cultural reasons.”

The Indo-Anglian fiction owes its origin to the translations of various fictional works from the Indian languages into English, notably from Bengali into English. Tagore cast a sweeping and transforming influence on it. His novels *Gora*, *The Wreck*, *The Home and the World* and short stories were originally written in Bengali. They were translated into English. The form of his novels is old fashioned. His works brought to Indo-Anglian fiction realism and social purpose. He gave emotional and psychological depth to character portrayed.

The early pioneering works of Indo-Anglian fiction were social, historical, detective and romantic. They lacked depth and style and technique to leave any permanent imprint. Yet they helped in the development of the genre.

The English Teacher (1945): It is R.K.Narayanan's third novel dealing with school and college life of India. Krishnan, the English Teacher, was a product of a system of education which makes us 'morons, cultural morons', and his repeating mugged up notes from year to year was a fraud practiced for a consideration of a hundred rupees.' He believed in freedom of soul and independence of mind, and was not ready to perpetuate the system that crippled his imagination. He had studied English literature and admired the wonderful writers but only at the cost of his creativity. What he scribbled as his original poem one fine morning was actually a poem of Byron just reproduced; his mind was only a jumble of quotations. He found teaching synonymous with sitting in his chair and keeping his tongue active whether his students understood him or felt baffled by what he said.

Although the novel, The English Teacher, describes the life of Krishnan as a teacher of English in a college, yet the main part of the novel centres round the love between Krishna and his wife Sushila. They were living a very happy life when suddenly Sushila died of typhoid. After her death Krishnan concentrated himself on bringing up his daughter Leela. Then the novel takes a mystic turn. Krishnan started receiving messages from his wife through a medium, a cheerful gentleman of philosophic outlook. Every week he used to go to the medium for a sitting and he received minute instructions about the things of his house, which convinced him that they could only come from his wife's spirit. The English Teacher put up his daughter Leela at a school run by a devoted master. The master's unhappy life and his devotion to the school form a minor subplot of the novel.

In the end Krishna resigns his job and joins the primitive school so that he could talk directly to his departed wife, who, he believes, was a spirit.

The English Teacher 'is a song of love in marriage. ' It is a psychic, mystic and spiritual study of some part of Indianness. It is a remarkable piece of art, full of unexpected things – the turning of each page brings a surprise. The atmosphere and texture of happiness and above all, its elusiveness have seldom been so perfectly transformed. It is an interesting, delicious idyll. It is a wonderfully painted miniature of India, wherein we can meet characters as vivid as Jane Austen's and move through landscapes as delicate as Corot's. Susila is symbol of devoted Hindu wife who gives foremost importance to her family and her domestic duty.

The novel which starts as an interesting novel of domestic fidelity gets bogged in spiritual things and philosophic discussions which many a time tax the patience of the readers. As a work of art this novel could have been much better with less spiritualism. The characters are well worked out. Even the school master inspires dignity, fills the readers with a sort of reverence. But in spite of artistic style, subtle humour and irony, the novel suffers from a lack of interest.

## 2. A BRIEF STORY OF 'THE ENGLISH TEACHER'

Krishna was the teacher of English in Albert Mission College, Malgudi. Though he was married and had a seven month daughter Leela, he was leading a lonely life in the college hostel. He received two letters one from his wife Susila and the other from his father. His wife wrote that his daughter had an eye on her like an intelligence officer and seemed to be asking when his father would take her away her home. His father informed him with his and his father-in-law's suggestion that he should lead a family life. Krishna searched frantically a suitable house and paced towards the station excitedly, anxiously and hurriedly. His mother had come from the village to sat the house in order and to receive and welcome her daughter-in-law ceremoniously. Except for a brief quarrel when Susila, his wife, sold his shrieking alarm piece, they never again quarrelled, especially for the sake of their child. They led an idyllic, ecstatic married life. But misfortune lay lurking in store for them. Krishna's father offered them to advance a substantial amount of money to purchase a house. On their way to Sastri's house, who was secretary of the Lawley Extension Housing Scheme, they took their breakfast at the Bombay Anand Bhavan restaurant where Susila caught typhoid. Then Susila later was imprisoned in the hell-like foul lavatory of the house which they had selected. A dirty fly sat on her lips. She washed her lips and face several times. Even then she felt so squeamish that she kept her two lips separate. She did not feel like taking meals. She suffered from fever and splitting headache. Krishna consulted Shanker the famous doctor of the city. This famous doctor seemed to be foolish, complacent and irresponsible. He prescribed for Susila medicine without examining her. He had been treating her for malaria whereas, as the belated report showed, she had been suffering from typhoid. But by the time the typhoid report came, the condition of Susila had already worsened. The condition went on deteriorating for want of proper medicine: when the typhoid report had appeared, the parents of Susila had come to serve and nurse her. The parents of Susila, especially her father, sat by her, consoling and encouraging, and telling her anecdotes and stories. They looked after the child in the day time, told her tales, taught her lessons and took her for shopping. They loved her to the point of spoiling her. Susila's father believed in spoiling the child. Susila's mother had befriended Granny, the old woman cook, and they told each other in the kitchen their life and philosophy. Susila's mother, with the help of Granny had arranged an exorcist who came and smeared the sacred ash on the forehead of Susila, to drive away the Evil Spirit. She was superstitious and believed that an Evil Eye had attacked her daughter. She went to the nearby temple, brought sacred ashes and smeared it on the forehead of her daughter. Susila's parents suffered secretly and prayed for her recovery. Krishna's mother, who had a passion for house-keeping, could not visit Malgudi to see Susila who had a passion for budget keeping.

Krishna had become a willing nurse to his wife. He set by her from dawn till late night, recording her temperature, administering her medicine and telling her tales. When she suffered from high fever and complained of splitting headache, he endearingly called her child and caressed her forehead. He began to suffer from sleeplessness on account of anxiety for his wife. Sometimes he started from her sleep and went to her room to ascertain that she was all right. Her condition deteriorated gradually. She suffered from

delirium. She felt mentally deranged. She complained to her husband, that her father was a bad man and was snatching her gold chain. The doctor brought with him a famous Madras physician for expert second opinion. But the foolish doctor did not follow the physician's prescription. He became nervous, hopeless and helpless and bit his nail in disappointment. Susila left for heavenly abode.

The death of his darling wife left Krishna strewed. Life seemed to him meaningless. He felt lonely, utterly grief-stricken and uprooted. He thought of thousand ways of putting an end to his life. But for his extreme love for the child he would have put an end to his life. His wife, who loved him extremely, loved him even more after her death. Desperately and frantically, with the help of her fellow souls in heaven, she sought for a spiritual Medium man through whom he could communicate with her husband. She perfected the art of psychich development so that she could communicate with her husband successfully. She, who, when alive, loved her husband, like Viola in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, silently, expressed in communication her love for him and the child. She guided her husband in the psychic development so that he could communicate with her successfully. She feared that if he repeatedly failed in communicating with her successfully, he might lose faith in the existence of her soul and leave all his efforts at communication. Therefore she advised him to postpone his efforts at communicating with her for some time. He, in order to concentrate on psychich development, resigned from his job. He told Mr. Brown the principal of the college that he was leaving his job because he wanted to teach in school. He had be-friended one headmaster who was running a school and was leading a miserable married life. Krishna loved his child so extremely that whenever he could not devote time to her child, he fell guilty. When he communicated with his wife successfully, he felt rapturous and song merrily. But when he could not communicate successfully, he fell himself to have miserably fallen into an abyss without the help of a ladder to come out of it ultimately unable to suffer any longer the unbearable pain of separation from his wife he shared her fate, and accompanied her to heaven.

## 6. THEMES OF 'THE ENGLISH TEACHER'

There are in *The English Teacher*, many themes like love, life of heaven, communication, child psychology, social issues, superstitions and nature. The most important theme, however, is love. Love is related differently. There is Krishna's love for Susila, his wife, and Leela his daughter. There is Susila's love for Krishna and the child. There is the love of the grand parents for the child Granny's love for Susila and the child, and the child's love for the parents and the grand parents. The love of Krishna for his wife, Susila, however, towers above the love of other relations. *The English Teacher* is, essentially, a love story. Let us discuss them briefly.

### (A) Love —Krishna's Love for Susila

Krishna love his wife Susila extremely and abundantly. His love is constant, like the ever-fixed star, constant and eternal. It is deep like the unchartered ocean and sacred like the stars. It is as deep and true as that of Farhad's for Shiri and that of Romeo for Juliet.

It does not alter when it alteration finds. When Krishna learns that his wife is coming, he frantically and wildly searches the house, and does not for a long time find any house suitable for his queen-like house. He paces towards the station hurriedly, anxiously. He offers to pay the coolie three times of his usual wages so that the luggage of his wife may be unloaded conveniently. He requests the stationmaster to detain the train for more than seven minutes so that his wife may get down from the compartment safely. He concedes her fantastic demand to get the marble slabs fitted to the walls of her new bedroom. When she falls seriously ill, he feels nervously anxious, and becomes her willing nurse. He serves her day in and day out. Like the Headmaster, he suffers from sleeplessness and feels nightmarish. He starts from his sleep, and runs to her bedroom to ascertain that everything is all right. He watches the thermometer with a beating heart and prays for mild fever. When the fever recorded is high, he feels like breaking the thermometer. He remains sitting in her room from dawn to night watching her sleep or telling her tales. He pours into her throat barley water, medicine and glucose. When she suffers from high fever and splitting pain, he endearingly calls her child and caresses her forehead.' Her sickness has brought him even closer to her. He is stunned at her death. He feels lonely, desolate, deserted, and uprooted. He suffers the pangs of excruciating sorrow. He thinks of thousand ways of putting an end to his life. But for his deep love for his daughter, he would have committed suicide. He begins to communicate with her. When he communicates successfully he feels exultant, and sings merrily. When he communicates unsuccessfully, he feels like having fallen into an abyss without the help of a ladder to come out of it. Ultimately when she comes and sits by him on the bed smiling, he offers her jasmine (lowers. She accepts them and sticks them into her hair. When he exclaims exultantly that she is there with him, she smiles and says she has always been there with him. Then before the dawn breaks he accompanies her to heaven.

### **His Love for the Child**

His love for his child is next only to his love for his wife. He does not send the child even with his mother to the village even though his mother weeps on this account. He wants to keep the company of his child because she is now to him the only relief. He dares not contemplate where he should have been without her. He loves her so much that he refuses her grand parents to take her away with them. When one day he reaches his home so late that he finds her sleeping, he is full of remorse and prays to God to forgive him for neglecting his child. He determines to spend the whole Sunday with her. He thinks of thousand ways of committing suicide because he cannot bear and suffer any longer the grief of separation from his wife. He does not do so only because of his extreme love for his child. Keeping the company of his child has become the chief occupation of his life. He cares for little else. He feels exultant when she makes a toy in school. He feels thrill and pride whenever he works for her and looks after her. Doing anything for her is for him a noble and exciting occupation. He keeps her letter in his purse as if it is a rare document.

### **Susila's Love for Krishna**

Susila's love for her husband is silent. Her love for him, however, is as deep as that of Viola for the Duke in *Twelfth Night*. Like Viola, she never expresses her love. But her love is expressed by her behaviour. Even though Krishna always reaches home from college on time, she always waits for him anxiously outside the house in the garden. When he asks her why is waiting for him, she gets flushed. Her extreme love for him, however, is expressed after her death. She remains restless for communicating with her husband. She frantically searches a Medium man through whom she may communicate with him. At last she searches one and begins to communicate. Gradually she takes pains to master the art of communication. She then guides her husband how to communicate successfully. When her husband fails to communicate, she suggests her to postpone communicating with her for some time. She fears lest, after repeated failures, he may lose faith in the existence of her soul, and may permanently stop all her efforts at communicating with her.

### **Her Love for Her Daughter**

She loves her daughter abundantly and exultantly. The interest of the child (her daughter) is uppermost in what she does. After a brief quarrel both Susila and Krishna decide not to quarrel because the quarrel adversely affects the child. When they are taking breakfast in Bombay Anand Bhavan Restaurant, she asks him to take sweets for the child. On return from the house-search business she reminds him to buy sweets and toys for the child. They discard a house because it is similar to other houses and the child is likely to get confused about her house. They select a big house only because there is a lot of place for the child to play. Even when she falls ill, she takes care of the child. She uncoils oils combs and plaits her hair, washes her, and changes her dress. And yet she sympathises her when she says that the "poor child looks an orphan without proper treatment.

There is a pathetic scene which evidences her extreme love for the child. When she is bed-ridden, the child comes and stands at the threshold and watches her mother. Her eyes light up when the child comes to the door. She (mother) asks in a feeble voice if she has taken her food and asks other questions. When the child goes away, she shuts her eyes and listens to her foot falls. She loves her even more after her death. She remembers her in her communication with her husband. She keeps watch over her, she loves with her spiritually.

### **Child's Love for Her Parents**

The child loves her parents abundantly. She is always delighted to see her father. She is delighted to see her father out of her mother's room so early. She claps her hands in joy and runs towards him. When she sees her father reading she is excited, and exclaims joyously that father is reading. When she sees her father awakened, she exclaims exultantly. "Oh father has woken up." Her extreme love to her father is expressed by her letter to him with the huge word "LEELA" and the address "to my beloved father".



Her love for her mother is as much as it is for her father. When her father tells her that her mother is calling her, she brightens. She asks if her fever has gone she runs towards her leaving behind the temple and the priest<sup>5</sup>. When she comes from the neighbouring house, she immediately asks: “Is mother all right? There is a touching scene of her love for her mother. When her mother is bed-ridden, she comes and stands watching her. And though she does not speak, she likes to stand there, and watches her mother. She remembers her mother who is now in heaven. Her mother asks Krishna if he thinks the child has forgotten her.

### **Grand Parents' Love for the Child**

The grand father grows fond of the child when the latter reaches the village house. He remains sitting on the pyol and watches her grand-daughter playing. The grand mother often comes to Malgudi and finds more occasions to see her daughter-in-law. She loves her so much that she requests her son repeatedly to send her with her to the village. When her son refuses to send her, she calls him Stubborn, and weeps. Whenever she comes to Malgudi, the first thing she asks her son is about the welfare of the child.<sup>3</sup> She is swamped by the child. She finds little time to talk or think of anything else. She fusses over the child. She keeps Susila free to look after the child. She brings for her a gold chain and slips it over her head. She asks her son not to be harsh to her. When she takes her to the village she takes her to the pond or the garden, sleeps with her, and fondles her in every possible manner.

The father-in-law of Krishna also loves her very much. He spends most of his time in the company of the child. He teaches her lessons, tells her stories, and takes her out for shopping. He loves her to the point of spoiling her. He believes in spoiling the children and asks: “Who should be spoiled if not children.” Like her husband, the Mother-in-law of Krishna also spoils the child. She pampers her. She gives her plenty to eat defeating all the regular dieting system of the parents. Thus we see that everywhere in the novel there is love and nothing but love. Love is willy nilly the main theme of the novel.

### **(B) Child Psychology**

Like Surdas, Narayan describes the child psychology. He expresses the subtle and finer shades of child life. When her mother tells her that she has selected a big house for her, she says that she wants a small one which can be put into a trunk. When Krishna awakens from his midday sleep, she tells him with a feeling of triumph: “You didn't know it when I got up and ran away.” She gazes at her sleeping father. When, on waking, her father asks her what she was doing, she replies: “I wanted to watch if any ant or fly was going to get into you through your nose. When she is going to school she, instead of a book, clasps a catalogue to her little bosom. She follows her father, and whines for some work. She takes out some useless toys from the overstuffed box, and goes to throw them away into the street, and brings them back to put them back into the box, saying they are all important. He asks her father why he goes to his far away school, why he does not go to his near

school. When her father tells her that if she touches the book after washing, Saraswati will be pleased, and will bless her for reading herself, she says : what will you do then she asked as if pitying a man who would lose his only employment in life. When her father is reading, she exclaims : Father is reading" as if reading on the part of father is something strange. Even Surdas would have envied some of these pranks of the child. Narayan is a postmaster in describing the psychology of the child.

### **(C) Life of Heaven**

Like Yeats, who gives a vivid description of byzantium, Narayan inspired by Plato, Browning and Yeats, gives a vivid and fantastic account of life in heavenly.

He describes the life of heaven through the soul of Susila who communicates with her husband on earth. Life in heaven is one of thought and experience. Narayan echoes Browning when he says that the life of heaven is the life of aspiration, striving and joy. The greatest ecstasy is the feeling of the Divine Light which floods there. Music transports the souls to higher planes. Things in heaven are more intense than they are on earth. A melody there establishes a link between the souls and the human beings. The souls are utterly transformed though they retain their worldly relations. Susila is transformed. Yet she remains the same so far as her love for her husband, daughter and other relatives is concerned. Everything in heaven is finer and quicker than it is on earth. There is there no interval between aspiration and fulfilment as there is on earth. There thought is fulfilment. There is no struggle in between the two. When a soul aspires for a garment it is on it. When a soul aspires for a perfume, the perfume pervades. Like Plato, Narayan believes that the phenoman on earth is only a pale copy of its idea in heaven. The soul of Susila says to her husband

"You think you saw it (the saree) in that trunk, how can it be there? What you have seen is its counterpart, the real part of the thing is that which is in thought.

### **(D) Social Issues**

Though, like Chaucer and Jane Austen, Narayan is a pure artist, he, like them, presents the social evils unobtrusively, without any zeal for reforming them. He presents several social evils in *The English Teacher*. Let us enumerate some of them.

Narayan flings his irony at the miserable condition of the college hostels. He says that hostel bathrooms are hell on earth. When God asked his assistant to take a man to hell, he brought him to the hostel bathroom passage. He could not take him to the bathroom for a long time because it remained engaged. Later the assistant could not find the man because he was covered by the growing grass.

Narayan carps at the railway authorities who do not make the railway carriages of safer dimensions. He exposes the businessman who keep incorrect measures and weigh less. Krishna's mother declares that the measures, including the government stamped ones, are

incorrect and are kept maliciously incorrect<sup>2</sup> because some municipal members are businessman. He humorously presents the joint family system which causes constant wrangling between the mother-in-laws and the daughters-in-law. There is the constant heated exchange between Krishna's mother and her elder daughter-in-law. Shankar, the doctor of Susila narrates an incident that a man came to him and requested him to keep her wife in bed for a fortnight more so that she may remain free from the harshness of her mother-in-law.<sup>3</sup> Narayan hits hard at the Municipal Chairman and members who always fight among themselves, do not work at all. But when any important visitor comes they take him to the top of the municipal building and from there point out with great pride Sarayn cutting across the northern boundary of the town. The localities like Anderson Lane are cleaned and- washed not by the municipality but by the sun, the rain and the winds.

### **(E) Superstitions**

Narayan takes pleasure in describing some of the superstitions which are a part of lore of Indian culture. The mother-in-law of Krishna is superstitious. She is convinced that the Evil Eye has fallen on her daughter and that at the new house a malignant spirit had attacked her<sup>5</sup>. She believes in exorcism, and invites an exorcist to drive away the evil spirit.<sup>6</sup> Even Shankar, the doctor of Susila exposes his superstitious nature when he says:

"When we understand it (exorcism) fully....we doctors will be able

to give more complete cares.

The Indian villages are the store house of simple superstitions. When Krishna goes to the bus stand to see his mother off, he comes across a village women steeped in superstition. The village woman insists upon having the child lifted up and shown to her. She touches the child's cheek and cracks her fingers on her temple as an antidote for Evil Eye Narayan, like Chaucer, gets amused and amuses the readers by finding even educated persons superstitions. When a donkey brays, he is exulted and says:

"It is a good sign, they say, the braying of a donkey. So my request is well-timed.

### **(F) Nature**

Narayan, like Wordsworth believes in pantheism. He believes that the mystery of God can be revealed to us only in the communion of nature.

He believes, like Wordsworth, that nature never did betray the heart that loved her. Here is pure pantheism.

"There are subtle, invisible emotions in nature's surroundings; with them the deepest in us merges and harmonizes. I think the highest form of joy and peace can ever comprehend.

Krishna is impressed by this view of Nature when he goes to bathe in the river. He is so much inspired by nature that he feels like writing poetry. Nature is celestial, spiritual. The spirits select for communication a spiritual person who lives in the lap of Nature. The selected person, the Medium man, seeks pantheism in Nature:

"This casuarina and the setting sun and the river create a sort of peace to which I've become more and more addicted. I spend long hours here, and desire nothing better than to be left here to the peace. It gives one the feeling that it is a place which belongs to Eternity, and that it will not be touched by time, disease or decay.

Krishna feels ecstatic in such natural surroundings:

"Tall casuarina trees swayed and murmured over the banks. A crescent moon peeped behind the foliage. On the bank on our side stood a smile shrine

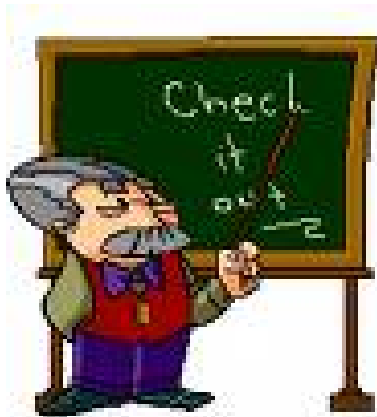
He is in ecstasy when he sees the following scene of Nature's beauty:

It looked like a green heaven. Acres and acres of trees, shrubs and orchards. Far off, casuarina leaves murmured. Beyond that casuarina, would you believe it I have a lotus pond, and on its bank a temple, the most lovely ruin that you ever saw. I was in ecstasy when I found that these delightful things were included in the lot.

Krishna is always fascinated by Nature. When he has gone in search of a house, he is overwhelmed by the beauty of Nature surrounding the selected house:

"Fields of corn stretched away in front of the house and far beyond it, a cluster of huts of the next village and beyond it all stood up the blue outlines of Mempi Mountains. It was a lovely prospect.

He is always fascinated by the beauty of Nature. When he wants to meet the Medium and is anxiously waiting for the Boy, the son of the Medium man, he is fascinated by the west sky ablaze with the sun below the horizon.



**PARAGRAPH:**

- Describe Krishna's visit to the Malgudi railway station.
- Describe the stages of Susila's deterioration in her condition leading to her death.

**ESSAY:**

1. Critical appreciation of "THE ENGLISH TEACHER."
2. "THE ENGLISH TEACHER" is a love story.- DISCUSS
3. Sketch the character of the protagonist-"Krishna"