



SATHYABAMA

**INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)**

Accredited "A" Grade by NAAC | 12B Status by UGC | Approved by AICTE

www.sathyabama.ac.in

**SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

UNIT – I - British Literature II – SHS5007

Detailed

1. John Dryden Mac Flecknoe
2. Alexander Pope The Rape of the Lock

Non Detailed

1. Andrew Marvell To His Coy Mistress
2. Thomas Gray Ode on the spring
3. Pope An Essay on Man: Epistle II

Mac Flecknoe

John Dryden

Mac Flecknoe is the one of the best short satirical poems in which Dryden has dealt with Thomas Shadwell with humorous contempt. Mac Flecknoe is a personal as well as a literary satire. In Mac Flecknoe, not a single reference of prevailing political predicament can be found only but the political and dramatic activities of Shadwell are also mentioned. Dryden presents Shadwell as a dull poetaster, a corpulent man and a plagiarist. Dryden's uses the heroic couplet for satirical purposes. Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel* was followed by his another piece *The Medal*, which was answered by Thomas Shadwell in *Medal of John Bayes*, a coarse satire on Dryden. He decided to avenge himself on Shadwell and Dryden fully revenged himself by the publication of Mac Flecknoe in 1682.

Dryden presents Shadwell as a dull poetaster, as an idiot. He is the dullest son of Flecknoe. He "never deviates into sense" Even fog prevails throughout the day in Shadwell has been presented as a prince of a bond of a musician, he produces shrill unpleasant sound. He was born as an enemy of wit and common sense and at the time of coronation he swore that he will maintain dullness until death. Dryden exposes the dramatic skill of Shadwell by saying that his comedies make people shed tears and his tragedies create laughter.

Dryden also accuses Shadwell for copying from others work without paying the attribute to them. And further Dryden ridicules Shadwell physical built up; Shadwell is a fat

and bulky fellow but without a brain and common sense. He suggests Shadwell not to base his characters upon the experience and knowledge of mankind. His men of wit should also be like him. Shadwell's borrowings are as distinct as oil in the water. He should not claim likeness with Ben Jonson, because Jonson was a learned man but Shadwell was a perfect stupid. Johnson's satires are great pieces in literature, his comic pieces were effective but Shadwell is so poor in using satire that they do not offend the person satirized there in.

Mac Flecknoe is a personal satire but nowhere has Dryden stooped too low in exposing Shadwell. And satire in the poem is enlivened with wit and humor. The heroic verse implied in the poem magnifies its effect. And the words themselves constantly create the comic ambience. Epithets like perfect, genuine, Confirmed are used with epithets such as dullard, stupid to create ambivalence. But ambivalence disappears once the reader goes through the poem and deciphers the intention of the author.

Some critics like J.C. Collins and George Thorn Drury are of the view that much of the satire in Mac Flecknoe is undoubtedly unjust. Dryden has become in presenting Shadwell in Mac Flecknoe. He was not a confirmed dullard as Dryden says him; though he was not a great poet, he was the comic dramatist of some repute. But for us as a student of literature, poem is a perfect piece in the pile of English literature for its uniformity, precision, regularity artistic and literariness.

To sum up Dryden's two hundred lines of abuse, especially with the sketches to Thomas Shadwell in a negative manner is as a result of his political affiliation, but more directly as a result of an increasingly unfriendly rivalry in the theatre. The poem defines by negatives and discrepancies; it undoes epic pretensions by playing with a mock-heroic.

The poem starts with the mention that it is a satire and the subject of the satire is True-blue Protestant Poet T.S., referring probably to the poet Thomas Shadwell.

The first line of the poem creates the illusion of it being an epic poem about a historical hero. The next lines talk about Mac Flecknoe, a monarch who instead of ruling an empire, rules over the non-sense. The king is old and thus must choose a successor to his throne. The poet wonders whether the king will chose a poet who has talent and wit or if he will chose someone like him, a man with no literary talent whatsoever.

The poem then introduces the character of Shadwell, a man with no talent, dull, stupid and boring who resembles his father the most. The poet then continues to insult Shadwell in a mock heroic tone, calling him a dense man, comparing him with a tree that has no intelligence and saying about him that he writes in an illogical way.

Shadwell's arrival in London is described and Dryden tells about him that he came sailing like a king. Allusions are made towards two of Thomas Shadwell's plays, *Epsom Wells* and *The Virtuoso* and towards the metrical feet and rhyme scheme used by Shadwell in one of his poems *Psyche*. Shadwell's arrival is described and the water on which he sails is presented as being full with human waste and with people coming from the Pissing-Alley coming to greet him. While the common people are happy to see Shadwell, Singleton, a contemporary writer is envious that he wasn't chosen as successor to the throne.

Starting from line 64, the poem continues with the mock-heroic tone. London is described and references are made to a fortification in London transformed into brothel and the rumors that circulated during those times regarding a supposed plot to assassinate the King are mentioned.

The brothels are compared to nurseries where kings, queens and 'punks', referring to prostitutes are born. Inside this place, the children learn how to become actors and how to play different roles. The poet explains that comedies and tragedies have no place in the brothels and the only type of writing that survives is the simple one, meant for a simple audience.

In this environment, Shadwell will rule over those who have no literary talent. The descriptions offered by Dryden only served the purpose of highlighting the incompetency of Shadwell and have the purpose of creating the image of a fool ruling over peasants.

Shadwell's coronation is also described in an ironic way. The realm over which he rules is small, stretching between Bun-Hill and Watling-street thus accentuating the lack of influence Shadwell had over other writers. The streets are filled with the limbs of other poets, suggesting that Shadwell managed to get a hold on his position at the expense of talented writers. Once more, the poet mentions human waste and links it with Shadwell's writing and

compares him with a historical figure, Hannibal, to transmit the idea that Shadwell's purpose is to destroy wit and replace it with dullness.

During his coronation, the oil used to anoint a new king is replaced by ale, signifying the poet's dullness. After the crown is placed on his head, Shadwell sits on the throne and the former king prepares to give the cheering crowd a speech.

The former king begins by presenting the land over which the new king will rule, a territory where no one lives. Mac Flecknoe urges him to remain true to his writing and to not let anyone make any changes in his work, Mac Flecknoe praises Shadwell's abilities and then ends his speech by telling Shadwell to continue to remain dull.

After the speech ends, the poet continues to mock Shadwell's writing, noting how Shadwell's poems have the complete opposite effect on his audience that he wants to. He then ends the poem by telling the reader that Shadwell has more talent than Mac Flecknoe, meaning that his writing is more boring and witless than the writings of his predecessor.

The poet creates a dismal image by mentioning more than once human waste. Every time human waste is mentioned, the image created is linked with Shadwell, becoming a motif in the novel. The motif appears for the first time when London is described before Shadwell's arrival. The water in the port is described as being filthy with human waste that just floats on the water. Another reference towards human waste is made when the crowd coming to greet the new king is described. The poet notes how they all seem to come from a single place, the Pissing Alley, a real alley found in London during Dryden's period.

Throughout the poem, the name of numerous poets is mentioned thus becoming a motif. The reason why the names of other poets appear is to compare Shadwell with them. Dryden uses the name of brilliant poets like Ben Jonson to accentuate the idea that Shadwell will never reach his level of literary talent but he also uses the names of other poets, less known and without talent, with the purpose of making sure that the reader knows in which category to place Shadwell.

Being a satirical poem, jokes and puns addressed to Shadwell appear frequently. Dryden compares Shadwell with inanimate objects like barrels and trees to highlight the idea that Shadwell is incompetent and to hint that Shadwell is obese. The poet does not only attack Shadwell's intelligence and appearance but also the characters created by Shadwell. Throughout the poem, Dryden mentions numerous works written by Shadwell and criticizes them harshly.

The cheering crowd who comes to welcome Shadwell back is used as symbol to characterize the people who support Shadwell and his work. The people are common, uneducated people, coming from brothels and infamous alleys and symbolizing the ignorant part of the population. The poet wants to emphasize by using this description that Shadwell's work is inferior and only "inferior" people can enjoy it. The cheering crowd can be seen as a symbol that stands for the quality of Shadwell's work and its value.

The poet mentions the Kingdom over which Shadwell rules and uses it as a symbol to emphasize the influence or lack of it Shadwell has. When Mac Flecknoe talks about the kingdom Shadwell will get, he describes its boundaries by mentioning two street names. While at a first glance these names seem to delineate a large territory, in reality it refers to a short street that existed in London during Shadwell's time.

The Rape Of The Lock

Alexander Pope

The Rape of the Lock begins with a passage outlining the subject of the poem and invoking the aid of the muse. Then the sun (“Sol”) appears to initiate the leisurely morning routines of a wealthy household. Lapdogs shake themselves awake, bells begin to ring, and although it is already noon, Belinda still sleeps. She has been dreaming, and we learn that the dream has been sent by “her guardian Sylph,” Ariel. The dream is of a handsome youth who tells her that she is protected by “unnumber’d Spirits”—an army of supernatural beings who once lived on earth as human women. The youth explains that they are the invisible guardians of women’s chastity, although the credit is usually mistakenly given to “Honour” rather than to their divine stewardship. Of these Spirits, one particular group—the Sylphs, who dwell in the air—serve as Belinda’s personal guardians; they are devoted, lover-like, to any woman that “rejects mankind,” and they understand and reward the vanities of an elegant and frivolous lady like Belinda. Ariel, the chief of all Belinda’s puckish protectors, warns her in this dream that “some dread event” is going to befall her that day, though he can tell her nothing more specific than that she should “beware of Man!” Then Belinda awakes, to the licking tongue of her lapdog, Shock. Upon the delivery of a billet-doux, or love-letter, she forgets all about the dream. She then proceeds to her dressing table and goes through an elaborate ritual of dressing, in which her own image in the mirror is described as a “heavenly image,” a “goddess.” The Sylphs, unseen, assist their charge as she prepares herself for the day’s activities.

Belinda, rivaling the sun in her radiance, sets out by boat on the river Thames for Hampton Court Palace. She is accompanied by a party of glitzy ladies (“Nymphs”) and gentlemen, but is far and away the most striking member of the group. Pope’s description of her charms includes “the sparkling Cross she wore” on her “white breast,” her “quick” eyes and “lively looks,” and the easy grace with which she bestows her smiles and attentions evenly among all the adoring guests. Her crowning glories, though, are the two ringlets that dangle on her “iv’ry neck.” These curls are described as love’s labyrinths, specifically designed to ensnare any poor heart who might get entangled in them.

One of the young gentlemen on the boat, the Baron, particularly admires Belinda's locks, and has determined to steal them for himself. We read that he rose early that morning to build an altar to love and pray for success in this project. He sacrificed several tokens of his former affections, including garters, gloves, and billet-doux (love-letters). He then prostrated himself before a pyre built with "all the trophies of his former loves," fanning its flames with his "am'rous sighs." The gods listened to his prayer but decided to grant only half of it.

As the pleasure-boat continues on its way, everyone is carefree except Ariel, who remembers that some bad event has been foretold for the day. He summons an army of sylphs, who assemble around him in their iridescent beauty. He reminds them with great ceremony that one of their duties, after regulating celestial bodies and the weather and guarding the British monarch, is "to tend the Fair": to keep watch over ladies' powders, perfumes, curls, and clothing, and to "assist their blushes, and inspire their airs." Therefore, since "some dire disaster" threatens Belinda, Ariel assigns her an extensive troop of bodyguards. Brillante is to guard her earrings, Momentilla her watch, and Crispissa her locks. Ariel himself will protect Shock, the lapdog. A band of fifty Sylphs will guard the all-important petticoat. Ariel pronounces that any sylph who neglects his assigned duty will be severely punished. They disperse to their posts and wait for fate to unfold.

In this Second canto, the sexual allegory of the poem begins to come into fuller view. The title of the poem already associates the cutting of Belinda's hair with a more explicit sexual conquest, and here Pope cultivates that suggestion. He multiplies his sexually metaphorical language for the incident, adding words like "ravish" and "betray" to the "rape" of the title. He also slips in some commentary on the implications of his society's sexual mores, as when he remarks that "when success a Lover's toil attends, / few ask, if fraud or force attain'd his ends." When Ariel speculates about the possible forms the "dire disaster" might take, he includes a breach of chastity ("Diana's law"), the breaking of china (another allusion to the loss of virginity), and the staining of honor or a gown (the two incommensurate events could happen equally easily and accidentally). He also mentions some pettier social "disasters" against which the Sylphs are equally prepared to fight, like missing a ball (here, as grave as missing prayers) or losing the lapdog. In the Sylphs' defensive efforts, Belinda's petticoat is the battlefield that requires the most extensive fortifications. This fact furthers the idea that the rape of the lock stands in for a literal rape, or

at least represents a threat to her chastity more serious than just the mere theft of a curl.

The boat arrives at Hampton Court Palace, and the ladies and gentlemen disembark to their courtly amusements. After a pleasant round of chatting and gossip, Belinda sits down with two of the men to a game of cards. They play ombre, a three-handed game of tricks and trumps, somewhat like bridge, and it is described in terms of a heroic battle: the cards are troops combating on the “velvet plain” of the card-table. Belinda, under the watchful care of the Sylphs, begins favorably. She declares spades as trumps and leads with her highest cards, sure of success. Soon, however, the hand takes a turn for the worse when “to the Baron fate inclines the field”: he catches her king of clubs with his queen and then leads back with his high diamonds. Belinda is in danger of being beaten, but recovers in the last trick so as to just barely win back the amount she bid.

The next ritual amusement is the serving of coffee. The curling vapors of the steaming coffee remind the Baron of his intention to attempt Belinda’s lock. Clarissa draws out her scissors for his use, as a lady would arm a knight in a romance. Taking up the scissors, he tries three times to clip the lock from behind without Belinda seeing. The Sylphs endeavor furiously to intervene, blowing the hair out of harm’s way and tweaking her diamond earring to make her turn around. Ariel, in a last-minute effort, gains access to her brain, where he is surprised to find “an earthly lover lurking at her heart.” He gives up protecting her then; the implication is that she secretly wants to be violated. Finally, the shears close on the curl. A daring sylph jumps in between the blades and is cut in two; but being a supernatural creature, he is quickly restored. The deed is done, and the Baron exults while Belinda’s screams fill the air.

Belinda’s “anxious cares” and “secret passions” after the loss of her lock are equal to the emotions of all who have ever known “rage, resentment and despair.” After the disappointed Sylphs withdraw, an earthy gnome called Umbriel flies down to the “Cave of Spleen.” (The spleen, an organ that removes disease-causing agents from the bloodstream, was traditionally associated with the passions, particularly malaise; “spleen” is a synonym for “ill-temper.”) In his descent he passes through Belinda’s bedroom, where she lies prostrate with discomfiture and the headache. She is attended by “two handmaidens,” Ill-Nature and Affectation. Umbriel passes safely through this melancholy chamber, holding a sprig of “spleenwort” before him as a charm. He addresses the “Goddess of Spleen,” and returns with

a bag of “sighs, sobs, and passions” and a vial of sorrow, grief, and tears. He unleashes the first bag on Belinda, fueling her ire and despair.

There to commiserate with Belinda is her friend Thalestris. (In Greek mythology, Thalestris is the name of one of the Amazons, a race of warrior women who excluded men from their society.) Thalestris delivers a speech calculated to further foment Belinda’s indignation and urge her to avenge herself. She then goes to Sir Plume, “her beau,” to ask him to demand that the Baron return the hair. Sir Plume makes a weak and slang-filled speech, to which the Baron disdainfully refuses to acquiesce. At this, Umbriel releases the contents of the remaining vial, throwing Belinda into a fit of sorrow and self-pity. With “beauteous grief” she bemoans her fate, regrets not having heeded the dream-warning, and laments the lonely, pitiful state of her sole remaining curl.

The Baron remains impassive against all the ladies’ tears and reproaches. Clarissa delivers a speech in which she questions why a society that so adores beauty in women does not also place a value on “good sense” and “good humour.” Women are frequently called angels, she argues, but without reference to the moral qualities of these creatures. Especially as beauty is necessarily so short-lived, we must have something more substantial and permanent to fall back on. This sensible, moralizing speech falls on deaf ears, however, and Belinda, Thalestris and the rest ignore her and proceed to launch an all-out attack on the offending Baron. A muddled tussle results, with the gnome Umbriel presiding in a posture of self-congratulation. The gentlemen are slain or revived according to the smiles and frowns of the fair ladies. Belinda and the Baron meet in combat and she emerges victorious by peppering him with snuff and drawing her bodkin. Having achieved a position of advantage, she again demands that he return the lock. But the ringlet has been lost in the chaos, and cannot be found. The poet avers that the lock has risen to the heavenly spheres to become a star; stargazers may admire it now for all eternity. In this way, the poet reasons, it will attract more envy than it ever could on earth.

***The Rape of the Lock* Analysis**

"The Rape of the Lock" is the finest example of a mock-epic in English. The poem's 794 lines are divided into five cantos or sections. "The Rape of the Lock" is written in heroic couplets, lines of iambic pentameter, rhyming aa, bb, cc, and so forth.

The Rape of the Lock, originally published as *The Rape of the Lock: An Heroi-Comical Poem*

1712, is a mock-epic based upon an actual disagreement between two aristocratic English families during the eighteenth century.

Lord Petre (the Baron in the poem) surprises the beautiful Arabella Fermor (Belinda) by clipping off a lock of hair. At the suggestion of his friend and with Arabella Fermor's approval, Alexander Pope used imagination, hyperbole, wit, and gentle satire to inflate this, trivial social slip-up into an earthshaking catastrophe of cosmic consequence. The poem is generally described as one of Pope's most brilliant satires.

The Rape of the Lock is a humorous comment of the vanities and idleness of 18th-century high society. Basing his poem on a real incident among families of his acquaintance, Pope intended his verses to cool hot tempers and to encourage his friends to laugh at their own folly.

The poem is perhaps the most outstanding example in the English language of the genre of mock-epic. The epic had long been considered one of the most serious of literary forms; it had been applied, in the classical period, to the lofty subject matter of love and war. The strategy of Pope's mock-epic is not to mock the form itself, but to mock his society in its very failure to rise to epic standards, exposing its pettiness by casting it against the grandeur of the traditional epic subjects and the bravery and fortitude of epic heroes: Pope's mock-heroic treatment in *The Rape of the Lock* underscores the ridiculousness of a society in which values have lost all proportion, and the trivial is handled with the gravity and solemnity that ought to be accorded to truly important issues. The society on display in this poem is one that fails to distinguish between things that matter and things that do not. The poem mocks the men it portrays by showing them as unworthy of a form that suited a more heroic culture. Thus the mock-epic resembles the epic in that its central concerns are serious and often moral, but the fact that the approach must now be satirical rather than earnest is symptomatic of how far the culture has fallen.

Short Summary

Belinda arises to prepare for the day's social activities after sleeping late. Her guardian sylph, Ariel, warned her in a dream that some disaster will befall her, and promises to protect her to the best of his abilities. Belinda takes little notice of this oracle, however. After an elaborate ritual of dressing and primping, she travels on the Thames River to Hampton Court Palace, an ancient royal residence outside of London, where a group of wealthy young socialites are gathering for a party. Among them is the Baron, who has already made up his mind to steal a lock of Belinda's hair. He has risen early to perform an elaborate set of prayers and sacrifices to promote success in this enterprise. When the partygoers arrive at the palace, they enjoy a tense game of cards, which Pope describes in mock-heroic terms as a battle. This is followed by a round of coffee. Then the Baron takes up a pair of scissors and manages, on the third try, to cut

off the coveted lock of Belinda's hair. Belinda is furious. Umbriel, a mischievous gnome, journeys down to the Cave of Spleen to obtain a pack of sighs and a flask of tears which he then bestows on the heroine to fan the flames of her anger. Clarissa, who had aided the Baron in his crime, now urges Belinda to give up her anger in favor of good humor and good sense, moral qualities which will outlast her vanities. But Clarissa's moralizing falls on deaf ears, and Belinda initiates a fight between the ladies and the gentlemen, in which she attempts to recover the severed curl. The lock is lost in the confusion of this mock battle, however; the poet consoles the bereft Belinda with the suggestion that it has been taken up into the heavens and immortalized as a constellation.

To His Coy Mistress

Andrew Marvell

The Metaphysical Poets are known for their ability to startle the reader and coax new perspective through paradoxical images, subtle argument, inventive syntax, and imagery from art, philosophy, and religion using an extended metaphor known as a conceit. Andrew Marvell, along with similar but distinct poets such as John Donne, George Herbert, Andrew Marvell, and Henry Vaughn, developed a poetic style in which philosophical and spiritual subjects were approached with reason and often concluded in paradox. This group of writers established *meditation*—based on the union of thought and feeling sought after in Jesuit Ignatian meditation—as a poetic mode.

Due to the inconsistencies and ambiguities within his work and the scarcity of information about his personal life, Andrew Marvell has been a source of fascination for scholars and readers since his work found recognition in the early decades of the twentieth century. Born in 1621, Marvell grew up in the Yorkshire town of Hull where his father, Reverend Andrew Marvell, was a lecturer at Holy Trinity Church and master of the Charterhouse. At age twelve Marvell began his studies at Trinity College, Cambridge. Four years later two of Marvell's poems, one in Latin and one in Greek, were published in an anthology of Cambridge poets. After receiving his B.A. in 1639, Marvell stayed on at Trinity, apparently to complete an M.A. degree. In 1641, however, his father drowned in the Hull estuary and Marvell abandoned his studies. During the 1640's Marvell traveled extensively on the Continent, adding Dutch, French, Spanish, and Italian, to his Latin and Greek—missing the English civil wars entirely.

A well-known politician, Marvell held office in Cromwell's government and represented Hull to Parliament during the Restoration. His very public position—in a time of tremendous political turmoil and upheaval—almost certainly led Marvell away from publication. No faction escaped Marvell's satirical eye: he criticized and lampooned both the court and parliament. Indeed, had they been published during his lifetime, many of Marvell's more famous poems—in particular, "Tom May's Death," an attack on the famous Cromwellian—would have made him rather unpopular with Royalist and republican alike.

Marvell used his political status to free Milton, who was jailed during the Restoration, and quite possibly saved the elder poet's life. In the early years of his tenure, Marvell made two extraordinary diplomatic journeys: to Holland (1662-1663) and to Russia, Sweden, and Denmark (1663-1665). In 1678, after 18 years in Parliament, Marvell died rather suddenly of a fever. Gossip of the time suggested that the Jesuits (a target of Marvell's satire) had poisoned him. After his death he was remembered as a fierce and loyal patriot.

Andrew Marvell, now considered one of the greatest poets of the seventeenth century, published very little of his scathing political satire and complex lyric verse in his lifetime. Although Marvell published a handful of poems in anthologies, a collection of Marvell's work did not appear until 1681, three years after his death, when his nephew compiled and found a publisher for *Miscellaneous Poems*. The circumstances surrounding the publication of the volume aroused some suspicion: a person named "Mary Marvell," who claimed to be Marvell's wife, wrote the preface to the book. "Mary Marvell" was, in fact, Mary Palmer—Marvell's housekeeper—who posed as Marvell's wife, apparently, in order to keep Marvell's small estate from the creditors of his business partners. Her ruse, of course, merely contributes to the mystery that surrounds the life of this great poet.

If there were enough time, the speaker and his mistress could go on courting forever, but time is fast disappearing. Therefore, they must squeeze their joys into today; there is no time to be coy or aloof.

The exotic, distant, flowing Ganges is contrasted with the down-to-earth, hometown, tidal Humber. The rich and majestic ruby, which is to gems what the sun is to the planets and the king to the rest of society, is contrasted with the lowly, pastoral love complaint. "Vegetable" love refers to the vegetative, or growing, capacity of the soul of plants or animals, which must take time to reach normal growth and would need much longer to grow "Vaster than empires." The most celebrated image of the poem, "Time's wingéd chariot," combines the image of speed with harassment and gains even more power by being contrasted with the sterility of "Deserts" and the stark stillness of "vast eternity." The propriety of the image of devouring worms in a love poem (as well as the possible allusion to

Geoffrey Chaucer's "Miller's Tale" in "quaint honor") has been questioned, but the worms certainly work well in the creation of a sense of urgency in the poem. So also does the contrast in the images of eating: the eager appetite of the "amorous birds of prey" pitted against the slow, trapped, defeated helplessness of being devoured, slow bite by slow bite, in the lazy-but-powerful jaws of time.

There is a declaration of unity and even mutuality, should the hoped-for culmination of his pleading be reached, in the image of their sweetness and their strength (not her sweetness and his strength) being rolled up tightly into one ball. The image increases in vitality and strength (hinting at a more fitting end to virginity than a congregation of politic worms) as this ball tears through the gates of life. There is power in the oxymoronic mixing of toughness, strife, and iron with pleasures and the fertility of the gates of life. The final image of the sun standing still could possibly be an allusion to Joshua's commanding the sun to stand still so he could finish the day's slaughter in battle but is more likely an allusion to Zeus performing the same feat to extend by twenty-four hours his night with the lovely Alcmena in the pleasant task of engendering Hercules. Perhaps this final couplet, which some editors separate from the last section of the poem, merely suggests, "Time flies when you're having fun."

Other technical felicities include Marvell's creation of sounds to fit the sense of the poem. The alliteration of "long love's day" combines with the use of long vowels and diphthongs to create the feeling of slow time in the first section of the poem, despite its quick succession of images. The repeated, aspirated *h*sounds and the *ch*sound in "chariot" almost make the reader feel the rushing of wind that accompanies the beating of wings. In the last section of the poem, the combination of liquid *l*'s and the long back-of-the-mouth vowels suggests the action of rolling something up: "Let us roll all our strength and all/ Our sweetness up into one ball." The sudden shift to frontal vowels and the onomatopoeic "tear" provides an abrupt shift as the ball takes on the characteristics of a cannonball. The effective use of variations in the rhymed iambic tetrameter rhythm also adds to the experience of meaning by correlating sound with sense. Note the use of spondees in "Love you ten years," "last age," "roll all," "rough strife," and "Stand still." Another rhythmic effect that underscores the meaning of the words is the use of an occasional accented first syllable coming after an enjambment ending in a long vowel that crescendos into the accent. Especially effective are "I would/ Love you" (ll 7-8), "should grow/ Vaster" (ll 11-12), "I

always hear/ Time's" (ll 21-22), and "before us lie/ Deserts" (ll 23-24).

"To His Coy Mistress" is the best example of a *carpe diem* poem. *Carpe diem* is a Latin phrase meaning *seize the day*. Seduction is the theme of most *carpe diem* poems.

What distinguishes Marvell's poem from other *carpe diem* poems is the careful integration of time and seduction so that it is not clear which is the predominant theme. Time hovers over the first section of the poem in its slow counting of the years ideally available for one to express love. Time threateningly enters the second section of the poem, relentlessly reminding those who would love that a long postponement of joy means no joy at all. Time moves into the present tense in the third section, obliterating a dried-out past and a sterile future in the intensity of now, the only time in which willing lovers discover themselves and achieve fulfillment. In the final couplet of the poem is its final reversal: Time no longer controls lovers, but they gain dominion over time—not as fully as a god such as Zeus perhaps, to make it stand still, but time speeds through its course at the command of lovers.

Ode on the Spring

Thomas Gray

In the spring of 1742, Thomas Gray turned his attention from writing Latin verse to composing in English. His first effort, “Noontide,” later renamed “Ode on the Spring,” was included with a personal letter to West, his dear friend. The letter came back unopened, and soon Gray’s fear was confirmed; the companion of his Eton days had died. Ironically, that poem that West never saw dealt with the brevity of life. Certainly, Gray had reason to ruminate on such a theme; eleven of his siblings had died in infancy, leaving him the sole survivor. Now, the death of West intensified his feeling of loss. The purpose of mortal existence became the theme that Gray was to address from a variety of points of view in nearly all the major poems of his career.

While “Ode on the Spring” is an early effort, it is not unaccomplished. Gray simply did not produce careless or unrefined poetry; he labored long and thoughtfully to achieve a precise result. Some critics, including the great Johnson, have attacked “Ode on the Spring.” In his *Lives of the Poets* (1779-1781), Johnson objects that “the language is too luxuriant, and the thoughts have nothing new,” and fundamentally, Johnson is correct. The language is indeed luxuriant, and the content is by no means original. The poem is largely descriptive of the Buckinghamshire country where the poet, seated under a tree near the water, considers the brief lives of the insects as they frolic in the spring sun. The insects are a metaphor for the segment of humanity that, unlike the reclusive and scholarly poet, enjoys the sportive life of temporal pleasures. As the poet meditates on his *sic transit* theme, the insects are suddenly allowed to interrupt and “in accents low” answer the sober poet. They tell him that from their point of view it is he who is wasting his life: He is alone, without a beautiful female companion; he has hoarded no treasures to give him pleasure, and his being adds nothing to the beauty of the countryside. Moreover, the poet’s spring flees as quickly as that of the insects. Gray allows the poet no rebuttal to the insects’ argument; their last words, “We frolic, while ’tis May,” end the poem. Talking insects are unusual, but what they and the poet have to say is not. The figure of the poet as the detached observer who prefers to remain isolated from the affairs of humanity stretches back into antiquity. While “Ode on the Spring” is admittedly composed of highly conventional elements, it can be argued that the composition of those elements is unusually sophisticated and uniquely characteristic of Gray.

The persona in “Ode on the Spring” is very close to Gray himself: reclusive, scholarly, an observer more than a participant. The luxuriant language serves a double purpose. It creates an ideal nature, lavish and beautiful beyond reality, a nature before the fall in which the reader is not unduly shocked to find that humans can still talk to animals. Against this ideal, where beautiful May follows beautiful May without worry about time, is presented the fate of both the poet and the insects. Their concern, mortality, is very real; indeed, it is more real because it still exists despite the context of an unreal nature. The language, however, in addition to clarifying the external message of the reality of death, also satirizes. The poet, speaking in the first person, creates through his elaborate language this beautiful, ideal nature, although he would prefer to remain divorced from the mortal humanity he contrasts with his creation. He would be unique and pompously states, With me the Muse shall sit, and think (At ease reclin’d in rustic state) How vain the ardours of the crowd, How low, how little are the Proud, How indigent the Great! The Muse, however, refuses to cooperate, and the poet’s ideal nature with its ideal talking insects includes him with the rest of mortal humanity. Not only do his insects remind him that “On hasty wings thy youth is flown,” but they also challenge his very style of life and argue that contemplation and detachment are most wasteful of spring. Thus, “Ode on the Spring,” while conventional and luxuriant, as critics have said, is still a very skillful handling of conventions and an accomplished example of how poetic language can communicate more than one message simultaneously.

The news of West’s death motivated Gray to explore more deeply the theme of human mortality that “Ode on the Spring” had introduced. During the summer of 1742, a season of intense sorrow and intense creative energy for Gray, he produced two important poems: “Hymn to Adversity” and “Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College.”

Essay On Man Epistle – II

Alexander Pope

Pope's principle for understanding man is the Great Chain of Being, which orders all creation according to God's will. The disorders which man sees in the universe are actually parts of some larger perfection which man's limited knowledge cannot perceive. Man's prideful speculations, not the external universe, are the cause of his misery.

Within man himself, there is also an order based on the workings of self-love (the faculty of desire) and reason (the faculty of judgment). Right living depends upon the two working in harmony, since neither is good or evil in itself. Rather, good or evil arises out of their proper or improper use.

Human society also partakes of this universal order. The imitation of nature and rational self-love enable man to create a successful social order, but his favoring of a particular government or religion, instead of reliance on general principles, creates dissension and tyranny. Man's end--happiness--is attained when he submits to Providence and dispenses with pride.

Part of the essay's greatness is Pope's unity of structure and theme. The poem's orderly exposition of ideas, its concentration on universals rather than specifics, and its heroic couplet verses, reflect the ideas of balance, subordination, and harmony better than even the finest prose.

The second epistle adds to the interpretive challenges presented in the first epistle. At its outset, Pope commands man to "Know then thyself," an adage that misdescribes his argument (1). Although he actually intends for man to better understand his place in the universe, the classical meaning of "Know thyself" is that man should look inwards for truth

rather than outwards. Having spent most of the first epistle describing man's relationship to God as well as his fellow creatures, Pope's true meaning of the phrase is clear. He then confuses the issue by endeavoring to convince man to avoid the presumptuousness of studying God's creation through natural science. Science has given man the tools to better understand God's creation, but its intoxicating power has caused man to imitate God. It seems that man must look outwards to gain any understanding of his divine purpose but avoid excessive analysis of what he sees. To do so would be to assume the role of God.

The second epistle abruptly turns to focus on the principles that guide human action. The rest of this section focuses largely on "self-love," an eighteenth-century term for self-maintenance and fulfillment. It was common during Pope's lifetime to view the passions as the force determining human action. Typically instinctual, the immediate object of the passions was seen as pleasure. According to Pope's philosophy, each man has a "ruling passion" that subordinates the others. In contrast with the accepted eighteenth-century views of the passions, Pope's doctrine of the "ruling passion" is quite original. It seems clear that with this idea, Pope tries to explain why certain individuals behave in distinct ways, seemingly governed by a particular desire. He does not, however, make this explicit in the poem.

Pope's discussion of the passions shows that "self-love" and "reason" are not opposing principles. Reason's role, it seems, is to regulate human behavior while self-love originates it. In another sense, self-love and the passions dictate the short term while reason shapes the long term.

The work that more than any other popularized the optimistic philosophy, not only in England but throughout Europe, was Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man* (1733-34), a rationalistic effort to justify the ways of God to man philosophically. As has been stated in the introduction, Voltaire had become well acquainted with the English poet during his stay of more than two years in England, and the two had corresponded with each other with a fair degree of regularity when Voltaire returned to the Continent.

Voltaire could have been called a fervent admirer of Pope. He hailed the *Essay of*

Criticism as superior to Horace, and he described the *Rape of the Lock* as better than *Lutrin*. When the *Essay on Man* was published, Voltaire sent a copy to the Norman abbot Du Resnol and may possibly have helped the abbot prepare the first French translation, which was so well received. The very title of his *Discours en vers sur l'homme* (1738) indicates the extent Voltaire was influenced by Pope. It has been pointed out that at times, he does little more than echo the same thoughts expressed by the English poet. Even as late as 1756, the year in which he published his poem on the destruction of Lisbon, he lauded the author of *Essay on Man*. In the edition of *Lettres philosophiques* published in that year, he wrote: "The *Essay on Man* appears to me to be the most beautiful didactic poem, the most useful, the most sublime that has ever been composed in any language." Perhaps this is no more than another illustration of how Voltaire could vacillate in his attitude as he struggled with the problems posed by the optimistic philosophy in its relation to actual experience. For in the Lisbon poem and in *Candide*, he picked up Pope's recurring phrase "Whatever is, is right" and made mockery of it: "*Tout est bien*" in a world filled with misery!

Pope denied that he was indebted to Leibnitz for the ideas that inform his poem, and his word may be accepted. Those ideas were first set forth in England by Anthony Ashley Cowper, Earl of Shaftesbury (1671-1731). They pervade all his works but especially the *Moralist*. Indeed, several lines in the *Essay on Man*, particularly in the first Epistle, are simply statements from the *Moralist* done in verse. Although the question is unsettled and probably will remain so, it is generally believed that Pope was indoctrinated by having read the letters that were prepared for him by Bolingbroke and that provided an exegesis of Shaftesbury's philosophy. The main tenet of this system of natural theology was that one God, all-wise and all-merciful, governed the world providentially for the best. Most important for Shaftesbury was the principle of Harmony and Balance, which he based not on reason but on the general ground of good taste. Believing that God's most characteristic attribute was benevolence, Shaftesbury provided an emphatic endorsement of providentialism.

Following are the major ideas in *Essay on Man*: (1) a God of infinite wisdom exists; (2) He created a world that is the best of all possible ones; (3) the plenum, or all-embracing whole of the universe, is real and hierarchical; (4) authentic good is that of the whole, not of

isolated parts; (5) self-love and social love both motivate humans' conduct; (6) virtue is attainable; (7) "One truth is clear, WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT." Partial evil, according to Pope, contributes to the universal good. "God sends not ill, if rightly understood." According to this principle, vices, themselves to be deplored, may lead to virtues. For example, motivated by envy, a person may develop courage and wish to emulate the accomplishments of another; and the avaricious person may attain the virtue of prudence. One can easily understand why, from the beginning, many felt that Pope had depended on Leibnitz.

Reference:

1. Kinsley, H.A.K. (Ed.). (1996). John Dryden: The Critical Heritage (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315004495>.
2. Hammond, P., & Hopkins, D. (Eds.). (2000). The Poems of John Dryden: Volume Four: 1686-1696 (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315847931>.
3. Goldsmith, N.M. (2002). Alexander Pope: The Evolution of a Poet (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315184050>.
4. Marvell, A., & Smith, N. (2007). The Poems of Andrew Marvell (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315834672>
5. Pope, A. (1988). Alexander Pope: Selected Poetry and Prose (R. Sowerby, Ed.) (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203200292>



SATHYABAMA

INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)

Accredited "A" Grade by NAAC | 12B Status by UGC | Approved by AICTE
www.sathyabama.ac.in

**SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

UNIT – II - British Literature II – SHS5007

Prose

Detailed

1. Samuel Johnson's Preface to Plays of William Shakespeare
2. Joseph Addison The Spectator's Account of Himself

Non Detailed

1. Richard Steele Recollections of Childhood
2. Swift The Battle of Books

Preface to Plays of William Shakespeare

Samuel Johnson

Samuel Johnson's preface to *The Plays of William Shakespeare* has long been considered a classic document of English literary criticism. In it Johnson sets forth his editorial principles and gives an appreciative analysis of the "excellences" and "defects" of the work of the great Elizabethan dramatist. Many of his points have become fundamental tenets of modern criticism; others give greater insight into Johnson's prejudices than into Shakespeare's genius. The resonant prose of the preface adds authority to the views of its author.

Perhaps no other document exhibits the character of eighteenth century literary criticism better than what is commonly known as Johnson's *Preface to Shakespeare*. Written after Johnson had spent nine years laboring to produce an edition of Shakespeare's plays, the *Preface to Shakespeare* is characterized by sweeping generalizations about the dramatist's work and by stunning pronouncements about its merits, judgments that elevated Shakespeare to the top spot among European writers of any century. At times, Johnson displays the tendency of his contemporaries to fault Shakespeare for his propensity for wordplay and for ignoring the demands for poetic justice in his plays; readers of subsequent generations have found these criticisms to reflect the inadequacies of the critic more than they do those of the dramatist. What sets Johnson's work apart from that of his contemporaries, however, is the immense learning

that lies beneath so many of his judgments; he consistently displays his familiarity with the texts, and his generalizations are rooted in specific passages from the dramas. Further, Johnson is the first among the great Shakespeare critics to stress the playwright's sound understanding of human nature. Johnson's focus on character analysis initiated a critical trend that would be dominant in Shakespeare criticism (in fact, all of dramatic criticism) for more than a century and would lead to the great work of critics such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Charles Lamb, and A. C. Bradley.

The significance of the *Preface to Shakespeare*, however, goes beyond its contributions to Shakespeare scholarship. First, it is the most significant practical application of a critical principle that Johnson espoused consistently and that has become a staple of the practice since: comparison. His systematic attempt to measure Shakespeare against others, both classical and contemporary, became the model. Second, the *Preface to Shakespeare* exemplifies Johnson's belief that good criticism can be produced only after good scholarship has been practiced. The critic who wishes to judge an author's originality or an author's contributions to the tradition must first practice sound literary reading and research in order to understand what has been borrowed and what has been invented.

Characteristically, Johnson makes his Shakespeare criticism the foundation for general statements about people, nature, and literature. He is a true classicist in his concern with the universal rather than with the particular; the highest praise he can bestow upon Shakespeare is to say that his plays are "just representations of general nature." The dramatist has relied upon his knowledge of human nature, rather than on bizarre effects, for his success. "The pleasures of sudden wonder are soon exhausted, and the mind can only repose on the stability of truth," Johnson concludes. It is for this reason that Shakespeare has outlived his century and reached the point at which his works can be judged solely on their own merits, without the interference of personal interests and prejudices that make criticism of one's contemporaries difficult.

Johnson feels that the readers of his time can often understand the universality of Shakespeare's vision better than the audiences of Elizabethan England could, for the intervening centuries have freed the plays of their topicality. The characters in the plays are not

limited by time or nationality; they are, rather, “the genuine progeny of common humanity, such as the world will always supply, and observation will always find.”

Implicitly criticizing earlier editors of Shakespeare, who had dotted their pages with asterisks marking particularly fine passages, Johnson contends that the greatness of the plays lies primarily in their total effect, in the naturalness of the action, the dialogue, and the characterization.

The Spectator's Account of Himself

Joseph Addison

Joseph Addison and Richard Steele's *The Spectator* was among the most popular and influential literary periodicals in England in the eighteenth century. Begun on March 1, 1711, this one-page essay sheet was published six days a week, Monday through Saturday, and reached 555 issues by its last issue on December 6, 1712. Each issue was numbered, the articles were unsigned, and many had mottoes from classical authors. *The Spectator's* end was brought about by a combination of the other interests of its authors and by a rate increase in the taxes that were levied on paper. In 1714, *The Spectator* was revived from June through December by Addison and two other writers, who had occasionally contributed to the original publication. Reading *The Spectator* yields a vivid portrait of London life in the first decades of the eighteenth century.

The Spectator, like its equally famous predecessor, *The Tatler* (1709 to 1712), was the creation of Sir Richard Steele, who combined a life of politics with a writing career as a poet, a playwright, and a literary journalist. Steele became a member of Parliament, was knighted by King George I in 1715, and achieved success as a dramatist with his play *The Conscious Lovers* in 1722. Using the pseudonym of Isaac Bickerstaff, Steele provided lively stories and reports on London society through *The Tatler*, which attracted male and female readers. Addison, already popular as poet, was also a playwright and a writer on miscellaneous topics who held a series of government appointments. He contributed material to *The Tatler* and then formed a collaborative relationship with Steele to write for *The Spectator*. While *The Tatler* featured both news and short essays on topical matters, *The Spectator*, with the established readers of *The Tatler* as its primary buyers, was composed of one long essay on the social scene or a group of fictive letters to the editor that gave Addison and Steele a forum for moral or intellectual commentary. This was presented in the periodical by the specially created, fictional social observer, "Mr. Spectator."

To give the essays structure, Steele created the Spectator Club and presented the

character of Sir Roger De Coverly, a fifty-six-year-old bachelor and country gentleman, as its central spokesman. Other members of this fictional group included a merchant, Sir Andrew Freeport, a lawyer, a soldier, a clergyman, and a socialite, Will Honeycomb, who contributed gossip and interesting examples of social behavior to Mr. Spectator. Although Steele ultimately did not use the Spectator Club as a device as often as he apparently anticipated, the De Coverly essays were the best recognized and most popular section of *The Spectator*. In later literature of the century, characters similar to those created by Steele for the club appeared in novels and political periodicals. Through De Coverly and Freeport, Addison and Steele are able to contrast the political views of the Tory and Whig parties and, through Honeycomb, to satirize the ill effects of an overly social life on personal morality and good judgment.

The first number of *The Spectator* begins with Addison's general introduction of Mr. Spectator to his readers. As Mr. Spectator explains, readers want to know something about an author, even if the information is general: Thus I live in the World, rather as a Spectator of Mankind, than as one of the Species . . . as a Looker-on, which is the Character I intend to preserve in this Paper.

As for keeping some personal details to himself, Mr. Spectator notes that knowing his real name, his age, and his place of residence would spoil his ability to act as a nonpartisan observer. By issue 10 (written by Addison), Mr. Spectator reports to his readers that the periodical has a daily circulation of three thousand papers, and, by its height in 1712, nine thousand issues of it are sold daily in London. In addition to essays on a single theme, some issues used letters from readers (written by friends of Addison and Steele), which created the impression of a widespread circulation while offering a means for Mr. Spectator to address specific social problems. Issue 20, for example, written by Steele, is based on a young lady's note about men who stare at women in church. Mr. Spectator gives a detailed and courteous reply that contrasts "male impudence," as he labels it, among the English, the Irish, and the Scots. Several subsequent issues, such as 48 and 53, are composed entirely of these sorts of letters, which become a typical way for the authors to discuss male and female social behavior and, usually, female fashion.

Joseph Addison's character clearly lives during the eighteenth century when people did not know or care much about the events in the outside world. As noted in the diary, Addison's character lived a life that was centered on his daily routine of waking up, going to the coffee shop... As a satirist, Addison uses a typical ignorant man who is an imbecile caught up in his normal affairs and a society that is just as ignorant as he is. Joseph Addison's satiric purposes is served when all will read the diary of a foolish man and the bland society he lives in, and know the petty issues they concern themselves with. Both the diarist and everyone those who surround him are not better than him because they are an integral part of his boring life.

The minute detail given by the diarist about his lackluster life shows how much attention he pays to it. The dry and apathetic tone of the diarist throughout the passage reveals his apathy regarding matters that happen outside his realm. The character wakes up at eight, puts on his clothes, smokes his pipes, walks to the fields, goes to Mr. Nisby's club, eats his sumptuous lunch and dinner and goes back to retire. Addison repeats what the diarist does and record everyday because it is the same boring thing. Details such as "double soled shoes" and "nap broke by the falling of a pewter dish" shows the diarist as one who cares too much about small things. This is satiric because while a great political leader is dead, the diarist is too busy with "purl" and sleep to bother about anything. Addison is teasing the diarist to show the crowd what an imbecile he is when he cares about every single aspect of his life and nothing further than that.

The diarist is not alone as the society is equally foolish by continuing in its daily routines. Society also is just like the diarist because the diarist is one of the many ignorant fools who make up society. Therefore the tone by which society is represented is just as lackluster, apathetic and boring. Every day the diarist goes to Mr. Nisby's club from six o' clock till ten o' clock keeping a very regular pattern of both Mr. Nisby's and the diarist's life. Mr. Nisby accurately represents the working class society. The society is ignorant and sees the death of the Grand Vizier as another occurrence in the world. An example of society's disregard to the outside world is seen when a stranger asked the diarist for the stock prices. No one cares about the Grand Vizier but only of the stock prices. This goes to show society was selfish. Addison's passage portrays society as being ignorant and too overwhelmed in their daily affairs to care or

bother about anything except matters that concern them.

Addison's attention to detail about the simplistic activities of the diarist describes him as a simpleton. The society in which he lives is equally monotonous as well. The characterization of the diarist as a simpleton serves Addison's satiric purpose because he wants to show the events beyond the daily routine. There are Grand Viziers that are present in far away empires that are dead and one should possess the knowledge about them. Addison is teasing the diarist and all those who are like him because they were not interested in politics and knowledge of the outside world.

The diarist was an apathetic individual because of the society he lived in and the society was ignorant because of individuals like the diarist. Addison's purpose is to show the crowd that one should be more concerned about the "last leg of mutton." The Sultans and Grand Viziers are outside the box of daily routines and it is everyone's responsibility to be knowledgeable about the times and events that take place during their lives.

In order to reach a basis for the comparison of styles, it is necessary to determine the stylistic technique that resulted from Addison's personality. Just as Steele's dual personality has caused divided opinion among biographers, Dobree tells us that Addison too is somewhat of a trial to literary historians who wish to portray him as he really was. Dobree is of the opinion that there is something puzzling, even baffling about him; there are so many little points, trifling events, each seemingly insignificant that add up to much unexplained material. Dobree refuses to accept what one writer calls "Lord Macaulay's proof that Addison would in a future state sit at the head of all ifilhigs in Heaven," Macaulay included.[^] Addison is accused of possessing an irritable

From the time of Addison's schooldays, he possessed a reserved nature. At Oxford, he is said to have gone for long walks alone and to have shown a diffident, meditative, retiring attitude. His letters are not at all revelatory, but are finished compositions! There is an absence of dramatic incident in his life. Minto believes that his non-dramatic life results in a deficiency of energy,

passion, and strength in his writing, in little spontaneity, and no depth of sentiment. Certainly there is no emotion nor encouragement of emotion in others in Addison's religious admonishings. Even in Blois, he had no love affairs or was too discreet to confide them to the Abbe. ' It is an accepted belief that Addison was too shy to talk with strangers or in crowds, and that he never spoke in Parliament yet he is reported to have been a charming conversationalist. His timidity and shyness perhaps helped him to keep his friends and make few enemies, yet he seems to have been "cold and lonely." Dobree suggests that his reserve was caused by his high regard for public opinion, and his wish for public esteem. He admits his own reserve and denounces a lack of that quality in others.

Recollections of Childhood

Richard Steele

The most important contribution in 18th century prose has been made by Richard Steele (1672-1729) and Joseph Addison (1672-1719) through their well known periodicals *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*. Temperamentally Richard Steele was a moralist but he had none of the cynicism which had characterised the century. He wrote dramas but it was due to his essays that he finds his place in literature. He had variation and sentimental aspiration and a form of sincere piety as proved by his first book *The Christian Hero*. His lesson is that conduct should be regulated not by the desire for glory but by conscience. He started his journal *The Tatler* in 1709, *The Spectator* in 1711 and several other short lived periodicals *The Guardian* (1713), *The Englishman* (1713), *The Reader* (1714), and *The Plebeian* (1719). Steele is remarkable for his witty prose and humorous style. His characters are also humorous.

Steele's alliance with Addison was so close and so constant that a comparison between them is almost inevitable. Some critics maintain that of the two Steele is worthier. He is equal to Addison in versatility and originality. His humour is broader and less restrained than Addison's, with a naïve pathetic touch that is reminiscent of Goldsmith. His pathos is more attractive and more humane. But Steele's very virtues are only his weaknesses sublimed; they are emotional, not intellectual; of the heart, and not of the head. He is incapable of irony; he lacks penetration and power. He lacks Addison's care and suave ironic insight. He is reckless in style and inconsequent in method.

The aim of Steele's essays was didactic; he desired to bring about a reformation of contemporary society manners, and is notable for his consistent advocacy of womanly virtues and the ideal of the gentleman of courtesy, chivalry, and good taste. His essays on children are charming, and are full of human sympathy.

Joseph Addison was famous for drama, poetry and essays. But it is in fact almost entirely as an essayist that he is justly famed. Together with Steele he protected the periodical

essay in *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*. The first object of Addison and Steele was to present a true and faithful picture of the 18th century. The next object was to bring about a moral and social reform in the conditions of the time. The best of his essays are centred round the imaginary character of Sir Roger de Coverley and hence known as *Coverley Papers*.

Addison wrote four hundred essays in all, which are of almost uniform length, of nearly unvarying excellence of style and of a wide variety of subject. Most of his compositions deal with topical subjects ----- fashions, head dresses, practical jokes, polite conversation. Deeper themes were handled in a popular fashion immorality, jealousy, prayer, death and drunkenness. He touched politics only gingerly. He advocated moderation and tolerance and was the enemy of enthusiasm. Sometimes he adopted allegory as a means of throwing his ideas vividly to the readers and hence we have *The Vision of Mirza* and the political allegory *Public Credit*.

Addison's humour is of a rare order. It is delicately ironical, gentlemanly, tolerant and urbane. His style has often been deservedly praised. It is the pattern of the middle style, never slipshod, or obscure, or unmelodious. He has an infallible instinct for proper word and subdued rhythm. In this fashion his prose moves with a demure and pleasing grace, in harmony with his subject, with his object, and with himself.

Joseph Addison and Richard Steele's *The Spectator* was among the most popular and influential literary periodicals in England in the eighteenth century. Begun on March 1, 1711, this one-page essay sheet was published six days a week, Monday through Saturday, and reached 555 issues by its last issue on December 6, 1712. Each issue was numbered, the articles were unsigned, and many had mottoes from classical authors. The *Spectator's* end was brought about by a combination of the other interests of its authors and by a rate increase in the taxes that were levied on paper. In 1714, *The Spectator* was revived from June through December by Addison and two other writers, who had occasionally contributed to the original publication. Reading *The Spectator* yields a vivid portrait of London life in the first decades of the eighteenth century.

The Spectator, like its equally famous predecessor, *The Tatler* (1709 to 1712), was the

creation of Sir Richard Steele, who combined a life of politics with a writing career as a poet, a playwright, and a literary journalist. Steele became a member of Parliament, was knighted by King George I in 1715, and achieved success as a dramatist with his play *The Conscious Lovers* in 1722. Using the pseudonym of Isaac Bickerstaff, Steele provided lively stories and reports on London society through *The Tatler*, which attracted male and female readers. Addison, already popular as poet, was also a playwright and a writer on miscellaneous topics who held a series of government appointments. He contributed material to *The Tatler* and then formed a collaborative relationship with Steele to write for *The Spectator*. While *The Tatler* featured both news and short essays on topical matters, *The Spectator*, with the established readers of *The Tatler* as its primary buyers, was composed of one long essay on the social scene or a group of fictive letters to the editor that gave Addison and Steele a forum for moral or intellectual commentary. This was presented in the periodical by the specially created, fictional social observer, "Mr. Spectator."

To give the essays structure, Steele created the Spectator Club and presented the character of Sir Roger De Coverly, a fifty-six-year-old bachelor and country gentleman, as its central spokesman. Other members of this fictional group included a merchant, Sir Andrew Freeport, a lawyer, a soldier, a clergyman, and a socialite, Will Honeycomb, who contributed gossip and interesting examples of social behavior to Mr. Spectator. Although Steele ultimately did not use the Spectator Club as a device as often as he apparently anticipated, the De Coverly essays were the best recognized and most popular section of *The Spectator*. In later literature of the century, characters similar to those created by Steele for the club appeared in novels and political periodicals. Through De Coverly and Freeport, Addison and Steele are able to contrast the political views of the Tory and Whig parties and, through Honeycomb, to satirize the ill effects of an overly social life on personal morality and good judgment.

The first number of *The Spectator* begins with Addison's general introduction of Mr. Spectator to his readers. As Mr. Spectator explains, readers want to know something about an author, even if the information is general: Thus I live in the World, rather as a Spectator of Mankind, than as one of the Species . . . as a Looker-on, which is the Character I intend to preserve in this Paper.

As for keeping some personal details to himself, Mr. Spectator notes that knowing his real name, his age, and his place of residence would spoil his ability to act as a nonpartisan

observer. By issue 10 (written by Addison), Mr. Spectator reports to his readers that the periodical has a daily circulation of three thousand papers, and, by its height in 1712, nine thousand issues of it are sold daily in London. In addition to essays on a single theme, some issues used letters from readers (written by friends of Addison and Steele), which created the impression of a widespread circulation while offering a means for Mr. Spectator to address specific social problems. Issue 20, for example, written by Steele, is based on a young lady's note about men who stare at women in church. Mr. Spectator gives a detailed and courteous reply that contrasts "male impudence," as he labels it, among the English, the Irish, and the Scots. Several subsequent issues, such as 48 and 53, are composed entirely of these sorts of letters, which become a typical way for the authors to discuss male and female social behavior and, usually, female fashion.

Summary

'Sir Richard Steele's essay' 'Recollections of childhood' reflects the effect of death and the memory of death on a person's experience of life. Based on his personal experience of witnessing the demise of loved ones in his formative years, this essay analyses various aspects of death. Steele published this essay in the periodical, 'The Tatler' which was run by Joseph Addison and Steele himself. Through his insightful reflections on life, death and human nature Steele much like Addison, highlights the neo-classical ideals of balance, good sense and moral integrity. He writes in a conversational yet refined style, using humour and changing the tone according to situation.

This essay opens with an interesting observation. Many people enjoy life only by sharing every experience with others but some people are happy in keeping things to themselves. Such people protect their privacy to honour the memory of their loved ones who are no longer alive in the manner of a real conversation the narrator moves from observation to personal experience. One evening, the narrator sat down alone to think of his dead companions, he still missed them but his sorrow had become less intense. The message is that the time is a great healer. With time the human mind goes away from sorrow. This allows us to go on with life.

Looking at the other side of the situation the narrator points out that one must at times remember

unhappy experiences like someones death. Human mind loves to be excited with desire and to be impatient in the face of problems. Unpleasant memories take the mind, “into that sobriety of though which poises the heart”. The mind becomes calm once it realises that life is a mixed bag of joy and sorrow. To prepare oneself for future one must sometimes think of the past. It is just like winding up and out of order clock by making its hand move across the digits.

The narrator proceeds to think about his own experience with death. His first experience of sorrow was at the age of five when his father passed away. The narrator could not exactly understand everything but by watching his mother who had “a dignity in her grief” the narrator developed a sympathetic nature since that time he began to experience pity for the sorrow of other. Commenting on the significance of childhood experience the narrator writes,

“The mind in infancy is ...like the body in embryo...”

If a birthmark develops on a baby in the mother’s womb it cannot be removed after the baby is born. Similarly one’s mind is strongly influenced by childhood experiences. Such experiences are hard to remove even when grows up.

The narrator presents a gentle touch of irony. He inherited the qualities of pity and gentleness from his mother but these qualities do not prove to be practically beneficial to the world. He becomes too kind and easy to be cheated.

“...and unmanly gentleness of mind which has since ensnared me into ten thousand calamities and from where I can read no advantage...”

However, he is no sorry to be gentle and kind. His gentleness allows him to relive and feel the memories of the past.

People feel a great sense of loss on the ‘untimely and unhappy deaths’ of young men and women. For many people life is a burden yet one feels sorry when death takes away the burden of life. For example when a young soldier dies one feels that the young man could have had a

long happy life, had he not been a soldier. Young soldiers have to sacrifice themselves for the political ambitions of leaders. People have great respect for the sacrifices of soldiers but when one thinks of the people who lose their loved ones or those who die young :

“...pity enters with an unmixed softness and possess all our souls at once.”

At this point, the narrator recalls the untimely death of the first girl he ever loved. He wonders why death is so cruel to the young and the innocent. He can still remember his beloved vividly. Death always comes all of a sudden. In the same week the narrator had seen his beloved dressed for a ballad in a shroud. He still cannot accept her death at such a young age. He pours his love and sorrow in a rhetorical question :

“How ill did the habit of death become the pretty trifler ?”

This part of the essay uncovers the poignant expression of emotional anguish. However, the narrator goes back to his objective and balanced tone and concludes the essay with the mention of getting together with friends.

The essay ‘Recollection of Childhood’ presents a well rounded attempt to analyse various aspects of death. Steele blends together anecdotes realistic observation and intelligent reflection. In a conversational tone, the narrator communicate with the reader. Although, the focus is on death the tone is not too sentimental. There are various example of irony, gentle humour and emotional moments. The diction is simple. The length and structure of the sentences vary according to the changing moods of the narrator. This essay is a remarkable example of drawing universal insight from personal experience.

The Battle of the Books Summary

Jonathan Swift

Jonathan Swift was born in 1667, on the 30th of November. His father was a Jonathan Swift, sixth of the ten sons of the Rev. Thomas Swift, vicar of Goodrich, near Ross, in Herefordshire, who had married Elizabeth Dryden, niece to the poet Dryden's grandfather. Jonathan Swift married, at Leicester, Abigail Erick, or Herrick, who was of the family that had given to England Robert Herrick, the poet. As their eldest brother, Godwin, was prospering in Ireland, four other Swifts, Dryden, William, Jonathan, and Adam, all in turn found their way to Dublin. Jonathan was admitted an attorney of the King's Inns, Dublin, and was appointed by the Benchers to the office of Steward of the King's Inns, in January, 1666. He died in April, 1667, leaving his widow with an infant daughter, Jane, and an unborn child.

Swift was born in Dublin seven months after his father's death. His mother after a time returned to her own family, in Leicester, and the child was added to the household of his uncle, Godwin Swift, who, by his four wives, became father to ten sons of his own and four daughters. Godwin Swift sent his nephew to Kilkenny School, where he had William Congreve among his schoolfellows. In April, 1682, Swift was entered at Trinity College as pensioner, together with his cousin Thomas, son of his uncle Thomas. That cousin Thomas afterwards became rector of Puttenham, in Surrey. Jonathan Swift graduated as B.A. at Dublin, in February, 1686, and remained in Trinity College for another three years. He was ready to proceed to M.A. when his uncle Godwin became insane. The troubles of 1689 also caused the closing of the University, and Jonathan Swift went to Leicester, where mother and son took counsel together as to future possibilities of life.

The retired statesman, Sir William Temple, at Moor Park, near Farnham, in Surrey, was in highest esteem with the new King and the leaders of the Revolution. His father, as Master of the Irish Rolls, had been a friend of Godwin Swift's, and with his wife Swift's mother could claim cousinship. After some months, therefore, at Leicester, Jonathan Swift, aged twenty-two, went to Moor Park, and entered Sir William Temple's household, doing service with the expectation of advancement through his influence. The advancement he desired was in the Church. When Swift went to Moor Park he

found in its household a child six or seven years old, daughter to Mrs. Johnson, who was trusted servant and companion to Lady Gifford, Sir William Temple's sister. With this little Esther, aged seven, Swift, aged twenty-two, became a playfellow and helper in her studies. He broke his English for her into what he called their "little language," that was part of the same playful kindness, and passed into their after-life. In July, 1692, with Sir William Temple's help, Jonathan Swift commenced M.A. in Oxford, as of Hart Hall. In 1694, Swift's ambition having been thwarted by an offer of a clerkship, of 120 pounds a year, in the Irish Rolls, he broke from Sir William Temple, took orders, and obtained, through other influence, in January, 1695, the small prebendary of Kilroot, in the north of Ireland. He was there for about a year. Close by, in Belfast, was an old college friend, named Waring, who had a sister. Swift was captivated by Miss Waring, called her Varina, and would have become engaged to marry her if she had not flinched from engagement with a young clergyman whose income was but a hundred a year. But Sir William Temple had missed Jonathan Swift from Moor Park. Differences were forgotten, and Swift, at his wish, went back. This was in 1696, when his little pupil, Esther Johnson, was fifteen. Swift said of her, "I knew her from six years old, and had some share in her education, by directing what books she should read, and perpetually instructing her in the principles of honour and virtue, from which she never swerved in any one action or moment of her life. She was sickly from her childhood until about the age of fifteen; but then grew into perfect health, and was then looked upon as one of the most beautiful, graceful, and agreeable young women in London, only a little too fat. Her hair was blacker than a raven, and every feature of her face in perfection." This was the Stella of Swift's after-life, the one woman to whom his whole love was given. But side by side with the slow growth of his knowledge of all she was for him, was the slow growth of his conviction that attacks of giddiness and deafness, which first came when he was twenty, and recurred at times throughout his life, were signs to be associated with that which he regarded as the curse upon his life. His end would be like his uncle Godwin's. It was a curse transmissible to children, but if he desired to keep the influence his genius gave him, he could not tell the world why he refused to marry. Only to Stella, who remained unmarried for his sake, and gave her life to him, could all be known.

Returned to Moor Park, Swift wrote, in 1697, the "Battle of the Books," as well as the "Tale of the Tub," with which it was published seven years afterwards, in 1704. Perrault and others had been battling in France over the relative merits of Ancient and Modern Writers. The debate had spread to England. On behalf of the Ancients, stress was laid by Temple on the letters of Phalaris, tyrant of Agrigentum. Wotton replied to Sir William for the Moderns. The Hon. Charles Boyle, of Christ Church, published a new edition of the Epistles of Phalaris, with translation of the Greek text into Latin. Dr. Bentley, the King's Librarian, published a "Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris," denying their value, and arguing that Phalaris did not write them. Christ Church replied through Charles Boyle, with "Dr. Bentley's Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris examined." Swift entered into the war with a light heart, and matched the Ancients in defending them for the amusement of his patron. His incidental argument between the Spider and the Bee has provided a catch-phrase, "Sweetness and Light," to a combatant of later times.

Sir William Temple died on the 27th of January, 1699. Swift then became chaplain to Lord Berkeley in Dublin Castle, and it was as a little surprise to Lady Berkeley, who liked him to read to her Robert Boyle's "Meditations," that Swift wrote the "Meditation on a Broomstick." In February, 1700, he obtained from Lord Berkeley the vicarage of Laracor with the living of Rathbeggan, also in the diocese of Meath. In the beginning of 1701 Esther Johnson, to whom Sir William Temple had bequeathed a leasehold farm in Wicklow, came with an elder friend, Miss Dingley, and settled in Laracor to be near Swift. During one of the visits to London, made from Laracor, Swift attacked the false pretensions of astrologers by that prediction of the death of Mr. Partridge, a prophetic almanac maker, of which he described the Accomplishment so clearly that Partridge had much ado to get credit for being alive.

The lines addressed to Stella speak for themselves. "Cadenus and Vanessa" was meant as polite and courteous admonition to Miss Hester Van Homrigh, a young lady in whom green-sickness seems to have produced devotion to Swift in forms that embarrassed him, and with which he did not well know how to deal.

First published with *A Tale of a Tub*, Swift's "The Battle of the Books" (pub. 1704) is a deceptively simple mock-heroic account of a battle among the books reposing in the

King's Library at St. James's Palace. The battle itself is a satirical allegory on an intellectual debate that had been raging in England since 1692, sometimes called the "Battle of the Ancients and the Moderns." In theory, this debate concerned the relative value of the intellectual accomplishments of antiquity, as compared to the "progress" that had been made in many fields of human knowledge since the Renaissance.

As was not unusual in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Britain, the terms of this debate had already been anticipated by the French, who had been engaged in their own "Battle" for at least 30 years before it became an issue across the channel. The opening shot in England was fired, almost inadvertently, in 1692 by the publication of Sir William Temple's "An Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning," which appeared in the second volume of his collection of essays, *Miscellanea*. Sir William Temple had been a career diplomat, a rather old-fashioned "man of letters," and, not incidentally, Jonathan Swift's employer and chief patron; his essay was an elegant and wide-ranging but not very rigorous survey of antiquity and modern "progress" that concluded that the Moderns had, in fact, very little to add to the store of knowledge that had been inherited from the classical past.

Unfortunately for Temple, part of his argument rested upon a laudatory discussion of two classical texts, the "Letters of Phalaris" and the Fables of "Æsop," that were, in actuality, forgeries of later antiquity, a fact that the classical philologist and Royal Librarian Richard Bentley was able to demonstrate conclusively in his *Dissertation upon the Epistle of Phalaris* (1698).

Bentley, a classicist whose pioneering philological methodologies laid the foundation for many aspects of modern analytical criticism, epitomized everything that Temple and his supporters despised about the Moderns: he was a "professional" critic who had little tolerance for the older class-based mode of amateur scholarship, he was rigorous to the point of being pedantic, and he was, perhaps most importantly, "ungentlemanly"; in fact, part of the animus against Bentley was the result of an accusation by a well-connected young Oxford scholar, Charles Boyle, that Bentley had been rude and uncooperative in his capacity as Keeper of the King's Library at St. James's Palace when the former had approached him about viewing a manuscript in that collection. Bentley's own admittedly abrasive personality, his "common" class affiliations, and his lack of apparent respect for received values became, in themselves, important issues in the battle that ensued.

Bentley was soon under attack by a great many proponents of the Ancients; most of these, significantly, chose to fight him through published satire, probably because Bentley's own

knowledge was too formidable to enable them to defeat him employing more legitimately scholarly arguments. Bentley, for his part, received vital support from the formidable talents of another "Modern" scholar, William Wotton, a Cambridge don whose *Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning* (1694) effectively demolished many of Temple's arguments.

Jonathan Swift's contributions to the debate are most evident in his satirical "Battle of the Books," which recounts, in a pseudo-manuscript format that parodies the state of real ancient manuscripts, an actual epic battle between the volumes in Bentley's library at St. James's. Swift's own sympathies are unquestionably with the Ancients, and many a Modern author, including John Dryden, Abraham Cowley, and Aphra Behn, is bested by a classical combatant. At the climax of the battle, Bentley and Wotton themselves are vanquished by Boyle, imagined as an "auxillary" of the Ancients.

Swift's narrative is playful and light, and he takes the opportunity to settle many personal scores against near contemporaries like Dryden, but he also manages, along the way, to expose many of the more subtle dimensions and implications of the debate in which he is engaged. The Battle of the Ancients and Moderns was not, in fact, merely about whether the Ancients produced "better" authors and philosophers than the Moderns; it was more fundamentally about how "History" itself functioned and should be read, and about the relationships between past and present, humanity and nature, and human understanding and knowledge.

The plate illustrated here is one of 8 new plates (only one of which is accompanies the "Battle of the Books") included with the fifth edition of *A Tale of a Tub* (1710): it was designed, apparently, under the direction of the art critic Sir Andrew Fountaine and engraved by Bernard Lens and John Sturt, who ran a drawing-school at St. Paul's Churchyard. All are reproduced, along with the original designs by Fountaine, in Guthkelch and Nichol Smith's 1920 edition of *A Tale*. The engravings, it should be noted, are not especially apt representations of Swift's narrative, and there is no evidence that he had any hand in their design (although he was aware that they were being produced).

The Battle of the Books by Jonathan Swift contains a satirical account of the controversy that had been going on for some time in England with regard to the comparative merits of the ancient authors and modern authors.

Summary

Swift gives the origin of the dispute between the two parties of books in the very beginning in allegorical terms. He regards the ancient authors and the modern authors as the occupants of two

summits of a mountain called Paranssus (which was sacred to Apollo and the Muses), the summit occupied by the Ancients being higher than the one occupied by the Moderns. A feeling of jealousy leads the Moderns to challenge the right of the Ancients to occupy the higher summit. The quarrel between the occupants of the two summits, says Swift, then spread to the books lying on the shelves of St. James's Library.

Before describing the actual battle fought by the books, Swift takes the opportunity to attack Richard Bentley who was the keeper of the aforesaid library and a champion of the Ancients, Swift satirizes Bentley for his discourtesy towards those who wanted to borrow books or manuscripts from the library and for his inability to think clearly or to keep the library books in a proper order.

Swift then turns to the books themselves and the dispute which was taking place between them. One of the Ancients, says Swift, had tried to settle the matter by settlement but had failed in his effort to lessen the tempers. This ancient author had pointed out that the writers belonging to his side were really wiser than those of the modern times and that they were entitled to greater respect because of their antiquity. But the Moderns did not accept this argument and went so far as to claim that of the two parties the Moderns were the more ancient.

Swift then proceeds to describe an important event which occurred at this juncture. A bee, finding a hole in a broken window-pane of the library, came inside and landed upon a spider's cobweb. This invasion by the bee led to a dispute between the two (the spider and the bee). The spider spoke to the bee in a contemptuous tone, pointing out that while he himself owned an impressive palace (namely, his cobweb) the bee had no property or substance at all except a pair of wings and a drone-pipe. The bee in reply said that heaven had given to him the power to fly and the power to sing, and that he visited all the flowers and the blossoms of the field and the garden, gathering the required materials for his use. The bee also alleged that the spider's palace, while exhibiting "method and art", was absolutely devoid of "duration and matter". The bee went on to say that all that the spider produced was poison while the bee produced honey and wax.

Aesop (a Greek fabulist and storyteller credited with a number of fables now collectively known as Aesop's Fables) now speaks and states that whatever the bee had said in favour of himself could be applied to the ancient authors and that whatever the bee had alleged against the spider could be applied to the

Moderns. According to Aesop, the Moderns have no real grounds for boasting of their genius or their inventions because, even if they possess method and skill, they have only produced works which will soon be forgotten because the materials of which those works are made have come out of the authors themselves and are therefore no better than dirt. The Moderns cannot claim to any genuine productions of real value. Much in their work can be described as mere wrangling and satire which maybe compared to the spider's poison. As for the Ancients, they have their imaginative flights and their language. The Ancients collected their materials from every corner of Nature and they have produced works full of honey and wax which have contributed to mankind two of the noblest things, which are sweetness and light.

Swift then goes on to mention the books which took part in the battle. However, instead of naming the books by their titles, he names the authors of the books which took part in the fight. When the two armies of warriors had thus got ready for the battle, Fame, who had at one time an important position in the library, flew up straight to the chief god, Jupiter, and gave him a faithful account of what was happening below on the earth. Jupiter immediately called a meeting of the gods and goddesses in order to decide upon a course of action. However, there being a difference of opinion among the gods and goddesses, Jupiter privately consulted the Book of Fate and gave appropriate orders to his agents to go down to the library and manipulate events in accordance with those orders.

Momus, the god of jealous mockery, who at the conference of the gods and goddesses had taken the side of the Moderns, now enlisted the support of a goddess known as Criticism. This goddess was very malignant and she lent her full support to the Moderns.

Swift then goes on to describe the battle itself. He tells us that the first to start the offensive was Paracelus (was a Swiss physician, alchemist, lay theologian, and philosopher of the German Renaissance) who attacked Galen (was a physician, surgeon and philosopher in the Roman Empire.) with a javelin but who was himself wounded by Galen's counterattack. Then Aristotle (a Greek philosopher and polymath during the Classical period in Ancient Greece) shot an arrow at Bacon (English philosopher and statesman), but Bacon escaped being injured and the arrow hit and killed another modern philosopher whose name was Descartes (a French-born philosopher, mathematician, and scientist). Now it was Homer's (The Greek poet) turn to launch an attack upon the modern epic poets. Next came Virgil (was an

ancient Roman poet), another ancient epic poet. He found himself face to face with the modern poet, Dryden who also had attempted epic poetry (by writing a translation of Virgil's Aeneid). Dryden, however, acknowledged Virgil's superiority to himself as an epic poet, and sought a compromise with the enemy.

Yet another ancient epic poet, by the name of Lucan, now attacked two Moderns who also had attempted epic poetry. These Moderns were Richard Blackmore and Thomas Creech. Then the ancient poet, Pindar, the famous writer of Odes came forward and killed such modern writers of Pindaric Odes as John Oldham and Afra Behn, and Abraham Cowley. Then comes the last episode in *The Battle of the Books*. The central figures in this last episode are Bentley and Wotton (who were the champions of the Moderns), and Temple and Boyle (the champions of the Ancients). Swift pours all his scorn and ridicule upon Bentley and Wotton. These moderns see Phalaris and Aesop lying fast asleep in the distance, but they do not have the courage to attack them. Wotton even fails in his attempt to quench his thirst at the spring known as Helicon. The two friends then encounter Charles Boyle who attacks them with a lance and kills both of them at one stroke. According to Swift's satirical account, then, Temple and Boyle had been victorious in their support of the Ancients as against Bentley and Wotton who had opposed the Ancients and given all their support to the Moderns.

Analysis

Although the bookseller suggests that this story is not allegorical and not about real people, this story is very much an allegory. While the books may not be interchangeable with the authors, they at least represent the ideas contained within the books. It is not literally a battle of books. One can go far, however, simply by putting Swift's words in present-day English. Just restating the story in one's own words is in itself a demonstration of understanding, for doing so requires the reader to unravel the allegory.

The more you know of the works of each author mentioned, the better able you will be to see Swift's jokes and evaluate the claims behind them. For instance, is the great theologian Aquinas really "without either arms, courage, or discipline," or is this just an anti-religious bias? Is Thomas Creech really that bad a translator of Horace that the best way to (humorously) portray him is that he was pursuing a flying vision of Horace, created out of dullness, that was not even the real

Horace? Homer is incredibly strong and able, implying that Swift considered him one of the best Ancients, defeating other writers with his works. When Aristotle flings an arrow at Bacon but hits Descartes, Swift is implying that Aristotle's work is superior to that of Descartes but perhaps not to Bacon's.

The allegory also works at a more general level. For example, the offer to level the Ancients' hill is a dig against the Moderns, who the author here casts as young upstarts who, at least in the eyes of the Ancients, should be grateful that they can labor under the protection of the Ancients' longstanding achievements. Instead, the Moderns seem to make a business out of rooting out problems in the Ancients' writings. The moderns are "light" intellectually but have large rears, yet they at least have numbers on their side.

The spider and bee also rather transparently represent, respectively, the Moderns and the Ancients. The spider is known for the scientific precision in his intricate web, yet the bee points out that he eats bugs instead of the nectar of better things, spewing out bile instead of honey, suggesting the relative advantages of each group.

It takes someone with knowledge of the Ancients to appreciate many of Swift's flourishes; the preference once again is for the Ancients. When it is said of the bee in the spider's web, "Thrice he endeavoured to force his passage, and thrice the centre shook," this is an allusion to dramatic passages of Homer, where for example Odysseus "thrice" tries to reach out for his mother in the Underworld. Likewise, the intervention of the gods in a battle is most likely an allusion to Homer's *Iliad*. The activity of the Goddess of Criticism with respect to her son Wotton, and the scenes of the battle in general, reflect similar scenes in the *Iliad*. The *Iliad*, for instance, contains an exchange of armor that is similar to the one here.

When the author "petition[s] for a hundred tongues, and mouths, and hands, and pens" in order to tell the tale of the battle itself, he is indeed drawing on epic writers, mainly Ancients, who called on the gods to help give them the language they need to capture the details. Aesop, master of fables (involving animals that signify humans), of course could be mistaken for a Modern when he takes the form of an ass.

Swift uses the deities to make further suggestions about the Ancients and Moderns. The Goddess of Criticism supports the Moderns along with Momus, god of satire, implying that criticism and

mockery characterize the Moderns' writings. Swift of course is a modern satirist, so this does not simply mean that the modern satirists are all bad. Remember that there is "criticism" but also "true criticism," according to Swift's "Digression of the Modern Kind" in *A Tale of a Tub*. This Goddess, however, seems to represent much the worst kind, given her description as something like an ass full of spleen. The gods, for the most part, take the side of the Ancients and those few Moderns who are on the side of the Ancients.

In the final section, Swift parodies Bentley's and Wotton's close intellectual friendship and relatively weak abilities to fight the Ancients or even to drink at their fountain of wisdom. At the end, they are bound together just like in real life (in one book, both of their writings were bound together), basically indistinguishable. It is also comical that the great authors somehow need the help of these two men. It is fitting that when they die at the end, the battle rages on perfectly well without them. This is a lesson for other critics.

The gaps in the text permit Swift to turn easily from one topic to another. They also suggest the high degree to which the battle is unfinished, both overall and in the details of the conflicts between specific individuals. That the story ends without a conclusion might suggest the futility of the entire argument between Ancients and Moderns, since both sides have their virtues and each writer should be taken on his own merits. Given the intervention of the gods and the looming prophecy of Fate, there might not be much that men can do to affect the outcome.

Reference:

1. Boulton, J.T. (Ed.). (1995). *Samuel Johnson: The Critical Heritage* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203197356>
2. Smallwood, P. (2004). *Johnson's Critical Presence: Image, History, Judgment* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315251394>
3. Bloom, E.A., & Bloom, L.D. (Eds.). (1996). *Joseph Addison and Richard Steele: The Critical Heritage* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315004501>
4. Blanchard, R. (1968). *Tracts and Pamphlets by Richard Steele* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315034096>
5. Wood, N. (1999). *Jonathan Swift* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315843865>



SATHYABAMA

INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)

Accredited "A" Grade by NAAC | 12B Status by UGC | Approved by AICTE
www.sathyabama.ac.in

**SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

UNIT – III - British Literature II – SHS5007

Drama

Detailed

1. Oliver Goldsmith *She Stoops to Conquer*

Non Detailed

1. William Congreve *The Way of The World*
2. R.B. Sheridan *The Rivals*

She Stoops to Conquer

Oliver Goldsmith

She Stoops to Conquer opens with a prologue in which an actor mourns the death of the classical low comedy at the altar of sentimental, "mawkish" comedy. He hopes that Dr. Goldsmith can remedy this problem through the play about to be presented.

Act I is full of set-up for the rest of the play. Mr. and Mrs. Hardcastle live in an old house that resembles an inn, and they are waiting for the arrival of Marlow, son of Mr. Hardcastle's old friend and a possible suitor to his daughter Kate. Kate is very close to her father, so much so that she dresses plainly in the evenings (to suit his conservative tastes) and fancifully in the mornings for her friends. Meanwhile, Mrs. Hardcastle's niece Constance is in the old woman's care, and has her small inheritance (consisting of some valuable jewels) held until she is married, hopefully to Mrs. Hardcastle's spoiled son from an earlier marriage, Tony Lumpkin. The problem is that neither Tony nor Constance loves the other, and in fact Constance has a beloved, who will be traveling to the house that night with Marlow. Tony's problem is also that he is a drunk and a lover of low living, which he shows when the play shifts to a pub nearby. When Marlow and Hastings (Constance's beloved) arrive at the pub, lost on the way to Hardcastle's, Tony plays a practical joke by telling the two men that there is no room at the pub and that they can find lodging at the old inn down the road (which is of course Hardcastle's home).

Act II sees the plot get complicated. When Marlow and Hastings arrive, they are

impertinent and rude with Hardcastle, whom they think is a landlord and not a host (because of Tony's trick). Hardcastle expects Marlow to be a polite young man, and is shocked at the behavior. Constance finds Hastings, and reveals to him that Tony must have played a trick. However, they decide to keep the truth from Marlow, because they think revealing it will upset him and ruin the trip. They decide they will try to get her jewels and elope together. Marlow has a bizarre tendency to speak with exaggerated timidity to "modest" women, while speaking in lively and hearty tones to women of low- class. When he has his first meeting with Kate, she is dressed well, and hence drives him into a debilitating stupor because of his inability to speak to modest women. She is nevertheless attracted to him, and decides to try and draw out his true character. Tony and Hastings decide together that Tony will steal the jewels for Hastings and Constance, so that he can be rid of his mother's pressure to marry Constance, whom he doesn't love.

Act III opens with Hardcastle and Kate each confused with the side of Marlow they saw. Where Hardcastle is shocked at his impertinence, Kate is disappointed to have seen only modesty. Kate asks her father for the chance to show him that Marlow is more than both believe. Tony has stolen the jewels, but Constance doesn't know and continues to beg her aunt for them. Tony convinces Mrs. Hardcastle to pretend they were stolen to dissuade Constance, a plea she willingly accepts until she realizes they have actually been stolen. Meanwhile, Kate is now dressed in her plain dress and is mistaken by Marlow (who never looked her in the face in their earlier meeting) as a barmaid to whom he is attracted. She decides to play the part, and they have a lively, fun conversation that ends with him trying to embrace her, a move Mr. Hardcastle observes. Kate asks for the night to prove that he can be both respectful and lively.

Act IV finds the plots almost falling apart. News has spread that Sir Charles Marlow (Hardcastle's friend, and father to young Marlow) is on his way, which will reveal Hastings's identity as beloved of Constance and also force the question of whether Kate and Marlow are to marry. Hastings has sent the jewels in a casket to Marlow for safekeeping but Marlow, confused, has given them to Mrs. Hardcastle (whom he still believes is the landlady of the inn). When Hastings learns this, he realizes his plan to elope with wealth is over, and decides he must convince Constance to elope immediately. Meanwhile, Marlow's impertinence towards Hardcastle (whom he believes is the landlord) reaches its apex, and Hardcastle kicks him out of

the house, during which altercation Marlow begins to realize what is actually happening. He finds Kate, who now pretends to be a poor relation to the Hardcastles, which would make her a proper match as far as class but not a good marriage as far as wealth. Marlow is starting to love her, but cannot pursue it because it would be unacceptable to his father because of her lack of wealth, so he leaves her. Meanwhile, a letter from Hastings arrives that Mrs. Hardcastle intercepts, and she reads that he waits for Constance in the garden, ready to elope. Angry, she insists that she will bring Constance far away, and makes plans for that. Marlow, Hastings and Tony confront one another, and the anger over all the deceit leads to a severe argument, resolved temporarily when Tony promises to solve the problem for Hastings.

Act V finds the truth coming to light, and everyone happy. Sir Charles has arrived, and he and Hastings laugh together over the confusion young Marlow was in. Marlow arrives to apologize, and in the discussion over Kate, claims he barely talked to Kate. Hardcastle accuses him of lying, since Hardcastle saw him embrace Kate (but Marlow does not know that was indeed Kate). Kate arrives after Marlow leaves the room and convinces the older men she will reveal the full truth if they watch an interview between the two from a hidden vantage behind a screen. Meanwhile, Hastings waits in the garden, per Tony's instruction, and Tony arrives to tell him that he drove his mother and Constance all over in circles, so that they think they are lost far from home when in fact they have been left nearby. Mrs. Hardcastle, distraught, arrives and is convinced she must hide from a highwayman who is approaching. The "highwayman" proves to be Mr. Hardcastle, who scares her in her confusion for a while but ultimately discovers what is happening. Hastings and Constance, nearby, decide they will not elope but rather appeal to Mr. Hardcastle for mercy. Back at the house, the interview between Kate (playing the poor relation) and Marlow reveals his truly good character, and after some discussion, everyone agrees to the match. Hastings and Constance ask permission to marry and, since Tony is actually of age and therefore can of his own volition decide not to marry Constance, the permission is granted. All are happy (except for miserly Mrs. Hardcastle), and the "mistakes of a night" have been corrected.

There are two epilogues generally printed to the play, one of which sketches in metaphor Goldsmith's attempt to bring comedy back to its traditional roots, and the other of which suggests Tony Lumpkin has adventures yet to be realized.

The Way of The World

William Congreve

Before the action of the play begins, the following events are assumed to have taken place.

Mirabell, a young man-about-town, apparently not a man of great wealth, has had an affair with Mrs. Fainall, the widowed daughter of Lady Wishfort. To protect her from scandal in the event of pregnancy, he has helped engineer her marriage to Mr. Fainall, a man whom he feels to be of sufficiently good reputation to constitute a respectable match, but not a man of such virtue that tricking him would be unfair. Fainall, for his part, married the young widow because he coveted her fortune to support his amour with Mrs. Marwood. In time, the liaison between Mirabell and Mrs. Fainall ended (although this is not explicitly stated), and Mirabell found himself in love with Millamant, the niece and ward of Lady Wishfort, and the cousin of his former mistress.

There are, however, financial complications. Half of Millamant's fortune was under her own control, but the other half, 6,000 pounds, was controlled by Lady Wishfort, to be turned over to Millamant if she married a suitor approved by her aunt. Unfortunately, Mirabell had earlier offended Lady Wishfort; she had misinterpreted his flattery as love.

Mirabell, therefore, has contrived an elaborate scheme. He has arranged for a pretended uncle (his valet, Waitwell) to woo and win Lady Wishfort. Then Mirabell intends to reveal the actual status of the successful wooer and obtain her consent to his marriage to Millamant by rescuing her from this misalliance. Waitwell was to marry Foible, Lady Wishfort's maid, before the masquerade so that he might not decide to hold Lady Wishfort to her contract; Mirabell is too much a man of his time to trust anyone in matters of money or love. Millamant is aware of the plot, probably through Foible.

When the play opens, Mirabell is impatiently waiting to hear that Waitwell is married to Foible. During Mirabell's card game with Fainall, it becomes clear that the relations between the two men are strained. There are hints at the fact that Fainall has been twice duped by Mirabell: Mrs. Fainall is Mirabell's former mistress, and Mrs.

Marwood, Fainall's mistress, is in love with Mirabell. In the meantime, although Millamant quite clearly intends to have Mirabell, she enjoys teasing him in his state of uncertainty.

Mirabell bids fair to succeed until, unfortunately, Mrs. Marwood overhears Mrs. Fainall and Foible discussing the scheme, as well as Mirabell and Mrs. Fainall's earlier love affair. Since Mrs. Marwood also overhears insulting comments about herself, she is vengeful and informs Fainall of the plot and the fact, which he suspected before, that his wife was once Mirabell's mistress. The two conspirators now have both motive and means for revenge. In the same afternoon, Millamant accepts Mirabell's proposal and rejects Sir Wilfull Witwoud, Lady Wishfort's candidate for her hand.

Fainall now dominates the action. He unmasks Sir Rowland, the false uncle, and blackmails Lady Wishfort with the threat of her daughter's disgrace. He demands that the balance of Millamant's fortune, now forfeit, be turned over to his sole control, as well as the unspent balance of Mrs. Fainall's fortune. In addition, he wants assurance that Lady Wishfort will not marry so that Mrs. Fainall is certain to be the heir.

This move of Fainall's is now countered; Millamant says that she will marry Sir Wilfull to save her own fortune. Fainall insists that he wants control of the rest of his wife's money and immediate management of Lady Wishfort's fortune. When Mirabell brings two servants to prove that Fainall and Mrs. Marwood were themselves guilty of adultery, Fainall ignores the accusation and points out that he will still create a scandal which would blacken the name of Mrs. Fainall unless he gets the money.

At this point, Mirabell triumphantly reveals his most successful ploy. Before Mrs. Fainall married Fainall, she and Mirabell had suspected the man's character, and she had appointed her lover trustee of her fortune. Fainall is left with no claim to make because Mrs. Fainall does not control her own money. He and Mrs. Marwood leave in great anger. Sir Wilfull steps aside as Millamant's suitor; Lady Wishfort forgives the servants and consents to the match of Mirabell and Millamant.

In this dedication, as in most others of the period, we may ignore the rather fulsome praise of the man to whom it was addressed; that praise is a convention of the time. Some of the comments made in the letter, however, are of interest. Congreve was obviously chagrined at the play's lukewarm reception and attributed it to the coarse taste of the audience. The playgoers were accustomed to plays where "the characters meant to be ridiculed" were "fools so gross" that "instead of moving our mirth, they ought very often to excite our compassion." Congreve's description of his own purpose when creating comic characters is revealing: "to design some characters which should appear ridiculous, not so much through a natural folly . . . as through an affected wit . . . which . . . is also false." This statement has often been considered the basic definition of characterization in the "Comedy of Manners," a genre where "affectation" is the great fault. Unfortunately, Congreve continues, many people could not distinguish between "a Witwoud and a Truewit."

Not all of the comic characters in *The Way of the World* are "affectations," for Congreve included some that were created as "humours." He is here making the point that he is avoiding the extremes of farce, what we might call slapstick, in this comedy.

The precise statement of the theme of a work of art is always a little unsatisfactory. The pithy sentence must omit a great deal; it always does violence to the whole work. Nevertheless, it is worth making the effort to determine a theme, or themes, in a play as a guide to study or analysis.

As a point of departure, it is valid to say that the theme of this play is given us by Congreve in the title, *The Way of the World*. All the events and characters of the play can be related to this central theme. The obvious criticism is that the same "theme" can be ascribed to unlimited numbers of other, and quite different, novels and plays. Further, Congreve does not, in this play, seem to take a consistent position. Sometimes he is direct, sometimes ironic; sometimes he deplores, sometimes he approves; at

times he is amused; and most of the time his position is a compound of all of these attitudes.

To get a more satisfactory statement we might use a different approach that would give a better sense of the texture of the play. Most Restoration playwrights supplied their plays with alternate titles, or subtitles. Since Congreve did not, we might seek for the different subtitles that are appropriate. Each one would suggest a theme, although not the theme. These may put flesh on the bare bones the title gives us.

Love a la Mode

Certainly, the play can be seen as a dramatic presentation of varieties of love in the England of the year 1700. Central is the delicate handling of the love game as played by Mirabell and Millamant. They represent the ideal of the Restoration attitude, intense yet balanced, their love based on mutual esteem with no surrender of individuality. Contrasted with it are Mirabell's earlier and quite ambiguous love affair with Mrs. Fainall; the illicit love of Fainall and Mrs. Marwood, presumably passionate, but wholly without mutual trust; the spurious court young Witwoud pays to Millamant; the direct and somewhat coarse approach of Sir Wilfull; and, at the opposite extreme completely, the aging and undignified longings of Lady Wishfort, vain, unrealistic, over-eager, desperate, and a little pathetic.

Love and Money

Such an approach is closely related to that of love a la mode, although they are not identical. In the world whose way is presented here, love and money are values to be taken into account at all times. The sincerity of Mirabell's love does not make him lose sight of the importance of Millamant's fortune. Fainall marries for money to support an illicit love; apparently the thought of marrying Mrs. Marwood without adequate money (however "adequate" might be defined) is unthinkable. Money is Lady Wishfort's sole hold over her child and her ward. Even the marriage of the servants is built on a promise of a handsome sum of money. This is the world's way. Love without money is an impossible sentimental dream, although money often corrupts what love there is.

A Gallery of Portraits

Congreve's statements in the dedication, the prologue, and the epilogue suggest that this might be a valid subtitle. Since it is the way of the world to put a premium on youth, Mirabell and Millamant stand at the center, representing all that is to be commended. Mirabell is the beau ideal: polished, poised, rational and balanced, witty and perspicacious without being what we might today call over-intellectual. Millamant is the belle: feminine, beautiful, witty, not prudish, but with a sense of her own worth. She has avoided the messiness and humiliation of sexual intrigue. Opposed to Mirabell are would-be wits, worthy but graceless boors, and deep intriguers. Opposed to Millamant are women who engaged in adultery and an old dowager without decorum. Every character reveals himself in action, and together they produce a gallery of self-portraits.

Jungle of High Intrigue

This subtitle would focus attention on some of the values of London society. Everyone is engaged in intrigue: Mirabell intrigues to gain consent to his marriage from Lady Wishfort, and this involves intrigue within intrigue, for he does not trust Waitwell. Fainall intrigues in turn. Everyone is involved in one or the other of these schemes — Mrs. Fainall, Mrs. Marwood, and the servants. Even Lady Wishfort in her willingness to marry Sir Rowland has a devious purpose — revenge on Mirabell. When Mrs. Fainall married her husband, that was part of an intrigue, as was his marriage to her. And as we see in the play, victory goes to Mirabell, not because of his virtue, but simply because he is the most successful intriguer.

Certainly all these possible subtitles, rather than any one, add up to the ironic commentary on society that is in the title, *The Way of the World*.

The Rivals

R.B. Sheridan

"The Rivals" is an 18th century comedy written by Richard Sheridan. It is widely considered a comedy of manners, which is a social satire that focuses on commenting on the state of the social classes of the day, particularly in high society. The play features a cast of 12 major characters, each of which plays a pivotal role in the play's composition.

The play is set in Bath, Somerset, England, in the mid-18th century and revolves around two rich young lovers, Lydia and Jack. However, Jack pretends to be a young, poor soldier in the hopes of sweeping Lydia off her feet with the romantic idea of running off and eloping with a poor officer. Both characters are readers of romantic novellas of the day, leading to their overly dramatic romance encounters throughout the story. Understanding each of the characters in "The Rivals" by Richard Sheridan will help any reader or watcher better understand the context of the story and the state of mind of the characters.

Lydia Languish is pursued by many men, including Bob Acres, Sir Lucius O'Trigger, and Jack Absolute (as Ensign Beverley); she prefers the latter. Her aunt, Mrs. Malaprop, carries out an anonymous correspondence with Sir Lucius. Julia loves the neglectful Faulkland. Sir Anthony Absolute arranges for his son to marry Lydia; eventually, they are married, although Jack Absolute is supposed to fight his alter ego in the process. Faulkland and Julia are reconciled. Sir Lucius and Bob Acres renounce any claim to Lydia.

Act I.

Fag and Thomas, a coachman, two servants, meet by chance and discuss their employers: Thomas is employed by Sir Anthony Absolute and Fag by his son Jack, who has taken on the identity of Ensign Beverley. Jack Absolute is in love with Miss Lydia Languish, who would prefer him as a half-pay ensign than as he really is (the son of a baronet). However, her troublesome aunt is impeding the progress of their courtship.

Fag teases Thomas about his wig; natural hair is the newest fashion. Lucy has brought Lydia romance novels from various circulating libraries. Lydia's cousin Julia Melville enters, and announces that her uncle Sir Anthony has also just arrived in Bath. Lydia tells Julia that her aunt, Mrs. Malaprop, is carrying on an epistolary flirtation with a tall Irishman under a pseudonym of "Delia or Celia". Lydia is annoyed that "the odious Acres", another suitor, is in Bath and intends to call on her. She has written a letter to herself warning her that Beverley is carrying on with another woman; having shown this to Beverley, she has caused a quarrel between them, and he has been absent for some days. Lydia teases Julia about her lover Faulkland. Mrs. Malaprop and Sir Anthony approach; Julia flees, Lucy hides the romance novels, and Lydia composes herself. Mrs. Malaprop berates Lydia for wanting to marry an impoverished man. Sir Anthony scolds Mrs. Malaprop for having permitted her niece for having indulged in the "diabolical arts" resulting from exposure to a circulating library. Mrs. Malaprop consents to Sir Anthony's request to have Jack Absolute court Lydia. Mrs. Malaprop scolds Lucy and begs her to keep her correspondence with Sir Lucius O'Trigger a secret.

Act II.

Absolute chastises Fag for confiding in Thomas. Faulkland arrive and Absolute tells him that Julia is in Bath. Bob Acres enters; believing that Jack Absolute has never met Lydia, he confides his annoyance at his rival Ensign Beverley. Faulkland asks Acres about Julia; he believes she should have been indisposed during his absence, but is horrified to find that she is happy and well. Acres teases Faulkland to the point of the latter's departure. Acres tells Jack that he wants to fight Ensign Beverley. Fag announces Sir Anthony's arrival. Jack is initially pleased with Sir Anthony's offer of a fortune, which will allow him to quit the army, but is taken aback by the condition that he must get a wife. Sir Anthony curses him and says that he must love whoever is chosen for him. After threatening to invest five pence a day and make Jack live off the interest and vowing to "unget him", Sir Anthony leaves. Jack summons Fag to come quickly. Lucy gives Sir Lucius a letter supposedly from Lydia (but really from Mrs. Malaprop). Sir Lucius kisses Lucy and instructs her to tell her mistress that he kissed her fifty times.

Fag enters, and Lucy tells him that Sir Anthony Absolute intends to marry his son to Lydia. Fag assures her that he will bring the news to his master (Beverley).

Act III.

Pleased with Fag's news, Jack returns to his father and affects penitence. Sir Anthony describes Lydia's beauty, to which Jack pretends to be indifferent. Sir Anthony forgives him but says that he will marry the girl himself if Jack continues to spite him. Faulkland and Julia meet; his disbelief in her love causes her to leave in tears. As himself, Jack meets with Mrs. Malaprop to discuss his engagement to Lydia. She approves of the match, but gives him Beverley's latest letter, saying that he must defeat his rival. Jack suggests that she allow Lydia to run off with Beverley and to let him apprehend the couple before they have time to be married. Mrs. Malaprop agrees to this plan. As a joke, Jack requests that she introduce him to Lydia as Beverley. Lydia meets him; he says that he is Beverley but that he had impersonated Absolute to fool Mrs. Malaprop. This lady listens to part of their conversation, and is scandalized to hear Lydia tell Absolute "Let her choice be Capt. Absolute, but Beverley is mine". Acres practices a dance step and grooms himself. Sir Lucius O'Trigger arrives. Acres tells him about how Beverley has supplanted him as Lydia's preferred rival, and O'Trigger encourages him to fight Beverley. O'Trigger dictates the challenge, and tells Acres that he faces a similar situation: a young captain (Absolute) has insulted his country.

Act IV.

Acres' valet David discourages him from fighting by calling honour a "false friend", but he will not be dissuaded. Acres calls Jack Absolute to deliver the challenge to Beverley. Sir Anthony and Jack go to visit Lydia and Mrs. Malaprop. Lydia and Jack refuse to look at one another; Sir Anthony and Mrs. Malaprop are angry with both of them. Lydia marvels that her aunt has noticed no difference between Absolute and the pretended Absolute (really Absolute as Beverley). However, Lydia recognizes Jack as Beverley, and realizes that he is really Absolute; she is peeved that there will be no elopement. Alone, they fight over the deception. Sir Anthony and Mrs. Malaprop return to hear Lydia renounce any further thought of Jack. To his own amusement, Sir Anthony

believes that Jack has been “too lively” and has taken a liberty. Sir Lucius meets the despondent Jack and challenges him to a duel. Jack meets Faulkland, who is still smarting over his fight with Julia. A letter arrives from that lady forgiving him; Faulkland finds fault nonetheless, to Jack’s disgust. To test Julia’s love, Faulkland will tell her that he plans to duel that evening.

Act V.

Faulkland goes to Julia to tell her that he must “fly the kingdom instantly”. Julia suggests that she join him in exile, but he finds excuses to prevent her doing so. Finally he admits that his exile is a lie. Julia tells him that she cannot marry him because he will never be content in love. Faulkland curses himself. Lydia complains to Julia about Beverley’s real identity. David, Fag and Mrs. Malaprop enter; the servants have acquainted the lady with knowledge of the imminent duels between Sir Lucius and Absolute, Acres and “Beverley”, and Falkland and whoever runs across his path; the women fly to stop them. Absolute hides his sword under his greatcoat. He meets his father, and tells him that he is bringing the sword to Lydia’s so that he can die a romantic death if she does not change her mind. As soon as Absolute has gone, David arrives to tell Sir Anthony of the duels. They rush to stop them. Sir Lucius practices aiming his gun at the terrified Acres. Absolute and Faulkland arrive; they plead with Faulkland to fight with Sir Lucius so as not to spoil the party. Absolute admits that he is Beverley; Acres is relieved and refuses to fight him. Acres agrees to be Sir Lucius’ second. Absolute and Sir Lucius draw. Sir Anthony, Mrs. Malaprop and Lydia arrive and stop the fight. Sir Lucius addresses Lydia as “Delia”, but Lydia says it is a mistake, and professes her love for Jack. Mrs. Malaprop reveals herself to be Delia, but Sir Lucius will have none of it. Acres says he will live a bachelor. Sir Anthony orders Julia and Faulkland to be married immediately; this will put a stop to Faulkland’s nonsense. Sir Lucius hosts a party celebrating the two marriages. Absolute and Faulkland discuss how they have both tasted “the Bitters, as well as the Sweets, of Love”, but that all has been remedied.

Reference :

1. Rousseau, G.S. (Ed.). (1996). *Oliver Goldsmith: The Critical Heritage* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315004525>
2. Oliver Goldsmith. *She Stoops to Conquer*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1991.
3. Oliver Goldsmith, James Ogden, ed.. *She Stoops to Conquer*. London: A&C Black, 2001.
4. Andrew Dickson. "An introduction to 18th-century British theatre." British Library. June 21, 2018. June 24, 2019
5. Howard, J. (2017). *Mary D. Sheridan's Play in Early Childhood: From Birth to Six Years* (4th ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315622248>



SATHYABAMA

INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)

Accredited "A" Grade by NAAC | 12B Status by UGC | Approved by AICTE

www.sathyabama.ac.in

**SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

UNIT – IV - British Literature II – SHS5007

Fiction

1. Daniel Defoe Robinson Crusoe
2. Jonathan Swift Gulliver's Travels
3. Henry Fielding The History of Tom Jones

Robinson Crusoe

Daniel Defoe

Robinson Crusoe, as a young and impulsive wanderer, defied his parents and went to sea. He was involved in a series of violent storms at sea and was warned by the captain that he should not be a seafaring man. Ashamed to go home, Crusoe boarded another ship and returned from a successful trip to Africa. Taking off again, Crusoe met with bad luck and was taken prisoner in Sallee. His captors sent Crusoe out to fish, and he used this to his advantage and escaped, along with a slave.

He was rescued by a Portuguese ship and started a new adventure. He landed in Brazil, and, after some time, he became the owner of a sugar plantation. Hoping to increase his wealth by buying slaves, he aligned himself with other planters and undertook a trip to Africa in order to bring back a shipload of slaves. After surviving a storm, Crusoe and the others were shipwrecked. He was thrown upon shore only to discover that he was the sole survivor of the wreck.

Crusoe made immediate plans for food, and then shelter, to protect himself from wild animals. He brought as many things as possible from the wrecked ship, things that would be useful later to him. In addition, he began to develop talents that he had never used in order to provide himself with necessities. Cut off from the company of men, he began to communicate with God, thus beginning the first part of his religious conversion. To keep his sanity and to entertain himself, he began a journal. In the journal, he recorded every task that he performed

each day since he had been marooned.

As time passed, Crusoe became a skilled craftsman, able to construct many useful things, and thus furnished himself with diverse comforts. He also learned about farming, as a result of some seeds which he brought with him. An illness prompted some prophetic dreams, and Crusoe began to reappraise his duty to God. Crusoe explored his island and discovered another part of the island much richer and more fertile, and he built a summer home there.

One of the first tasks he undertook was to build himself a canoe in case an escape became possible, but the canoe was too heavy to get to the water. He then constructed a small boat and journeyed around the island. Crusoe reflected on his earlier, wicked life, disobeying his parents, and wondered if it might be related to his isolation on this island.

After spending about fifteen years on the island, Crusoe found a man's naked footprint, and he was sorely beset by apprehensions, which kept him awake many nights. He considered many possibilities to account for the footprint and he began to take extra precautions against a possible intruder. Sometime later, Crusoe was horrified to find human bones scattered about the shore, evidently the remains of a savage feast. He was plagued again with new fears. He explored the nature of cannibalism and debated his right to interfere with the customs of another race.

Crusoe was cautious for several years, but encountered nothing more to alarm him. He found a cave, which he used as a storage room, and in December of the same year, he spied cannibals sitting around a campfire. He did not see them again for quite some time.

Later, Crusoe saw a ship in distress, but everyone was already drowned on the ship and Crusoe remained companionless. However, he was able to take many provisions from this newly wrecked ship. Sometime later, cannibals landed on the island and a victim escaped. Crusoe saved his life, named him Friday, and taught him English. Friday soon became Crusoe's humble and devoted slave.

Crusoe and Friday made plans to leave the island and, accordingly, they built another boat. Crusoe also undertook Friday's religious education, converting the savage into a Protestant. Their voyage was postponed due to the return of the savages. This time it was necessary to attack

the cannibals in order to save two prisoners since one was a white man. The white man was a Spaniard and the other was Friday's father. Later the four of them planned a voyage to the mainland to rescue sixteen compatriots of the Spaniard. First, however, they built up their food supply to assure enough food for the extra people. Crusoe and Friday agreed to wait on the island while the Spaniard and Friday's father brought back the other men.

A week later, they spied a ship but they quickly learned that there had been a mutiny on board. By devious means, Crusoe and Friday rescued the captain and two other men, and after much scheming, regained control of the ship. The grateful captain gave Crusoe many gifts and took him and Friday back to England. Some of the rebel crewmen were left marooned on the island.

Crusoe returned to England and found that in his absence he had become a wealthy man. After going to Lisbon to handle some of his affairs, Crusoe began an overland journey back to England. Crusoe and his company encountered many hardships in crossing the mountains, but they finally arrived safely in England. Crusoe sold his plantation in Brazil for a good price, married, and had three children. Finally, however, he was persuaded to go on yet another voyage, and he visited his old island, where there were promises of new adventures to be found in a later account.

Gulliver's Travel

Jonathan Swift

Gulliver's Travels is an adventure story (in reality, a misadventure story) involving several voyages of Lemuel Gulliver, a ship's surgeon, who, because of a series of mishaps en route to recognized ports, ends up, instead, on several unknown islands living with people and animals of unusual sizes, behaviors, and philosophies, but who, after each adventure, is somehow able to return to his home in England where he recovers from these unusual experiences and then sets out again on a new voyage.

Book I: When the ship Gulliver is traveling on is destroyed in a storm, Gulliver ends up on the island of Lilliput, where he awakes to find that he has been captured by Lilliputians, very small people — approximately six inches in height. Gulliver is treated with compassion and concern. In turn, he helps them solve some of their problems, especially their conflict with their enemy, Blefuscu, an island across the bay from them. Gulliver falls from favor, however, because he refuses to support the Emperor's desire to enslave the Blefuscudians and because he "makes water" to put out a palace fire. Gulliver flees to Blefuscu, where he converts a large war ship to his own use and sets sail from Blefuscu eventually to be rescued at sea by an English merchant ship and returned to his home in England.

Book II: As he travels as a ship's surgeon, Gulliver and a small crew are sent to find water on an island. Instead they encounter a land of giants. As the crew flees, Gulliver is left behind and captured. Gulliver's captor, a farmer, takes him to the farmer's home where Gulliver is treated kindly, but, of course, curiously. The farmer assigns his daughter, Glumdalclitch, to be Gulliver's keeper, and she cares for Gulliver with great compassion. The farmer takes Gulliver on tour across the countryside, displaying him to onlookers. Eventually, the farmer sells Gulliver to the Queen. At court, Gulliver meets the King, and the two spend many sessions discussing the customs and behaviors of Gulliver's country. In many cases, the King is shocked and chagrined by the selfishness and pettiness that he hears Gulliver describe. Gulliver, on the other hand, defends England.

One day, on the beach, as Gulliver looks longingly at the sea from his box (portable room), he is snatched up by an eagle and eventually dropped into the sea. A passing ship spots the floating chest and rescues Gulliver, eventually returning him to England and his family.

Book III: Gulliver is on a ship bound for the Levant. After arriving, Gulliver is assigned captain of a sloop to visit nearby islands and establish trade. On this trip, pirates attack the sloop and place Gulliver in a small boat to fend for himself. While drifting at sea, Gulliver discovers a Flying Island. While on the Flying Island, called Laputa, Gulliver meets several inhabitants, including the King. All are preoccupied with things associated with mathematics and music. In addition, astronomers use the laws of magnetism to move the island up, down, forward, backward, and sideways, thus controlling the island's movements in relation to the island below (Balnibarbi). While in this land, Gulliver visits Balnibarbi, the island of Glubbudubdrib, and Luggnagg. Gulliver finally arrives in Japan where he meets the Japanese emperor. From there, he goes to Amsterdam and eventually home to England.

Book IV: While Gulliver is captain of a merchant ship bound for Barbados and the Leeward Islands, several of his crew become ill and die on the voyage. Gulliver hires several replacement sailors in Barbados. These replacements turn out to be pirates who convince the other crew members to mutiny. As a result, Gulliver is deposited on a "strand" (an island) to fend for himself. Almost immediately, he is discovered by a herd of ugly, despicable human-like creatures who are called, he later learns, Yahoos. They attack him by climbing trees and defecating on him. He is saved from this disgrace by the appearance of a horse, identified, he later learns, by the name Houyhnhnm. The grey horse (a Houyhnhnm) takes Gulliver to his home, where he is introduced to the grey's mare (wife), a colt and a foal (children), and a sorrel nag (the servant). Gulliver also sees that the Yahoos are kept in pens away from the house. It becomes immediately clear that, except for Gulliver's clothing, he and the Yahoos are the same animal. From this point on, Gulliver and his master (the grey) begin a series of discussions about the evolution of Yahoos, about topics, concepts, and behaviors related to the Yahoo society, which Gulliver represents, and about the society of the Houyhnhnms.

Despite his favored treatment in the grey steed's home, the kingdom's Assembly determines that Gulliver is a Yahoo and must either live with the uncivilized Yahoos or return to his own world. With great sadness, Gulliver takes his leave of the Houyhnhnms. He builds a canoe and sails to a nearby island where he is eventually found hiding by a crew from a Portuguese ship. The ship's captain returns Gulliver to Lisbon, where he lives in the captain's home. Gulliver is so repelled by the sight and smell of these "civilized Yahoos" that he can't stand to be around them. Eventually, however, Gulliver agrees to return to his family in England. Upon his arrival, he is repelled by his Yahoo family, so he buys two horses and spends most of his days caring for and conversing with the horses in the stable in order to be as far away from his Yahoo family as possible.

On this voyage, Gulliver goes to the sea as a surgeon on the merchant ship, *Antelope*. The ship is destroyed during a heavy windstorm, and Gulliver, the only survivor, swims to a nearby island, Lilliput. Being nearly exhausted from the ordeal, he falls asleep. Upon awakening, he finds that the island's inhabitants, who are no larger than six inches tall, have captured him. After the inhabitants examine Gulliver and provide him with food, the Emperor of this country orders his subjects to move Gulliver to a little-used temple, the only place large enough to house him.

Analysis

In this first chapter, Swift establishes Gulliver's character. He does this primarily by the vast amount of details that he tells us about Gulliver. Clearly, Gulliver is of good and solid — but unimaginative — English stock. Gulliver was born in Nottinghamshire, a sedate county without eccentricity. He attended Emmanuel College, a respected, but not dazzling, college. The neighborhoods that Gulliver lived in — Old Jury, Fetter Lane, and Wapping — are all lower-middle-class sections. He is, in short, Mr. British middle class of his time.

Gulliver is also, as might be expected, "gullible." He believes what he is told. He is an honest man, and he expects others to be honest. This expectation makes for humor — and also for irony. We can be sure that what Gulliver tells us will be accurate. And we can also be fairly

sure that Gulliver does not always understand the meaning of what he sees. The result is a series of astonishingly detailed, dead-pan scenes. For example, Gulliver gradually discovers, moving from one exact detail to another, that he is a prisoner of men six inches tall.

Concerning the political application of this chapter, note that Gulliver is confined in a building that was emptied because a notorious murder was committed there. The building probably represents Westminster Hall, where Charles I was tried and sentenced to death.

Swift has at least two aims in *Gulliver's Travels* besides merely telling a good adventure story. Behind the disguise of his narrative, he is satirizing the pettiness of human nature in general and attacking the Whigs in particular. By emphasizing the six-inch height of the Lilliputians, he graphically diminishes the stature of politicians and indeed the stature of all human nature. And in using the fire in the Queen's chambers, the rope dancers, the bill of particulars drawn against Gulliver, and the inventory of Gulliver's pockets, he presents a series of allusions that were identifiable to his contemporaries as critical of Whig politics.

Why, one might ask, did Swift have such a consuming contempt for the Whigs? This hatred began when Swift entered politics as the representative of the Irish church. Representing the Irish bishops, Swift tried to get Queen Anne and the Whigs to grant some financial aid to the Irish church. They refused, and Swift turned against them even though he had considered them his friends and had helped them while he worked for Sir William Temple. Swift turned to the Tories for political allegiance and devoted his propaganda talents to their services. Using certain political events of 1714-18, he described in *Gulliver's Travels* many things that would remind his readers that Lilliputian folly was also English folly — and, particularly, Whig folly. The method, for example, which Gulliver must use to swear his allegiance to the Lilliputian emperor parallels the absurd difficulty that the Whigs created concerning the credentials of the Tory ambassadors who signed the Treaty of Utrecht.

Swift's craftiness was successful. His book was popular because it was a compelling adventure tale and also a puzzle. His readers were eager to identify the various characters and discuss their discoveries, and, as a result, many of them saw politics and politicians from a new perspective.

Within the broad scheme of Gulliver's Travels, Gulliver seems to be an average man in eighteenth-century England. He is concerned with family and with his job, yet he is confronted by the pigmies that politics and political theorizing make of people. Gulliver is utterly incapable of the stupidity of the Lilliputian politicians, and, therefore, he and the Lilliputians are ever-present contrasts for us. We are always aware of the difference between the imperfect (but normal) moral life of Gulliver, and the petty and stupid political life of emperors, prime ministers, and informers.

In the second book of the Travels, Swift reverses the size relationship that he used in Book I. In Lilliput, Gulliver was a giant; in Brobdingnag, Gulliver is a midget. Swift uses this difference to express a difference in morality. Gulliver was an ordinary man compared to the amoral political midgets in Lilliput. Now, Gulliver remains an ordinary man, but the Brobdingnagians are moral men. They are not perfect, but they are consistently moral. Only children and the deformed are intentionally evil.

Set against a moral background, Gulliver's "ordinariness" exposes many of its faults. Gulliver is revealed to be a very proud man and one who accepts the madness and malice of European politics, parties, and society as natural. What's more, he even lies to conceal what is despicable about them. The Brobdingnagian king, however, is not fooled by Gulliver. The English, he says, are "odious vermin."

Swift praises the Brobdingnagians, but he does not intend for us to think that they are perfect humans. They are superhumans, bound to us by flesh and blood, just bigger morally than we are. Their virtues are not impossible for us to attain, but because it takes so much maturing to reach the stature of a moral giant, few humans achieve it.

Brobdingnag is a practical, moral utopia. Among the Brobdingnagians, there is goodwill and calm virtue. Their laws encourage charity. Yet they are, underneath, just men who labor under every disadvantage to which man is heir. They are physically ugly when magnified, but they are morally beautiful. We cannot reject them simply because Gulliver describes them as physically gross. If we reject them, we become even more conscious of an ordinary person's

verminous morality.

In Books I and II, Swift directs his satire more toward individual targets than firing broadside at abstract concepts. In Book I, he is primarily concerned with Whig politics and politicians rather than with the abstract politician; in Book II, he elects to reprove immoral Englishmen rather than abstract immorality. In Book III, Swift's target is somewhat abstract — pride in reason — but he also singles out and censures a group of his contemporaries whom he believed to be particularly depraved in their exaltation of reason. He attacks his old enemies, the Moderns, and their satellites, the Deists and rationalists. In opposition to their credos, Swift believed that people were capable of reasoning, but that they were far from being fully rational. For the record, it should probably be mentioned that Swift was not alone in denouncing this clique of people. The objects of Swift's indignation had also aroused the rage of Pope, Arbuthnot, Dryden, and most of the orthodox theologians of the Augustan Age.

This love of reason that Swift criticizes derived from the rationalism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. John Locke's theories of natural religion were popularly read, as were Descartes' theories about the use of reason. Then a loosely connected group summarized these opinions, plus others, and a cult was born: They called themselves the Deists.

In general, the Deists believed that people could reason, observe the universe accurately, and perceive axioms intuitively. With these faculties, people could then arrive at religious truth; they did not need biblical revelation. Orthodox theology has always made reason dependent on God and morality, but the Deists refuted this notion. They attacked revealed religion, saying that if reason can support the God described by the Bible, it may also conclude that God is quite different from the biblical God. The answer depends upon which observations and axioms the reasoner chooses to use.

Even before he wrote the *Travels*, Swift opposed excessive pride in reason. In his ironical *Argument Against Abolishing Christianity*, he makes plain what he considers to be the consequences of depending on reason, rather than upon faith and revelation. Disbelief, he said, is the consequence of presumptuous pride in reasoning, and immorality is the consequence of disbelief. Swift believed that religion holds moral society together. A person who does not

believe in God by faith and revelation is in danger of disbelieving in morality.

To Swift, rationalism leads to Deism, Deism to atheism, and atheism to immorality. Where people worship reason, they abandon tradition and common sense. Both tradition and common sense tell humankind that murder, whoring, and drunkenness, for example, are immoral. Yet, if one depends on reason for morality, that person can find no proof that one should not drink, whore, or murder. Thus, reasonably, is one not free to do these things? Swift believed that will, rather than reason, was far too often the master.

Alexander Pope agreed with the position that Swift took. In his *Essay on Man*, he states that people cannot perceive accurately. Our axioms are usually contradictory, and our rational systems of living in a society are meaninglessly abstract. People, he insists, are thoroughly filled with self-love and pride; they are incapable of being rational

— that is, objective. Swift would certainly concur.

In Book III, Laputan systematizing is exaggerated, but Swift's point is clear and concrete: Such systematizing is a manifestation of proud rationalism. The Laputans think so abstractly that they have lost their hold on common sense. They are so absorbed in their abstractions that they serve food in geometric and musical shapes. Everything is relegated to abstract thought, and the result is mass delusion and chaos. The Laputans do not produce anything useful; their clothes do not fit, and their houses are not constructed correctly. These people think — but only for abstract thinking's sake; they do not consider ends.

In a similar fashion, Swift shows that philology and scholarship betray the best interests of the Luggnaggians; pragmatic scientism fails in Balnibarbi; and accumulated experience does not make the Struldbruggs either happy or wise. In his topical political references, Swift demonstrates the viciousness and cruelty, as well as the folly, that arise from abstract political theory imposed by selfish politicians. The common people, Swift says, suffer. He also cites the folly of Laputan theorists and the Laputan king by referring to the immediate political blunders of the Georges.

The Travels is structured very much like a variation on the question, "Why are people so often vicious and cruel?" and the answer, "Because they succumb to the worst elements in themselves." Man is an infinitely complex animal; he is many, many mixtures of intellect and reason, charity and emotion. Yet reason and intellect are not synonymous — even if they might profitably be; nor are emotion and charity necessarily akin to one another. But few people see Man as the grey mixture of varying qualities that he is. Man oversimplifies, and, in the last book of the Travels, Swift shows us the folly of people who advance such theories. In his time, it was a popular notion that a Reasonable Man was a Complete Man. Here, Swift shows us Reason exalted. We must judge whether it is possible or desirable for Man.

The Houyhnhnms are super-reasonable. They have all the virtues that the stoics and Deists advocated. They speak clearly, they act justly, and they have simple laws. They do not quarrel or argue since each knows what is true and right. They do not suffer from the uncertainties of reasoning that afflict Man. But they are so reasonable that they have no emotions. They are untroubled by greed, politics, or lust. They act from undifferentiated benevolence. They would never prefer the welfare of one of their own children to the welfare of another Houyhnhnm simply on the basis of kinship.

Very simply, the Houyhnhnms are horses; they are not humans. And this physical difference parallels the abstract difference. They are fully rational, innocent, and undepraved. Man is capable of reason, but never wholly or continuously, and he is — but never wholly or continuously — passionate, proud, and depraved.

In contrast to the Houyhnhnms, Swift presents their precise opposite: the Yahoos, creatures who exhibit the essence of sensual human sinfulness. The Yahoos are not merely animals; they are animals who are naturally vicious. Swift describes them in deliberately filthy and disgusting terms, often using metaphors drawn from dung. The Yahoos plainly represent Mankind depraved. Swift, in fact, describes the Yahoos in such disgusting terms that early critics assumed that he hated Man to the point of madness. Swift, however, takes his descriptions from the sermons and theological tracts of his predecessors and contemporaries. If Swift hated Man, one would also have to say that St. Francis and St. Augustine did, too. Swift's descriptions of depraved Man are, if anything, milder than they might be. One sermon writer described Man as a

saccus stercorum, a sack filled with dung. The descriptions of the Yahoos do not document Swift's supposed misanthropy. Rather, the creatures exhibit physically the moral flaws and natural depravity that theologians say plague the offspring of Adam.

Midway between the poles of the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos, Swift places Gulliver. Gulliver is an average man, except that he has become irrational in his regard for reason. Gulliver is so disgusted with the Yahoos and so admires the Houyhnhnms that he tries to become a horse.

This aspiration to become a horse exposes Gulliver's grave weakness. Gullible and proud, he becomes such a devotee of reason that he cannot accept his fellow humans who are less than totally reasonable. He cannot recognize virtue and charity when they exist. Captain Pedro de Mendez rescues Gulliver and takes him back to Europe, but Gulliver despises him because Mendez doesn't look like a horse. Likewise, when he reaches home, Gulliver hates his family because they look and smell like Yahoos. He is still capable of seeing objects and surfaces accurately, but he is incapable of grasping true depths of meaning.

Swift discriminates between people as they are idealized, people as they are damned, people as they possibly could be, and others as they are. The Houyhnhnms embody the ideal of the rationalists and stoics; the Yahoos illustrate the damning abstraction of sinful and depraved Man; and Pedro de Mendez represents virtue possible to Man. Gulliver, usually quite sane, is misled when we leave him, but he is like most people. Even dullards, occasionally, become obsessed by something or other for a while before lapsing back into their quiet, workaday selves. Eventually, we can imagine that Gulliver will recover and be his former unexciting, gullible self.

Swift uses the technique of making abstractions concrete to show us that super-reasonable horses are impossible and useless models for humans. They have never fallen and therefore have never been redeemed. They are incapable of the Christian virtues that unite passion and reason: Neither they nor the Yahoos are touched by grace or charity. In contrast, the Christian virtues of Pedro de Mendez and the Brobdingnagians (the "least corrupted" of mankind) are possible to humans. These virtues are the result of grace and redemption. Swift does not press this theological point, however. He is, after all, writing a satire, not a religious tract.

The History of Tom Jones

Henry Fielding

The distinguished country gentleman Allworthy, who lives in Somersetshire with his unmarried sister Bridget Allworthy, arrives home from a trip to London to discover a baby boy in his bed. Allworthy undertakes to uncover the mother and father of this foundling, and finds local woman Jenny Jones and her tutor, Mr. Partridge, guilty. Allworthy sends Jenny away from the county, and the poverty-stricken Partridge leaves of his own accord. In spite of the criticism of the parish, Allworthy decides to bring up the boy. Soon after, Bridget marries Captain Blifil, a visitor at Allworthy's estate, and gives birth to a son of her own, named Blifil. Captain Blifil regards Tom Jones with jealousy, since he wishes his son to inherit all of Allworthy possessions. While meditating on money matters, Captain Blifil falls dead of an apoplexy.

The narrator skips forward twelve years. Blifil and Tom Jones have been brought up together, but receive vastly different treatment from the other members of the household. Allworthy is the only person who shows consistent affection for Tom. The philosopher Square and the reverend Thwackum, the boys' tutors, despise Tom and adore Blifil, since Tom is wild and Blifil is pious. Tom frequently steals apples and ducks to support the family of Black George, one of Allworthy's servants. Tom tells all of his secrets to Blifil, who then relates these to Thwackum or Allworthy, thereby getting Tom into trouble. The people of the parish, hearing of Tom's generosity to Black George, begin to speak kindly of Tom while condemning Blifil for his sneakiness.

Tom spends much time with Squire Western—Allworthy's neighbor—since the Squire is impressed by Tom's sportsmanship. Sophia Western, Squire Western's daughter, falls deeply in love with Tom. Tom has already bestowed his affection on Molly Seagrim, the poor but feisty daughter of Black George. When Molly becomes pregnant, Tom prevents Allworthy from sending Molly to prison by admitting that he has fathered her child. Tom, at first oblivious to Sophia's charms and beauty, falls deeply in love with her, and begins to resent his ties to Molly. Yet he remains with Molly out of honor. Tom's commitment to Molly ends when he discovers that she has been having

affairs, which means Tom is not the father of her child and frees him to confess his feelings to Sophia.

Allworthy falls gravely ill and summons his family and friends to be near him. He reads out his will, which states that Blifil will inherit most of his estate, although Tom is also provided for. Thwackum and Square are upset that they are each promised only a thousand pounds. Tom experiences great emotion at Allworthy's illness and barely leaves his bedside. A lawyer named Dowling arrives and announces the sudden and unexpected death of Bridget Allworthy. When the doctor announces that Allworthy will not die, Tom rejoices and gets drunk on both joy and alcohol. Blifil calls Tom a "bastard" and Tom retaliates by hitting him. Tom, after swearing eternal constancy to Sophia, encounters Molly by chance and makes love to her.

Mrs. Western, the aunt with whom Sophia spent much of her youth, comes to stay at her brother's house. She and the Squire fight constantly, but they unite over Mrs. Western's plan to marry Sophia to Blifil. Mrs. Western promises not to reveal Sophia's love for Tom as long as Sophia submits to receiving Blifil as a suitor. Blifil thus begins his courtship of Sophia, and brags so much about his progress that Allworthy believes that Sophia must love Blifil. Sophia, however, strongly opposes the proposal, and Squire Western grows violent with her. Blifil tells Allworthy that Tom is a rascal who cavorted drunkenly about the house, and Allworthy banishes Tom from the county. Tom does not want to leave Sophia, but decides that he must follow the honorable path.

Tom begins to wander about the countryside. In Bristol, he happens to meet up with Partridge, who becomes his loyal servant. Tom also rescues Mrs. Waters from being robbed, and they begin an affair at a local inn. Sophia, who has run away from Squire Western's estate to avoid marrying Blifil, stops at this inn and discovers that Tom is having an affair with Mrs. Waters. She leaves her muff in Tom's bed so that he knows she has been there. When Tom finds the muff, he frantically sets out in pursuit of Sophia. The Irishman Fitzpatrick arrives at the inn searching for his wife, and Western arrives searching for Sophia. On the way to London, Sophia rides with her cousin

Harriet, who is also Fitzpatrick's wife. In London, Sophia stays with her lady relative Lady Bellaston. Tom and Partridge arrive in London soon after, and they stay in the house of Mrs. Miller and her daughters, one of whom is named Nancy. A young gentleman called Nightingale also inhabits the house, and Tom soon realizes that he and Nancy are in love. Nancy falls pregnant and Tom convinces Nightingale to marry her. Lady Bellaston and Tom begin an affair, although Tom privately, continues to pursue Sophia. When he and Sophia are reconciled, Tom breaks off the relationship with Lady Bellaston by sending her a marriage proposal that scares her away. Yet Lady Bellaston is still determined not to allow Sophia and Tom's love to flourish. She encourages another young man, Lord Fellamar, to rape Sophia.

Soon after, Squire Western, Mrs. Western, Blifil, and Allworthy arrive in London, and Squire Western locks Sophia in her bedroom. Mr. Fitzpatrick thinks Tom is his wife's lover and begins a duel with Tom. In defending himself, Tom stabs Fitzpatrick with the sword and is thrown into jail. Partridge visits Tom in jail with the ghastly news that Mrs. Waters is Jenny Jones, Tom's mother. Mrs. Waters meets with Allworthy and explains that Fitzpatrick is still alive, and has admitted to initiating the duel. She also tells Allworthy that a lawyer acting on behalf of an unnamed gentleman tried to persuade her to conspire against Tom. Allworthy realizes that Blifil is this very gentleman, and he decides never to speak to him again. Tom, however, takes pity on Blifil and provides him with an annuity.

Mrs. Waters also reveals that Tom's mother was Bridget Allworthy. Square sends Allworthy a letter explaining that Tom's conduct during Allworthy's illness was honorable and compassionate. Tom is released from jail and he and Allworthy are reunited as nephew and uncle. Mrs. Miller explains to Sophia the reasons for Tom's marriage proposal to Lady Bellaston, and Sophia is satisfied. Now that Tom is Allworthy's heir, Squire Western eagerly encourages the marriage between Tom and Sophia. Sophia chastises Tom for his lack of chastity, but agrees to marry him. They live happily on Western's estate with two children, and shower everyone around them with kindness and generosity.

Reference :

1. Owens, W.R., Furbank, P.N., Bellamy, L., Mullan, J., Hindle, M., & McVeagh, J. (2009). *The Novels of Daniel Defoe, Part II vol 9* (1st ed.). Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351220460>
2. Owens, W.R., Furbank, P.N., Bellamy, L., Mullan, J., Hindle, M., & McVeagh, J. (2009). *The Novels of Daniel Defoe, Part II vol 6* (1st ed.). Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351220583>
3. Wood, N. (1999). *Jonathan Swift* (1st ed.). Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315843865>
4. Williams, K. (Ed.). (1995). *Jonathan Swift: The Critical Heritage* (1st ed.). Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203196953>
5. Rawson, C. (1972). *Routledge Revivals: Henry Fielding and the Augustan Ideal Under Stress* (1972): 'Nature's Dance of Death' and Other Studies (1st ed.). Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429485633>



SATHYABAMA

**INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)**

Accredited "A" Grade by NAAC | 12B Status by UGC | Approved by AICTE
www.sathyabama.ac.in

**SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

UNIT – V - British Literature II – SHS5007

Fiction II

1. Samuel Richardson Pamela
2. Cervantes Don Quixote
3. Laurence Sterne Tristram Shandy

Pamela

Samuel Richardson

Andrews is a lively, clever, pretty, and virtuous servant-girl, age 15, in the county of Bedfordshire in England. For the past three years, she has served as waiting-maid to the kindly Lady B., who unfortunately has just died. Lady B.'s son, the twenty-something Squire B., becomes Master of the country household. After a period of mourning in which he decorously restrains himself from making any advances on his late mother's favorite, Mr. B. begins flirting with Pamela incessantly. In letters to her parents, who are destitute through no fault of their own, Pamela reports her Master's attempts and vows that she will suffer any injury or social penalty rather than sacrifice her chastity. Her parents encourage this devotion to her virtue and advise her to leave Mr. B.'s employment and return to home and poverty if ever Mr. B. makes a physical attempt on her.

The attempt comes, sooner rather than later, and Pamela resists it vigorously. Disconcerted but only temporarily deterred, Mr. B. tries to bribe Pamela to keep quiet about the incident; she relates it, however, to her parents and to the motherly housekeeper, Mrs. Jervis. Mr. B. begins to make noise about Pamela's gossiping about him in her letters home, prompting Pamela to suspect him of stealing her mail. Further offenses ensue, including an incident in which Mr. B., hiding in a closet, spies on Pamela as she undresses at night and then rushes out to have his way with her. Pamela, however, displays a marked tendency to fall into a swoon whenever her Master approaches her with lewd intentions, and this peculiarity has the convenient effect of diminishing the Squire's libido.

In spite of Mr. B.'s continued harassment, Pamela does not manage to make the departure that she so frequently threatens. Various impediments, among them her obligation to finish embroidering one of Mr. B.'s waistcoats, prevent her return to her parents. Finally, she resolves to go and, having resisted a final effort of Mr. B. to tempt her with money for her parents and marriage to a clergyman, packs her bags to leave.

Unfortunately, her driver is the coachman from Mr. B.'s estate in Lincolnshire, and her destination turns out not to be the one she intended.

Mr. B., who has intercepted and read all of the correspondence between Pamela and her parents, writes to Mr. and Mrs. Andrews with a consoling but phony explanation for her failing to appear in their village as planned. Mr. Andrews sees through the ruse and approaches the Bedfordshire estate, bewailing the disappearance of his daughter, but to no avail. Meanwhile, Pamela has arrived in Lincolnshire, where the crude and malignant housekeeper Mrs. Jewkes watches her every move.

Pamela continues writing letters while in captivity, but as she does not know when she will be able to send them, she dispenses with salutations and signatures, so that they run together into one continuous journal. She begins plotting her escape immediately, and she soon settles on the clergyman Mr. Williams as her only likely ally. Mr. Williams does indeed turn out to be a willing helper, though his competence remains in question. They arrange a system of secret correspondence whereby they will hide their notes to each other beside a sunflower in the garden.

Mr. Williams tries and fails to enlist support for Pamela among the local gentry, who all suspect his and Pamela's motives. The clergyman eventually suggests that he and Pamela get married, whereupon the Squire would no longer have any authority to detain her. Pamela declines this offer, only to find soon after that Mr. B. has written to the clergyman making the same suggestion. Pamela again rejects the idea.

When a group of thieves attacks Mr. Williams on the road and searches his pockets for papers, Pamela becomes concerned that Mr. B. sent them to steal her letters, which the clergyman was carrying. The incident prompts her to make her first escape attempt, but her own

nerves prevent her even from making it across the garden. Soon a further impediment appears in the person of Monsieur Colbrand, a hideous Swiss man whom Mr. B. has sent to guard Pamela.

Mr. B., suspecting Mr. Williams of colluding with Pamela, sends him to prison for debt. Pamela concludes that she has run out of options and makes a desperate escape attempt in the middle of the night. The attempt fails when a crumbling wall causes injury to her head and legs. Despairing, Pamela considers drowning herself in the garden pond, but a sudden renewal of her commitment to life and virtue, which she credits to a divine intervention, saves her. In the morning, the other servants find her lying wounded in an outhouse, and her captivity continues as before.

A few days later Mr. B. arrives in Lincolnshire. He serves Pamela with a set of terms on which he proposes to make her his mistress, but she refuses them scornfully. Changing his strategy, Mr. B. gets close to Pamela at night by impersonating a drunken maidservant. Pamela's swooning fits come to her aid again, and after this episode, Mr. B. shows signs of being genuinely chastened. He again attempts to woo her but does not employ force. Then, in a heart-to-heart, he explains to her that he has come to admire her character and in fact deeply loves her, but his aversion to marriage prevents making an honest proposal. Pamela feels moved by this confession and hopes fervently that it is sincere.

The Nature of Virtue

Richardson's novel has often given the impression of defining "virtue" too narrowly and negatively, as the physical condition of virginity before marriage. The novel's conception of virtue is actually more capacious than its detractors have allowed, however. To begin with, Pamela makes a sensible distinction between losing her virginity involuntarily and acquiescing in a seduction. Only the latter would be a transgression against sexual virtue. Moreover, almost the entire second half of the novel is taken up with the explication and praise of Pamela's positive qualities of generosity and benevolence. Mr. B. values these qualities, and they have brought him to propose marriage: reading her journal, he has discovered her genuine goodwill toward him, particularly in her rejoicing over his escape from death by drowning. As a result, Pamela's active goodness merits the "reward" of a happy marriage as much as her defense of her virginity.

The Integrity of the Individual

Richardson's fiction commonly portrays individuals struggling to balance incompatible demands on their integrity: Pamela, for instance, must either compromise her own sense of right or offend her Master, who deserves her obedience except in so far as he makes illicit demands on her. This highly conscientious servant and Christian must work scrupulously to defy her Master's will only to the degree that it is necessary to preserve her virtue; to do any less would be irreligious, while to do any more would be contumacious, and the successful balance of these conflicting claims represents the greatest expression of Pamela's personal integrity. Meanwhile, those modern readers who dismiss Pamela's defense of her virtue as fatally old-fashioned might consider the issue from the standpoint of the individual's right to self-determination. Pamela has a right to stand on her own principles, whatever they are, so that as so often in English literature, physical virginity stands in for individual morality and belief: no one, Squire or King, has the right to expect another person to violate the standards of her own conscience.

Class Politics

One of the great social facts of Richardson's day was the intermingling of the aspirant middle class with the gentry and aristocracy. The eighteenth century was a golden age of social climbing and thereby of satire (primarily in poetry), but Richardson was the first novelist to turn his serious regard on class difference and class tension. Pamela's class status is ambiguous at the start of the novel. She is on good terms with the other Bedfordshire servants, and the pleasure she takes in their respect for her shows that she does not consider herself above them; her position as a lady's maid, however, has led to her acquiring refinements of education and manner that unfit her for the work of common servants: when she attempts to scour a plate, her soft hand develops a blister. Moreover, Richardson does some fudging with respect to her origins when he specifies that her father is an educated man who was not always a peasant but once ran a school.

Sexual Politics

Sexual inequality was a common theme of eighteenth-century social commentators and political philosophers: certain religious groups were agitating for universal suffrage, John Locke argued for universal education, and the feminist Mary Astell decried the inequities of the marital state. Though Richardson's decision to have Pamela fall in love with her would-be rapist has rankled many advocates of women's rights in recent years, he remains in some senses a feminist writer due to his sympathetic interest in the hopes and concerns of women. He allows Pamela to comment acerbically on the hoary theme of the sexual double standard: "those Things don't disgrace Men, that ruin poor Women, as the World goes." In addition, Sally Godfrey demonstrates the truth of this remark by going to great lengths (and a long distance) to avoid ruination after her connection with Mr. B., who comes through the episode comparatively unscathed.

Not only as regards extramarital activities but also as regards marriage itself, eighteenth-century society stacked the deck against women: a wife had no legal existence apart from her husband, and as Jocelyn Harris notes, Pamela in marrying Mr.

B. commits herself irrevocably to a man whom she hardly knows and who has not been notable for either his placid temper or his steadfast monogamy; Pamela's private sarcasms after her marriage, then, register subtly Richardson's appropriate misgivings about matrimony as a reward for virtue. Perhaps above all, however, Richardson's sympathy for the feminine view of things emerges in his presentation of certain contrasts between the feminine and masculine psyches. Pamela's psychological subtlety counters Mr. B.'s simplicity, her emotional refinement counters his crudity, and her perceptiveness defeats his callousness, with the result that Mr. B. must give up his masculine, aggressive persona and embrace instead the civilizing feminine values of his new wife.

If this hedging suggests latent class snobbery on Richardson's part, however, the novelist does not fail to insist that those who receive privileges under the system bear responsibilities also, and correspondingly those on the lower rungs of the ladder are entitled to claim rights of their superiors. Thus, in the early part of the novel, Pamela emphasizes that Mr. B., in harassing her, violates his duty to protect the social inferiors under his care; after his reformation in the

middle of the novel, she repeatedly lauds the “Godlike Power” of doing good that is the special pleasure and burden of the wealthy. Whether Richardson’s stress on the reciprocal obligations that characterize the harmonious social order expresses genuine concern for the working class, or whether it is simply an insidious justification of an inequitable power structure, is a matter for individual readers to decide.

Psychology and the Self

In composing *Pamela*, Richardson wanted to explore human psychology in ways that no other writer had. His innovative narrative method, in which Pamela records her thoughts as they occur to her and soon after the events that have inspired them, he called “writing to the moment”; his goal was to convey “those lively and delicate Impressions, which Things Present are known to make upon the Minds of those affected by them,” on the theory that “in the Study of human Nature the Knowledge of those Apprehensions leads us farther into the Recesses of the human Mind, than the colder and more general Reflections suited to a continued . . . Narrative.” The most profound psychological portrait, then, arises from the depiction, in the heat of the moment, of spontaneous and unfiltered thoughts. Nevertheless, Richardson’s eagerness to illuminate the “Recesses of the human Mind” is balanced by a sense of these mental recesses as private spaces that outsiders should not enter without permission.

Although the overt plot of the novel addresses Mr. B.’s efforts to invade the recesses of Pamela’s physical person, the secondary plot in which she must defend the secrecy of her writings shows the Squire equally keen to intrude upon her inmost psyche. Beginning with the incident in Letter I when she reacts to Mr. B.’s sudden appearance by concealing her letter in her bosom, Pamela instinctively resists her Master’s attempts to expose her private thoughts; as she says, “what one writes to one’s Father and Mother, is not for every body.” It is not until Mr. B. learns to respect both Pamela’s body and her writings, relinquishing access to them except when she voluntarily offers it, that he becomes worthy of either physical or psychological intimacy with her.

Hypocrisy and Self-Knowledge

Since the initial publication of *Pamela* in 1740, critics of Richardson's moralistic novel have accused its heroine of hypocrisy, charging that her ostensible virtue is simply a reverse-psychological ploy for attracting Mr. B. This criticism has a certain merit, in that Pamela does indeed turn out to be more positively disposed toward her Master than she has let on; in her defense, however, her misrepresentation of her feelings has not been deliberate, as she is quite the last person to figure out what her "treacherous, treacherous Heart" has felt. Pamela's difficulty in coming to know her own heart raises larger questions of the possibility of accurate disclosure: if Pamela cannot even tell herself the truth, then what chance is there that interpersonal communication will be any more transparent?

The issue crystallizes when, during her captivity in Lincolnshire, Pamela becomes of necessity almost compulsively suspicious of appearances. This understandable defense mechanism develops into a character flaw when it combines with her natural tendency toward pride and aloofness to prevent her reposing trust in Mr. B. when, finally, he deserves it. The lovers thus remain at cross-purposes when they should be coming together, and only Mr. B.'s persistence secures the union that Pamela's suspicions have jeopardized. While the novel, then, evinces skepticism toward the possibility of coming to know oneself or another fully, it balances that skepticism with an emphasis on the necessity of trusting to what cannot be fully known, lest all opportunities of fulfilling human relationships be lost.

Realism and Country Life

Eighteenth-century literature tended to idealize the life of rustic simplicity that Pamela typifies. Dramatists were fond of rendering the tale of the licentious squire and the chaste maiden in a high romantic strain, and Margaret Anne Doody points out that Mr. B., when he displays Pamela to the neighbors as "my pretty Rustick," implicitly calls on the traditional identification of country lasses with natural beauty and pastoral innocence. Richardson, however, disappoints these idyllic expectations by having Pamela tell her story in the "low" style that is realistically appropriate to her class, as well as through his generous incorporation of naturalistic details. Far

from idealizing the countryside, Richardson recurs to the dirt in which Pamela conceals her writings and plants her horse beans. In selecting his imagery, Richardson favors not the wood nymphs and sentimental willows of pastoral romance but such homely items as Pamela's flannel, Mr. B.'s boiled chicken, the carp in the pond, the grass in the garden, the mould, a cake, and the shoes that Mrs. Jewkes periodically confiscates from Pamela. By refusing to compromise on the lowliness of his heroine and her surroundings, Richardson makes a statement that is both socially progressive and aesthetically radical. To discover dramatic significance, Richardson does not look to the great cities and the exemplars of public greatness who reside there; he maintains, rather, that much of equal or greater significance inheres in the private actions and passions of common people.

Don Quixote

Cervantes

Don Quixote is a middle-aged gentleman from the region of La Mancha in central Spain. Obsessed with the chivalrous ideals touted in books he has read, he decides to take up his lance and sword to defend the helpless and destroy the wicked. After a first failed adventure, he sets out on a second one with a somewhat befuddled laborer named Sancho Panza, whom he has persuaded to accompany him as his faithful squire. In return for Sancho's services, Don Quixote promises to make Sancho the wealthy governor of an isle. On his horse, Rocinante, a barn nag well past his prime, Don Quixote rides the roads of Spain in search of glory and grand adventure. He gives up food, shelter, and comfort, all in the name of a peasant woman, Dulcinea del Toboso, whom he envisions as a princess.

On his second expedition, Don Quixote becomes more of a bandit than a savior, stealing from and hurting baffled and justifiably angry citizens while acting out against what he perceives as threats to his knighthood or to the world. Don Quixote abandons a boy, leaving him in the hands of an evil farmer simply because the farmer swears an oath that he will not harm the boy. He steals a barber's basin that he believes to be the mythic Mambrino's helmet, and he becomes convinced of the healing powers of the Balsam of Fierbras, an elixir that makes him so ill that, by comparison, he later feels healed. Sancho stands by Don Quixote, often bearing the brunt of the punishments that arise from Don Quixote's behavior.

The story of Don Quixote's deeds includes the stories of those he meets on his journey. Don Quixote witnesses the funeral of a student who dies as a result of his love for a disdainful lady turned shepherdess. He frees a wicked and devious galley slave, Gines de Pasamonte, and unwittingly reunites two bereaved couples, Cardenio and Lucinda, and Ferdinand and Dorothea. Torn apart by Ferdinand's treachery, the four lovers finally come together at an inn where Don Quixote sleeps, dreaming that he is battling a giant.

Along the way, the simple Sancho plays the straight man to Don Quixote, trying his best to correct his master's outlandish fantasies. Two of Don Quixote's friends, the priest and the barber, come to drag him home. Believing that he is under the force of an enchantment, he accompanies them, thus ending his second expedition and the First Part of the novel.

The Second Part of the novel begins with a passionate invective against a phony sequel of Don Quixote that was published in the interim between Cervantes's two parts. Everywhere Don Quixote goes, his reputation—gleaned by others from both the real and the false versions of the story—precedes him.

As the two embark on their journey, Sancho lies to Don Quixote, telling him that an evil enchanter has transformed Dulcinea into a peasant girl. Undoing this enchantment, in which even Sancho comes to believe, becomes Don Quixote's chief goal.

Don Quixote meets a Duke and Duchess who conspire to play tricks on him. They make a servant dress up as Merlin, for example, and tell Don Quixote that Dulcinea's enchantment—which they know to be a hoax—can be undone only if Sancho whips himself 3,300 times on his naked backside. Under the watch of the Duke and Duchess, Don Quixote and Sancho undertake several adventures. They set out on a flying wooden horse, hoping to slay a giant who has turned a princess and her lover into metal figurines and bearded the princess's female servants.

During his stay with the Duke, Sancho becomes governor of a fictitious isle. He rules for ten days until he is wounded in an onslaught the Duke and Duchess sponsor for their entertainment. Sancho reasons that it is better to be a happy laborer than a miserable governor.

A young maid at the Duchess's home falls in love with Don Quixote, but he remains a staunch worshipper of Dulcinea. Their never-consummated affair amuses the court to no end. Finally, Don Quixote sets out again on his journey, but his demise comes quickly. Shortly after his arrival in Barcelona, the Knight of the White Moon—actually an old friend in disguise—vanquishes him.

Cervantes relates the story of Don Quixote as a history, which he claims he has translated

from a manuscript written by a Moor named Cide Hamete Benengeli. Cervantes becomes a party to his own fiction, even allowing Sancho and Don Quixote to modify their own histories and comment negatively upon the false history published in their names.

In the end, the beaten and battered Don Quixote forswears all the chivalric truths he followed so fervently and dies from a fever. With his death, knights-errant become extinct. Benengeli returns at the end of the novel to tell us that illustrating the demise of chivalry was his main purpose in writing the history of Don Quixote.

Tristram Shandy

Laurence Sterne

The action covered in *Tristram Shandy* spans the years 1680-1766. Sterne obscures the story's underlying chronology, however, by rearranging the order of the various pieces of his tale. He also subordinates the basic plot framework by weaving together a number of different stories, as well as such disparate materials as essays, sermons, and legal documents. There are, nevertheless, two clearly discernible narrative lines in the book.

The first is the plot sequence that includes Tristram's conception, birth, christening, and accidental circumcision. (This sequence extends somewhat further in Tristram's treatment of his "breeching," the problem of his education, and his first and second tours of France, but these events are handled less extensively and are not as central to the text.) It takes six volumes to cover this chain of events, although comparatively few pages are spent in actually advancing such a simple plot. The story occurs as a series of accidents, all of which seem calculated to confound Walter Shandy's hopes and expectations for his son. The manner of his conception is the first disaster, followed by the flattening of his nose at birth, a misunderstanding in which he is given the wrong name, and an accidental run-in with a falling window-sash. The catastrophes that befall Tristram are actually relatively trivial; only in the context of Walter Shandy's eccentric, pseudo-scientific theories do they become calamities.

The second major plot consists of the fortunes of Tristram's Uncle Toby. Most of the details of this story are concentrated in the final third of the novel, although they are alluded to and developed in piecemeal fashion from the very beginning. Toby receives a wound to the groin while in the army, and it takes him four years to recover. When he is able to move around again, he retires to the country with the idea of constructing a scaled replica of the scene of the battle in which he was injured. He becomes obsessed with re-enacting those battles, as well as with the whole history and theory of fortification and defense. The Peace of Utrecht slows him down in these "hobby-horsical" activities, however, and it is during this lull that he falls under the spell of

Widow Wadman. The novel ends with the long-promised account of their unfortunate affair.

Tristram is both the fictionalized author of *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy* and the child whose conception, birth, christening, and circumcision form one major sequence of the narrative. The adult Tristram Shandy relates certain aspects of his family history, including many that took place before his own birth, drawing from stories and hearsay as much as from his own memories. His opinions we get in abundance; of the actual details of his life the author furnishes only traces, and the child Tristram turns out to be a minor character.

Tristram's philosophically-minded father, Walter Shandy's love for abstruse and convoluted intellectual argumentation and his readiness to embrace any tantalizing hypothesis lead him to propound a great number of absurd pseudo-scientific.

Tristram's mother, Mrs. Shandy insists on having the midwife attend her labor rather than Dr. Slop, out of resentment at not being allowed to bear the child in London. On all other points, Mrs. Shandy is singularly passive and uncontentious, which makes her a dull conversational partner for her argumentative husband.

Tristram's uncle, and brother to Walter Shandy. After sustaining a groin-wound in battle, he retires to a life of obsessive attention to the history and science of military fortifications. His temperament is gentle and sentimental: Tristram tells us he wouldn't harm a fly.

Manservant and sidekick to Uncle Toby. His real name is James Butler; he received the nickname "Trim" while in the military. Trim colludes with Captain Toby in his military shenanigans, but his own favorite hobby is advising people, especially if it allows him to make eloquent speeches.

The local male midwife, who, at Walter's insistence, acts as a back-up at Tristram's birth. A "scientifick operator," Dr. Slop has written a book expressing his disdain for the practice of midwifery. He is interested in surgical instrument and medical advances, and prides himself on having invented a new pair of delivery forceps.

The village parson, and a close friend of the Shandy family. Yorick is lighthearted and straight-talking; he detests gravity and pretension. As a witty and misunderstood clergyman, he has often been taken as a representation of the writer, Sterne, himself.

Chambermaid to Mrs. Shandy. She is present at Tristram's birth, complicit in his mischristening, and partly to blame for his accidental circumcision by the fallen window shade.

Reference:

1. Wayne C. Booth, 1961, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, Chicago University Press, London
2. Ian Watt, 1974, *Rise of the English Novel*, Chatto & Windus, London.
3. Frederick R Karl, 1977, *Reader's Guide to the Development of the English Novel till the 18th Century*, The Camelot Press Ltd. Southampton.
4. Ian Milligan, 1983, *The Novel in English: An Introduction*, Macmillan, Hong Kong.
5. Latimer, B. (2013). *Making Gender, Culture, and the Self in the Fiction of Samuel Richardson: The Novel Individual* (1st ed.). Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315593319>