TILAK MAHARASHTRA VIDYAPEETH

FACULTY OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

M.A. (ENGLISH)

PART – I

ENGLISH DRAMA

(E-101)

INTRODUCTION

The scope of the Distance Education System is unlimited. It has opened avenues of higher education for those who had been denied the opportunity. In the present era when constant updating is the need of the hour, Distance Education is doing wonders with the fast developing communication technology. Although the students are at distance, a complete learning experience is provided to them through the Self Learning Material, developed by our expert faculty.

It is our great pleasure to hand over to you the learning material of M.A. - English Part I. This year you will be studying English Drama, English Poetry and English Fiction with the help of literary creations of few authors and poets. Along with these areas of English literature you will also make an enquiry into the structure of modern English.

We are sure that, even those of you who might be studying M.A. for a material purpose, with the help of this kind of syllabus and learning material, will develop academic interest in all forms of English literature.

We take this opportunity to express our gratitude towards Hon'ble Vice-chancellor Dr. Deepak Tilak, Dean - Faculty of Distance Education Shri. Ratnakar Chandekar and the Registrar Dr. Umesh Keskar for encouragement, support and guidance provided by them.

We are thankful to Dr. Rajashri Kulkarni & Shri. Vishnu Abhyankar for preparation of this study material.

Wish you all the best!

Prof. Neelima Mehta
Head. Faculty of Distance education

CONTENTS

CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

The beginnings of the drama in England are obscure. But critics claim that they can be traced to the tenth century. It is also said that the Church, which had condemned the theatre of the Roman Empire, brought it back to England through spectacles and themes and later, through the Morality Plays, the Miracle Plays and the Interludes. The changes in the form of drama (in the Renaissance period) can be in part explained by the revival of interest in classical drama. The classical drama gave examples for both comedy and tragedy to dramatists like Kyd, Marlowe and Shakespeare for plays like The Spanish Tragedy, Dr. Faustus, Macbeth, and many others. Theatres like The Swan and The Globe were built and theatre companies like the Lord Chamberlain's men and the Admiral's men began to flourish.

Marlowe gave tragedy the magnificent instrument of his blank verse and also endowed it with the concept of character. As a poet, Kyd could not compare with Marlowe, but he showed, in the structure of the play, a skill which Marlowe did not equal. Shakespeare always wrote for the contemporary theatre, manipulating the Elizabethan stage .with great resource and invention. He was able to satisfy the desire for dramatic pleasure at a number of different levels of appreciation, sometimes even incorporating them in a single play. e.g. Hamlet or Othello have melodrama, subtle presentation of character, as well as language unequalled in beauty. To satisfy his audience was his primary purpose, but this was not enough, for he had to satisfy. himself, and plays like Hamlet and King Lear show that he wrote the plays as his genius directed. His earliest work was in the plays on English history, including the plays on the reign of Henry IV and Henry VI. Perhaps the best example of Shakespeare's originality and ingenuity is his romantic comedy, The Midsummer Night's Dream, in which the romantic action is enriched by the fiery elements on one side, and the rustics on the other, while the verse gives that atmosphere which Shakespeare can construct distinctively for each dramatic action. Shakespeare then wrote his 'dark comedies', in which the pattern of romantic comedy is combined with satire which exposes the treachery of love, the deceit of honour, and the uselessness of war. The great period of Shakespeare's tragedy is to be found in the plays which begin with Hamlet, and include works like Othello and Macbeth. The last romances, of which, The Tempest is the last, indicate a change of vision in which there is gentleness and optimism, as well as forgiveness and fantasy. Among the great dramatists who followed Shakespeare were Ben Jonson with plays like Every Man In His Humour (1598) and Volpone (1602), and later , Thomas Dekker, Beaumont and Fletcher, John Webster and William Wycherley. This

period produced mainly satire (e.g. Jonson) and tragedy (e.g. Webster). Oliver Goldsmith and Sheridan then came on the scene with their 'comedies of manners' - plays like She Stoops To Conquer (1773) and The School For Scandal (1777).

The 19th century does not contribute much to drama since there were no significant plays written in this period, and it was more conducive to prose, and the development of the novel. The 20th century saw the rise of the realistic social drama, but Shaw undoubtedly towers over the whole theatre world as the exponent of realism as well as the inculcator of the play of ideas. Beginning in 1892 with the play Widower's Houses, he wrote for several decades, until the end of the 1930s. Each play by Shaw presents a problem which is discussed thoroughly, and character is given secondary importance. In fact, he accompanied the plays with prefaces in which he explained the themes more fully, and very often his verbal wit proved to be his greatest wit as well as his greatest temptation. Though writers like T.S.Eliot, Isherwood, Fry, Priestley, and Wilde wrote several good plays, it was writers like Samuel Beckett, Harold Pinter, John Osborne and Arnold Wesker, who made a mark in the field of experimental drama, and who were responsible for the coining of terms like 'anger', and 'absurd'. The plays of these writers, project the uncertainty, frustration, disillusionment, and the resulting feeling of insecurity faced by modern man in the post-war environment of the west in the decades that followed the world wars. Hence, many critics felt that in modern drama, its primary aim - that of entertainment - was forgotten, as it was an illumination of the contemporary dilemma of man, and one could only wait and see whether this aim would be fulfilled by the plays that would be written in the future.

CHAPTER – II

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE: DR. FAUSTUS

"How greatly it was all planned!

He was aware that Shakespeare did not stand alone'" was the tribute paid to Marlowe by Goethe, that great German poet and play-wright. Goethe's Faust though based on the same Faust Legend is much more philosophical than Marlowe's play, of which Goethe had heard obviously, though he may not have read it before he finished the First Part of his monumental work. Anyway, the name of Marlowe is usually associated with that of Shakespeare whenever Elizabethan drama is mentioned. "Marlowe is the predawn light which ushered in the sunrise of Shakespeare'" is the tribute commonly paid to Marlowe. (In fact there is an extant theory that Marlowe himself is Shakespeare, the dramatist. Mention of this may be found in the guidelines on Shakespeare's Sonnets. Guidelines: 17-20)

Marlowe's achievement which help or influenced the growth of English Drama are mainly in two fields. He used the blank verse with suppleness, feeing it from the bondage of the mechanical staccato rhythm of ten syllable, five-beat pattern seen in earlier works. It is to be conceded that Marlowe was not the first to use Blank Verse in drama or tragedy, but it is to be admitted that he was the first to use Blank Verse giving it life and making it a powerful medium of expressive dialogue. The tragedy Gorboduc (1561) was written in Blank Verse: but the Verse is mechanically pedantic, accurate in its iambic beat and decasyllabic count and clumsy as every line ends almost with a pause to the idea if not a full stop. It is Marlowe's achievement that he perceived the potentialities of this verse medium, and penetrated its rhythm giving life to it and making it supple. It became a magnificent vehicle for drama, achieving a rhythm both majestic and pliant- fit enough to express every kind of idea or emotion. IT came to perfection the hands of Shakespeare whose use of it has made it appear like natural speech. Of course Marlowe's blank verse is not of the same all-embracing perfection of Shakespeare's verse, but is was Marlowe who groomed the verse to proportion, so that Shakespeare could use it with mastery and perfection- The blank verse of the earlier tragedies of Marlowe has the weakness of mechanical rhythmic beats but in his later plays we see Marlowe making the verse pliant to his purpose- a long way from the dead verse used in "Gorboduc".

The second great achievement of Marlowe is that he introduced character into drama. The interplay of character and action as an essential part of drama was seen by Marlowe and he paved the way for the great character dramas of Shakespeare and others. Telling a story with a purpose, earlier drama had no interest in the characters at all. Morality:, presented the

struggle between Good and Evil for possession of man's soul. The two qualities were personified with Good standing on one side, simple in appearance, soft in speech, dignified in manner, soothing in its actions and most probable dull in its total impression compared to the Evil standing on the other side, colourful in appearance, loud in speech, blustering in manner, charming in its action and most attractive in its total impression. Evil always is more seductive than Good and has greater charm and pull over man's weak soul. This fact was brought forth using these two qualities as personified types playing with man's soul as the stakes. The human being in the middle represented 'Everyman' and as such did not have any distinctive quality of his own. Individuality is the most important ingredient of the distinctive character of any person and this was lacking in the Moralities commonly stages in those days. The Miracles and the Mysteries, religious plays based on the life of Christ and the Saints of the Church, followed set rules of presentation of the stories. Again, here, the interest was in the faith to be impressed upon, the faithful followers of the Church and not in the presentation of the characters. People were merely types and not characters for the purposes of this type of religious drama. Though Marlowe has used the Morality as an inspiration and has emulated it in a few scenes in Dr. Faustus, he has forged a new kind of drama in which character is distinct. In fact it was he who brought drama into fullness of life by adding character to the already existing elements of plot and conflict, extent in the Morality, Miracle and Mystery plays which were popular during the period. Thus these two innovations make Marlowe the Harbinger of English Drama. The influence of Marlowe on Shakespeare is itself a fascinating study, as can be seen by comparing Marlowe's Edward II with Shakespeare's Richard II. A comparative study of evil in Dr. Faustus and Macbeth is also of engrossing interest.

Christopher Marlowe born in 1563, the second child of a prosperous Canterbury shoemaker, went to King's School on a scholarship at eh age of 15. two years later he won a scholarship from his school and went to Corpus Christi College, Cam-bridge. In 1584 he took his B.A. and in 1587 his M.A. degree. As he had lived there as a student on scholarship for six years it was presumed that he would take Holy Orders and join the priesthood. But there were rumours that he was thinking of becoming a Roman Catholic at Rheims and the M.A. degree was withheld for a time by the Cambridge University till the Privy Council ordered that the degree be awarded as Marlowe was on Government work and had done "her Majesty good service". The Privy Council's interceding on behalf of Marlowe proves that he was working as a Government informer and spy. It is one of the ironies of his life that first he was accursed of trying to become a Roman Catholic and later if life-just six years later accused of being a heretic and an atheist who denied Jesus Christ! As a student he was just ordinary and showed neither great scholarship nor any brilliance: certainly none suspected him of any poetic propensities!

After taking his M.A. degree, Marlowe lived mostly in London and wrote a number

of plays, the first of them Timberline in 1588 or 1589. the play employs blank verse for the blustering central character of Tamburlaine very powerfully. Here and there the blank verse does show Marlowe's deep understanding of its potentialities. In his later plays, the Jew of Malta, The Tragedy of Dido (with Nashe as his Collaborator) and Edward II the verse from changes, becoming increasingly pliant in its suppleness and expressiveness. In Dr. Faustus, his blank verse reaches its highest point as the verse from is completely in tune with the needs of the play. Marlowe is also supposed to have assisted Shakespeare in writing King Henry VI. He wrote on poem ' Hero and Leander' and peculiarly enough he was known to his contemporaries more as a poet than as a playwright.

It was evident that Marlowe continued to serve the Government as a spy. In spite of his close association with Sir Thomas Walsingham, he was in constant danger of being prosecuted for 'atheistic view's by the same privy Council which had absolved him of "Roman Catholic propensities" earlier. On 3rd May 1593 in a tavern at Deptford he dined with three disreputable characters and the same night after dinner in a drunken brawl his companion, the double-spy Ingram Freezer stabbed him in self-defense. Marlowe died on the spot of a wound in the eye.

Marlowe was a young man of bold self-assurance, a typical product of the adventurous age, passionate and fiery in word and act, flippant and biting in his talk, particularly of whatever the elders held in reverence, but kind and generous as a companion. Great tributes were paid to him by his contemporaries as a poet and as a friend. This complex and sometimes absolutely opposed reactions from critics. But all are agreed that Christopher Marlowe did pave the way for the great achievements of Shakespeare in the field of drama.

Dr Fautsus was most probably written in 1592. it was based on the Faust legend witch was current in Germany for quite a little time and produced a number of Faust Books in German. In 1587 the first Faustbuch in German was published and a translation in English appeared in 1592. The translator is known only as PF and his identity has still not been established. Marlowe must have read this book and based his play on the English Faust Book very faithfully following it but making a few additions for his dramatic purposes. 'Some of these are Faustus" soliloquy on the vanity of human science, the Good and Bad Angels evidently taken Morality Plays and the substitution of the procession of the Seven Deadly Sins (Obviously under the influence of Mystery and Miracle plays). By judicious selection. Omitting a large amount of irrelevant material he was able to shape the rather rambling and incoherent story into a dramatic unity. That he was able to infuse a living characterization into the legend of Faustus making it into a powerful tragedy speaks highly of Marlowe's dramatic art which brought Goethe's encomium on the admirable construction of Dr. Faustus.

(The Faust legend can be seen in the Appendix)

The opening speech of the Chorus announces Marlowe's purpose. Faustus, a man of humble origin, has acquired great learning: but his arrogance causes him to overreach and ruin himself. We are to witness a tragedy of presumption- the tragedy of pride and arrogance.

This motive held a strong attraction for the poet whose most-favoured character had declared that Nature.

"Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds".

(Tamburlaine)

The attraction makes itself felt from the beginning of the play. In the first scene, Faustus dismisses the traditional subjects of study and turns instead to magic, with conceited self-satisfaction and impatient scorn, he rejects philosophy, medicine law and divinity: and with almost breathless eagerness he contemplates the "world of profit and delight, power, of honour, of omnipotence" which he expects to enjoy as a magician. The whole earth, and the winds and clouds above it, will be subject to his absolute control, while waiting for his friends Valdes and Cornelius, who are to instruct him in concealed art's he swiftly reviews some of the widely varied uses to which he intends to put the skill he seeks. These testify to his are dent curiosity, his desire for wealth had luxury, and his nationalism, as well as to longing for supreme uncontrolled power. Such qualities mark him unmistakably as a man of Renaissance; and a whole series of sensuous allusions maintains throughout the scene of the extended horizons of that age of discovery Faustus craves for gold from the East Indies, for pearl from the depths of the ocean, and for "pleasant fruits and princely delicates from America; Valdes refers to the Indians in the Spanish colonies, to Lapland gainis, to the argosies of Venice, and the annual plate fleet which supplied the Spanish treasury from the New World. There was much here to fire the imaginations of English theatergoers; and they would heartily approve of Faustus' determination to chase the Prince of Parma from the Netherlands. After all, only defeat of the Spanish Armada had prevented Parma from invading England in 1588. Nor were Englishmen ignorant of the, fierily keel at Antwerp's bridge'.

So Faustus' dream of power which is mainly materialistic includes much that must have appealed strongly to the people for whom Marlowe wrote; and the liveliness and zest with which it is expressed show that much in it must likewise have appealed strongly to the poet himself. At the same time, Faustus' declaration-"A sound magician is a demy-god" forces us to recognize the presumptuous nature of his ambition. He evidently aspires to be something more than a man. Without surprise, we learn that his conscience is uneasy. He does not admit it probably because he is not at all conscious of it, but the internal conflict is externalized in the admonitions of his Good and Bad Angels. The first sentence of the Good Angel, a warning against incurring 'God's heavy wrath's crystallizes our fears for one sho has

much of our sympathy; and these fears are augmented when, in the following scene, the two Scholars perceive the ‘danger of his soul’.

Faustus, however, stubbornly persists in his chooses course. In scene III, he succeeds in calling us Mephistophilis and propose his bargain with Lucifer; in scene V, he signs his soul away to Lucifer and questions Mehistophilis about astronomy and is later entertained by an informal show of the Seven Deadly Sins which is designed to distract him from thought of repentance.

But things are not very smooth for Faustus During these three scenes, Faustus suffers a number of rebuffs. Having performed the ritual by which, he believes, ‘the spirits are enforced to raise’, he naturally regards the appearance of Mephistophilis as a proof that he can order him about. He proceeds to do so with a quite absurd arrogance. Mephistophilis disillusions him. Faustus’ charms, he explains, did not comeil him to come: they merely drew his attention to Faustus’ attractively sinful frame of mind, and he came of his Owen accord, ‘in hop to get his glorious soul’. In scene V, after singing the bond, Faustus asks for a wife. Marriage is a sacrament, and naturally Mephistophils cannot given him one. Mephistophilis’ reply takes, the form of crude practical joke, followed by a promise of any number of concubines. In scene IV, when Faustus questions him about astronomy, Mephistophilis tells him nothing. Wagner could not have told him; and, when Faustus asks who made the world Mephistophilis reluctant to acknowledge the Creator, refuses to reply. His refusal provokes a crisis in their relations.

Anyone less infatuated and less arrogant than Faustus might have inferred from these rebuffs that the power hw was acquiring so presumptuously fell far short of the ‘omni-potence’ of which he had dreamed. Fautus, however, brings himself to disregarded not only these checks but also several quite obvious and explicit wanings. Of these, the most obvious is provided by the congealing of his blood and its forming the words ‘Homo fuge’, when he is busy singing the bond with it. Even Lucifer’s grotesque show of the Seven Deadly Sings, with Pride appropriately at their head, can be seen as potentially admonishing whatever Faustus’ actual response to the performance might be. But the most eloquent warning comes from that melancholy, tortured, and surprisingly truthful friend. Mephistophilis himself. Within fifty lines of their first meeting, Faustus asks him what caused the fall of Lucifer. Mephistophilis ascribes it correctly to ‘aspiring pride and insolence’ that is, to factors such as are visible in Faustus himself.

‘And what are you,’ inquires Faustus, ‘that live with Lucifer’?

Meph : Unhappy spirits that fell with Lucifer, Conspri’d against our God with Lucifer, And are forever damn’d with Lucifer.

Fau. : Where are you damn'd?

Meph : In hell.

Fau. : How comes it then that art out of hell?

Meph : Why, this is hell, nor am I out of it, Thinks thou that, I, who saw the Face of God.

And tasted the eternal joys of heaven Am not tormented with ten thousand hells. In being deprived of everlasting bliss? (iii.72-92)

Mephistophilis, no doubt, means only to voice his own anguish. But his words would have conveyed a warning if Faustus had been capable of receiving one. It is the same after the signing of the bond in scene V. Faustus asks where hell is, Mephistophilis first locates it in the centre of the sublunary, elemental part of the universe, then goes on to speak of it, as he did earlier, as the spiritual condition of those who are entirely separated from God;

Meph.: Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed
In one self place, but where we are is hell,
And where hell is, there must we ever be;
And to be short, when all the world dissolves
And every reature shall be pruify'd .
All places shall be hell that is not heaven.

Fau. : I thing hell's a fable.

Meph : any think so still, till experience change thy mind': (v 122-9)

Faustus does not merely neglect these warnings. He sweeps them aside with impatient, flippant arrogance. When his blood congeals to prevent his singing away his soul, he asks himself indignantly : " is not they soul thine own"? It is time that the injunction 'Home fuge' shake his complacency for a moment. But he receives the Seven Deadly Sins with unreflecting jocularity ; and in his glib and insensitive retorts to the anguished Mephistophilis, somber speeches about hell he boastfully asserts his human self-sufficiency. How ridiculous that the has to instill courage in to Mephistophilis and comfort him!

"What is great Mephistophilis so passionate For being deprived of the joys of heaven?

Learn thou of Faustus manly fortitude And scorn those joys thou never shalt possess", (iii 85-8)

What better irony is thery when he denies the existence of hell to Mephistophilis!

Meph : but I am instance to prove the contrary.
For I tell the I am damn'd and now in hell.

Fau. : Nay, and this be hell, I'll willingly be damn'd :
What, sleeping eating, walking and disputing"!

Faustus, then, concludes an infamous bargain in order to enjoy the knowledge, the pleasure, and above all the omnipotent power for which he craves. In scene I, we do feel a certain degree of sympathy, and even of anmiration, for him. This becomes more and more severely qualified as the play proceeds and his swallowing-down of rebuffs and refusals, togheter withs his frivolous dismissal of one warning after another, exposes the inordinate appetite which dominates him. He is willful, headstrong and bind.

His bargain requires him to abjure God. As early as in the original evocation of Mephistophilis, he is fully prepared to do this. At the beginning, he feels few misgivings. Indeed, scene III ends with a further expression of kind of elation which characterized him in scence I. But shortly before sighing the bond he wavers. Again the good and Bad Angels appear and externalize his internal struggle with his conscience: "contrition, prayer, repentance' which could reconcile him with God, are denounced by the Bad Angel as illusions, fruits of Llunacy'. Such doctrine helps Facstus to silence the voice of conscience. Onece more he achieves the heady elation and cries out arrogantly.

'Why, the signory of Emden shall be mine', but not before he has glimpsed a further temptation to despair.

This temptation recurs momentarily when he first sees the sords 'Homo fue'. It confronts him in full strength, however, at the beginning of scence VI. The Bad Angel then assures the man who has abjured God that he is beyond the reach of Divine Mercy. Faustus confesses that his heart hardened, that his conviction of his own damnation prevents him form repenting, and that he has thought of suicide :

"And long ere this I should have done the deed

Had not sweet pleasure conquer'd deep despair"

Here the stress on, sweet pleasure, should be noted as it denotes his sensuous nature. But fifty lines later, after Mephistophilis refuses to say who made the world, Faustus comes near to achieving repentance. For once, he seems to be listening so the Good Angel, and words of prayer begin to pass his lips. At this crisis, feeling that the situation has gone out of

his hands, Mephistophilis invokes the aid of Lucifer and Beelzebub. They intimidate Faustus and as soon as the again abjures God, gratify' him with the shows of the Seven Deadly Sins. Almost childishly, Faustus enjoys the colourful scene not perceiving the suggested damnation.

It is clear from this scene that the deed of gift which Lucifer required Faustus to sign is not really so binding and, that the initial sin has not damned him once and for all. The utterances of the Good and Bad Angels on their two appearances would be pointless if it were not still possible for Faustus to repent and by so doing to cancel the bond ; and the continuous measures taken by Mephistophilis show that damnation is a continuous process 'For although..... (Faustus) had made..... (Satan) a promise, yet he might have remembered through true repentance sinners come again into the favour of God.' In fact, the deed is validated from minute to minute only by Faustus' persistent refusal to relinguish such power that he thinks he has acquired by his presumption.

So Faustus, abjuring God in the hope of becoming something more than a man, "to be equal to God" succeeds in fact in separating himself from God, isolating himself in large measure from his fellows, and consigning himself to the hell so powerfully suggested by Mehpistophilis. Repentance remains possible; he represses yet another spontaneous satisfactions, incomplete though they tend to be, which his sin brings him.

The tragedy is that his achievements are so poor while his aspirations were skyhigh. Incomplete they are indeed in comparison with what he felt able to promise himself. From scene VIII to scene XVII we watch him exploit his dearly-bought power. He goes on the rampage in the Vatican : he intervenes, effectively but inconclusively, in the scene between the Pope and Emperor: he conjures for Charles V and revenges himself on a heckler; when the heckler retaliates, he takes a second revenge: he conjures for the Duke and Duchess of Vanholt; he tricks a horse dealer; and when the horsedealer retaliates, he takes his revenge on him too. For the 'world of profit and delight' which these escapades represent, Faustus voluntarily barters his soul. Was it only for these trivialties that he has sacrified his immortal soul!

It is possible that these passages are mainly that work of Marlowe's collaborator: and the change of authorship no doubt accounts for the temporary transformation of Faustus from an ambitious but sometimes fearful sinner into a jaunty pepebaiter and practical joker. Marlowe clearly wishes us to see that Faustus had made an even worse bargain than what had at first appeared ; and the rebuffs and refusals which Faustus endures as already described, in scene III, V and VI are only to prepare us for this perception. All his pranks are on the physical plane and physical torture is the worse baiting he practices.

We have observed several crises of conscience on Faustus' part. One more of these occurs towards the end of the twenty four years allowed him in the deed of gift. In scene XVIII, an Old Man exorts him to repent before it is too late;

Though thou hast new offended like a man.
Do not perfevere in it like a devil.
Yet, yet, thou hast an amiable soul,
If sin by by custom grow not into nature:
Then thou art banis'd from the sight of heaven;
No mortal can express the paints of hell.

(xviii-41-7)

As Gerg remarks, this Old Man might almost be the personified abstraction Good Counsel from a Morality play. Equally reminiscent of the same older form of drama are Marlowe's use throughout of the two Angels, and of the diabolical characters, and his taking as his theme the struggle between the forces of good and evil for the soul of a representative man.

The good counsel has an immediate effect upon Faustus. But, since he lacks faith in God's mercy, this effect in merely to drive him towards despair. He is so deeply in the both that, he cries in desparate anguish:

"Damn'd art thou, Faustus, damn'd despair and die" (xviii.56)

Mephistophils hands him a dagger, and only the old Man's intervention and his assurance that God's mercy is still available prevent Faustus from stabbing himself. As he struggles to repent and fight against despair, Mephistophilis repents the treatments which proved so successful in scene VI. First he terrorizes Faustus who is clearly afraid of physical torture like all intellectuals. "Revolt, or I'll in piecemeal tear thy flesh".

Then when Faustus has submitted and has offered to renew the bond, he gratifies him with the sweet embraces' of Helen of Troy. Naturally, this his not Helen herself-Just as 'the royal shapes/Of Alexander and his paramour' were presented by sprits, He leons, too, is impersonated by a Devil; and Faustus in embracing her commits the sin of demoniality, of bodily intercourse with demons. The Old Man, learning this, concludes that he can now do nothing for Faustus; and by the next scene; his last. Faustus has finally added to this original presumption and abjuring of God the further mortal sin of despair.

Before he surrenders himself to Helen, Faustus utters his famous apostrophe, beginning :

Was this the face that launch'd a thousands ships

And burnt the topless towers of Illium ?

(xviii-99-100)

Frequent allusions in Marlowe's works show that he had fed his imagination on classical poetry and classical legend; and here, he re-creates in highly evocate romantic terms the world of the Iliad. For this purpose he employs, that, formal, lyrical blank verse which he had developed in *Tamburlaine :*

I will be Paris, and for love three
Instead of Troy shall wittenberg be sack'd
And I will comat with weak Menelaus
And wear thy colours on my plumed crest,
Yea, I will wound Achiles in the hell
And then return to Helen for a kiss
O, thou art fairer than the evening's air
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars,
Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter
When he appear'd to hopeless Semele
More lovely than the monarch of the sky
In wanton Arethusa's azur'd arms,
And non but thou shalt be my
Paramour.

(xviii.106-18)

Throughout this rhapsody we hear once more the note of elation which was so strong in the earlier scenes of the play ; and the long-continued popularity of the speech apart from its context shows that readers have been able without misgiving to take it as expressing a simple eager aspiration. But the speech is actually addressed to a friend, the devil-women who will indeed such forth Faustus' soul ; it is the immediate prelude to the sin which plunges him into irremediable despair ; and its significance is underlined by the presence during most of it of the Old Man, whose comment becomes vocal at close. Arousing these conflicting responses, the incident may reasonably be regarded as epstomizing the basic theme of the whole play, the decay of the moral values of Faustus.

By scene XIX, then, Faustus has entirely lost hope. In a prose passage he takes a moving farewell of the scholars. Mephistophilis assures him that it is now too late to repent ; and when the Angles enter immediately afterwards they merely moralize upon the fact of his damnation. There follows the great soliloquy which express Faustus' state of mind and feeling during his lost hour.

There is general agreement that this is Marlowe's most mature passage of dramatic verse. It contrasts sharply even with the apostrophe to Helen. Shrinking in terror Faustus first addresses himself in a long series of monosyllables terminated emphatically by the polysyllable which focuses his dread :

"Now hast thou but one bare hour to live,

And then thou must be damn'd perpetually".

He appeals for time, almost shrieking for "a year, a month, a week, a natural day" in which to repent, thus implicitly admitting that his deed of gift did not make repentance impossible; and this appeal culminates in this poignant quotation of a line of Latin verse. Ovid, whom he quotes, wished to lengthen out the pleasure of the night; Faustus wishes simply to postpone the anguish of the morrow. The uselessness of the appeal is conveyed in a two-line sentence which, starting with an almost stately slowness, accelerates sharply to alludes again to his imminent damnation :

"The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike,

The devil will come, and Faustus must be damn'd".

Even as late as this, he has an intimation of the divine mercy, through it is now unattainable by him :

See where Christ's blood streams in the firmament"! And he seems to strain upwards in the broken line which immediately follows. Again he quails when tormented by the fiend; and by calling desperately upon Lucifer to spare him he surrenders himself afresh.

Enough has been said perhaps to display something of the dramatic urgency and widely varied expressiveness of this great monologue, in which Faustus shows himself agonizingly aware of 'the heavy wrath of God' against which his good Angel has already warned him. Towards its close, he fort wears his humanism. Having prided himself on his reliance, and having even striven to be more than a Man, he now longs to be less than a man: he wishes he could be 'a creature wanting soul', some brutish beast', which at death world face mere extinction and not eternal damnation. He curses his parents for engendering him.

No doubt the ‘books’ which he offers to burn are primarily his books of magic. But the world reminds us of his exclamation to the Scholars earlier in the scene: ‘O, would I had never seen Written berg, never read book!’ ; and we retain the impression that Faustus is ascribing his downfall in part to his learning. Hearing them to all that has preceded them, we can surely have no hesitation in thinking of Faustus as embodying the new inquiring and aspiring spirit of the age of the Renaissance, and of Marlowe as expressing ultimately, his awed and pitiful recognition of the peril into which it could lead those whom it dominated. But we must beware of assuming too simple a relationship between any artist and his work; and, even if the relationship was in this instance a simple one Doctor Faustus apparently belongs to the last year of Marlowe’s life and therefore to the latest stage of whatever development he was undergoing.

The farcial prose scenes call for little attention. Naturally, topics, which are important in the more serious scenes trend to be echoed in them. Wagner, for example, asserts that Robin ‘would given his soul to the devil for a shoulder of mutton’(v.9-10); and in scene X Robin conjures up an irate Mephistophilis. No doubt there is a touch of crude burlesque in such places. But the current critical fashion ordains that we should discern in them a profound, stubble, and sustained irony. Some others ask if it is not doing violence to common sense in the name of literary criticism. Most of the resemblances which have been traced between these funny scenes and more serious action of the play are quite remarkably slight. One instance is this. In scene IX’ Faustus snatches away the Pope’s food and drink ; in scene, X, the two clowns enter with a cup they have stolen from an inn. What kind of resemblance is this? They are not even very funny, but some critics feel that it is all intended to stress the mundane nature of the trivialities Faustus pursues.

Thus we find Marlowe dramatisting a ‘narrative which is already full of tragic potentialities though tacking in tragic dignity, giving an unmistakable individuality to the character of Faustus, rescuing him from the typical magic-pondered and devil’s servant type of the legend. The tragedy of Faustus is not in .his desire for unlimited power but in the means he adopts for it. His pride, arrogance and lack of understanding of the process of evil which corrupts him are supremely well presented. He surrenders entirely to evil’s machinations the very moment he thinks he has attained suzerainty over the agent of Lucifer, Mephistophilis. The insidious eating away of his goodness by evil is the cause for his decadent use of the power he has gained bartering away his own soul. His tragic fall is that he misuses all his power in puerile and vulgar things, though his intention was to be ‘great as God’. Our sympathy of Faustus is stirred as he again passes through conflict, though again and again he succumbs to evil. But we do not oversympathise with him, for the great scholar Faustus of the early part of the play has used power only to pander to his sensuous vulgarity what should have been Appollo’s laurel turns out to be a more wayside flower bush! But the

tragic intensity of his fall is indicated in the vast difference between his aspirations and his achievements. Knowing full well that he is slipping to Hell, he vainly tries to repent and his failure is a consequence of his own arrogance and fluctruating infirm mind. It is only at the end that we see the tragic intensity of the last scene is presented as the finest artistic achievement of Marlowe's dramatic genius. But it is right to point out that the plot and character of Dr.Eaustus prepare us for it and it is a grand culmination for the tragic decadence of a great scholar and a great soul.

APPENDIX

THE FAUST LEGEND

(This has been taken from the introduction to the editions of play by Gerg, Ward, Osborne and Modlen)

1. *Johann, Faustus M.A.:*

From the disreputable reality of Faustus the "Scholar-Mountebank" of the Renaissance was woven by legend and romance the Fust who captured the imagination of Marlowe and Goethe. This Faustus, in the solitary sublimity of the supreme rebel, is the literary equal of the Prometheus of Aeschylus and Lucifer, the true hero of Paradise Lost. All three are emblems of the recurring conflict great advernurous minds with the restrictions imposed by conventional religion and morality. In each pride is carried through arrogance to conceit. In the nobility of his aspiration Faust perhaps stands first. For knowledge, and for the glamour of that power which knowledge brings, open eyed, he stretches forty his hand to pluck off the fruit of the Forbidden Tree. The inevitable catastrophe but enhances the grandeur of his choice.

But behind the literary Faust is the historical Faustus, who lived when the Renaissance was at its height. His was the more common tragedy of the misuse and decay of great intellectual gifts. Our knowledge of the historical Pause is derived from some dozen references in little-read authors, and most of these were written upon hearsay evidence by men biased in his disfavour. Yet together they give us a surprisingly vivid picture of the man. The most important of these follow in chronological order:

1. On August 20th, 1507, Johann Trittheim, a Benedictine abbot in Wurzburg, tutor of Cornelius Agrippa and learned writer on occultism and demonology, wrote to the Mathematician and Astromer Royal of the Emperor Palatine in answer to an enquiry about Faust. The letter is abusive and defamatory. He had formerly met one George Sabellicus, Faustus junior, at Gelnhausen. This man he portrays as a heretic, a mountebank, and a cheap magician. He says that he had heard that he boasted that he could

replace all the works of Plato and Aristotle from memory and could perform all the miracles of Christ. He adds the useful information that Faust had once been employed in an educational post by Franz von Sickingen.

2. In 1509 there is record at Heidelberg University of a student Johann Faust from Simmern, who in that year graduated in philosophy (the equivalent of an Arts Degree) first of sixteen students.

3. Contract Mudt (October 7th, 1513), a Canon Of Gotha, writes of Georgius Faustus, "the demigod of Heidelburg" as an empty boaster, a palmist and a quack magician, who impressed only the ignorant.

4. 1539 Philip Begardus, a practicing doctor of Worms attacks Faustus as a quack physician and magician.

5. 1542. Johann Cast, a Protestant pastor at Basle, describes the death of Faust. He was strangled by the devil and his head twisted backwards, and "the corpse persisted in lying on the bier with the face looking downwards, although five times it was turned on its back". The story of his death, which is said to have occurred in 1541 at an inn in a small village in Wurttemberg is also told by Johann Mennel (1652) and the rationalist Wier (568). Mennal an acquaintance and fellow countryman, states that Faust was born at Knittlingen, in the Palatinate.

There are other references, of less importance but confirming the general impression given by the above; among them is one by Luther, who doubts Faust's pretentions although crediting him with powers of prediction.

It will have been notices that even the name varies from writer to writer The Geogius Faustus of Heide berg of Conradt Mudt serves as connecting link between the George Sabellicus, Faustus junior of the Trittheim and the Johann Faust of the Heidelberg University records. Commentators now identify these. His true name was George Sabel. "Faustus" was a nickname which eventually supplanted his real name. Like Fortunatus and Prospero (in Shakespeare's Tempest) it simple means "the lucky one" H.G. Meek argues that Faustus junior suggests a "Faustus senior" i.e., that Sabel took the name from some previous "Faustus" whom he took as his model. This personage he finds in the father of St. Clement, whom Simon Magus changed into his own double. The change of Christian name is not so easily accounted for. But "Johann" was a popular name month conjurors and popular magicians. Thus Johann Faustus would be an admirable trade name for a purveyor of popular magic. These suppositions must remain conjectural, but the identification of Johann Faustus with George Sabel is almost certain.

Let us now try to reconstruct the man. George Sable, or as he was later known, Johann Faustus, was born at Knittlingen in the Palatinate, about 1488. he was endowed with a fine intelligence and immoderate self-confidence. He took the best degree of his year in the University of Heidelberg. But even before this his reputation and attainments were sufficient to earn for him the friendship of the Lutheran reformer and General Franz von sickingen, .one of the greatest patrons of literature and learning of the day, and the interest of Johann Wirding, Astronomer Royal to the Elector Palatine.

He lived at the height of the Renaissance, when the recently re-discovered classics still held something of novelty, and science and learning were full of glamour. His intellectual curiosity, his diversity of interests, and his self-confidence are typical of his age. We find him studying the classics, interested in the new religious ideas which were the precursors of the Reformation, and after credited with being expert in all branches of occultism from astrology and alchemy to the divagations of popular mystagogy. It must be remembered that at this time astrology and alchemy were regarded as serious sciences and magic and demonology were universally accredited. Most of the outstanding scholars of the age, divine and secular alike, incurred the reputation of sorcery.

Although his journeys were later exaggerated, he undoubtedly traveled much and far. His travels fall into two periods. Before his degree he lived the life of a wandering scholar. In the latter part of the fifteenth century the roads in Germany were infested with scholars traveling from one University to another in order to pursue their studies. Their condition was wretched; they were usually poverty stricken, and gagged or stole their bread or earned a supper by singing or playing. Owing to the scarcity of books the courses of lectures at different Universities were important. These destitute students became the companions of Faust in his later years and pondered to his exaggerated self-conceit. It is pertainent to remember that they were popularly believed to study Black Magic.

After his course at Heidelberg degeneration set in. self\confidence turns to boasting and boasting to charlatanism. As the anecdote about his knowledge of Palato and Aristotle illustrates his erudition, the story that he claimed by diabolical agency to be able to restore the lost plays of Plautus and Terence illustrates his charlatanism.

He now becomes a travelling fortuneteller and quack mystagogue, basking in the admiration of the ignorant and associating with needy students and gypsies. He claims to have supernatural powers and calls the devil his brother-in-law. One can see the typical psychology of the charlatan-inflated self-worship, the absolute need of admiration, which he obtains by high-sounding titles and a swaggering air, and the gradual drift towards even lower ranks of society. With the increase of his malady his morals deteriorate. From the peddling of quack scholarship he sins to the peddling of quack medicines, which earns him

the hostility of the medical profession he is publicly expelled from Ingolsandt and is forced to make a hurried retreat from punishment in other cities. He was appearently not persecuted for necromancy.

Thus Faust displays the best and the worst of the Renaissance having both its insatiable curiosity for learning and its erratic tendency to superstition and to overweening conceit. His is the pathetic figure of a great mind going to ruin. The keen intelligence is outweighed by the love of ostentation and craving for flattery which drew him even lower. Thus in Faust we may see the Casanove of the Renaissance.

2. The Faust Legend :

This figure, pathetic in its disappointed promise of greatness, early became the hero of legend. Yet in his exaggerated claims to learning and scholarship and his pretentious to supernatural powers, Faustus was probably a more typical representative of the popular 'spirit of the age' which creates- legend though not literature, than the greater figures who have come down to historical fame. His own wandering existence must have made him widely known, and his associates were those traveling scholars and reving gypsies and peddlers who, in that age, were the chief disseminators of news among the populace. And once a legend has started it accumulates like a snow-ball thus all the floating tales and magicians and marvels attached themselves to Faustus.

The time was ripe for another cycle of legend. The Chansons de Gestes and the Adventure cycles of medieval chivalry, which had gathered round such figures as Aeneas. Virgil, Kind Arthur, Siegfried, charlemangne, etc., had lost their popular appeal. The story-tellers sought some new subject more in harmonty with the needs of the age. The hero must be a wanderer in order to introduce the element of adventure, he must be in contact with the supernatural, for the popular mind was filled with the superstitions of magic and miracle; he must be connected with the Universities in order to give him authoritativeness in an age of awakening and learning ; and finally the hero of a folktale must be spectacular.

Such was Faust, the wandering miracle monger and braggart scholar. Further, from the provenance of the Faust buchea and the fact that most of the stories are derived from tales told of the medieval saints, Meek infers that the faust legend was developed by the Lutherans with the purpose of discrediting the Roman Catholic Church.

In legend the true character of Faustus is obscured and he becomes the typical Renaissance scholar. Having early compass the whole scope of human knowledge and in despair of satisfying his further aspirations by natural means, he enters into a compact with the Devil, whereby mephistophilis shall for twenty-four years serve his intellectual and

material ambitions, in return for which he pledge his soul to the Devil at the end of this period.

The Faust legends are contained in a number of books and ballads knows collectively as the *Faustbucher,* and forming one department of the Valkbucher, or popular chapbooks, which appeared towards the end of the sixteenth century in Germany. The first of the Faust Books was the Historial von D.John Faustens, which appeared in 1587. within a year this had been translated into Low German and Danish, and a versified from and a drama were printed at Tubingen. In 1589 it was translated into French and in 1592 in English translation by P.P. was published. It was the latter which Morlowe took as his model. The first reference in English to Faustus occurs in 1572 in a translation of Lavater's Ghostes and Sprits. Neither the author of the German Historia nor the identity of P.F is known. From 1630 to 1830, "The Life and Death of Doctor Faustus" became the subject of innumerable popular ballads, marionetters, and "penny-deradfuls".

CHAPTER – III

THE AGE OF SHAKESPEARE

Knowledge of the political, social and intellectual background of an age is essential to understand a literary work better. When Shakespeare wrote, England was ruled by Queen Elizabeth and it was known as the Golden Age of English History. The country was prosperous. The greatness of Elizabethan literature was the consequences of many co-operating causes. Influences were everywhere at work, says Hudson, which tended to expand thought, stir the feeling, dilate imagination, and by nourishing as well as stimulating genius, to give breath and energy to the literature proceeded." The full impact of Renaissance was felt in England both in the fields of art and literature. The superstitions and the worldliness of the medieval ages were rejected by the Elizabethans. People took interest in this world and adopted modern out look. Values like self respect and individualism were upheld. So we come across intensely individual and dynamic characters in Shakespeare's ..plays. England had peace and security after many troubled years. To put it briefly, Shakespeare belonged to an age in which men lived intensely, thought intensely, and wrote intensely. The age itself was 'dramatic' and the plays which mirrored it are replete with interesting plots and dramatic situations.

Shakespeare's Macbeth

The probable date of composition of *Macbeth* is (generally agreed upon by Shakespeare scholars) the end of 1605 or the beginning of 1606. The main source from which Shakespeare borrowed this material is Holinshed's Chronicles. Read Holinshed's version of the career of Macbeth and the story of the Murder of Duff Donwald, you can make' a detailed study of the deviation, Shakespeare deliberately idealizes Duncan and blackens Macbeth's character. Even if he treats Macbeth's career as a 'tragic' story, he does not wish to lessen Macbeth's guilt. Bear this point in mind while ^studying Macbeth is not given prominent place in Holinshed's chronicle. The original of Lady Macbeth in Holinshed's is Lady Donwald and not Lady Macbeth.

Analysis

Act I Scene I:

The tragedy opens amid thunder and lightning. Three witches appear in thunder and lightning in a desert place. As the supernatural plays a very big part in Macbeth it is not surprising that the play begins with the tree witches, Shakespeare was writing for an audience that generally believed in witch craft and respected its formidable power. As the witches are

able to raise storms they select apt weather for their meeting. They await in grim anticipation the arrival of Macbeth. As Spalding, suggests they have been holding a “witches Sabbath”, the dead end of which indicates the opening of the play. A cat mews and a toad crocks somewhere in the background. The first two witches respond to their calls. The witches utter their ghastly creed “Fair is foul and foul is fair” which means what is fair for normal human beings is foul to them and what is evil to others is fair to them. This oft quoted lines describe their nature. The last couplet sums up the witches doctrine of disorder. Dowden remarks “they appear in a desert place, with thunder and lightning, it is the barren heath where evil has obtained the mastery of things, fair is foul and foul is fair”.....This confusion of moral values is rejected in the tumult in the heavens and the ‘hurly-burly’ on earth. This tempestuous atmosphere indicates the presence of evil forces, insurrection and war. They agree that they will meet again after the battle is over, when they will see Macbeth.

This magnificent first scene is very important. It is a brief scene. In fact Macbeth has the shortest opening scene with just eleven lines. It foretells the mood and sets the atmosphere of the play. It not only mentions Macbeth and prepares us for his arrival on the stage but also introduces the forces that control the play’s action. Says Coleridge “In Macbeth the poet’s object was to raise the mind at once to the high tragic tone.....The true reason for the first appearance of the witches is to strike the keynote of the whole drama”. The play shows human struggle against the forces of evil. The witches tempt Macbeth to a cource of evil. This initial scene also makes a suggestion that Macbeth is a play in which moral values get perverted.

Scene ii

The bleeding sergeant in epic language breaks the news of the victory won by Macbeth and Banquo, the cousins of the king. It is reported that the battle went evenly for a long time until finally Macbeth conquered the rebel Macdon Wald. The Norwegian kind taking his opportunity began a new attack. But Macbeth was not worried. He fought with great valour. After breaking this happy news the soldier collapses from his wounds but more news comes when Ross, a nobleman enters. He brings information about further victories. We are informed that the Norwegian king has been compelled to make humiliating terns and that Cawdor has been captured. The Thane of Cawdor is one of the traitors who had strengthened the hands of the invaders. But he is now defeated and taken prisoner by Macbeth. Duncan decrees that the ungrateful Thane should be executed. He confers the title of Thane of Cawder on Macbeth. The king declares “what he hath lost, noble Macbeth hath won”.

This scene makes ready for Macbeth’s Victorious arrival with an aura of martial

glory around him. In this scene, Shakespeare intentionally heightens the valour and patriotism of Macbeth. A noble picture of the hero before his fall is given. The sergeant presents Macbeth as, "valour's 'minion' and 'Bellona's Bridegroom". Macbeth has done fantastic deeds of courage and has clothed himself in glory. The grateful Duncan is full of praise for his 'noble' cousin. He contrasts 'noble' Macbeth with the proven traitor, Cawdor. This contrast and Duncan's references to Macbeth are excellent instances of dramatic irony. A critic observes "the glowing terms in which Duncan appreciates Macbeth's valour and loyalty set off by contrast the heinous treachery and ingratitude of Macbeth, sparred by the ambition which Duncan's own gracious reward for his services first kindled in him. Thus gratitude breeds ingratitude. Loyalty and trust, betrayal and treachery. "Fair is foul and foul is fair" indeed in the crooked destine of Macbeth's tragic ambition!

The scene closes, observes A. W. Varity, on the note of Macbeth's glorification. It has given him already the first place in our thoughts, and we await his appearance with curiosity".

In this scene, Macbeth who is mentioned is referred to as a physically strong and brave soldier, an inspiring captain and a brilliant general. Take note of the numerous terms of praise which are showered on Macbeth in the first Act of the tragedy; e.g. 'Bellona's bridegroom' (ii 65) 'noble Macbeth' (ii 60) 'my noble partner' (iii 54) 'most worthy Thane' (iii 106) and 'worthy Macbeth' (iii 148) Macbeth is used to assuming authority since he has already made terms with Swene King of Norway. Thus the ability and prowesses of Macbeth are revealed. In showing the unsettled, disturbed and rebellious conditions in Scotland, the scene depicts Duncan as a mild and benevolent man but a weak and unfit king. In this scene, the audience is introduced to characters of secondary major importance like Duncan, Malcolm and Donalbain, Lennox and Ross who is to b the carrier of messages throughout the play.

Macbeth and Banquos are on their way back from the campaign against the rebels and the king of Norway. It is Banquo who sees witches first. He accosts them. But they turn to Macbeth and pronounce him as the Thane of Glamis, the Thane of Cowdor and the future King of Scotland. The first witch talks always of the past the second witch of the present and the third witch of the future thus, when they welcome Macbeth the first witch hails him as Thane of Glamis (which title he has always held). The second witch hails him as Thane of Cawdor (which title has just earned, although he is yet unaware of it) While the third witch hails him as "he who will be king hereafter. The astounded Macbeth is dump founded and spell bound. But the cool and clam Banquo commands them half jeeringly to speak to him. The witches hail him as "lesser than Macbeth and greater" "not so happy yet happier". They assure him" Then shall get kings, though thou be none" Macbeth desires to question them

further but suddenly they vanish into thin air.

The way the two men react to the witches' prophecy indicates the essential difference in their mental make up. What worries Banquo is the credibility of the witches-are they real or unreal. But Macbeth's concern is only with their prophecy.

In this scene observe the description of the witches, their works and actions. They seem to resemble the "sorceresses of Gothic and popular superstition' Coleridge observes "the witches lead evil minds from evil to evil and have the power of tempting, those who have been the tempters of themselves".

Macbeth, in his first soliloquy, reveals the struggle going on in his mind. He also reveals that the idea of murder had already occurred to hi. Macbeth thirtks that the supernatural is inviting him to become the king. But the very thought of murdering Duncan (it is, as yet, only a suggestion in his mind) makes his hair stand. It makes his heart which is fixed in his body beat against his ribs. He has not committed murder, he has only imagined it. The thought of murder disturbs him so deeply that imagination makes him incapable of action. Only what he imagines appears to exist and nothing else. Ultimately he reveals the fundamental weakness in his character, where in "function is smothered in surmise". He concludes the soliloquy with a decision to let fate rule his destiny. Ote that the witches merely foretell that Macbeth will be king hereafter, they do not till him how he will become king. The wicked thought of securing the crown by murder is in Macbeth's mind ever before he meets the witches. This is confirmed by what lady Macbeth says in a later scene.

Scene IV.

There's no art

To find the mind's construction in the

face He was a gentleman or whom I built

An absolute trust

It is a great irony that Duncan's comment about the impossibility of judging a man's character from his appearance is followed by the immediate arrival of Macbeth, the very man whom Duncan should most suspect. The emotionally soft and the unsuitable king are lavish in his praise and expression of gratitude to Macbeth. He declares Malcolm, his son prince of Cumberland and thus heir apparent to the theme. There is no obvious reason why Duncan chooses this occasion to proclaim Malcolm-still a mere boy to be his successor. Duncan exhibiting greater foliy and weaker judgment wishes to visit Inverness, the castle of Macbeth.

He wants to be his guest as a further evidence of his confidence. Later we see that Duncan runs his own head into the noose. Macbeth seeks permission to go home in advance in order to prepare for the royal reception. Now we have the first soliloquy of Macbeth. He gives vent to his annoyance and disappointment at the proclamation of Malcolm as the heir apparent. This is a great hindrance to his career of usurpation. It is obvious to Macbeth that only by his own action he will get the kingship. He ponders over the ways and means of its removal. His thoughts of murder are so shaking that he wants the very stars to disappear.

The scene prepares us to view the future course of action to be taken up by Macbeth. It also reveals further Duncan's unsuitability for the kingship. He is a poor judge of character. He is over emotional and too weak to be a king. Duncan's comment upon the impossibility of judging a man's character from his appearance is a fine instance of dramatic irony.

Act I Scene V.

Lady Macbeth is reading a letter sent to Macbeth. In it he apprises her of the witches' prophecies. The first words of Lady Macbeth present her as a woman of invincible will. She appears to have the capacity to carry through against all odds whatever she undertakes. We see that her ambition is for Macbeth and not for herself. She has a god understanding of Macbeth. He is afraid to undertake action because of his fear that his crime will be discovered. She knows that he has the required qualities to become the king. She is afraid that his scruples may hinder him from turning thought into action. He is 'too full of the milk of human kindness to catch the nearest way. But she will lend strength to his will with the 'valour of his tongue. Finally she assumes the charge of "This night's great business", Macbeth does not seem to share her enthusiasm but he does not resist her.

The plot of the play leading to Duncan's murder advances quickly. Harrison's comment on this scene is interesting. This scene shows Shakespeare at his best, creating two characters at once though the tips of one, as Lady Macbeth reveal herself in commenting on her husband. "The scene introduces Lady Macbeth and reveals her strength of character. The scene shows the bonds of affection existing between Macbeth and his wife. Thus the two are made "plausibly human and their crime becomes all the more dreadful because of that, these people are not monsters, they are human beings."

Act I scene VI:

It is a superb example of Shakespeare's splendid use of dramatic irony in the play. The noble victim walks into the trap set for him by the regicides. There is an excellent show of devotion and hospitality by Lady Macbeth who poses as a polished and gracious hostess.

The honeyed words of Lady Macbeth deceive Duncan. It is ironic that Duncan and Banquo describe poetically the clam beauty of the setting of this ghastly murder. The castle is lit up with the gentle rays of the setting sun. Nests of housemasters are hanging from the corners and projections of the roof. The fatigued king experiences joy as a result of its soothing effect.

See see our honoured hostess!

The love that follows us sometime is our trouble.

Which still we thank as love.

Duncan seems to mean that though people attend on him because of their affection, sometimes their action troubles him but still he thanks them for their love. We realize that Duncan is about to be murdered here. The elaborate courtesy with which Lady Macbeth welcomes Duncan deserves our notice.

Macbeth is not there to receive the king. He cannot like his wife, 'look like the innocent flower, but be the serpent under it.'

In the serenity of this scene we have a release from the nervous tension of the preceding scene. There is a little halt before the tension of the scenes which ensue. The dramatic irony and the irony of the situation of the scene contribute to the dramatic interest of the play.

Act I Scene VII:

This scene is one of the most dramatic scenes in the play. Macbeth's soliloquy shows once more that he is indecisive. He has left the banquet. The order and ceremonious duty of the banquet is a contrast to the destructive treachery of Macbeth's plan. The presence of Duncan creates a feeling of unease in him. He is pacing the dark court-yard of the castle shortly after this scene opens, Macbeth is left alone and we here the famous soliloquy starting. "If it were done when its done..." The soliloquy reveals the conflict that has sa violently shaken his single state of mind that he aloes decides to give up the project. The considerations that deter him from the dead are a curious mixture of 'prudence and conscientious scruples". He thinks of the prospect of retribution. Macbeth's irresolution is only another aspect of his wonderfully imaginative faculty. In vivid eloquence, moving language he ponders on the history of the crime he wants to commit. If the murder will not lead to any thing else, if it ends here, it would be better to accomplish it without delay. It would be a good thing to do it quickly if the assassination could catch up the results and reach a final result. If only the below which kills, Duncan were the end of the business, here on the earth, Macbeth could risk

the world after death (.e.g, not trouble himself about what might happen after death). But when we commit such crimes, we are judged and punished here on the earth he only teaches others how to murder, and we get murdered. Justice which is always fair punishes us. If we make another man drink poison later justice forces us to drink it. Beside Duncan is his king and guest. Thus it is his duty, by the laws of hospitality to shut the door against the murders, not bears the knife himself. In addition to this Duncan is a just and a merciful King. He is kind to nobles and particularly to Macbeth himself. Duncan is his king and guest. Thus it is him duty, by the laws of hospitality to shut the door against the murders, not bear the knife himself. In addition to this Duncan is a just and a merciful king. He is kind to nobles and particularly to Macbeth himself. Duncan's virtues "will plead like angels trumpet-tongued, against the crime of murder. Because he enjoys the king's favour he stands high in the opinion of all men and his honour will be stained if he commits so foul a murder. Macbeth feels that there is no spur to instigate him but his 'vaulting ambition'. As these thoughts dissuade him from continuing with the crime he tells his wife he "will proceed no further in this business"- She is annoyed, amazed and indignant to learn that Macbeth is unwilling to murder Duncan. The reason he gives is that he wants to enjoy for a while the new honours bestowed on him by Duncan.

Lady Macbeth exhibits singleness of purpose and strength of will. She cleverly handles Macbeth. She has the strength of character and an excellent understanding of his weakness. She has come resolved to screw his courage to the sticking point! She taunts him, doubts his love for her and finally accuses him of cowardice. Lady Macbeth reveals the fact that the murder of Duncan must have been given thought even before the witches prophecy, for she reminds Macbeth of the fact that his deed was contemplated before at a time when neither time nor place was suitable. For her part, if she had sworn to do so, she would have done it. She says,

I have given suck, and know

How tender it is to love the babe that Milks me

I would, while it was smiling in my face,

Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums,

And dashed the brains out, had I so

Sworn as you done to this

Gradually she wins him back to her when she points out how easily the murder can be done. See will drug the king's grooms with wine. She will make others appear guilty. She

is ruthless and wants him to achieve his ambition. Their deed that might give them for their whole life sovereign power and royalty. He surrenders to her indomitable will. Macbeth is free from his 'imagined qualms'. He summons up courage to commit the murder and says-

I am settled, and bend up

Each corporal agent to this terrible feat

Husband and wife return to the banquet

The smile of hospitality on their visage hides the crime they nurture in their hearts.

The scene reveals Macbeth's indecision and Lady Macbeth's strength of character and her understanding of her husband's weakness. The scene also wins even more the sympathy of the audience for Duncan who has "borne his faculties so Meeks hath been so clear in his great office". Thus it heightens the cruelty of the crime of his murder. Later the indecision of Macbeth is laid to rest and prepares the audience or the readers for the murder in the next act.

Act II:

In Act II the murder is committed. Both the 'disenchantment and disintegration' of Macbeth's personality begin.

Scene I:

The atmosphere is ominous as we approach the time of murder, "the darkness, the measuring of time, the sense of oppression the familiar domestic imagery, the presence of evil thoughts and the edginess al add to the suspense". Time is past midnight and it is dark. "The moon is down..... There's husbandry in heaven their candles are all out". Banquo's son, Fleance, introduced for the first time holds Banquo's sword and helmet (Through Fleance we know through whom Banquo's line is going to descend). Banquo is in a troubled state of mind. He is restless, agitated and oppressed. The prophecy of the witches is tempting him and he makes a sincere effort to struggle against ambition. He tries to restrain his (cursed thoughts). He prays for the power to overcome this. Thus Banquo, like Macbeth who does later, suffers from bad dreams but unlike Macbeth he looks for spiritual aid. He is so agitated that even though he is in a friend's castle he demands his sword. Is there any proof in this scene that he suspects Macbeth's intentions?

When Macbeth comes Banquo tells him that Duncan is highly pleased "in measureless content and has sent gifts to his servant's quarters and a diamond to his wife. Duncan's message and gift to the Macbeths before going to bed is another stroke of tragic

irony because the Macbeth's will reciprocate his gratitude by ensuring that it should be Duncan's final message and gift.

Banquo is troubled by the witches prophecies. He refers them to Macbeth. But Macbeth feigns indifference but suggests that if Banquo would fall in with his wishes he may win great honour. Banquo who is loyal to the king replies that he would certainly like that provide he could keep his hounour untainted and his conscience clear.

Macbeth is left alone. He becomes a victim t the delusions of his fevered excited mind. His half-oppressed brain conjures a vision. The vision of a dagger appears to him pointing towards Duncan's room. Its handle id founded towards him. His heated imagination and feverish blood that eyes conjure up the hallucination of an 'air drawn dagger' when he tries to grasp it, it eludes him, it is nothing but air, a mere illusion that has emerged from his own imagination. He says,

Or thou art but

A dagger of the mind, a fake creation,

Proceeding from heat-oppressed brain!

It begins to move towards Duncan's chamber. Either his eyes-are deceiving him, says Macbeth, or else they are more useful than all the other scenes if the dagger is real. The dagger seems to be covered with blood.

I see thee still;

And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood, which has not so before.

Finally Macbeth tells himself that the dagger is unreal and it is the task (bloody business) before him which gives shape and creates such an illusion. A critic observes Macbeth is tormented by the vision of the dagger, and by his inability to decide whether his own heated imagination is responsible for the vision, or whether the dagger is a demonic representation. If the latter is true, the powers of darkness have subverted his reason and are controlling his fantasy. On the one hand we have the working of conscience and its suppression of the will and reason to the devil Shakespeare need not answer the question which is the greater evil, he simply raises it.

In Macbeth's soliloquy we have a word picture of horror, evil and of things associated with murder- The very stores may cry out in horror.

In this scene we see Macbeth reacting to Banquo's remarks about the witches with

indifference. But left alone, this mask of self-possession slips and he cowers in terror before the air-draun dagger which his fevered imagination presents before him. Macbeth does not think abstractly. His thoughts appear before us as concrete images. His troubled conscience communicates its warnings and punishments in the form of hallucination. The dagger is the first of them. But his determination is not upset by these soul shaking terrors. He hears the sound of bell. It is a signal from his wife. He goes towards Duncan's room like a man in trance. He is under the spell of a power which he cannot resist. Thus the scene throws light on the changing character of Macbeth.

As the Elizabethan age was quite different from the modern stage, it was not possible to represent the grim action of this scene on the stage. Thus Shakespeare makes use of his work-magic to draw the picture of the dead night and gloomy atmosphere. The playwright describes the night and builds an atmosphere fit for the grim action.

Scene II

The scene follows directly on from the preceding one. The murder is not shown on stage. But the dramatist draws out in great depth and detail the workings of the minds of the two main characters during the terrible moments. The horror of the deed is conveyed through its effect on the murderers. As a dramatic situation it ranks as perhaps the finest scene in the whole range of dramatic literature. Lady Macbeth is anxiously waiting for her husband who has gone to commit the murder. She has completed her task. She has made the grooms heavily drunk, she has drugged their drinks. Her own moral courage and strength are fortified by drink. The ominous hoot of the owl, followed by Macbeth's frightened exclamation makes her fear that Macbeth has failed and the attempt, not the deed confounds (ruins) them. She feel sorry for having entrusted the mission to Macbeth. If Duncun had not resembled her father as he slept, she herself would have committed the murder. She exhibits her womanly quality. There is a trace of humanity even in this woman. When Macbeth enters she calls him 'my husband'. This is the only occasion on which she speaks of Macbeth in this way.

Macbeth is distraught and horror-stricken. He gives a vivid description of the foul deed. He is nearly hysterical. His character is beginning to break down. Later he becomes remorseful.

We must notice here that the voice Macbeth hears refers to him by three different names as if he will have to suffer as three different persons. 'Sleep no more'. This theme too is repeated at different times during the play.

Macbeth in his excitement has brought with him the blood stained daggers. He should have left them by the sleeping grooms. He refuses to go back to the room to do the

needful. His wife sneers at his childish scruples and reproaches him for his lack of firmness. She beseeches him not to act in so weak hearted a way. Observe the contrast in the dialogue between the two. Macbeth is in frenzy and his imagination works feverishly. Lady Macbeth has to use super human strength to get him off his frenzy.

Lady Macbeth declares that dead and the sleeping are harmless like painted pictures. Only children are afraid of them.

Left alone Macbeth feels terrible hands plucking out his eyes.

He feels that if he dipped his hands in the ocean, with its infinite and perpetually moving waves, the hand will not be washed clean, but the sea will turn red. If Macbeth's images are grand and vivid, Lady Macbeth's are homely.

Lady Macbeth returns and her hands too are covered with blood triumphantly she assures Macbeth that a little water will wash the filthy witchness from their hands and clear them of the deed/ the same woman says later, "All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand." Her hands are bloody as his and her heart is not so white.

My hands are of your colour, but I shame

To wear a heart so white.

The scene builds up the tension, the suspense and a sense of horror. Shakespeare uses the technique of the Greek tragedy; the murder is committed of stage. The imagination of the audience is given a boost. As pointed out earlier, here is perhaps the most impressive murder-scene in the whole range of English literature. The murder is vividly and dramatically reported-the bloody daggers, the blood-stained hands, Macbeth's frenzy and his account of the smallest details, Lady Macbeth's preternatural calmness-all these things make an unforgettable impression. As Boas points out "the scene is written with a pen of fire, and we seem eye-witnesses of the deed of death, though it is transacted off the stage.

Act II Scene Hi:

This scene is connected more closely with the preceding one by the continued knocking, becomes louder. Knockers lose their patience more & more.

Murder of the king will lead to chaos, and so it is the masterpiece of confusion. The murder is sacrilegious insulting to what is sacred because the king is sacred. The building referred to is the king's body. He continues, if you approach the king's chamber you will see a spectacle that will destroy your sight (Medusa, one of the gorgon, who was a beautiful girl, was turned into a fearful monster by goddess Athena. Anyone who looked at her face was

turned into stone). Everyone in the castle is awake-hearing Macduff s speeches stems from a genuine emotion, the more elaborate imagery of Macbeth's speeches sound forced and unnatural. Banquo muses on the enormity of the crime that is committed. Macbeth with Lennos goes to the chamber of Duncan to verify Macduff's report.

The brief interval between the murder and its discovery has brought remarkable changes in the murderer. The hysterical Macbeth is now self possessed. He perfectly plays the roll of the loyal subject shocked by the sacrilegious murder of the king. It is right that his words have a double meaning. "To his auditors they sound like sentiments of and wrath against the murderer, but they are also the out cry of a heart oppressed by guilt and remorse." He plays his role well although he does not succeed in convincing everybody. If only he had died an hour before this happening life would have been a perfectly happy one. After Duncan's murder nothing in human life is of any importance. Everything is trivial like toys. The noble king is dead: now it is as if the wine has been drawn from the cask and the lees left behind. ('Vault' refers to the sky also, and the line also means that there is nothing of any value in the world). He sees the still sleeping grooms with strains of blood on their clothes and links. He kills them.

Anyone who had a heart and courage in that heart could have reacted in the manner he did. The ironic sincerity of Macbeth's language is 'appalling and profound.'

In this scene important characters introduced in Lennox and Macduff. It signals the starting of the brutalization of Macbeth and the breakdown of Lady Macbeth-Comic interlude provides a contrast to the act of murder. So road is left clear for Macbeth's coronation.

The opening part of scene iii, popularly referred to as the Porter's scene is a splendid example of Shakespeare's use of comedy between two scenes of great tragic intensity to provide relief and contrast. The porter's speech is comic in substance, but there is an under current of grim irony. The grim irony of the porter's apparent flippancy has a really Shakespearean flavour. The port imagines that he is the porter of hell gate. He speaks more truly than he knows. In Macbeth's castle Hell and broken loose with shameless violation of hospitality, betrayal of trust, treason and murder. The contemporary allusions which Shakespeare puts into the mouth of the porter help to fix the date of the play. The porter scene with its references to hell, retribution, equivocation, and human duplicity provides commentary at the common level.

The scene like the porter's scene relieves the tension of the scene before and gives relief. It offers a commentary on the unnatural deed by marshalling the omens in evidence. It is much in the nature of classical Greek chorus. In Stanley Garden's edition of *Macbeth* it is pointed out that "the language of Ross and the old man is carefully distinguished. The old

man shows the precise-minded interest of old age in the strange phenomena, and compares them rather fussily, but directly enough with his reflections. The self conscious, balanced, cleverly affected imagery used by Ross is near to the language typical of mannered society on the Elizabethan stage." A. W. Verity observes "this scene illustrates a very instructive feature of Shakespeare's dramatic method, his side-scenes. Hitherto we have been, as it were, amid the rush of tragic incidents now we view them retrospectively..... we view them as they appear to non-actors...."

The use of signs and omens to heighten the sense of tragedy is a common device used by the playwright. They are faithfully copied from holinshed's account of the murder of king, Duff by Donwald. They may be compared with similar happenings described in *Julius Caesar* on the eve of Caesar's murder. This scene allows the passage of time and space needed for the next act.

Act HI Scene i:

Banquo is soliloquizing in a-room in the palace at Forres. His soliloquy shows that Banquo is also corrupted by the influence of the witches the one man who knows the truth about Duncan's murder is silent and acquiesces in Macbeth's accession to the throne. Why? The answer is suggested by this soliloquy. He is inactive and undecided. Does not show any sign of doing something to bring about justice. This indecision costs him his life. The prophecies of the witches concerning Macbeth have come true. He hopes that what they have told him may as well be his oracles. Do not you feel that Banquo is showing symptoms of moral deterioration? When he is thus engrossed in his own thoughts, Macbeth as king attended by his queen and a host of hords and ladies and attendants comes here.

Macbeth rapidly plans the murder. He entrusts the execution of murder to two hired ruffians. After declaring his intention to remain alone in anticipation of pleasant company, and having blessed his companions Macbeth sends for the murderers. Appearance and reality are 'one more at odds in this sinister transition.

Left alone we see *Macbeth* talking to himself. Macbeth does not feel secure if Banquo is alive. He fears Banquo who knows too much. He is afraid of him both because of the prophecy of the witches and because he seems naturally fit to be kind and to rule. Banquo is brave and wise and noble. He pays tribute to Banquo's royalty of nature. Macbeth sees in Banquo the man he would wish to be. His resentment against Banquo is because of the realization of his own inadequacy. Macbeth feels that as long as Banquo is alive his guardian spirit is rendered helpless just as long as Julius Caesar was alive, Antony was eclipsed. (Julius Caesar was a great ruler of Rome. He was killed in 44 B.C Antony was his close friend).

Main reason for Macbeth's decision to murder Banquo is that Banquo's issues will become kings. The desperate regicide is resolved to come in its way at any cost. He has sold his soul to the devil for a fruitless crown and a barren scepter—"to make them king, the seeds of Banquo kings". He has murdered Duncan to no purpose. He has committed a heinous crime only to benefit Banquo's family. Macbeth is determined not to allow it, even if destiny itself is against it. He defies destiny to make Banquo's children succeed to the throne inspite of Macbeth's will to prevent it. "The attempt on fleance's life is in effect a gauntlet to fate, anattempt to turn aside the prophecy. Macbeth's wish destroys him in the fulfillment. Motives for his crime are suspicion, jealous and desire for peace of mind."

It is significant that Macbeth does not need to consult his wife nor does he need her egging. This scene shows that crown has brought him neither peace nor contentment.

Two murderers enter the stage. Macbeth instigates the ruffians to action by dwelling on the private wrongs done to them by him -that Banquo is responsible for their failures and disappointments. Cunningly he persuades the murderers. He casks the murderers if they are so weak to suffer it, without retaliating,-if they are so filled with Christian feelings that they will pray for the good of the man and his son who made them and their family beggars for ever. He sneers at the gospel teaching, 'pray for them which hurt you and persecute you?' You can divide men up like dogs. 'The long comparison with dogs is in tend to bind the murderers to their deed. 'It is a taunting insult, unintentional perhaps, but instinctive'. Through it Macbeth unknowingly reveals his implicit evaluation of man. As dogs, prove their qualities, so the men are taunted to prove themselves distinguished in humanity by murdering. Thus murder becomes a virtue, a sign of status. So you see that there is a reversal of values in the play. It is one of the main themes of the play.

Macbeth is taunting and providing the murderers to steel their minds. The murderers say that they are not cowards, they have manliness. Murderers are ready to take any amount of risk to better their own lives. Macbeth says that he can sue his authority to get rid of Banquo. But since he has some common friends he does not like to displease them. So he wants the murder to be done in secret and declares that Flenace's death is as vital to him as his father's, he advises them to do the job properly. His dialogue or conference with the assassins shows that he has become a hardened criminal who plots his crimes with deliberate cunning.

Act III Scene II

We see in this scene exchange of confidences between a hardened criminal and his troubled wife. Both have lost peace of mind.

Lady Macbeth is in a room in the place at Forres. She has sent a servant to summon her husband. She is left alone. She is full of remorse and melancholy. Her disintegration has begun. The women who thought that the murder of Duncan which would to all their nights, and days to come give solely sovereign away and masterdom ; realizes now that 'naught's had, all's spent' and envies the peace which the dead enjoy in their graves. She realizes with dreadful clarity that the greatness which she now has is futile. If there is no peace of mind, what we have achieved is futile. It is better to be destroyed than to destroy someone and then live in suspicion, doubt and insecurity. The exposure of her real feeling, given expression to in her soliloquy but hidden from Macbeth, enhances her stature, and the tragedy of her misjudgment.

Lady Macbeth rebukes her husband for keeping alone. The bond of love and understanding that bound them together and made them partners in crime has begun to loosen. He is drifting away from her.

Lady Macbeth persuades him to stop worrying since what is done cannot be undone. When it is not possible to set right the situation there is no point in worrying. But Macbeth cannot be so easily soothed. His uneasy conscience allows him no peace of mind. They have no security.

Lady Macbeth is puzzled but her husband asks not to be anxious. The scene closes with his remark that he will go on his career of violence and evil, with the expectation of getting security. Actions which begin with evil need more crimes t consolidate them. Macbeth has already become an object of pity as well as terror.

Shakespeare seems to be creating an atmosphere in tune with the violence of the scene which ensues. The use of such imagery was necessary because of the inadequacies of the stage of Shakespeare's day.

The scene reveals that Macbeths have failed to find satisfaction. There is a marked similarity in their disillusionment. Lady Macbeth is full of remorse and unhappiness. She realizes that there is no peace in violence. Macbeth echoes her feelings. He is tortured by the constant fear of imaginary death. But still they have regard for each other. She conceals her own anguish to comfort him. It is his love for her which makes him keep aloof and not involve her in the murder of Banquo and his son. He will spare her the terrible thoughts guilty knowledge would bring.

Who is the third murderer? The identity of the third murderer has thrilled critics. Johnson thought that he was the 'perfect spy of the time' to whom Macbeth referred (III, 1.19). Others opine that he represents 'destiny' or is Macbeth himself. But if the third

murderer were Macbeth himself he would have known the escape of Fleance even before the next scene. But it should be remembered that Macbeth did not want to be directly involved in the murder and when in the ensuing scene he learns that Fleance has escaped he is genuinely shocked. Probably the third murderer was the spy sent by Macbeth to keep watch on the first two.

This scene marks the climax of the play and is also the mechanical centre as well. Coming as it does in the mechanical centre of the play it makes "for a symmetrical isosceles-development of plot and of denoue-ment." The scene shows the turning point of the plot. Till now Macbeth's successes show an ascending graph. He has got the crown and the murder of Banquo is accomplished. But with the escape of Fleance his decline begins.

Act III, Scene iv

This is the famous Banquet scene in the hall of the palace at Torres. Those who attend the banquet might be considered friends and those who do not can be looked upon as possible foes. In scene I of Act III Macbeth had told Banquo that his assembly was to be forerunner to a council of state. A feast with full ceremonial is presented. It is at, the climax of Macbeth's apparent 'triumph'. What is noticeable is prudence, order, and formal relationships. See how this contrasts with the chaos of the scene before this.

The banquet to which Banquo has been invited is in progress. All the invitees except Banquo have arrived, Lady Macbeth, the graceful hostess remains seated in her chair of state. Though Macbeth converses freely with the lords and nobles, he is only acting his part, he will 'play it'. At his juncture, the first murderer enters. There is blood on the face of the murderer and Macbeth says it is better that he blood should be on his face than in Banquo's body. Does the intrusion of the murderer show the impossibility of an usurper establishing true order. Macbeth is upset, says he "Then comes my fit again". (fit=spasm of fear and frustration.) The murderer whispers to Macbeth that Banquo "with twenty trenched gashes on his head" is murdered but Fleance has escaped. The first part of the murderer's report brings joy the second brings a recurrence of his depressed mood. Macbeth feels he is now cabined, cribbed, confined and bound into sancy doubts and fears. The repetition shows his neurotic fixation on the throne. Persistently intruding doubts and fears enclose him as in a cabin or a crib 'hovel'. His state would have been sound as the marble and free like the air. But now he feels like a person troubled by doubts and shut up in a small

There are grown serpent lies; the worm
That's fled
Hath nature that in time will venom
Breed,

No teeth for th' present.

The downward movement of the plot graph has begun. Macbeth's fortunes are descending. In his state of mental excitement he betrays himself. The visitation of Banquo's ghost is perhaps the most striking instance of the way in which the imagination of the murder plagues him like the dagger which Macbeth sees before he murders Duncan, and the voice which roars in his ears that he shall sleep no more after the murder is committed, the ghost of Banquo is a hallucination which his fevered and guilt flamed imagination ahs conjured before him. The vision is patterned upon the murderer's description. Macbeth's character has so degraded that he now seeks out the witches - the forces of evil, the instruments of darkness. Macbeth is anticipating civil unrest. So he has private Gestapo. - This throws light on the unhappy state of affairs in Macbeth's kingdom. In this scene it is indicated that Macduff may prove a menace to Macbeth.

The appearance of the ghost is a reminder of the super natural element in the play. Irony is added to the incident by the fact that Macbeth himself from the banquet. "My Lord I will not", Banquo has replied (Act III Scene i) and he keeps his promise, but in a manner that neither he nor Macbeth ahs ever imagined. And the ghost reappears even as Macbeth is saying "would he (Banquo) were here:"

Lady Macbeth's words "Almost at odds with morning, which is which," towards the end of the scene are very significant, Wilson sees the line as "a symbolical timing of the central moment of the play; borne out by the immediate reference to Macduff who is to usher in the dawn." So far, in the world of Macbeth the forces of darkness had seemed to hold complete control. But now it appears as if the forces of good have begun to gain ground. The night is drawing to a close, for the morning has begun to battle with it.

It is thought that this scene was not penned by Shakespeare but was later interpolated by Middleton. This scene, and II 39-43 and 125-32 of IV are generally included in the play but are almost certainly not by Shakespeare. They are irrelevant to the plot, and while they were probably added because of the popularity of the Witch scenes, they actually reduce their impact". This scene was probably not written by Shakespeare but added about 1616 to lead into the songs, 'Come away, come away' here and 'Black spirits' in Act IV; scene I, which had been introduced into Macbeth from Thomas Middleton's play the Witch. Bradley regards authenticity to the whole of this scene and the Hecate passage in the first scene of the fourth Act as "open to serious doubt". The reasons he advances are they contain stage directions to two songs found in Middleton's witch, they can be removed without leaving any trace of their removal and they contain lines which do not match with the spirit of the preceding scenes.

Although it does not add anything to the development of the play it may be there to

add to the thrill of the supernatural. Hecate was a familiar figure to an Elizabethan audience, and a play introducing witches would seen incomplete without her. Anyway the scene serves as a preparation for the second meeting between Macbeth and the witches.

ACT III, Scene VI:

This refreshingly quiet and choric scene is at Forres in Macbeth's castle. It comes after the busy and violent scenes which proceed it. This scene does the work of the classical Greek Chorus. It provides comment and bridges a gap of time.

This scene shows that Macbeth the king is suspected and detested. There is exposition and commentary. The mood of the country is conveyed. In fact this is the first of a number of short scenes in which Shakespeare paints Macbeth as a brutal tyrant whose misdeeds cause Scotland to bleed.

The scene allows time for Macbeth to reach the witches cavern in Act-IV. It also indicates future developments. Macduff will lead the revolt and the war in Act V. Macduff who seemed to be a very minor character in the first three Acts has begun to assume importance.

Act IV Scene I

Forces of retribution begin to gain power Macbeth delves deeper into crime and the forces against him unite and grow. It is a day after the banquet. Venue is a cave, in the middle of a boiling cauldron.

The witches have met in a cave upon the heath. They are dancing round a boiling cauldron. They are getting ready their dreadful charms. They are brewing strange concoctions. Their preparations are unusually elaborate. They seem to have knowledge of what Macbeth is going to want of them. Shakespeare has created an apt-atmosphere. Thunder is heard, ingredients create a feeling of horror and disgust and darkness prevails.

Macbeth is determined to seize Macduff s castle at Fife and undo his family -put his wife and children to death. His fury drives him to the most inhuman crime of his career the murder of lady Macduff and his children. It is purposeless butchery, cruelty showing his rapid moral deterioration.

This is the last time we see Macbeth in this act. We meet him next only in ACT V, Scene iii, and in the interval he has worsened.

This thrilling scene was a great favorite with the audience who believed in witch craft. The ceremonies and the apparitions may be theatrically arresting but does this scene

have the dramatic power of the earlier scenes ? Study this scene like the other witch scenes carefully for a question on the witches, their power and their methods of practicing their art.

Act IV Scene ii:

A charming and pathetic scene in which the domestic life in Macduff s castle at Fife is presented. Lady Macduff is angry with her husband who has deserted her. He has fled to England without informing her. He has fled to England without informing her. She is angry, hurt and bewildered. She attributes his action to madness or cowardice. He will be considered guilty. Macduff is not a traitor but by running away in fear he has created the impression that he is one. She has nothing to do with political manoeuoring. His fear is unwarranted. She complains that he lacks natural affection for his wife and children. Lady Macduff argues that it was not wise on Macduff s part to have deserted her and the children. If he were in danger, so were they.

The scene represents the general terror throughout Scotland. Rightly notes a critic "The destructive forces of disorder-vividly described by Ross as a shifting chaos in which all foundations of certainty are sapped away- are contrasted with the natural order of family relationships, and of birth and growth." The sympathy of the audience *lor* Macbeth is completely lost in this scene. The scene gives Macduff reason to take revenge on Macbeth. The brutality of the last murder committed by Macbeth is accentuated by the innocence of his victims.

Act IV scene III:

This is the longest scene in the play. It is condemned by some critics as undramatic. It is said to contain irrelevant matter. Is it not incorrect to comment so? Is there not enough suspense in the verbal development to hold the attention of the audience? The scene provides a vivid contrast between Scotland, groaning under the heels of the tyrant and England peaceful and prosperous under the kind hearted and saintly Edward. In this scene we see Macduff as the avenger of his wife and children. Malcolm emerges as the saviour of England. Malcolm is associated with sanctity and the powers of good. He is a contrast to Macbeth and what he represents. The dramatic stature of Malcolm is built up. The scene sets side by side Malcolm's 'king becoming graces' with the vices of tyranny. It shows clearly the spiritual power given to a legitimate king. Does not this fact lend supreme authority to the forces of rebellion?

This scene serves several purposes in the development of the play. Its slow movement represents the steady gathering of the forces against Macbeth. The scene opens on a note of hopelessness but ends with a note of confidence. Study carefully the way in which

the scene throws light upon the character of Malcolm. Ross is shown as ever, as the carrier of new.

Act V Scene I:

This is the celebrated sleep-walking scene. This scene reveals the disorder in Lady Macbeth's mind while the previous scene had given a general description of the disorder in Scotland.

Lady Macbeth had goaded her husband to murder Duncan. She thought it would bring 'solely sovereign sway and masterdom' for the rest of their lives. But she has been disillusioned. She cannot sleep. Husband and wife are becoming strangers. She does not make an exhibition of her feeling or expect sympathy. As a consequence of this suppressed feelings she is sinking and he mind is crumbling. She has begun to walk in her sleep. She discloses dreadful secrets.

The last appearance of Lady Macbeth is in this scene. She can suppress the memory of crime with she is awake. But when asleep, she relieved the might of horrors. She is given to somnambulism while Macbeth seems to suffer insomnia. In her sleep she mutters incoherent words. The torments of Lady Macbeth's hell are the remembrance of things past. Her hearers yet though vaguely an idea about the guilt, which plagues her heart. She has kept her self control and she ahs broken inwardly. "Brooding remorse deepens into the melancholy of a disordered mind and she pours out her womanly soul in the broken words of delirium.

In this most effective and spectacular scene Lady Macbeth sheds the assumed mask of hardness and of cruelty. A certain degree of sympathy for Lady Macbeth is won back. Thereby her death will be considered a tragedy.

The nobles are ready to shed their blood to the last drop to cure the land of its illness. The suggestion of blood letting continues the medical image. It is a reference to the practice of bleeding to lesson a sickness by drawing from the veins the excess of humours, Lennox says that they with to water the sovereign, the loyal and remedial flower and drown the weeds. Weeds refer to Macbeth and in medicine sovereign remedy is one that cannot fail.

We see the rapid diminution of Macbeth's strength. He is driven to despair. He has a conviction that he is fighting a loosing battle. 'Cheer' and 'chair' ('dethrone' 'depose'). He is aware that his life is fallen into the sear, it is withered. He is the most hated man in the country. The fruit of success in his villainous career has already turned to dust and ashes in his mouth. In old age a man should receive hove, honour, and loyalty from others. Old men should be surrounded by friends. But Macbeth can expect none of these. Instead of the above mentioned gifts he receives only curses. Those who curse him do so under their breath since

they are afraid. The words of reverence they utter come not from their heart but from the lips. The movement of the lines is reflective and pitiful. (Troops of friends- there words indicate that he is desolate. Do not you feel that Shakespeare is sympathetic even to Macbeth? Is it not a good example of what Keats called Shakespeare's 'negative capability'. Thus a degree of pity is auroused for the hero so that we are sorry for him. Macbeth's wonderful utterances hold our attention. They are spellbinding. In fact their beauty increases as Macbeth himself plunges into "the depth of disillusionment and despair".

But now he wants the ramous to be pulled off. This shows his terrible condition. Do you fell that macbeth's behaviour throughout this scene confirms Angus' description (V223) Macbeth demonstrates alternate moods of irritation and dejection.

Act V Scene iv :

We find the combines armies of Scottish nobles and those of the English under Malcolm. Macduff, Siward and his son near Birnamwood. Malcolm says that the times when we can sleep in safety are near. The line recollects the murders of Duncan and of Macduff s family. The line strongly identifies the invading Malcolm with order.

Act V scene V:

Macbeth is very sure that his foes will be compelled to stage a go back because of famine and disease. Basically, Macbeth is a daring warrior. He is said that he has to lock himself up in the castle instead of going out and giving a tough fight. He says those who should have supported him have faced the enemies on the battle ground and driven them back. Macbeth still thinks he is invulnerable.

Macbeth is determined to fight till the end. He says at least we'll die with harness on our back".

Act V scene VI:

It is a short scene. In this scene, instructions are given Trumpets speak and the army divides for the attack on the fortress. The scene is a plain before the castle at Dunsinane. Battle representations of this scene were popular in the Elizabethan theatre Malcolm who orders shows himself to be suitable for leadership.

Scotland has awakened from a night-mere. True government is restored. The present government is graded with divine approval. It confirms itself to order. Malcom's speech holds guarantee of good government for the country. Thus the tragedy ends "with cairn of mind, all passion spent."

a) Plot of Macbeth - Macbeth is one of the shortest plays of Shakespeare. How has the story developed? How efficient is the manner. Read the scenes and not the interesting features.

b) The atmosphere of Macbeth - the play is supernatural and emotional. How does the play produce a sense of horror ? note the predominance of darkness. What purpose is served by the language.

c) Irony in Macbeth- Irony is a dramatic device employed by the playwright. Macbeth illustrates different kinds of irony like verbal irony, irony of situation etc. Draw specific examples from the play.

d) The character of Macbeth, Lady Macbeth Banquo, Macduff, Duncan and the witches.

e) Macbeth as a Tragedy - Tragedy the imitation of a serious and complete action in an embellished language. The function of tragedy is to excite the emotions of pity and fear-kindred emotions that are in the breasts of all men and by the act of excitations to afford a pleasurable relief. The process is called *Katharsis or* purification of the emotions.

The hero is , therefore, the centre of action. He is not a man of flawless perfection, nor one of consummate villainy.

In Shakespearean tragedy there is external conflict and also an inner conflict in the character of the hero himself.

Macbeth is unlike other great tragedies of Shakespeare. It differs in substance as well as in form. It is unique. Macbeth presents us with a character who is at once hero and villain of his own tragedy. The forces of evil are as much in them as around them.

Macbeth has been described by some critics as a tragedy of ambition. The couple is guilty of achieving their ambition by evil means although they are not basically bad or evil. In fact, in Shakespearean tragedy it is the 'tragic flaw' in the character of the hero which brings in his downfall. This predominant weakness is fatal to him. *Character* is *destiny* in a Shakespearean play. The weak human will is subject to the attack of passion temptation and illusion. One thing that is worthy of notice is that a tragic hero commands admiration even in his downfall.

Another feature of tragedy that it brings 'catharses. In other words it arouses the emotions of pity and fear. We experience fear when we see Macbeth, a man gifted with imagination, haunted by the unseen and incomprehensible forces. He is bewildered and shocked after the murder of Duncan and at the appearance of the ghost in the Banquet scene.

If we, at the end of the play, question ourselves, "Are we moved with pity for Macbeth and his wife, or do we merely feel that the world was well rid of such a butcher and his fiend-like queen? I am sure, many close the book with a feeling of pity for the unhappy couple. Why do we feel this pity in our hearts? It is to be remembered that tragedy does not consist in the mere fact of death or suffering, the play is not a tragedy merely because it ends unhappily ; it is tragic because of the promise and the possibilities which are come to nothing. We find in the death of Macbeth and his lady superabundant energy and capacities. The peace and orderliness of a dull and common place world is disturbed. What is disturbed is restored only by their own destruction. *Macbeth* is one of the most impressive and instructive of Shakespeare's tragedies.

CHAPTER – IV

SHERIDAN : THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL

The comedy of Manners was the natural product of a sophisticated section of London society ; it assumed its distinctive features in the period of Charles II (1600-1683), produced its master piece after the Glorious Revolution (1688) , and the convention continued in the plays of Vanbrugh (pron: Vanbroo) and Farquhar (Pron.Far-ker till about 1710). Its naked immorality had called down the greatest censure from a clergyman called Jeremy Collier about two years before Congreve produced his most brilliant play, *The Way of the World Jeremy Collier's* attack on the immorality and profaneness of the Restoration drama was at once a reflection of the gradually changing age and a death knell to an artificial convention. The rising middle class and the flourishing mercantile community were in no mood to tolerate a practice which represented them are fit and gulls. The theatre gong public was no longer restricted to the beaux and belles of the court circle.

The first writer to take note of this change was the versatile dramatist-actor Omanager, Colley Gibber. He had his hand always on the pulse of the audience, -which secretly delighted in scenes of immorality, but he had also to satisfy the critics. So he ingeniously hit upon a trick of running his hero through all the profligacies of the town for the first four acts of the drama and then taking him through a last-acy repentance and reformation. These moral-immoral plays of Gibber held the stage in the opening decade of the 18th century. By this time a wave of sentimentalism was sweeping over England and Western Europe and it affected all forms of literature. The essayist Richard Steele wrote aeries of sentimental comedies in which he sought to teach people moral lessons and so rouse the sympathy of the audience by presenting touching scenes of virtue. Steele's sentimentalism was shipped across the channel of France and in the second half of the century it returned to England with all its characteristics accentuated. Sentimentalism deepened and broadened into the humanitarianism of the mid century ; the tendency for social reform, preaching and sermonizing assumed fanatical dimensions; "the essential goodness of the Human soul" and "the essential goodness of the Human being" were two doctrines widely held by the religious reformers and their followers. Those social types whom dramatists and novelists had invariably held up to contempt and ridicule were now treated with sympathy and admired as undeservedly despised creatures. Drama was no longer a mirror to nature but a medium for social propaganda and reformation, instead of the give-and-take of dramatic dialogue we find a stilted and sententious style calculated to emphasize the serious purpose. Laughter was replaced by tears in comedy. The success of a comedy was gauged on the basis of the frequency with which the audience applied their handkerchief to their eyes. This new

sentimental comedy which replaced the comedy of manners, found its popular exponents in Hugh Kelly and Richard Cumberland.

Sentimental comedy provoked violent reaction during the very heyday of its splendour in the second half of the century. It is in this context that we have to understand the work of Oliver Goldsmith and Richard Brinsley Sheridan. Goldsmith opposed it strongly both by precept and by example. In strongly both by precept and by example. In his "enquiry into the present state of learning", he condemned this jachrymose deity who had usurped the place of laughing comedy, and later followed it with two comedies by which he drove tears out of the comic stage and restored humour and laughter as the legitimate objects of comedy. His *She Stoops To Conquer*, staged in 1773, revived the healthy Elizabeth tradition of comedy and stemmed the powerful tide of the fashionable sentimental attitude Goldsmith was followed in the same decade by Sheridan. In the prologue to his first comedy. *The Rivals* Sheridan poured ridicule on.

The Goddess of the woeful countenance

The sentimental muse;

He revived the Restoration comedy of manners, purged of its grosstless and immorality. The main story revolving round Captain Absolute, Lydia Languish and Mrs. Malaprop is anti-sentimental, but the subplot is clearly a concession to the prevailing deity. Sheridan's objection to the 'sentimental music' is that it replaced laughter by tears and indulged in sermonizing, which was nothing but hypocritical.

She'll snatch the dagger from her sister's hand

And having made her votaries weep a flood,

Good Heaven! She'll end her comedies in blood,

As, for the lightimate comic muse, she will abjure

'Solemn sentiments' and will not 'preach'.

The Rivals is a brilliant farce; it scintillates and sparkles ; the author generously endows his servants as well as masters with wit. We may admit that the characters do not often speak in character, but this is a complaint which can be leveled against all comedies-of,manners. The rivals of the title are one and the same person. Captain Absolute, the son and heir of a wealthy baronet impersonates as an impecunious ensign Beverly and makes love to Lydia Languish, a veritable Don Quixote in petticoat, who had been fed on the sentimental trash that gushed out of the popular press. Her aunt and guardian Mrs. Malaprop, like Lady

Wishfort in *The Way of the World,* is a widow longing for a young lover. She prides herself in being 'the queen of the Dictionary.' The humour in the portrayal of this comic character is that she uses pompous words which are misapplied in their context. For example, she prides herself in her 'nice derangement of epitaphs' (arrangement of epithets) ; she would teach girls geometry, "the science of contiguous countries" (She means geography) ; she would command a person ; "your physiognomy is so grammatical" (she means phraseology), and expatiate upon 'the allegories on the banks of the Nile' (she means alligators). Malapropism is older than Mrs. Malaprop, but it was she who bequeathed the word to the English Dictionary. Lydia Languish is so romantic and sentimental that she has been dreaming of a rope-and-ladder escape, elopement, love in cottage and eating moonshine. But when she knows that her Beverley is a rick man she is terribly disappointed and it calls for all the ingenuity of the Captain to cajole her into marriage. The play was good theatre; fun and laughter again took their place on the comic stage.

Sheridan's inventive powers were not very remarkable. Apart from the Rivals and The School for Scandal his works are mainly translations and adaptations. He borrowed freely from his own romantic life and made free use of an unpolished work of his mother for the two plays which have any claim to originality. There was a romantic haze about his youth: he had eloped with Elizabeth Linely the most glamorous beauty-queen of the times, and fought two duels, one of which was very nearly fatal. This was the autobiographical stuff which he transmuted into excellent theatre in the *Rivals.* Rather he succeeded the celebrated actor-manager-dramatist, David Garrick, as the manager of the famous Drury Lane theatre-A crimonious slander pursued him ; his own father was antagonistic while his hypocritical elder brother was a favourite. Sheridan did not have to go any where else than his own family for the constrasted bothers in *The School for Scandal,* which was acted in Drury Lane in 1777 with thunderous applause.

The School for Scandal, as it appears in its final form, is a marvel of plot construction. It was conceived and executed as two different comic pieces at two different times. The story of the Scandal Club and episode of ill matched husband and wife were not born under the same inspiration, but they were later put together with such skill that it has become an example of 'art concealing art.' The main plot of the misfitted husband and wife and the contrasted brothers is laid in the enveloping action of the Scandal Club. Though Dr. Johnson had laid the ghost of the dramatic unities and there was no more talk about their tyranny, it may be interesting to observe here that the scenes of the play are almost the same and the aption developes so rapidly that it gives us the impression of one day. The characters are labeled off in the Johnsonian manner so that they tend to be types rather than individuals. Lady Sneerwell is a frustrated middle aged widow who presides over the scandal club and directs its activities to murder reputations and promote intrigues, we are reminded of Lady

Wishfort and her cable nights in the *Way of the World.* Lady Sneerwell and her colleagues are more malicious, and her ladyship has her own ambitions also to serve. Her principal agent is Snake ; the name at once suggests that he his unreliable, and by the end of the play we find him deserting Lady Sneerwell and changing his colour with the alchemic influence of gold from the opposite camp. Snake wonders why Lady Sneerwell takes so much interest in slandering others. She admits "wounded myself in the early part of my life by the envenomed tongue of slander I confess I have since known no pleasure equal to the reducing others to the level of may own injured reputation". The main plot now unfolds itself naturally. Sir peter has married a beautiful girl from the country side and Lady Sneerwell has inducted the young wife into the scandal club, making the simple woman believe that it is part of the fashionable way of life. Sir peter is the guardian of two young men, Joseph Surface and Charles Surface, "the eldest (Snake reports) possessing the most amiable character, and universally well spoken of the youngest, the most dissipated and extravagant young fellow in the kingdom, without friends or character ; the former an avowed admirer of your ladyship's and apparently your favourite ; the latter attached to Maria, Sri Peter's ward, and confessedly beloved by her." Snake is puzzled why, then, Lady Sneerwell should be so uncommonly earnest to destroy the mutual attachment subsisting between Charles and Maria. Lady Sneerwell how explains to Snake (and to the audience) that Joseph Surface's real attachment is to Maria, or her fortune" and that he is masking his pretensions and profiting by Lady Sneerwell's assistance. Joseph and Lady Sneerwell are hand-in-glove with each other in this game of destroying the reputation of Charles so that Maria might be worn over to Joseph and Charles might be deceived into love for Lady Sneerwell, who confesses, "Charles, that libertine, that extravagant that bankrupt in fortune and reputation" is the one "to gain whom I would sacrifice everything". Thus Sheridan gets through the expository part of the action without much ado, and we are ready for the entrance of Joseph Surface. Joseph, you know, is the name of a young man in the Bible, the very embodiment of male chastity. The irony becomes clear. When Joseph Surface passes for a paragon of virtue and attempts to seduce his guardian's young wife. Joseph pretends to be sorry for his brother Charles. "His dissipation and extravagance exceed anything I have ever heard of, but he is secretly happy at the prospect of Maria rejecting the ruined. Charles and falling to his lot with her fortune. The Baconain stimulation and dissimulation have become second nature with him, and even to those who know him intimately he falls into this usual vein of hypocrisy "poor Charles! I'm sure I wish it were in my power to be of any essential service to him ; for the man who does not share in the distress of a brother, even though merited by his own misconduct, deserves..... "Lady Sneerwell cut him short and exposes him at

once both to himself and to the audience"; O Lord! you are going to be moral, and forget that you are among friends. We now see the kind of hypocritical "sentiments" with which he has beeft able to deceive the world and, in particular, his guardian Sir Peter Teazle.

Before Joseph leaves the scene he cautions Lady Sneerwell about her assistant Snake: “Take my work for’t. Lady Sneerwell that fellow hasn’t enough virtue to be faithful even to his own villainy”. This links the exposition to the denouement where Snake actually goes over to the victims of Lady SdeerwelPs malicious propaganda, not because he is essentially good-natured but because he is promised more material reward.

The next visitor at Lady Sneerwell’s house is the heroine Maria. She is not Impressive enough to be a heroine : she is a passive doll moved about by other characters. She is harassed by two members of the scandal club, uncle and nephew, Crabtree and Sir Benjamin Backbite. The Johnsonian Labe names at once reveal the nature of those who bear them. Sir Benjamin is a stock character a poetaster who composes execrable verses mostly plagiarized Maria has virtually run away from the pestering advances of Sir Banjamin. She confesses, “wit loses its respect with me when I see it in company with malice” Joseph Surface’s ready rejoiner is one of his hypocritical ‘sentiments’ : “certainly, madam ; to smile as the jest which plants to thorn in another’s breast is to become a principal in the mischeifs”. Before the sense comes to its close the other members of the scandal club are also casually introduced to us. Mrs. Candour as her name ironically suggests appears to sympathies with a victim, but her brand to sympathy does* the deadliest butchery. Crabtree and Backbite also give us a foretaste of what they are capable of doing. Before curtain comes down on this important expository scene. We see Lady Sneerwell and Joseph Surface together. They know each other perfectly well. Lady SneerwelPs parting words ring in our ears : “I’ll go and plot mischief and you shall study sentiment.”

The scene now shifts from Lady SneerwelFs house to the house of Sir Peter almost immediately after the meeting between the principal villains. Lady Sneerwell and Joseph Surface. Sir Peter has been married only six months when he realizes that he has committed the greatest blunder of his life. He has been scoffing at matrimony for long and he now suspects that he has become the laughing stock of all the world. “When an old bachelor marries a your wife what (else) is he to expect? “Lady Teazle, a girl bred wholly in the country,” now “plays her part in all the extravagant fopperies of the fashion and the town :” “She dissipates all my fortune and contradicts all my humours,” and yet his tragedy is that he cannot help loving her; His vexations are further heightened by the conduct of his ward Maria, who, he thinks, has turned reble and “absolutely refuses the man of his choice (viz Joseph Surface), meaning..... To bestow herself on his profligate brother. “Charles has one ally advocate in his father’s old servant Rowley. He is sure that .the young scapegrace” will retrieve his errors yet,” for he has taken after his fathert who was “nearly as wild a spark; yet when he died, he did not leave a more benevolent, heart to lament his loss”. The theme of the contrasted brothers-one hypocritical and universally acclaimed as a paragon of virtue and the other branded as a liberation but having a heart in its right place---is a common place of

eighteenth century literature. If you have read Fielding's torn Jones you will remember the hypocritical Bilfil and the reckless but good natured Tom Jones. In fact, Sheridan had a living example of such a contrast between himself and his elder brother. The Surface brothers had lost their father, but "their uncle Sir Oliver's liberality gave them an early independence". Sir Peter says that as guardian, no person could have more opportunities of judging of their hearts and I was never mistaken in my life. Joesph is indeed a model for the young men of the age. He is a man of sentiment, and acts up to the sentiments he professes." He is severe in his denunciation of his other ward Charles "If he had any grain of virtue by descent he has dissipated it with the rest of his inheritance." The old man's disapproval is further aggravated by his belief in the stories circulated by Lady Sneerwell about Charles's love affair with Lady Teazle. Rowley announces that sir Oliver, after an absence of fifteen years, is returning to London and that he means to make some trial of the disposition of his nephews. The Act conies to its close with the comic lamentation of Sir Peter, "Ah! Master Rowely, when an old bachelor marries a young wife, he deserves-no the crime carries its punishment along with it.

Act II sc.i introduces to us one of the frequent quarrels between Sir Peter Teazle and his young wife. He is exasperated by her extravagance but Lady Teazle is determined to swim daily with the current to fashion. At the end Lady Teazle ingenuously asks "But now, Sir Peter, if we have finished our daily jungle, I presume I may go to my engagement at Lady Sneerwell's. This is another reason for Sir Peter's annoyance for the knows that Lady Sneerwell and her friends are "utters of forged tales, carries of scandal and clippers of reputation." In spite of all her extravagance and bad company Sir Peter cannot help loving his enchanting wife.

The next scene takes us back to Lady Sneerwell's where the club has its full quorum. The visit of Lady Teazle and Maria at once sets Lady Sneerwell's mischievous plot on its foot. Maria is asked to play piquet (a card game) with Joseph Surface, and Lady Teazle is surprised that her beau should not take this opportunity to speak to her before Sir Peter arrives. Sir Peter himself plays his visit lest he might be an object of their slander. He knows, however that in the hands of the scandal mongers, a character dies at every world : their work is to "kill character and run down reputations" When he leaves he remarks with cynical satisfaction "But I leave my character behind me". The conversation between Maria and Joseph surface reveals with a hypocritical scoundrel the man is ; his sententious and pompous words are intended to wheedle the young lady from "that profligate Charles". His advances to Maria are interrupted by the unexpected entry of Lady Teazle from another room. It must be remembered that Lady Teazle is essentially good-hearted and chaste ; she is allowing Surface to play the gallant only because of her mistaken sense of fashion; as she says, "you know I admit you as lover no further than fashion sanctions. "The hypocrite gives a cock-and-bull story to explain his conduct to Maria and reminds Lady Teazle of her promise to give me

your judgement on my library."

Sir Oliver Surface, the wealthy uncle of Joseph and Charles, has just arrived from India. He is amused to hear about the marriage of his friend Sir Peter. He discusses the two nephews with Rowley. The shrewed man of the world suspects Joesph's universal reputation with the high and the low but he will test them both in disguise before he will form his own judgement about them. Sir Peter waxes eloquent on Joseph, his edification to hear him converse : he professes the noblest sentiments but as for Charles, he gives him up as a wild fellow.

Till now we have had a remarkable dramatic situation likely to ensure the success of the play but as we approach the dramatic centre of the play is gathers momentum. Charles has been borrowing money from an old Jew called Premium (Whom he has never met personally) through a broker. Sir Oliver now decides to visit Charles impersonating Premium and then call upon Joseph in the name of a poor relation called Stanley. Meanwhile Sir Peter makes further efforts to persuade Maria to transfer her love from Charles to that amiable young man, "Joseph". Lady Teazle tries to cajole her fond old husband, to be in a charming sweet temper so that he might give her a hundred pounds. The scene of quarrel that follows is extremely, ausing : each accuses the other of being the first to lose temper and ultimately they rise to a crescendo of passion. At last Sit Peter hints at her secret love affair with Charles : the poor man has swallowed the story that Lady Sneerwell has circulated. At last Lady Teazle cajoles him into a state of reconciliation once again before she leaves the scene.

The next scene brings us to Charles's house where Sir Oliver is surprised to find the servants aping the manners of aristocracy. Witty himself Sheridan bestows upon the servants also the witty and allusive style of which he is a master. You will remember that his is a characteristic of the comedy of manners and it persisted right on to Oscar Wilde and Bernard Shaw. Sir Oliver exclaims in amazement : "If the man is a shadow of the master, this is the temple of dissipation indeed". Next we see Charles himself coming out of the house and talking to Premium (Sir Oliver in disguise) about his plans for the future. The audience will be hugely amused when Charles confidentially tells the supposed merchant : "The moment Sir Oliver dies, ...you would come on me for the money...he breaks apace, I am told, he is so much altered latterly that his nearest relations don't know him,". The irony of the situation becomes clear to us when we remember that he is talking to Sir Oliver, himself.

Thematically there is no break between the last scene of the Third Act and the next scene which comes with IV Act. But the theatrical performance requires a difference setting and hence calls for an interval the action shifts from the drawing room to the portrait-gallery upstairs without an interval of time or change of place. But here a new Act begins merely to enable the producer to arrange for the changed scene setting. One of Charles's friends as

“auctioneer ascends “an old gouty chair of my father’s as a pulpit and with a parchment as hammer, he knocks down portrait after portrait, all done in the expensive old style, “when beaus wore wigs, and ladies their own hair.” Sir Oliver observes that Charles has been “passing over” one portrait whom the auctioneer describes as “that ill-looking fellow over the setter. As stern-looking a rogue as ever I saw, an unforgiving eye, and a damned disinheriting countenance, an inveterate knave”. But Charles obstinately refuses to part with the portrait of his uncle, and the old man is so pleased as to-exclaim to himself, “The rogue is may nephew after all..... I forgive him everything”. The humour of the situation lies in the fact that Charles sell his family portraits to premium without suspecting that the is his own uncle and that the auctioneer makes all sorts of uncomplimentary references to him. At the end of the auction Charles is certainly distressed, but he cannot afford to part with his spirits. His laugher suppresses his tears and he claims, “I find one’s ancestors are more valuable relations than I took them for”. The first thing he does is to send “a hundred pounds” to his poor relation Stanley. He would not listen to Rowely’s advice : “Be just before you are generous, “for Justice is, an old lame hobbling beldame, and I can’t get her to keep pace with Generosity.”

Sir Oliver is now satisfied that the young scapegrace, his nephew, is reckless but he has his heart in its right place. Now he proposes to test his other nephew disguised as Stanley, whom neither of the nephews has seen. But before this the greatest scene as it is called intervenes. In fact, this scene comes so close upon the auction scene that the cumulative impact on the audience is tremendous. Lady Teazle pays a visit to Joseph. Surface in this library, and the hypocritical scoundrel advises the simple minded woman that the best way of curing Sir Peter’s Jealousy is to give him reason for it. Lady Teazle has enough common sense to understand his insinuation that he expects her to “sin in her own defense, and part with my virtue to secure my reputation.” But though she plays the role of the woman of fashion, she is essentially good natured and virtuous. Her thoughtless indiscretion ahs placed her in a compromising situation when Sir Peter himself arrives. Joseph Surface’s guilty mind conceives the idea of hiding the lady behind a screen in the library and he pretends to be busy poring over a book. Sir Peter is easily deceived into the belief that his young friend is “ever improving himself, and Joseph agrees : “Books, you know, are the only things in which I am coxcomb”. Seeing maps hung upon the screen, Sir Peter observes with satisfaction, “you can make even your screen a source of knowledge”, and when Joseph exclaims, “I find great use in that screen” the audience will certainly catch the irony of the situation. The foolish old husband-complains to Joseph that Charles is ungreateful enough to be in secret liaison with his wife: “your brother has no sentiment”. Joseph is ready with his ‘sentiments’ when ingratitude barbs the dart of injury, the worulnd has double danger in it”. He would disclaim kindred with his brother for the man who can break the laws of hospitality, and tempt the wife of his friend, deserves to be branded as the pest of society. Sir Peter is annoyed with his wife, but his is so deeply in love with his wife that he confides to Joseph (and lady Teazle listens to

it from behind the screen) that he has already prepared drafts of two deeds : “By one she will enjoy eight hundred a year independent while I live ; and by the other, the bulk of my fortune at my death”. It is at this juncture that Charles’s arrival is announced by a servant. Though Joseph wants to avoid his brother Sir Peter wants him to be interrogated about his relation with Lady Teazle. In his anxiety to hide himself he sees a petticoat behind the screen, and the resourceful Joseph laughingly admits that it is a little French milliner, “a silly rouge that plagues me”. Sir Peter is satisfied and he hides himself in a cupboard before Charles makes his boisterous entry into the room. Form the talk between Charles and Joseph Sir Peter is convinced that there is no substance in the rumour connecting him with Lady Teazle. Charles in his irrepressible manner drags Sir Peter out of the cupboard and all of them have a hearty laugh provoking the audience also into prusts to laugher. At this stage Joseph is forced to leave the room to dispose of an unwelcome visitor. Sir Peter cannot help making use of this opportunity to commend Joshph as a model to Charles: “Ah! Charles, if you associated more with your brother one might indeed hope for your reformation. He is a man of sentiment-well, there is nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment”. But the old man can hardly suppress Joseph Surface’s affair with the f\French milliner. To Sir Peter this is only a pardonable and natural adventure on the part of a young man. It can easily be imagined that Charles immediately thrown down the screen, revealing Lady Teazle where Sir Peter expected to see the “little French milliner”. The disclosure is the most unexpected blow to Sir Peter. Charles, with good humoured irony, exclaims, “Sir Peter, this is one of the smartest French milliners I ever saw”. He remembers Sir Peter’s encomiums upon Joseph and he juris them at him with mischievous pleasure: “Sir Peter, there is nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment”. Lady Teazle is a bashed but she is also disillusioned about the hypocritical Joseph. She tells him to his face that he is nothing but “a smooth tongued hypocrite, who would have seduced the wife of his too credulous friend’. Sir Peter besides himself with anger calls him a villain and she curtain falls on the great scene in the midst of Joseph’s attempts to expostulate with his erstwhile guardian.

The screen scene has very few parallels in English drama for the skill with which its suspense is kept up and the final resolution effected. This scene following close upon ‘the auction scene’ takes us in a crescendo of theatrical delight towards the end of the Forth Act. The dramatist is now confronted with the difficult takes of keeping up without allowing it to flag in the last Act. The problem is, how to avoid an anti-climax. The excellent craftsmanship of Sheridan does not fail him. He has developed the story of the miss-matched couple and the contrasted brothers in the enveloping action of the scandal club. He must bring in the enveloping action once again to wind up the plot. So after a brief scene where Sir Oliver tests the elder disguised as a poor relation and discovers his meanness and hypocritical protestations of nobility, we move to the house of Sir Peter. Here the scandal-mongers arrive one after another. Apparently with the object of commiserating with Sir Peter, who has been

reportedly wounded in a duel with one of the brothers, one asserting that it was a wound with the sword and another vehemently swearing it was a bullet-wound in the thorax. We are fully aware of what happened in the screen scene and the humour of the situation mounts as we listen to the ridiculous distortions and the circumstantial details invented by Lady Sneerwell and her colleagues. The screen scene is projected to us once again through the grossly refectory and colouring medium of the speakers. We wonder with amusement at Crabtree's circumstantial details about the duel between Sir Peter and Charles: "The bail struck a little bronze Shakespeare that stood over the fireplace; grazed out of the window at a right angle , and wounded the postman, who was just coming to the door with a double letter from Northamptonshire". The scandal-mongers mistake Sir Oliver for the doctor supposedly called in to attend on the wounded Sir Peter, and enquires him of his patients condition! Sir Peter himself walks in, hale and hearty, clear out of his house. Lady Sneerwel, the president of the scandal club is discomfited and her club faces utter dissolution. Joseph Surface's villainy and hypocrisy are exposed to the silvery laughter of the comic muse to the silvery laughter of the comic muse the forgiveness of the prodigal merely because he refuses to sell his uncle's portrait is a little too easy. But Sheridan had learnt from the initial failure of 'The Rivals' that his audience must not be shocked and he went as far as he dared in his portrayal of Joseph, whose moral sentiments are represented as a cover for his hypocrisy, but almost as a sign of it. This had the effect of undercutting the lofty remarks of many heroes of sentimental comedy... The play has a succession of theatrically effective scenes Sheridan writes straight forward colloquial dialogue, not particularly polished, but for that very reason preferred by most audiences to that of Congreve.

------- KENNETH MUIR

III. There is no deep unity in the tendencies of his theatre; and unity is not either the forte of his plays. They combine with skill diverse elements, plots and themes; thy are amalgams of successful, sometimes, admirable scene, rather then organic masterpieces. Sheridan is not a psychologist, but a shrewd penetrating observer; he is more able to perceive the secret movement of vanity or envy, than to construct characters. He knows how to create the ridiculous from the mechanisms which are-built in us by the prejudices of the mind and the distortions of judgement; but the province of comedy in which he most readily moves is that of situations and verbal virtuosity. Here atleast he moves with astonishing mastery.

—- L. CAZAMIAN

CHAPTER – V

BERNARD SHAW: SAINT JOAN

Shaw, George Bernard (1856-1950) Anglo Irish playwright, dramatic critic and socialist, Dublin ; educated at Wesleyan connexional School and the Model Boys' School, Dublin; Worked with a firm of estate agents; wrote unsuccessful novels in succession 1879-83; elected member of the Fabian society, 1884; made a mark as a public speaker on subjects of topical interest; reviewed books, plays and music for periodicals; Quintessence of Ibsenism 1890; Under the influence of Ibsen wrote plays of ideas; first play The Widowers' House produced, 1892; Mrs. Warren's Profession written 1893 not produced till 1902; Arms and The Man and Superman 1901-1903; Major Barbara 1905; Pygmalion 1912; Back to Methuselah 1921; Saint John 1923; Nobel Prize for Literature, 1925; his plays are characterized by wit, brilliance and vigorous intellect ; they have the stamp of a powerful personality ; quite a few of his plays have a permanent place in the repertory ; his major plays still continue to be revived.

Shaw appeared on the English theatrical scene at a time when there was hardly any serious play writing. The better known playwrights of the period were mere craftsmen with no claims as artists. Shaw was impatient with them because their plays presented, in Eric Bentley's words, "not life but day dreams, not thought but sentiment." There was no tradition in England for a playwright to fall back on. Inspiration was to come from the Continent. Thus Ibsen the Ibsen of problem plays and not the later Ibsen who wrote poetic-symbolic plays exerted considerable influence on Shaw. Shaw speaks with enthusiasm about the new drama (introduced by Ibsen) in *Quintessence of Ibsenism* :"In the new plays the drama arises through a conflict of unsettled ideals rather than through vulgar attachments, repacities generosities, resentments, ambitions, misunderstandings; oddities and so forth as to which no moral question is raised. The conflict is not between clear right and wrong, the villain is as conscientious as the hero if not more so; in fact, the question which is the villain and which the hero. Or to put it another way "there are no villains and no heroes. This strickes the critics mainly as a departure from dramatic art; but it is really the inevitable return to nature which ends all the merely technical fashions." Here Shaw is critical of playwrights, who, instead of reflecting life, merely followed certain conventions handed down to them.

Playwriting, for Shaw, was not an end in itself; it was a means to putting across his ideas-social, moral and political. "For art's sake alone," he writes in the preface to Man and Superman " I would not fact the toil of writing a single sentence." The fact that drama for him was a vehicle of ideas does not mean that his plays should be read as treaties. Eric Bentley rightly says, "It was clear from the start that Bernard Shaw was a man of ideas. Later it round

out that he was a fabulous entertainer. But few have granted that the two Shaw's were one." Like Brecht whom he influenced he believed that the theatre should combine instruction with delight. "He furnishes the theatre with as much fun as it can take." Writes Brecht, "And it can take a lot. What draws people to the theatre is, strictly speaking, so much influence, which constitutes a tremendous buoyancy for those problems which really interest the progressive dramatic writer and which are the real value of his pieces. It follows that his problems must be so pertinent that he can be as buoyant about them as he wishes to be, for the buoyancy is what people want."

R. J. Kaufman rightly says that like Brecht Shaw "devised a dramatic art that utilized parable to please and to teach simultaneously. His drama is committed to "higher didacticism."

Shaw was an unconventional thinker and looked upon popular notions with suspicion. This skeptical attitude is reflected in his treatment of social and moral questions. What are his concerns as a playwright? The Widowers' Houses a play about slum-landlordism, exposes the hypocrisy of the so-called pleasant people and their ruthless exploitation of the poor. Mrs. Warren's profession treats the same theme through an examination of the problem of prostitution. Arms and men ridicules the glamour of the and heroism. *Man and superman* subtitled 'A Comedy and a Philosophy' presents a relational view of man-woman relationship, the social aspect of marriage and the idea of Life-Force-Nature working he purpose through woman. Pygmalion deals with the related questions of education and class-distinctions. Major Barbara is an indictment of capitalist economy.

Shaw's work is characterized by superb craftsmanship, brilliance, a fine comic sense, social awareness and a serious moral purpose.

SAINT JOAN

Saint Joan has for its theme the clash between private judgement and constituted authority. The protagonist is pitted against the powerful institutions of the medieval times- the church and feudalism. The theme of religion and politics is treated in rational terms. Though the time of action is the past the play has contemporary relevance.

Shaw the rationalist is faced with a problem in presenting the character of Joan. There is an aura of romance around Joan of arc the French peasant girl who inspired he countrymen to fight the English invaders. The historical Joan was a visionary-she saw visions and heard 'Voices' which told her what to do. She was practical too and carried out the orders of the saints. Shaw has to reconcile these two opposites in Joan's personality-down-to-earth practicality and the visionary aspect. As Eric Bentley puts it "(Shaw) must show Joan as a

credible human being, and he must.... Make her greatness credible." It is for you to examine how far Shaw has solved this problem.

One of the striking features of the play is the co-presence of a variety of moods. In the words of Louis Martz the play moves from "farce to high comedy, to romantic glimpse of the warrior Joan in shining armour..... into an area of deepening somberness."

The first three scenes, which given an episodic character to the play, dramatise the "romance" of Joan's rise. The movement is "a strong, bustling, forward movement." The accent in these initial scenes is on the resourcefulness and the sound commonsense of the protagonist. Those she comes in contact with are completely in her power. Captain Baudri court cannot but send her to the Dauphin. Shaw is, of course, careful to add that the French squire is a man with no will of his own. When he consents to her seeking out the Dauphin, the 'spell' on the castle is removed' the steward appears to tell the squire that 'the hens are laying like mad.' In the castle at Chinon the Archbishop of Rheims, who is a man of religion only in his bearing, Bluebeard and the Dauphin decide to test Joan's powers about which there is so much of take around Bluebeard pretends to be Charles and Charles hides behind the curtiers. Joan has no difficulty in picking out the real Dauphin. She puts courage into the spiritless Dauphin who would like to be left alone and inspires him to fight the English. "And I come from god to tell to kneel in the cathedral and solemnly give thy kingdom to him for ever and ever and become the greatest kind in the world as his steward and his bailiff, his soldier and his servant." The speech has the desired effect; sitting on the royal chair Charles gives the Maid the command of his army. The Archbishop gives her benediction. In the scene that follows Dunois the French commander is in low spirits. He has been praying for the west wind as the success in the battle depends on it. Joan prays to St.Catherine and the wind changes direction.

These 'miracles' are explained away by Shaw in the play. 'The miracle' of the eggs is a piece of boisterous humour ('the hens are laying like mad'). What about the miracle of picking out the real Dauphin ? According to the Archbishop every one in France knows the Dauphin to be the meanest looking figure at court. As for the wind changing direction near Orleans it is a 'strumpet' wind that blows as it pleases. Shaw deals with these "miracles" as a comic artist and a sceptic. 'Joan must be judged', says Shaw, 'as a sane woman inspire of her voices because they never gave her any advice that might not have come to her from her mother with.' Her utterances in these scenes are full of commonsense; "They(the English) are only men. God made them just like us ; but He gave them their own country and their own language ; and it is not His will that they should come to our country and try to speak our language.: She can speak of the French too with the same simplicity: "He gave us our countries and our languages, and meant us to keep them." Inspite of her practicality and

commonsense there is an aura of mystery surrounding her. Shaw convinces us that there is something about her, that she is a bit of a miracle herself. The play does convey the idea that the maid of popular imagination is a credible human being as well.

In the last three scenes of the play Shaw dramatizes the conflict between Joan and the religious and political forces hostile to her. The Maid has led the soldiers to victory. Charles is about to be crowned. In the English camp Earl of Warwick, his Chaplain Stogumber and the Bishop of Beauvais from an alliance to fight Joan who proves to be a threat to the institutions they stand for. Spiritual and temporal powers close in on the rebel. Warwick represents the medieval feudal authority : He finds Joan presumptuous. He does not approve her direct dealing with the kings; "It is a cunning device to supersede the aristocracy and make the king sole and absolute autocrat. Instead of the kind being merely the first among his peers, he becomes their master. That we cannot suffer : we call no man master.....Now by the Maid's doctrine the king will take our lands.....and make them a present to God ; and God will then vest them wholly in the kind. " Cauchon the representative of the Catholic church is of the view that the Maid is diabolically inspired. She is a heretic according to him. "The Pope himself at his proudest dare not presume as this woman presumes. She brings the message of God to Charles and the Church must stand aside. She will crown him in the Cathedral at Rheims : she, not the Church!" Joan is setting the country above the church. Stogumber is a jingoist and thinks of Joan as a rebel as she denies the English the right to rule less civilized men. Cauchon calls her presumptuous way nationalism. Warwick uses the word Protestant to describe her attitude. Her adversaries sink their differences in view of the common enemy. "If you will burn the Protestant" he says to Caushon, "I will burn the Nationalist". Caushon says he will "strive to the utmost for this woman's salvation."

Joan has enemies in France too. After the coronation Charles turns out to be ungrateful. He charges her with conceit when she proposes that they should continue fighting and capture Paris.: He is for a treaty. Joan is impatient with him. She does not want to stop fighting because there are "still Englishman on this holy earth of dear France." The Archbishop accuses her of the sin of pride: "You came clothed with the virtue of humility ; and because God blessed your enterprises accordingly, you have stained yourself with the sin of pride. The old Greek tragedy is rising among us. It is the chastisement of Hubris." Dunois her only friend also feels that her little hour of miracle is over. The Maid stands alone. In an impassioned speech she denounces her enemies, putting her trust in God, who is also alone and can therefore understand her loneliness : "France is alone ; and God is alone; and what is my loneliness before the loneliness of my country and my God? I see now that the loneliness of God is His strength : what would He be if He listened to your jealous little counsels?..... it is better to be alone with God: His friendship will not fail me....."

The concluding scene dealing with the trial and execution of Joan Shaw makes a superb use of debate. Here we have brilliant drama of ideas- characters cease to be characters and become vehicles of ideas. Joan, who represents individual or private judgement, is in conflict with men of religion who represent constituted authority. The church and the political forces- English as well as French-have formed an alliance. The holy Inquisition is associated with the Bishop's court. Those with temporal power are not out of the picture. They would hasten Joan's execution. The scene is tragicomic- it moves from the comedy of internal bickering to a sombre mood of the unequal fight between the individual and the authority. Joan has been sold to the English by Burgundians. The trial takes place at rouen. Warwick is for hastening the execution. Cauchon tells him that the authorities have not been idle and they have already held fifteen esaminations. The Inquistior does not think that Joan's case is a political one, but one of the gravest cases of heresy within my experience". He says he is eager to save her soul from perdition. Warwick, on the other hand, is not desirous of saving her soul. According to him her death is a political necessity. D'Estivet refers to the blasphemies uttered by her. Warwick is asked to withdraw from the proceedings. The Inquisitor has contempt for the secular power. The English chaplain Stogumber is displeased that some of the important points are left out in the examinations, which calls for a Shavian dig at the English:

The Chaplain..... For instance, the Maid has actually declared that the blessed saints..... and the holy Archangel Michael, spoke to her in French.

The Inquisitor : You think, doubtless, that they should have spoken in Latin.

The Chaplain : Naturally, my lord.

'The Inquisitor : Well, as we are all here agreed, I think, that these voices of the Maid are the Voices of evil spirits tempting her to her damnation, it would not be very courteous to you, Master de Stogumber or to the king of England, to assume that English is the devil's native language. The Inquisitor is for dropping "trumpery charges" like "stealing of horses, and dancing's round fairy trees and the village children, and praying at haunted wells".

Leaving aside the minor charges the Inquisitor accuses Joan of diabolical pride. The Maid , according to him, is setting up her own judgement against the church and posing as an interpreter of God's will. He has no doubts as to her honesty and simplicity: he would not call her a hypocrite or a liar. The heretics, he argues, quite often believe honestly and sincerely that their diabolical inspiration is divine. These saintly simpletons have power to wreck both the church and the Empire. He contends that the Holy Inquisition is quite humane : "Before the Holy Inquisition existed and even now when its officers are not within reach, the unfortunate wretch suspected of heresy, perhaps quite ignorantly and unjustly, is stones, torn

in pieces, drowned, burned in his house.....” He assures that the trial would be fair. He is convinced of righteousness and the essential mercy of the trial.

Joan, chained by the ankles, is brought to the court. Inspite of the strain of the examinations she is not cowed down. She ‘confronts the court unabashed. Her attempt to escape from the prison is interpreted by D’estivet as a heresy : ‘....if you are in the hands Of the church, and if you are in the hands of the church and if you, and if you willfully take yourself out its hands you are deserting the church”. This explanation makes no sense to her. As for swearing on the Gospels to tell the whole truth she repeats what she has said earlier: “God does not allow the whole truth to told”. She makes it clear that she will swear no more than that. She points out the futility of physical torture. “If you tear me limb from limb until you separate my soul from my body you will get nothing out of me beyond what I have told you..... if you hurt me I will say anything you like to stop the pain : But I will say anything you like to stop the paid : But I will take it all backwards.’ The court decides to avoid torture and ‘forced confessions’. Asked by Cauchon whether she will accept the judgement of God’s Church on earth she replies that she will obey any reasonable command. She adds that she cannot be commanded to declare that her visions and the revelations did not come from God. The court is scandalized that Joan is imputing to the church ‘the error and folly of commanding the impossible’.

D’ Estivet mentions two grave ‘crimes’ Joan has committed: “First, she has inter course with evil spirits, and is therefore a sorceress. Second, she wears men’s clothes, which is indecent, unnatural, and abominable”. Joan’s defense is simple: “Is the blessed St Catherine an evil spirit? Is Saint Margaret?” The authorities tell her that she is- a heroic and will be burnt. Joan has her moment of doubt now : ‘oh, it is true: it is true : my voices have deceived me. I have been mocked by devils : my faith is broken. Ladvenu feels relieved that God has saved her at the eleventh hour. She is told that she has to sign a letter of recantation. Ladvenu reads the letter. She decides to recant. When she learns that she is sentences to perpetual imprisonment she tears up the document. In an impassioned speech which is “consciously poetic”, she visualizes for us her isolation and the agony of imprisonment: “Bread has no sorrow for me, and water no affliction. But to shut me from the light of the sky and the sight of the fields and flowers : to chain my feet so that I can never ride with the soldiers nor climb the hills; to make me breathe foul damp darkness, and keep from me everything that brings me back to the love of God..... all this is worse than the furnace in the Bible that was heated seven times”.

Joan is burnt off the stage. Overcome with remorse, Stogumber who has returned from the burning, compares himself to Judas and says that he will ‘go pray among her ashes.’

How is the clash between individual judgement and constituted authority dramatized in this scene? Is Joan depicted as a heroic individual in conflict with totally unjust opponents? Shaw has these remarks in the preface : "... ..if Joan had not been burnt by normally innocent people in the energy of their righteousness her death at their hands would have no more significance that the Tokyo earthquake, which burnt a great many maidens. According A. M. Gibbs what the scene dramatizes is 'a conflict between people acting according to their various lights or to inexorable pressures of their political situation'. To Louis L.Martz the whole thing is a piece of Shavian irony 'Thus Joan's apparent resemblance to the Aristotelian hero : her extreme self-confidence, her brashness, her appearance of rash impetuosity-all this becomes in the end a piece of Shavian irony, for her only real error in the play is the one point where her superb self-confidence breaks down in the panic of recantation. And so the hubris is not Joan's but Everyman's, the characters who accuse Joan of pride and error are in those accusations convicting themselves of the pride of self-righteousness and the errors of human certitude".

Shaw makes the trial scene dramatic by viewing Joan's actions from a variety of perspectives. Side by side with the protagonist's view-point we have her opponents' reasons for destroying her. But for these perspectives the play would have been melodramatic.

Shaw justifies the inclusion of the Epilogue on the ground the "Joan's history in the world" did not end with her execution. He means to show both "the canonized Joan" and 'the incinerated one'. The Epilogue is a brilliant piece of comedy, satire and fantasy. It is reminiscent of the satyr play which followed the performance of a tragedy in ancient Greece. The satyr play was often a burlesque of the themes of the main play. Incidentally, the Knight's speeches in Eliot's Murder in the Cathedral are modeled on Shaw's epilogue. Here all the main characters of the play appear and provide a choric commentary on the execution of Joan.

Twenty five years have clasped. Another trial presided over by corrupt judges has rehabilitated Joan. Charles is relieved that no one can say now that he was crowned by a heretic and sorceress. In his conversation with Ladvenu from whom he has come to know of Joan's rehabilitation Charles makes a shrewd remark, "If you bring her back to life, they would burn her again within six months for all their present adoration of her." Ladvenu leaves saying that he will have nothing to do with kings.

Charles's dream follows. He sees the figure of Joan. He brags that he has led many successful battles and is now known as Charles the Victorious. Joan is happy that she is still a presence. The apparition of Cauchon appears and says, "they have excommunicated my dead body." He adds that men will see in him the triumph of evil over good. Yet, he claims, he was

merciful and Just. Next to appear is the figure of Dunois. The maid learns from him that the English have been driven out of France. He is sorry that he did not do a thing to prevent the burning of the maid. The English soldier 'a saint from hell' is the same person who had presented Joan with two sticks ties together as a crucifix at the time of the execution. For him hell is no bad place after all. He has 'tip-top' company there. Stogumber is full of remorse. He says that he has been redeemed by the sight of the maid burnt to death. Cauchon asks him, "Must then a Christ perish in torment in every age to save those that have no imagination ?" Warwick enters and justifies the burning of Joan as a political necessity.

A clerical look sing gentleman in twentieth century dress makes his appearance to announce the canonization of Joan. Joan is in raptures. Dunois comments, "Half an hour to burn you, dear saint, and four centuries to find out the truth about you."

We How see a vision of a statue of Joan. Cauchon, Warwick, Stogumber, the Inquisitor, the English soldier and Charles kneel before Joan and sing per praise. They celebrate the triumph of good over evil.

The maid asks whether she can return to earth as a living person. The replies are evasive. Cauchon says, "..... mortal eyes cannot distinguish the saint from the heretic." The figures fade away, except the soldier. Charles goes to bed. The soldier says that these kings and bishops are destined to go to hell. It is time for him to return to hell. Joan is alone. Her lament closes the play, "O God that maddest this beautiful earth, when will it be ready to receive thy saints? How long, O Lord, How long ?"

The Epilogue, according to some critics, is "a disconcerting, inartistic mixture of farce, satire and didactic explanation." It is also praised as a stroke of genius. What is your view ?

SELECT CRITICISM

..... Shaw, despite the fact that his intellectual stance is often deeply pessimistic, wrote the grater part of his work in the passionate belief or hope that man's lot could be changed for the better. And for the meliorist the tragic mode is necessarily uncongenial, since tragedy, as a ritual of lament, characteristically portrays situations in which we see a progressive diminution of choice; although it may celebrate and affirm the human spirit, its stress is on the immutable laws by which human destiny is controlled .....Shaw's reductive comedy can take irritating forms (he lapses into "flippant" derision"): but it has also its "noble and serious aspects" .....Shaw saw comedy as a means of tolerating pain, as the creative, constructive form appropriate to meliorist social intentions, and as the literary form which is

capable of presenting the most truthful account of human experience.

(A.M. Gibbs : SHAW)

The mystical insights of Saint Joan are obvious enough : he miracles, the sense of power, the voices and clairaudience, and best of all the wonderfully composed Epilogue, where Joan's spirit talks to the earth people who are traveling in the astral while their bodies sleep. Joan contains nearly all Shaw's favourite qualities: bisexuality, soldier ship, occult powers, saintliness, common sense, efficiency.

(Wilson Knights in SHAW : 20th century views)

Shaw must have realized that here (in the records of Joan's trial) was an opportunity to study and recreate a person who united in herself and recreate a person who united in herself so much that he had divided between his practical and his idealistic characters.....

Whether Joan can be thought to have "succeeded" depends wholly upon the criterion of success. In war she outdoes the most gifted professional soldiers : she was a success. Yet, after her victories she is outdone by the same professionals: she was a failure. The effect of her victories was lasting ; she was a success. She was outwitted and burnt: she was a failure. Yet, after her death the practical men decided that they had made a mistake : she was a success. Would they then like to have her back again ? No, that would be inconvenient: she is a failure.....

Shaw cannot with the anarchists and their myriad unconscious sympathizers resent authority ; he finds it requisite for order and performance. He cannot with the authoritarians reject non-conformity; he finds it requisite for all human development.

(Eric Bentley : BERNARD SHAW)

It seems possible, if we will not demand an Aristotelian hero, and if we view the area of tragedy as a sort of scale of spectrum ranging between the two poles of doubt and affirmation : or, to put it more precisely, between the pole of fruitless suffering and the pole of universal cause. Not a scale of value, but a spectrum of various qualities, with *a Farewell to Arms* making one extreme, outside the area of tragedy, and Shakespeare's *Tempest*, marking the other extreme. In between, within the area of tragedy, would lie an enormous variety of works that would defy any rigorous attempt at definition, except that all would show in some degree a mingled atmosphere of doubt and affirmation, of human suffering and secret cause. Far over toward the side of fruitless suffering we might find the plays of Ibsen or

Othello ; somewhere in the middle *Hamlet of Oedipus Rex* ; and far over toward the other side we might find a triad a strongly affirmative tragedies: Oedipus at *Colonus, Samson Agonistes and Murder r in the Cathedral*; and still farther over, perhaps hanging on by his hands to the very rim of tragedy - we might even find a place for Bernard Shaw. (Louis Martz: 'The Saint as Tragic Hero' From Tragic Themes in Western Literature, ed Cleanth Brooks)

CHAPTER – VI

SAMUEL BECKETT: WAITING FOR GODOT

Samuel Beckett and the theatre of the absurd

Born on 13th April 1906 in Dublin, Samuel Beckett was the younger of the two sons in a Protestant family. He was an average student and displayed academic brilliance only during his college days, when he wrote fiction as well as non - fiction. He was befriended by James Joyce who had a tremendous influence on him. He wrote poems, short stories, novels and plays including Murphy. Molloy, Endgame and Waiting For Godot, many of which were written in French. Biographers say that he chose to write in French because he thought that writing in a foreign language would impose some discipline on him and make him write with clarity and economy of expression. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1969, and became a recognized world figure.

The themes of Beckett's works usually involve the problems facing modern man. e.g. the search for the self, the hollowness of Western culture, the absurdity of man in the world, etc. What is remarkable is, that though his themes are serious, Beckett's works always have plenty of humour, as is seen his best-known work, 'Waiting For Godot.' The play is usually regarded as a good example of "drama of the absurd." The phrase "absurd drama" or the "theatre of the absurd" gained recognition through Martin Esslin's book The Theatre Of The Absurd published in 1961. The dictionary meaning of "absurd" is "ridiculous", "opposed to reason", while Eugene lonesco says that the absurd is that which is devoid of purpose. According to him, man is cut off from his religious metaphysical and transcendental roots and therefore is lost - all his actions become senseless, absurd, useless. This is because modern man is sceptical and questions all the beliefs and basic assumptions of former ages, which have been tested and found wanting. The senselessness of life and loss of ideals is reflected in the works of dramatists like Beckett, Adamov, lonesco and Genet, who are the major dramatists of the absurd theatre. These exponents violate all dramatic conventions and their plays do not have the characteristics of successful plays, e.g. an interesting story, a well-constructed plot, good characterization, a proper theme, etc. They make use of devices like clowning, nonsensical dialogues and such absurdities which have earned it the title of Absurd Theatre. These dramatists appear to suffer from a sense of metaphysical anguish due to being cut off from religious, transcendental and social roots and are anguished at the senselessness of life which makes man's existence absurd. Esslin says that they do not argue about the absurdity of the human condition, but merely present it in terms of concrete stage images. No doubt they play a satirical role when they criticize a society that is petty and dishonest, but what is more important, they present a picture of a world that has lost its meaning and its

purpose. Some of the themes common to these plays are life, death, communication, alienation, disintegration, etc. Though they contain slapstick humour, the plays are pessimistic and complex, made more so because the minimum of plot and characterization and repetitive dialogue.

Waiting For Godot : A Summary

Waiting For Godot was first published in U.S.A. in 1954 and performed in London in 1955. The Times Literary Supplement described it as "a prolonged and sustained metaphor about the nature of human life." The play is divided into two acts - in both the action takes place on a country road under a tree, and the time is evening. The characters are - two elderly tramps - Vladimir ("Didi") and Estragon ("Gogo"), a local land owner - Pozzo, his slave - Lucky and a small messenger boy. When the play opens, the scene is a country road. It is evening and Estragon, sitting on a low mound near a tree, is trying to take off his boot. He pulls at it with both hands, panting, and gives up the effort. Exhausted, he rests for a while, tries again, and fails. Vladimir enters and Estragon says, "Nothing to be done." Vladimir replies that he too is coming round to that opinion. The two men are waiting for someone of the name of Godot, who, they hope, will do something for them. They are not sure exactly what Godot will do for them, any more than they know for certain whether they have to come to the right place on the appointed day. They occupy the time as best they can until the arrival of Pozzo, a local land owner, on his way to the fair to sell his slave Lucky. Pozzo halts a while with Estragon and Vladimir, eats a meal in their presence, even granting them the bones which his slave rejects, and then in gratitude for their society makes Lucky dance and next think aloud for their entertainment. The three become so agitated by Lucky's intellectual performance that they all set upon him and silence him. Estragon and Vladimir have not been alone many moments together before a small boy appears with the news that Mr. Godot will not come this evening but would come tomorrow. The boy departs; night falls abruptly; and after briefly contemplating suicide by hanging themselves from the tree, the two men decide to leave but, despite their decision to go, do not move as the curtain falls.

In Act II, the curtain rises the next day on a scene identical except for the fact that the tree has put forth a few leaves. Vladimir is joined on the stage by Estragon and much the same things happen, except that when Pozzo and Lucky appear (from the side they made their exit in Act I), Pozzo happens to have gone blind and Lucky dumb. All four collapse on top of one another and then somehow manage to get up again. Pozzo becomes exasperated at Vladimir's questions about time, saying furiously that life itself is only a brief instance. Pozzo leaves, driving Lucky before him, from the side he had entered in Act. I. After another brief

interval the boy comes again and delivers the same message as before. The sun sets; the moon rises abruptly; the two men again contemplate suicide; and then, despite their agreement to leave, make no movement as the curtain falls. So ends the play in which, as one critic has wittily put it, nothing happens, twice.

Characterisation

Of the five characters in the play Vladimir and Estragon appear first. They complement as well as supplement each other. Estragon is preoccupied with his boots, while Vladimir is preoccupied with his hat. Vladimir is the more intellectual and cultured of the two and therefore always looks for appropriate words to express himself; sometimes even Latin. Vladimir is more sensitive, emotional, affectionate and demonstrative than Estragon. e.g. He wants to hug Estragon, feels lonely etc. But when they discuss the idea of hanging themselves, Estragon sees at once that Vladimir, who is the heavier of the two, may break the branch of the tree, but Vladimir needs to have this explained to him. Vladimir always peers into his hat as if looking for something -maybe ideas. When Lucky leaves his hat behind, Vladimir exchanges it for his, perhaps preferring other men's ideas to his own. Vladimir sings a lullaby to Estragon and covers him with a coat when he falls asleep. He is also capable of thinking of others and sympathising with them. He is shocked to see the sores on Lucky's neck and protests to Pozzo, who wants to sell him.

On the other hand, Estragon is concerned more with his own self. He does not bother to think much and is content with the first word that comes to his mind. He is irritable, obstinate and more selfish than Vladimir and is more interested in Pozzo's discarded chicken bones than his or Lucky's pain. He has a fit of bad temper like a child, sitting passively on the mound while Vladimir walks restlessly about with his eyes searching the horizon as if the answer to his agony might be found there. Estragon's imagination is spontaneous, and he habitually personalizes the universe; thus when he talks of Christ it is not surprising to find him identifying himself with him or that he claims, looking at his rags, to have been a poet. When Pozzo asks his name, he replies, "Adam." Estragon is also more naturally a victim - he is the one who is kicked by Lucky and beaten by the unknown persons who are referred to as "they". In Act I he struggles to get his feet into his boots: after the interval they are replaced by a pair a little too large. Finally, Estragon is closer to timelessness than Vladimir. All landscapes are now the same to him and his memory is incapable of reaching back even to the previous day.

The two tramps are two distinct individuals and are similar as well as contrasts to

each other. Vladimir's preoccupation is mental while Estragon's is physical. Vladimir is the more practical of the two, and Estragon claims to have been a poet. In eating his carrot, Estragon finds that the more he eats of it the less he likes it, while Vladimir reacts the opposite way - he likes things as he gets used to them. Vladimir remembers past events, Estragon tends to forget them as soon as they have happened. Estragon likes telling funny stories, Vladimir is upset by them. It is mainly Vladimir who voices the hope that Godot will come and that his coming will change their situation, while Estragon remains sceptical throughout and at times even forgets the name of Godot. It is Vladimir who conducts the conversation with the boy who is Godot's messenger and to whom the boy's messages are addressed. Estragon is the weaker of the two; he is beaten up by mysterious strangers every night. Vladimir at times acts as his protector, sings him to sleep with a lullaby, and covers him with his coat. The opposition of their temperaments is the cause of endless bickering between them and often leads to the suggestion that they should part. Yet, being complementary natures, they also are dependent on each other and have to stay together. They have been together for many years and they attract and repel each other. They feel a profound need for each other and this need sometimes transforms their hatred into tenderness.

Pozzo and Lucky are the master and slave pair, the latter being driven by the former by means of a rope tied round his neck. More dog-like than human, he responds to the cracking of a whip he himself carries between his teeth till his master has the need of it. He also has to carry upon his shoulders the weight of Pozzo's belongings. Bent under the weight of his burden, Lucky resembles a mule or an ass. Pozzo is cut off from the past because he cannot remember having met Vladimir and Estragon before. He is an egoist who loves the sound of his own voice and is convinced that he owns the road, the land around it and the people on it. Lucky carries a stool for him, on which he sits, as if it were a portable throne. Once he has risen from it, he does not stay unless begged to do so. He eats the chicken, and condescendingly, throws the bones to Lucky whom he calls "pig," and who is too weak to eat them. Lucky is the puppet who obeys Pozzo's commands. He dances, recites and thinks for Pozzo and is like an animal who can only cry and kick when beaten. His long speech terrifies his listeners because it foretells the extinction of the world. Vladimir seizes Lucky's hat. flings it on the ground and tramples on it, shouting that he has put an end to Lucky's thinking. The audience is given the impression that tyranny has won. Pozzo does not carry out his intention of selling Lucky and when we next see them, Lucky still carries the burden, but is dumb, and Pozzo has lost his sight and strength. The rope linking the two is shorter, symbolising the increasing dependence of the master on the servant.

Godot

The identity of the mysterious Godot is the most baffling aspect of the play. This mysterious character is the saviour for whom the two tramps wait because he will solve their problems. But instead of Godot, at the end of each day, a messenger boy arrives with the message that Godot will come the next day. At the end of Act II, we come to know that Godot does nothing and that he has a white beard. Godot has often been regarded as the age-old image of God as the Father.

Apparently once, Vladimir and Estragon had seen Godot. But they do not remember him quite clearly, and the vague promises he seems to have given them are treated with a light-heartedness born of doubt. In fact, it seems to them as if God, Godot, and Pozzo were sometimes merging into one blurred picture. When, in Act II, they talk of God, Pozzo appears and is mistaken by Estragon for Godot. Godot is vague, merely an empty promise, and waiting for Godot has become a habit with them. Although the name Godot undoubtedly includes the word 'God,' the play deals with merely with the concept of God, and therefore God's image is left vague. It appears that Godot does nothing at all, and the only information given by the messenger bot is that Godot will not be coming today but tomorrow. Beckett clearly indicates that it precisely Godot's non-arrival which keeps the two tramps waiting for him and their faith in him alive. Godot is the external figure who can bring a change in the immobility of the two tramps for whom he certainly exists, and waiting for him is likely to be rewarded. At the same time, there is doubt about the nature of his offer, and if it is not advantageous, they are afraid they will not be able to leave it. Whoever Godot maybe, he is a powerful person having some hold over the tramps which prevents them from canceling their appointment with him. Godot fails to appear in the play, yet he is as real as the other characters. The tramps need him to give meaning to their universe and since they depend on his arrival, until he arrives, everything that happens is provisional. Godot's very absence demonstrates his presence, and he dominates the play in which he fails to appear.

The structure of the play

It is not possible to divide the play into beginning, middle and end. But it has a firm structure based on repetition and symmetry, e.g. In both Act I and II Pozzo's arrival is foreshadowed by one of the men imagining he can hear the sound of people approaching. The ending of the two acts has identical wording. The names Vladimir - Estragon and Pozzo - Lucky are made up of the same number of letters. But they are more contrasting than similar. Vladimir is the neurotic intellectual type, Estragon the placid intuitive type; Pozzo is the

bullying extrovert, Lucky the timid introvert. Vladimir instinctively sympathizes with Lucky, while Estragon experiences a degree of fellow-feeling for Pozzo. The two acts are also symmetrically constructed - the Pozzo - Lucky incident in each precedes the appearance of the boy who brings the news that Godot will not come that day but the next day. In Act I, Lucky makes a long speech but in Act II, he is completely silent. Repetition and symmetry in dialogue are also very effective, e.g. In Act I:-

Estragon: His friends.

Vladimir: His agents.

Estragon: His correspondents.

Vladimir: His books.

Or in Act II:-

Estragon: Like leaves.

Vladimir: Like sand.

Estragon: Like leaves.

Some prominent themes in the play

The play is a direct presentation of waiting, which is made visible and audible to the audience. We can discover a common ground between ourselves and the two tramps who are waiting for Godot because the experience of waiting is common to all. Though they say they are waiting for Godot, they cannot say who or what Godot is, nor can they be sure that they are waiting at the right place or on the right day, or what would happen when Godot comes, or what would happen if they stopped waiting. They have no watches, no time-tables, and there is no one from whom they can get much information. They cannot get the essential knowledge, and they are ignorant. Without the essential knowledge they cannot act, and so they are impotent. They produce in us a sense of baffled helplessness which we experience when forced to remain in a situation which we do not understand and over which we have no control. All that they do is seek ways to pass the time in the situation in which they find themselves. They tell stories, sing songs, play verbal games, pretend to be Pozzo and Lucky, do physical exercises. But all these activities are mere stop-gaps serving only to pass the time. They understand this perfectly. It is in the act of waiting that- we experience the flow of time in its purest, most evident form. When we are active, we tend to forget the passage of time; but if we are waiting passively, we are confronted with the action of time itself. Being subject

to the flux of time, human beings are, at no single moment, identical with themselves. We can never be sure that the human beings we meet are the same today as they were yesterday. When Pozzo and Lucky first appear, neither Vladimir nor Estragon seems to recognize them; Estragon even takes Pozzo for Godot. But after they have gone, Vladimir comments that they have changed since their last appearance. Estragon insists that he did not know them while Vladimir insists: "We know them. I tell you. You forget everything" In Act II, when Pozzo and Lucky re-appear, cruelly deformed by the action of time, the tramps again have their doubts whether these are the same people whom they met on the previous day. Nor does Pozzo remember them. Here, then, is another aspect of "waiting*' which is conveyed to us: the act of waiting makes us experience the flow of time. To wait means to experience the action of time, which is constant change. And yet, as nothing real ever happens, that change itself is an illusion. The more things change, the more they are the same. That is the terrible stability of the world.

The play tells us about the futility and meaninglessness of life. The characters in this play have been pulled out of the world, and they no longer have anything to do with it. The world has become empty for them. The two heroes, or anti-heroes, are merely alive, but no longer living in a world. And this concept is carried through with a merciless consequence. The tramps are waiting for nothing in particular. They even have to remind each other of the very fact that they are waiting and of what they are waiting for. Thus, actually they are not waiting for anything. But, exposed as they are to the daily continuation of their existence, they cannot help concluding that they must be waiting. And, exposed to their continued waiting, they cannot help assuming that they are waiting for something. It is meaningless to ask who or what the expected Godot is. Godot is nothing but the name for the fact that the life which goes on pointlessly is wrongly interpreted to mean waiting, or as waiting for something. The physical and mental state of these four characters also hints at the disintegration of man which is perhaps the result of the realisation of the aimlessness and futility of his existence.

Critics on the play

Waiting For Godot has evoked a lot of favourable as well as unfavourable comments. Much of the negative criticism says that Beckett denies the existence of God and his vision of man is as an alienated being whose life is meaningless and futile. Martin Esslin in his book The Theatre Of The Absurd says that this is because man finds himself in a universe deprived of illusions and of light, and feels lost because he is cut off from his religious, metaphysical and transcendental roots. Critics like G. S. Fraser and others have interpreted it as a morality play and as a religious allegory, while others like Ruby Conn have said that Beckett has mocked the Christian tradition. The word "Godot" in the title has aroused much controversy

because some, like Eric Bentley say that it is deprived from Balzac, and others say that Beckett derived it from Simone Well's play Waiting For God or from Tom Kromers book Waiting For Nothing. The play has also been much discussed as a tragic-comedy since the tragic as well as comic elements have been traced in it. The humour in the play has often invited the comment that the slapstick humour brings it close to a music hall comedy. Both the elements can be traced in instances like Lucky's monologue, which has tragic implications but also has a comic effect due to the manner of its delivery. Critics have also commented on the characters - Vladimir and Estragon - being interpreted as the mental and physical aspects of man, and Pozzo and Lucky as the master and slave. One can only conclude that this play is not a conventional play but a complex and rich work of art that is open to various interpretations.

CHAPTER – VII

HAROLD PINTER: THE HOMECOMING

Pinter's life and work

The first performance of Harold Pinter's The Room took place in 1957. But the three plays which brought him critical acclaim were The Birthday Party (1958), The Caretaker (1960), and The Homecoming (1964). These plays, as well as his other works, reflect the influences of his childhood, and later, of the Second World War. Born (1930) and brought up in London, he was the only child of Jewish tailor. At an early age, he displayed excellence in acting, and after completing his school education, he attended the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, and later, also acted in several plays. His experience as an actor enabled him to absorb all the factors that hold an audience in the theatre viz structure, performance, speech etc.

Being born Jewish and having experienced World War II at close hand in London, was to have life-long consequences. The threat and actuality of bombing attacks and violence symbolised by the German Gestapo left a permanent scar on his mind. Pinter's beginning as a dramatist coincided with other dramatists appearing on the scene at the same time. Pinter was included with some of these in the group of Absurdists because their plays depicted the unspecified 'menace' associated with the world outside, the mixing of the comic and the serious, and the seeming 'absurdity' of some of his dramatic situations. Pinter's plays were regarded as mere realistic and as dealing seriously with the working class, e.g. All the characters in The Caretaker are the victims of an uncaring society. The reason for his continued appeal is the style and subject matter of his plays as also the fact that they were different from the typical theatre of the time.

The Homecoming: A Summary

The play is divided into two acts and the action takes place in a large room of an old house in North London. When the curtain opens, we see Lenny sitting on a sofa ticking off horses in a newspaper. Max enters looking for a pair of scissors and they have an acrimonious exchange. Max remembers when he and a friend called MacGregor used to make a big impression in the West End of London as hard men, and he recalls his days on the racecourse when he used to have a gift for recognising the best horses. Lenny changes the subject by complaining about Max's poor cooking. Sam enters in his chauffeur's uniform. He has driven a wealthy American to Heathrow Airport and been given a box of cigars. He claims to be the most popular of the firm's chauffeurs. Max responds by asking why he never got married. Sam says there is still time, and recalls how he used to escort Jessie, Max's wife, in the old

days when Max was busy. Joey enters. He has been training as a boxer in the gym. He and Sam say they are hungry, expecting Max to provide dinner. He reacts furiously. Sam reminds Max that he was trusted in the past with escorting Jessie - something Max would never have allowed MacGregor (now dead) to do. Max threatens Sam with eviction when he stops working. The scene ends in blackout.

When the lights come up it is night. Teddy and Ruth are standing at the threshold of the room with suitcases. Teddy has brought his wife of six years to meet his family. They have come from America where Teddy is a professor of philosophy. Teddy is anxious not to wake the sleeping family. He encourages Ruth to go to bed, saying that she needs some rest. She asks of he really wants to stay and suddenly says she wants to go for a walk to 'have a breath of air.' Teddy is left standing alone when Lenny enters from his downstairs room. Lenny complains of not being able to sleep. Teddy goes upstairs to bed. Lenny lights a cigarette and sits, waiting. Ruth returns and Lenny begins to questions her. She explains that she is Teddy's wife and that are on a visit to Europe and have been to Italy. Lenny engages in a series of speeches designed to impress Ruth, including two long stories where he describes his violent assault on women who have been unreasonable to him. Finally he approaches Ruth and attempts to remove her glass of water. Ruth is unmoved by any of Lenny's tactics and reverses the proceedings, saying. 'If you take the glass...I'll take you.' Lenny is unnerved and accuses her of making some kind of proposal. She leaves him and goes upstairs. Max is wakened by Lenny's shouting and comes downstairs asking what the matter is. Lenny refuses to answer and, when Max persists, he demands to know the details of his own conception. Max spits at him and leaves. The scene ends in blackout.

In the morning Joey is seen shadow-boxing in front of a mirror. Max enters complaining that he has been a driven out of the kitchen by the noise of Sam washing up the breakfast dishes. He calls Sam into the room and accuses Teddy of being resentful. Teddy and Ruth come downstairs wearing dressing-gowns. When Max sees them for the first time he accuses Teddy of bringing a whore into the house and demands that Joey chuck them out. Joey calls him 'an old man.' Max hits Joey with all his might and begins to collapse with the effort; he then sits Sam with his stick when Sam comes to help him. Getting to his feet, Max asks Ruth how many children she has (three), and, turning to Teddy, he asks for a cuddle and kiss. Teddy faces- him and responds, 'Come on, Dad. I'm ready for the cuddle.'

When Act II begins, it is afternoon and the family is having a coffee after lunch. Max says that his wife Jessie had been 'the backbone to this family,' who had 'a will of iron, a heart of gold and a mind.' He is then irritated by Sam's not going to work, and says he has had to work hard to bring up his family. He regrets not having been to Teddy's wedding and expresses his delight at the success of the married couple. Lenny begins to question Teddy on

matters of philosophy, but Teddy refuses to be drawn. Ruth diverts attention to herself and her physical presence. She says that she was born nearby, but left for America, which she describes as 'All rock and sand.' Max, Lenny and Joey exit. Teddy is left alone with Ruth. He is anxious to return to America but she shows no enthusiasm. Teddy leaves to pack. Lenny enters and sits by Ruth. She tells him of her when she was 'a photographic model for the body.' Teddy returns with the suitcases expecting to leave with Ruth but Lenny puts on a record of slow jazz and asks for a slow dance. When Max and Joey return, Lenny is kissing Ruth - while Teddy stands by with Ruth's coat. Joey takes Ruth from Lenny, sits with her on the sofa and embraces her. Max notices that Teddy is ready to leave and wishes him well. Ruth suddenly pushes Joey away, stands up and demands something to eat from Joey and something to drink from Lenny. Lenny pours drinks all around. Ruth asks Teddy if the family have read his critical works and he replies that they wouldn't understand them because the family lacks 'intellectual equilibrium.' The scene ends in blackout.

In the evening Teddy is sitting with Sam, who confides that he was always his favourite, and his mother's favourite, of all sons. Lenny enters, goes to the sideboard and discovers that a cheese roll that he has made has disappeared. Teddy says that he has eaten it. This provokes a lengthy accusation from Lenny that Teddy has let the family down by withdrawing to America and becoming 'A bit sulky. A bit inner.' Joey comes downstairs and Lenny asks him how he has got on with Ruth. Joey says that he didn't get 'all the way.' Lenny tells Teddy that his wife is a tease. Max and Sam enter and hear what's been going on between Joey and Ruth. Max suggests that the family asks Ruth to stay with them and each contribute to her upkeep. Lenny argues that it would be less expensive if he set her up as a prostitute: Teddy could act as their representative in America, supplying clients. When Ruth comes downstairs Teddy puts the family's proposition to her. She makes stringent demands as to the conditions she would expect if she were to agree the offer, which Max and Lenny accept. Sam steps forward and declares "MacGregor had Jessie in the back of my cab as I drove them along' and then collapses. The family is unconcerned about this collapse. Teddy takes his leave. Ruth sits, relaxed. Joey kneels before her and puts his head in her lap. Max falls on his knees by the side of her chair and Lenny stands, watching.

Characterisation

From a psychoanalytical point of view, Pinter is an acute observer of human behaviour and is well aware that the individual psyche is very complex and does not always operate according to reason. The individual in the present is affected by his experiences in the past, which cannot easily be defined with certainty. Good and bad experiences can be remembered, more or less vaguely, which leaves us in the present in a state of insecurity. Pinter does not begin the play with any exposition or prolonged introduction to the characters

and the setting. The Homecoming presents us with a family, and a very particular family. All the characters of the play belong to one family and we are not concerned with anybody else except Jessie, the dead mother, and MacGregor - also dead, but uncomfortably close to this family. Max is a commanding presence throughout the play, made so by his ferocious verbal aggression which is directed at everybody in turn. Mis violent fury derives from the fact of his growing old, and he represents those characters who undergo the frustrating experience of ageing. Max hates growing old and the key to his character is resentment. He resents the memory of Jessie because she has died and left him to run the house. He resents Sam because he has to cook for him. Most of all he resents his sons, because they are in the process of replacing him, and they are an ever-present reminder of what he has lost. Lenny is smart and independent, Joey is virile and goes training to box, while Max is consigned to the kitchen. His bitterness erupts whenever he is reminded of his own decline, mostly in vicious verbal assaults, but also physically. His furious reaction on seeing Teddy and Ruth for the first time is the result of complex emotions. Teddy is his eldest son who, as such, holds an immeasurable attachment. However Teddy has abandoned his family for six years, so causing an immeasurable disappointment. Stuck in the house all day, with everyday's routine the same, Max is obsessed with reviving the past when he believes he was impressive. Yet despite the frustrations of becoming old, Max remains a formidable figure because of his mental vitality and verbal energy.

Lenny is the most provocative character in the play, initiating the direction of the dialogue in most of his scenes However, his motives remain inscrutable: he never says and does. Even his "occupation' remains uncertain. There can be no doubt about Max and the butcher's shop or Sam and his cars or Joey in demolition: they talk about their jobs and nobody questions what they say. Lenny admits that he has an occupation, and eventually claims to have 'a number of flats' in the area of Greek Street, by which it is suggested that he is running prostitutes as a pimp. This comes as a surprise to Max, so the matter is at the very least questionable; we don't in the end need to know - our lack of certainty is part of the intrigue of the play. What holds our interest and what matters is how Lenny behaves on stage. Generally he reacts to rather than create a situation: he reacts to Max at the beginning of the play, to Sam when he enters and then to the arrival of Teddy and Ruth. Firstly, he encourages Teddy to go to bed and then awaits the return of Ruth from her walk. The scene is a remarkable conflict. Lenny's two long monologues fail to impress Ruth in any way.

Sam is regarded as the conscience of the family, the sweet old uncle who does his best to keep the peace and who finally blurts out his guilty only to stop what the family are doing to Ruth. But this is surely not the case. He may be the weakest and the most sexless, but he knows how to survive and when he can he is quite prepared to irritate and annoy - Max especially. It is second nature in this family to exploit weaknesses in the others, but in

the niggling banter Sam only goes so far. He is shrewd enough to know the limits. If the older generation is under constant threat from the younger, then the two older members - Max and Sam - can also be a constant challenge to each other. Max was tough and has brought up a family, so he can always score against Sam. Sam. however, still has a job and supplies an income, so he can expect Max to cook him a meal - thus emphasising Max's decline in status. His behaviour in the kitchen, noisily washing dishes and cleaning up, is certainly a deliberate irritant. The smallest detail can be telling, such as when he first comes in and talks to Lenny. His ignoring Max is a deliberate ploy which hits its mark - Max is forced to proclaim, 'I'm here too, you know.'

Commentators on The Homecoming are divided about Teddy. Is he the victim or the villain of the play, and does he win or lose? Pinter's objectivity, his intense concern to let his characters speak for themselves allows us to sit on the fence and say 'both.' On the surface he appears to do badly - he loses his wife to the family, and he suffers a large amount of criticism from Lenny throughout the play. On the other hand it could be argued that Ruth is a wife well worth losing. Of dubious background, mentally unstable and amoral, Ruth might have become an embarrassment to Teddv. Questions are also asked about who the real outsider is in the play, and whose 'homecoming' we see. Again the argument is unclear. On balance, however, if the family has any value at all, then Teddy is the one who opts out. He is the one who proposes to Ruth that she stays and pays her way, while he returns to the arid world of American academics.

The fact that Ruth is the one and only woman in The Homecoming makes her pivotal, and a touchstone by which we can assess all the men in the play. Furthermore, the archetypal family relationships that are presented allowed her to be seen in symbolic terms as a representative woman: she is regarded by the men in all the variety of roles that a woman can fulfil. However, she is also a character and .a personality in her own right, and a complex enigmatic figure whose motives are uncertain. More than any of the characters in the play, Ruth commands attention on the stage by the force of her physical presence. Lastly, when she comes downstairs and receives the family's proposition, she is seated throughout until the end, acting as a magnet, until the final tableau shows her in the dominant position, centre stage.

Joey is almost peripheral in the personality conflicts that occur within the family because he has no interest in them and because he is pretty dim-witted. He has none of the brilliance, fluency or cunning that is evident in the others. This leads to a perfectly likely conclusion that he isn't quite part of the same family. His physical strength is evident in this job as a labourer and his ambitions as a boxer (not a very promising prospect), and this presents us with an unsophisticated hefty lump ('that big slag,' Max cruelly calls him). He

can, therefore, be readily accepted as the son of Jessie. But he is so different from Max, Lenny, Teddy and Sam that circumstantial evidence implies that he could well be the son of MacGregor, the old heavyweight friend of Max who, according to Sam, 'had Jessie in the back of my cab as I drove them along.' It is significant that he is treated almost with affection by the family, probably because he is liked and because he offers no threat to anybody. He is bowled over by Ruth, utterly captured by her. Clearly he as lived without a mother from an early age and Ruth is something quite different from his usual pick-ups. She opens up a complex and frustrated emotional life which is vividly depicted in the final stage image, of his lying peacefully in Ruth's lap.

Some observations on the play

In The Homecoming there is a central event, which is the return of Teddy with his wife, but the rhythm of the play, which is the vital element in any production, is created by the totality of the structure. The play has a linear structure, in that one thing leads to another over a two-day time-span. Characters generally act in accordance with what has just happened to him. A series of dialogues moves towards an emotional climax in a very focused speech followed by a lighting blackout. When the lights come up Teddy and Ruth are standing, silent, at night, looking around the room. The mood is changed, and with it the rhythm of the play. The dialogue, filled with pauses, reflects an emotionally estranged couple and a radical intrusion into the house. The linear structure continues with Lenny's reaction to their arrival. The action in Act Two is very ambiguous. It can be taken entirely realistically and naturalistically, i.e. everything happens exactly as we see it. In the theatre, however, the language and movement of Ruth during the second act creates a complexity of responses. The structure of the play is determined partly by psychological realism and by elements of ritual, but the play is also held together, poetically, by its verbal echoes. Ideas and phrases reverberate and are repeated tantalisingly throughout. The play begins and ends with Max referring to animals - I had an instinctive understanding of animals,' and then, about Ruth, 'She'll make us all animals;' These and other verbal echoes provide a structural thread, holding the events in a tight, concentrated symmetry.

Language is fundamental to The Homecoming. It is the basis of structure, every scene being determined by how the characters talk and how they use language. The rhythm of the play is controlled by the type of speech patterns employed. Language and speech patterns are also the defining measure of each character. This involves abusive, obscene language; monologues that have different impacts and purposes; language games where personal attacks are couched in the strategic use of spurious enquiries - seemingly polite and genuine but really destructive and malicious; cryptic exchanges, where a subtext is at work and a mystery colours what is happening on stage; repetitive imagery which adds a poetic dimension to the

play.

Conclusion

The play examines family relationships with ruthless objectivity, devoid of any moral agenda. Some of early reviewers of the play dismissed the characters as an ugly, brutal, foul-mouthed bunch living in a slum. However, as the play proceeds, it is evident that the family live in a well-regulated household which is nothing like a slum. Inspite of the abuse, they stay together because they are a family and need each other. Teddy is the eldest son of the family and has betrayed them in the most appalling manner. His disappearance to America and abandonment of the family, must, during his six years of absence, have caused the deepest resentment to boil and fester. This alone would make his surprise appearance the cause of passionate and complex emotions. The appearance of Ruth merely compounds his offence. Max doesn't know who she is, and doesn't in the least care. All his fury and frustration is directed at Teddy. If Max recovers enough to 'let bygones be bygones' and cook the family a very good lunch, Lenny is not so forgiving. He is going to make Teddy answer for his betrayal, and Ruth provides the most convenient opportunity.

Ruth is more than a match for all of the men in the play, so we may conclude she decides to stay in this home of her own free will. As she says when Lenny and Max agree to her demands, 'Yes, it sounds a very attractive idea.' This could be her way of rejecting and putting-down Teddy who has, outrageously, put the proposition to her in the first place. However, all her speeches and actions during Act I indicate her rejection of her American home and her willingness to engage sexually with Joey and Lenny. There is nothing to stop her returning to America with Teddy, so why does she choose to stay? Of all the characters in the play, Ruth is by far the most enigmatic and she is, of course, the only woman. Her position as the one woman makes her the centre of attention in all the scenes. However, as a dramatic character she takes on an increasingly symbolic status, embodying various male perceptions of 'woman,' seen variously as a wife, a mother, a sister, a daughter and a whore. These roles are united in the final stunning image of her, seated and relaxed, in control of the family and the room. So Ruth is both a psychologically realised personality and a symbol of a poetic vision - a representative of 'woman' and a dream-image of male wish-fulfilment.

Ruth is, essentially, the wife brought back to England by her husband to visit his family, and thus may be regarded as the conventional Pinter intruder, whose arrival disturbs the inhabitants of the room and creates the action of the play. This marriage has certainly upset the family because they were excluded from it and Teddy has left the family home. So Ruth becomes a means whereby the family can get back at the eldest son for his betrayal. She is central to the 'game' that is intended to belittle Teddy. However, Ruth has her own agenda, which on one level is quite straightforward - she prefers what the family has to offer to what

America and Teddy have to offer.

On her arrival in the house with Teddy, after the family has gone to bed, it is evident that the two are estranged. Teddy appears anxious that Ruth be at ease and not nervous, but it is Teddy who is anxious and Ruth who seems perfectly 'at home.' Her question, 'Do you want to stay?' indicates her intuition that this is not a good place for them both to be. Her decision to go for a walk alone (in a London suburb, at night) is very telling. It shows her independence and it also indicates that she knows her way about - later she says, 'I was born quite near here.' It soon emerges that she has absolutely no regard for her life in America. Whenever Teddy tries to impress the family with his success she says nothing. Her life in America, and her life with Teddy, has all meaning and appeal. Her self-confidence and sexual confidence are demonstrated in her response to Lenny's violent and threatening speeches in Act I. and in her cool reaction to Max's filthy assault on her when he first sees her the morning after her arrival. Ruth does not need a guardian. She is able to look after herself simply by exercising her sexuality. In a play that piles shock upon shock, one of the most shattering events is the proposition by Lenny that they put Ruth on the game- make a prostitute of her-to save on the expense of keeping her in the house.

The Homecoming has retained its power to shock by its apparent assault on respectable family values. The aggression and violence shown between the generations, the hatred of women displayed by the disaffected male family, and the ruthless assault on the returning son and his wife are all provocative, disturbing and unpleasant. However, the play also has a powerful, theoretical impact, and despite the most obvious complaints that maybe levelled at the characters for their language and behaviour, it is possible to find a more positive and hopeful scenario being explored. The action revolves around the male family and Ruth. They are all frustrated and in need. The behaviour between them might just as reasonably be related to a concept of love as hate. The family - except for Teddy - has stayed together and they acknowledge that they are a unit. The absent mother, Jessie, for all her reputed faults, has left a vacuum. In America, Ruth has been driven to despair by the life that has been imposed on her. The family needs a woman, and the woman wants to be needed. The play moves to a logical conclusion. Because of the apparent immorality that is displayed during the play and the revelation of what might be called 'basic instincts,' the play is bound to disturb and upset. However the main focus is on basic human needs: the need to be recognised, appreciated, wanted. All the characters, apart from Teddy, reveal their insecurity and expose their emotional weakness, while Teddy, who claims to be in control of his life and emotions, is rejected. Teddy is a complete outsider, while Ruth is the play's pivot. The play's title refers to her, and not to Teddy. It is no homeeoming for him, whereas she is instantly on home ground. Ruth's relations with the family consist of extended bargaining: she has sex to offer, they have the territory, and in the end they strike a deal. She retains the whip hand -a

point which Pinter emphasises in the last scene when the apparently victorious Max falls on his knees begging for attention from her. Her tactics are absolutely clear. She wants to translate sexual power into real estate, and she does so by specifying precisely the property she desires- the number of rooms, services, domestic assistance, wardrobe-and putting the whole thing in contractual terms. The absence of a mother, and the personality of the dead mother, Jessie, pervades the play. At the same time, Ruth is a mother-figure, she is the reincarnation of Jessie. At the end of the play, Ruth again rules the household. This is the Miomecoming' of the title. It is not Teddy who has come back home, but the mother who has returned.

CHAPTER – VIII

JOHN OSBORNE: LOOK BACK IN ANGER

About the author

The play has a strong autobiographical flavour, and this makes it necessary to know a little about Osborne's background. His father was a white-collar, middle-class man who married a barmaid. Born in 1929, John Osborne's upbringing was suburban, which hints at a struggle at maintaining a shabby respectability. He was sent to a third -rate public school, where he declares he was very unhappy. Some of the feelings of dislocation and confusion that we feel in characters like Jimmy could be a reflection of this. His background enabled him to understand the sense of drifting and uncertainty which characterized the period of the early fifties, and drew him into sympathy with the characters in his plays. He left school early and worked as a journalist for a couple of years. Later he spent a number of years as an unsuccessful actor in obscure theatre companies. This experience of the stage as a craft may have been part of the reason for the success his plays enjoyed.

Osborne's Look Back In Anger was regarded as a revolutionary play which led to the coining of the term 'anger in the context of the new wave of dramatists who were regarded as 'angry young men'. This was not a well-defined school of thought but the work of these dramatists reflected certain shared attitudes to social and political changes in post-war British society. These writers not only exposed the hypocrisies of upper-class ethos and lifestyles but also portrayed the lack of direction of those not privileged by birth and traditional social power. So when Jimmy Porter made his appearance on stage, he was easily recognised as part of the existing tradition of the post-war young rebel hero. The success of Look Back In Anger opened up new avenues for various other representations of contemporary life by new playwrights and gave a new lease of life and energy to the theatre.

Look Back In Anger: A summary

Look Back In Anger is about a group of young people living in England in the mid-1950s. The husband. Jimmy Porter, is an ex-undergraduate who has married a wife from a class higher than his own. They share a flat with a young, uneducated friend, Cliff, who helps Jimmy run a sweet-stall. Act I, which is long and undivided, introduces all the major characters either on stage or by description. We meet Jimmy, Alison and Cliff, and are shown the uneasy but functioning relationship they have established. We are introduced to Helena, and are shown the disruptive effect her entrance is likely to produce. We are given lengthy descriptions of all the other characters whose relationships with the main figures in the play shape their present responses. Primarily these are Alison's father and mother; Hugh's mother,

who has set Jimmy up with his sweet-stall; Hugh himself; Webster, the only one of Alison's friends whom Jimmy can tolerate, and so on, right down to minor characters, rapidly sketched in the dialogue, such as Alison's brother Nigel. We learn about Alison's pregnancy, the factor that will come up again in a more complex way in Act II and which provides a sort of resolution when she loses her child in Act III. We are introduced to the game of bears and squirrels, the full explanation of the significance of which is held over until Act II Scene I, when Alison tells Helena how it became 'the one way of escaping from everything' for both of them. Finally, the act ends with Jimmy's receiving the news of the death of Hugh's mother, providing an effective climax and allowing the complication of Act II, Alison's resolution to go home, to occur in the period of his absence.

Act II is divided into two scenes. The first scene is concerned primarily with the effect on the existing situation of the arrival of Alison's friend, Helena. Helena is puzzled, appalled and yet intrigued by the situation she finds. At first she functions as a device to allow Alison to tell the audience in greater depth about the early days with Jimmy. In Act I Alison has had to be a silent character. Now for the first time we see the events of the past from her point of view.

Act II Scene One also begins with the process of complicating the action by introducing the potential for future dramatic ironies, for instance, Jimmy's hope that Alison will learn to suffer, to understand the meaning of pain, sets up the potential for the response to the loss of their child in Act Three.

Act II Scene II introduces the new figure of Alison's father, an ex-Indian army colonel. The character serves to complicate the action further by failing to behave in the stereotypical way we might expect. His sympathy for his daughter's plight is modified by his sense of how she may have been partly to blame for estrangement between herself and Jimmy. A sense of continuity if not similarity between the colonel and Jimmy complicates any simple decision we might be tempted to make in favour of one or other of the characters who have been introduced.

When Helena tells Jimmy at the end of the act that Alison is to have a baby, and he reacts in a violent and bitter outburst, she reveals as the climax of Act II the attraction she has felt for him and which has emerged only obliquely up until this point. The act ends with their passionate embrace. The complications established in Acts I and II are now fully wound up and Act III must resolve them. The time passage between Act II Scene II and Act III Scene I is the longest in the play ('several months later'). At first nothing appears to have changed except that Helena is substituted for Alison as the main target of Jimmy's abuse. Her reactions are less profound, his abuse, as a result, less intense.

The first scene of this final act ends with the return of Alison. Helena seems almost relieved and resolves the situation by asserting her intention of leaving. Jimmy and Alison are left alone to renew their struggle. But there has been a change. Alison, through the loss of the baby, has arrived at the point of desolation which Jimmy wished for her and she capitulates in the longest and the most agonised speech she has in the whole play. At the end, Jimmy and she can only retreat again to the temporary refuge of bears and squirrels, leaving any future open and in doubt.

Characterisation

Jimmy does not have a strong physical appearance: he is 'a tall, thin young man.' He smokes a pipe, which he uses as a device to assert a masculinity and assurance that perhaps, in reality, he does not possess. He is a character, the description suggests, who has a strong need to compensate on the surface for weakness within himself, weaknesses which he perceives, but not too well or too completely. As a result, there is a feeling behind the description that there are possibilities latent in Jimmy for the capturing the audience's sympathy if they perceive the real figure behind the mask, the unsure, tender and honest young man behind the blustering, cruel and arrogant surface. Cliff draws our attention to the most overt clue to Jimmy's insecurity and weakness, in his joking attack on food. Jimmy is like a child, whose eating is a cry for comfort. The source of his anguish is in his awareness that he is convictionless and adrift, unable to act because of his own sloth and inadequacy.

The essential point about Jimmy's character and his role in the play is his relationship with the past. The title, Look Back In Anger, contains the essential contradiction which the character of Jimmy explores. He is angry when he looks back at a past in which he longs to be contained, but which he cannot ever quite accept. This is not because he has a better ideal or a dream to offer, but because he cannot accept the dreams of the past except by a process of sentimentalising them. At the heart of the character seems to be an anger at being cast-off and excluded. And in this mood he is as capable of sentimental idealism as anyone in the play. It is not surprising therefore that he should have a kind of grudging respect for Alison's father, Colonel Redfern, Like Redfern, Jimmy survives by idealising the past, and by creating defensive pockets of memory to which he can retire when the emptiness of present and the desolation of his future become too much to bear. Like Colonel Redfern hovering on the brink of nostalgia, Jimmy repeats the well-worn anecdotes of an idealised past. Jimmy is trapped between his sense of a past which he idealises, and from which he is. of course, excluded, since it is a falsified one, and the absence in the world in which he has to live of any ideals that can replace his idealised version of the past.

Alison represents all that Jimmy represents in a ruling class. She may be superior on the basis of her class, but Jimmy conveys the superiority of his gender, though this is never enough for him. Alison finally capitulates to Jimmy on his terms. She has lost her child and

the ability, perhaps, to have other children. Jimmy has had to destroy the possibility of motherhood in her, in order to gain her as a 'mother' for himself, and. his victory over her class has been achieved in terms of her gender. The two retrace their steps into the playroom of bears and squirrels, a childlike pre-sexual place where they can find some peace and rapport. The play ends with Ali son's arms around Jimmy, comforting him, so that any maternal qualities she may have had are from now on to be exclusively for him. There is no equivalent focus given to Alison and in fact the play is male-centered in its focus. The other characters in the play, viz. Cliff, Helena, and Colonel Redfern, recede into the background in the presence of Jimmy, who dominates the stage from the beginning to the end.

Some observations on the play

The atmosphere of the opening helps to establish some legitimacy to Jimmy's claim that the other two are stifling him, and themselves. The slow opening, with only the occasional sound of Alison's iron, the rustling of papers, the long, boring emptiness of a chilly, spring evening captures the mood in a small Midland town where there is nothing to do, and nowhere to go, except the pictures or the pub.

In addition, despite Jimmy's nagging aggression, there are subtle indications to the audience that Jimmy's cruelty is part of a complex defence mechanism which hides is his own basic insecurity. Notice how careful he is tq sprinkle to his attacks on the 'posh Sundays' with enough intellectual references and word games to prove his right and ability to be critical of them: 'the English Novel;' 'the White Woman's Burden;' and, in an ironic allusion to T.S. Eliot's Mrs. Porter (in The Waste Landl 'And Mrs. Porter gets them all going with the first yawn.'

On the surface Cliff's tenderness towards Alison may appear to emphasise Jimmy's aggression and cruelty. But Cliff shows affection and understanding towards Jimmy too, and the audience is required to notice his tone, and modify their response as a result. Thus, when Cliff kicks out Jimmy in Alison's defence, there is instantly a note of comic tenderness in his following comment, as if trying to tell Jimmy that he understands and that he is buffer for them both, not just for one alone. Jimmy is not a self-indulgent young man who doesn't know what he wants and screams and shouts because he can't get it. Much of his behaviour conforms with this childish pattern, for instance his screaming at Alison to make tea and then his sudden announcement that he does not want any. So through much of the opening act, Jimmy behaves like a spoilt child, but this is a symptom rather than the root of his character. Restless, selfish and egoistic as his responses are, they are nevertheless rooted in a legitimate anger against a world where people make no demands, but are content to accept what they are offered. His anger is directed at those who come close enough to be struck, but his dissatisfaction is with himself, and with his inability to change the world. It is to find what it is that Jimmy wants because the fact is that he himself has no clear idea of what that is. In fact

he has no positive future aim at all. He feels that happiness, love, certitude and moral security are unattainable, and settles for opposition, argument, hatred and mutual destruction. Overcome by the boredom and frustration he feels at his own existence, and significantly stressed by the atmosphere of the small, dull, Midland flat, Jimmy turns to one small event after another, seeking any outlet for the obscure sense of purposeless which haunts him.

The world of squirrels and bears has been the only refuge to which Jimmy and Alison have been able to retreat. The world of imaginary furry little animals is also an expression of mutual dependence. Jimmy's aggression towards the women in the play reveals his refusal to allow Alison or anyone else to discover his need for them. Jimmy's father was betrayed by his mother and he fears that the same process of betrayal must occur as a part of all relationships. In this sense, as well as in a social and political sense, he looks back in anger to the past and it is this which effectually bars trim from any possibility of a future. Because Jimmy's character is so complex, it is insufficient to dismiss him as a merely a spokesman for his generation. There is certainly a strong connection between the individual and psychological problems he faces, and the problems of a whole generation of people in the 1950s. The spread of educational opportunities, which on the surface might have been seen as only desirable, had an unfortunate side-effect. Jimmy is an example of those people who, born into the working class, were educated out of it, but were unable to find an acceptable role in the complexities of the English class system. In the flawed world of post-war England, these people had no place to go. As a result, Jimmy Porter sentimentalises the working class because he is no longer part of it. Jimmy belongs to no world. There is no route back for him into the working-class world of his childhood, and he thinks even this is suspect since his father and mother are clearly working-class elite. The alternative, the world of the upper / middle classes, is also impossible; that world can provide no refuge for him either. It can produce enemies, and so a struggle, but he cannot belong here, since to do so he would have to betray his past. To love Alison and her mother, he would have to reject his father and Mrs. Tanner, and he can do neither. He is trapped in the limbo of no class and no loyalty. Hence his tendency, which Alison notices and comments on to Helen, to create a personal myth about those people to whom he can be loyal. The attempt to forge a link between the two worlds, which Jimmy's speech reveals, is doomed to failure and the only possible solution is a retreat into fantasy. In Look Back In Anger, Osborne proffers no solutions for the situation he has recorded. At the end of the play Jimmy is left in despair, needing Alison's love but unable to accept it. Alison finally accepts his terms, but can buy them only a temporary respite. Their only refuge - the world of squirrels and bears - is a world that Jimmy knows will be invaded soon. The ending of the play is a way of stating what the whole play has made clear. For Jimmy and Alison the process of destruction is inevitable, for it is a process whose root is in the malaise of the time.

CONCLUSION

The main thing one has to keep in mind while studying a play is that it is a multiple art, using words, scenic effects, music, gestures of the actors, etc. The role played by words, or the literary element in drama will vary. e.g. In Shaw's plays, discussion is more important than the other factors, while Shakespeare knew the significance of all of them, and tried to maintain a balance between as many as possible. Like the other art forms, the plays written in every age reflect the current trends in contemporary thought as also the socio - economic and cultural influences of the time. Hence, it is important to keep these in mind as one analyses other aspects (like characterisation, plot, dialogue, action, spectacle, etc.), and at the same time study the play in the context of other works of the time.

QUESTION BANK

Sheridan : The School for Scandal

1. In what sense can you call The School for Scandal an anti-sentimental comedy?

2. The School for Scandal is a typical comedy of manners purged of its immorality. Discuss.

3. Illustrate Sheridan's "superb sense of situation" or Discuss how "he works from situation."

4. Compare The School for scandal with The Way of the World as comedies of manners.

5. How does Sheridan avoid and anticlimax after the successful auction scene and the screen scene?

Bernard Shaw: Saint Joana

1. How is theme of martyrdom treated by Shaw and Eliot in Saint Joan and Murder in the Cathedral?

2. It correct to describe Saint Joan as a drama of ideas"?

3. Is the Epilogue an unnecessary appendage to the play, Saint Joan ? Substantiate your view.

4. Comment on Shaw's delineation of Joan.

5. How do you place Shaw in the context of modern non-realistic drama?

1 Explain the term "Problem Play".

2 Define "Absurd" Theatre.

3 Explain the three unities in Shakespearean Dramas.

4 What is a Shakespearean Tragedy ?

5 Explain Drama as a genre (form) of literature.

6 Explain the term "Catharsis" .

7 Define Poetic Justice.

8 Explain Tragic flow of the hero in Shakespearean Dramas .

9 Bring out / Explain the biblical reference in Marlowes Dr. Faustus.

10 Critically analyze the End of Dr. Faustus.

11 What is Plot?

12 What is Poetic Drama ?

13 Explain the term soliloquy.

14 Explain the theme of Fall of Man in Dr. Faustus.

15 Explain the significance of the Porter's scene in Macbeth ?

16 Who is Godot ?

17 Analyze Jones " Home Coming".

18 Evaluate 'The School for Scandals' as a comedy of Manners.

19 Explain the significance of the title 'The School for Scandals'.

20 Write a note on characteristics of drama in Augustan Age.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Christopher Marlowe: Dr.Faustus

1. Marlowe : *B.J. Steane.*

2. Age of Shakespeare : *Edited by Boris Ford (Penguin)*

3. Marlowe's Dr Faustus : *Brockbank.*

4. And Morning in his eyes : *Philip Henderson.*

5. Twentieth Century Interpretation of Dr. Faustus.

6. Selected Essays : *T.S. Eliot,*

7. Critics on Marlowe ; *Edited by Judith O 'keill.*

8. Doctor Faustus : *Case book edited by John Jump.*

9. Varieties of Dramatic Experience : *Benard de Bear NicoL*

10. Frontiers of Drama : *Ellis-Fermor Una.*

11. Further Explorations : *L.C. Knights.*

Sheridan : The School for Scandal

1. Mrs. Oliphant: Sheridan (English Men of Letters.) This book seems to be now out of print, but must be available in all old libraries.
2. F.S.Boas: Eighteenth Century Drama (o up) (1953), pages 345 to end.
3. W.A. Darlington: Sheridan (Writers and their work, Longman)
4. Allardyce Nicoll: A History of English Drama. (1952)
5. F.W. Bateson: Eassays in Criticism, VII (1957).
6. J.Loftis: Comedy and Society from Congreve to Fielding (1959)
7. A.De Selincourt: Six Great Dramatists (1960)
8. Kenneth Muir : Comedy of Manners (1970)

Bernard Shaw: Saint Joana

1. *Bernard* Shaw-Major Barbara, Pygmalion Arms and the Man, Man and Superman, The Devil's Disciple.

2. *C. Ward*- Bernard Shaw.

3. *R. J. Kaufman (Ed)* - G.B. Shaw (twentieth Century Views)

4. *Eric Bentley*- Bernard Shaw

5. *A.M.* Gibbes -Shaw.

6. *Raymond Williams*- Drama from Ibsen to Brecht.

Samuel Beckett-Waiting for Godot

1. Cohn Ruby. Samuel Beckett: Waiting For Godot. A Casebook. London: Macmillan, 1987.

2. Esslin Martin. The Theatre Of The Absurd. Harmondsworth. Middlesex: Penguin, 1961.

Harold Pinter : The Home Coming

1. Esslin Martin. Pinter: The Playwright. London: Methuen, 1982.

2. Scott Michael. Harold Pinter: The Birthday Party, The Caretaker, and The Homeeoming, A Casebook. London: Macmillan, 1986.

John Osborne : Look Back in Anger

1. Hayman, Ronald. John Osborne. London: Heinemann. 1968.

2. Russel Taylor, John. John Qsborne: Look Back In Anger. A Casebook. London: Macmillan, 1968.

    1. Bradley, A. C. Shakespearean Tragedy. London: Macmillan, 1985,

    2. Cohn Ruby. Samuel Beckett: Waiting For Godot. A Casebook. London: Macmillan, 1987.

    3. Esslin Martin. The Theatre Of The Absurd. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1961.

    4. Esslin Martin. An Anatomy Of Drama. New York: Hill and Wong, 1977.

    5. Esslin Martin. Samuel Beckett: A Collection Of Critical Essays. New Jersey: Prentice - Hall, 1980.

    6. Esslin Martin. Pinter: The Playwright. London: Methuen, 1982.

    7. Ford, Boris. Ed. The Pelican Guide To English Literature. Vol. 6. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1958.

8. Hayman, Ronald. John Osborne. London: Heinemann.1968.

9. Kaufmann, R.J. Ed. G. B. Shaw: A Collection Of Critical Essays. New Jersey: Prentice - Hall, 1980.

10. Leech, Clifford. Christopher Marlowe: A Collection Of Critical Essays. New Jersey: Prentice - Hall, 1980.

11. II. Nicoll. Allardyce. British Drama. London: Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1973.

12. Russel Brown, John. Ed. Modern British Dramatists: A Collection Of Critical Essays. New Jersey: Prentice - Hall, 1980.

13. Russel Taylor, John. John Qsborne: Look Back In Anger. A Casebook. London: Macmillan, 1968.

14. Scott Michael. Harold Pinter: The Birthday Party, The Caretaker, and The Homecoming, A Casebook. London: Macmillan, 1986