

UGBA

Semester II
English

Core Course (CC) & Elective Course (EC) – 112 Title:
History of English Literature: 1625-1660

Unit No.	Title/Author/Topic	Text
01	A. Literary Features of the Age of Milton/ Puritan Age B. Metaphysical Poetry C. Milton as a Poet	<i>History of English Literature</i> by Edward Albert (Oxford University Press)
02	John Milton: Sonnets 1. Sonnet – 12 ‘I did but prompt the age’ 2. ‘On Shakespeare’ 3. ‘On His Blindness’	<i>Florets</i> (Orient Blackswan Pub.)
03	Poems: 1. ‘Holy Sonnet 14’ by John Donne 2. ‘Virtue’ by George Herbert 3. ‘The Garden’ by Andrew Marvell	<i>Poetic Quest</i> Ed. by Shubha Mishra, Vandana Bhagdikar (Orient Blackswan Pub.)
04	Acquaintances (Non-detailed) (See the Note below)	No Particular Text is Prescribed

Note:

Unit 4: Acquaintances with the works of writers of this period.

(The objective type of questions can be framed in which the students will be asked to write the name of the author, the year of publication, the form of the work and the age/period to which it belongs.)

List of Titles for Acquaintances:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Comus</i> | 9. <i>Perkin Warbeck</i> |
| 2. <i>Paradise Lost</i> | 10. <i>Religio Medici</i> |
| 3. <i>Samson Agonistes</i> | 11. <i>A New Way to Pay Old Debts</i> |
| 4. <i>The Temple</i> | 12. <i>Leviathan</i> |
| 5. <i>The Mistress</i> | 13. <i>Holy Living</i> |
| 6. <i>The Rehearsal Transpros'd</i> | 14. <i>The Lady of Pleasure</i> |
| 7. <i>Noble Numbers</i> | 15. <i>The Compleat Angler</i> |
| 8. <i>The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England</i> | |

Recommended Reading:

- Bennett, Joan. *Four Metaphysical Poets: Donne, Herbert, Vaughan, Crashaw*. Cambridge UP, 1964.
- Hudson, W.H. *An Outline History of English Literature*. Atlantic Publishers, 2008.
- Long, William J. *English Literature: Its History and Its Significance for the Life of the English Speaking World*. Ginn & Co., 1919. (Digitalized in 2007: Project Gutenberg)

- Patrides, C.A. & Raymond B. Waddington. *The Age of Milton: Backgrounds to Seventeenth-Century Literature*. Manchester UP, 1980.
- Sanders, Andrew, *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*. Oxford UP, 2004.

=====

=

CC/EC: 112

Examination Pattern for external exams:

Q. 1. Long Answer based on Unit -1 (1/2) (Up to 850-900 words) Marks
17

Format 1: General Question **OR** General
Question
Question **OR** Short Notes – 2 out of 2

OR Format 2: General

Q. 2. Long Answer based on Unit -2 (1/2) (Up to 850-900 words) Marks
17

Format 1: General Question **OR** General
Question
Question **OR** Short Notes – 2 out of 2

OR Format 2: General

Q. 3. Long Answer based on Unit -3 (1/2) (Up to 850-900 words) Marks
17

Format 1: General Question **OR** General
Question
Question **OR** Short Notes – 2 out of 2

OR Format 2: General

Q. 4. (a) Answers based on Unit -4 (5/7) Marks 10
(b) MCQs (1mark ×9) (From Unit 1 to 3)
Marks 09

Total Marks: 70

=====

=====

UGBA- SEM II – Core English – 112

(History of English Literature: 1625-1660)

UNIT - 1

Question: (a)What are the literary characteristics of the age of Milton? OR

(b) Discuss the prominent features of the Puritan age or period of Common Wealth?

Answer:

Introduction: The entire period of this age is covered by the civil war. The earlier years were marked by the quarrels between people and monarchy. Elizabethan literature was marked by the unity in spirit resulting from the patriotism of all classes and their devotion to the Queen, who thought of the welfare of the country. But under the rule of Stuarts, everything was changed, the kings were open enemies of the people. In literature, the age is full of confusion as the nation was divided into political and religious causes. The old ideas were breaking leading to confusion everywhere. Spenser's traditions were breaking, his followers could not continue his masterly poetic excellence. The Puritanism was shattering the high ideals of the Elizabethan age. This age is called "gloomy age" which did not produce the great masters of verse and great prose. The literary features of the age are as follows:

(1) The Reaction in the Tone of Poetry:

There was a great change in the tone of poetry. The poetry of Elizabethan was marked by exalted poetic fervor full of hope and vitality. During this period there was decline in the standards of poetic excellence in several ways. According to Edward Albert, "The output, especially of poetry, is much smaller, and the fashion is towards shorter poems, especially the lyric of a peculiar type." In place of long poems, there was an output of shorter poems. Lyrics were attempted. In the new

poetry there is more of intellectual play of fancy than of passion and profundity. In prose there is a prevailing of melancholy tone associated with the age.

(2) Metaphysical Poetry:

The Metaphysical poetry was started by John Donne in the later part of the Shakespearean age. It was continued by Crashaw, George Herbert, Vaughan and Marvel. Their work show blend of passion and thought, full of learned imagery and striking conceits. They reflect psychological insight and subtlety of thought. It denotes the work of a group of poets who came directly or indirectly under Donne's influence. Most of the metaphysical poets had religious and mystical spirit. The poetry of this kind appealed to the intellect rather than to heart of human being.

(3) Cavalier Poetry:

There was another kind of poetry produced during this age which was quite different from the Metaphysical poetry. It was called Cavalier poetry. The Metaphysical poetry was mystical and religious in theme of love. Harrick, Lovelace and Suckling wrote poetry under the influence Ben Jonson. They believed in classical restraint and concise lucidity. The Cavalier poetry had simplicity and graces in structure; and had highly polished and refined style.

(4) The Collapse of Drama:

The drama achieved its supremacy during the Elizabethan age, which was not continued during the age of Milton. Many factors combined to oppress the development of drama during this age. Firstly the whole age was disturbed by the Civil War. Secondly the Puritans came to power in England. They were against the entertainment, so they opposed the performance of drama. In temper this age was not dramatic. As a result, the dramatic works were small and unimportant. The dramatic activity declined during this age due to closing of the theatres in 1642.

(5) Expansion of Prose:

The development of prose was carried further from the previous age. There as great output of excellent prose writings during this time. The great progress in the writing of sermons shows an excellent feature of prose. Many pamphlets were written on numerous subjects like history, politics, philosophy and contemporary problems. We see advancement in using prose style. The artificial prose style was replaced by natural way of writing.

(6) John Milton

In this age, as compared to the Elizabethan age there were few great writers. The greatest contribution of the age was John Milton, who claims the greatest place in English literature. His prose is the finest example in English language, his poetic achievement is considered next to Shakespeare. He was the first poet to write an excellent epic successfully in English literature.

To Sum up, the significant event historically is the civil war. It actually started in 1642 and reached its culmination in the execution of Charles I in 1649. Then there was establishment of Common Wealth, rise and fall of Oliver Cromwell. After his death in 1660, the monarchy was restored in order to remove further confusion in politics of the England.

UGBA- SEM II – Core English – 112

(History of English Literature: 1625-1660)

Question: Milton as Poet

Answer: Milton was one of the greatest poets of England and is placed next to Shakespeare in the hierarchy of English poets. The First period of Milton's poetic career begins from 1629 and goes up to 1640. This is the period of his University career and his study at Horton. It is popularly known as the Horton period. The early poems of Milton give expression to the feelings of his heart and they are prelude to the greater work that was to be produced in his later life. During the Horton period, Milton composed "Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity", "L'Allegro", "II Penseroso" and "Comus". "Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity" (1629) is produced under the influence of the Metaphysical poets. The ode is a dignified lyric. It celebrates the birth of Christ. It is regarded as the most beautiful ode to the English language. The poem indicates the influence of Spenser. There is in this ode that sublimity of thought and splendor of imagery, which are present in his later poems. While at Horton, Milton composed "L'Allegro" and "II Penseroso", two long poems in octosyllabic couples dealing with the respective experiences of the gay and thoughtful man. The pieces are decorative rather than descriptive, artificial rather than natural but they are full of scholarly fancy excellent poetical phrasing. In "L'Allegro" Milton represents the life of the joyful Man from the early morning to the time of his retiring.

The next two poems of this period were in masque form; one a fragment, Arcades, the other a complete masque, taking its title from the chief character, Comus, god of revelry. "Comus" is a remarkable poem which displays Milton's high

poetical qualities. It shows him in transition from the pastoral, idyllic manner of his early poems towards the greater purpose of mature work. The poem represents the triumph of virtue and is marked by high seriousness and moral edification. The central theme of the masque is -

“Mortals that would follow me / Love virtue she alone is free / If virtue feeble were / Heaven itself would stoop to her”.

It is the first of Milton's poems where Puritanism shows clear signs of its influence.

“Lycidas” is a pastoral elegy upon the death of Edward King, a college-mate of Milton who was drowned in the Irish sea. It is a pastoral elegy in the style of the Greek masters. Though the poem is written on his friend Edward King, yet Edward King is not its real subject. The real subject of the poem is the uncertainty and torment occasioned in Milton's mind by his realization that death might ruin the achievement of that fame which was his ambition. In “Lycidas” the poet writes about fame and corruption prevailing in the Roman Catholic Church. The poem of mourning becomes a poem of vigorous satire and strong personal note. This poem is to be reckoned among the highest of Milton's achievements, is something new in the English poetry. In form it is pastoral, but this artificial medium serves only to show the power of Milton's grip. The elegy has the colour and the music of the best Spenserian verse.

During the second period Milton wrote political work and prose writings. He wrote many prose pamphlets and the famous “Aereopagatica”. During this period of prose all that Milton composed by the way of poetry are the eighteen sonnets. The sonnets have varied interest. They are few in number and are historically of great importance, because they mark that return from Shakespearean form of sonnet to the Petrarchian model. Among the prominent sonnets of Milton, “On His Blindness”

and “On the Late massacre in Piedmont” are worth to notice. His sonnets are written about controversial subjects, women, political figures, and his own life. The sonnets of Milton are characterized by sincerity of feeling, clarity of thought, simplicity of expression and lack of humour.

The third period of Milton’s poetry is the period of great poems. During this period Milton produced “Paradise Lost”, “Paradise regained” and “Samson Agonistes”. “Paradise Lost” was begun as early as 1658, and issued in 1667. Its theme is the fall of man and in form it follows the strict unity of the classical epic. In conception the poem is spacious and commanding; it is abundantly adorned all the details that Milton’s rich imagination can suggest. The characters, especially of Lucifer, are drawn on a gigantic scale and the blank verse in which the work composed is new and wonderful. This type of blank verse has founded a tradition in English; it has often been imitated and modified, but never paralleled. The plan of the poem is vast and extensive. Milton’s aim in writing this poem was to justify the way of God to man, but he leaves the problem as ever. “Paradise Lost” is an epic of art based upon the classical conventions. The vast and vague dimensions of the poet’s universe, in which super-natural beings pass between Heaven and Earth baffle the imagination. W.J. Long rightly remarks about the greatness of the theme: “It will be seen that this is a colossal epic, not of a man or a hero, but of the whole race of man; of that Milton’s characters are such as no human hand could adequately portray ...”. The similes and metaphors in “Paradise Lost” are splendid. There is not a simile in the poem that is trivial or meaningless, scarcely one that does not add dignity to the conception it illustrates. The style of poem is more Latin of any other English poem. The meaning of words, the syntax, the division of sentence reminds the scholarly reader of classical authors. It an example of what Arnold called “the grand

style'. It is indeed perhaps the greatest example in any language of that style, and it sustains that style almost throughout its entirety with miraculous power.

UGBA- SEM II – Core English – 112

(History of English Literature: 1625-1660)

Question: What are the main characteristics of Milton's poetry?

Answer:

Milton was one of the greatest poets of England and is placed next to Shakespeare in the hierarchy of English poets. Mark Pattison is of the opinion that if England was represented in a congress of international poets, she should be represented by Shakespeare first and Milton next. Milton's works are divided into three periods and the poems he composed during these periods have great importance in the history of English poetry. The following are the characteristics of Milton's poetry.

[1] Sublimity:

The supreme quality of Milton's poetry is sublimity. His poetry elevates and uplifts us. Milton's poetry exercises an elevating influence on the mind of the reader. He gives us an impression of moral exaltation. Milton's subject matter is sublime. Voltaire is of opinion that Milton's poetry was the grandest thing in English literature. Not lovers and lasses, but God, Satan, Adam, Eve and Christ are the characters that Milton introduces in his poetry. In the "Nativity Ode" the subject is Christ who brought about religious regeneration in Europe. The songs of the spheres are heard in his Ode. The poet presents the setting of stars and oceans by the God at the beginning of the creation and trumpet of doomsday. In "Comus" Milton presents sublime thoughts concerning virtue. "Paradise Regained" is an expression of the sublime thoughts and ideas that Milton had about God and religion.

[2] Sense of Beauty:

The chief characteristic of Milton's poetry is his profound love of beauty in its various forms. He is deeply sensitive to the beauty of external nature. He depicts the beauty of countryside in "L'Allegero". He describes the beauty of the sun, the clouds, the sunset, lawns and trees standing in their beauty and grandeur. In "Il Penseroso" he presents many exquisite landscapes of beauty for our delight:

"To behold the wandering moon / Riding near her highest noon,

Like one that had been led astray / Through the heaven's wide pathless way",

In 'Paradise Lost' his sense of beauty is supreme. In Book IV, he gives a glowing description of the beauty of Adam and Eve.

[3] Milton's High Seriousness:

Matthew Arnold considered high seriousness as a characteristic of good and great poetry. His seriousness marks both Milton's character and poetry. There is a lack of humour in Milton's poetry. Walter Raleigh beautifully says, "Almost all men are less humorous than Shakespeare but most men are more humorous than Milton." The poet never bothers about a big audience of admiring readers. His desire is to have "fit audience though few", an audience that may be able to appreciate the high seriousness of his poetic thought.

[4] A Great Poetic Artist:

The high seriousness of Milton's poetry goes well with his profession as a poet. Milton is convinced that the vocation of poet is lofty and exalted and keep up to his vocation he writes poetry of great sublimity and beauty. The artistic workmanship of the poet comes out everywhere. He writes as a conscientious artist and whatever has been left behind is a hallmark of artistic

perfection. Poetry has been by far our greatest artistic achievement and Milton is for the greatest poetic artist.

[5] His Superb Imagination:

Milton's imagination is superb. Only a man of Milton's imagination could have the "Paradise Lost". The theme of the epic is vast and of a more universal human interest than any theme handled by Milton's predecessor. The imagination of the poet creates a world of heaven and hell which could only have been possible with the superb imagination that he has. He has an imagination that can soar above time and space and be at home in infinity. Lowell rightly says: "In reading "Paradise Lost: one has a feeling of a vastness. You float under an illimitable sky brimmed with sun-shine or hung with constellation"

[6] His Suggestive Power:

The most striking feature of Milton's poetry is his suggestive power. The effect of his poetry is produced not only by what it expresses, but by what it suggests. The imagination of the poet conjures many beautiful and suggestive pictures. In Milton's poetry more is meant than meets the ear.

[7] Milton's Classicism:

Closely connected with his Puritanism, there is in Milton's nature a strong bent for classicism. He is keen student of the ancient classics and is steeped in classical learning. He is great scholar. He introduces a number of classical references in all his poems. A large number of epic from Homer and Virgil are scattered throughout his works. His learning was wide and matured and he wrote Latinian prose and verse as freely as he wrote English. His classical bent is apparent in (a) his choice of classical and semi-classical forms – the epic, the Greek tragedy,

the pastoral and the sonnet, (b) the elaborate descriptions and enormous similes in “Paradise Lost”, (c) the fondness for classical allusion, which runs right through all his poetry, (d) the dignity of classical turn.

[8] Style and Diction of Milton:

Milton’s style has been called grand style, because it has always been an unmistakable stamp of majesty in it. Milton’s language is not the language of ordinary life. His diction is grand and majestic and the language that he employs is the language of a special art. He borrows words from Latin and employs them in his language. With Latin words there goes his classical diction. The Miltonic diction follows the ancient models. Similes and metaphors abound with the result that the impression that is left on our minds after reading his poetry is that of grandeur, majesty and dignity.

To sum up, sublimity, sense of beauty, high seriousness, a great poetic artist, superb imagination, suggestive power, his classicism and his style and diction are the qualities of Milton’s poetry.

UGBA- SEM II – Core English – 112

(History of English Literature: 1625-1660)

THE METAPHYSICAL POETRY OF SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

A group of poets in the seventeenth century gave us an altogether different type of poetry. Here the word different* is used in the sense that it neither contained the Elizabethan love-theme nor the chivalrous adventures which were very well relished by the Elizabethan writers and the readers. For the poets of this group, their poetry became a media of their mental and spiritual exercise. Their poetry is marked by the presence of divinity and religiosity in it. The poets of this group made attempts positively to make their poetry look different from the poetry of the preceding age. They introduced certain literary features in their poetry.

Dr Johnson, keeping in view those literary features of their poetry, coined a term 'metaphysical poetry' which later on proved to be a label for their poetry. Even today, the readers of English literature recognise their poetry using the same term. Dr Johnson has understood, defined and described the characteristics of the metaphysical poetry in his own way, in the light of the literary features of their poetry. It must be noted, however, that Dr Johnson, who did not approve of the poetic practice of these poets, used the term 'metaphysical poetry' in a derogatory sense. Dr Johnson has marked a number of new poetic features in this poetry. Almost all the metaphysical poets were men of learning and their major function was to make the manifestation of their learning through their poetry. But it was unfortunate on their part that they tried to express it through their poetry which, sometimes, merely remained verse.

If we consider poetry as an imitative art as mentioned by Plato, Donne and his followers do not deserve to be called poets. They imitated nothing - neither Nature nor life. Dr Johnson puts them below the level of imitators. The thoughts that they produced in their poetry were new but not natural. The wit for which they are highly

rated was, according to Dr Johnson, nothing but a combination of dissimilar images or resemblances among the images which look different on the surface. Their interest was fully centred around achieving something unexpected from the people and surprising them. They neglected the human sentiments while writing their poetry. The metaphysicals wanted to prove their superiority by showing the contemporary literary world that they had begun an enterprise which none of their predecessors could think of. Amplitude was a mania with the metaphysicals who amplified everything. It was up to the extent that they left fancy and reason far behind in their zest for giving a metaphysical effect to their poetry.

While showing such drawbacks of the metaphysical poetry, Dr Johnson does not forget to show us the positive side of it. This is a proper way of acquainting the readers with a new type of poetry. It is true that they were fond of manifesting their wit which they did by bringing about different conceits in their poetry but, in doing so, sometimes they were successful in finding out the unexpected truth. Their far-fetched images and conceits could carry the idea and meaning of the poem to that realm which was neither expected nor imagined by their contemporary readers. The second benefit, which was shared by both the poets and readers was that, they were required to possess vast reading and thinking either to write or interpret this kind of poetry. This does not mean that the poets used such images to widen the horizon of knowledge. They did it simply because they wanted to be praised rather than understood.

Generally, they drew their conceits from those areas of knowledge which are quite unfamiliar to the readers of literature and lovers of poetry. In brief, the metaphysicals brought their images and conceits from the remote background which was not traced by the readers of that time. Some of the metaphysicals, who tried to depict platonic love in their poetry, gave great importance to the tears of lovers. Sometimes, they used images which contradicted their own ideas that they wanted

to express in their poetry. Of course, it should not be forgotten that it was a voluntary act on the part of the metaphysicals to deviate from the main currents of poetry to give some new shape to it. This they practised in excess and hence, they failed in their zestful attempts to create something new.

The remarkable feature of the metaphysical poetry is its emphasis on intellect. The metaphysical adopted the intellectual approach both in selection and in the treatment of the subject-matter. Helen C White describes the following two factors which are responsible for the birth of the metaphysical poetry: (1) the philosophical conception of the universe, and (2) the role of a human being in the world. These two factors inspired the poets to write in a new pattern. With the metaphysicals, the first and the foremost problem was: what kind of verse should be selected to express religious and philosophical ideas? The poets of this group, according to Helen White, put emphasis on intellect not only because they had that zest to give something new but also because they found it necessary to use wit for bringing in conceits and images.

It is because of the element of wit that the metaphysical poetry has secured a special place in the literary history of England. All the metaphysicals had a great fascination for wit with which they tried to refine their language of poetry. Wit played a vital role in the selection of far-fetched and scientific images. The writers during the period of Renaissance were interested in the love-theme or in the expression of the abstract in the universe. The metaphysicals shifted the mode of expression from abstract to personal. Of course, this made their poetry ambiguous for the readers. It became necessary for the readers to refer to their private life and issues, before making an attempt to analyse their poetry. This quality of personal expression is not present in all the metaphysicals. Some of them tried their hand at doing so. Donne expresses his personal views on love and religion in many of his

sonnets and poems. Cowley, one of the metaphysicals, says of poetry that it is not the picture of a poet, but of the things and persons imagined by him. It is because of this that personal quality enters his or her poetry. Most of the metaphysicals were interested in the personal expression in order to communicate their feelings. This tendency resulted into a new point of view in poetry, commonly known as the writer's point of view. Here the reader has to think on the lines demanded by the writer.

The Relation of Thought and Feeling: Commenting on the relation between thought and feeling in the poetry of the metaphysicals, T.S. Eliot states that the relationship between thought and feeling is in fact "the recreation of thought into feelings". Reacting to this comment of Eliot, Duncan says: ... Eliot has understood the metaphysical poets at least somewhat better than the metaphysical poets could have understood the theories of their work. While minutely examining their poems, a relationship could be seen between their thoughts and feelings. Donne, in his poem "The Extasie", finds a close link between body, soul and mind. His letter to Mr Henry Goodyere is an evidence of his admission of this relationship:

We consist of three parts, a soul,
and a body and mind: which call
those thoughts and affections and
passions, which neither soul nor
body hath alone, but have been
begotten by their communication,
as Musique results out breath and a coronet.

The metaphysicals were well-acquainted with the human elements like thought, passion and affections and they also believed that there exists some kind of

relationship among these three which they viewed more in terms of morality and less aesthetics.

Ambiguity: Duncan considered ambiguity also a major feature of the metaphysical poetry. In the dictionary of Modern Critical Terms, it has been defined as "something which is opposed to clarity". But in recent times, it has been considered a major virtue of literature, with the help of which, a writer can achieve the desired effect in his work. I A Richards has also defended the presence of ambiguity in poetry with an argument that the clarity which is required in the scientific language is not essentially needed in poetry. But this does not give a licence to a writer to employ this device just for the sake of employing it. The poet should not possess undue lust for creating different shades of meaning at a time. Whenever the poet creates multiple meanings by employing this device, he should see that his created meanings are interlinked and all those meanings should intellectually interact with the readers.

Most of the metaphysicals were fond of using puns in their poetry which became a distinct feature of their poetry. It gave witty touch to their poetry. The ambiguity which they created in their poetry proved to be an ornament to their poetry for it gave the special credit to their poetry. Metaphysical poetry is the blend of passionate feelings and paradoxical ratiocination. Whether they wanted to express their love or faith in Christianity, they remained passionate in the expression of their feelings. This can be located in the poetry of Donne.

UGBA- SEM II – Core English – 112

(History of English Literature: 1625-1660)

Unit – II – Milton's Sonnets

[1] Sonnet 12: I did but prompt the age to quit their clogs

Text of the Poem

I did but prompt the age to quit their clogs
By the known rules of ancient liberty,
When straight a barbarous noise environs me
Of owls and cuckoos, asses, apes and dogs:
As when those hinds that were transform'd to frogs
Rail'd at Latona's twin-born progeny
Which after held the sun and moon in fee.
But this is got by casting pearl to hogs,
That bawl for freedom in their senseless mood,
And still revolt when truth would set them free.
Licence they mean when they cry liberty;
For who loves that, must first be wise and good.
But from that mark how far they rove we see,
For all this waste of wealth and loss of blood.

Paraphrase

I only suggested that the age give up their weights and chains by ancient liberty's known rules, when suddenly I'm surrounded by a barbarous

noise, noise of owls and cuckoos, asses, apes and dogs.
It was like those deer that were transformed to frogs
that yelled and ranted at Latona's twin-born children
Who, afterwards, held the sun and moon in their possession.
But this is what you get from casting pearl to hogs;
That cry for freedom in their senseless state of mind,
And they still revolt against the truth when the truth would set them free.
Being free from all restrictions is what they mean when they cry liberty;
For people who love liberty must first be wise and good;
But from that target, we see how far their arrows miss the mark
For all this waste of wealth, and loss of blood.

Background

In 1643, Milton published what is considered one of his most controversial works, *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*. At the time, divorce was nearly impossible in England, and if one did have a special case that could constitute a divorce, such as disloyalty, it was illegal to remarry. Milton argued that mismatch and unhappiness were practical reasons for divorce, and that people should have a second chance at happiness with an opportunity to remarry. His ideas were radical, and with "Sonnet 12," Milton makes it clear that his arguments for divorce were not well-received. This piece was his second sonnet on his divorce tracts and was probably written in 1646. *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* seems to have initially flashed intense conversation, but printed

responses did not appear until a year after its publication. These responses were mostly “by Presbyterians, awesomely negative, and virtually without exception exercises in ridicule rather than reasoned argument”. Therefore, this sonnet is Milton’s response to all of the negative response towards his previous work.

Milton is a master of allusion. It is not common to find both Biblical and classical references intricately tangled in his work, just as he has done in “Sonnet 12.” He opens the sonnet with a Biblical allusion to Mosaic divorce law: “I did but prompt the age to quit their clogs / By the known rules of ancient liberty”. Though he is being critical, he is not dismissing Mosaic law. In *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, Milton uses the Bible to support his argument by claiming that people have misinterpreted the words of Moses. With this allusion, Milton is suggesting that the misinterpretation of the law, not the laws itself, has become a stumbling block, and he has only used law to encourage others to see pass their folly.

Directly after this classical allusion, Milton makes another Biblical allusion in line eight: “But this is got by casting pearl to hogs”. With this allusion, the pearls represent the speaker’s ideas, as he clearly values and prizes both his ideas and the right to express them. The pig serve as another degeneration and representation of people. Therefore, the speaker is using this allusion to suggest when one casts their pearls (valuable ideas) to swine (crude people,) it can be expected that one’s ideas will be crushed and torn to pieces. This quote takes place in the book of Matthew,

where Jesus warns others that judgment and cruel treatment of others leads to hypocrisy. It seems our speaker makes this reference as a reminder to others, as he is promoting the same concept.

Theme

Milton addresses several important topics that give us insight to his personal experiences, as well as an insight into the representative culture. Through his allusions, and the degeneration of his opposition through the animal chorus metaphor, Milton was clearly disappointed, frustrated, and angered with the public's consensual rejection of his divorce arguments. He was not merely upset by negative criticism, but because he "felt that he had become infamous without being given a fair hearing".

Milton introduces another metaphor that reveals his attitude towards the politics of the time; he gives us hogs that "bawl for freedom" that "still revolt when truth would set them free". Milton's ideas should appeal to the Parliamentary rebels; however, in line eleven, he suggests that these rebels are senselessly crying for licentiousness (freedom from all restrictions) instead of democratic freedom, and they are not willing to consider the changes that should be made to obtain this freedom. In the final three lines of the poem, Milton directly references his opposition and the English Civil War: "For who loves that, [liberty] must first be wise and good; / But from that mark how far they rove we see / For all this waste of wealth, and loss of blood". Milton closes with his attitude about the war- he feels that his war has been a complete waste because people

who are fighting for progress are maintaining the same ideas, policies, and traditions.

[2] “On Shakespeare” By John Milton

Text of the Poem

What needs my Shakespeare for his honoured bones
The labour of an age in piled stones?
Or that his hallowed relics should be hid
Under a star-ypointing pyramid?
Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?
Thou in our wonder and astonishment
Has built thyself a livelong monument.
For whilst, to the shame of slow-endeavouring art,
Thy easy numbers flow, and that each heart
Hath from the leaves of thy unvalued book
Those Delphic lines with deep impression took,
Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,
Dost make us marble with too much conceiving,
And so sepúlchred in such pomp dost lie
That kings for such a tomb would wish to die.

Background

“On Shakespeare” was originally published under the title “An Epitaph on the Admirable Dramaticke Poet, W. Shakespeare” in the 1632 folio of Shakespeare's collected plays. Milton later changed the title to “On Shakespeare” in the 1645 edition of his collected poems. The original title, however, declares the sixteen-line poem an epitaph, which is a phrase or

short meditation written to remember someone who has died. Epitaphs frequently appeared as short inscriptions on tombstones. Milton's "On Shakespeare", the poem celebrates the late poet and playwright for his talent and hinting at Milton's own skill as a professional poet.

By the time Milton composed "On Shakespeare" in 1630, Shakespeare had already been dead for fourteen years. As such, his impact on English life and literature was well known. He was already considered a transformative figure of the early modern period – for his poetry and mostly for his plays and his impact on English Renaissance drama. Milton, by contrast, was just beginning his career as a poet. He graduated from Cambridge in 1629, and composed "On Shakespeare" in 1630. The poem was Milton's first to ever appear in print. In "On Shakespeare," Milton ponders the appropriate memorial for Shakespeare, wondering whether an elaborate tomb or pyramid would represent the bard's legacy. He decides that these burials are "weak witness" to Shakespeare's fame as a poet, suggesting that the real testament to Shakespeare's life lives within his readers' appreciation for his work. As the poem concludes, Milton suggests that even kings would be envious of this figurative "tomb" in which Shakespeare is buried.

Critical Analysis

In the first stanza of "On Shakespeare", the speaker begins by asking the reader a question. It takes up the first four lines, or quatrain, of text. He

asks whoever may be listening to what Shakespeare, now that he is dead, needs with his “honoured bones.” It is important to note in the first line that Milton refers to Shakespeare as “my Shakespeare.” He feels a connection to the writer that he believes will be shared by those who eventually read the text. From the start it is clear that Milton has a high opinion of Shakespeare. He is dead, but even his bones are honorable. Milton knows that Shakespeare was above such things. In the following lines, Milton expands on the meaning of the first line. He wants to make sure the reader understands that erecting monuments to Shakespeare’s name should be a questionable enterprise. Milton does not believe Shakespeare would want his earthly remains treated in such a way. His true monument is the work he left behind, in comparison to that his bones.

In the next four lines, the speaker goes on to refer to Shakespeare as the “Dear son of Memory.” The remains from his vastly important existence are nothing but the offspring of true memory. They are the “heir” to his “fame,” not the fame and genius itself. Milton poses another question to his readers and to Shakespeare himself. He asks what “need’st thou” with “such weak witness of thy name?” As stated previously he does not see the purpose in creating something physical, or preserving the physical remnants of someone as important as Shakespeare.

In the next quatrain, the speaker refers to the other poets who strive to create work as powerful as Shakespeare’s. They are the creators of “slow-endavouring art.” This speaks to the nature of their poetry and to the fact

that it doesn't quite reach the level of art as compared to Shakespeare. In contrast to these poor writers who are nowhere near Shakespeare's level, Milton brags on Shakespeare's ability to make his words or "numbers flow" easily. They come to him without struggle, or at least so it seems to Milton. Next Milton turns to the audience who has engaged so profoundly with Shakespeare's poetry and drama. They take from the "leaves of thy unvalued book," someone akin to the poetry of the gods. He references Shakespeare's "Delphic lines," an allusion to the Greek God of poetry, Apollo.

In the final four lines, the speaker reveals what kind of tomb Shakespeare does have. It is the only one that is truly befitting for someone of his importance. His works, and his memory, have come to live within his readers and all those who saw his plays performed. As "we" grieve for his loss, "our" bodies turn into the marble sepulcher in which Shakespeare now rests.

[3] “On His Blindness” by John Milton

Poem

When I consider how my light is spent,
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one Talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my Soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest he returning chide;
“Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?”
I fondly ask. But patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, “God doth not need
Either man’s work or his own gifts; who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
Is Kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed
And post o’er Land and Ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and wait.”

Paraphrase

When I think about how I went blind before I reached the midpoint of my life in this big, dark world; when I consider that my greatest talent—which it would kill me to hide—is now useless, even though I want more than ever to use it to serve God, to prove to him that I’ve made good use of my life, so that he doesn’t rebuke me for the way I’ve spent my life; when I think about all this, I ask, foolishly, “Does God want me to do work that requires sight after denying me that sight?” But my internal sense of patience, in an effort to stop that bad thought, quickly replies: “God doesn’t need man’s work or his gifts. Whoever best obeys God’s commands serves him best. He is like a king. Thousands of people rush around at his bidding, crossing land and sea without rest. And those who simply wait for his commands also serve him.”

Critical Analysis

The poem *On His Blindness* is an autobiographical sonnet in which he expresses his feelings as a blind person. The poet thinks, in the beginning, that he will not be able to serve God as his sight is gone. As the poem develops, he begins to believe that God wants him to keep working, in spite of the fact that his job caused him to lose his sight. In the end, he is assured that he is serving God like the angels who just wait for the orders of God. The poem has a number of Biblical references that depict Milton’s stern belief in God. The poem is written in the Petrarchan rhyme scheme.

Stanza 1

The poet starts the poem with 'When' thus he introduces his idea in the very beginning. According to him, he often thinks that half of his life or sight or intelligence has been spent in serving humanity, but now he has lost his eyesight and so his other half-life is dark now and wide i.e. challenging as well. The one talent (of writing) which he had, is useless now because without eyesight he cannot write. Thus it is just a load from the God that has been bestowed on him. The poet laments over the loss of his eyesight and wonders what this talent means for him now as without eyesight he cannot use it.

Stanza 2

In these lines, the lament of poets turns into desire and wonder. He says that he desired to serve his Maker but because of this blindness he cannot do so. He wonders if God still wants to serve Him in spite of the fact that his sight is gone. The poet says that this foolish thought often haunts him.

Stanza 3

In these lines, the poet says that when such foolish thoughts come into his mind, the patience at once comes to reply that the work of man does not please God, but the 'who best bear his mild yoke' i.e. the one who remains patient and content with what he has is most liked by Him. God has a huge Kingdom and there are thousands of angels who remain in motion to carry God's order. They never take rest. The poet compares them with those who have the talent and use it to serve God.

Couplet

And post o'er land and ocean without rest:

They also serve who only stand and wait."

On the other hand, there are some other angels also who serve Him just by standing and waiting before God. According to him, their service is equally valuable to God as that of the first category of angels.

UGBA- SEM II – Core English – 112

(History of English Literature: 1625-1660)

Unit – III - Poems

[1] Holy Sonnet 14 – John Donne

The Text of the Poem

Batter my heart, three-person'd God, for you
As yet but knock, breathe, shine, and seek to mend;
That I may rise and stand, o'erthrow me, and bend
Your force to break, blow, burn, and make me new.
I, like an usurp'd town to another due,
Labor to admit you, but oh, to no end;
Reason, your viceroy in me, me should defend,
But is captiv'd, and proves weak or untrue.
Yet dearly I love you, and would be lov'd fain,
But am betroth'd unto your enemy;
Divorce me, untie or break that knot again,
Take me to you, imprison me, for I,
Except you enthrall me, never shall be free,
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me.

Summary

The poet requests the God of holy Trinity to bang into his heart. The poet further urges the God that so far, you've just politely knocked, gently breathed, shone your light, and tried to fix me. The only way for me to get up on my own two feet again is for you to knock me over. He further tells the God to use all his power to break

me, to blow me down, to burn me up—and in that way remake me as a new person. The poet compares himself with a town that has been taken over by a conquering army and is trying to let you back in, but I can't. Logical thinking, which is supposed to rule my mind when you are away, is also supposed to defend me against attacks on my religious faith. Instead, my logical thinking is imprisoned by enemy forces and turns out to be feeble, or even unfaithful to you. However, I do love you so much, and greatly desire to be loved by you. But I'm married to your enemy. As such, you'll have to break up that marriage. If marriage is *tying the knot*, you'll have to untie or cut that knot. You'll have to kidnap me and put me in your prison. That's because, unless you make me love you so much that it enslaves me, I'll never be free. And I'll never be pure unless you have your way with me.

Theme

The Agony of Religious Doubt

John Donne wrote the series of poems called the Holy Sonnets during a period of religious conversion from Catholicism to Anglicanism. In this particular poem, the speaker has lost touch with God altogether and prays desperately for God to return. Furthermore, the speaker believes that faith can only return through forceful means: God has to force his way back into the speaker's heart. The poem, then, is at once a open portrait of a soul desperate to overcome the torment of religious doubt. The speaker states the poem's central problem most clearly: "I [...] labor to admit you, but oh, to no end." In other words, the speaker is trying to believe in God, to allow God into the soul, but keeps failing. The crux of the poem is that the speaker doesn't believe in God but rather than the speaker cannot feel God in heart and soul, as the speaker once did.

The word "admit" here, then, is a pun. It literally means to "let in," as if God can be let in to the speaker's soul. But it also puns on the sense of admitting something is

true—the speaker is having a hard time admitting that God is real. “Reason,” the speaker’s ability to think logically, has been no help in this matter, pushing the speaker to further desperation rather than comfort; trying to prove God’s existence using logic isn’t necessarily convincing to one’s emotions. Furthermore, the speaker introduces this problem as a metaphor: “I, like an usurp’d town to another due, / Labor to admit you.” The speaker’s soul is like a “usurp’d town,” a town that has been conquered by an enemy. The identity of this enemy is unspecified, but it can be interpreted as the devil, or any other force that leads people away from God. The implied solution, then, is that God must “break” into the “town” of the speaker’s soul, and set the speaker free. Doubt, then, is cast as a kind of painful imprisonment.

In fact, the speaker seems to feel that faith is beyond the speaker’s control. Although the speaker keeps trying to let God in, that won’t work. Instead, the speaker begs God to force his way into the speaker’s soul. That’s why the poem begins, “Batter my heart.” It’s as if the speaker’s heart is a fort, and God must invade that fort. Through divine force, God can “make” the speaker “new,” transforming the speaker back into a devout Christian. The speaker’s crisis of faith, then, is so extreme that only extreme measures on the part of God can overcome it. The speaker sincerely wishes to return to God, but doesn’t have the strength to do it alone.

Faith as Erotic Love

The speaker makes a bold comparison between faith in God and erotic love. In fact, the erotic desire expressed here is not simply metaphorical. Rather, it can be thought of a desire for ecstasy on a spiritual, rather than simply physical, plane. The speaker begs for a rough—and consensual—seduction, one that fills the speaker with such passion that it eradicates all doubt in God. It is only through such passion, rather than logic or reason, that the speaker can truly overcome this crisis of faith.

The speaker begins the poem by emphasizing the importance of the heart, which represents passion and love: "Batter my heart, three person'd God." By beginning with this line, the speaker suggests that passion is central to faith. The speaker needs to feel passionate love for God in order to believe in him. This description also emphasizes the "force" of divine love. The speaker doesn't ask God to gently slip into the speaker's heart, but rather to break in. This isn't a gentle seduction, but a rough one.

In the middle of the poem, the speaker's state is like that of someone who's been separated from the person they love and forced to marry someone else: "Yet dearly I love you, and would be lov'd fain, / But am betroth'd unto your enemy." The speaker wants to be with God, but is "betroth'd," or married, to God's "enemy." This enemy can be interpreted as the devil, atheism, or anything else that causes one to lose faith. Whatever the case, the gist is clear. The speaker is comparing the situation to something like Romeo and Juliet, or any number of stories about ill-fated lovers.

[2] Virtue : BY GEORGE HERBERT

Text

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky;
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night,
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue angry and brave
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye;
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie;
My music shows ye have your closes,
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like season'd timber, never gives;
But though the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives.

Virtue (The Temple: Sacred Poems and Private Ejaculations) is a didactic poem. It teaches us that virtue is supreme and super lasting. In this world of impermanence, beautiful thing and beauty itself are subject to decay but a truly virtuous soul remains unchanged through all eternally. The poem is finest specimens of metaphysical that are present in the poem are – a blending of thought and feeling, metaphysical concentration, unification of sensibility learnedness.

In *Virtue* Herbert speaks of the permanence of a virtuous soul. All the beautiful things of the world including a sweet day a sweet rose and the sweet spring are subject to decay but a virtuous soul remains unchanged. To assert his points Herbert uses three images in this poem. First he speaks of a sweet day which must come to an end and be swallowed up by dark night. Secondly he refers to a sweet rose which in spite of its sweet color and fragrance is destined to wither. Thirdly he speaks of a spring which, with its music and color is damaged to sink into oblivion.

Herbert visualizes a sweet day which is cool, calm and bright. He fancies that the day represents the wedding of the earth and the skies as if they have worked together in order to bring about the day:

“Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky,”

However, a cool, calm and bright day must come to an end with the passing of time and at the fall of night. The dew shall weep because the sweet day will die in night. The evening dew is regarded. Here is the tear of mourning over the death of the sweet day. Herbert presents a serene yet invigorating day and locates the reader in the celestial and terrestrial realms simultaneously, for the day in its loveliness brings them together. Day, however, gives way to night, just as life gives way to death. The narrator asserts, turning a daily natural event, nightfall, into a metaphor. Beyond death, the line also suggests grief at the loss of paradise on Earth, the Fall, which is the original cause of death in the Judeo-Christian story of the Creation. The evening dew, invested with emotion and made to represent grief, is equated with tears, which are shed at nightfall over the Fall, the sin that brought death into the world:

“The dew shall weep thy fall tonight;
For thou must die.”

Next, the poet speaks of a lovely delightful rose. The sweet rose has a bright red color which indicates its angry mood add splendid look. Accordingly to the poet, the rose seems to be asking onlooker to wipe the tears from its eyes as it knows that it must fade away and die. The color dazzles the eyes of the onlooker:

“Sweet rose, whose hue angry and brave
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye,
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must die.”

The spring is pictured here being full of ‘sweet’ days and colorful and fragrant flowers and is compared to a box full of sweets to denote the sweetness and beauty of the reason. The delights presented in the first two quatrains are also contained in the third, and the narrator solidifies his suggestion of the earth's rich bounty. But the poet asserts that spring, with its music color and fragrance is destined to sink into oblivion. But it has its "Close" is a technical term in music indicating the resolution of a musical phrase. Thus, the poetic verse, like everything else the

narrator has so far depicted, must come to an end, as it temporarily does with the four stressed and conclusive beats of the twelfth line:

“Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie,
My music shows ye have your closes,
And all must die.”

However, the last quatrain presents images of an eternal soul. Through a metaphoric explanation the poet says that a seasoned timber cannot be burnt and changed into coal and therefore it never surrenders to corrosion. Similarly, the virtuous soul remains unchanged in spite of the passing of time. The phrase ‘turn to coal’ means totally destroyed. It implies that the whole World will be destructed with the passing of time. By ‘chiefly lives’ the poet means that the soul will remain alive when the world will remain no more. As such, the entire poem, which all along warned of death, shows the way in which Herbert believes that he and his readers may achieve eternal life:

“Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like seasoned timber, never gives;
But though the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives.”

[3] The Garden by Andrew Marvel

Text of the Poem : The Garden

**How vainly men themselves amaze
To win the palm, the oak, or bays,
And their uncessant labours see
Crown'd from some single herb or tree,
Whose short and narrow verged shade
Does prudently their toils upbraid;
While all flow'rs and all trees do close
To weave the garlands of repose.**

**Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,
And Innocence, thy sister dear!
Mistaken long, I sought you then
In busy companies of men;
Your sacred plants, if here below,
Only among the plants will grow.
Society is all but rude,
To this delicious solitude.**

No white nor red was ever seen

So am'rous as this lovely green.
Fond lovers, cruel as their flame,
Cut in these trees their mistress' name;
Little, alas, they know or heed
How far these beauties hers exceed!
Fair trees! wheres'e'er your barks I wound,
No name shall but your own be found.

When we have run our passion's heat,
Love hither makes his best retreat.
The gods, that mortal beauty chase,
Still in a tree did end their race:
Apollo hunted Daphne so,
Only that she might laurel grow;
And Pan did after Syrinx speed,
Not as a nymph, but for a reed.

What wond'rous life in this I lead!
Ripe apples drop about my head;
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine;
The nectarine and curious peach

Into my hands themselves do reach;
Stumbling on melons as I pass,
Ensnar'd with flow'rs, I fall on grass.

Meanwhile the mind, from pleasure less,
Withdraws into its happiness;
The mind, that ocean where each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find,
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds, and other seas;
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.

Here at the fountain's sliding foot,
Or at some fruit tree's mossy root,
Casting the body's vest aside,
My soul into the boughs does glide;
There like a bird it sits and sings,
Then whets, and combs its silver wings;
And, till prepar'd for longer flight,
Waves in its plumes the various light.

Such was that happy garden-state,
While man there walk'd without a mate;
After a place so pure and sweet,
What other help could yet be meet!
But 'twas beyond a mortal's share
To wander solitary there:
Two paradises 'twere in one
To live in paradise alone.

How well the skillful gard'ner drew
Of flow'rs and herbs this dial new,
Where from above the milder sun
Does through a fragrant zodiac run;
And as it works, th' industrious bee
Computes its time as well as we.

How could such sweet and wholesome hours
Be reckon'd but with herbs and flow'rs!

Summary:

“The Garden” begins with the speaker reflecting upon the vanity and inferiority of man’s devotion to public life in politics, war, and civic service. The speaker portrays the garden as a space of “sacred plants,” removed from society and its “rude” demands. He praises the garden for its shade of “lovely green,” which he sees as superior to the white and red hues that commonly signify passionate love.

The speaker claims that when passion has run its course, love turns people towards a contemplative life surrounded by nature. He praises the abundance of fruits and plants in the garden, imagining himself tripping over melons and falling upon the grass. Meanwhile, his mind retreats into a state of inner happiness, allowing him to create and contemplate “other worlds and other seas.” The speaker then returns to addressing the garden, where he envisions his soul releasing itself from his body and perching in the trees like a bird. He compares the scene to the “happy garden-state” of Eden, the Biblical paradise in which God created Adam and Eve. The poem ends with the speaker imagining the garden as its own cosmos, with a sun running through a “fragrant zodiac” and an “industrious bee” whose work computes the passage of time.

Analysis

"The Garden" is divided into 9 numbered stanzas, each of which contains 4 rhymed couplets of iambic pentameter. Its subject matter is the tranquillity of retirement from public life. Most critics associate the poem's content with Marvell’s own retirement from his position as tutor to Mary Fairfax, whose father, Thomas, was a General in Oliver Cromwell’s army during the English Civil War.

In the first stanza, the speaker mentions three forms of public virtue associated with the emblem of a particular plant’s leaves: the palm for military virtue, the oak for

civic virtue, and the bay (or laurel) for poetic virtue. However, these symbols also suggest the limitations of the pursuits they signify, since the wreaths are only made of trimmings from the actual plants. Public life and devotion to virtue must come to an end one day. The speaker suggests that just as flowers and trees “do close / To weave the garlands of repose,” so must individuals retreat from social obligation into retired contemplation.

The speaker goes on to praise the solitude and quiet of his retreat into the garden, believing that he was mistaken to have once sought “Fair Quiet” and “Innocence” among the “busy companies of men.” He also associates his private retreat with a holy experience, stating that the “sacred plants” of quiet and innocence can only grow amongst the organic plants in the garden. In other words, the material surrounding of the garden makes room in the speaker's heart and mind for the cultivation of spiritual values, which life in society has forced him to disregard.

The speaker continues to develop his extended conceit of the garden's superior virtues, finding its “lovely green” more favorable than red and white. Poets may carve the name of their beloved into trees, but the speaker finds such actions to be fruitless, because each tree already contains a more beautiful imprint: a proper name. The speaker thus imagines his experience in the garden as a paradisaical return to Adam's perfect knowledge of creation. The speaker continues to praise the abundant fruits, vines, flowers, and grass in the garden, but at the end of stanza five, the speaker's image of this natural abundance abruptly shifts when he finds himself “Stumbling on melons” and “Insnared with flow'rs.” He falls onto the grass, which suggests that the garden's private blossoming has become too much for him to manage, as if it has overwhelmed his bodily senses. Hence, he retreats into his mind, where the powers of contemplation become a source of superior creativity.

The speaker then presents an image of his soul detaching from his body, but remaining in the garden. It simply glides into the tree limbs like a bird, waving its wings to reflect the light of the sun until it is ready for its “longer flight.” The image suggests that during the soul’s time on Earth, it is possible for it to transcend some of the physical body's limitations, as we see in the speaker's previous contemplation of a “green thought in a green shade.” Yet the soul cannot entirely detach from the physical world until the moment of bodily death, so for the time being it must remain perched upon the highest reaches that the garden allows. Thus, the poem’s final stanza contains an extended metaphor comparing the garden to a private universe, containing its own “fragrant zodiac” of flowers and a cosmic timekeeper in the form of the bee, whose industrious labours mark the passage of the time.

In summary, ‘The Garden’ is a classic example of something that Andrew Marvell explores in many of his poems: the idea of discussing two extremes or opposites and putting forward a balanced and poised ‘argument’. Marvell depicts the garden as a retreat, as a place of repose and restfulness – an escape from the more frenetic world of public life that lies beyond the boundaries of the garden.

UGBA- Core English – 112 - Unit- 4

List of Titles for Acquaintances:

(1) Name of the Work: Comus

Name of the Author: John Milton

Type of Work (Literary genre): Mask (play)

Year of Publication: 1637 Age: Age of Milton

(2) Name of the Work: Paradise Lost

Name of the Author: John Milton

Type of Work (Literary genre): Epic

Year of Publication: Age: Age of Milton

(3) Name of the Work: Samson Agonistes

Name of the Author: John Milton

Type of Work (Literary genre): Tragedy

Year of Publication: 1671 Age: Age of Milton

(4) Name of the Work: The Temple

Name of the Author: George Herbert

Type of Work (Literary genre): Poetry

Year of Publication: 1633 Age: Age of Milton

(5) Name of the Work: The Mistress

Name of the Author: Abraham Cowley

Type of Work (Literary genre): Poetry

Year of Publication: 1647 Age: Age of Milton

(6) Name of the Work: The Rehearsal Transposed

Name of the Author: Andrew Marvell

Type of Work (Literary genre): Prose Work

Year of Publication: 1672-73

Age: Age of Milton

(7) Name of the Work: Noble Numbers

Name of the Author: Robert Herrick

Type of Work (Literary genre): Poetry

Year of Publication: 1647

Age: Age of Milton

(8) Name of the Work: The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England

Name of the Author: Edward Hyde

Type of Work (Literary genre): Prose

Year of Publication: 1702-04

Age: Age of Milton

(9) Name of the Work: Perkin Warbeck

Name of the Author: John Ford

Type of Work (Literary genre): Historical Play

Year of Publication: 1634

Age: Age of Milton

(10) Name of the Work: Religio Medici

Name of the Author: Thomas Browne

Type of Work (Literary genre): Prose work

Year of Publication: 1642

Age: Age of Milton

(11) Name of the Work: A New Way to Pay the Old Debts

Name of the Author: Philip Massinger

Type of Work (Literary genre): Comedy

Year of Publication: 1633

Age: Age of Milton

(12) Name of the Work: Leviathan

Name of the Author: Thomas Hobbes

Type of Work (Literary genre): Prose work

Year of Publication: 1651

Age: Age of Milton

(13) Name of the Work: Holy Living

Name of the Author: Jeremy Taylor

Type of Work (Literary genre): Prose work

Year of Publication: 1650

Age: Age of Milton

(14) Name of the Work: The Lady of Pleasure

Name of the Author: James Shirley

Type of Work (Literary genre): Comedy

Year of Publication: 1637

Age: Age of Milton

(15) Name of the Work: The Compleat Angler

Name of the Author: Izaak Walton

Type of Work (Literary genre): Prose work

Year of Publication: 1653

Age: Age of Milton