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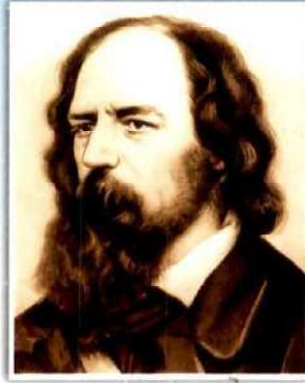
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ENGLISH (LANGUAGE)



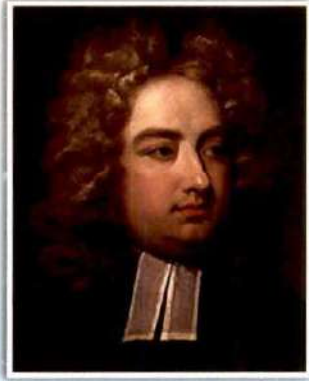
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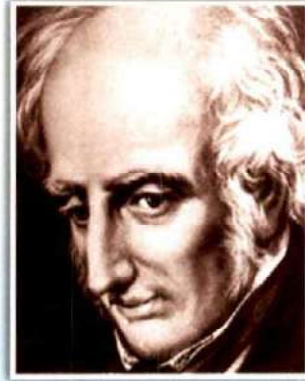
Tennyson



Francis Bacon



Jonathan Swift



Wordsworth



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**POETRY, PROSE, FICTION
AND
GRAMMAR**

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BLOCK-1, 2, 3 & 4

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**I B.A./B.Com
ENGLISH LANGUAGE
Course -I**

Department of Studies and Research in English

BLOCK 1

POETRY

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INTRODUCTION

Dear Student,

I am pleased to welcome you to the English (Language) course prescribed for the first year of your graduate study programme. The course consists of Poetry, Prose, Fiction and Grammar. The study material for this course consists of four Blocks. You will find details about every Block in the form of 'Introduction' preceding every Block.

Block 1 - POETRY consists of six most anthologised masterpoems of English language. These poems are written by some of the 'all time great' masters of English poetry. Poetry, let me tell you is difficult to understand. It is difficult at least, in part, because it employs what we call a figurative language. The language of poetry is different from the language of prose. It is not the language of conversation. It is precise and suggestive. In addition to being precise, it is rich in association of thought and feeling. Therefore, it is absolutely essential to read poetry with attention. The poems you have to study in this Block are of different forms. They try to capture the varieties of life and experience. They give us perspectives on life. Hence, read through the poems slowly and attentively at least twice. Consult the 'notes' and 'glossary' provided in the lessons. Also keep a good dictionary for frequent reference. You may come across some memorable lines; try to memorise them. These lines may be used as quotations, while answering questions in your examination, and also later in your life.

In case you have doubts, you are free to approach the counselors at the study centres. Be sincere and work hard. It will yield the desired result.

Wishing you well,

Prof. Nirmala C. Prakash
Subject Coordinator

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UNIT – 1 : WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE :
I) NOT MARBLE, NOR THE GILDED MONUMENTS
II) LET ME NOT TO MARRIAGE OF TRUE MINDS

Structure

- 1.0 Objective
- 1.1 Introduction to the Poet and the Sonnet Form
- 1.2 Text of "Not Marble, Nor the Gilded Monuments"
- 1.3 Glossary
- 1.4 Analysis
- 1.5 Answers to Self-check Questions
- 1.6 Summing Up
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- 1.10 Analysis
- 1.11 Answers to Self-check Questions
- 1.12 Summing Up
- 1.13 Question for Self-study
- 1.14 Select Bibliography



1.0 OBJECTIVE

At the end of going through the unit on Shakespeare's sonnets, you should be able to

- *know* something about Shakespeare's achievement
- *write* a note on a sonnet as a form.
- *identify* the two types of Sonnets discussed
- *discuss* and *answer* questions pertaining to the two sonnets prescribed for your study.

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE POET AND THE SONNET FORM

William Shakespeare (1564-1616), the great dramatist, also wrote sonnets. Critics have divided his sonnets, 154 in number, into two main groups. The first group contains the first hundred and twenty-six sonnets, and is addressed to a young man of remarkable physical charm for whom Shakespeare appears to have had a strong affection. The identity of this young man is shrouded in mystery. Weighty arguments have been advanced by one group of critics in support of the claims of Henry Wriothesley, the Earl of Southampton to be "the onlie begetter" of these sonnets. Others have argued in favour of Henry Herbert, the Earl of Pembroke; but the problem has remained unsolved. The second group contains the rest of the sonnets, and is addressed to a "dark woman" with whom Shakespeare seems to have been in love. About this lady with "the raven brows, and eyes so suited" there has been much speculation. She is identified with a certain Mrs. Mary Fitton, a maid of honour to Queen Elizabeth, of whom we know next to nothing. Shakespeare criticism is yet to settle the question of this woman's identity. However, it is more than probable that the mighty bard had this "dark" woman in mind when he drew his magnificent Cleopatra.

Like his tragedies, the sonnets of Shakespeare are "a revelation, a commentary on all things, a mirror held up to the soul and reproducing all its phases." They do not date from anyone year-though most of them must have been written between 1592 and 1598 - but represent the changing moods of the poet over a long period. Their general tone is sombre; they are full of unrest, of gloomy reflections darkening into despair. A sense of profound disgust for a world where evil is captain over good is observable in quite a few of these sonnets. They clearly foreshadow the period of his great tragedies.

The sonnet is a poem of fourteen lines. There are two types of sonnet-the Petrarchan and the Shakespearean. The Petrarchan sonnet is divided into two parts-the first eight lines known as the Octave, and the remaining six lines called the Sestet. The Shakespearean sonnet,

on the other hand, is built up of three quatrains followed by a couplet. Shakespeare did not invent this form, but his sonnets are the best examples of the kind. The sonnet writer cannot expatiate at will; he is confined within the brief limits of fourteen lines, and within that compass must achieve his effect. Rossetti very appropriately called the sonnet "a moment's monument".

1.2 TEXT

NOT MARBLE, NOR THE GILDED MONUMENTS

Not marble nor the gilded monuments
Of princes shall outlive this powerful rhyme,
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone, besmeared with sluttish time.
When wasteful war shall statues overturn
And broils root out the work of masonry,
Nor Mars his sword, nor war's quick fire shall burn
The living record of your memory.
'Gainst death, and all-oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth, your praise shall still find room,
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom.
So till the judgement that your self rise,
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

- Shakespeare

1.3 GLOSSARY

Not Marble, nor the gilded monuments: Statues made of marble or brass coated with gold.

outlive: live beyond

this powerful rhyme: the power of poetry in general. Shakespeare is not praising his own poetry as powerful or this sonnet in particular.

more bright: this kind of usage is common in Shakespeare.

in these contents: That is contained in these verses of mine or just 'my poems about you'

unswept stone: a neglected monument, a memorial stone or effigy in a church. Public monuments were not taken care of and they were not kept clean. The poet probably digs at the absence of civic interest.

sluttish: dirty; morally unclean; note the figurative use of this word.

wasteful: destructive

broils: noisy quarrels

the work of masonry: architecture; the artistic skill in memorials

Mars: the God of war in ancient mythology, known also as the red planet

Nor Mars his sword: note the omission of the verb: 'destroy' needs to be understood; this is a typical Shakespearean ellipsis.

quick: fierce

all oblivious enmity: everything which would cause you to be forgotten

Shall you pace forth: you will stride on: become conspicuous; The friend will enjoy eternal fame. Note the emphatic tone of the poet.

praise: glory

still: always

all posterity: unending future

wear this world out to the ending doom: you will continue to shine as long as this world exists. In other words, this world will never wear out and the friend will bask in everlasting glory.

the judgement: the last day of Judgement

in this: in verse

in lovers' eyes: in the eyes of those who think of you properly because they are lovers or in the eyes of those who will love you when they see you in your glory. Both meanings are possibly correct.

you live... .. eyes: 'you will live on in verse, and your habitation will be in the eyes of lovers'. Note the poet's extraordinary confidence in his verse. He believes that his poetry will stand the test of time. In the earlier sonnets, the poet was rather doubtful. Here, he is sure of the enduring quality of his verse.

{ yāvat sthāsyanti girayaḥ saritaś ca mahītale
tāvat rāmāvanakathā lokeṣu pracariṣyati }

Those of you who have read Valmiki's *The Ramayana*, I am sure are familiar with the beautiful verses which appear at the beginning of the great Epic. They are the words spoken by Brahma. The gist of this is that *The Ramayana* will be remembered as long as mountains stand and rivers flow on this earth. This is one way of saying that the exemplary verses are everlasting. Is it possible for you to perceive the parallel between the lines from *The Ramayana* and Shakespeare's Sonnet?

1.4 ANALYSIS

Not Marble, Nor the Gilded Monument

This is the 55th sonnet in the series addressed to the friend. Its theme is the power and glory of verse. Shakespeare, of course, speaks of his love and affection for the friend. But it is poetry that immortalizes his love.

Lines 1-4: Princes want to perpetuate their memory. They want to be remembered after their death. So they put up monuments. The monuments are made of marble stone or metal. But they do not last long. For, Time destroys them. At any rate, neither marble nor monuments shall outlive verse. Shakespeare assures his friend that he will shine more bright in verse than in unswept stone, dirty with decay. Here the poet incidentally digs at the absence of civic duty to keep the tombs and monuments clean.

Lines 5-8: The poet speaks of other destructive agents like war and fire. War is wasteful. It throws down statues and buildings. Fights between rival groups also cause damage. Fire may disfigure public memorials. The memory of princes may thus be totally rooted out. But poetry is long lasting. It is a living record. It defies Time. The poet assures his friend that neither fire nor broil shall ever destroy the living record of his memory.

Lines 9-12: Death is the end of everything. It throws things into the kingdom of oblivion. There are also other forces which partially conceal one's fame. Nothing is constant. Change is incessant. But his friend will pace forth majestically against all odds. He will move forward surviving death and oblivion. Posterity will not forget him. He will live on in the verse.

Lines 13-14: The couplet repeats what is offered in the three quatrains. Shakespeare promises his friend that his praise will remain firm till the day of doom. Till the day of Judgement, his friend will live on in verse and in the eyes of all lovers. The couplet also suggests that poetry is everlasting and it will stand the test of time. It is an effective conclusion.

Self-Check Exercises

- 1) **What is a Sonnet? Explain the distinctive features of the two types of Sonnets.**
(Add extra lines, as per the requirement of the answer)

- 2) **Write a note on the immortalising power of verse (taking into consideration the 55th Sonnet of Shakespeare).**(Add extra lines, as per the requirement of the answer)

1.5 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK QUESTIONS

1) 1.1

2) 1.4

1.6 SUMMING UP

This sonnet deals with the tyranny of time (the cruelly administered absolute power of time) and the immortalizing power of verse. This is a favourite theme of sonnet-writers in the Age of Shakespeare.

1.7 QUESTION FOR SELF-STUDY

Write an appreciation of Sonnet 55.

1.8 TEXT OF LET ME NOT TO MARRIAGE OF TRUE MINDS

LET ME NOT TO THE MARRIAGE OF TRUE MINDS

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments; love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove.
O no, it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wand' ring bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come,
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom:
 If this be error and upon me proved,
 I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

-Shakespeare

1.9 GLOSSARY

Let me not: May I never

impediments: obstacles: The word is borrowed from the marriage Service in the Book of Common Prayer. "If any of you know cause or just *impediment*, why these two persons should not be joined: together in Holy Matrimony, you are to declare it."

alteration (noun): changes or the effect of Time on beauty; opportunity for change or change in the person who is being loved.

bends with the remover to remove: changes its way so as to be separated by infidelity. True love remains for ever and it does not bend even when one of the pair is perfidious.

ever-fixed mark: sea-mark; beacon light; it is not shadowed by tempests and storms.

the star: the pole-star; sailors set their course by it. The star helps them to get the right

direction. True love is like a guiding star.

bark: boat; Life is like sea and we are voyagers in it.

Whose worth is unknown although his height be taken: We may tell the height, altitude, of a star, but we cannot tell what wealth it contains. Figuratively, it means that the value or true love is something unknowable. The full value of true love can never be known.

Times' fool: Love cannot be made the sport or mockery of Time. *Rosy lips and cheeks* stand for youth. Shakespeare in his Sonnets speaks of Time as the universal foe of beauty and youth.

bending sickle's compass: Time is represented as a crooked man with a sickle (sharp, curved knife). It gathers as it cuts. Time undoes everything and nothing will elude its compass (reach or limit). But true love lives beyond Time.

his brief hours and weeks: Time's brief period. Earlier Time is referred to as all-powerful and all-destroying. Now its importance is reduced. When compared to the eternal (unending) existence of love, time's duration is short.

bears it out: survives time

edge of doom: doomsday; the last day when God judges all mankind. In this powerful image, the poet suggests the everlasting quality of love.

Lines 13-14: "If this is a false judgement, and this can be proved against me, then I have never written anything and no man's love has been real love." In other words the poet declares that his definition of love is correct. True love always exists.

1.10 Analysis

The sonnet defines perfect love. The treatment is, until the last couplet, impersonal.

"Let me not to the marriage of True Minds" is the 116th sonnet in a series addressed to the Friend. It tells about flawless love. In Sonnet 115, love is represented as a babe. One is not sure how the babe will change as it grows up. So the poet speaks about love rather doubtfully. Now all his doubts are resolved. He believes that true love does not alter and it is a constant guide in life.

Sonnet cxv

*Those lines that I before have writ do lie,
Even those that said I could not love you dearer:
Yet then my judgment knew no reason why
My most full flame should afterwards burn
clearer:
But reckoning Time, whose million'd accidents
Creep in 'twixt vows, and change deems of
kings,
Tan sacred beauty, blunt the sharp'st intents,
Divert strong minds to th' course of altering
things:
Alas, why, fearing of Time's tyranny,
Might I not then- say, 'Now I love you best.'
When I was certain o'er uncertainty,
Crowning the present, doubting of the rest?
Love is a babe; then might I not say so,
To give full growth to that which still doth
grow?*

- Shakespeare

(Please note: This sonnet (CXV) is not prescribed for your study, but is given as additional reading material)

Lines 1-4 : Marriage implies union of two minds. It is based on perfect love. It lies far beyond any obstacle, physical or material. Nothing should hinder the marriage of true minds. There is a reference to Marriage Service. It is explained in the glossary (1.9). True love between two persons does not alter, does not bend, even though there is a strong temptation for it. Things change in the flux of time. But true love is unchanging and lives beyond Time.

Lines 5-8: The poet defines love in negative terms. Now he dwells upon its positive virtue. It is constant and remains firm for ever. Storms and stresses of life do not shake it. It is unshakable and like the northern star, shows the right direction in life. It is immeasurable. It is priceless. (Look up the Dictionary if you do not know the meaning of these two words)

Lines 9-12: The greatness of love is described in this quatrain. Beauty and strength are the blessings of youth. But time takes them away. While the factors that generate love vanish in course of time love itself remains undying. Earlier, Time was described as all-powerful and every created thing would come within its compass. Now its importance is seen as diminished, compared to the supremacy of love. Time cannot destroy true love. Love will stay on even to the edge of doom.

There are two images in this quatrain-Time with his bending sickle; the, edge of doom. An appropriate use of image can enrich a poem..

"IMAGE- (1) A physical representation of a person, animal, or object that is painted, sculptured, photographed or otherwise made visible (2) The mental impression or visualized likeness summoned up by a word, phrase or sentence. An author can use figurative language such as metaphors and similes to create images as vivid as the physical presence of objects and ideas themselves. When Andrew Marvell wrote in *His Coy Mistress*

But at the back I always hear
Time's winged chariot hurrying near
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity. . . .

he was describing the transience of life and mystery of the future in the images of a hurrying vehicle and limitless deserts.

The image is a distinctive and essential element, ingredient, of nearly all imaginative prose and poetry."

(Glossary of Literary Terms)

Lines 13-14: This is a couplet. The poet strikes a personal note. He is confident of his claim that love is a permanent feeling and poetry immortalizes it. If these claims are proved against him, it is as good as saying that he has not written any poem and no one has ever loved in this world. Note the challenging tone of the couplet.

Two things should be clear to you from the above analysis of the sonnet. Shakespeare's concept of love and the greatness of his poetry.

Self-Check Exercises

- 1) What according to Shakespeare are the impediments that one can admit to the marriage of true minds? (Add extra lines, as per the requirement of the answer)

- 2) Sonnet No. 116 is said to define ideal love -Briefly discuss the statement. (Add extra lines, as per the requirement of the answer)

1.11 ANSWERS TO SELF-CHECK QUESTIONS

- 1) & 2) Please see 1.10

1.12 SUMMING UP

Shakespeare the playwright has so much overwhelmed the world with his great plays that Shakespeare the poet is relegated to a minor place by many critics. In fact even when critics praise the poet they cull out examples from his great tragedies or the songs from comedies to prove his poetic genius. This appears to do scant justice to Shakespeare's powers as a poet and especially in the Sonnet form to which he has bestowed his name.

William Shakespeare, the great dramatist and poet (1564-1616) was born in the village of Stratford upon-Avon and could get very meagre education in his hometown. He went to London and became famous as a poet and a playwright. Apart from his great dramas, he wrote a large number of Sonnets and three longer poems.