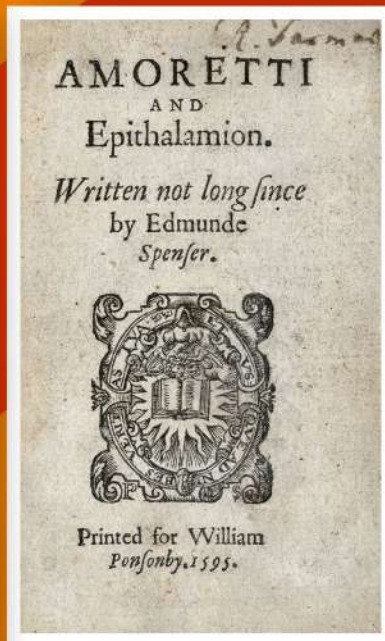
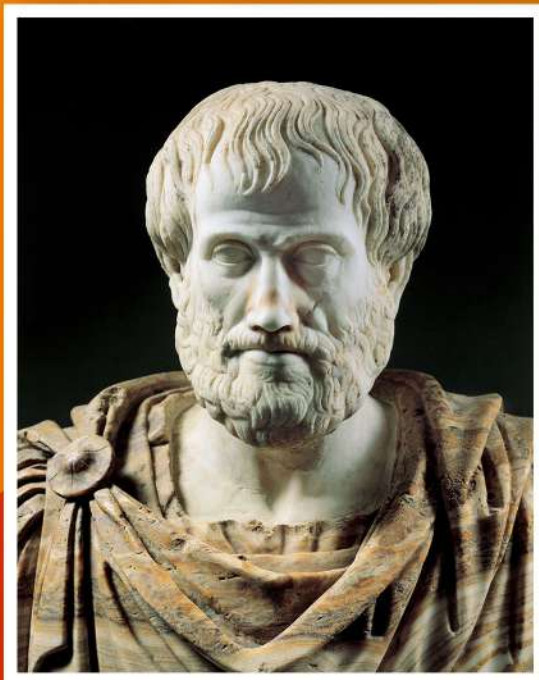
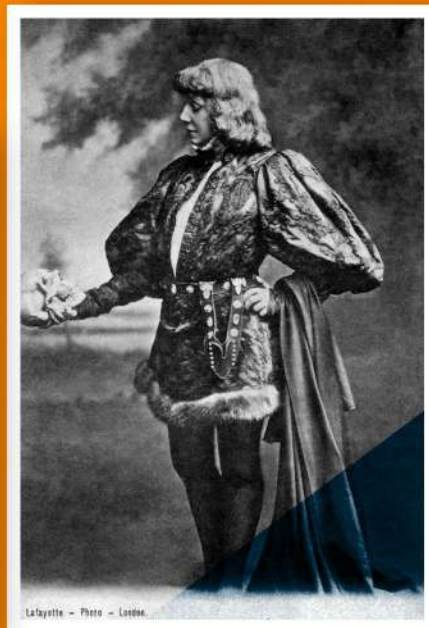
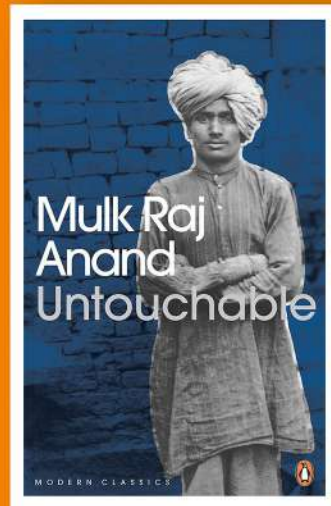


# TRB

# POLYTECHNIC FOR LECTURER

# ENGLISH



Professor Academy  
Chennai

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**POLYTECHNIC  
FOR LECTURER**

# ENGLISH



**Professor Academy**

No.42,Railway Border Road,Kodambakkam,Chennai-24

**SAMPLE MATERIAL**

## UNIT – 1

### Sir Thomas More: *Utopia*

#### Introduction:

**Thomas More** was born into a prominent London family on February 6, 1478. He was the second child of attorney John More and Agnes Graunger More. More attended primary school at St. Anthony's School in London, where he was provided with a religious education and an early training in oratory and debating skills. In 1490, More began working as a page in the household of the Archbishop of Canterbury, John Morton. It was customary during this time period for upper-middle-class families to participate in such arrangements, which provided an opportunity for English youth to receive both work experience and to continue their education. From 1492 to 1494, More attended the University of Oxford and later studied law at the New Inn in London, until 1496; he finally entered the legal profession in 1501. Deeply spiritual, More lived in a monastery, the Charterhouse of London, for several years; however, he did not take any monastic vows.

He married Jane Colt in 1505, and the couple subsequently had four children. Holding the then-unorthodox view that men and women had equal intellectual potential, More educated his daughters as well as his son. In 1510, More began working as one of two undersheriffs of London, and the next year his wife Joan died. More soon married the widow Alice Middleton. He served until 1518 as an undersheriff, despite the fact that in 1517 he was also appointed as a counselor and personal servant to King Henry VIII. During his years as an undersheriff he began writing *Utopia*, which was published in 1516, as well as *The History of Richard III* (William Shakespeare is indebted to More for his portrait of the tyrant.), which was completed in 1518. In the king's service, More was sent on diplomatic missions, including negotiations with the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, in 1520–21. More was knighted following these negotiations. He became speaker of the House of Commons in 1523. Other posts included chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (1525) and high steward of the Universities of Oxford (1524) and Cambridge (1525).

An outspoken advocate against Lutheranism, More penned a number of polemical books, published between 1529 and 1533, against this form of religion, which More considered to be heresy against the teachings of Catholicism. Gaining the powerful position of lord chancellor in 1529, a position he held until 1532, More had several Lutherans burned at the stake, and he imprisoned many others. It was during these years that the conflict between More's allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church and Henry VIII's desire to establish an independent Church of England came to the forefront. More's primary conflict with Henry VIII stemmed from Henry's desire to annul his marriage to his wife, Catherine of Aragon, and marry Anne Boleyn. The pope condemned the new marriage as bigamous, and More refused to sign the 1534 Act of Succession because it declared Henry and Anne's marriage lawful and their heirs successors to the throne of England. Imprisoned in 1534 in the Tower of London, More continued to write.

He was **convicted of treason** in 1535 and beheaded on July 6th that same year. In 1886, More was canonized (recognized as a saint by the Roman Catholic Church) by Pope Leo XIII.

### **The Gist of the Text:**

*Utopia*, a speculative political essay written in Latin, was published at Leuven in December 1516, Erasmus supervising the printing. The form was probably suggested by the narrative of the voyages of Vespucci, printed 1507. The subject is the search for the best possible form of government. More meets at Antwerp a traveller, one Raphael Hythloday, who has discovered 'Utopia', 'Nowhere land'. Communism is there the general law, a national system of education is extended to men and women alike, and the freest toleration of religion is recognized. The work at once became popular, and was translated by Ralph Robinson into English in 1551, and into French (in 1550), German, Italian, and Spanish.

The book was an immediate success with the audience for which More wrote it: the humanists and an elite group of public officials. "Utopia" is a Greek name of More's coining, from *ou-topos* ("no place"); a pun on *eu-topos* ("good place") is suggested in a prefatory poem. More's *Utopia* describes a pagan and communist city-state in which the institutions and policies are entirely governed by reason.

### **Thomas More to Peter Giles**

More's *Utopia* is framed by two letters from More to his friend, Peter Giles. In the opening letter, More presents himself as the possessor of a true account of the inhabitants of the island of Utopia. In this letter, More apologizes to Giles for taking so long to write the tale of the land of Utopia and explains certain facts of his life in his own self-defense. Namely, he discusses his professional duties as a judge, as well as his responsibilities to his household, his family, and his servants. More then entreats Giles to examine the text that follows in Books 1 and 2. More references the fact that both he and Giles, as well as More's assistant John Clement, discussed with a man named Raphael Hythloday the history, customs, laws, and religion of the Utopians. More asks Giles to verify his facts and even to contact Hythloday if necessary in order to insure the accuracy of the work.

Additionally, More suggests his reluctance to publish the work at all, because "the tastes of mortals are so various." Through this letter, More establishes as reality the fictive tale that is to follow, and in doing so creates for himself a persona, a character who possesses More's name but whom critics agree should not be confused with the real author.

### **Book 1**

The next section of *Utopia* recounts the conversation held between the More persona and his friend Peter Giles, when the two are in Antwerp, Belgium. Giles tells More of his having met the philosopher and traveler Raphael Hythloday, who had recently journeyed with the explorer Amerigo Vespucci. Giles subsequently introduces More and Hythloday. More then presents the content of the conversation he had with Hythloday about his travels. More

discovers the wealth of experience Hythloday possesses in the area of the customs of a variety of newly discovered nations. The conversation then turns to More's perception of Hythloday's duty to share his knowledge. More conveys his sense that Hythloday should be employed by a king as an advisor for the betterment of that nation.

Hythloday reveals his unwillingness to do so, arguing that kings are more interested in expanding their borders through warfare than they are with improving the lives of their country's inhabitants. He describes his experiences with European rulers and his exchange with Cardinal Morton, the lord chancellor of England. In recounting this conversation, Hythloday expresses his often unfavorable views regarding English society and customs. He points to the inequities in the distribution of wealth that lead the impoverished citizens to steal, which results in their being unfairly punished. Hythloday goes on to discuss the way the Polylerites (a fictional people Hythloday describes as having been encountered in his travels through Persia) deal with crime and punishment, and to laud the overall fairness of societies in which thieves are not put to death but forced into hard labor. In this regard the Polylerites resemble the Utopians.

More continues to insist that Hythloday could serve the "common good" by advising rulers. Yet Hythloday explains that his advice would be such that typical rulers would not listen anyway, for he would implore them to establish a society like that of the Utopians, and many of their customs would prove intolerable to a great many people, Hythloday contends. The notion of the potential evil of private property is then debated by More and Hythloday. When More and Giles express their desire to learn every detail about the island from Hythloday, the trio adjourns for lunch before taking up the story of the Utopians again.

## **Book 2**

Book 2 opens with a discussion of the geography of the island of Utopia. (Scholars have noted that the geographic measures of the island are self-contradictory; the island is a physical impossibility.) Hythloday, who lived among the Utopians for five years, describes a variety of the physical aspects of the island before moving on to the structure of the society and the customs of its inhabitants. His account is filled with detailed assessments as well as a general defense of and praise for the society. The key features he expounds upon include: the lack of private property, the equality of education among males and females, the uniformity of clothing, the regimented nature of daily living, the treatment of the sick, the treatment of prisoners and slaves, the justification for warfare, the notion of virtuous pleasure, and the nature of their religious beliefs and their tolerance for different forms and habits of worship.

In conclusion, Hythloday observes that Utopia is the only true commonwealth, as it is the only place on earth where virtually nothing is private, and the citizens' concerns are directed toward the public good. Book 2 finishes with More's observations that several of the customs of the Utopians are "quite absurd." These include their notions of commonly held property, their acceptance of a variety of religious practices, and their lack of a monetary system. Yet More concedes that there are in Utopia "very many features which in our societies I would

wish rather than expect to see.” He does not expound upon which elements of Utopian society he finds praiseworthy or what Europeans might find unacceptable about them.

### **Thomas More to Peter Giles**

In this final section of the novel, More once again addresses Peter Giles, referencing one critic’s view that “if the story is being presented as true, I find some things in it rather absurd; if it is a fiction, then I think that More’s usual good judgement is lacking on some points.” More critiques this assessment, asserting the truth and accuracy of his work. He suggests that if he were writing a fictive account of Utopia, he would have included “some pointed hints which would have let the more learned discover what I was about.” His next sentence, while incomplete in the Latin original and therefore left incomplete in translation, includes some suggestions that he has in fact included some such hints within the text of Utopia. More goes on to state that if cautious and suspicious people cannot believe his tale is true, they should simply visit Hythloday himself. The caveat More inserts at this point is that he is responsible only for his own writing, rather than for the trustworthiness of other people. He then bids farewell to his friend Peter.

### **Excerpts from the Text:**

#### **from “Of Their Trades, And Manner of Life”:**

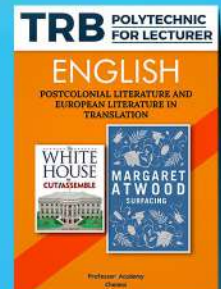
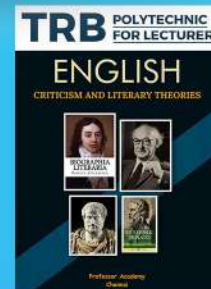
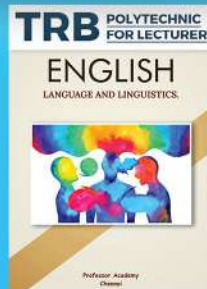
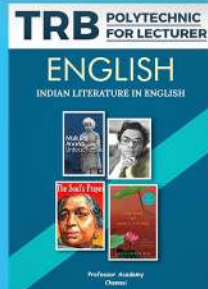
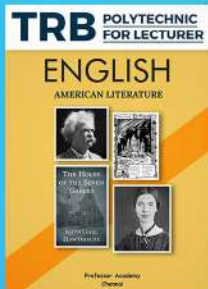
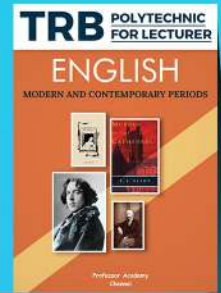
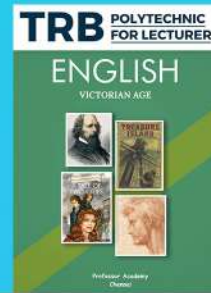
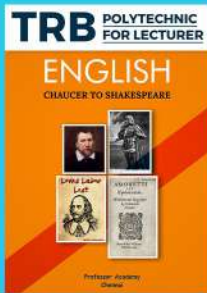
‘Agriculture is that which is so universally understood among them that no person, either man or woman, is ignorant of it; they are instructed in it from their childhood, partly by what they learn at school, and partly by practice, they being led out often into the fields about the town, where they not only see others at work but are likewise exercised in it themselves. Besides agriculture, which is so common to them all, every man has some peculiar trade to which he applies himself; such as the manufacture of wool or flax, masonry, smith’s work, or carpenter’s work; for there is no sort of trade that is in great esteem among them. Throughout the island they wear the same sort of clothes, without any other distinction except what is necessary to distinguish the two sexes and the married and unmarried. The fashion never alters, and as it is neither disagreeable nor uneasy, so it is suited to the climate, and calculated both for their summers and winters. Every family makes their own clothes; but all among them, women as well as men, learn one or other of the trades formerly mentioned. **Women**, for the most part, deal in wool and flax, which suit best with their weakness, leaving the ruder trades to the men. The same trade generally passes down from father to son, inclinations often following descent: but if any man’s genius lies another way he is, by adoption, translated into a family that deals in the trade to which he is inclined; and when that is to be done, care is taken, not only by his father, but by the magistrate, that he may be put to a discreet and good man: and if, after a person has learned one trade, he desires to acquire another, that is also allowed, and is managed in the same manner as the former. When he has learned both, he follows that which he likes best, unless the public has more occasion for the other.



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The chief, and almost the only, business of **the Syphogrants** is to take care that no man may live idle, but that every one may follow his trade diligently; yet they do not wear themselves out with perpetual toil from morning to night, as if they were beasts of burden, which as it is indeed a heavy slavery, so it is everywhere the common course of life amongst all mechanics except the Utopians: but they, dividing the day and night into twenty-four hours, appoint six of these for work, three of which are before dinner and three after; they then sup, and at eight o'clock, counting from noon, go to bed and sleep eight hours: the rest of their time, besides that taken up in work, eating, and sleeping, is left to every man's discretion; yet they are not to abuse that interval to luxury and idleness, but must employ it in some proper exercise, according to their various inclinations, which is, for the most part, reading. It is ordinary to have public lectures every morning before daybreak, at which none are obliged to appear but those who are marked out for literature; yet a great many, both men and women, of all ranks, go to hear lectures of one sort or other, according to their inclinations: but if others that are not made for contemplation, choose rather to employ themselves at that time in their trades, as many of them do, they are not hindered, but are rather commended, as men that take care to serve their country. After supper they spend an hour in some diversion, in summer in their gardens, and in winter in the halls where they eat, where they entertain each other either with music or discourse. They do not so much as know dice, or any such foolish and mischievous games. They have, however, two sorts of games not unlike our chess; the one is between several numbers, in which one number, as it were, consumes another; the other resembles a battle between the virtues and the vices, in which the enmity in the vices among themselves, and their agreement against virtue, is not unpleasantly represented; together with the special opposition between the particular virtues and vices; as also the methods by which vice either openly assaults or secretly undermines virtue; and virtue, on the other hand, resists it. But the time appointed for labour is to be narrowly examined, otherwise you may imagine that since there are only six hours appointed for work, they may fall under a scarcity of necessary provisions: but it is so far from being true that this time is not sufficient for supplying them with plenty of all things, either necessary or convenient, that it is rather too much; and this you will easily apprehend if you consider how great a part of all other nations is quite idle. First, women generally do little, who are the half of mankind; and if some few women are diligent, their husbands are idle: then consider the great company of idle priests, and of those that are called religious men; add to these all rich men, chiefly those that have estates in land, who are called noblemen and gentlemen, together with their families, made up of idle persons, that are kept more for show than use; add to these all those strong and lusty beggars that go about pretending some disease in excuse for their begging; and upon the whole account you will find that the number of those by whose labours mankind is supplied is much less than you perhaps imagined: then consider how few of those that work are employed in labours that are of real service, for we, who measure all things by money, give rise to many trades that are both vain and superfluous, and serve only to support riot and luxury: for if those who work were employed only in such things as the conveniences of life require, there would be such an abundance of them that the prices of them would so sink that tradesmen could not be maintained by their gains; if all those who labour about useless things were set to more profitable employments, and if all they that languish out their lives in sloth and idleness (every one of whom consumes as much as any two of the men that are at work) were

forced to labour, you may easily imagine that a small proportion of time would serve for doing all that is either necessary, profitable, or pleasant to mankind, especially while pleasure is kept within its due bounds: this appears very plainly in Utopia; for there, in a great city, and in all the territory that lies round it, you can scarce find five hundred, either men or women, by their age and strength capable of labour, that are not engaged in it. Even the Syphogrants, though excused by the law, yet do not excuse themselves, but work, that by their examples they may excite the industry of the rest of the people; the like exemption is allowed to those who, being recommended to the people by the priests, are, by the secret suffrages of the Syphogrants, privileged from labour, that they may apply themselves wholly to study; and if any of these fall short of those hopes that they seemed at first to give, they are obliged to return to work; and sometimes a mechanic that so employs his leisure hours as to make a considerable advancement in learning is eased from being a tradesman and ranked among their learned men. Out of these they choose their ambassadors, their priests, their Tranibors, and the Prince himself, anciently called their Barzenes, but is called of late their Ademus.

### **The Summary of the Text:**

#### **Book 1**

Thomas More the character sets the stage for Utopia by recounting how he was sent by King Henry VIII of England as an ambassador to the Netherlands, along with several other excellent men. Their mission is to negotiate with a Flemish commission organized by Charles, the King of Castile, concerning the English wool trade. The commissions meet once or twice without arriving at any full agreement. Consequently, the Flemish travel to Brussels for further instructions from their prince, during which time More travels to Antwerp.

While living in Antwerp, More befriends an honest, learned citizen of that city: **Peter Giles**. More finds Giles's conversation both merry and pleasant, and it makes More feel less homesick to have such an entertaining new friend, even though he's been away from his wife and children for four months at this point.

One day, while returning to his house in Antwerp after a church service, More runs into **Giles**, who is speaking with an old, sunburned, long-bearded, and cloaked stranger from Portugal; this man is named **Raphael Hythloday**. More takes him to be a mariner. Giles exclaims that he was just about to escort Hythloday to More's lodgings for a meeting, because the old man is well-traveled and knows much about the world, especially foreign peoples and countries. However, Hythloday turns out to be not so much a mariner (though he did travel with Amerigo Vespucci) as a person in quest of knowledge, like the Greek hero Ulysses and the philosopher Plato.

**More, Giles, and Hythloday** go to More's house and sit in the **garden** where Hythloday tells of his travels. During one voyage, he says, he received Vespucci's permission to stay behind and explore the East for himself. After many days spent crossing scorching deserts and wilderness, Hythloday and his companions came upon well-governed people, cities, and

towns. Ships gladly welcomed Hythloday and his companions aboard, and they were consequently able to visit many nearby countries. Hythloday even introduced some sailors to the use of the lodestone, a magnet used in navigation. More, however, suggests that sailors have so much confidence in the lodestone that they become reckless and expose themselves to danger.

More and Giles are especially curious about how the peoples Hythloday encountered are governed, and they ask him many questions on this point. More is also quick to point out that they don't ask Hythloday any questions about monsters, because monsters, like Scylla from Homer's *Odyssey* and cannibals, are easy to find, whereas people ruled by good and wholesome laws are not. Of all the societies Hythloday presents, however, More is "determined to rehearse only that he told us...of the Utopians" (from the Greek meaning "nowhere").

Peter Giles is so impressed by **Hythloday** that he strongly encourages him to go into the service of a prince as his counselor, for the prince, the nation, and Hythloday's own friends and family would benefit from Hythloday's profound learning and wisdom. Hythloday counters that he has done enough for his friends and family as it is, having long ago given them most of his belongings. As such, he would not "give [himself] in bondage unto kings" on their account. Peter says he does not mean bondage at all; Hythloday could become very wealthy by serving in a king's court. Hythloday, again, has a counter: wealth stands in opposition to his own principles and nature. He values the liberty to follow his own thoughts and pleasures too much to serve a prince.

**More**, for his part, encourages Hythloday to go into a prince's service not for wealth but to contribute to the public good. Hythloday responds, first, that he does not possess the ability to fill a prince's head with truth and virtue, because princes are more interested in chivalry, war, and conquest than good governance. Second, counselors prefer the ideas they themselves invent to all others, and therefore attempt to fault the ideas of their peers, no matter how good, which means that their best decrees "lie unexecuted."

More asks Hythloday if he's been to England. Hythloday says he has, and he stayed there for four or five months, shortly after a Cornish rebellion—which was motivated by overtaxation—was bloodily put down in 1497. Hythloday spent much of his time in England in the company of **Cardinal John Morton**, whom More served as a page in boyhood and whom Hythloday describes as upright, reverent, gentle, wise, and eloquent—an excellent administrator of policy and law.

One day, while sitting at **Cardinal Morton**'s table, Hythloday fell into discussion with a cunning **lawyer** concerning English law. The lawyer praises the rigorous justice executed upon felons and especially thieves at that time, for many were hanged for their crimes and few escaped punishment. Hythloday disagrees: death is "too extreme and cruel a punishment for theft," he says. He also argues that people who resort to thievery are forced into it by having no other way of getting their living. Instead of executing thieves, he says, England should make it so that the thieves can live by honest work instead.

**Hythloday** claims, moreover, that he's not just referring to people who can't work because they've been maimed and lamed by fighting on behalf of their nation in the wars. He is referring to people who can't work for more commonplace reasons. First, Hythloday says, there are a great number of idle gentlemen who live by exploitatively raising their tenants' rent and who hire serving men to proudly show off the wealth of their estates. But these serving men never learn any craft, and they become as idle as their lords.

**Hythloday** continues: once these serving men's lords die, or once they themselves fall ill and are thrust out to get their living independently, serving men have no choice but to "manfully play the thieves'," lest they starve. What choice do they have? After being thrust out, the men wear their clothes threadbare and become sickly, which makes it unlikely that another master will take them into service. Moreover, farmers dare not put them to work either, knowing that such men do not have the temperament or discipline to do hard work for small wages.

The lawyer responds that England should cherish these pampered, out-of-work serving men, for they are stouter and more courageous than craftsmen and farmers tend to be, and they make up the whole strength of the English army as such. Hythloday agrees that, when such out-of-work serving men don't become thieves, they do tend to become soldiers, but he finds it troubling that England must cherish its thieves for war's sake.

Moreover, **Hythloday** observes that in all nations, but especially in France, having a standing army in peacetime is bad policy. Nations don't like sending unpracticed soldiers into battle, and so they provide practice by seeking out unnecessary wars. Standing armies of mercenaries or slaves also have a history of turning against the countries that support them. Finally, as France's military record in wars with England would suggest, practiced soldiers don't even have an advantage over unpracticed ones. Hythloday thinks that men who have a craft tend to be stouter and sturdier than gentlemen's serving men who are softened by idleness anyway.

Hythloday introduces a second cause of thievery in England. For the sake of reaping huge profits in the wool trade, noblemen, gentlemen, and even churchmen tear down houses and towns to pasture their sheep on what could otherwise be farmland, thereby making it impossible for people to live on and work the land. The farmers who are cheated or oppressed out of their land often get nothing for it, or for their household stuff. After wandering the country and spending all they have, they inevitably turn to theft, having no other way to get their living, and then they are hanged. Those who beg instead are often imprisoned; in any case, they can't contribute to the public good either.

The decay of farming causes yet other problems, in **Hythloday's** account: food shortages and a spike in the price of wool, which makes it so that poor people can no longer afford to buy wool and make cloth from it. This problem was further exacerbated, Hythloday recalls, by the death of many English sheep due to an epidemic of sheep rot, which only made wool harder to get. This, again, results in people being forced out of work into idleness, and only a few greedy people profit. Hythloday also foresees similar problems arising when "utter

covetousness” leads noblemen and gentlemen to exploit the cattle industry as they’ve already done with the sheep industry.

Making matters even worse, according to **Hythloday**, is the fact that beggary and poverty are often accompanied by debauched drinking, decadent excess, the soliciting of prostitutes, and gambling among those not reduced to poverty, like serving men, craftsmen, and farmers. Hythloday calls for a law that will force the people who despoiled farmland to restore it, and he calls for an end to idleness. Until these problems are solved, he says, justice will be mere show and not profitable, and children will be brought up in sin. A society should not make thieves and then punish them cruelly, Hythloday concludes.

The lawyer tediously claims he will answer **Hythloday**, promising to rehearse each of his points in order and then counter all of Hythloday’s arguments. However, **Cardinal Morton** cuts him off: he doesn’t want to listen to such verbosity, and would rather the lawyer save his answer for later.

Instead, **Cardinal Morton** asks **Hythloday** how he thinks thieves should be punished, if not by death. Hythloday responds that a man’s life is worth more than money, that cruel laws disproportionate to the crime they’re punishing should not be tolerated, and that man’s law ought not to go against God’s commandment against killing insofar as this is possible, lest man usurp God’s power. Not even Moses’s sharp law punished theft with death, Hythloday points out. Moreover, thieves who know they’ll be hanged for thieving and murder alike are more likely to kill their witnesses, such that the death penalty for theft perversely incentivizes murder.

**Hythloday** then turns to how thieves should be punished. He points out that the Romans punished thieves and other criminals by forcing them to serve the public good in stone quarries and mines. Hythloday says that the (fictional) people called the Polylerites (from the Greek meaning “nonsensical people”), whose fertile land is ringed in by mountains, punish thieves by forcing them to pay restitution to the victims of their crimes, and also by forcing them to become common laborers, or serving men. These laborers, humanely treated, are not imprisoned or bound unless they refuse to work, in which case they are also whipped.

Furthermore, **Hythloday** says, the serving men among the Polylerites are distinguished from other citizens by the common color of their clothes and the fact that the tip of one of their ears is cut off. For them to receive money or weapons is death, for the receiver and giver alike; for a serving man to throw away his distinct clothes or to run away is likewise death. For a free man to counsel a serving man to run away is bondage; for a serving man to do so, death. Those who reveal the plots of a runaway receive freedom or money, depending on whether they’re serving men or freemen, respectively. It is always better for a runaway to repent and turn back than to “go forward in their evil purpose.” Serving men can also achieve freedom through hard work and patience.

Hythloday concludes that the Polylerites’ treatment of thieves is much more humane than England’s. He thinks that society can be so organized that even bad people can’t help but to do good. The lawyer at once counters that, were England to do as the Polylerites do, the

nation would fall into danger; he says no more, but everyone present agrees with him except **Cardinal Morton**. The Cardinal says proof is needed to decide either way, but he is sympathetic to Hythloday's proposal and adds that forcing even vagabonds into labor might benefit society. Everyone at the table then praises what Hythloday had said; the highest praise, however, is reserved for the Cardinal's novel point about vagabonds.

Hythloday then tells More and Giles about a **joker** at **Cardinal Morton**'s table who tried to say witty things as a professional fool might, but more often than not his jokes were so belabored and out of sync with the conversation that people ended up laughing at him more than at his jokes. Once in a while, however, the joker did succeed in saying something very witty and reasonable indeed.

One person at **Cardinal Morton**'s table says that, thanks to the proposals of **Hythloday** and the Cardinal, both thieves and vagabonds are taken care of in England—all that remains is to make provisions for the sick and old who have fallen into beggary. The joker proposes that beggars be forced into monasteries and convents and made into lay brethren and nuns. The Cardinal smiles at this joke, but others at the table uncritically accept the proposal in earnest. A usually very serious **friar** jests that, now that the joker has made provisions for beggars, he must make provisions for friars, too. The joker retorts that the Cardinal's provision for vagabonds (putting them to work) applies to friars as well, for friars "be the veriest vagabonds that be'," in the joker's words.

The **joker**'s mockery of friars is too much for the friar to bear, and he is enraged. He chides, scolds, and curses the joker. The joker scoffs very entertainingly and advises the friar to follow the scripture in being patient. The friar maintains that he is angry but that he is not sinning. Cardinal Morton calms the friar and tells him not to debase his intelligence by arguing with a fool. The friar praises the Cardinal's wisdom, but nonetheless insinuates that the joker could be excommunicated for his mockery. The Cardinal, seeing that the argument will not end, sends the fool away, changes the subject, and soon after dismisses all his company. **Hythloday** says that this story suggests how little courtiers would value his counsel.

Hythloday pardons himself for telling Thomas More and Peter Giles such a long tale. He says he did so only because it seemed as though his companions wanted to hear it all. He points out that all present at **Cardinal Morton**'s table that day disagreed with his views on punishment until the Cardinal approved them, which suggests that those men are impudent flatterers, even to the point of accepting smiled-on jokes for earnest proposals.

More thanks Hythloday for his tale, which was especially pleasant for him because he served **Cardinal Morton** in his boyhood. More confesses that he hasn't changed his mind on one point, however: he believes that if Hythloday serves as the counselor of a prince, he will greatly benefit his nation, which is nothing more than a good man's duty. Only when philosophers are kings or the counselors of kings will society become perfect, as Plato says.

Hythloday does not agree with **More**. He says that, unless kings themselves study philosophy seriously, they will not listen to the counsel of philosophers. He imagines helping an empire-

building French king like Charles the VIII or Louis the VII wage his wars of conquest. All his fellow counselors would propose cunning ways of winning battles, forging alliances, holding old territory, and gaining new territory. And if he, Hythloday, were to suggest that the king cease his wars of conquest and focus on domestic matters, what would happen?

Hythloday even has an example in mind for his hypothetical French king to follow, which he learned from a (fictional) people called the Achorians (Greek for “those who live in a place that does not exist”), neighbors of the Utopians. The Achorian king conquered a new kingdom, but had a harder time keeping it than he did in getting it because of rebellion. The Achorians lost money and blood in battle, and in peace many were so corrupted by their warlike ways that they had developed “wicked manners” and criminal tendencies. The Achorians forced their king to choose one kingdom to govern, because in governing both he was merely half a king. So it was that he contented himself with his old kingdom.

Hythloday returns to his earlier question: how would the hypothetical French king receive his counsel, that he should cease his wars of conquest and not meddle with other kingdoms? **More** concedes the king would not be grateful for such advice.

**Hythloday** then imagines what cunning, vicious things his fellow counselors might advise the king to do: inflate the currency; pretend to go to war to raise money; renew old, outdated laws to collect fines; impose fines for certain practices and sell licenses to exempt people from the fines; etc. All the counselors agree on one thing: as the rich Roman Crassus says, a prince who must maintain an army can never have enough **gold**, and a prince can never do an injustice, because all men are his already. Poverty, such counselors say, makes people too poor to behave badly or rebel. And how would the king receive Hythloday’s counsel then, if Hythloday advised that he should care more about the wealth of his people than about his own wealth? A shepherd’s duty, Hythloday says, is to feed his sheep rather than himself.

Hythloday goes on to say that poverty is not the mother of peace so much as it is of conflict, arguing, and fighting, as the behavior of beggars would suggest. After all, people who are not content are also those most desirous for change, and people who have nothing to lose are likelier to resort to violence. Besides, it is beneath the dignity of a king to rule over beggars—this would be fitter work for a mere jailer. A king who cannot rule except by harming his subjects is not fit to rule at all; he would do better to renounce bad pleasures and pride.

Hythloday introduces a law of the (fictional) people called the Macarians (from the Greek meaning “happy people”). The Macarians do not permit their king to have more than a thousand pounds of **gold** or silver in his treasury, and by this measure they make sure that he enriches his country and not himself. A thousand pound of gold or silver is enough to support the king in putting down a rebellion, but not enough to encourage him to steal from his subjects.

Hythloday concludes, at last, that his counsel could only fall on deaf ears in a king’s court, and **Thomas More** now agrees with him. More says that “school philosophy” is not profitable or palatable to people who have already made up their minds, even if it’s “not

unpleasant” among friends. Hythloday agrees that school philosophy has no place in the consultations of princes.

**More** does say, however, that philosophy does have a part to play in governance, although it must know its place and cannot digress. He means that philosophy which is craftily and wittily poured into the unreceptive ears of its audience to turn the “very bad” into the “merely bad”—if not the good. Not until all men are good, More says, can all be well—and some men will be bad a while yet.

Hythloday responds that playing such a crafty counselor would just make him as bad as everyone else. If he wants to speak truly, he must resort to “school philosophy,” and he does not know whether the philosopher can speak a falsehood and still be a philosopher. Hythloday does not want to play along with evil and wink at that which Christ forbids; he does not want ethics to be bent to accommodate vice. If he disagrees with a king’s counselors, no one will listen to him; and if he agrees with them, he will only help to further their madness and allow bad counsels and decrees to pass as good. He will either be denounced as a traitor, be corrupted himself, or be held accountable for the evils of others.

Hythloday speculates that no nation with private property or money can ever be justly governed. This reminds him of the Utopians, who have very few laws and share all resources collectively, but whose society is so well organized that everyone thrives. Just as Plato foresees in his Republic, because the Utopians have abolished private property, everyone is equal. No wicked, ravenous rich people prey on the poor, and no magistrates can be bought with bribes or gifts. Until private property is abolished in a society, Hythloday says, any kind of “cure” will just cause sickness somewhere else in a nation’s political body.

**More** questions **Hythloday** as to whether or not people will really work at all without the incentive of personal gain—won’t they be too confident in other people’s industry and so lazily excuse themselves from labor? Hythloday is not surprised by this question, but says that, had More lived in Utopia as he had for more than five years, More would grant that no people are as well-ordered as the Utopians themselves.

**Peter Giles** says it’s hard for him to believe that this is so, given that the people in Europe are just as witty as others and that their nations are even more ancient and experienced in governance than the Utopians’. Hythloday responds that there were cities in Utopia before there were people in the Netherlands. He also says that, while Europeans may surpass the Utopians in wit, the Utopians are superior in study and work ethic.

To demonstrate the Utopians’ excellence, Hythloday tells a story. According to the Utopian chronicles, some 1,200 years ago certain Romans and Egyptians washed up on Utopian shores after their ship was destroyed in a storm. The Utopians then studiously and profitably mastered all the crafts and sciences these people could transmit. Hythloday doubts that Europeans could adopt Utopian know-how as readily. This is why, he says, Utopia is governed so much more wisely than Europe, though the Europeans are not inferior in intelligence or resources to the Utopians.



Thomas More asks Hythloday to describe the **island** of Utopia in great detail, from its geography to its cities to its people to its customs to its laws. Hythloday gladly agrees, but says that the telling will require leisure. The men consequently agree to go into More's house for dinner, after which they return to the **garden** and sit. Hythloday thinks in silence for a while, then proceeds to tell More and **Peter Giles** all about Utopia.

## **Book 2: Discourse on Utopia**

Hythloday begins his discourse on the **island** of Utopia by describing its geography. The island itself is about 200 miles broad and 500 miles long, in roughly the shape of a crescent. Between its corners the sea calmly runs in, which profitably provides ships with access to every part of the land. However, the corners of the island are rocky and dangerous for ships to access. This means the Utopians need only one military post for defense, strategically located upon a great rock in the sea. The Utopians themselves would struggle to sail to their island were it not for certain landmarks on the shore. The coasts of Utopia are so naturally protected that a few defenders can drive back armies.

Utopia was not always an **island**, **Hythloday** says, nor was it always called Utopia. Its first name was Abraxa, perhaps meaning "Holy Name," "without breeches," or "waterless." **Utopus**, the conqueror of the place and the founder of Utopia itself, civilized the natives of Abraxa and had them, along with his own soldiers, cut up and dig away the fifteen miles of ground that connected Utopia to the mainland. Many hands on the project made light work, and so Utopia was born as an island.

There are fifty-four large and fair cities in Utopia, each with a jurisdiction of at least twenty miles, all alike in language, customs, institutions, and laws. They are all built to be as identical as possible. The closest cities are miles away from one another, but each is within a day's walk from the next. The centermost city, Amaurote ("dim city"), is on account of its position taken for the capital. Every year, three old, wise, and experienced men come from every city to Amaurote to debate "the common matters of the land." No city desires to expand, because the Utopians consider themselves not so much owners as the good husbands of their land.

In the countryside are houses, farms, and farm implements. Here the Utopians live together in families of at least forty people, along with two bondmen, or slaves. A wise man and woman govern over each household, and every group of thirty families is governed by a magistrate called a Philarch (from the Greek meaning "head of the group" or "loving ruler").

Every year, each family sends twenty Utopians who have been working the farms for the past two years to the cities, and twenty fresh workers are sent from the cities to take their place, to be taught country work by people who have already been there for a year. This system ensures that the Utopians always have expertise in farming, which protects against food shortages caused by ignorance. This system also prevents people from becoming overworked, although many Utopians enjoy farming so much that they choose to stay beyond their required two years.

The duties of people in the countryside include plowing and tilling the ground, breeding cattle, and chopping wood, which they carry to the city both by land or water, whatever is most convenient. The Utopians also breed many, many chickens, and in a strange way: instead of letting the hens sit on and incubate their eggs, the Utopians keep the eggs in “a certain equal heat.” This makes it so that, when the chicks hatch, they consider the people who feed them to be their mothers, and even follow them around. The Utopians raise horses only to train their youths in riding and combat. Oxen, in contrast, do all of the plowing and drawing, because they can endure more labor and pain than horses, and because they are healthier, cheaper, and good to eat.

The Utopians sow corn only for bread, and they drink either wine, cider, or water. They know exactly how much food each city needs, yet they cultivate a surplus of corn and cattle to give to their neighbors. When the people in the country need something not found among them, they fetch it from town for free. The Utopians all gather in town once a month on the holy day. During the harvest, the Philarchs tell the city magistrates how many laborers need to be sent to them out of the city, and these are readily dispatched so that the harvest work takes little more than one good day.

## **Book 2: Of Their Towns, Particularly of Amaurote**

The cities of Utopia are almost identical, **Hythloday** says: if you know one, you know them all. Amaurote seems to be the worthiest of them, however, because the council house, a capitol of sorts, is located there. Arranged almost in a square, this city stands on a hill that runs for two miles down to the river of Anyder (from the Greek meaning “without water”); the city has a length a little greater than two miles. The Anyder has for its source a little spring eighty miles above Amaurote, and sixty miles beyond the city the river drains into the ocean. The water of the Anyder ebbs and flows every six hours, so that it is fresh and mostly salty in turns.

Another, smaller river, fenced in by the Utopians at its source to protect it from invaders, also runs through Amaurote, conveyed by brick channels. Where that water cannot reach, the Utopians use cisterns to gather rainwater. High, thick stone walls, loaded with defensive turrets and bulwarks, surround the city. Around three sides of Amaurote, furthermore, is a deep, broad, dry ditch full of bushes and thorns. On the fourth side the river itself acts like a ditch.

The streets of Amaurote are conveniently wide—some twenty feet wide—and well sheltered from wind. Gorgeous houses line them in gapless rows. In the back of every house is a **garden**. Each house has a front door to the street and a back door to the garden. These doors are never locked or bolted, so that any citizen can, when they please, freely enter any other citizen’s house. Every ten years the Utopians randomly change houses.

The Utopians care for their **gardens** meticulously, and they grow vineyards, various fruits, herbs, and flowers. They do so out of pleasure and also in friendly competition with their neighbors. There is nothing so useful and pleasant as these gardens in Utopia, which is

perhaps why **Utopus** dedicated himself to taking care of them when he founded the nation. This great founder laid out the city in its current configuration, but he left its beautification to future generations.

Indeed, chronicles have been written since the **island**'s founding 1,760 years ago, and these show that the houses in Utopia were at first low and homely like poor shepherds' houses, made of mud and straw. But now the houses are gorgeous, with three stories, built of stone, plastering, or brick. The roofs are made of cheap, fireproof plaster that also resists violent weather well. Glass and linen cloth dipped in oil or amber keep the wind out of the windows.

## **Book 2: Of Their Magistrates**

As has been said, **Hythloday** continues, every group of thirty families or farms in Utopia annually elects an officer to represent them; this officer or magistrate is called a Philarch (formerly known as a Syphogrant, perhaps from the Greek meaning "wise old ruler of the pigsty"). In turn, every ten Philarchs is under a magistrate called the Archphilarch (formerly known as the Tranibore).

Concerning the election of the chief magistrate of the city (whom we'll call the Prince, even though he is not a monarch), all the Philarchs, who number 200, first swear to choose the best candidate; then they secretly vote for one of the four candidates whose names are put forward by the people in each quarter of the city, one name per quarter. The Prince governs for a lifetime unless he is deposed on suspicion of tyranny. (We later learn that the Utopians also call the Prince "Barzanes," of unknown derivation, and "Ademus," from the Greek meaning "without people"). The Archphilarchs are chosen annually, but are rarely changed out. All other magistrates serve terms of one year.

Every three days the Archphilarchs meet with the Prince to discuss the state of the commonwealth, including any problems among the people, though these seldom arise. The Archphilarchs bring with them two Philarchs, a new couple every day. Nothing can be confirmed and ratified in the commonwealth unless it has been debated for three days in the council. Magistrates who hold consultations about the commonwealth outside of the council or the place of the common election are sentenced to death. This prevents magistrates from conspiring together to bring about tyranny.

Matters of great importance must be disclosed to the Philarchs, who then consult with their families. Sometimes such matters are brought before the council of the whole **island**. Another custom of the council is to not debate a matter on the day it is proposed, but to wait till the next meeting. This prevents magistrates from developing rash prejudices, and gives them time to think before speaking.

## Book 2: Of Their Trades, and Manner of Life

Hythloday now discusses the work done in Utopia. As has been said, everyone develops expertise, both theoretical and practical, in farming. In addition, every Utopian learns his or her own proper craft, be it clothworking, masonry, metalworking, or carpentry. (The Utopians have no need for any other occupations.) Hythloday includes a brief digression here about apparel: the Utopians all wear attractive, comfortable, flexible garments of the same fashion, distinguished only by gender and marital status, to minimize the number of workmen they need.

All citizens, men and women, must learn a craft. The women, being less physically strong, tend to work with cloth. The men take up “the more laboursome” crafts, and each is usually brought up in his father’s craft. But people are free to learn the craft they find most appealing, and they can even to learn a second craft after the first if they so desire. When someone has learned two crafts, they can do whichever they please unless the city has more need of one than the other.

Keeping people diligently at their tasks is almost the only office of the Philarchs. So that people do not exhaust themselves working like beasts, they are only required to work six hours every twenty-four-hour day, three before lunch and three after, until dinner. Utopians go to bed around eight o’ clock in the evening and sleep for eight hours.

All the time that is not spent at work, sleep, or eating the Utopians may spend as they please. They can attend the daily lectures open to the educated and general public alike, listen to music and dance, or play virtuous games (no gambling, naturally, in Utopia), including a chess-like game and a didactic game (of **More**’s invention) where vices fight with virtues.

Even though the Utopians work only six hours a day, they complete all the work necessary for a healthy, happy life. This is because there are no idle serving men here, no idle women, no idle priests, no idle landowners, and no idle able-bodied beggars. Also, because there is no money in Utopia, people don’t work at vain and superfluous occupations, and they don’t waste their money on bad, dishonest pleasures. If everyone in society worked hard and productively, **Hythloday** says, no one would be overworked.

In Utopia, only 500 people are exempt from labor, including the Philarchs. But not even these magistrates live idly: they labor anyway so that “their example [may] provoke others to work.” Furthermore, those whom the people have excused from labor to learn can be plucked back to the company of the workers if they prove unsatisfactory. Many craftsmen, for their part, become so learned in their spare time that they are promoted to the company of the “learned” (educated). All ambassadors and magistrates are chosen out of the learned class.

The Utopians avoid excessive building costs by continually repairing their buildings instead of letting them fall into decay and replacing them. They also lessen the charge of clothing by wearing durable leather while they work and wool cloaks while they travel, all of one color. They use coarse linen because it is less expensive such linen also lasts longer than, say, fine and dainty silk.

Because the Utopians don't need to work as much as people elsewhere, many can come together to repair broken highways as needed. Also, the magistrates do not make the people work when it's unnecessary; as such, they will, whenever appropriate, announce fewer hours in work. This makes it possible for the Utopians to improve their minds freely, and this is their principle happiness.

## **Book 2: Of Their Traffic**

**Hythloday** now turns to how Utopians interact with one another. Cities consist of families, mostly made up of blood relatives. Wives leave their own families to live with their husbands, but men stay in the families they're born into, governed by the oldest capable man. No family may have fewer than ten members or more than sixteen (not counting their children), and no city may have more than 6,000 families in it.

If a family becomes too large, its excess members are moved into smaller families, and if a city becomes too large, its excess members are moved into smaller cities. If the population of the island itself becomes too large, the excess members relocate to a nearby land where there is much waste and they found a town, assimilating the natives there if possible, but driving them out and warring with them if not. The Utopians maintain that the most just cause of war is to liberate ground that people would otherwise idly occupy. If a city in Utopia proper becomes too small, members of these Utopian towns abroad are moved into it.

Now for the interactions of the Utopians. The oldest capable man rules the family. Wives care for their husbands, and children for their parents. Each city is divided into equal quarters, and at the center of each is a marketplace. From here the fathers of the families fetch what their households require for free. No one in Utopia asks for more than they need; fear of lack and pride are the causes of greed, but neither exists in Utopia.

Around the markets are places to get food: herbs, fruit, bread, fish, the meat of four-legged animals, and fowl. Animals are killed, cleaned, and butchered outside of town by bondmen (slaves), because free citizens are not allowed to do so. The Utopians believe that mercy decays in people who regularly kill. Also, nothing filthy or unclean is brought into the city, and this prevents pestilence and disease. Along every street are great halls for meeting and eating. The Philarchs live in these, along with the thirty families appointed to them. The stewards of every hall come into the food markets to fetch however much meat is necessary.

Around each city there are four big, well-supplied, diligently attended hospitals, so big they can comfortably accommodate any number of patients without the risk of spreading disease. The physicians are intelligent and skilled. No person is forced to go to the hospital, but in the case of illness most people prefer the hospital to their own beds.

After the sick receive the food their physicians have prescribed, the best food in the city is divided up, first among the magistrates, priests, ambassadors, and (the very rare) strangers, then among the rest of the citizens. No one is prohibited from fetching more food out of the market and bringing it to his own house. People can dine at home instead of in the halls, but

no one willingly does, because it is a point of small honesty to dine among one's fellow citizens, and also because the food in the halls is better than what one could prepare at home.

In the halls, the hardest, most drudging labor is done by bondmen. Women from every family prepare and serve the meals. Men sit against the wall opposite women at the table (four people to a table), which makes it easy for women to rise, as often happens when they're pregnant, and go to the nursery.

The nurses sit in a parlor with the babies they're nursing, and they're provided with fire, clean water, and cradles. Every mother nurses her own child unless she is prevented by sickness. In such a case, the wives of the Philarchs quickly provide a nurse. Children under the age of five also sit with the nurses at meals. All the other children under the age of marriage, boys and girls, serve at the tables or, if they're not strong enough to serve, stand silently by. These children eat what's given to them. There are no other formalities at mealtime among the Utopians.

The Philarch and his wife sit—with two of the eldest next to them, or the priest and his wife—at the center of the high table so that everyone in the hall can see them. The young sit interspersed among their elders at meals rather than off by themselves so that they cannot behave and speak viciously, and elders do not talk tediously but encourage young people to prove their wit and virtuous disposition in conversation.

The Utopians begin every meal with a reading of something good, virtuous, and short. Lunch is short, but dinner is long, and no dinner passes without music being played. Incense, spices, and perfumes are burned during meals, and sweet ointments and waters are sprinkled about. The Utopians believe that no pleasure should be forbidden if no harm comes of it. In the country, in contrast, people who dwell far from their neighbors do eat in their own houses.

## **Book 2: Of the Travelling of the Utopians**

If Utopians desire to travel to other cities, the Philarchs or Archphilarchs grant them license. People don't travel alone, but rather in companies, and they must carry a letter testifying that they have permission to be abroad and that also prescribes the date of their return. Travelers are provided with a wagon driven by a bondman, but, unless they have women in their company, they usually do without it. Travelers are taken care of by their fellow Utopians wherever they go, though if they stay in a place for more than a day they are expected to work.

People who travel without permission are taken for runaways and returned home with a stern warning and sharp punishment. Those who commit such an offense again are punished with bondage. A man can walk about in the country if given permission by the head of his family and his wife. However, the man will not be fed until he does his work. Under this condition, a man can also go wherever he wishes in his own city. After all, there are no wicked taverns or alehouses or brothels for him to go to, and every Utopian keeps an eye on every other.

Everyone in Utopia has what he or she needs because all people there are equal partners. When the three old, wise, and experienced men come from every city to Amaurote each year, they report the quantity of resources their cities have, and cities with an abundance of goods give freely to those with a lack. The whole **island** is like a family or household in this way. When every city in Utopia is well supplied, the Utopians take their surplus into foreign countries. One seventh of the surplus is given freely to the poor abroad, and the rest is sold at a reasonable, low price. By this means, the Utopians bring back both **gold** and silver as well as those resources they lack, which is virtually only iron.

When selling goods, the Utopians accept both ready money and credit. They do not accept promises of payment from private individuals, but require the promises of whole cities. When the day of repayment arrives, a given city will collect all the debt privately owed to the Utopians and put it into the city's commons until their Utopian creditors demand it. But most of what is owed to them the Utopians never ask for, preferring not to take it from those whom it profits. They require their debt only when lending to another people or in times of war, for the hiring of mercenaries.

The Utopians value gold and silver far less than iron, because iron is useful and essential for life. People only value gold and silver out of folly, **Hythloday** says, because it is rare. To prevent people from hoarding gold or becoming attached to it, the Utopians use the stuff to build chamber pots (receptacles for human waste) and other things that serve low purposes, like fetters for their bondmen and jewelry which offenders are forced to wear for shame. Moreover, the Utopians give their children pearls and precious stones, but only so that they outgrow them as our children outgrow and become embarrassed of their toys.

Hythloday proceeds to tell a funny story about three ambassadors of the Anemolians (from the Greek meaning "windy people") who came to Amaurote on a mission. They noticed the Utopians wore no fine clothes or jewelry and assumed that they must lack those things. In order to impress the Utopians, then, the three ambassadors, accompanied by a hundred servants, dressed in gorgeous silks and dazzling **gold** jewelry and precious stones—only for the Utopians to mistake the ambassadors' servants for lords and the gaudily dressed ambassadors for slaves! After a day or two, the ambassadors hid away their gold and finery in shame.

The Utopians wonder why anyone would be enamored of **gold** when they have the stars to gaze upon. They think it absurd that in many parts of the world gold is valued more highly than people, and that an idiot can command respect by virtue of mere wealth. The Utopians especially detest that people practically worship rich people whom they know will never give them so much as a farthing, a single cent.

The Utopians develop their opinions through socialization and education. Although few citizens—only the wittiest and most apt—are exempt from labor so that they can dedicate themselves to learning, every Utopian child is given an education in their rich, pleasant native language. Even most men and women bestow their spare hours on learning. The Utopians were not familiar with many famous philosophers until **Hythloday** introduced them, but they

already knew much of what the famous philosophers teach concerning music, logic, arithmetic, and geometry. The Utopians also know much about astronomy, but they do not use the positions of the stars and planets to divine the future as many in Europe do.

As for moral philosophy, the Utopians' chief area of inquiry is how people can attain to happiness. They are, in broad terms, hedonists: people who believe that pleasure is the most important thing in life. To build their philosophy, the Utopians draw on religious ideas: they hold the soul to be immortal and destined by God for happiness, and they believe that good deeds are rewarded, and bad deeds punished, in the afterlife.

If these religious principles were disproved, the Utopians would affirm nonetheless that pleasure is to be obtained by all possible means, legal or illegal, so long as lesser pleasures don't hinder us from obtaining bigger pleasures. The Utopians believe that people should not willfully submit themselves to pain, and that happiness only comes from good and honest pleasure, like virtue.

The Utopians define virtue as a life organized according to nature, which drives us on to seek pleasure wherever we can. We follow nature by heeding what our reason approves and disapproves of; reason also guides us in the love of the divine. Finally, because every person is part of society in nature, it is only natural that in his pursuit of pleasure he does not harm his fellows. We should honor our promises and obey good laws. A life of pleasure can either be evil—in which case we should help no one pursue it—or it can be good, in which case we should help others and ourselves to it. Self-sacrifice is an act of humanity and gentleness, and it always brings benefits, a good conscience, and God's graces.

The Utopians define pleasure as anything that naturally delights either the body or mind; after all, the senses and reason itself desire pleasure. The Utopians avoid, however, those things that other people only imagine to be pleasurable despite nature, because once the mind is possessed by false pleasure it can no longer delight in the true. Among false pleasures the Utopians count gaudy clothes; vain and unprofitable honors like those which come with dominating other men; riches and precious stones, which people merely hoard; gambling; and hunting, which to the Utopians is vile butchery.

Among "true" pleasures, the Utopians recognize two kinds: those of body and those of mind. There are two kinds of bodily pleasure. The first is the pleasure we feel when we satisfy our bodies' physical requirements, as when we eat and drink when we're hungry and thirsty, relieve our bowels, or scratch an itch. Related to this is the pleasure we feel when we listen to music, as this affects our senses. The second kind of bodily pleasure is that which comes from good health, which is the foundation and ground of all other pleasures. The Utopians "chiefest and most principle of all" pleasures, however, are those of the mind, especially the exercise of virtue and conscience.

Hythloday comments now that the Utopians are the most excellent people in the world, and that their commonwealth is the most flourishing. The Utopians are healthy, active, nimble, and strong. Though their soil and air are not of the highest quality, the Utopians manage their resources so well that they thrive. The people are gentle, happy, witty, delighting in



quietness, and able to endure great labor as required. They aren't especially fond of bodily labor, but they never grow tired of studying and exercising their minds.

When Hythloday exposed the Utopians to Greek literature and philosophy (he didn't think they would care much for Latin writings, except for historians and poets), they earnestly asked him to teach them the language. The Utopians learned with marvelous quickness, and in three years had mastered Greek; indeed, Hythloday suspects that the Utopians must have originated in Greece. In addition, Hythloday gave the Utopians most of Plato's works, most of Aristotle's, some Greek grammars and histories, the poetry of Homer and Euripides, and more. They would also now have Theophrastus's book about plants in its entirety had a marmoset (a kind of monkey) not ripped some pages out while Hythloday was sailing aboard a ship during his fourth voyage.

The Utopians especially value the medical writings of the Greek physician Galen. Although they need less medical attention than any other people, the Utopians delight in exploring the mysteries of nature. They are ingenious inventors of things that are to the advantage and enrichment of human life. They owe to **Hythloday** and his fellow travelers the crafts of printing and of making paper, by which they've multiplied their books into many thousands of copies.

The Utopians are very welcoming of guests. They love to hear about the laws, policies, and manners of other lands. That being said, few merchants come to Utopia because the only thing the Utopians buy, really, is iron. The Utopians also think it more prudent to go into foreign lands to trade themselves, rather than have merchants come, because this gives them better knowledge of their surroundings and keeps them proficient and knowledgeable in sailing.

## **Book 2: Of Their Slaves, and of Their Marriages**

Slavery in Utopia, **Hythloday** explains, is a punishment for those Utopians who have committed "heinous offenses." Utopia also pays cities in other lands for their criminals, but only those already condemned to death: these prisoners are then brought back to Utopia to labor in bondage. Poor (free) laborers from other countries sometimes volunteer to become bondmen in Utopia, but these are treated "almost as gently as [Utopia's] own free citizens" and are at liberty to depart at any time, though they seldom do. The Utopians do not make prisoners of war into bondmen, except those captured in battle. Slaves who are originally from Utopia are forced to work the hardest, because they fell into crime despite being brought up in such a virtuous and excellent commonwealth.

The Utopians care for their sick very affectionately, providing both the proper diet and medical attention. The people comfort those with incurable diseases by visiting and helping them. For people who have diseases that are not only incurable but also cause continual pain, the priests and magistrates urge them to consider euthanasia, or voluntary death (by starvation, for example). This is because such invalids cannot do the duty of life and are a burden to themselves and others. However, the Utopians don't force anyone to die against

their will. People who kill themselves before the priests and council have allowed it are considered unworthy to be buried or burned; their bodies are thrown into “some stinking marsh” or other.

A woman must be eighteen years old or older to get married in Utopia; a man must be at least twenty-two. If it is proven that a man or woman has had sex before their marriage, he or she is sharply punished, and both partners to the act are forbidden from marriage unless pardoned by the Prince. The heads of the family in which such offenses occur risk infamy for being negligent in their duties. The Utopians punish free love so strictly because they fear that if they don't, few people will get married.

The Utopians have one custom that Hythloday finds foolish: they show prospective husbands and wives their potential spouses before marriage. Who would buy a horse, they argue, without inspecting it thoroughly? The Utopians understand that not all men and women are so enlightened as to be pleased only by their spouse's virtue, but also by their physical appearance. This practice prevents spouses from being alienated from each other later if they discover a previously hidden “deformity.”

Matrimony is never broken in Utopia except by death, adultery, or intolerable behavior on the part of one of the spouses; in the latter case, the council may license a person to divorce their present spouse and wed another. However, the spouse who misbehaved lives in infamy, and is forbidden from remarrying. If a husband and wife can't get along, and they find others they can get along with better (and agree to do so), the council can also grant them a divorce, although this is rarely done, to discourage people from seeking easy ways out of marriage.

People who commit adultery are punished with bondage, and if both offenders were married, their former spouses can get married to each other (if they want), or else to whomever they desire. If a person still wishes to be married to the partner who cheated on them, they are allowed, but on the condition that they must follow their partner into labor and drudgery. Often the Prince is so moved by the adulterer's repentance and their spouse's fidelity that he grants the adulterer their freedom. If someone commits adultery twice, they are sentenced to death.

For all other crimes, there is no prescribed sentence in the law. The council judges each offender on a case-by-case basis. Husbands chastise their wives, and parents chastise their children, unless they've done something so heinous that the example of public punishment would encourage better behavior in others. The most common punishment for heinous crimes is slavery, which causes the offender grief while also profiting the commonwealth. If a bondman rebels, however, they are killed like a desperate wild beast. People who are patient in bondage and who repent of their crimes live in hope of having their punishment mitigated or lifted. People who intend to commit adultery or any other crime are subject to the same punishments as those who actually commit them. In Utopia, the intent is considered as evil as the act.

The Utopians take especial pleasure in fools (by which the author means either witty and intelligent professional clowns, or, in what is the likelier case here, the mentally disabled). It

is deeply shameful to hurt one of these fools in Utopia, but the Utopians believe that it profits the fools themselves to be objects of pleasure. To mock a person for a deformity or missing limb is also a deeply shameful act, for the Utopians think that it's unwise to mock someone for what they cannot change.

The Utopians think it's good to take pleasure in natural beauty, but they condemn as vain and prideful those who prefer women in make-up. Honesty and humility are what a good Utopian husband really values in his wife.

The Utopians punish sin, as we have seen, but they also reward virtue. Sculptures of good men, especially great benefactors, are set up in the marketplaces to remind people of their good acts and to encourage virtue. Those who desire honors inordinately, however, can be sure that they will never be honored in Utopia.

Utopians live together lovingly. Their magistrates are neither proud nor severe, but are like good fathers whom the citizens honor willingly. The Prince is not distinguished by gaudy clothes, but only by a sheaf of corn he carries; likewise, the bishop carries a candle.

There are few laws in Utopia, no more than a well-organized society requires. The Utopians disapprove of other nations' innumerable books of convoluted laws more than anything else, because they believe that a citizen should be able to read and understand all the laws to which he or she is bound. Lawyers are banned from Utopia for being too cunning in their interpretations of the law; every person represents him- or herself in legal matters, which brings truth to light sooner in the mind of a wise judge. The Utopians favor the plainest interpretation of a law as being the most just.

Because the Utopians are so virtuous, neighboring countries (many of which the Utopians have liberated from tyranny) invite Utopians to serve as their magistrates. People who are so invited are allowed to go and serve, some for a year, some for five years, and they are welcomed home with honor and praise.

That being said, the Utopians do not make political alliances with other nations, because such alliances are so often broken as part of deceitful stratagems, as is the case in Europe. Also, the idea of alliances presupposes natural enmity between nations, which the Utopians reject. They think no one is an enemy who has not done them injury, and that people are naturally allied to one another in love and goodwill, which are stronger than mere words can ever be.

## **Book 2: Of Their Military Discipline**

The Utopians hate war, battle, and the glory gotten in war—after all, not even wild beasts fight. Nonetheless, the men and women of Utopia daily practice the discipline of war in case the need arises. The Utopians fight only to defend themselves, to protect their friends from invaders, or to deliver a people from tyranny. They also go to war sometimes on behalf of friends for the sake of avenging past injuries, but only if those injuries are fresh and their

enemy refuses to make restitution. Finally, the Utopians go to war if their friends' merchants have been cheated trading abroad due to a failure of justice.

While the Utopians go to war on behalf of their friends in matters of money, when they themselves are so cheated by a nation they avenge themselves only by refusing to trade with that nation until restitution is made. This is because they take the loss of their friends' privately held money more heavily than the loss of their own, as their citizens do not feel the loss. However, if Utopians are killed abroad and the offenders are not handed over to Utopia, the Utopians declare war. Offenders in such a case are punished with death or bondage.

The Utopians are ashamed to achieve victory with bloodshed, and would rather win through wit, craft, and deceit. They commemorate a bloodless victory by setting up a pillar of stone in the place where they vanquished their enemy. They believe that bodily strength is for beasts; reason is for human beings. The Utopians avoid war whenever possible, but, when they must fight, they are especially cruel to those who have offended them, in order to deter future conflict.

Unlike many of their European counterparts, Utopians fight "dirty" in war: they distribute pamphlets among their enemy's population, promising substantial rewards of **gold** and land to anyone who kills or captures their enemy's prince and other proclaimed adversaries—alive is worth twice as much as dead. These proclaimed adversaries may also turn themselves in to the Utopians, claim the reward, and be assured of their lives. Such policy throws Utopia's enemies into suspicion of one another, and it also saves innocent lives.

Utopia holds its citizens so dear that they aren't deployed in war unless the need arises. Instead, the Utopians store up **gold**, silver, and debt abroad for virtually one purpose alone: to avoid war altogether, or to hire mercenaries to fight on their behalf. They usually hire the Zapoletes (from the Greek meaning "those who will sell anything"). The Zapoletes are a savage, wild people (modeled after the notorious Swiss mercenaries of **Thomas More's** time) who live by hunting, stealing, and fighting. The Utopians command the loyalty of the Zapoletes by paying them more than any other nation, although so many of these mercenaries die in battle that the Utopians end up paying relatively little. Moreover, the Utopians don't care if the wicked Zapoletes die; they think it would be better if such people were washed from the world.

Other than mercenaries, the Utopians use their friends' soldiers and, only as a last result, their own citizens, governed by one virtuous Utopian with two officers appointed under him who take his place if he is killed. The Utopians don't force citizens to go to war; their army consists only of willing volunteers, because a coward is dangerous to his fellows. In case of invasion, cowards are put among brave men in shops or are assigned to defend the walls. Extreme necessity often turns cowardice to bravery.

Women can accompany their husbands to battle, where they offer praise. A man fights among his kinfolk, because then he is more ready to support them and they him. It is seen as shameful for a husband to survive his wife in war, or for a son to survive his father, and so Utopian soldiers often fight all the more courageously, with great slaughter and bloodshed,

even though they would rather avoid war altogether. The fact that a Utopian soldier's family is taken care of no matter what also makes him more courageous in battle. The Utopians neither throw their lives away in war nor resort to cowardice to save themselves.

In battle, the Utopians select a band of fit young men who are tasked with the assassination of their enemy's captain, which they accomplish through cunning and open strength. In their assault on this captain, wearied men are replaced by fresh ones, and the Utopians rarely fail to kill or (preferably) capture their target. Moreover, the Utopians never send all of their forces to pursue a retreating enemy. When forced to retreat themselves, the Utopians excel in staging cunning ambushes, which often turn the tide of battle. Utopians fortify their camp with a deep, broad trench, made not by bondmen but by the soldiers themselves.

The Utopians wear strong, flexible armor they can swim in, and they fight with arrows, shot by footmen and horsemen alike. In hand-to-hand combat they use poleaxes, which are deadly by point and blade alike. The Utopians are ingenious inventors of war machines.

The Utopians honor their truces even if provoked. They do not steal from their enemies or destroy their land and crops. They do not hurt unarmed men, except for spies. They defend all cities surrendered to them and destroy none. If there are those among the enemy who insisted on defending a city, the Utopians punish them with death. Other soldiers captured in battle are punished with bondage. Anyone who counseled that a city be surrendered to the Utopians is rewarded with the condemned men's goods; the rest of those goods are distributed to those who aided the Utopians. The Utopians take no booty for themselves, and the conquered nation pays for the costs of the war in money and land.

## **Book 2: Of the Religions of the Utopians**

Hythloday turns now to his last topic: the religions in Utopia. All over the **island**, and even within a given city, people worship different deities, from the sun to great heroes of the past. However, most Utopians, and the wisest, believe that God is eternal, incomprehensible, and inexplicable, dispersed throughout the world as power and virtue. He is the creator of all things and the end of all things. All Utopians, despite diverging opinions on the form God takes, nonetheless agree that there is one chief and principal Supreme Being, the maker and ruler of the world, and this Being they call Mithras (a Persian god, worshipped in Rome as the god of the sun). Utopians are more and more turning away from superstitions and joining the majority in their beliefs.

When Hythloday and his companions introduced Christ's doctrine, laws, and miracles to the Utopians, a surprising number were inclined to receive it. This may have been due to divine influence, but also to the fact that Christ advocated collective ownership of resources, as is practiced in monasteries and convents. Many Utopians received baptism while Hythloday was there and wanted a priest to perform other Christian sacraments.

The Utopians are tolerant of all religions, but they do not permit people to condemn other religions. In **Hythloday's** presence, one newly baptized Utopian began to condemn as wicked

and devilish all religions but Christianity; he was promptly exiled for sedition and for raising up dissent among the people. Religious tolerance was instituted by Utopus himself when he observed how religious disagreement caused strife among the natives of the **island**—and was what enabled his conquest of them in the first place. For the sake of peace, he established a law protecting religious freedom. People may attempt to convert others to their religious opinions with gentle speech, but not with violence and hurtful words. The punishment is exile or bondage.

Utopus reasoned that religious freedom promotes not only peace, but that it is part of God's will. God must desire diverse forms of worship and honor, as he inspires different people with different religions. Moreover, even if there were only one true religion, its truth would eventually convert everyone without violence or force anyway. If people could speak intolerantly of other religions, however, it is quite likely they would defame this one true religion, just as weeds overgrow corn.

**Utopus** did decree some limits on faith: no religion should declare that a man's soul perishes with his body, or that the world is governed by chance. The Utopians believe, rather, that good deeds are rewarded, and bad deeds punished, in the afterlife. The irreligious, or atheists, in Utopia are not punished, except in being excluded from all honors and offices, as well as being generally despised. This is because the Utopians are convinced that, if one does not have religion, one will necessarily mock the faithful or break the country's laws. Atheists cannot argue their views among the general public, but they are encouraged to argue with priests, in the hopes that they will see the madness of their irreligious ways.

Contrary to the atheists, there are heretics in Utopia who believe that the souls of animals are immortal, but these people are allowed to speak their minds and they share all the liberties other Utopians do. However, all religious Utopians believe that human souls especially are predestined for great happiness in the afterlife.

Consequently, while the Utopians lament sickness, they do not lament death—that is, unless someone dies unwillingly. They take unwilling death as a bad sign that a soul fears punishment in the afterlife. Someone who dies an unwilling death is buried, but people who die willing, happy deaths are celebrated, praised, and cremated. The dead person's virtue and good deeds are remembered to encourage virtue in others, and the dead are thought to be invisibly present among the living, which gives the living courage.

The Utopians despise and mock people who try to predict the future, like soothsayers. However, they do believe in supernatural miracles, which they consider to be the works of God; indeed, miracles are said to be common occurrences in Utopia. In times of great need, Utopians hopefully and confidently pray for divine aid, which is often granted to them.

The Utopians believe that the contemplation of nature is a form of praising God, although some among them forego learning altogether in order to dedicate themselves solely to work and to God, for they think that happiness comes of "busy labours and good exercises." Such people, known as Buthrescas (from the Greek meaning "very religious"), do hard, unpleasant work willingly.

There are two sects of these religiously hardworking Buthrescas. The members of one abstain from carnal pleasures like sex and eating meat; the members of the other work just as hard but do not abstain from such pleasures, thinking that procreation is a public good and meat is a potent fuel for labor. Members of the first sect are considered holier in Utopia, while members of the second are considered wiser.

There are very few priests in Utopia—thirteen per city, one for each temple—but they are of exceeding holiness. The people elect their priests by secret ballot. Over the priests of each city is set a bishop, and together these religious officials oversee all divine matters and orders of religions; they are also judges and masters of conduct in Utopia. It is shameful to be rebuked by a priest for immoral living. The priests differ from the secular magistrates in that they only offer advice and counsel, whereas magistrates punish bad conduct. The only exception to this is that priests can excommunicate immoral Utopians and bar them from religious occasions. Religious values are instilled in Utopians from childhood.

Both men and women can become priests in Utopia (although the women elected tend to be old or widows). Male priests take for their wives the foremost women in the country. If a priest commits an offence, their judgment is left to God and to themselves; but priests are so virtuous that few fall to wickedness, and their position is not one of power so much as one of honor, anyway. Utopian priests are also deeply respected abroad; Hythloday recalls how in battle the priests protect enemy combatants from being slaughtered when the Utopians get the upper hand. When the Utopian army retreats, the priests intercept their pursuers and often succeed in making peace.

The Utopian holy days fall on the first and last day of each month and year. The first days are called Cynemernes (from the Greek meaning “dog day,” associated perhaps with the Greek goddess Hecate), and the last are called Trapemernes (from the Greek meaning “changing day”). The Utopians worship in large, gorgeous churches which are intentionally kept somewhat dark so that people focus more earnestly upon religion and devotion. Even though Utopians hold diverse religious opinions, they all worship in the same churches, where what is common to all of them is taught. No image of God is displayed so that people are free to conceive of God as they will. Private ceremonies and practices may be freely held at home.

The Utopians worship on Trapemernes days after fasting to give thanks to God; they worship on Cynemernes days to pray for fortune and success in the coming days. Before worshipping on Trapemernes, wives confess their offenses to their husbands, and children confess to their parents. People in quarrels reconcile, because Utopians fear worshipping with a troubled conscience. In the churches, men sit on the right side, women on the left, and in such a way that elders can observe their conduct. The young sit interspersed with their elders for the same reason.

The Utopians sacrifice no living animals, nor do they think God delights in blood and slaughter—especially because he has given life to animals so that people can live. Incense and candles are burned and prayers are said, not for the pleasure of God, but because such practices harmlessly please and inspire the Utopians. People worship in white clothing, and

the priests wear vestments of many colors, not precious but fashioned well with symbolically meaningful feathers interwoven into them.

When a priest enters to begin worship, the people bow down as though God himself had entered. They rise at the priest's signal and sing praises to God, accompanied by foreign musical instruments. The Utopians' music is better than the Europeans' because it perfectly marries meaning and sound. In their prayers, the Utopians acknowledge God to be their maker and the principal cause of all goodness, and they thank him, especially for the benefits he's showered on their commonwealth. They also pray to join God in the afterlife at his pleasure.

## Book 2: Conclusion

**Hythloday** says that he has described as truly as possible the form and order of Utopia, which he thinks is not only the best commonwealth in the world but also the only one worthy of the name "commonwealth," for nothing is private there. Unlike nations founded on the institution of private property, Utopia provides equally and abundantly for all its citizens. There is no justice when a banker or usurer can sit idly and live richly while common laborers live in poverty and misery, as is the case in Europe.

Indeed, **Hythloday** sees in most nations a conspiracy by which rich people exploit and oppress the poor. By getting rid of money, the Utopians pull wickedness up by the root and eliminate poverty, too. If it were not for Pride, Hythloday thinks that Europeans would have followed Christ's teachings and abolished private property long ago as well. The Utopians have devised such a prosperous, virtuous, and peaceful way of life that their commonwealth will endure while empires fall around it.

Thus ends **Hythloday's** tale. **Thomas More** thinks to himself that many Utopian laws and policies are founded on no good reason, even when it comes to the principal foundation of their ordinances—that is, their collective ownership of resources and moneyless economy. However, Hythloday seems weary from his discourse, and More doesn't want to offend him by disagreeing with his claims (Hythloday said earlier, after all, that we contradict others' ideas only because we didn't come up with them ourselves).

Consequently, **More** praises the Utopians and leads **Hythloday** back into the house for dinner, saying that they will examine and evaluate the Utopians' laws and policies at another time, which More hopes to God will come to pass. For now, More cannot agree with Hythloday in everything; however, he confesses that, though he wishes for many features of Utopia to be realized in Europe's cities, he doesn't dare hope as much, for such a hope would be unrealistic.

# #



## from UNIT – 2

### William Blake: *Songs of Experience*

#### Introduction:

**William Blake**, (born Nov. 28, 1757, London, Eng.—died Aug. 12, 1827, London), English engraver, artist, poet, and visionary, author of exquisite lyrics in *Songs of Innocence* (1789) and *Songs of Experience* (1794) and profound and difficult “prophecies,” such as *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* (1793), *The First Book of Urizen* (1794), *Milton* (1804[–?11]), and *Jerusalem* (1804[–?20]).

On the completion of his apprenticeship in 1779, Blake began to work vigorously as an independent **engraver**. His most frequent commissions were from the great liberal bookseller Joseph Johnson. More publicly visible were Blake’s engravings of his enormous design of Geoffrey Chaucer’s *Canterbury Pilgrims* (1810), his 22 folio designs for the *Book of Job* (1826), and his 7 even larger unfinished plates for *Dante* (1826–27). Though only the *Chaucer* sold well enough to repay its probable expenses during Blake’s lifetime, these are agreed today to be among the greatest triumphs of line engraving in England, sufficient to ensure Blake’s reputation as an engraver and artist even had he made no other watercolours or poems.

The phrase “**dark Satanic mills**” appears in his poem “**Jerusalem**” (from *Milton*) and it refers to the 19<sup>th</sup>-century industrial revolution and the dehumanizing nature of industrialization.

His series of poetic works called “**Prophetic Books**” include:

- *Tiriel* (1789)
- *The Book of Thel* (1789)
- *America a Prophecy* (1793)
- *Europe a Prophecy* (1794)
- *Visions of the Daughters of Albion* (1793)
- *The Book of Urizen* (1794)
- *The Book of Ahania* (1795)
- *The Book of Los* (1795)
- *The Song of Los* (1795)
- *Vala, or The Four Zoas* (begun 1797, unfinished, abandoned 1804)
- *Milton, A Poem* (1804-1810)
- *Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion* (1804–1820).

- Further, the title of **Aldous Huxley**’s book *The Doors of Perception* is taken from a phrase in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*.

*Songs of Innocence*, published in 1789, was Blake's first great demonstration of "illuminated printing," his unique technique of publishing both text and hand-coloured illustration together. The rhythmic subtlety and delicate beauty of both his lyrics and his designs created rare harmony on his pages. The poems transformed his era's street ballads and rhymes for children into some of the purest lyrics in the English language.

In 1794 Blake published *Songs of Innocence and of Experience: Shewing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul*. It contained a slightly rearranged version of *Songs of Innocence* with the addition of *Songs of Experience*. The poems reflect Blake's views that experience brings the individual into conflict with rules, moralism, and repression. As a result, the songs of experience are bitter, ironic replies to those of the earlier volume. The Lamb is the key symbol of *Innocence*; in *Experience* its rival image is the Tyger, the embodiment of energy, strength, lust, and aggression.

- The collection *Songs of Innocence* (1789) includes:
  - ❖ "The Shepherd"
  - ❖ "The Lamb"
  - ❖ **"The Sick Rose"**
  - ❖ "The Little Black Boy"
  - ❖ "The Little Girl Lost"
  - ❖ "The Little Girl Found"
  - ❖ "The Little Boy Lost"
  - ❖ "The Little Boy Found"
  - ❖ "The Chimney Sweeper: When my mother died I was very young"
  - ❖ "Holy Thursday", and so on.
  
- The collection *Songs of Experience* (1794) includes:
  - ❖ "The Tyger"
  - ❖ "The Sick Rose"
  - ❖ "A Poison Tree"
  - ❖ "The Clod and the Pebble"
  - ❖ "The Chimney Sweeper: A little black thing among the snow"
  - ❖ "London"
  - ❖ "The Garden of Love", and so on.
  
- **"the contrary states of the human soul"**
  - ❖ *Songs of Innocence and of Experience Showing the Two Contrary States of the Human Soul*
  - ❖ "the contrary states of the human soul" — "The Lamb" (innocence) & "The Tyger" (experience)
  - ❖ In *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (written 1790–93), Blake writes:
    - “Without contraries is no progression. Attraction and repulsion, reason and energy, love and hate, are necessary to human existence. From these contraries spring what

the religious call Good and Evil. Good is the passive that obeys reason; Evil is the active springing from Energy. Good is heaven. Evil is hell.”

In fact, Blake has invented two basic, distinct – but related – personae through whom his two sequences of poems are communicated to the reader. The *Songs of Innocence* are introduced and sung by **the Piper**, the *Songs of Experience* by **the Bard**. They are two fictitious poets who are, effectively, the authors of 'their' poems. All poets, whether 'Piping songs of pleasant glee' or speaking with 'the voice of the Bard', are inevitably, like Ezekiel, prophets, for 'the Poetic or Prophetic character' are one and the same. The Piper and the Bard can be thought of as two voices, two characters, of the one poet. 'The Voice of the Ancient Bard' is, in the standard order, the last of the *Songs of Experience*, but it was originally a song of innocence and is found more often in that sequence, and placed early in it. Both of these voices are, of course, Blake's, but the usefulness - and the importance - of this elaborate fiction is that it reminds us that neither point of view is his. At least, not *finally* his. The contraries of innocence and experience are not absolute but provisional, a creative opposition out of whose tension new insights can be generated.

- **On Blake's poetry**

- ❖ Northrop Frye's *Fearful Symmetry: A Study of William Blake* (1947)

### **The Gist of the Text:**

*Songs of Experience* reveals that the acceptance of society as it is and belief in a caring God is naïve. This series does not begin with joy in a pastoral landscape, as does *Songs of Innocence*.

The poems (in *Songs of Experience*) remind the reader that there is more than one way to view the same experience, a point further underscored by several other poems in *Songs of Experience* that are answers or companions to poems in *Songs of Innocence*, some even bearing the same name. For instance, in the “experience” version of “Holy Thursday,” the speaker is appalled by the presence of poverty in such a rich country as England. If people lived in a right relationship with each other and nature, the speaker suggests, hunger and poverty would not exist. The child in “London” has parents, but is more bitter than the orphan of the “innocence” “Chimney Sweeper,” because he is intelligent enough to recognize what is being done to him. His response, coupled with that of the accepting adult in the “innocence” version of “Holy Thursday,” show that the sour viewpoint of the “experience” poems is not a result of obtaining wisdom by growing older. Some children are able to see the larger truth; some adults never perceive it. Intelligence and circumstance cause the difference, not age.

Nature itself is tainted in such poems as “The Sick Rose,” in which the rose is destroyed by a worm—innocence and beauty give way to sin and corruption. Now it is clear why the child on the cloud in the “innocence” introduction had wept to hear the song piped a second time.

If “innocence” is a naïve viewpoint, Blake shows in the rest of his work that “experience” is also, being fixated on sin and corruption when there is a fuller, genuinely spiritual world at hand. In “The Voice of the Ancient Bard,” the speaker urges the reader to “see the opening morn,/ Image of truth new born.”

### **Poem 1: “Introduction”**

[The “Introduction” is spoken with “the voice of the Bard . . . Who Present, Past, & Future, sees” and who describes a fallen world with a “lapsed Soul . . . weeping in the evening dew.”]

Hear the voice of the Bard,  
Who present, past, and future, sees;  
Whose ears have heard  
The Holy Word  
That walked among the ancient trees;

Calling the lapsed soul,  
And weeping in the evening dew;  
That might control  
The starry pole,  
And fallen, fallen light renew!

‘O Earth, O Earth, return!  
Arise from out the dewy grass!  
Night is worn,  
And the morn  
Rises from the slumbrous mass.

‘Turn away no more;  
Why wilt thou turn away?  
The starry floor,  
The watery shore,  
Is given thee till the break of day.’

### **Poem 2: “Earth’s Answer”**

[The earth itself asks to be released from the chains of jealousy and fear.]

Earth raised up her head  
From the darkness dread and drear,  
Her light fled,  
Stony, dread,  
And her locks covered with grey despair.

‘Prisoned on watery shore,  
Starry jealousy does keep my den  
Cold and hoar;  
Weeping o’er,  
I hear the father of the ancient men.

‘Selfish father of men!  
 Cruel, jealous, selfish fear!  
 Can delight,  
 Chained in night,  
 The virgins of youth and morning bear.

‘Does spring hide its joy,  
 When buds and blossoms grow?  
 Does the sower  
 Sow by night,  
 Or the ploughman in darkness plough?’

‘Break this heavy chain,  
 That does freeze my bones around!  
 Selfish, vain,  
 Eternal bane,  
 That free love with bondage bound.’

### **Poem 3: “The Clod and the Pebble”**

[“The Clod and the Pebble” presents two views of love, **the clod** finding the experience **selfless** and giving, **the pebble** stating that love is **selfish** and restricting.]

‘Love seeketh not itself to please,  
 Nor for itself hath any care,  
 But for another gives its ease,  
 And builds a heaven in hell’s despair.’

So sung a little clod of clay,  
 Trodden with the cattle’s feet,  
 But a pebble of the brook  
 Warbled out these metres meet:

‘Love seeketh only Self to please,  
 To bind another to its delight,  
 Joys in another’s loss of ease,  
 And builds a hell in heaven’s despite.’

### **Poem 4: “Holy Thursday”**

[On Holy Thursday (Ascension Day), the clean-scrubbed charity-school children of London flow like a river toward St. Paul’s Cathedral. [In the “innocence” version of “Holy Thursday”, even the orphans of London receive help from “wise guardians of the poor,” and the audience of the poem is urged to “cherish pity, lest you drive an angel from your door.” In the “experience” version of “Holy Thursday,” the speaker is appalled by the presence of poverty in such a rich country as England. If people lived in a right relationship with each other and nature, the speaker suggests, hunger and poverty would not exist.]

Is this a holy thing to see  
 In a rich and fruitful land,—  
 Babes reduced to misery,  
 Fed with cold and usurous hand?

Is that trembling cry a song?  
 Can it be a song of joy?  
 And so many children poor?  
 It is a land of poverty!

And their sun does never shine,  
 And their fields are bleak and bare,  
 And their ways are filled with thorns,  
 It is eternal winter there.

For where'er the sun does shine,  
 And where'er the rain does fall,  
 Babe can never hunger there,  
 Nor poverty the mind appal.

### **Poem 5: “The Little Girl Lost”**

[The speaker envisions a future in which the Earth has been unbound from the chains of Reason and seeks her creator. In that day, the wild desert in which the little girl will wander later in the poem becomes “a garden mild.” The seven-year-old girl, Lyca, represents the human soul, lost and wandering “in desert wild” as she searches for meaning or solace. In her wandering, Lyca cannot rest as long as her mother weeps for her. Eventually her mother stops weeping long enough for the girl to go to sleep, and it is here that she finds the beginning of her own paradise. The wild animals, most notably a lion and lioness, surround Lyca’s sleeping form but cannot or will not harm her because she is a virgin. The lion, an echo of the protective king of beasts from “Night” in *Songs of Innocence*, weeps “ruby tears” while the lioness disrobes Lyca, symbolically removing her soul from her material body in death. The lions then take Lyca to their cave to sleep.]

In futurity  
 I prophesy  
 That the earth from sleep  
 (Grave the sentence deep)

Shall arise, and seek  
 For her Maker meek;  
 And the desert wild  
 Become a garden mild.

In the southern clime,  
 Where the summer’s prime  
 Never fades away,  
 Lovely Lyca lay.

Seven summers old  
 Lovely Lyca told.

She had wandered long,  
Hearing wild birds' song.

'Sweet sleep, come to me,  
Underneath this tree;  
Do father, mother, weep?  
Where can Lyca sleep?

'Lost in desert wild  
Is your little child.  
How can Lyca sleep  
If her mother weep?

'If her heart does ache,  
Then let Lyca wake;  
If my mother sleep,  
Lyca shall not weep.

'Frowning, frowning night,  
O'er this desert bright  
Let thy moon arise,  
While I close my eyes.'

Sleeping Lyca lay,  
While the beasts of prey,  
Come from caverns deep,  
Viewed the maid asleep.

The kingly lion stood,  
And the virgin viewed:  
Then he gambolled round  
O'er the hallowed ground.

Leopards, tigers, play  
Round her as she lay;  
While the lion old  
Bowed his mane of gold,

And her bosom lick,  
And upon her neck,  
From his eyes of flame,  
Ruby tears there came;

While the lioness  
Loosed her slender dress,  
And naked they conveyed  
To caves the sleeping maid.

### **Poem 6: "The Little Girl Found"**

[Lyca's parents go in their search her. They grow increasingly desperate, a state that is only increased when they dream of her starving in the desert. They encounter the lion, who at first knocks them to the ground then stalks around them. Smelling their scent, or more

likely the scent of their daughter Lyca, the lion licks their hands and speaks to them, telling them to cease weeping and follow him to his “palace” wherein their daughter rests “among tygers wild.” The parents follow the lion and spend the rest of their days in the lion’s “lonely dell” fearing neither wolf nor lion.]

All the night in woe  
Lyca’s parents go  
Over valleys deep,  
While the deserts weep.

Tired and woe-begone,  
Hoarse with making moan,  
Arm in arm, seven days  
They traced the desert ways.

Seven nights they sleep  
Among shadows deep,  
And dream they see their child  
Starved in desert wild.

Pale through pathless ways  
The fancied image strays,  
Famished, weeping, weak,  
With hollow piteous shriek.

Rising from unrest,  
The trembling woman pressed  
With feet of weary woe;  
She could no further go.

In his arms he bore  
Her, armed with sorrow sore;  
Till before their way  
A couching lion lay.

Turning back was vain:  
Soon his heavy mane  
Bore them to the ground,  
Then he stalked around,

Smelling to his prey;  
But their fears allay  
When he licks their hands,  
And silent by them stands.

They look upon his eyes,  
Filled with deep surprise;  
And wondering behold  
A spirit armed in gold.

On his head a crown,  
On his shoulders down



Flowed his golden hair.  
Gone was all their care.

‘Follow me,’ he said;  
‘Weep not for the maid;  
In my palace deep,  
Lyca lies asleep.’

Then they followèd  
Where the vision led,  
And saw their sleeping child  
Among tigers wild.

To this day they dwell  
In a lonely dell,  
Nor fear the wolvish howl  
Nor the lion’s growl.

### **Poem 7: “The Chimney-Sweeper”**

[The “experience” version of “The Chimney Sweeper” makes clear how both a world of misery and the attitude of hopefulness presented in Songs of Innocence can exist side by side. A person asks a forlorn chimney sweeper where his parents are, and the child replies that they have gone to church “to praise God & his Priest & King, / Who make up a heaven of our misery.” The society’s failings are supported and excused away by the institutions of religion and government, which manage to persuade many that all will somehow be all right, perhaps after death, the same point that is made in “London.”]

The narrator introduces the boy chimney sweep as no more than a ‘little black thing’. The child is so young that he cannot even pronounce the traditional cry of ‘sweep, sweep’ which the chimney sweeps of Blake’s time called out to advertise their presence as they walked through the streets. When the narrator asks him where his parents are, he simply replies that they have ‘both gone up to the church to pray’. He then tells how they sold him to be a chimney sweep but still refuse to accept that they have done him any wrong. In the final two lines he attacks the church and the king for pretending that all is right with the world and for closing their eyes to ‘our misery’.]

A little black thing among the snow,  
Crying! ‘weep! weep!’ in notes of woe!  
‘Where are thy father and mother? Say!’—  
‘They are both gone up to the church to pray.

‘Because I was happy upon the heath,  
And smiled among the winter’s snow,  
They clothed me in the clothes of death,  
And taught me to sing the notes of woe.

‘And because I am happy and dance and sing,  
They think they have done me no injury,

And are gone to praise God and His priest and king,  
Who made up a heaven of our misery.'

### **Poem 8: "Nurse's Song"**

[In this "experience" version of "Nurse's Song," the nurse urges the children to come in from their wasteful play, in which she finds no happiness.]

When the voices of children are heard on the green,  
And whisperings are in the dale,  
The days of my youth rise fresh in my mind,  
My face turns green and pale.

Then come home, my children, the sun is gone down,  
And the dews of night arise;  
Your spring and your day are wasted in play,  
And your winter and night in disguise.

### **Poem 9: "The Sick Rose"**

[The speaker addresses a rose, which he claims is sick because an "invisible worm" has "found out thy bed/Of crimson joy." The rose symbolizes earthly, as opposed to spiritual, love, which becomes ill when infected with the materialism of the world. The rose's bed of "crimson joy" may also be a sexual image, with the admittedly phallic worm representing either lust or jealousy. The worm has a "dark secret love" that destroys the rose's life, suggesting something sinful or unmentionable.]

O rose, thou art sick!  
The invisible worm,  
That flies in the night,  
In the howling storm,

Has found out thy bed  
Of crimson joy,  
And his dark secret love  
Does thy life destroy.

### **Poem 10: "The Fly"**

[The speaker draws a comparison between himself and a fly that he has thoughtlessly brushed away. He asks if he is like the fly, or the fly is more like himself. He imagines another, greater hand, perhaps that of God, brushing him away some day and ending his private designs. He concludes with the belief that he is indeed like the fly, not in his insignificance to Fate or chance, but in the fly's significance in the natural world. Just as the fly dances and sings, so does the speaker. Thought is what gives him life and breath, and "the want/Of thought is death." He takes joy simply in existing, with little thought or worry over what tomorrow may hold.]

Little Fly,  
 Thy summer's play  
 My thoughtless hand  
 Has brushed away.

Am not I  
 A fly like thee?  
 Or art not thou  
 A man like me?

For I dance,  
 And drink, and sing,  
 Till some blind hand  
 Shall brush my wing.

If thought is life  
 And strength and breath,  
 And the want  
 Of thought is death;

Then am I  
 A happy fly.  
 If I live,  
 Or if I die.

### **Poem 11: "The Angel"**

[The speaker dreams a dream in which she is a "maiden Queen" watched over by an angel. She weeps all the time, and the angel takes pity and wipes away her tears. However, even when she is happy at heart, the maiden Queen continues to weep in an attempt to evoke pity from the angel. Instead, the angel sees no happiness in his charge and so departs.]

I dreamt a dream! What can it mean?  
 And that I was a maiden Queen  
 Guarded by an Angel mild:  
 Witless woe was ne'er beguiled!

And I wept both night and day,  
 And he wiped my tears away;  
 And I wept both day and night,  
 And hid from him my heart's delight.

So he took his wings, and fled;  
 Then the morn blushed rosy red.  
 I dried my tears, and armed my fears  
 With ten thousand shields and spears.

Soon my Angel came again;  
 I was armed, he came in vain;  
 For the time of youth was fled,  
 And grey hairs were on my head.

### **Poem 12: “The Tyger”**

[The companion poem to “The Lamb” is the famous “The Tyger,” in which the speaker notes that the same God created the defenseless lamb and the fierce tiger, although he or she seems incredulous: “Did he who made the Lamb make thee?” In the “experience” poems, Blake presents the shock and dismay that arise from the contemplation of the theological problem of evil: If God created everything, God is ultimately responsible for everything, and if God is good, why does evil exist?

Who could have dared to make (‘frame’) a beast as terrifying as the tiger? It then goes on to liken the making of a tiger to the dangerous process of fashioning molten metal from the furnace with hammer and anvil.]

Tyger, tyger, burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies  
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?  
On what wings dare he aspire?  
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder and what art  
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?  
And, when thy heart began to beat,  
What dread hand and what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?  
In what furnace was thy brain?  
What the anvil? what dread grasp  
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,  
And watered heaven with their tears,  
Did He smile His work to see?  
Did He who made the lamb make thee?

Tyger, tyger, burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

### **Poem 13: “My Pretty Rose Tree”**

[The Rose Tree shows undeserved jealousy when its owner turns down the offer of another flower. Although the speaker rejects a single flower in favor of the several flowers his own tree, the Rose Tree is jealous of these attentions and turns away from him, offering only thorns. This is love grown cold for no good reason and demonstrates the great damage that jealousy can bring from a single event.]

A flower was offered to me,  
 Such a flower as May never bore;  
 But I said, 'I've a pretty rose tree,'  
 And I passed the sweet flower o'er.

Then I went to my pretty rose tree,  
 To tend her by day and by night;  
 But my rose turned away with jealousy,  
 And her thorns were my only delight.

### **Poem 14: "Ah, Sunflower"**

[In "Ah! Sun-flower" the flower is rooted to its spot and cannot go where repressed youths and virgins go for fulfillment in the next world.]

Ah, sunflower, weary of time,  
 Who countest the steps of the sun;  
 Seeking after that sweet golden clime  
 Where the traveller's journey is done;

Where the Youth pined away with desire,  
 And the pale virgin shrouded in snow,  
 Arise from their graves, and aspire  
 Where my Sunflower wishes to go!

### **Poem 15: "The Lily"**

[This poem states that the Lily is the superior flower, in that it offers no harm or defense of itself to one who would love it. The rose is given as a contrast with its thorns, and the sheep's defensive horns are also cited.]

The modest Rose puts forth a thorn,  
 The humble sheep a threat'ning horn:  
 While the Lily white shall in love delight,  
 Nor a thorn nor a threat stain her beauty bright.

### **Poem 16: "The Garden of Love"**

[In "The Garden of Love," a chapel dedicated to negative commandments, sin, and death has been placed in the middle of what once was a refreshing garden.]

I went to the Garden of Love,  
 And saw what I never had seen;  
 A Chapel was built in the midst,  
 Where I used to play on the green.

And the gates of this Chapel were shut,  
 And 'Thou shalt not' writ over the door;  
 So I turned to the Garden of Love  
 That so many sweet flowers bore.

And I saw it was filled with graves,  
 And tombstones where flowers should be;  
 And priests in black gowns were walking their rounds,  
 And binding with briars my joys and desires.

### **Poem 17: “The Little Vagabond”**

[The title character complains to his mother that the church is too cold, whereas the alehouse is much warmer and friendlier. He suggests that if ale were served in church, parishioners would stay longer and enjoy their time of fellowship, and few would desire to leave the church or avoid regular attendance.]

Dear mother, dear mother, the Church is cold;  
 But the Alehouse is healthy, and pleasant, and warm.  
 Besides, I can tell where I am used well;  
 Such usage in heaven will never do well.

But, if at the Church they would give us some ale,  
 And a pleasant fire our souls to regale,  
 We'd sing and we'd pray all the livelong day,  
 Nor ever once wish from the Church to stray.

Then the Parson might preach, and drink, and sing,  
 And we'd be as happy as birds in the spring;  
 And modest Dame Lurch, who is always at church,  
 Would not have bandy children, nor fasting, nor birch.

And God, like a father, rejoicing to see  
 His children as pleasant and happy as He,  
 Would have no more quarrel with the Devil or the barrel,  
 But kiss him, and give him both drink and apparel.

### **Poem 18: “London”**

[The narrator wanders through London and finds even the streets and the river suffering under political oppression. In everyone he passes, he sees signs of misery and moral weakness. In fact, the narrator doesn't just see the misery of the sweep, the soldier, the prostitute or the baby, he also hears it in their cries, sighs, curses and tears. He visualises the cry of the chimney-sweep covering the churches like a pall draped over a coffin, and the last breath of the dying soldier running like blood down the walls of the royal palace. In the depths of night the 'Harlot's curse' (venereal disease) blinds the new-born baby and turns love itself into a disease-infested shortcut to death.]

I wander through each chartered street,  
 Near where the chartered Thames does flow,  
 A mark in every face I meet,  
 Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every man,  
 In every infant's cry of fear,  
 In every voice, in every ban,  
 The mind-forged manacles I hear:

How the chimney-sweeper's cry  
 Every blackening church appals,  
 And the hapless soldier's sigh  
 Runs in blood down palace-walls.

But most, through midnight streets I hear  
 How the youthful harlot's curse  
 Blasts the new-born infant's tear,  
 And blights with plagues the marriage hearse.

### **Poem 19: "The Human Abstract"**

[The poem contends that human reason and abstract thinking lead to harm, because the virtues they extol require the existence of suffering. Pity presupposes poverty, while mercy assumes the existence of sorrow. He then continues with a litany of false virtues that arise from sin or vice: peace comes from mutual fear, love increases by selfishness, and care is the bait used by cruelty.]

Pity would be no more  
 If we did not make somebody poor,  
 And Mercy no more could be  
 If all were as happy as we.

And mutual fear brings Peace,  
 Till the selfish loves increase;  
 Then Cruelty knits a snare,  
 And spreads his baits with care.

He sits down with holy fears,  
 And waters the ground with tears;  
 Then Humility takes its root  
 Underneath his foot.

Soon spreads the dismal shade  
 Of Mystery over his head,  
 And the caterpillar and fly  
 Feed on the Mystery.

And it bears the fruit of Deceit,  
 Ruddy and sweet to eat,  
 And the raven his nest has made  
 In its thickest shade.

The gods of the earth and sea  
 Sought through nature to find this tree,  
 But their search was all in vain:  
 There grows one in the human Brain.

### **Poem 20: “Infant Sorrow”**

[In “Infant Sorrow,” the baby is unhappy to be born into a dangerous and sorrowful world, unlike the child of “Infant Joy” (“innocence”). The infant finds itself “helpless” and “naked,” but also describes itself as a “fiend hid in a cloud,” suggesting future harms it may perpetrate. To the infant fresh from the safety of its mother’s womb, there is no comfort in the father’s arms, so it settles for sulking at its mother’s breast.]

My mother groaned, my father wept:  
 Into the dangerous world I leapt,  
 Helpless, naked, piping loud,  
 Like a fiend hid in a cloud.

Struggling in my father’s hands,  
 Striving against my swaddling bands,  
 Bound and weary, I thought best  
 To sulk upon my mother’s breast.

### **Poem 21: “A Poison Tree”**

[This poem meditates on the nature of wrath offers two ways of dealing with on an offence. When the speaker is angry with his friend, he told the friend of it and his “wrath did end.” However, when he was angry with his enemy, he kept the anger hidden, allowing it to grow. His wrath, which is watered “in fears” and sunned ‘with smiles, And with soft deceitful wiles,” grows into the poison tree of the title. The tree bears “an apple bright” that the speaker’s enemy desires; the greedy enemy takes the fruit, even though he knows it belongs to the speaker, and eats it. The next morning the speaker is glad to see his “foe outstretch’d beneath the tree.”]

I was angry with my friend:  
 I told my wrath, my wrath did end.  
 I was angry with my foe:  
 I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I watered it in fears  
 Night and morning with my tears,  
 And I sunnèd it with smiles  
 And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night,  
 Till it bore an apple bright,  
 And my foe beheld it shine,  
 And he knew that it was mine,—

And into my garden stole  
 When the night had veiled the pole;  
 In the morning, glad, I see  
 My foe outstretched beneath the tree.



## **Poem 22: “A Little Boy Lost”**

[“A Little Boy Lost” presents an honest search for understanding on the part of the titular boy. He recognizes that love is at first selfish, that no one seems capable of loving another more than himself, and that human “Thought” cannot know anything “greater than itself” (for example, God in His true divine nature). The boy sincerely asks, “Father, how can I love you,/Or any of my brothers more?” since he loves like a little bird “that picks up crumbs around the door.”

The boy’s sincere inquiry and humble recognition of his own limitations are taken by a nearby priest as blasphemy. The older man grabs the boy “by his little coat” to the admiration of all onlookers. The priest then stands upon the altar and holds the boy up as a “fiend” for all to see and vilify. To the priest, the boy “sets reason up for judge/Of our most holy Mystery.” In other words, the boy places human thought above the unfathomable faith of the church. In an act of almost unthinkable cruelty, the priest ignores the boy’s and his parents’ cries for mercy, strips the boy “to his little shirt,” binds the lad in an iron chain, and burns him “in a holy place.” This spectacle echoes the burning at the stake done to alleged heretics by the Inquisition and other religious authorities. The poet concludes with a question that is really a condemnation: “Are such things done on Albions shore?”]

‘Nought loves another as itself,  
Nor venerates another so,  
Nor is it possible to thought  
A greater than itself to know.

‘And, father, how can I love you  
Or any of my brothers more?  
I love you like the little bird  
That picks up crumbs around the door.’

The Priest sat by and heard the child;  
In trembling zeal he seized his hair,  
He led him by his little coat,  
And all admired his priestly care.

And standing on the altar high,  
‘Lo, what a fiend is here!’ said he:  
‘One who sets reason up for judge  
Of our most holy mystery.’

The weeping child could not be heard,  
The weeping parents wept in vain:  
They stripped him to his little shirt,  
And bound him in an iron chain,

And burned him in a holy place  
Where many had been burned before;

The weeping parents wept in vain.  
Are such things done on Albion's shore?

### **Poem 23: "A Little Girl Lost"**

[Blake begins this poem with a call to "Children of the future Age," returning to the prophetic voice introduced in the "Introduction." He wants these children, who presumably live in a better time, to understand that "in a former time,/Love! sweet Love! was thought a crime." He then goes on to tell the story of such a love: "In the Age of Gold" where spring and summer reign, two youths meet in a "garden bright," and play while their "Parents were afar." These young people, who are presumably adolescents, based upon their next actions, grow "Tired with kisses sweet" and agree to rendezvous at night when everyone is asleep. The maiden returns home, but is struck with terror at her father's "loving look." The father asks his daughter, here identified as Ona, to speak to him. He is afraid for her, and his fear "shakes the blossoms of my hoary hair."]

Children of the future age,  
Reading this indignant page,  
Know that in a former time  
Love, sweet love, was thought a crime.

In the age of gold,  
Free from winter's cold,  
Youth and maiden bright,  
To the holy light,  
Naked in the sunny beams delight.

Once a youthful pair,  
Filled with softest care,  
Met in garden bright  
Where the holy light  
Had just removed the curtains of the night.

There, in rising day,  
On the grass they play;  
Parents were afar,  
Strangers came not near,  
And the maiden soon forgot her fear.

Tired with kisses sweet,  
They agree to meet  
When the silent sleep  
Waves o'er heaven's deep,  
And the weary tired wanderers weep.

To her father white  
Came the maiden bright;  
But his loving look,  
Like the holy book,  
All her tender limbs with terror shook.

Ona, pale and weak,  
 To thy father speak!  
 O the trembling fear!  
 O the dismal care  
 That shakes the blossoms of my hoary hair!

### **Poem 24: “A Divine Image”**

[The companion poem to “The Divine Image” (“innocence”) is “A Divine Image,” (“experience”) which points out that cruelty, jealousy, terror, and secrecy are also human properties, and if people are created from God’s image, those qualities must belong to God also.]

Cruelty has a human heart,  
 And Jealousy a human face;  
 Terror the human form divine,  
 And Secrecy the human dress.

The human dress is forgèd iron,  
 The human form a fiery forge,  
 The human face a furnace sealed,  
 The human heart its hungry gorge.

### **Poem 25: “A Cradle Song”**

[In this “experience” version of “A Cradle Song”, the mother still seems to feel personal affection for her child, but now she is suspicious of just what dreams might be passing through its mind. On the other hand, in the “innocence” version, singing a lullaby, the mother assists her own loving care of her child the mother calls upon an ‘Angel mild’ to ensure sweet dreams.]

Sleep, sleep, beauty bright,  
 Dreaming in the joys of night;  
 Sleep, sleep; in thy sleep  
 Little sorrows sit and weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face  
 Soft desires I can trace,  
 Secret joys and secret smiles,  
 Little pretty infant wiles.

As thy softest limbs I feel,  
 Smiles as of the morning steal  
 O’er thy cheek, and o’er thy breast  
 Where thy little heart doth rest.

O the cunning wiles that creep  
 In thy little heart asleep!  
 When thy little heart doth wake,  
 Then the dreadful light shall break.

### **Poem 26: “The Schoolboy”**

[The poem is about a schoolboy who is unhappy. He says that his childhood is crumpled for the sake of learning and teaching. The boy likes mornings, trees, and birds. He loves being in nature. However, due to his school, his mornings are unpleasant and unhappy. He does not like going to school and is not interested in studies and books. The poet further advises the parents to not deprive the child of joy and freedom that he deserves to have. In case we have unhappy children, our world will be full of sorrow. We will never be able to experience joy.]

I love to rise in a summer morn,  
 When the birds sing on every tree;  
 The distant huntsman winds his horn,  
 And the skylark sings with me:  
 O what sweet company!

But to go to school in a summer morn,—  
 O it drives all joy away!  
 Under a cruel eye outworn,  
 The little ones spend the day  
 In sighing and dismay.

Ah then at times I drooping sit,  
 And spend many an anxious hour;  
 Nor in my book can I take delight,  
 Nor sit in learning's bower,  
 Worn through with the dreary shower.

How can the bird that is born for joy  
 Sit in a cage and sing?  
 How can a child, when fears annoy,  
 But droop his tender wing,  
 And forget his youthful spring!

O father and mother if buds are nipped,  
 And blossoms blown away;  
 And if the tender plants are stripped  
 Of their joy in the springing day,  
 By sorrow and care's dismay,—

How shall the summer arise in joy,  
 Or the summer fruits appear?  
 Or how shall we gather what griefs destroy,  
 Or bless the mellowing year,  
 When the blasts of winter appear?

### **Poem 27: “To Tirzah”**

[The speaker addresses a female persona, probably the titular "Tirzah," to ask what business he has with her. He starts by pointing out that he is mortal and will die ("be consumed with the Earth") and rise again, so he asks what he could have to share with the

woman. He declares that the sexes originated from "Shame & Pride" and lived only to "work & weep." He then addresses the "Mother of [his] Mortal part" who has cruelly shaped his heart and through deceit bound his "nostrils Eyes & Ears" and silenced his "Tongue in senseless clay." He declares that the death of Jesus has set him free (from sin, perhaps) so again, "what have I to do with thee?"]

Whate'er is born of mortal birth  
Must be consumèd with the earth,  
To rise from generation free:  
Then what have I to do with thee?

The sexes sprung from shame and pride,  
Blowed in the morn, in evening died;  
But mercy changed death into sleep;  
The sexes rose to work and weep.

Thou, mother of my mortal part,  
With cruelty didst mould my heart,  
And with false self-deceiving tears  
Didst blind my nostrils, eyes, and ears,

Didst close my tongue in senseless clay,  
And me to mortal life betray.  
The death of Jesus set me free:  
Then what have I to do with thee?

### **Poem 28: "The Voice of the Ancient Bard"**

[Blake concludes the *Songs of Experience* with a poem that was originally placed in his *Songs of Innocence*. The Bard of the *Songs of Experience*'s "Introduction" returns to reassure the "youth of delight" that all is not lost. He invites the innocent one who has seen such dark visions of experience to "see the opening morn,/Image of truth new born" in which doubt and restrictive human Reason have disappeared. He then warns the youth that "folly is an endless maze" full of tangled roots that cause many to fall "over bones of the dead."]

Youth of delight! come hither  
And see the opening morn,  
Image of Truth new-born.  
Doubt is fled, and clouds of reason,  
Dark disputes and artful teasing.  
Folly is an endless maze;  
Tangled roots perplex her ways;  
How many have fallen there!  
They stumble all night over bones of the dead;  
And feel—they know not what but care;  
And wish to lead others, when they should be led.

##

## from UNIT – 3

### Samuel Taylor Coleridge: *Lyrical Ballads*

#### Introduction:

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, (born October 21, 1772, Ottery St. Mary, Devonshire, England—died July 25, 1834, Highgate, near London), English lyrical poet, critic, and philosopher. His *Lyrical Ballads*, written with William Wordsworth, heralded the English Romantic movement, and his *Biographia Literaria* (1817) is the most significant work of general literary criticism produced in the English **Romantic period (1798 – 1832)**. In it, Coleridge argued that poetry has its “**immediate object pleasure, not truth**”.

*Wordsworth and S. T. Coleridge published Lyrical Ballads anonymously in 1798. The French Revolution (1789–1799) was one of the major sources of inspiration for them.*

The first edition of *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) contains **23 poems** of which 19 were written by Wordsworth and 4 by Coleridge. It opens with Coleridge’s “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” and closes with Wordsworth’s “Lines written a few miles above Tintern Abbey”

The 4 poems by Coleridge:

1. “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” (in seven parts)
2. “The Foster-Mother’s Tale”
3. “The Nightingale: A Conversational Poem”
4. “The Dungeon”

The **second edition of *Lyrical Ballads* (1800):**

- ❖ Curiously, on the title page only Wordsworth’s name appeared — *Lyrical Ballads, with Other Poems. In Two Volumes. By W. Wordsworth.*
- ❖ The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition was published in two separate volumes.
- ❖ The **first volume** of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition contained a **Preface** by Wordsworth and **24 poems**:
  - **19 poems** by Wordsworth; **5 poems** by Coleridge
  - In this volume, Wordsworth **omitted his poem “The Convict”** (which featured in the 1798 ed.), and he **divided “Lines written near Richmond, upon the Thames, at Evening”** (in the 1798 ed.) into two separate poems: “Lines written when sailing in a Boat at Evening” and “Written near Richmond, upon the Thames”. Further, he changed the order of the poems and reduced the title of “Old Man travelling; Animal Tranquillity and Decay, A Sketch” (in the 1798 ed.) to “Animal Tranquillity and Decay, A Sketch”.
  - **Coleridge’s fifth poem “Love”** was added to his four 1798 poems with a few changes in the titles (“The Ancient Mariner: A Poet’s Reverie”, “The Foster-Mother’s Tale”, “The Dungeon”, and “The Nightingale”).

Coleridge, meanwhile, was developing a new, informal mode of poetry in which he could use a conversational tone and rhythm to give unity to a poem. Of these poems, the most successful is “**Frost at Midnight**,” (addressed to his sleeping son **Hartley Coleridge**) which

begins with the description of a silent frosty night in Somerset and proceeds through a meditation on the relationship between the quiet work of frost and the quiet breathing of the sleeping baby at the poet's side, to conclude in a resolve that his child shall be brought up as a "child of nature," so that the sympathies that the poet has come to detect may be reinforced throughout the child's education.

He composed under the influence of laudanum the mysterious poetic fragment known as "**Kubla Khan**." During the autumn and winter of 1797–98, he wrote his most famous poem, "**The Rime of the Ancient Mariner**", drawing upon the ballad form. The main narrative tells how a sailor who has committed a crime against the life principle by slaying an **albatross** suffers from torments, physical and mental, in which the nature of his crime is made known to him. From "Rime of the Ancient Mariner":

Water, water, everywhere,  
And all the boards did shrink;  
Water, water, everywhere,  
Nor any drop to drink.

In his Gothic ballad entitled "**Christabel**," he aimed to show how naked energy might be redeemed through contact with a spirit of innocent love.

### Lake Poets

- ❖ Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Robert Southey lived in the Lake District and later came to known as "Lake poets".
- ❖ With his friend **Southey**, **Coleridge** devised a utopian scheme: **Pantisocracy**, ('all of equal power'), an egalitarian community where all rule equally. But, the project didn't materialise because of its unviability.
- ❖ Coleridge and Southey collaborated in the three-act play *The Fall of Robespierre* (1794).

### Asra poems

- ❖ Written by **S. T. Coleridge**, these poems which include the poem "To Asra".
- ❖ They register his affection for Sara Hutchinson. 'Asra' is an anagram of 'Sara'.
- ❖ Sara Hutchinson was the younger sister of Mary Hutchinson. Wordsworth and Mary got married later.
- ❖ Coleridge's "**Dejection: An Ode**", which discusses his feelings of love for Sara Hutchinson, was sometimes grouped under 'Asra poems'.

*Watchman* was another a short-lived journal run by Coleridge in 1796.

Coleridge published a **periodical**, *The Friend*, from June 1809 to March 1810 and ceased only when Sara Hutchinson, who had been acting as amanuensis, found the strain of the relationship too much for her and retired to her brother's farm in Wales. Coleridge, resentful that Wordsworth should apparently have encouraged his sister-in-law's withdrawal, resolved shortly afterward to terminate his working relationship with William and Dorothy Wordsworth and to settle in London again.

His **plays** include

1. *The Fall of Robespierre* (1794; with Robert Southey),
2. *Remorse* (1813)

### **The Perfect Critic**

- ❖ In his essay “The Perfect Critic” (in *The Sacred Wood*, 1920), T. S. Eliot writes:
 

“Coleridge was perhaps **the greatest of English critics, and in a sense the last.** After Coleridge we have Matthew Arnold; but Arnold I think it will be conceded was rather a propagandist for criticism than a critic, a popularizer rather than a creator of ideas.”

Sobriquet: Coleridge is called **the Sage of Highgate.**

In *Table Talk*, he defined ‘prose’ and ‘poetry’ as follows:

“[P]rose = words in their best order; poetry = the best words in their best order.”



### **The Gist of Text 1: “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner”**

The poem is a tale of crime, punishment, and redemption: a Mariner shoots an Albatross (a bird of good fortune) and is gravely punished by an extraneous force for this act. However, by learning to love, the Mariner is partially absolved. As his punishment continues, and he is unable to die, he must travel the globe, telling his story to strangers and teaching to them the lessons he has learned.

The poem opens as the Ancient Mariner, unnaturally old and with a “glittering eye,” stops a man in the street. The man is with two companions; the group is on its way to a wedding party. The Wedding Guest tries to get away from the Ancient Mariner, and continue on his way with his friends, but he finds himself drawn to the old man’s eyes. The Mariner’s story begins when he is much younger and is on a ship with 200 other sailors. The weather is good and the ship sails well until a storm hits as they reach the equator. The ship is driven by the wind to the South Pole and is stuck there in the ice, until an albatross appears out of the mist. The sailors feed and play with the albatross (a bird of good fortune) and the ice breaks and the ship is freed. However, for some inexplicable reason, the Mariner kills the bird.

The sailors blame the Mariner as the wind stops and the ship is stuck once more. The sun burns too hot, there is no water, and slimy sea creatures can be seen sliding around on the top of the sea. The sailors become so thirsty that they are unable to speak. They place the corpse of the albatross around the Mariner’s neck, to remind him of the terrible thing he has done. A long time passes. The Mariner spots another ship approaching. Still unable to speak, he bites his arm and sucks out some blood so that he can remark to the sailors. However, the Mariner soon notices that the ship is strange. Not only is it moving when there is no wind, but, as it passes in front of the sun, it looks to be a skeleton ship. As the



ship pulls even closer, the Mariner can see that it is manned by only two entities, Death and Life-in-Death. They are playing a game of dice to see who can win the soul of the Mariner. Life-in-Death wins. Death is left with the souls of the 200 sailors. The sky turns black and the sailors drop dead on the deck; with their open, staring eyes, they curse the Mariner for what he has done. The Mariner is left alone, unable to pray, and drifting on the ocean with 200 corpses that refuse to rot.

One evening, the Mariner notices some beautiful water snakes dancing on the sea. Watching them move, he is filled with immense happiness and he blesses them without meaning to. Able to pray again, the dead albatross falls from the Mariner's neck and into the sea. The curse is broken, and the Mariner is able to fall asleep. He dreams of water and when he wakes it's raining. The Mariner drinks and drinks. The dead sailors come back to life, reanimated by angels. Still unable to speak, the sailors begin to sail the ship. When they reach the equator, the ship suddenly lurches, and the Mariner falls and loses consciousness.

As he lies there, dazed, he hears two voices discussing his sin and punishment. They say that the albatross was loved by a spirit and that the Mariner will continue to serve. When the Mariner wakes, up the voices have gone, but he sees the dead sailors, together, cursing him with their eyes. Suddenly, they disappear, too. Despite this, the Mariner knows that he will always be haunted by them.

The wind becomes stronger and it isn't long before the Mariner sees his homeland in the distance. He also sees that there is a small rowboat approaching his ship. In it is a Pilot, his boy, and a Hermit. As the rowboat reaches the ship, a whirlpool starts to pull the ship down. The Pilot and the Hermit rescue the Mariner from the water and initially believe him dead. Frightened when the Mariner suddenly comes to, the Hermit asks him what kind of man he is. The Mariner is suddenly struck by an intense physical pain. After telling the Hermit what has happened to him, the pain disappears. The Mariner now knows of the continued punishment he must face for killing the albatross.

The Mariner explains to the Wedding Guest how the Mariner must travel the world, telling his story, and that he instinctively knows whom he must tell it to. Once it is told, he is relieved of his pain, until the next time he must tell the story. His final lesson to the Wedding Guest is that joining others in prayer is better than any party, and that the best way to connect with God is to love his creatures. The Mariner vanishes. Rather than joining his friends at the party, the Wedding Guest returns home. When he wakes up the following morning, he is a "sadder and...wiser" man for having heard the Mariner's tale.

**Text 1:*****Argument:***

*How a Ship having passed the Line was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell; and in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came back to his own Country.*

**PART I**

It is an ancient Mariner,  
And he stoppeth one of three.  
'By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,  
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,  
And I am next of kin;  
The guests are met, the feast is set:  
May'st hear the merry din.'

He holds him with his skinny hand,  
'There was a ship,' quoth he.  
'Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!  
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

He holds him with his glittering eye—  
The Wedding-Guest stood still,  
And listens like a three years' child:  
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:  
He cannot choose but hear;  
And thus spake on that ancient man,  
The bright-eyed Mariner.

'The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,  
Merrily did we drop  
Below the kirk, below the hill,  
Below the lighthouse top.

The Sun came up upon the left,  
Out of the sea came he!  
And he shone bright, and on the right  
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,  
Till over the mast at noon—'  
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,  
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The bride hath paced into the hall,  
Red as a rose is she;  
Nodding their heads before her goes  
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,  
Yet he cannot choose but hear;  
And thus spake on that ancient man,  
The bright-eyed Mariner.

And now the STORM-BLAST came, and he  
Was tyrannous and strong:  
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,  
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,  
As who pursued with yell and blow  
Still treads the shadow of his foe,  
And forward bends his head,  
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,  
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,  
And it grew wondrous cold:  
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,  
As green as emerald.

And through the drifts the snowy clifts  
Did send a dismal sheen:  
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—  
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,  
The ice was all around:  
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,  
Like noises in a swound!

At length did cross an Albatross,  
Thorough the fog it came;  
As if it had been a Christian soul,

We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,  
And round and round it flew.  
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;  
The helmsman steered us through!

And a good south wind sprung up behind;  
The Albatross did follow,  
And every day, for food or play,  
Came to the mariner's hollo!

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,  
It perched for vespers nine;  
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,  
Glimmered the white Moon-shine.'

'God save thee, ancient Mariner!  
From the fiends, that plague thee thus!—  
Why look'st thou so?'—With my cross-bow  
I shot the ALBATROSS.

## **PART II**

The Sun now rose upon the right:  
Out of the sea came he,  
Still hid in mist, and on the left  
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,  
But no sweet bird did follow,  
Nor any day for food or play  
Came to the mariner's hollo!

And I had done a hellish thing,  
And it would work 'em woe:  
For all averred, I had killed the bird  
That made the breeze to blow.  
Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,  
That made the breeze to blow!

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,  
The glorious Sun uprist:  
Then all averred, I had killed the bird  
That brought the fog and mist.  
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,  
That bring the fog and mist.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,  
The furrow followed free;  
We were the first that ever burst  
Into that silent sea.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,  
'Twas sad as sad could be;  
And we did speak only to break  
The silence of the sea!

All in a hot and copper sky,  
The bloody Sun, at noon,  
Right up above the mast did stand,  
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,  
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;  
As idle as a painted ship  
Upon a painted ocean.

Water, water, every where,  
And all the boards did shrink;  
Water, water, every where,  
Nor any drop to drink.

The very deep did rot: O Christ!  
That ever this should be!  
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs  
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout  
The death-fires danced at night;  
The water, like a witch's oils,  
Burnt green, and blue and white.

And some in dreams assurèd were  
Of the Spirit that plagued us so;  
Nine fathom deep he had followed us  
From the land of mist and snow.

And every tongue, through utter drought,  
Was withered at the root;  
We could not speak, no more than if  
We had been choked with soot.

Ah! well a-day! what evil looks  
 Had I from old and young!  
 Instead of the cross, the Albatross  
 About my neck was hung.

### **PART III**

There passed a weary time. Each throat  
 Was parched, and glazed each eye.  
 A weary time! a weary time!  
 How glazed each weary eye,

When looking westward, I beheld  
 A something in the sky.

At first it seemed a little speck,  
 And then it seemed a mist;  
 It moved and moved, and took at last  
 A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!  
 And still it neared and neared:  
 As if it dodged a water-sprite,  
 It plunged and tacked and veered.

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,  
 We could nor laugh nor wail;  
 Through utter drought all dumb we stood!  
 I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,  
 And cried, A sail! a sail!

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,  
 Agape they heard me call:  
 Gramercy! they for joy did grin,  
 And all at once their breath drew in.  
 As they were drinking all.

See! see! (I cried) she tacks no more!  
 Hither to work us weal;  
 Without a breeze, without a tide,  
 She steadies with upright keel!

The western wave was all a-flame.  
 The day was well nigh done!  
 Almost upon the western wave

Rested the broad bright Sun;  
 When that strange shape drove suddenly  
 Betwixt us and the Sun.

And straight the Sun was flecked with bars,  
 (Heaven's Mother send us grace!)  
 As if through a dungeon-grate he peered  
 With broad and burning face.

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)  
 How fast she nears and nears!  
 Are those *her* sails that glance in the Sun,  
 Like restless gossameres?

Are those her *ribs* through which the Sun  
 Did peer, as through a grate?  
 And is that Woman all her crew?  
 Is that a DEATH? and are there two?  
 Is DEATH that woman's mate?

*Her* lips were red, *her* looks were free,  
 Her locks were yellow as gold:  
 Her skin was as white as leprosy,  
 The Night-mare LIFE-IN-DEATH was she,  
 Who thicks man's blood with cold.

The naked hulk alongside came,  
 And the twain were casting dice;  
 'The game is done! I've won! I've won!'   
 Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out;  
 At one stride comes the dark;  
 With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,  
 Off shot the spectre-bark.

We listened and looked sideways up!  
 Fear at my heart, as at a cup,  
 My life-blood seemed to sip!  
 The stars were dim, and thick the night,  
 The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed white;  
 From the sails the dew did drip—  
 Till clomb above the eastern bar  
 The hornèd Moon, with one bright star  
 Within the nether tip.

One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,  
 Too quick for groan or sigh,  
 Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,  
 And cursed me with his eye.

Four times fifty living men,  
 (And I heard nor sigh nor groan)  
 With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,  
 They dropped down one by one.

The souls did from their bodies fly,—  
 They fled to bliss or woe!  
 And every soul, it passed me by,  
 Like the whizz of my cross-bow!

#### **PART IV**

I fear thee, ancient Mariner!  
 I fear thy skinny hand!  
 And thou art long, and lank, and brown,  
 As is the ribbed sea-sand.

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,  
 And thy skinny hand, so brown.'—  
 Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!  
 This body dropt not down.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,  
 Alone on a wide wide sea!  
 And never a saint took pity on  
 My soul in agony.

The many men, so beautiful!  
 And they all dead did lie:  
 And a thousand thousand slimy things  
 Lived on; and so did I.

I looked upon the rotting sea,  
 And drew my eyes away;  
 I looked upon the rotting deck,  
 And there the dead men lay.

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;  
 But or ever a prayer had gusht,  
 A wicked whisper came, and made



My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,  
 And the balls like pulses beat;  
 For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky  
 Lay dead like a load on my weary eye,  
 And the dead were at my feet.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,  
 Nor rot nor reek did they:  
 The look with which they looked on me  
 Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell  
 A spirit from on high;  
 But oh! more horrible than that  
 Is the curse in a dead man's eye!  
 Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,  
 And yet I could not die.

The moving Moon went up the sky,  
 And no where did abide:  
 Softly she was going up,  
 And a star or two beside—

Her beams bemoaned the sultry main,  
 Like April hoar-frost spread;  
 But where the ship's huge shadow lay,  
 The charmed water burnt away  
 A still and awful red.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,  
 I watched the water-snakes:  
 They moved in tracks of shining white,  
 And when they reared, the elfish light  
 Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship  
 I watched their rich attire:  
 Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,  
 They coiled and swam; and every track  
 Was a flash of golden fire.

O happy living things! no tongue

Their beauty might declare:  
 A spring of love gushed from my heart,  
 And I blessed them unaware:  
 Sure my kind saint took pity on me,  
 And I blessed them unaware.

The self-same moment I could pray;  
 And from my neck so free  
 The Albatross fell off, and sank  
 Like lead into the sea.

#### **PART V**

Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,  
 Beloved from pole to pole!  
 To Mary Queen the praise be given!  
 She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,  
 That slid into my soul.

The silly buckets on the deck,  
 That had so long remained,  
 I dreamt that they were filled with dew;  
 And when I awoke, it rained.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,  
 My garments all were dank;  
 Sure I had drunken in my dreams,  
 And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs:  
 I was so light—almost  
 I thought that I had died in sleep,  
 And was a blessed ghost.

And soon I heard a roaring wind:  
 It did not come anear;  
 But with its sound it shook the sails,  
 That were so thin and sere.

The upper air burst into life!  
 And a hundred fire-flags sheen,  
 To and fro they were hurried about!  
 And to and fro, and in and out,  
 The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,

And the sails did sigh like sedge,  
And the rain poured down from one black cloud;  
The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still  
The Moon was at its side:  
Like waters shot from some high crag,  
The lightning fell with never a jag,  
A river steep and wide.

The loud wind never reached the ship,  
Yet now the ship moved on!  
Beneath the lightning and the Moon  
The dead men gave a groan.

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,  
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;  
It had been strange, even in a dream,  
To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;  
Yet never a breeze up-blew;  
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,  
Where they were wont to do;  
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—  
We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son  
Stood by me, knee to knee:  
The body and I pulled at one rope,  
But he said nought to me.

'I fear thee, ancient Mariner!'  
Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest!  
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,  
Which to their corses came again,  
But a troop of spirits blest:

For when it dawned—they dropped their arms,  
And clustered round the mast;  
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,  
And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,

Then darted to the Sun;  
Slowly the sounds came back again,  
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky  
I heard the sky-lark sing;  
Sometimes all little birds that are,  
How they seemed to fill the sea and air  
With their sweet jargoning!

And now 'twas like all instruments,  
Now like a lonely flute;  
And now it is an angel's song,  
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on  
A pleasant noise till noon,  
A noise like of a hidden brook  
In the leafy month of June,  
That to the sleeping woods all night  
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,  
Yet never a breeze did breathe:  
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,  
Moved onward from beneath.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,  
From the land of mist and snow,  
The spirit slid: and it was he  
That made the ship to go.  
The sails at noon left off their tune,  
And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,  
Had fixed her to the ocean:  
But in a minute she 'gan stir,  
With a short uneasy motion—  
Backwards and forwards half her length  
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,  
She made a sudden bound:  
It flung the blood into my head,  
And I fell down in a swoond.

How long in that same fit I lay,  
 I have not to declare;  
 But ere my living life returned,  
 I heard and in my soul discerned  
 Two voices in the air.

'Is it he?' quoth one, 'Is this the man?  
 By him who died on cross,  
 With his cruel bow he laid full low  
 The harmless Albatross.

The spirit who bideth by himself  
 In the land of mist and snow,  
 He loved the bird that loved the man  
 Who shot him with his bow.'

The other was a softer voice,  
 As soft as honey-dew:  
 Quoth he, 'The man hath penance done,  
 And penance more will do.'

## **PART VI**

### *First Voice*

'But tell me, tell me! speak again,  
 Thy soft response renewing—  
 What makes that ship drive on so fast?  
 What is the ocean doing?'

### *Second Voice*

Still as a slave before his lord,  
 The ocean hath no blast;  
 His great bright eye most silently  
 Up to the Moon is cast—

If he may know which way to go;  
 For she guides him smooth or grim.  
 See, brother, see! how graciously  
 She looketh down on him.'

### *First Voice*

'But why drives on that ship so fast,  
 Without or wave or wind?'

### *Second Voice*

'The air is cut away before,  
And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!  
Or we shall be belated:  
For slow and slow that ship will go,  
When the Mariner's trance is abated.'

I woke, and we were sailing on  
As in a gentle weather:  
'Twas night, calm night, the moon was high;  
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,  
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:  
All fixed on me their stony eyes,  
That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,  
Had never passed away:  
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,  
Nor turn them up to pray.

And now this spell was snapt: once more  
I viewed the ocean green,  
And looked far forth, yet little saw  
Of what had else been seen—

Like one, that on a lonesome road  
Doth walk in fear and dread,  
And having once turned round walks on,  
And turns no more his head;  
Because he knows, a frightful fiend  
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,  
Nor sound nor motion made:  
Its path was not upon the sea,  
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek  
Like a meadow-gale of spring—  
It mingled strangely with my fears,  
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,  
 Yet she sailed softly too:  
 Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—  
 On me alone it blew.

Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed  
 The light-house top I see?  
 Is this the hill? is this the kirk?  
 Is this mine own countree?

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,  
 And I with sobs did pray—  
 O let me be awake, my God!  
 Or let me sleep away.

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,  
 So smoothly it was strewn!  
 And on the bay the moonlight lay,  
 And the shadow of the Moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,  
 That stands above the rock:  
 The moonlight steeped in silentness  
 The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with silent light,  
 Till rising from the same,  
 Full many shapes, that shadows were,  
 In crimson colours came.

A little distance from the prow  
 Those crimson shadows were:  
 I turned my eyes upon the deck—  
 Oh, Christ! what saw I there!

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,  
 And, by the holy rood!  
 A man all light, a seraph-man,  
 On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand:  
 It was a heavenly sight!  
 They stood as signals to the land,  
 Each one a lovely light;  
 This seraph-band, each waved his hand,

No voice did they impart—  
 No voice; but oh! the silence sank  
 Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,  
 I heard the Pilot's cheer;  
 My head was turned perforce away  
 And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,  
 I heard them coming fast:  
 Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy  
 The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice:  
 It is the Hermit good!  
 He singeth loud his godly hymns  
 That he makes in the wood.  
 He'll shrive my soul, he'll wash away  
 The Albatross's blood.

#### **PART VII**

This Hermit good lives in that wood  
 Which slopes down to the sea.  
 How loudly his sweet voice he rears!  
 He loves to talk with mariners  
 That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—  
 He hath a cushion plump:  
 It is the moss that wholly hides  
 The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk,  
 'Why, this is strange, I trow!  
 Where are those lights so many and fair,  
 That signal made but now?'

'Strange, by my faith!' the Hermit said—  
 'And they answered not our cheer!  
 The planks looked warped! and see those sails,  
 How thin they are and sere!  
 I never saw aught like to them,  
 Unless perchance it were



Brown skeletons of leaves that lag  
 My forest-brook along;  
 When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,  
 And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,  
 That eats the she-wolf's young.'

'Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look—  
 (The Pilot made reply)  
 I am a-feared'—'Push on, push on!'  
 Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,  
 But I nor spake nor stirred;  
 The boat came close beneath the ship,  
 And straight a sound was heard.

Under the water it rumbled on,  
 Still louder and more dread:  
 It reached the ship, it split the bay;  
 The ship went down like lead.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,  
 Which sky and ocean smote,  
 Like one that hath been seven days drowned  
 My body lay afloat;  
 But swift as dreams, myself I found  
 Within the Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,  
 The boat spun round and round;  
 And all was still, save that the hill  
 Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked  
 And fell down in a fit;  
 The holy Hermit raised his eyes,  
 And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,  
 Who now doth crazy go,  
 Laughed loud and long, and all the while  
 His eyes went to and fro.  
 'Ha! ha!' quoth he, 'full plain I see,  
 The Devil knows how to row.'  
 And now, all in my own countree,

I stood on the firm land!  
 The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,  
 And scarcely he could stand.

'O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!  
 The Hermit crossed his brow.  
 'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee say—  
 What manner of man art thou?'

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched  
 With a woful agony,  
 Which forced me to begin my tale;  
 And then it left me free.

Since then, at an uncertain hour,  
 That agony returns:  
 And till my ghastly tale is told,  
 This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land;  
 I have strange power of speech;  
 That moment that his face I see,  
 I know the man that must hear me:  
 To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door!  
 The wedding-guests are there:  
 But in the garden-bower the bride  
 And bride-maids singing are:  
 And hark the little vesper bell,  
 Which biddeth me to prayer!

O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been  
 Alone on a wide wide sea:  
 So lonely 'twas, that God himself  
 Scarce seemèd there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,  
 'Tis sweeter far to me,  
 To walk together to the kirk  
 With a goodly company!—

To walk together to the kirk,  
 And all together pray,  
 While each to his great Father bends,

Old men, and babes, and loving friends  
And youths and maidens gay!

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell  
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!  
He prayeth well, who loveth well  
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best  
All things both great and small;  
For the dear God who loveth us,  
He made and loveth all.

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,  
Whose beard with age is hoar,  
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest  
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,  
And is of sense forlorn:  
A sadder and a wiser man,  
He rose the morrow morn.

### **An Appreciation of Text 1:**

The poem begins by introducing the **Ancient Mariner**, who, with his “glittering eye,” stops a Wedding Guest from attending a nearby wedding celebration. The Mariner stops the young man to tell him the story of a ship, providing no introduction but simply beginning his tale. Despite the Wedding Guest’s efforts to leave, the Mariner continues to speak.

The Mariner’s story begins with the ship leaving harbor and sailing southward. A tremendous storm then blows the ship even further to the South Pole, where the crew are awed as they encounter mist, snow, cold, and giant glaciers. An **Albatross** breaks the pristine lifelessness of the Antarctic. The sailors greet it as a good omen, and a new wind rises up, propelling the ship. Day after day the albatross appears, appearing in the morning when the sailors call for it, and soaring behind the ship. But then as the other sailor’s cry out in dismay, the Mariner, for reasons unexplained, shoots and kills the albatross with his crossbow.

At first, the other **Sailors** are furious with the Mariner for killing the bird which they believed a god omen and responsible for making the breezes blow. But after the bird has been killed the fog clears and the fair breeze continues, blowing the ship north into the Pacific, and the crew comes to believe the bird was the source of the fog and mist and that the killing is justified. It is then that the wind ceases, and the ship becomes trapped on a vast, calm sea. The Sailors and the Mariner become increasingly thirsty, and some sailors dream that an

angered **Spirit** has followed them from the pole. The crew then hangs the albatross around the Mariner's neck.

In this terrible calm, trapped completely by the watery ocean that they cannot drink, the men on the ship grow so thirsty that they cannot even speak. When the Mariner sees what he believes is a ship approaching, he must bite his arm and drink his own blood so that he is able to alert the crew, who all grin out of joy. But the joy fades as the ghostly ship, which sails without wind, approaches. On its deck, **Death** and **Life-in-Death** gamble with dice for the lives of the Sailors and the Mariner. After Life-in-Death wins the soul of the Mariner, the Sailors begin to die of thirst, falling to the deck one by one, each staring at the Mariner in reproach.

Surrounded by the dead Sailors and cursed continuously by their gaze, the Mariner tries to turn his eyes to heaven to pray, but fails. It is only in the **Moonlight**, after enduring the horror of being the only one alive among the dead crew that the Mariner notices beautiful Water Snakes swimming beside the ship. At this moment he becomes inspired, and has a spiritual realization that all of God's creatures are beautiful and must be treated with respect and reverence. With this realization, he is finally able to pray, and the albatross fell from his neck and sunk into the sea.

The Mariner falls into a kind of stupor, and then wakes to find the dead Sailors' bodies reanimated by angels and at work on the ship. Powered by the Spirit from the South Pole, the ship races homeward, where the Mariner sees a choir of angels leave the bodies of the deceased Sailors. After this angels' chorus, the Mariner perceives a small boat on which a **Pilot**, the **Pilot's Boy**, and a **Hermit** approach. As they get closer, the Mariner's ship suddenly sinks, but he wakes to find himself in the Pilot's boat. When the Mariner speaks, the Pilot and Hermit are stunned, by fear. The Hermit prays. The Mariner, in turn, saves his own saviors, and rows them to land, where he begs the Hermit to grant him absolution for his sins. The Hermit crosses himself, and asks the Mariner "what manner of man art thou?" The Mariner then feels compelled to tell his story.

The Mariner concludes his tale by explaining that as he travels from land to land he is always plagued by that same compulsion to tell his tale, that he experiences a peculiar agony if he doesn't give in to his urge to share the story, and that he can tell just from looking at their faces which men must hear his tale. He ends with the explicit lesson that prayer is the greatest joy in life, and the best prayers come from love and reverence of all of God's creation. Thus he moves onward to find the next person who must hear his story, leaving the Wedding Guest "a sadder and a wiser man."



## **The Gist of Text 2: “The Foster-Mother’s Tale”**

Identified in the subtitle as a “dramatic fragment,” “The Foster-Mother’s Tale” is sourced from Act IV of Coleridge’s 1797 play *Osorio*. Following *Osorio*’s rejection from Drury Lane Theatre in 1797, the play was not performed during Coleridge’s lifetime (*Remorse* V). While the soliloquy presented in “The Dungeon” was included in the revised version of the play re-titled *Remorse*, “The Foster-Mother’s Tale” scene was eliminated. The unrhymed blank verse (or iambic pentameter) metrical form of “The Foster-Mother” reflects its mode as an intimate dialogue between the characters of Maria and her Foster-Mother.

In “The Foster-Mother’s Tale,” the Foster-Mother shares with her foster-daughter, Maria, a story about a boy who is discovered beneath a tree. Plucked from the natural world, the boy rebels against social and religious norms and fails to integrate into society. As punishment, he is confined to a hole. The boy’s eventual escape back to nature redeems him of the immorality he learns in the civilized world.

### **Text 2:**

*Foster-Mother.* I never saw the man whom you describe.

*Maria.* ’Tis strange! he spake of you familiarly  
As mine and Albert’s common Foster-mother.

*Foster-Mother.* Now blessings on the man, whoe’er he be,  
That joined your names with mine! O my sweet lady,  
As often as I think of those dear times  
When you two little ones would stand at eve  
On each side of my chair, and make me learn  
All you had learnt in the day; and how to talk  
In gentle phrase, then bid me sing to you —  
’Tis more like heaven to come than what *has* been!

*Maria.* O my dear Mother! this strange man has left me  
Troubled with wilder fancies, than the moon  
Breeds in the love-sick maid who gazes at it,  
Till lost in inward vision, with wet eye  
She gazes idly! — But that entrance, Mother!

*Foster-Mother.* Can no one hear? It is a perilous tale!

*Maria.* No one.

*Foster-Mother.* My husband’s father told it me,  
Poor old Leoni! — Angels rest his soul!  
He was a woodman, and could fell and saw  
With lusty arm. You know that huge round beam  
Which props the hanging wall of the old Chapel?

Beneath that tree, while yet it was a tree,  
 He found a baby wrapt in mosses, lined  
 With thistle-beards, and such small locks of wool  
 As hang on brambles. Well, he brought him home,  
 And rear'd him at the then Lord Velez' cost.  
 And so the babe grew up a pretty boy,  
 A pretty boy, but most unteachable —  
 And never learnt a prayer, nor told a bead,  
 But knew the names of birds, and mock'd their notes,  
 And whistled, as he were a bird himself:  
 And all the autumn 'twas his only play  
 To get the seeds of wild flowers, and to plant them  
 With earth and water, on the stumps of trees.  
 A Friar, who gather'd simples in the wood,  
 A grey-haired man — he lov'd this little boy,  
 The boy lov'd him — and, when the Friar taught him,  
 He soon could write with the pen: and from that time,  
 Lived chiefly at the Convent or the Castle.  
 So he became a very learned youth.

But Oh! poor wretch! — he read, and read, and read,  
 Till his brain turn'd — and ere his twentieth year,  
 He had unlawful thoughts of many things:  
 And though he prayed, he never lov'd to pray  
 With holy men, nor in a holy place —  
 But yet his speech, it was so soft and sweet,  
 The late Lord Velez ne'er was wearied with him.  
 And once, as by the north side of the Chapel  
 They stood together, chain'd in deep discourse,  
 The earth heav'd under them with such a groan,  
 That the wall totter'd, and had well-nigh fallen  
 Right on their heads. My Lord was sorely frighten'd;  
 A fever seiz'd him, and he made confession  
 Of all the heretical and lawless talk  
 Which brought this judgement: so the youth was seiz'd  
 And cast into that hole. My husband's father  
 Sobb'd like a child — it almost broke his heart:  
 And once as he was working in the cellar,  
 He heard a voice distinctly; 'twas the youth's,  
 Who sung a doleful song about green fields,  
 How sweet it were on lake or wild savannah,  
 To hunt for food, and be a naked man,  
 And wander up and down at liberty.  
 He always doted on the youth, and now

His love grew desperate; and defying death,  
 He made that cunning entrance I describ'd:  
 And the young man escap'd.

*Maria.* 'Tis a sweet tale:  
 Such as would lull a listening child to sleep,  
 His rosy face besoil'd with unwiped tears. —  
 And what became of him?

*Foster-Mother.* He went on shipboard  
 With those bold voyagers, who made discovery  
 Of golden lands. Leoni's younger brother  
 Went likewise, and when he return'd to Spain,  
 He told Leoni, that the poor mad youth,  
 Soon after they arriv'd in that new world,  
 In spite of his dissuasion, seiz'd a boat,  
 And all alone, set sail by silent moonlight  
 Up a great river, great as any sea,  
 And ne'er was heard of more: but 'tis suppos'd,  
 He liv'd and died among the savage men.

## **An Appreciation of Text 2:**

To contextualize this dramatic fragment within the entirety of Coleridge's *Osorio*, the play from which it derives, the Foster-Mother's story about this youth who is ultimately imprisoned for failing to adhere to social norms elicits Maria's sympathy for the plight of an incarcerated stranger (who is actually Albert, her love interest and foster-brother, in disguise) and precipitates their reunion at the end of the play.

Knowledge is a central theme of the Foster-Mother's story, which makes up the majority of the dramatic fragment. The Foster-Mother recounts to Maria a tale in which Leoni, "a woodman," discovers a child "wrapt in mosses" beneath a tree (22). The child displays an innate knowledge of the natural world, mimicking bird songs and planting gardens with "seeds of wild flowers" (32). A knowledge of nature is prized throughout *Lyrical Ballads*, but draws a particular connection to the poetic philosophy espoused in Coleridge's "The Nightingale" that involves first an observation of the natural world, followed by an imaginative transformation of these perceptions. Wordsworth's "Expostulation and Reply" also idealizes a knowledge of the natural world over book learning. Yet, in the seemingly European society presented in the Foster-Mother's story, the child's knowledge of nature is unappreciated. The child is only considered "learned" once he acquires the skills to read and write (39).

Even so, the youth cultivates "unlawful thoughts" (42) and even participates in "heretical and lawless talk" after he is educated by a Friar, using his new knowledge to question social

structures rather than conform to them (53). The moment in which “the earth [heaves]” after the boy verbalizes his opposition to religious and legal conventions seemingly suggests his danger to civilization (49). However, the Foster-Mother reminds both Maria and readers that they access these circumstances through her retelling of a story that she first hears from her “husband’s father” (16). The quaking earth then could merely be the supernatural fantasy of superstitious citizens who attempt to validate the threat the youth poses to previously stable social structures. This supernatural mythology about the boy’s social rebellion parallels the townspeople’s superstitious tales about Martha Ray and the death of her infant in Wordsworth’s “The Thorn.”

The creation and destruction of familial bonds is also of thematic importance in the dramatic fragment. The boy gains paternal figures in Leoni the woodman, the Friar, and Lord Velez, men from various social classes and religious groups. Leoni and Velez are purported to “love” and “ne’er be wearied” of the boy (46); when Leoni raises the boy at “Lord Velez’ cost,” the two men provide emotional and financial support that aligns with their respective working class and aristocratic positions (55). The Friar’s evidently religion-based teachings are similarly presented as penultimate acts of “love” (55). Even so, their paternal love relegates the boy to the domestic spaces of the “Convent or Castle,” cutting him off from nature (38).

Lord Velez’s care cannot surmount his desire to maintain the religious and legal conventions that the boy threatens to disrupt. Accordingly, Lord Velez sentences the boy to be confined to a “hole” once he does not conform to his own beliefs (55). The boy’s imprisonment parallels his previous relegation to the interior spaces of the Convent and Castle, emphasizing the confining effects of the civilized world.

The Friar and the aristocratic Lord Velez effectively facilitate the boy’s conformity to conventional beliefs about religion and law. Neither of these men attempt to help the youth once he is imprisoned. However, the dramatic fragment offers a favorable conception of the working classes through Leoni, whose assistance in the boy’s escape and return to nature denotes that his “love” ultimately triumphs over that of the Friar and Lord Velez (57). Similarly, Leoni’s position as a woodman, a modest land worker whose employment is tied to nature, is elevated above the other men’s religious and aristocratic statuses. Leoni’s link to nature strengthens his paternal love.

Like “The Dungeon” and Wordsworth’s “The Convict,” “The Foster-Mother” illustrates that nature rather than “prayer” has the capacity to redeem immorality (55). A Rousseauvian pastoral idealization is also most explicitly illustrated in the poem when the youth fantasizes of his return to nature as “a naked man” who can “hunt” and “wander” with “liberty” that resolves the constraints and tumult of his experience within society (61-62).



The uncertainty of the youth's fate at the end of the tale, beyond that he "lived and died among the savage men" (81) in the forests of Spain, speaks to the ultimate separation between corrupt European society and the idealized natural world.



### **The Gist of Text 3: "The Nightingale: A Conversational Poem"**

In this conversation poem, Coleridge is the speaker and the two people he addresses, and who are the silent listeners of the poem, are William Wordsworth and Dorothy Wordsworth. Dorothy was William's sister, but in the poem, Coleridge refers to Dorothy as his sister as well. Coleridge, William and Dorothy have gone to sit by a stream on a mossy bridge at nighttime. The three are simply observing the beauty of nature at night and Coleridge brings their attention to the singing of a nightingale. Coleridge explains to his two companions how the nightingale came to be known as a melancholy bird. He supposes that a broken-hearted man wandered through the woods one night and upon hearing the bird's song, the man projected his own emotions upon Nature and the nightingale and "made all gentle sounds tell back the tale/ Of his own sorrow."

Coleridge remarks on the absurdity of calling anything in nature melancholy. Likewise, he expresses his disdain for how "many a poet echoes the conceit" of making nature representative of dark human emotions in poetry. Coleridge claims that if such poets took the time to observe and absorb the beauty of their natural surroundings, then they would create poems that reflect nature's loveliness. However, Coleridge doubts that most poets will ever have such an experience, since most young men and women entertain themselves indoors on the most beautiful nights. In contrast to the majority of young people, Coleridge tells William and Dorothy that they three have a true appreciation for nature and they "may not thus profane/ Nature's sweet voices, always full of love/ And joyance!" Likewise, Coleridge and his companions can interpret the Nightingale's song as joyous and not as melancholy.

Coleridge then describes to his two companions a grove by an abandoned castle in which a large number of nightingales flock at night. He vividly describes the joyous sounds of the birds' songs, such as "murmurs musical" and an onomatopoeic "swift jug jug" that resembles the actual sounds the birds make. According to Coleridge, the sounds of the nightingales in this grove are so beautiful that if a person were to close his eyes, he would feel that he is dreaming. Coleridge notes that he is not the only person who listens to the beauty of these nightingales' songs. He has seen a young woman who lives near the castle come to the grove to watch and listen to the birds as well.

Finally, Coleridge tells his friends that they "have been loitering long and pleasantly" and that it is time to head home and to say farewell to each other and the nightingale. Before the companions part, Coleridge remarks how much his infant son would love the nightingale's song. Coleridge explains how he has instilled a love for nature in his son and that he "[deems] it wise/ To make him Nature's play-mate." He claims on a night when his son had trouble

sleeping, the infant calmed down after gazing at the moon. Coleridge wishes for his son to grow to love the nightingale's song, so "that with the night/ He may associate joy" and not believe the common association between nature and melancholy.

**Text 3:**

No cloud, no relique of the sunken day  
 Distinguishes the West, no long thin slip  
 Of sullen Light, no obscure trembling hues.  
 Come, we will rest on this old mossy Bridge!  
 You see the glimmer of the stream beneath,  
 But hear no murmuring: it flows silently  
 O'er its soft bed of verdure. All is still,  
 A balmy night! and tho' the stars be dim,  
 Yet let us think upon the vernal showers  
 That gladden the green earth, and we shall find  
 A pleasure in the dimness of the stars.  
 And hark! the Nightingale begins its song,  
 "Most musical, most melancholy" Bird!  
 A melancholy Bird? O idle thought!  
 In nature there is nothing melancholy.  
 —But some night-wandering Man, whose heart was pierc'd  
 With the remembrance of a grievous wrong,  
 Or slow distemper or neglected love,  
 (And so, poor Wretch! fill'd all things with himself  
 And made all gentle sounds tell back the tale  
 Of his own sorrows) he and such as he  
 First nam'd these notes a melancholy strain;  
 And many a poet echoes the conceit,  
 Poet, who hath been building up the rhyme  
 When he had better far have stretch'd his limbs  
 Beside a brook in mossy forest-dell  
 By sun or moonlight, to the influxes  
 Of shapes and sounds and shifting elements  
 Surrendering his whole spirit, of his song  
 And of his fame forgetful! so his fame  
 Should share in nature's immortality,  
 A venerable thing! and so his song  
 Should make all nature lovelier, and itself  
 Be lov'd, like nature!—But 'twill not be so;  
 And youths and maidens most poetical  
 Who lose the deep'ning twilights of the spring  
 In ball-rooms and hot theatres, they still  
 Full of meek sympathy must heave their sighs

O'er Philomela's pity-pleading strains.  
 My Friend, and my Friend's Sister! we have learnt  
 A different lore: we may not thus profane  
 Nature's sweet voices always full of love  
 And joyance! 'Tis the merry Nightingale  
 That crowds, and hurries, and precipitates  
 With fast thick warble his delicious notes,  
 As he were fearful, that an April night  
 Would be too short for him to utter forth  
 His love-chant, and disburthen his full soul  
 Of all its music! And I know a grove  
 Of large extent, hard by a castle huge  
 Which the great lord inhabits not: and so  
 This grove is wild with tangling underwood,  
 And the trim walks are broken up, and grass,  
 Thin grass and king-cups grow within the paths.  
 But never elsewhere in one place I knew  
 So many Nightingales: and far and near  
 In wood and thicket over the wide grove  
 They answer and provoke each other's songs—  
 With skirmish and capricious passagings,  
 And murmurs musical and swift jug jug  
 And one low piping sound more sweet than all—  
 Stirring the air with such an harmony,  
 That should you close your eyes, you might almost  
 Forget it was not day! On moonlight bushes,  
 Whose dewy leaflets are but half disclos'd,  
 You may perchance behold them on the twigs,  
 Their bright, bright eyes, their eyes both bright and full,  
 Glistning, while many a glow-worm in the shade  
 Lights up her love-torch.

A most gentle maid  
 Who dwelleth in her hospitable home  
 Hard by the Castle, and at latest eve,  
 (Even like a Lady vow'd and dedicate  
 To something more than nature in the grove)  
 Glides thro' the pathways; she knows all their notes,  
 That gentle Maid! and oft, a moment's space,  
 What time the moon was lost behind a cloud,  
 Hath heard a pause of silence: till the Moon  
 Emerging, hath awaken'd earth and sky  
 With one sensation, and those wakeful Birds  
 Have all burst forth in choral minstrelsy,

As if one quick and sudden Gale had swept  
 An hundred airy harps! And she hath watch'd  
 Many a Nightingale perch giddily  
 On blosmy twig still swinging from the breeze,  
 And to that motion tune his wanton song,  
 Like tipsy Joy that reels with tossing head.

Farewell, O Warbler! till to-morrow eve,  
 And you, my friends! farewell, a short farewell!  
 We have been loitering long and pleasantly,  
 And now for our dear homes.—That strain again!  
 Full fain it would delay me!—My dear Babe,  
 Who, capable of no articulate sound,  
 Mars all things with his imitative lisp,  
 How he would place his hand beside his ear,  
 His little hand, the small forefinger up,  
 And bid us listen! And I deem it wise  
 To make him Nature's playmate. He knows well  
 The evening star: and once when he awoke  
 In most distressful mood (some inward pain  
 Had made up that strange thing, an infant's dream)  
 I hurried with him to our orchard plot,  
 And he beholds the moon, and hush'd at once  
 Suspends his sobs, and laughs most silently,  
 While his fair eyes that swam with undropt tears  
 Did glitter in the yellow moon-beam! Well—  
 It is a father's tale. But if that Heaven  
 Should give me life, his childhood shall grow up  
 Familiar with these songs, that with the night  
 He may associate Joy! Once more farewell,  
 Sweet Nightingale! once more, my friends! farewell.

### **An Appreciation of Text 3:**

One of the most important elements of “The Nightingale” is Coleridge’s conveyance of his friendships with William and Dorothy Wordsworth. For instance, in “Coleridge the Revisionary: Surrogacy and Structure in the Conversation Poems,” Peter Barry notes how Coleridge uses the lord of the abandoned castle, the maiden who listens to the nightingales and the nightingales themselves as metaphorical representations of the poet’s personal and literary relationships with the Wordsworths: “The great Lord and the gentle Maid are clearly in some sense avatars of William and Dorothy, and the nightingales which ‘answer and provoke each other’s song’ are Coleridge and Wordsworth, often writing for each other, working on common themes, sending each other poem’s for comment” (614).

The theme of man and nature as separate entities in "The Nightingale" mirrors the speaker's sentiments in "Dejection: An Ode." In "The Nightingale," Coleridge expresses disdain for the poets who project their own feelings onto Nature. If humans are responsible for their own souls and emotions - as is held in "Dejection" - and we can't hold nature responsible for creating our happiness, then by the same token we shouldn't expect nature to have to possess our sadness as well.

Similar to "Frost at Midnight," Coleridge once again expresses his desire to instill a love for nature in his young son. According to Timothy P. Enright in "Sing, Mariner: Identity and Temporality in Coleridge's 'The Nightingale,'" the poet "peremptorily decides to equate his son with nature because that would not only elide the issue of imitation, but render both him and his son unlike the 'wandering Man'...who roam[s] apart, allied to something out of nature" (498). Coleridge could also have such a determination to teach his son to love nature because the poet associates the innocence and happiness of childhood with the beauty and innocence of nature. In other words, because Coleridge considers the unhappy parts of his latter boyhood and his young adulthood to be the period in which he was confined to the city and longed for the countryside, the poet thinks that a child can only be happy if he is surrounded by the beauty of nature.

This contrast between Natural joy and urban sorrow is addressed in the title-bird of the poem. The speaker quotes another's view that the nightingale is a "most musical, most melancholy bird" but then immediately declares this an "idle thought!" To him, "In nature there is nothing melancholy." In fact, the nightingale's song should make all Nature lovelier, and itself/Be loved like Nature!" However, the speaker realizes that in the popular conception of the bird, this will not happen; since "youths and maidens most poetical" insist on finding their delight in the "ball-rooms and hot theaters" of the city, the nightingale's song will seldom be heard. When it is heard, it will be a reminder that the night draws to a close and therefore be a sign of sorrow to the young people, rather than the harbinger of Nature that it is meant to be.

Coleridge/the speaker rejoices, however that his friend (William Wordsworth) and that friend's sister (Dorothy Wordsworth) have "learned a different lore." They will not be fooled into adopting the attitudes of others, but will instead appreciate the nightingale and all of Nature as it should be properly appreciated. To this end he directs their thoughts (if not their steps) to a "grove/Of a large extent, hard by a castle huge," invoking both Nature and a longing for the past at the same time. Of that ancient place, the speaker remarks that "never elsewhere in one place I knew/So many nightingales." Rather than bow to the melancholy perspective on the single nightingale's song, Coleridge insists the trio surround themselves with a multitude of nightingales in order to get the full effect of their joyful warbling.

Coleridge ends by bidding farewell both to the nightingale ("O warbler!") and to the Wordsworths ("And you, my friends!"), juxtaposing the two as he would juxtapose all of mankind and Nature. He returns home to his "dear babe," whom he reflects (as in "Frost at Midnight") will hopefully have a greater appreciation for Nature than even his father does. He intends to imbue in his son a love of all things natural, to "make him Nature's playmate"

so that he will be a more whole human being, much more conscious of the beauty around him than those aforementioned youths whose only beauty is in one another's eyes.



### **The Gist of Text 4: “The Dungeon”**

The speaker in “The Dungeon” creates a narrative about the experience of a single unnamed prisoner that is representative of a larger experience of incarceration. In the poem, the speaker is also not identified. However, contextualizing “The Dungeon” as a soliloquy from Coleridge’s 1797 play *Osorio* clarifies that the character of Albert is the speaker. Albert conducts his soliloquy while he is unjustly imprisoned for attempting to reveal Osorio’s murder plot. However, the theme of his soliloquy involves a more general rather than personal denunciation of the penal system.

#### **Text 4:**

And this place our forefathers made for man!  
 This is the process of our love and wisdom,  
 To each poor brother who offends against us-  
 Most innocent, perhaps-and what if guilty?  
 Is this the only cure? Merciful God!  
 Each pore and natural outlet shrivelled up  
 By Ignorance and parching Poverty,  
 His energies roll back upon his heart,  
 And stagnate and corrupt; till changed to poison,  
 They break out on him, like a loathsome plague-spot;  
 Then we call in our pampered mountebanks-  
 And this is their best cure! uncomforted  
 And friendless solitude, groaning and tears,  
 And savage faces, at the clanking hour,  
 Seen through the steam and vapours of his dungeon,  
 By the lamp's dismal twilight! So he lies  
 Circled with evil, till his very soul  
 Unmoulds its essence, hopelessly deformed  
 By sights of ever more deformity!

With other ministrations thou, O Nature!  
 Healest thy wandering and distempered child:  
 Thou pourest on him thy soft influences,  
 Thy sunny hues, fair forms, and breathing sweets,  
 Thy melodies of woods, and winds, and waters,  
 Till he relent, and can no more endure  
 To be a jarring and a dissonant thing

Amid this general dance and minstrelsy;  
 But, bursting into tears, wins back his way,  
 His angry spirit healed and harmonized  
 By the benignant touch of Love and Beauty.

#### **An Appreciation of Text 4:**

With reference to the “dungeon,” the speaker suggests that the penal system is more criminal than the prisoner it confines. Regardless of whether the prisoner is “guilty” or “innocent,” he is not imagined as the object of corruption (4). He is rather “circled with evil” within the prison’s walls (17). This prison corrodes his already “hopelessly deformed” soul with “sights of ever more deformity” (18). The poem invokes the auditory and visual desolation of incarceration with reference to sight-obscuring “steams and vapour” and a din of “groaning” (13) and “clanking” (14). Such sensorial references juxtapose the sights and sounds of nature with its “sunny hues” (23) and “melodies of woods” (24).

The speaker turns to “man” and “Merciful God” (5) to reform the suffering of the prisoner. Moreover, nature’s “benignant touch of love and beauty” offers a better “cure” for the prisoner’s criminality than the socially-sanctioned penal system (30). The speaker’s personification of the inclusive and loving “touch” of nature suggests that society does not treat the prisoner with comparable human compassion. Religious redemption too is markedly absent. Nature’s capacity to reform the prisoner draws obvious parallels to the theme of Wordsworth’s “The Convict.”

The speaker asserts that society is intended to show an inclusive “love” and “wisdom” to its convicts (2). Moreover, he implies that all of society is complicit in the mistreatment of its prisoners. The speaker underscores prisoners’ individuality and humanity, referring to them as “each poor brother” (3). Prisoners are not merely a faceless mass, hidden within the prison’s walls. By referring to them as family, the speaker localizes their suffering for the reader.

Like “The Foster-Mother’s Tale,” “The Dungeon” is sourced from Coleridge’s 1797 play *Osorio*. However, in *Lyrical Ballads*, “The Dungeon” is presented without the “dramatic fragment” subtitle that appears in “The Foster-Mother’s Tale.” As “The Dungeon” is based upon a soliloquy, it does not bear the characteristics of a play text, such as the speaker names that appear in “The Foster-Mother,” that necessitate its identification as a dramatic fragment.

When Coleridge rewrote and re-titled his play as *Remorse* (1813), this soliloquy remained in Act V (61-2). Coleridge did however change the name of the soliloquist from Albert to Don Alvar (*Remorse* 61).

The soliloquy's unrhymed blank verse (iambic pentameter) metrical form reflects its earnest protest of prisoner mistreatment.



### **The Gist of Text 5: "Love"**

The poem "Love" is one of Coleridge's most interesting and beautiful love poems. It is written in the form of a ballad and describes a story within a story. The poem's composition was originally involved with that of the 'Tale of the Dark Ladie', to which it was to have been an introduction. Genevieve, the beloved in this poem, is a creature of the poet's imagination, though some critics identify her with the daughter of the poet's school-nurse.

The poet had a great love for Genevieve. Once in the evening time, when the moon was climbing up the sky, he lay midway on a hill beside a ruined tower. He quite often recollects that happy time. The moonlight was slowly and stealthily spreading over the scene. And in such a beautiful and romantic atmosphere the poet's beloved, Genevieve, was also present and enhancing its beauty. She leaned against the statue of an armed Knight. She stood there in this manner and listened to the poet who began to play on his harp and sing an old song in the lingering twilight.

Genevieve was perfectly innocent and happy in her life. She had no sorrows of her own. But she was full of tender feelings of sympathy for others' sorrows, and therefore loved the poet best whenever he sang sorrowful songs before her. The poet played a sweet and sorrowful tune, and sang an old song which described a very pathetic and moving story. Though she listened to his song with a flitting blush and downcast eyes, she was all the time conscious that the poet was gazing at her face.

The poet now begins to sing the pathetic story of a Knight who carried the mark of a burning torch on his shield. He had a deep love for a lady who rejected his love. For ten long years he continued to love that lady, but that lady always treated him with a cruel scorn. He pined in her love. The poet narrated the story of that knight in deep, low and pleading tone and thus expressed his own love for Genevieve. Genevieve continued to listen to his song intently and forgave him for gazing too lovingly on her face. This is the first indication that Genevieve begins to yield to the poet's love.

The Knight had a deep love for the lady, but she did not care for him. Her cruel scorn towards him drove him mad. He left his home and wandered into the lonely woods, without taking any rest day and night. A fiend in the shape of a beautiful angel came there and tried to tempt the knight. But the knight immediately realized that it was a fiend not an angel, and did not yield to temptation. He remained firm and constant in his love for that lady.

Once that lady accidentally fell into the hands of some ruffians who wanted to molest her. The knight saw it and heroically saved that lady from the clutches of those ruffians. When that lady saw that her rejected lover had risked his life and saved her from the worst dishonor, she repented for her past cruelty towards him. She nursed him day and night and tried to remove that scorn from his mind which had driven him mad. But it was too late. She could



not save him. All her efforts proved useless. His madness, however, went away and his senses returned to him when he lay a dying man on the yellow forest leaves.

The poet now reaches the most pathetic part of the story-the last words of that knight spoken to that lady just before his death but he could not narrate it immediately. His voice faltered and his harp stopped. The soul of Genevieve was also disturbed with pity. She felt hopes and fears which came into her mind in so quick a succession that one might be taken to have caused the other. She even gave expression to her feelings of love for the poet which she was cherishing and concealing for a long time. Now she could not control herself, or suppress her feelings. She wept with pity and delight. She blushed at expressing her love for him, and felt the shyness befitting a virgin. The poet heard her speak out his name slowly and faintly.

Genevieve started breathing heavily and quickly with intense passion. Her bosom rose and fell. Then she became conscious that the poet was gazing at her and she stepped aside. Her virgin modesty would not allow her to yield so quickly. But her love proved too strong to be controlled at the moment and she rushed towards him, fear in her eyes and began to weep. Then she almost enclosed him in her arms, and gently hugged him. She bent her head back and gazed upon his face. Her look expressed partly the feeling of love and fear, and partly a maiden's artifice, or a trick of the eyes to show love. She did not allow the poet to see, but the poet felt that her bosom was heaving against his heart. In this manner she expressed her love for the poet. But she was still afraid. The poet removed her fears and comforted her. She was then assured and felt easy in her mind. She then expressed her love for him more openly, but with virgin pride. And in this manner the poet won Genevieve, his bright and beautiful bride. The story of that miserable knight made him win the love of Genevieve. The poet sang of another's love to express his own love for his beloved, and ultimately succeed in winning love. Thus, the poem ends on a happy note.

### **Text 5:**

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,  
 Whatever stirs this mortal frame,  
 All are but ministers of Love,  
 And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I  
 Live o'er again that happy hour,  
 When midway on the mount I lay,  
 Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene  
 Had blended with the lights of eve;  
 And she was there, my hope, my joy,  
 My own dear Genevieve!

She leant against the arm'd man,  
 The statue of the arm'd knight;  
 She stood and listened to my lay,  
 Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,  
My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!  
She loves me best, whene'er I sing  
The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air,  
I sang an old and moving story—  
An old rude song, that suited well  
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,  
With downcast eyes and modest grace;  
For well she knew, I could not choose  
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore  
Upon his shield a burning brand;  
And that for ten long years he wooed  
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined: and ah!  
The deep, the low, the pleading tone  
With which I sang another's love,  
Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,  
With downcast eyes, and modest grace;  
And she forgave me, that I gazed  
Too fondly on her face!

But when I told the cruel scorn  
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,  
And that he crossed the mountain-woods,  
Nor rested day nor night;

That sometimes from the savage den,  
And sometimes from the darksome shade,  
And sometimes starting up at once  
In green and sunny glade,—

There came and looked him in the face  
An angel beautiful and bright;  
And that he knew it was a Fiend,  
This miserable Knight!

And that unknowing what he did,  
He leaped amid a murderous band,  
And saved from outrage worse than death  
The Lady of the Land!

And how she wept, and clasped his knees;  
 And how she tended him in vain—  
 And ever strove to expiate  
 The scorn that crazed his brain;—

And that she nursed him in a cave;  
 And how his madness went away,  
 When on the yellow forest-leaves  
 A dying man he lay;—

His dying words—but when I reached  
 That tenderest strain of all the ditty,  
 My faltering voice and pausing harp  
 Disturbed her soul with pity!

All impulses of soul and sense  
 Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve;  
 The music and the doleful tale,  
 The rich and balmy eve;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,  
 An undistinguishable throng,  
 And gentle wishes long subdued,  
 Subdued and cherished long!

She wept with pity and delight,  
 She blushed with love, and virgin-shame;  
 And like the murmur of a dream,  
 I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved—she stepped aside,  
 As conscious of my look she stepped—  
 Then suddenly, with timorous eye  
 She fled to me and wept.

She half enclosed me with her arms,  
 She pressed me with a meek embrace;  
 And bending back her head, looked up,  
 And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,  
 And partly 'twas a bashful art,  
 That I might rather feel, than see,  
 The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,  
 And told her love with virgin pride;  
 And so I won my Genevieve,  
 My bright and beauteous Bride.

### **An Appreciation of Text 5:**

The time old cliché “It is better to have loved and lost to have never loved at all” is the foundation for Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s “Love,” as the narrator tells a tale within a tale about the perplexing idea of love’s ever-changing emotions that range from either extreme of joy and sorrow. The format of the poem set up by Coleridge in 24 quatrains, makes it simpler to witness the effect the story the narrator tells his beloved has on his life. Coleridge’s use of setting, word choice, and metaphors emphasize how this event has forever changed the course of the narrator’s life.

The first two quatrains are essential because Coleridge uses them to introduce the narrator and essential details about his opinion on love. Before actually acknowledging his lover, the narrator defines what love is to create a basis for this tale. He describes it as “all thoughts, all passions, all delights,” (line 1) which are nothing “but ministers of Love,” (line 3). There are many words within these two lines that present significance, one being “all,” nothing is omitted, everything is included whether it be passionate jealousy or romantic delights. This is Coleridge’s way of implementing that love includes all forms of feeling, not only the noble ones. The second one being “ministers,” conceivably a foreshadowing to reveal the purpose of the anecdote the narrator tells to his love. It is apparent after the second quatrain that what is following is a memory for “oft in [his] waking dreams [does he]/ Live o’er again that happy hour, /When midway on the mount [he] lay[s] /Beside the ruined tower.” He from time to time relives this certain memory because it makes him feel the same as he was in that moment.

Lines 9 to 12, the narrator presents his beloved Genevieve and the setting with which they both exist, one with “the moonshine” which was “blended with the lights of eve,” a very euphoric and romantic description. His love enjoys when he sings the “songs that make her grieve” (line 20). The narrator concedes to this wish and “played a soft and doleful air,” which is an odd way of mentioning that he’d do anything to make her happy. This is one of the songs that show his love for her, a second is by defining how striking her physical features are to him, “she knew [he] could not choose/ But gaze upon her face,” (line 28). He starts to tell the story of the Knight and “that for ten long years he wooed/ The Lady of the Land,” which puts an emphasis on how much this story parallels his own love for Genevieve. During this story, he “told her how he pined-“ (line 33) and the narrator most certainly identifies with the Knight as he writes “With which I sang another’s love, / Interpreted my own,” (line 34-35). It is important to note that the “K” in “Knight” is capitalized, it is most likely a metaphor for the narrator since he feels the same passion as the Knight, the intense love for another and doing anything for them as later mentioned, “And that unknowing what he did,/ He leaped amid a murderous band, /And saved from outrage worse than death / The Lady of the Land!” (line 49-52).

The Knight went as far as to commit murder to save the woman he loved. In the narration it is learned that the Knight is hurt during the fight to save his love and she is trying to cure him

back to health, although he is fatally injured. As the narrator is telling Genevieve what “His dying words” (line 65) were, she stops enjoying the story because it “Disturbed her soul with pity!” (line 68). Understandably, this is a powerful physical reaction to hearing a loved one die. Since the Knight metaphorically stands for the narrator, she cannot stand the idea of his death, she “fled to [him] and wept” (line 84). However she did not weep immediately, she wept after “stepp[ing] aside/ As conscious of [his] look” (line 82) then suddenly she runs to him and cries. This scene is the most significant of the entire poem because it demonstrates that thinking of his death influenced by the Knights’ makes Genevieve question whether she wants to be with him if she is just going to lose him one day. So she “stepped aside,” but flees back to him with a “timorous eye” (line 82), with fear she returns and rather be with him and lose him than to not have him at all.

By the end of the poem Genevieve overwhelmingly shows her adoration for him, “enclosed [him] with her arms, / press[ing] [him] with a meek embrace,/And, bending back her head, looked up/ And gazed upon [his] face,” (lines 85-88) she is clearly content with her choice of staying with him. Another aspect of love is showed in the preceding line, “that I might rather feel, than see,/ The swelling of her heart” (line 92), it is imperative to be able to feel a loved one’s pain rather than merely watching them go through suffering on their own. She is sharing the fear of losing him with her, and as they both experience this feeling they know they could not live without one another. The last two lines wrap up the story within a story with a nostalgic conclusion, this is the moment they fell in love as he “calmed her fears, and she was calm,/ And told her love with virgin pride-/And so [he] won [his] Genevieve,/ [His] bright and beauteous bride” (lines 93-96).

##

## from UNIT – 4

### John Ruskin: *Sesame and Lilies*

#### Introduction:

**John Ruskin**, (born February 8, 1819, London, England—died January 20, 1900, Coniston, Lancashire), English critic of art, architecture, and society who was a gifted painter, a distinctive prose stylist, and an important example of the Victorian Sage, or Prophet: a writer of polemical prose who seeks to cause widespread cultural and social change.

In 1843 Ruskin published the first volume of *Modern Painters*, a book that would eventually consist of five volumes and occupy him for the next 17 years. Three years later, in the second volume of *Modern Painters* (1846), Ruskin would specifically distinguish this strenuously ethical or Theoretic conception of art from the Aesthetic, undidactic, or **art-for-art's sake** definition that would be its great rival in the second half of the 19th century. In 1856 he published the third and fourth volumes of *Modern Painters*, with their penetrating inquiry into the reasons for the predominance of landscape painting in 19th-century art and their invention of the important critical term “**pathetic fallacy**.”

In 1848, newly married to Euphemia (Effie) Gray, Ruskin went on a honeymoon tour of the Gothic churches of northern France and began to write his first major book on buildings, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849). Conceived in the disturbing context of the European revolutions of 1848, the book lays down seven moral principles (or “Lamps”) to guide architectural practice.

*The Stones of Venice* was published in three volumes, one in 1851 and two more in 1853. In part it is a laboriously researched history of Venetian architecture, based on long months of direct study of the original buildings, then in a condition of serious neglect and decay.

*Unto This Last* and *Munera Pulveris* (1862 and 1872 as books, though published in magazines in 1860 and 1862–63) are attacks on the classical economics of Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill.

*Sesame and Lilies* (1865) would become notorious in the late 20th century as a stock example of Victorian male chauvinism. In fact, Ruskin was using the conventional construction of the feminine, as pacific, altruistic, and uncompetitive, to articulate yet another symbolic assertion of his anticapitalist social model.

*The Crown of Wild Olive* (1866, enlarged in 1873) collects some of the best specimens of Ruskin's Carlylean manner, notably the lecture “Traffic” of 1864, which memorably draws its audience's attention to the hypocrisy manifested by their choice of Gothic architecture for their churches but Neoclassical designs for their homes.

In *The Queen of the Air* (1869) he attempted to express his old concept of a divine power in Nature in new terms calculated for an age in which assent to the Christian faith was no longer automatic or universal. Through an account of the Greek myth of Athena, Ruskin sought to suggest an enduring human need for—and implicit recognition of—the supernatural authority on which the moral stresses of his artistic, political, and cultural views depend.

Ruskin's appointment as Slade Professor of Fine Art at Oxford in 1870 was a welcome encouragement at a troubled stage of his career, and in the following year he launched *Fors Clavigera*, a one-man **monthly magazine** in which, from 1871 to 1878 and 1880 to 1884 he developed his idiosyncratic cultural theories. Like his successive series of Oxford lectures (1870–79 and 1883–84), *Fors* is an unpredictable mixture of striking insights, powerful rhetoric, self-indulgence, bigotry, and occasional incoherence.

Ruskin wrote his last major work: his **autobiography**, *Praeterita* (1885–89). Unfinished, shamelessly partial (it omits, for example, all mention of his marriage), and chronologically untrustworthy, it provides a subtle and memorable history of the growth of Ruskin's distinctive sensibility.

### **The Gist of the Text:**

John Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies*, first published in **1865**, stands as a classic 19th-century statement on the natures and duties of men and women. It consisted of **two lectures**: “Of Kings’ Treasuries” and “Of Queens’ Gardens”. “**Of Kings’ Treasuries**” was delivered on December 6<sup>th</sup>, 1864, at Rusholme Town Hall, Manchester, in aid of a library fund for the Rusholme Institute. The central theme is books: how and what to read. ‘**Sesame**’ is the key to the royal treasure-house of books and the magic grain of education that will unlock the wisdom contained in them. The second lecture, “**Of Queens’ Gardens**”, was delivered about a week later (on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 1864) at the Town Hall, King Street, Manchester, now the free Reference Library, in aid of the St Andrew’s Schools. The main subject is therefore education, the education of women, and so Ruskin discusses ‘why women should read’. It is woman's function to be Queen of her Garden, like the **lily**, the symbol of beauty and purity.

In “Of Kings’ Treasuries”, Ruskin critiques Victorian manhood, and in “Of Queens’ Gardens”, he counsels women to take their places as the moral guides of men and urges the parents of girls to educate them to this end. Feminist critics of the 1960s and 1970s regarded “Of Queens’ Gardens” as an exemplary expression of repressive Victorian ideas about femininity, and they paired it with **John Stuart Mill**'s more progressive “Subjection of Women”.

Ruskin's **third lecture**, “**The Mystery of Life and Its Arts**,” delivered to the Royal College of Science in Dublin, 1868, was appended, along with a Preface, by the author in his **1871 (3<sup>rd</sup>) edition** of *Sesame and Lilies*.

The first begins with an enquiry into what it means to "advance in life." Ruskin wants to redefine the idea of advancement, which in Victorian self-help culture was normally limited to improving one's financial and social position, to include cultivation of the mind and spirit by reading great literature. He gives several examples, beginning with an extended analysis of a passage from Milton's "Lycidas." Ruskin believes that the mental possession of such great works makes every man a king with a treasury in his mind.

In the second lecture, Ruskin considers the position of women in education. He regards this as the cultivation of culture, educating the young, and being the moral and spiritual guides of men. Again, he gives various examples from literature, beginning with Shakespeare and observing that "Shakespeare has no heroes—he has only heroines." Ruskin sees the women in Shakespeare's plays as a pattern for womanhood in general, and commends women to emulate them by steering the men the love in the right direction and mitigating the effects of their folly.

The final lecture, which was delivered some years after the first two, explores the mysterious effects of literature on those who pay attention to it. Ruskin uses the refrain "Is not this a mystery of life?" as he describes the powerful effects of certain well-known passages. He then cautions against too much analysis of these effects: "The moment a man can really do his work he becomes speechless about it. All words become idle to him—all theories. Does a bird need to theorize about building its nest, or boast of it when built?" The lecture then examines ways of appreciating art without dissecting it, or needing to understand it too thoroughly.

### Excerpts from the Text:

#### from "Of Kings' Treasuries"

You shall each have a cake of sesame — and ten pound.  
— LUCIAN: *The Fisherman*

My first duty this evening is to ask your pardon for **the ambiguity of title** under which the subject of lecture has been announced: for indeed I am not going to talk of kings, known as regnant, **nor of treasuries**, understood to contain wealth; but of quite another order of royalty, and another material of riches, than those usually acknowledged. [. . .] will take the slight mask off at once, and tell you plainly that I want to speak to you **about the treasures hidden in books**; and about the way we find them, and the way we lose them.

Practically, then, at present, "**advancement in life**" means, becoming conspicuous in life; — obtaining a position which shall be acknowledged by others to be respectable or honourable. We do not understand by this advancement in general, the mere making of money, but the being known to have made it; not the accomplishment of any great aim, but the being seen to have accomplished it. In a word, we mean the gratification of our thirst for applause.



For all **books are divisible into two classes**, the books **of the hour**, and the books **of all time**. Mark this distinction — it is not one of quality only. It is not merely the bad book that does not last, and the good one that does. It is a distinction of species. There are **good books for the hour**, and **good ones for all time**; **bad books for the hour**, and **bad ones for all time**.

**The good book of the hour**, then — I do not speak of the bad ones — is simply the useful or pleasant talk of some person whom you cannot otherwise converse with, printed for you. Very useful often, telling you what you need to know; very pleasant often, as a sensible friend's present talk would be. These bright accounts **of travels**; good-humoured and **witty discussions of question**; lively or pathetic story-telling in the form **of novel**; firm fact-telling, by the real agents concerned in the events of passing history; all these books of the hour, multiplying among us as education becomes more general, are a peculiar possession of the present age; we ought to be entirely thankful for them, and entirely ashamed of ourselves if we make no good use of them. But we make the worst possible use if we allow them to usurp the place of true books: for strictly speaking, they are not books at all, but merely **letters or newspapers in good print**. [ . . . ] **A book is** essentially not a talked thing, but a written thing; and written, not with the view of mere communication, but **of permanence**.

For though it is only by reason of the opposition of letters in the function of signs, to sounds in the function of signs, that **the study of books** is called "**literature**," and that a man versed in it is called, by the consent of nations, **a man of letters** instead of a man of books, or of words [ . . . ]

**Nearly every word in your language has been first a word of some other language** — of Saxon, German, French, Latin, or Greek (not to speak of eastern and primitive dialects). And many words have been all these; — that is to say, have been Greek first, Latin next, French and German next, and English last [ . . . ] If you do not know the Greek alphabet, learn it; [ . . . ] then get good dictionaries of all these languages, and whenever you are in doubt about a word, hunt it down patiently. [ . . . ] I will take these few following lines of *Lycidas* [ . . . ]

Do not think it. **Great men do not play stage tricks with doctrines of life and death: only little men do that.** Milton means what he says; and means it with his might too — is going to put the whole strength of his spirit presently into the saying of it. For though **not a lover of false bishops**, he was a lover of true ones; and the Lake-pilot is here, in his thoughts, the type and head of true episcopal power.

Now go on:

Of other care they little reckoning make,  
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast.  
**Blind mouths** —

I pause again, for this is a strange expression; a broken metaphor, one might think, careless and unscholarly.

Not so: its very audacity and pithiness are intended to make us look close at the phrase and remember it. Those two monosyllables express the precisely accurate contraries of right character, in the two great offices of the Church — those of bishop and pastor.

A “**Bishop**” means a “**person who sees.**”

A “**Pastor**” means a “**person who feeds.**”

The most unbishoply character a man can have is therefore to be Blind.

The most unpastoral is, instead of feeding, to want to be fed, — to be a Mouth.

Take the two reverses together, and you have “blind mouths.” We may advisably follow out this idea a little. Nearly all the evils in the Church have arisen from bishops desiring *power* more than *light*. They want authority, not outlook.



### from “Of Queens’ Gardens”

Be thou glad, oh thirsting Desert; let the desert be made  
cheerful, and bloom as the lily; and the barren places of Jordan  
shall run wild with wood.

— ISAIAH xxxv, I (*Septuagint*)

Let us try, then, whether we cannot get at some clear and harmonious idea (it must be harmonious if it is true) of what **womanly mind and virtue** are in power and office, with respect to man’s; and how their relations, rightly accepted, aid, and increase, the vigour, and honour, and authority of both.

And first let us take Shakespeare.

Note broadly in the outset, **Shakespeare has no heroes: — he has only heroines.** There is not one entirely heroic figure in all his plays, except the slight sketch of Henry the Fifth, exaggerated for the purposes of the stage: and the still slighter Valentine in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. In his laboured and perfect plays you have no hero. Othello would have been one, if his simplicity had not been so great as to leave him the prey of every base practice round him; but he is the only example even approximating to the heroic type. Coriolanus — Cæsar — Antony, stand in flawed strength, and fall by their vanities; — Hamlet is indolent, and drowsily speculative; Romeo an impatient boy; the Merchant of Venice languidly submissive to adverse for-tune; Kent, in *King Lear*, is entirely noble at heart, but too rough and unpolished to be of true use at the critical time, and he sinks into the office of a servant only. Orlando, no less noble, is yet the despairing toy of chance, followed, comforted, saved, by Rosalind. Whereas there is hardly a play that has not a perfect woman in it, steadfast in grave hope and errorless purpose: Cordelia, Desdemona, Isabella, Hermione, Imogen, Queen Katherine, Perdita, Silvia, Viola, Rosalind, Helena, and last, and perhaps loveliest, Virgilia, are all faultless: conceived in the highest heroic type of humanity.

Then observed, secondly,

**The catastrophe of every play is caused always by the folly or fault of a man;** the redemption, if there be any, is by the wisdom and virtue of a woman, and failing that, there is none. The catastrophe of King Lear is owing to his own want of judgment, his impatient vanity, his misunderstanding of his children; the virtue of his one true daughter would have saved him from all the injuries of the others, unless he had cast her away from him; as it is, she all but saves him.

Of Othello I need not trace the tale; — nor the one weakness of his so mighty love; nor the inferiority of his perceptive intellect to that even of the second woman character in the play, the Emilia who dies in wild testimony against his error:

Oh, murderous coxcomb! What should such a fool  
Do with so good a wife?

In *Romeo and Juliet*, the wise and brave stratagem of the wife is brought to ruinous issue by the reckless impatience of her husband. In “Winter’s Tale” and in “Cymbel-ine,” the happiness and existence of two princely households, lost through long years, and imperilled to the death by the folly and obstinacy of the husbands, are redeemed at last by the queenly patience and wisdom of the wives. In *Measure for Measure*, the foul injustice of the judge, and the foul cowardice of the brother, are opposed to the victorious truth and adamant purity of a woman. In *Coriolanus*, the mother’s counsel, acted upon in time, would have saved her son from all evil; his momentary forgetfulness of it is his ruin; her prayer, at last granted, saves him — not, indeed, from death, but from the curse of living as the destroyer of his country.

[. . .]

Observe, further, **among all the principal figures in Shakespeare’s plays, there is only one weak woman** — Ophelia; and it is because she fails Hamlet at the critical moment, and is not, and cannot in her nature be, a guide to him when he needs her most, that all the bitter catastrophe follows. Finally, though there are three wicked women among the principal figures, Lady Macbeth, Regan, and Goneril, they are felt at once to be frightful exceptions to the ordinary laws of life; fatal in their influence also in proportion to the power for good which they have abandoned.

Next, take, though more briefly, graver testimony — that of the great Italians and Greeks. You know well the plan of **Dante’s great poem** [*Divine Comedy*]— that it is a love poem to his dead lady; a song of praise for her watch over his soul. Stooping only to pity, never to love, she yet saves him from destruction — saves him from hell. He is going eternally astray in despair; she comes down from heaven to his help, and throughout the ascents of Paradise is his teacher, interpreting for him the most difficult truths, divine and human, and leading him, with rebuke upon rebuke, from star to star.

[T]he **Greek women** [. . .] for chief ideal types of human beauty and faith, the simple mother’s and wife’s heart of Andromache; the divine, yet rejected wisdom of Cassandra; the playful kindness and simple princess-life of happy Nausicaä; the housewifely calm of that of

Penelope, with its watch upon the sea; the ever patient, fearless, hopelessly devoted piety of the sister and daughter, in Antigone; the bowing down of Iphigenia, lamblike and silent; and, finally, the expectation of the resurrection, made clear to the soul of the Greeks in the return from her grave of that Alcestis, who, to save her husband, had passed calmly through the bitterness of death.

Now, I could multiply witness upon witness of this kind upon you if I had time. I would take **Chaucer**, and show you why he wrote a **Legend of Good Women**; but no Legend of Good Men. I would take **Spenser**, and show you how all his fairy knights are sometimes deceived and sometimes vanquished; but **the soul of Una** is never darkened, and the spear of Britomart is never broken. Nay, I could go back into the mythical teaching of the most ancient times, and show you how the great people — by one of whose princesses it was appointed that the Lawgiver of all the earth should be educated, rather than by his own kindred; — how that great Egyptian people, wisest then of nations, gave to their Spirit of Wisdom the form of a woman; and into her hand, for a symbol, the weaver's shuttle; and how the name and the form of that spirit, adopted, believed, and obeyed by the Greeks, became that Athena of the olive-helm, and cloudy shield, to faith in whom you owe, down to this date, whatever you hold most precious in art, in literature, or in types of national virtue.

We are foolish, and without excuse foolish, in speaking of the “superiority” of one sex to the other, as if they could be compared in similar things. **Each has what the other has not: each completes the other, and is completed by the other:** they are in nothing alike, and the happiness and perfection of both depends on each asking and receiving from the other what the other only can give.

Now their separate characters are briefly these: **The man's power** is active, progressive, defensive. He is eminently the doer, the creator, the discoverer, the defend-er. His intellect is for speculation and invention; his energy for adventure, for war, and for conquest, wherever was is just, wherever conquest necessary. But **the woman's power** is for rule, not for battle — and her intellect is not for invention or creation, but for sweet ordering, arrangement, and decision. She sees the qualities of things, their claims, and their places. Her great function is Praise: she enters into no contest, but infallibly judges the crown of contest. By her office, and place, she is protected from all danger and temptation. The man, in his rough work in open world, must encounter all peril and trial: to him, therefore, must be the failure, the offense, the inevitable error: often he must be wounded, or subdued; often misled; and always hardened. But he guards the woman from all this; within his house, as ruled by her, unless she herself has sought it, need enter no danger, no temptation, no cause of error or offense.

Now, secondly, we ask, **What kind of education** is to fit her for these? The first of our duties to her — no thoughtful persons now doubt this — is to secure for her such physical training and exercise as may confirm her health, and perfect her beauty, the highest refinement of that beauty being unattainable without splendour of activity and of delicate strength. [. . .] I believe, then, with this exception, that **a girl's education should be nearly, in its course and material of study, the same as a boy's;** but quite differently directed. A woman, in any

rank of life, ought to know whatever her husband is likely to know, but to know it in a different way. His command of it should be foundational and progressive; hers, general and accomplished for daily and helpful use.

And if she can have **access to a good library of old and classical books**, there need be no choosing at all. Keep the modern magazine and novel out of your girl's way; turn her loose into the old library every wet day, and let her alone. She will find what is good for her; you cannot; for there is just this difference between the making of a girl's character and a boy's — you may chisel a boy into shape, as you would a rock, or hammer him into it, if he be of a better kind, as you would a piece of bronze. But you cannot hammer a girl into anything. She grows as a flower does — she will wither without sun; she will decay in her sheath, as the narcissus will, if you do not give her air enough; she may fall, and defile her head in dust, if you leave her without help at some moments of her life; but you cannot fetter her; she must take her own fair form [ . . . ]

**Let her loose in the library**, I say, as you do a fawn in a field. It knows the bad weeds twenty times better than you; and the good ones, too, and will eat some bitter and prickly ones, good for it, which you had not the slightest thought would have been so.

Then, **in art, keep the finest models before her**, and let her practice in all accomplishments to be accurate and thorough, so as to enable her to understand more than she accomplishes.

And give them, lastly, not only noble teachings but **noble teachers**.

Thus far, then, of the nature, thus far of the teaching, of woman, and thus of her household office, and queenliness. We come now to our last, our widest question — **What is her queenly office with respect to the state?**

Generally we are under an impression that a man's duties are public, and a woman's private. But this is not altogether so. A man has a personal work or duty, relating to his own home, and a public work or duty, which is the expansion of the other, relating to the state. So a woman has a personal work or duty, relating to her own home, and a public work or duty, which is also the expansion of that.

Now the man's work for his own home is, as has been said, to secure its maintenance, progress, and defence; the woman's to secure its order, comfort, and loveliness.

Expand both these functions. The man's duty, as a member of a commonwealth, is to assist in the maintenance, in the advance, in the defence of the state. **The woman's duty, as a member of the commonwealth**, is to assist in the ordering, in the comforting, and in the beautiful adornment of the state.



## from “The Mystery of Life and Its Arts”

**I am endeavouring to trace the form and beauty of** another kind of cloud than those; the bright cloud of which it is written — “**What is your life?** It is even as a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” [. . .] it is true of this cloudy life of ours, that “man walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain.”

**I spent the ten strongest years of my life,** (from twenty to thirty), in endeavouring **to show the excellence of** the work of the man [Turner] whom I believed, and rightly believed, to be the greatest painter of the schools of England since Reynolds. [. . .] The Trustees of the National Gallery commissioned me to arrange the Turner drawings there, and permitted me to prepare three hundred examples of his studies from nature, for exhibition at Kensington. At Kensington they were, and are, placed for exhibition; but they are not exhibited, for the room in which they hang is always empty.

Well — this showed me at once, that **those ten years of my life** had been, in their chief purpose, **lost**. For that, I did not so much care; I had, **at least, learned my own business thoroughly**, and should be able, as I fondly supposed, after such a lesson, now to use my knowledge with better effect. But what I did care for was the — to me frightful — **discovery**, that **the most splendid genius in the arts might be permitted by Providence to labour and perish uselessly . . .**

**That was the first mystery of life to me.** But, while my best energy was given to the study of painting, I had put collateral effort, more prudent if less enthusiastic, into that of **architecture** [. . .] Had Mr. [Benjamin] Woodward now been beside me, I had not so spoken; but his gentle and passionate spirit was cut off from the fulfilment of its purposes, and the work we did together is now become **vain**.

And still I could tell of **failure** and failure repeated, as years went on [. . .] **Now let me more deliberately tell you its results.** [. . .] You know there is a tendency in the minds of many men, when they are heavily disappointed in the main purposes of their life, to feel, and perhaps in warning, perhaps in mockery, to declare, that life itself is a vanity. [. . .] You know how beautifully **Pope** has expressed this particular phase of thought:

Hope builds as fast as Knowledge can destroy;  
In Folly’s cup, still laughs the bubble joy.  
One pleasure past, another still we gain,  
And not a vanity is given in vain.

But the effect of failure upon my own mind has been just the reverse of this. The more that my life disappointed me, the more solemn and wonderful it became to me.

This, then, I meant by saying that **the arts must have noble motive**. This also I said respecting them, that they never had prospered, nor could prosper, but when they had such true purpose, and were **devoted to the proclamation of divine truth or law**. And yet I saw also that they had always failed in this proclamation — that poetry, and sculpture, and painting, though only great when they strove to teach us some-thing about the gods, never

had taught us anything trustworthy about the gods, but had always betrayed their trust in the crisis of it, and, with their powers at the full reach, became ministers to pride and to lust. [. . .] **we were all plunged as in a languid dream** — our hearts fat, and our eyes heavy, and our ears closed, lest the inspiration of hand or voice should reach us — lest we should see with our eyes, and understand with our hearts, and be healed.

**This intense apathy** in all of us is **the first great mystery of life**; it stands in the way of every perception, every virtue.

Now, the highest representatives of men who have thus endeavoured, during the Christian era, to search out these deep things, and relate them, are **Dante** and **Milton**.

And what have they told us? **Milton's** account of the most important event in his whole system of the universe [in *Paradise Lost*], **the fall of the angels**, is evidently unbelievable to him-self; and the more so, that it is wholly founded on, and in a great part spoiled and degraded from, Hesiod's account of the decisive war of the younger gods with the Titans. The rest of his poem is a picturesque drama, in which every artifice of invention is visibly and consciously employed; not a single fact being, for an instant, conceived as tenable by any living faith. **Dante's** conception [in *Divine Comedy*] is far more intense, and, by him-self, for the time, not to be escaped from; it is indeed **a vision**, but a vision only, and that one of the wildest that ever entranced a soul — a dream in which every grotesque type or phantasy of heathen tradition is renewed, and adorned; and the des-tinies of the Christian Church, under their most sacred symbols, become literally subordinate to the praise, and are only to be understood by the aid, of one dear Florentine maiden.

But more. We have to remember that **these two great teachers** were both of them warped in their temper, and thwarted in their search for truth. They were **men of intellectual war, unable**, through darkness of controversy, or stress of personal grief, **to discern** where their own ambition modified their utterances of the moral law; or their own agony mingled with their anger at its violation. But greater men than these have been — innocent-hearted — too great for contest.

It does not matter how little, or how much, any of us have read, either of Homer or Shakespeare; everything round us, in substance, or in thought, has been moulded by them. All Greek gentlemen were educated under **Homer**. All Roman gentlemen, by Greek literature. All Italian, and French, and English gentlemen, by Roman literature, and by its principles. Of **the scope of Shakespeare**, I will say only, that the intellectual measure of every man since born, in the domains of creative thought, may be assigned to him, according to the degree in which he has been taught by Shakespeare.

Take Homer first, and think if there is any sadder image of human fate than the great **Homeric story**. The main features in **the character of Achilles** are its intense desire of justice, and its tenderness of affection. And in that bitter song of the Iliad, this man, though aided continually by the wisest of the gods, and burning with the desire of justice in his heart, becomes yet, through ill-governed passion, **the most unjust of men**: and, full of the deepest tenderness in his heart, becomes yet, through ill-governed passion, the most cruel of men.

Intense alike in love and in friendship, he loses, first his mistress, and then his friend; for the sake of the one, he surrenders to death the armies of his own land; for the sake of the other, he surrenders all. **Will a man lay down his life for his friend?**

Is not this a mystery of life?

But **what, then, is the message to us of our own poet**, and searcher of hearts, after fifteen hundred years of Christian faith have been numbered over the graves of men? Are his words more cheerful than the Heathen's — is his hope more near — his trust more sure — his reading of fate more happy? Ah, no! He differs from the Heathen poet chiefly in this — that he recognizes, for deliverance, no gods nigh at hand; and that, by petty chance — by momentary folly — by broken message — by fool's tyranny — or traitor's snare, the strongest and most righteous are brought to their ruin, and perish without word of hope.

About this human life that is to be, or that is, the wise religious men tell us nothing that we can trust; and the wise contemplative men, nothing that can give us peace. But there is yet a **third class**, to whom we may turn — **the wise practical men**. We have sat at the feet of the poets [Dante, Milton] who sang of heaven, and they have told us their dreams. We have listened to the poets [Homer, Shakespeare] who sang of earth, and they have chanted to us dirges and words of despair. But there is one class of men more: — men, not capable of vision, nor sensitive to sorrow, but firm of purpose — **practised in business**; learned in all that can be, (by handling), known. [. . .] What will *they* say to us, or show us by example? These kings — these councillors — these statesmen and builders of kingdoms — these capitalists and men of business, who weigh the earth, and the dust of it, in a balance. They know the world, surely; and what is the mystery of life to us, is none to them. They can surely show us how to live, while we live, and to gather out of the present world what is best.

I think **I can best tell you their answer**, by telling you a dream I had once. For though I am no poet, I have dreams sometimes: — **I dreamed I was at a child's Mayday party**, in which every means of entertainment had been provided for them, by a wise and kind host. It was in a stately house, with beautiful gardens attached to it; and the children had been set free in the rooms and gardens, with no care whatever but how to pass their afternoon rejoicingly. They did not, indeed, know much about what was to happen next day; and some of them, I thought, were a little frightened, because there was a chance of their being sent to a new school where there were examinations; but they kept the thoughts of that out of their heads as well as they could, and resolved to enjoy themselves. The house, I said, was in a beautiful garden, and **in the garden** were all kinds of flowers; sweet, grassy banks for rest; and smooth lawns for play; and pleasant streams and woods; and rocky places for climbing. And the children were happy for a little while, but presently they separated themselves into parties; and then each party declared it would have a piece of the garden for its own, and that none of the others should have anything to do with that piece. Next, they quarrelled violently which pieces they would have; and at last the boys took up the thing, as boys should do, "practically," and fought in the flower-beds till there was hardly a flower left standing; then **they trampled down each other's bits of the garden out of spite**; and the girls cried till they could cry no



more; and so they all lay down at last breathless in the ruin, and waited for the time when they were to be taken home in the evening. [. . .]

Meanwhile, **the children in the house** had been making themselves happy also in their manner. For them, there had been provided every kind of indoor pleasure: there was music for them to dance to; and the library was open, with all manner of amusing books; and there was a museum full of the most curious shells, and animals, and birds; and there was a workshop, with lathes and carpenter's tools, for the ingenious boys; and there were pretty fantastic dresses, for the girls to dress in; and there were microscopes, and kaleidoscopes; and whatever toys a child could fancy; and a table, in the dining-room, loaded with everything nice to eat.

But, in the midst of all this, it struck two or three of **the more "practical" children**, that they would like some of **the brass-headed nails** that studded the chairs; and so they set to work to pull them out. Presently, the others, who were reading, or looking at shells, took a fancy to do the like; and, in a little while, all the children, nearly, were spraining their fingers, in pulling out brass-headed nails. With all that they could pull out, they were not satisfied; and then, everybody wanted some of some-body else's. And at last, the really practical and sensible ones declared, that nothing was of any real consequence, that afternoon, except to get plenty of brass-headed nails; and that the books, and the cakes, and the microscopes were of no use at all in themselves, but only, if they could be exchanged for nail-heads. And **at last they began to fight for nail-heads**, as the others fought for the bits of garden. Only here and there, a despised one shrank away into a corner, and tried to get a little quiet with a book, in the midst of the noise; but all the practical ones thought of nothing else but counting nail-heads all the afternoon — even though they knew they would not be allowed to carry so much as one brass knob away with them. But no — it was — “Who has most nails? I have a hundred, and you have fifty; or, I have a thousand, and you have two. I must have as many as you before I leave the house, or I cannot possibly go home in peace.” At last, they made so much noise that I awoke, and thought to myself, “What a false dream that is, of *children!*” The child is the father of the man; and wiser. Children never do such foolish things. Only men do.

But there is yet one last class of persons to be interrogated. The wise religious men we have asked in vain; the wise contemplative men, in vain; the wise worldly men, in vain. But **there is another group yet**. In the midst of this vanity of empty religion — of tragic contemplation — of wrathful and wretched ambition, and dispute for dust, there is yet one great group of persons, by whom all these disputers live — **the persons who have determined**, or have had it by a beneficent Providence determined for them, **that they will do something useful**; that whatever may be prepared for them hereafter, or happen to them here, they will, at least, deserve the food that God gives them by winning it honourably: and that, however fallen from the purity, or far from the peace, of Eden, they will carry out the duty of human dominion, though they have lost its felicity; and dress and keep the wilderness, though they no more can dress or keep the garden.

These — hewers of wood, and drawers of water — these, bent under burdens, or torn of scourges — these, that dig and weave — that plant and build; workers in wood, and in marble, and in iron — by whom all food, clothing, habitation, furniture, and means of delight are produced, for themselves, and for all men beside; men, whose deeds are good, though their words may be few; men, whose lives are serviceable, be they never so short, and worthy of honour, be they never so humble; — from these, surely, at least, **we may receive some clear message of teaching**; and pierce, for an instant, into the mystery of life, and of its arts.

Yes; from these, at last, we do receive a lesson. But I grieve to say, or rather — for that is the deeper truth of the matter — I rejoice to say — this message of theirs can only be received by joining them — not by thinking about them.

**You sent for me to talk to you of art**; and I have obeyed you in coming. But the main thing I have to tell you is — that art must not be talked about. The fact that there is talk about it at all, signifies that it is ill done, or cannot be done. No true painter ever speaks, or ever has spoken, much of his art. **The greatest speak nothing**. Even Reynolds is no exception, for he wrote of all that he could not himself do, and was utterly silent respecting all that he himself did.

**The moment a man can really do his work he becomes speechless about it. All words become idle to him — all theories.**

Does a bird need to theorize about building its nest, or boast of it when built? All good work is essentially done that way — without hesitation, without difficulty, without boasting; and in the doers of the best, there is **an inner and involuntary power** which approximates literally to the instinct of an animal — nay, I am certain that in the most perfect human artists, reason does not supersede instinct, but is added to an instinct as much more divine than that of the lower animals as the human body is more beautiful than theirs [ . . . ]

**Art** is neither to be achieved by effort of thinking, nor explained by accuracy of speaking. It is the instinctive and necessary result of power, which **can only be developed through the mind of successive generations**, and which finally burst into life under social conditions as slow of growth as the faculties they regulate. Whole areas of mighty history are summed, and the passions of dead myriads are concentrated, in the existence of a noble art, and if that noble art were among us, we should feel it and rejoice; not caring in the least to hear lectures on it; and since it is not among us, be assured we have to go back to the root of it, or, at least, to the place where the stock of it is yet alive, and the branches began to die.

And now, returning to the broader question, what these arts and labours of life have to teach us of its mystery, this is **the first of their lessons** — that **the more beautiful the art, the more it is essentially the work of people who feel themselves wrong**; — who are striving for the fulfilment of a law, and the grasp of a loveliness, which they have not yet attained, which they feel even farther and farther from attaining the more they strive for it. And yet, in still deeper sense, it is the work of people who know also that they are right. The very sense of inevitable error from their purpose marks the perfectness of that purpose, and the

continued sense of failure arises from the continued opening of the eyes more clearly to all the sacredest laws of truth.

This is one lesson. **The second** is a very plain, and greatly precious one: namely — that whenever the arts and labours of life are fulfilled in this spirit of striving against misrule, and doing whatever we have to do, honourably and perfectly, **they invariably bring happiness**, as much as seems possible to the nature of man. In all other paths by which that happiness is pursued there is disappointment, or destruction: for ambition and for passion there is no rest — no fruition; the fairest pleasures of youth perish in a darkness greater than their past light: and the loftiest and purest love too often does but inflame the cloud of life with endless fire of pain. But, ascending from lowest to highest, through every scale of human industry, that industry worthily followed, gives peace. Ask the labourer in the field, at the forge, or in the mine; ask the patient, delicate-fingered artisan, or the strong-armed, fiery-hearted worker in bronze, and in marble, and with the colours of light; and none of these, who are true workmen, will ever tell you, that they have found the law of heaven an unkind one — that in the sweat of their face they should eat bread, till they return to the ground; nor that they ever found it an unrewarded obedience, if, indeed, it was rendered faithfully to the command — “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do — do it with thy might.”

**These are the two great and constant lessons** which our labourers teach us of the mystery of life. But there is **another, and a sadder one**, which they cannot teach us, which we must read on their tombstones.

And, at last, what has all this “Might” of humanity accomplished, in six thousand years of labour and sorrow? What has it *done*? Take **the three chief occupations and arts of men**, one by one, and count their achievements. Begin with the first — the lord of them all — **Agriculture**. [. . .] And, with all the treasures of the East at our feet, we, in our own dominion, could not find a few grains of rice, for a people that asked of us no more; but stood by, and saw five hundred thousand of them perish of **hunger**.

Then, after **agriculture, the art of kings**, take the next head of human arts — **Weaving; the art of queens**, honoured of all noble Heathen women, in the person of their virgin goddess — honoured of all Hebrew women [. . .] Six thousand years of weaving, and have we learned to weave? Might not every naked wall have been purple with tapes-try, and every feeble breast fenced with sweet colours from the cold? [. . .] And does not every winter’s snow robe what you have not robed, and shroud what you have not shrouded; and every winter’s wind bear up to heaven its wasted souls, to witness against you hereafter, by the voice of their Christ — “I was **naked**, and ye clothed me not”?

Lastly — take **the Art of Building** — the strongest — proudest — most orderly — most enduring of the arts of man; that of which the produce is in the surest manner accumulative, and need not perish, or be replaced; but if once well done, will stand more strongly than the unbalanced rocks — more prevalently than the crumbling hills. The art which is associated with all civic pride and sacred principle; with which men record their power — satisfy their enthusiasm — make sure their defence — define and make dear their habitation. And in six

thousand years of building, what have we done? Of the greater part of all that skill and strength, *no* vestige is left, but fallen stones, that encumber the fields and impede the streams. But, from this waste of disorder, and of time, and of rage, what is left to us? [. . .] The ant and the moth have cells for each of their young, but our little ones lie in festering heaps, in homes that consume them like graves; and night by night, from the corners of our streets, rises up the cry of **the homeless** — “I was a stranger, and ye took me not in.”

**The poets and prophets**, the wise men, and the scribes, though they have told us nothing about a life to come, have told us much about the life that is now. They have had — they also — **their dreams**, and we have laughed at them. They have dreamed of mercy, and of justice; they have dreamed of peace and good-will; they have dreamed of labour undisappointed, and of rest undisturbed; they have dreamed of fullness in harvest, and overflowing in store; they have dreamed of wisdom in council, and of providence in law; of gladness of parents, and strength of children, and glory of grey hairs. And at these visions of theirs we have mocked, and held them for idle and vain, unreal and unaccomplishable. **What have we accomplished with our realities?**

And, whatever our station in life may be, at this crisis, those of us who mean to fulfil our duty ought first to live on as little as we can; and, secondly, to do all the whole-some work for it we can, and to spend all we can spare in doing all the sure good we can.

And sure good is, first in feeding people, then in dressing people, then in lodging people, and lastly in rightly pleasing people, with arts, or sciences, or any other subject of thought.

I say first in **feeding [people]**; and, once for all, do not let yourselves be deceived by any of the common talk of “indiscriminate charity.” The order to us is not to feed the deserving hungry, nor the industrious hungry, nor the amiable and well-intentioned hungry, but simply to feed the hungry. [. . .] But the first thing is to be sure you have the food to give; and, therefore, to enforce the organization of vast activities in agriculture and in commerce, for the production of the wholesomest food, and proper storing and distribution of it, so that no famine shall anymore be possible among civilized beings. There is plenty of work in this business alone, and at once, for any number of people who like to engage in it.

Secondly, **dressing people** — that is to say, urging every one, within reach of your in-fluence to be always neat and clean, and giving them means of being so. In so far as they absolutely refuse, you must give up the effort with respect to them, only taking care that no children within your sphere of influence shall anymore be brought up with such habits; and that every person who is willing to dress with propriety shall have encouragement to do so. And the first absolutely necessary step towards this is the gradual adoption of a consistent dress for different ranks of persons, so that their rank shall be known by their dress; and the restriction of the changes of fashion within certain limits.

And then, thirdly, **lodging people**, which you may think should have been put first, but I put it third, because we must feed and clothe the people where we find them, and lodge them afterwards. And providing lodgement for them means a great deal of vigorous legislature, and cutting down of vested interests that stand in the way, and after that, or before that, so far as

we can get it, thorough sanitary and remedial action in the houses that we have; [. . .] And all the fine arts will healthily follow. I myself have washed a flight of stone stairs all down, with bucket and broom, in a Savoy inn, where they hadn't washed their stairs since they first went up them; and I never made a better sketch than that afternoon.

These, then, are **the three first needs of civilized life**; and the law for every Christian man and woman is, that they shall be in direct service towards one of these three needs, as far as is consistent with their own special occupation, and if they have no special business, then wholly in one of these services.

But much more than this. On such holy and simple practice will be founded, indeed, at last, an infallible religion. **The greatest of all the mysteries of life**, and the most terrible, is **the corruption of even the sincerest religion**, which is not daily founded on rational, effective, humble, and helpful action. [. . .]

I will not speak of the crimes which in past times have been committed in the name of Christ, nor of the follies which are at this hour held to be consistent with obedience to Him; but I will speak of the morbid corruption and waste of vital power in religious sentiment, by which the pure strength of that which should be the guiding soul of every nation, the splendour of its youthful manhood, and spotless light of its maidenhood, is averted or cast away. [. . .] So with **our youths**. We once taught them to make Latin verses, and called them educated; now we teach them to leap and to row, to hit a ball with a bat, and call them educated. **Can they plough, can they sow, can they plant at the right time, or build with a steady hand?** [. . .] And then, indeed, shall abide, for them and for us, an incorruptible felicity, and an infallible religion; shall abide for us Faith, no more to be assailed by temptation, no more to be defended by wrath and by fear; — shall abide with us Hope, no more to be quenched by the years that overwhelm, or made ashamed by the shadows that betray: — shall abide for us, and with us, the greatest of these; the abiding will, the abiding name of our Father. For the greatest of these is Charity.

**# #**

## from UNIT – 5

### W. B. Yeats: “Sailing to Byzantium”

#### Introduction:

William Butler Yeats, (born June 13, 1865, Sandymount, Dublin, Ireland—died January 28, 1939, Roquebrune-Cap-Martin, France), Irish poet, dramatist, and prose writer, one of the greatest English-language poets of the 20th century. He received the **Nobel Prize for Literature** in **1923**. His early poems, collected in *The Wanderings of Oisín, and Other Poems* (1889), are the work of an aesthete, often beautiful but always rarefied, a soul’s cry for release from circumstance.

In 1889 Yeats met **Maud Gonne**, an Irish beauty, ardent and brilliant. From that moment, as he wrote, “the troubling of my life began.” He fell in love with her, but his love was hopeless. Maud Gonne liked and admired him, but she was not in love with him. Her passion was lavished upon Ireland; she was an Irish patriot, a rebel, and a rhetorician, commanding in voice and in person. When Yeats joined in the Irish nationalist cause, he did so partly from conviction, but mostly for love of Maud. When Yeats’s play *Cathleen ni Houlihan* was first performed in Dublin in 1902, she played the title role.

In 1917 Yeats published *The Wild Swans at Coole*. From then onward he reached and maintained the height of his achievement—a renewal of inspiration and a perfecting of technique that are almost without parallel in the history of English poetry.

*The Tower* (1928), named after the castle he owned and had restored, is the work of a fully accomplished artist; in it, the experience of a lifetime is brought to perfection of form. Still, some of Yeats’s greatest verse was written subsequently, appearing in *The Winding Stair* (1929). The poems in both of these works use, as their dominant subjects and symbols, the Easter Rising and the Irish civil war; Yeats’s own tower; the Byzantine Empire and its mosaics; Plato, Plotinus, and Porphyry; and the author’s interest in contemporary psychical research. Yeats explained his own philosophy in the prose work *A Vision* (1925, revised version 1937); this meditation upon the relation between imagination, history, and the occult remains indispensable to serious students of Yeats despite its obscurities.

In 1913 Yeats spent some months at Stone Cottage, Sussex, with the American poet **Ezra Pound** acting as his secretary. Pound was then editing translations of the *nō* plays of Japan, and Yeats was greatly excited by them. The *nō* drama provided a framework of drama designed for a small audience of initiates, a stylized, intimate drama capable of fully using the resources offered by masks, mime, dance, and song and conveying—in contrast to the public theatre—Yeats’s own recondite symbolism. Yeats devised what he considered an equivalent of the *nō* drama in such plays as *Four Plays for Dancers* (1921), *At the Hawk’s Well* (first performed 1916), and several others.

Yeats died in January 1939 while abroad. Final arrangements for his burial in Ireland could not be made, so he was buried at Roquebrune, France. The intention of having his body buried in Sligo was thwarted when World War II began in the autumn of 1939. In 1948 his body was finally taken back to Sligo and buried in a little Protestant churchyard at Drumcliffe, as he specified in “**Under Ben Bulbin**,” in his *Last Poems*, under his own **epitaph**: “Cast a cold eye/On life, on death./Horseman, pass by!”

All changed, changed utterly: A terrible beauty is born.

– **W. B. Yeats’s “Easter, 1916”**

Turning and turning in the widening gyre

The falcon cannot hear the falconer;

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold

– **W. B. Yeats’s “The Second Coming”**

The title of the Nigerian novelist **Chinua Achebe’s** *Things Fall Apart* (1958) is taken from Yeats’s “The Second Coming”.

Why should I blame her that she filled my days

With misery, or that she would of late

Have taught to ignorant men most violent ways,

Or hurled the little streets upon the great,

Had they but courage equal to desire?

– **W. B. Yeats’s “No Second Troy”**

This poem registers Yeats’s attempts to coming to terms with **Maud Gonne’s** rejection of his proposal to her.

- W. B. Yeats and Ernest Rhys founded “**The Rhymers’ Club**”, a group of London-based poets, in 1890.
  - ❖ Other members of the group included Ernest Dawson, Lionel Johnson, Arthur Symons.
  - ❖ Oscar Wilde participated in some of their meetings.
- Yeats’s *Words for Music Perhaps and Other Poems* (1932) includes a series of poems called “**Crazy Jane poems**”, which include:
  - ❖ “Crazy Jane and the Bishop”
  - ❖ “Crazy Jane on the Day of Judgment”
  - ❖ “Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop”
  - ❖ “Crazy Jane Gown Old Looks at the Dancers” and so on.

That is no country for old men.

– **W. B. Yeats’s “Sailing to Byzantium”**

- The title of the American novelist **Cormac McCarthy's** *No Country for Old Men* (2005) is taken from W. B. Yeats's "Sailing to Byzantium".

### **The Gist of the Text:**

"Sailing to Byzantium" is essentially about the difficulty of keeping one's soul alive in a fragile, failing human body. The speaker, an old man, leaves behind the country of the young for a visionary quest to Byzantium, the ancient city that was a major seat of early Christianity. There, he hopes to learn how to move past his mortality and become something more like an immortal work of art.

"Sailing to Byzantium" is composed in four **ottava rima** stanzas. Ottava rima is an **8-line stanza rhyming abababcc**.

The speaker introduces readers to a world that has no room in it for the elderly. It's a world in which young lovers embrace under trees full of singing birds (who seem unaware of their own mortality), the waters swarm with fish, and every living thing—whether human, fish, or bird—is born and then dies. Everything in that country is so caught up in the moment that it can pay no attention to the things that might outlive the flesh.

An old man in this world is nothing but a skinny, ratty old scarecrow, unless he can keep his soul alive, vital, and singing within his failing, worn out body. No one can teach the soul to do this: the person who wants to keep their soul alive has to figure it out through their own study. For this reason, the speaker has taken a voyage across the ocean to the ancient holy city of Byzantium.

The speaker addresses Byzantium's long-dead wise men and saints, who are now caught up in the glorious fire of God, which is like the beautiful golden tiling that decorates Byzantine churches. He asks them to emerge from this fire, whirling in spirals like the bobbin of a spinning-wheel, and to teach his soul to sing. He wants them to burn up his mortal, fleshly heart, which is tethered to his failing body and can't fathom or accept its own mortality, and to take him up into their everlasting world of art.

When he's left his body behind, the speaker says, he won't take up a mortal physical form again. Instead, he'll be a beautiful piece of golden art, something that metal workers in ancient Greece might have made to hang in an emperor's bedroom. Or he'll be a golden bird placed in a golden tree, where he, like the sages, can teach people his eternal and otherworldly wisdom—his transcendent understanding of the past, present, and future.



## **The Text:**

### **Stanza I**

That is no country for old men. The young  
 In one another's arms, birds in the trees,  
 —Those dying generations—at their song,  
 The salmon-falls, the mackerel-crowded seas,  
 Fish, flesh, or fowl, commend all summer long  
 Whatever is begotten, born, and dies.  
 Caught in that sensual music all neglect  
 Monuments of unageing intellect.

### **Stanza I: Summary**

#### *Lines 1-3:*

In the opening stanza Yeats introduces a world of youth and sensuality. The conflict of the poem is addressed when the speaker distances himself from this world by stating "That is no country for old men." The speaker feels alien in this natural, youthful landscape. The image of the birds, often a symbol for the soul, are described as "dying generations." Their songs are not immortal and thus they are aligned with the natural world.

#### *Lines 4-6:*

Here the speaker continues his description of the natural world with images of fertility. "Salmon falls" and "mackerel-crowded seas," are both images of abundance and fertility. Yeats's salmon image is particularly interesting because it suggests both life in abundance, or the natural world, as well as the journey towards death, or the spiritual world. Each year salmon swim arduously upstream in order to reach a place to reproduce. In doing so they both work with, and against nature. Reproduction is of course, natural, but swimming upstream is an act that goes against nature. The motion itself is much like flying, and one is brought back to the idea of the body travelling towards the soul.

#### *Lines 7-8:*

The rhyming couplet at the end of this stanza emphasizes the conflict of the poem. Youth, caught in the "sensual music" of the natural world overlooks the imposing, immortal aspects of art and intellect.

### **Stanza II**

An aged man is but a paltry thing,  
 A tattered coat upon a stick, unless  
 Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing  
 For every tatter in its mortal dress,  
 Nor is there singing school but studying  
 Monuments of its own magnificence;  
 And therefore I have sailed the seas and come  
 To the holy city of Byzantium.

## Stanza II: Summary

*Lines 9-10:*

The second stanza introduces the world of the speaker as very different from the "country" of the previous stanza. An elderly man is described as a scarecrow. This "bird" image is interesting because it both describes the man physically, and also contributes to the description of the spiritual in the natural world. While youth is represented by singing birds, age is shown by a pathetic scarecrow.

*Lines 11-12:*

The scarecrow image is transformed into the soul with another motion similar to flight. The clapping of hands and singing evokes more bird imagery, but this time it is associated with the spiritual world.

*Lines 13-16:*

In these lines the speaker concludes that only in an ideal environment, like Byzantium can he learn the songs of the soul. Note the speaker elevates Byzantium to a "holy city" thus deeming it appropriate in the poem to be the center of the spiritual world.

## Stanza III

O sages standing in God's holy fire  
 As in the gold mosaic of a wall,  
 Come from the holy fire, perne in a gyre,  
 And be the singing-masters of my soul.  
 Consume my heart away; sick with desire  
 And fastened to a dying animal  
 It knows not what it is; and gather me  
 Into the artifice of eternity.

## Stanza III: Summary

*Lines 17-18:*

In Byzantium, the speaker addresses the "sages" of Byzantium whose images are enclosed inside a holy fire, represented in a gold mosaic. This also is a disguised bird image. The sages may remind the reader of the Phoenix, an ancient, mythical bird whose body is consumed by fire, only to be reborn from its own ashes.

*Lines 19-20:*

In these lines the speaker asks the sages to make him immortal like the glorious works of art in Byzantium. For this to occur his body, or natural element must be destroyed.

*Lines 21-24:*

Here the speaker's heart, the home of his once youthful passions, is consumed by a cleansing fire along with his body which is described as a "dying animal." Without the body, his soul, like the sages' is held in the "artifice of eternity."

#### **Stanza IV**

Once out of nature I shall never take  
 My bodily form from any natural thing,  
 But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make  
 Of hammered gold and gold enamelling  
 To keep a drowsy Emperor awake;  
 Or set upon a golden bough to sing  
 To lords and ladies of Byzantium  
 Of what is past, or passing, or to come.

#### **Stanza IV: Summary**

*Lines 25-29:*

In these lines the speaker renounces the natural world and chooses to recreate himself in the form of an immortal golden bird. Why does he choose this form? Perhaps because the bird symbolizes the soul and it sings much like the natural birds in the first stanza. But unlike those birds, the golden bird which exemplifies the art and beauty of Byzantium culture, is immortal.

*Lines 30-32:*

Placed in a golden tree the speaker has now completely transformed himself into a work of art, unable to decay. In the first stanza the birds of the natural world sing of "Whatever is begotten, born, and dies," and also die themselves at the hands of nature. In the ideal world the speaker sings of "what is past, or passing, or to come," thereby indicating his immortality.

#### **An Appreciation of the Text:**

First published in the collection *The Tower* in 1928, "Sailing to Byzantium" explores the dichotomies between age and youth, as well as sensuality and spirituality. The speaker is "an aged man" who comes to the realization that youth and the sensual life are no longer an option for him, and he commences on a spiritual journey to the ideal world of Byzantium. Yeats felt that the civilization of Byzantium represented a zenith in art, spirituality, and philosophy. It seems logical then that in the poem Byzantium symbolizes a place where the spiritless can journey in order to seek out the spiritual. In Byzantium the speaker is able to discard the natural element of his body in favor of the immortal, spiritual element of his soul.

Motifs in the poem include images of birds singing, gold, and fire. All these evoke the theme of immortality. Consider that since the poem examines the dichotomy of youth and age, a

way to bridge this conflict is through immortality. Notice that the first stanza of the poem examines the natural or sensual world, while the second stanza explores the world of aging and spirituality. These first two stanzas set up the conflict of the poem. In the third stanza the speaker reaches Byzantium. Here the creation through fire of a golden bird intertwines the two worlds. The body is no longer natural, but is composed of gold, a more beautiful element and one that will not decay.

### **Time:**

One of the central ideas in this work is how time affects all living things, making them slow down and lose their natural stamina and enthusiasm; the poem also notes how humans gain mental powers as physical ability slips away. The imagery used in the first stanza is mostly suggestive of reproduction. Examples include the line "The young / In one another's arms," for obvious reasons, the salmon which climbs the falls to spawn, and the sea overpopulated with mackerel. Yeats uses reproductive imagery as the most powerful symbol of youth. Once his point is established, he goes on to represent the slowing of age with more subtle imagery: "A tattered coat on a stick," "studying of monuments" to replace singing, and so on. The point is to establish that the benefits of being young are for the young, and the aged have to establish other values for themselves. At the end of the first stanza, he makes a reference to "unaging intellect." Another writer might have centered on this idea as being the main goal of existence, making youth and all of its physical pleasure just a prelude to be finished off before getting down to the business of life. By giving equal balance to both early and late life, Yeats is looking at the effects of time from a broader perspective. He avoids the temptation to praise old age just because he is old.

### **Art and Experience:**

When the poem refers to "the artifice of eternity," it is using the word "artifice" to mean roughly the same thing that we mean by the word "art" a product created by the human mind. In modern society, artificiality has come to have a negative meaning, as we can see most clearly in the pride that some commercial products take in announcing that they have "no artificial ingredients." We need to remember for the sake of reading this poem that there is also good reason to be proud of the ability to think of, design, and then create something that is not provided to us by nature. A tree is a thing that is found in the world, but an artistic work, such as a painting of a tree, is something that could not exist except for the power of the human mind. In the last stanza, Yeats gives a similar example, but instead of a tree, he uses a bird made of gold, which will never slow down, never become weak, and never die. Critics have mentioned that this might be a poor example for Yeats to use because, even though it is created by man, the gold bird is still modeled after a thing of nature, contradicting the line "I shall never take / My bodily form from any natural thing."

One reason why our modern sensibilities valuing the natural, shuddering at artificiality have come to be opposite of Yeats is that, in the time between when he wrote and now, natural objects have become so scarce and unnatural objects so overwhelming. We live in a world of simulated wood grain, silk flowers, and landscaping; we see more birds on the television screen than in the sky. It is hard for us to be moved by artifice as an achievement.

**Supernatural:**

To date, the only known alternative to aging is death. This poem's speaker does not accept that, though, preferring to skip death and take the intellect that he has accumulated during his lifetime straight into eternity. In order to do this, he has imagined a place that one can sail to where death is not a factor, where one can keep living, growing further and further from nature. By giving this idealized place the name of an actual place, "the holy city of Byzantium," the poem suggests that the natural law that drives us all to death can be broken. To the extent that it is showing us that human life is made up of two different elements, the physical and the mental (or natural and intellect), the poem is based in reality, but it has to go outside of reality to give one of these a life that is independent of the other. Since Yeats was a student of the super natural all his adult life, the idea of a magic land where intellect is not "fastened to a dying animal" might have seemed quite reasonable to him, but critics find his Byzantium hard to accept because it is so far from reality.

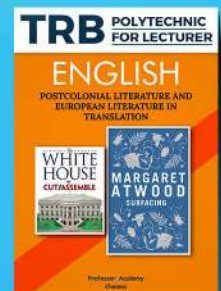
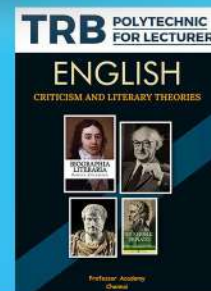
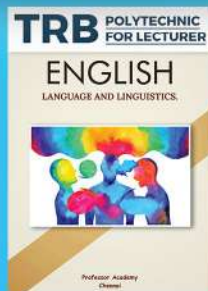
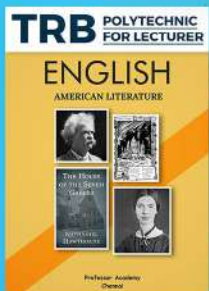
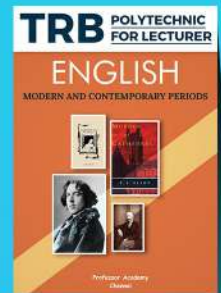
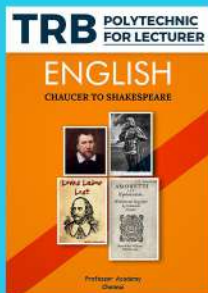
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## from UNIT – 6

### Nathaniel Hawthorne: *The House of the Seven Gables*

#### Introduction:

**Nathaniel Hawthorne**, (born July 4, 1804, Salem, Massachusetts, U.S.—died May 19, 1864, Plymouth, New Hampshire), American novelist and short-story writer who was a master of the allegorical and symbolic tale. One of the greatest fiction writers in American literature, he is best known for *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) and *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851).

In college Hawthorne had excelled only in composition and had determined to become a writer. Upon graduation, he had written an amateurish novel, *Fanshawe*, which he published at his own expense—only to decide that it was unworthy of him and to try to destroy all copies. Hawthorne, however, soon found his own voice, style, and subjects, and within five years of his graduation he had published such impressive and distinctive stories as “**The Hollow of the Three Hills**” and “**An Old Woman’s Tale**.” By 1832, “**My Kinsman, Major Molineux**” and “**Roger Malvin’s Burial**,” two of his greatest tales—and among the finest in the language—had appeared. “**Young Goodman Brown**,” perhaps the greatest tale of witchcraft ever written, appeared in 1835.

Hawthorne’s allegorical “**The Minister’s Black Veil**” is a psychological exploration of the notion of sin and guilt through a symbol: a black veil. This story was later published in his short-story collection *Twice-Told Tales* (1837 & 1842), which includes “**Dr. Heidegger’s Experiment**” and “**Wakefield**”.

His increasing success in placing his stories brought him a little fame. Unwilling to depend any longer on his uncles’ generosity, he turned to a job in the Boston Custom House (1839–40) and for six months in 1841 was a resident at the agricultural cooperative Brook Farm, in West Roxbury, Massachusetts. Even when his first signed book, *Twice-Told Tales*, was published in 1837, the work had brought gratifying recognition but no dependable income. By 1842, however, Hawthorne’s writing had brought him a sufficient income to allow him to marry Sophia Peabody; the couple rented the Old Manse in Concord and began a happy three-year period that Hawthorne would later record in his essay “The Old Manse.”

His new short-story collection, *Mosses from an Old Manse*, appeared in 1846.

Three years later the presidential election brought the Whigs into power under Zachary Taylor, and Hawthorne lost his job; but in a few months of concentrated effort, he produced his masterpiece, *The Scarlet Letter*. The bitterness he felt over his dismissal is apparent in “**The Custom House**” essay prefixed to the novel.

Determined to leave Salem forever, Hawthorne moved to Lenox, located in the mountain scenery of the Berkshires in western Massachusetts. There he began work on *The House of*

*the Seven Gables* (1851), the story of the Pyncheon family, who for generations had lived under a curse until it was removed at last by love.

In the autumn of 1851 Hawthorne moved his family to another temporary residence, this time in West Newton, near Boston. There he quickly wrote *The Blithedale Romance*, which was based on his disenchantment with Brook Farm.

Determined to produce yet another romance, he finally retreated to a seaside town in England and quickly produced *The Marble Faun*. In writing it, he drew heavily upon the experiences and impressions he had recorded in a notebook kept during his Italian tour to give substance to an allegory of the Fall of man, a theme that had usually been assumed in his earlier works but that now received direct and philosophic treatment.

### **The Gist of the Text:**

*The House of the Seven Gables* is a sombre study in hereditary sin based on the legend of a curse pronounced on Hawthorne's own family by a woman condemned to death during the witchcraft trials. The greed and arrogant pride of the novel's **Pyncheon family** down the generations is mirrored in the gloomy decay of their seven-gabled mansion, in which the family's enfeebled and impoverished poor relations live. At the book's end the descendant of a family long ago defrauded by the Pyncheons lifts his ancestors' curse on the mansion and marries a young niece of the family.

*The House of the Seven Gables*, published in **1851** by the notable Boston publisher Ticknor, Reed & Fields, is Nathaniel Hawthorne's **third novel**. Some of the novel's themes can be found in his previous writings, specifically in *Legends of the Province House* (1830s) and "**Peter Goldthwaite's Treasure**" (also written in the 1830s). In both of these tales, as in *The House of the Seven Gables*, Hawthorne explores issues of class and the pursuit of wealth against the backdrop of decaying residences.

Interestingly, in terms of plot, *The House of the Seven Gables* reflects actual events in Hawthorne's life and his family's history. He came from a long history of privilege in New England, yet faced poverty following the death of his father. Some critics have drawn parallels between Hepzibah's reticence to open the cent-shop and Hawthorne's own angst about publishing his writing. Further, Hawthorne's great-grandfather, John Hathorne (as the family's name was then spelled), was one of three judges who presided over the witchcraft trials of 1692.

Like Colonel Pyncheon, John Hathorne played a role (a direct one in fact) in putting people to death for alleged witchcraft practices. Some writers have commented on Hawthorne's interest in the legacy of past family sins, which is a central theme in *The House of the Seven Gables*, because of his great-grandfather's involvement in the death of twenty wrongfully accused people. In the end, the characters in *The House of the Seven Gables* appear to



be freed from the curse that has haunted their families for centuries. Though some speculate that Hawthorne forced a happy ending to this work to satisfy his publisher, and ultimately his readers, perhaps Hawthorne himself believed in the possibility that people have the ability to escape their pasts.

### **Excerpts from the Text:**

from **Preface:**

WHEN A WRITER calls his work a **Romance**, it need hardly be observed that he wishes to claim a certain latitude, both as to its fashion and material, which he would not have felt himself entitled to assume had he professed to be writing a Novel. The latter form of composition is presumed to aim at a very minute fidelity, not merely to the possible, but to the probable and ordinary course of man's experience. The former—while, as a **work of art**, it must rigidly subject itself to laws, and while it sins unpardonably so far as it may swerve aside from the truth of the human heart—has fairly a right to present that truth under circumstances, to a great extent, of the writer's own choosing or creation.

from **Chapter I: The Old Pyncheon Family**

HALFWAY DOWN a by-street of one of our New England towns stands a rusty wooden house, with seven acutely peaked gables, facing towards various points of the compass, and a huge, clustered chimney in the midst. The street is Pyncheon Street; the house is the old Pyncheon House; and an elm-tree, of wide circumference, rooted before the door, is familiar to every town-born child by the title of the Pyncheon Elm. On my occasional visits to the town aforesaid, I seldom failed to turn down Pyncheon Street, for the sake of passing through the shadow of these two antiquities, —the great elm-tree and the weather-beaten edifice.

The aspect of the venerable mansion has always affected me like a human countenance, bearing the traces not merely of outward storm and sunshine, but expressive also, of the long lapse of mortal life, and accompanying vicissitudes that have passed within. Were these to be worthily recounted, they would form a narrative of no small interest and instruction, and possessing, moreover, a certain remarkable unity, which might almost seem the result of artistic arrangement.

But the story would include a chain of events extending over the better part of two centuries, and, written out with reasonable amplitude, would fill a bigger folio volume, or a longer series of duodecimos, than could prudently be appropriated to the annals of all New England during a similar period. It consequently becomes imperative to make short work with most of the traditionary lore of which the old Pyncheon House, otherwise known as the House of the Seven Gables, has been the theme. With a brief sketch, therefore, of the circumstances amid which the foundation of the house was laid, and a rapid glimpse at its quaint exterior, as it grew black in the prevalent east wind,—pointing, too, here and there, at some spot of more verdant mossiness on its roof and walls,—we shall commence the real action of our tale at an epoch not very remote from the present day. Still, there will be a connection with the long past—a reference to forgotten events and personages, and to manners, feelings, and opinions,

almost or wholly obsolete—which, if adequately translated to the reader, would serve to illustrate how much of old material goes to make up the freshest novelty of human life. Hence, too, might be drawn a weighty lesson from the little-regarded truth, that the act of the passing generation is the germ which may and must produce good or evil fruit in a far-distant time; that, together with the seed of the merely temporary crop, which mortals term expediency, they inevitably sow the acorns of a more enduring growth, which may darkly overshadow their posterity. [. . .]

### **[Ending]**

Maule's well, all this time, though left in solitude, was throwing up a succession of kaleidoscopic pictures, in which a gifted eye might have seen foreshadowed the coming fortunes of Hepzibah and Clifford, and the descendant of the legendary wizard, and the village maiden, over whom he had thrown Love's web of sorcery. The Pyncheon Elm, moreover, with what foliage the September gale had spared to it, whispered unintelligible prophecies. And wise Uncle Venner, passing slowly from the ruinous porch, seemed to hear a strain of music, and fancied that sweet Alice Pyncheon—after witnessing these deeds, this bygone woe and this present happiness, of her kindred mortals—had given one farewell touch of a spirit's joy upon her harpsichord, as she floated heavenward from the *House of the Seven Gables!*

### **The Summary of the Text:**

#### *Principal characters:*

Miss Hepzibah Pyncheon, a spinster

Clifford Pyncheon, her brother

Judge Jaffrey Pyncheon, a kinsman

Phoebe Pyncheon, a distant cousin

Mr. Holgrave, Miss Hepzibah's lodger

The House of the Seven Gables is a colonial house built in the English style of half-timber and half-plaster. It stands on Pyncheon Street in quiet Salem. The house was built by Colonel Pyncheon, who wrested the desirable site from Matthew Maule, a poor man executed as a wizard. Colonel Pyncheon was responsible for the execution, and he takes the doomed man's land, so Maule, at the moment of his execution, declares that God will give the Pyncheons blood to drink. Despite this grim prophecy, the colonel has his house, and its builder is Thomas Maule, son of the old wizard.

Colonel Pyncheon, dying in his great oak chair just after the house is completed, chokes with blood so that his shirtfront is stained scarlet. Although doctors explain the cause of his death as apoplexy, the townsfolk had not forgotten old Maule's prophecy. The time of the colonel's death is auspicious. It is said that he just completed a treaty by which he bought huge tracts of land from the Indians, but this deed was not confirmed by the general court and was never

discovered by any of his heirs. Rumor also has it that a man was seen leaving the house about the time Colonel Pyncheon died.

More recently, another startling event occurred at the House of the Seven Gables. Jaffrey Pyncheon, a bachelor, was found dead in the colonel's great oaken armchair, and his nephew, Clifford Pyncheon, was sentenced to imprisonment after being found guilty of the murder of his uncle.

These events were in the unhappy past, however, and in 1850, the House of the Seven Gables is the home of Miss Hepzibah Pyncheon, an elderly, singlewoman who rents one wing of the old house to a young man of radical tendencies, a maker of daguerreotypes, whose name is Mr. Holgrave.

Miss Hepzibah is about to open a shop in one of the rooms of her house. Her brother Clifford is coming home from the state prison after thirty years, and she has to earn money in some way to support him. On the first day of her venture as a storekeeper, Miss Hepzibah proves to be a failure. The situation is saved, however, by the arrival of young Phoebe Pyncheon from the country. Soon she is operating the shop at a profit.

Clifford arrives from the prison a broken man of childish, querulous ways. Once he tries to throw himself from a big arched window which affords him almost his only contact with the outside world. He is fond of Phoebe, but Miss Hepzibah irritates him with her sullen scowling. For acquaintances, Clifford has Uncle Venner, a handyman who does odd jobs for the neighborhood, and the tenant of the house, Mr. Holgrave, the daguerreotypist.

The only other relative living in town is the highly respected Judge Pyncheon, another nephew of old Jaffrey, for whose murder Clifford spent thirty years in prison. He is, in fact, the heir of the murdered man, and he was somehow involved with Clifford's arrest and imprisonment. For these reasons, Clifford refuses to see him when the judge offers to give Clifford and Hepzibah a home at his country seat. Meanwhile, Phoebe has become friendly with Mr. Holgrave. In turn, he thinks that she brings light and hope into the gloomy old house, and he misses her greatly when she returns to her home in the country. Her visit is to be a brief one, however, for she went only to make some preparations before coming to live permanently with Miss Hepzibah and Clifford.

Before Phoebe returns from the country, Judge Pyncheon visits the House of the Seven Gables and, over Miss Hepzibah's protest, insists on seeing Clifford, who, he says, knows a family secret that means great wealth for the judge. When at last she goes out of the room to summon her brother, Judge Pyncheon sits down in the old chair by the fireplace, over which hangs the portrait of the Pyncheon who built the house. As the judge sits in the old chair, his ticking watch in his hand, an unusually strong family likeness can be noted between the stern judge and his Puritan ancestor in the portrait. Unable to find Clifford to deliver the judge's message, Miss Hepzibah returns. As she approaches the door, Clifford appears from within, laughing and pointing to the chair where the judge sits, dead of apoplexy, under the portrait

of the old colonel: His shirtfront is stained with blood. The wizard's curse is fulfilled once more; God gave him blood to drink.

The two helpless old people are so distressed by the sight of the dead man that they creep away from the house without notifying anyone and depart on the train. The dead body of the judge remains seated in the chair.

It is some time before the body is discovered by Mr. Holgrave. When Phoebe returns to the house, he admits her. He did not summon the police because he wishes to protect the old couple as long as possible. While he and Phoebe are alone in the house, Mr. Holgrave declares his love for her. They are interrupted by the return of Miss Hepzibah and the now-calm Clifford. They decided that to run away would not solve their problem.

The police attribute the judge's death to natural causes, and Clifford, Miss Hepzibah, and Phoebe become the heirs to his great fortune. It now seems certain that Jaffrey also died of natural causes, not by Clifford's hand, and that the judge so arranged the evidence to make Clifford appear a murderer.

In a short time, all the occupants of the House of the Seven Gables are ready to move to the judge's country estate, which they have inherited. They gather for the last time in the old room under the dingy portrait of Colonel Pyncheon. Clifford says he has a vague memory of something mysterious connected with the picture. Holgrave offers to explain the mystery and presses a secret spring near the picture. When he does so, the portrait falls to the floor, disclosing a recess in the wall. From this niche, Mr. Holgrave draws out the ancient Indian deed to the lands that the Pyncheons claimed. Clifford then remembers he once found the secret spring. It was this secret that Judge Pyncheon had hoped to learn from Clifford.

Phoebe asks how Mr. Holgrave happens to know these facts. The young man explains his name is not Holgrave, but Maule. He is, he says, a descendant of the wizard, Matthew Maule, and of Thomas Maule, who built the House of the Seven Gables. The knowledge of the hidden Indian deed was handed down to the descendants of Thomas, who built the compartment behind the portrait and secreted the deed there after the colonel's death. Holgrave is the last of the Maules, and Phoebe, the last of the Pyncheons, will bear his name. Matthew Maule's curse is expiated.

### **The Detailed Summary of the Text:**

#### ***Preface***

*The House of the Seven Gables* begins with a preface in which Hawthorne makes a point to tell readers that the tale they are about to read is a "Romance" rather than a traditional "Novel." He proceeds to say that because the story is written as a Romance, it gives him creative license to present reader's with his selective understanding of the truth instead of binding him to being true to life. He notes that Romances give writers a creative and subjective license to "mellow the lights and deepen and enrich the shadows of the picture."

Hawthorne also tells readers that the moral purpose of his work is to convey the notion that “the wrong-doing of one generation lives into the successive ones.” Despite this claim, however, he notes that he has not tried “to impale the story with its moral.” Finally, Hawthorne concludes that he did not intend to correlate the location or events in the story with any particular place or happenings in the County of Essex.

### ***I: The Old Pyncheon Family***

The first chapter opens with a description of the House of the Seven Gables, its history, and that of the Pyncheon and Maule families. In the mid-1600s, Matthew Maule (the elder) settles in the County of Essex and establishes a homestead. Soon thereafter, Colonel Pyncheon decides he would like to build his familial estate on Matthew’s land.

Matthew refuses to surrender his land. He is then put on trial for witchcraft and with Colonel Pyncheon’s full support, is hung. Just before dying, Matthew places a curse on Colonel Pyncheon, saying that “God will give him blood to drink.” Colonel Pyncheon acquires the land, builds his house using Thomas Maule, Matthew Maule’s son, as the architect. The day of his house-warming feast, to which he has invited the entire community, including many very esteemed society people, Colonel Pyncheon is found dead in his study with blood dripping from his mouth. Subsequent generations live in the house, believing that they are entitled to a large piece of land in Maine that Colonel Pyncheon was in the process of acquiring before he died. Many try to acquire the land, but fail.

More years pass, and thirty years before the beginning of the novel’s action, another wealthy Pyncheon (Jaffrey Pyncheon, the elder) dies. His nephew (Clifford) is accused, tried, and convicted of the murder and is sentenced to life imprisonment. Jaffrey Pyncheon (the elder) believed that Matthew Maule was wrongly robbed of his land and put to death and intended to make restitution to the Maule descendents. Following Clifford’s incarceration, Jaffrey Pyncheon’s other nephew (Judge Jaffrey Pyncheon) inherits the dead man’s wealth. Clifford’s sister (Hepzibah) remained living in the House of the Seven Gables, per her uncle’s will. Meanwhile, Maule’s descendents have all but died out. They long inhabited the town and were a “quiet, honest, well-meaning race of people, cherishing no malice done them,” who were said to have the power to influence people’s dreams.

The chapter concludes with a description of the giant elm tree in the yard, the flowers that grow between two of the gables, and the door on the front gable that leads to a once used retail space.

### ***II: The Little Shop-Window***

Hepzibah Pyncheon rises from bed, dresses, examines herself in the mirror, and pulls out a miniature (very small portrait) of a young man, who readers later learn is her brother, Clifford. She cries as she readies herself for the day and notices how cross she looks as a result of the scowl caused by her near-sightedness. Despite her almost permanent scowl, Hepzibah is said to have a “heart that never frowned. It was naturally tender, [and] sensitive.”

Hepzibah faces the day in low spirits as she sets up the shop that she intends to open. Opening the shop is mortifying for her because she is an aristocrat by birth; however, she has no choice and must commence a business of her own in order to save herself from starvation. When she finally opens the shop door, she immediately runs inside the house to cry.

### ***III: The First Customer***

The first person to enter Hepzibah's shop is her boarder, Holgrave. The daguerreotypist comes to the store to offer Hepzibah help with her preparations. He congratulates Hepzibah on her endeavor, noting that this venture is a promising new beginning for her that will give her a "sense of healthy and natural effort for a purpose." Hepzibah views the situation quite differently and laments that she is no longer a lady. Holgrave counters that no Pyncheon lady has ever acted more heroically or nobly. Holgrave attempts to buy biscuits, but Hepzibah insists on giving them to him free.

Holgrave departs and Hepzibah overhears two workmen discussing her shop. They discuss her disagreeable looks and the likely failure of her shop. As Hepzibah considers the possibility of failure, the shop-bell rings and a boy (Ned Higgins) enters. As with Holgrave, Hepzibah gives the child a gingerbread cookie for free. He shortly returns to request another cookie, for which Hepzibah takes his payment. Other customers follow and in several cases, Hepzibah does not stock their needs. At the end of the day, she has a poor opinion of the temperament and manners of people who she sees as part of the lower classes. At the same time, after seeing a wealthy lady pass by, she wonders about the purpose of such a person.

### ***IV: A Day Behind the Counter***

Toward the afternoon, a large, elderly gentleman (Judge Jaffrey Pyncheon) passes by the shop and gazes upon it with both a frown and a smile. When he sees Hepzibah his "smile changed from acrid and disagreeable to the sunniest complacency and benevolence." Hepzibah shows dislike for the man and draws a comparison between his likeness and that of the portrait of Colonel Pyncheon, which hangs in the house. The shop bell rings when Uncle Venner enters the shop. He is the oldest resident of Pyncheon Street and is happy to see that Hepzibah has opened a shop instead of remaining idle. He discusses the possibility of his retirement to what he calls his farm.

Although he praises Hepzibah for working, he tells her that it is an embarrassment that her wealthy cousin lets her do so. Hepzibah tells him that the judge is not to blame. Uncle Venner leaves Hepzibah after inquiring when Clifford will be home. Hepzibah is quite jarred by Uncle Venner's question and spends the remainder of the day dazed and clumsy. Just after she closes the shop for the day, an omnibus arrives, bringing Phoebe to Hepzibah's doorstep. Phoebe's letter was unfortunately delayed and thus her arrival is a surprise to Hepzibah, who decides that her country relation cannot stay lest she upset Clifford.

### ***V: May and November***

When Phoebe awakes in the morning, she arranges her quarters, “throwing a kindly and hospitable smile over the apartment.” Her “sweet breath and happy thoughts” remove “all former evil and sorrow” from the room. Phoebe joins Hepzibah, who tells her that she unfortunately cannot stay. Unaffected by the comment, Phoebe assures Hepzibah that she will earn her keep and be a cheerful addition to the house. Hepzibah accedes and after telling Phoebe that Clifford is soon to arrive home, she fetches his miniature (a very small portrait). Phoebe, who thought that Clifford was dead, admires the miniature, commenting on Clifford’s sweet and childlike face. The two women sit down to tea, and when the shop-bell rings, Phoebe jumps up. To Hepzibah’s great pleasure, Phoebe serves the customer with ease and skill.

Despite her being a country girl, Phoebe is praised by the narrator for her lady-like qualities. Phoebe’s presence is known in the town and inspires a steady stream of shop customers. Uncle Venner praises her and likens her to one of God’s angels. Hepzibah talks at length to Phoebe about Alice Pyncheon, who is believed to haunt the house and whose harpsichord Hepzibah had shown Phoebe earlier. Changing the subject, Hepzibah then tells Phoebe about Holgrave, the daguerreotypist with questionable politics who lives in one of the gables. Noting his strange hold on her mind and his agreeable and kind disposition, Hepzibah says that she is disinclined to send him away simply for his strange companions.

### ***VI: Maule’s Well***

After having tea, Phoebe goes out to the garden, which she finds in a state of decay that has been only slightly modified by a small effort of evident care. While in the garden, she is happy to find flowers, vegetables, a robin’s nest in a pear tree, a fountain, and a hen-coop. Within the hen-coop, she finds a rooster, two hens, and a chick, all having seen better days. Holgrave surprises Phoebe as he enters the garden. Holgrave notes the positive way the hens react to Phoebe, who approaches the conversation hesitantly. Holgrave tells Phoebe that he has been caring for the garden and offers to show her one of his daguerreotypes. He shows her one of Judge Jaffrey Pyncheon, and she mistakes it for Colonel Pyncheon.

Holgrave continues the discussion by saying that it has been impossible for him to create a pleasing rendering of the judge despite more than one attempt. Pictures apparently cannot cover up the truth of a man’s character as a subjective painter might. Holgrave asks Phoebe if she would care to tend to the flowers and the hens while he cared for the vegetables. Although her reticence about Holgrave remains in tact, she complies with the request and weeds the flower-bed. As Holgrave leaves, he warns Phoebe not to drink or bathe in the fountain, which is called Maule’s well, because the water is believed to be bewitched. Phoebe also goes inside and finds Hepzibah in the dark. Phoebe has a strange feeling that someone else is in the room with them, and after she goes off to bed, she continues to think that she hears Hepzibah talking with someone.

### ***VII: The Guest***

Phoebe awakes to find Hepzibah already busy in the kitchen attempting to find something savory to make for breakfast. Hepzibah purchases the best mackerel available from the passing fish-dealer. Phoebe assists by roasting coffee and making an Indian cake. Hepzibah is emotional during the preparations, laughing and crying. Phoebe is aware of Hepzibah's strange behavior and inquires what has happened to affect her so, when Hepzibah signals that "he" is coming to the table. Clifford arrives, looking elderly and spiritless. He weakly greets Phoebe, and Hepzibah explains that Phoebe is their cousin. The three sit down to eat, and Clifford notices how changed Hepzibah is and wonders if she is angry with him because of her scowl. Hepzibah assures him that she has nothing but love for him. He eats voraciously as the narrator continues to describe his disposition toward all that is beautiful. He is pleased with Phoebe's presence but cannot look at his sister because of her unattractiveness. Clifford enjoys the beautiful rose presented by Phoebe and remarks about the dismal house.

When the shop-bell rings, Phoebe gets up to attend to the customer, and Hepzibah explains to her brother that they are now quite poor. She fears the disgrace she has brought to them by opening the shop; however, Clifford apologizes for his previous disapproval and bursts into tears. Shortly thereafter, he falls asleep, leaving Hepzibah to weep quietly as she looks at him.

### ***VIII: The Pyncheon of To-Day***

When Phoebe enters the shop, she finds Ned, the young boy who favors the shop's gingerbread cookies. Before leaving, Ned asks Phoebe how Clifford is. Phoebe learns through the inquiry that the man at breakfast is Hepzibah's brother. Just as the boy leaves, Judge Jaffrey Pyncheon enters. He introduces himself and attempts to give Phoebe a kiss, which she instinctively rebuffs. He turns cold in response and then thinking better of it, warms again. She apologizes, yet is struck by the similarity between the judge and Colonel Pyncheon.

Noticing her ill-ease, the judge asks if she is afraid of something. She tells him no and asks if he would like to see Hepzibah. He delays her and surmises that she fears Clifford. She assures him to the contrary and says that Clifford is not frightful in the least. He goes to enter the house just as Hepzibah comes out and prevents him from doing so. The judge offers Hepzibah anything he has to make Clifford comfortable and asks to see him. Hepzibah refuses his request. The conversation escalates with the judge offering more and more and Hepzibah refusing everything. The two are interrupted by Clifford's cry to not let the judge enter the house. The judge is deeply angered and tells Hepzibah that when she and Clifford realize their injustice, he will simply hope that they will accept his generous offers.

He leaves and, while Hepzibah laments his evil ways, Phoebe questions if he is truly ill intentioned. Phoebe goes off to tend to Clifford, confused by the events of the day and certain that Hepzibah's contempt for the judge is rooted deeply in the past.



### ***IX: Clifford and Phoebe***

Despite her ongoing attempts to care for Clifford, Hepzibah realizes that because she so horribly lacks the beauty he so adores, Phoebe is better equipped to tend to him. Clifford brightens in Phoebe's refreshing and purifying presence and although he does not act on it, he finds himself attracted to her. For her part, Phoebe is likely unaware of her impact on Clifford. She finds the mysteries of his past annoying and is brought down a bit by the heavy atmosphere. Nonetheless, she perseveres, and the three settle into a daily routine. While Clifford sleeps in the morning, Phoebe works in the shop, which the public seems to enjoy. In the afternoons, Hepzibah takes over in the shop while Phoebe spends time with Clifford.

### ***X: The Pyncheon-Garden***

Phoebe often takes Clifford into the garden, where she reads to him. Clifford prefers poetry and is deeply delighted by the flowers in the garden. He is particularly fond of the scarlet blossoms found on some of the bean-vines, which Holgrave planted after finding the presumably ancient seeds in one of the garrets. The blossoms attract an ongoing stream of hummingbirds, which Clifford watches with childlike enthusiasm. Hepzibah is both happy and sad to see her brother's reaction.

She remembers that the hummingbirds had the same effect on him in his youth, yet she is saddened by his present state. For his part, Clifford wants to be sure that what he is experiencing is real and sometimes asks Phoebe to pinch him or to give him a rose so that he can prick himself with the thorns. One day, Clifford asks that the hens be freed from their enclosure. When Hepzibah cooks one of the hen's recently laid eggs, the rooster "delivered himself of a harangue that might have proved as long as his own pedigree." Clifford likes to spend time looking into Maule's Well, where beautiful faces formed from the colored pebbles at the bottom greet him. Occasionally, dark faces appear and hamper his mood for the remainder of the day.

On Sundays after Phoebe attends church, Clifford, Hepzibah, Holgrave, and Uncle Venner gather for picnics in the garden. Clifford feels young in Uncle Venner's presence and is uncharacteristically social with him. Holgrave tries to engage with Clifford as well, but seems to be motivated by something other than beneficence. One Sunday, Clifford sadly declares that he wants his happiness. The narrator calls Clifford part crazy and part imbecile and cautions him to enjoy what he has because happiness other than this may always elude him.

### ***XI: The Arched Window***

In addition to taking Clifford to the garden, Phoebe often brings him to sit in front of the window that faces the street. From there, he watches passersby. Clifford finds all of the new inventions strange, including the omnibus, the water-cart, the cab, and the railroad steam-devil. He prefers the things of his past, like the butcher's cart, the fishcart, and the scissor-grinder. One afternoon, an organ player stops in front of the house. While the greedy monkey plies the crowd for money, the organ player turns the crank, which plays music and also sets a host of small figures into action. The narrator notes that despite the actions engaged in by

each figure, when the music stops, they have come no further than when they started. The cobbler does not finish making his shoe, the blacksmith's iron is not shaped, and the milkmaid has fetched no milk. Clifford enjoys the music but finally cries about the monkey because of its physical and spiritual ugliness.

On another day, a procession passes the house and while watching the throngs of people, Clifford makes an attempt to jump into the crowd from the balcony. He is stopped by Phoebe and Hepzibah, but the narrator notes that such a plunge into the sea of humanity may have been a help to him. One Sunday, Clifford and Hepzibah decide to go to church. The two ready themselves but are unable to step out of the house. Clifford claims that they are ghosts whose only place is right there in the house. On yet another day, Clifford blows bubbles off the balcony, and one bubble lands and pops on Judge Jaffrey Pyncheon's nose. The judge mocks Clifford for still partaking in childish endeavors. Clifford is overcome with fear.

### ***XII: The Daguerreotypist***

When Clifford retires for the day, Phoebe spends her time shopping and reading the Bible. She has grown pensive and more mature under the influence of her relations and her stay in their home. Her only social outlet is Holgrave, who despite their almost daily encounters she feels she does not really know. Holgrave was independent early in life and has held many jobs, including schoolmaster, salesman, peddler, and dentist. He has traveled in Europe and lectured about mesmerism. Despite such experiences, he is not learned and is marked by youthful passion more than intellect.

In one of his meetings with Phoebe, with whom he appears smitten, Holgrave shares his views about the past and the future. He argues that everything in the past should be discarded and that before men can make their own mark on the world, they must rid themselves of the influence of previous generations. He believes that each new generation should start fresh, building their own public buildings and even homes. He argues that the House of the Seven Gables should be burned and cleansed of its awful past. Toward the end of their conversation, the legend of Colonel Pyncheon and Matthew Maule surfaces, and Holgrave tells Phoebe that he means to publish some of the Pyncheon history in a magazine. After Phoebe accedes to hearing it, he produces his manuscript of the story and begins to read.

### ***XIII: Alice Pyncheon***

The thirteenth chapter presents the text of Holgrave's story. Gervayse Pyncheon, having recently returned from Europe, requests that Matthew Maule (the younger) come to the House of the Seven Gables. Gervayse believes that Matthew may know the whereabouts of the deed to the land in Maine that Colonel Pyncheon was in the process of acquiring at the time of his death. Matthew is described as an unpopular man and despite his lower class status, enters the Pyncheon house through the front door. Gervayse offers Matthew money in exchange for information about the missing deed; however, Matthew refuses.

When Matthew eventually agrees to give Gervayse the information in exchange for the House of the Seven Gables, the two confirm their agreement in writing and with a drink. Before leaving, Matthew asks to see Gervayse's daughter, Alice. When Alice looks at him admiringly, Matthew misconstrues her look as disapproval. Matthew mesmerizes Alice in an attempt to summon the spirits of his father, grandfather, and Colonel Pyncheon. Gervayse intervenes and attempts to stop the process; however, on Alice's insistence, Matthew continues. Once summoned, the Maule spirits prevent the spirit of Colonel Pyncheon from telling where the deed is hidden. Matthew Maule (the younger) tells Gervayse that the secret must be kept until the deed is worthless and awakes Alice. Alice remains under his spell, however, and at any time, he can simply command her to laugh, be sad, or dance, and she does his bidding.

On his wedding day, Matthew summons Alice to wait on his bride. She does so, and finally Matthew releases Alice from her spell. Alice kisses the bride and walks home in the snow in inappropriate clothes. She catches a cold and ultimately dies. Matthew attends the funeral procession, noting that he only meant to humble her and now she was dead.

#### ***XIV: Phoebe's Good Bye***

Having listened carefully to Holgrave's detailed story, Phoebe is mesmerized. Holgrave is attempting to keep Phoebe under his spell; however, his integrity and value of the individual inspires him to awaken her. As the two watch the moon come up, Holgrave comments on his current happiness while Phoebe reflects that she has seen gayer days. Her time with Hepzibah and Clifford has aged her and, she hopes, made her wiser. Holgrave assures her that she is simply maturing and that what she is experiencing is an important part of the development of her soul. Phoebe gets up to help Hepzibah with the day's accounts when Holgrave acknowledges that she will briefly be returning to her country home. He tells Phoebe that her presence has much improved the lives of Hepzibah and Clifford, who for the most part are dead souls.

When Phoebe wonders if he means well by the Pyncheon siblings, he responds that unlike her, he is not compelled to help them, but rather to observe them. Holgrave says that he believes that Judge Jaffrey Pyncheon is ill-intentioned and that trouble is brewing. Two mornings later, Phoebe is tearful as she leaves, and Hepzibah notices that the young woman's smile is not as bright as it was upon her arrival. Clifford bids her goodbye, telling her that she has matured into a beautiful woman. Phoebe passes Uncle Venner, who like Holgrave, tells her what a boon she has been to the Pyncheon siblings. He likens her to an angel and hopes she will return quickly.

#### ***XV: The Scowl and the Smile***

The days following Phoebe's departure are dreary and stormy. Hepzibah's business falls off, and Clifford takes to his bed. Making matters worse, Judge Jaffrey Pyncheon arrives and insists upon seeing Clifford. He at first tries to sweet talk Hepzibah with words of kindness

and love about her and Clifford. Hepzibah remains cold and bitter and refuses to let him see Clifford, whom she fears would be unable to handle the encounter.

Eventually, the judge becomes enraged. He tells Hepzibah that Clifford knows the whereabouts of certain necessary paperwork about the large remaining portion of their uncle Jaffrey Pyncheon's estate and threatens to have Clifford committed to an asylum if Hepzibah does not let him talk with him. Hepzibah insists that Clifford could not possibly know anything about the hidden wealth, but fearing her cousin's intentions, goes to summon Clifford. The judge sits in the chair that Colonel Pyncheon occupied upon his death and waits.

### ***XVI: Clifford's Chamber***

While Hepzibah slowly ascends the stairs to Clifford's room, she wonders if he could possibly know anything about the missing portion of their uncle's estate. She concludes it is impossible and ponders going for help. She knows the community would favor the judge and instead attempts to find Holgrave, who she discovers is not in his room. Giving in to the inevitable meeting, she knocks on Clifford's door and after receiving no answer, she enters to find that he is not in bed. Fearing he may have left and drowned himself to escape his cousin's inquiry, Hepzibah returns to the parlor to summon the judge for help. Despite Hepzibah's emotional and animated outbursts, the judge does not move or respond. Clifford appears and pointing into the parlor, tells Hepzibah that they are now free to dance, sing, play, and be as happy as Phoebe. Going into the parlor, Hepzibah realizes that the judge is dead. Clifford tells Hepzibah that they must go and the two leave the house.

### ***XVII: The Flight of Two Owls***

Clifford and Hepzibah board the train. Hepzibah feels as though she is in a dream while Clifford feels exhilarated by the events. Clifford begins a conversation with a fellow passenger, noting the merits of the railroad and its ability to take people away from their homes and parlors. Contrary to his previous favoring of the things of yore, Clifford expounds that the railroad is one of the greatest modern inventions for it will enable people to return to their nomadic routes. He argues that men need to be on the move rather than cooped up in their homes.

Speaking of the House of the Seven Gables, Clifford deems that it should be burned because of the image of the dead man that it conjures in his mind. Hepzibah asks Clifford to be quiet for fear that the traveler may think he is crazy. Enlivened by his thoughts, however, Clifford continues, pointing to the merits of mesmerism and the telegraph. He likes that friends and lovers can be more connected via the telegraph, yet expresses disdain for its use to catch criminals. Clifford and Hepzibah depart the train and all of Clifford's energy drains away. He tells Hepzibah that she must now take charge of their future. Hepzibah prays that God will guide them.

### ***XVIII: Governor Pyncheon***

Judge Pyncheon remains motionless in the parlor. Despite having open eyes, he is not breathing. His watch continues to tick as the narrator inquires why he lingers. The narrator addresses him, asking if he has forgotten his appointments for the day, especially his dinner with important personages from throughout the state who he was hoping to persuade to nominate him as a candidate for governor. The narrator encourages the judge to make haste; however, he of course does not. A procession of Pyncheon spirits then enters the room, starting with Colonel Pyncheon followed by the next six generations.

Noticing that Judge Pyncheon's son is among the spirits, the narrator notes that the judge's wealth will now go to Clifford, Hepzibah, and Phoebe. When the next morning comes and the judge still does not stir, the narrator gives up the address just as the shop-bell rings.

### ***XIX: Alice's Posies***

The storm has ended, and the neighborhood is alive. The flowers on top of the house are in bloom. Uncle Venner arrives at the House of the Seven Gables to pick up the food Hepzibah sets aside for his pigs, and Holgrave tells him that no one is home. When Mrs. Gubbins comes to the shop, a neighbor tells her that she will not be able buy anything because Hepzibah and Clifford left yesterday to go to Judge Pyncheon's. Ned Higgins also comes to the shop to find it closed. The two laborers pass and speculate that Hepzibah has run off because her shop has failed.

When the butcher comes, he peeks inside and believes he sees Clifford sitting in the parlor rudely ignoring his knocking. The organ player also arrives and after playing for a bit is warned to move on because rumor has it that the judge has been murdered in the house. Finding Judge Pyncheon's card with his datebook items for the previous day on the back of it on the porch, one of the laborers deems that they should take it to the City Marshal. Phoebe arrives and is warned by Ned Higgins that something wicked is inside. As Phoebe knocks at the door, it opens before her. She assumes it is Hepzibah opening it. She steps inside, and it closes behind her.

### ***XX: The Flower of Eden***

Holgrave, not Hepzibah, leads Phoebe into what had been the grand reception room. He tells her that Hepzibah and Clifford are gone and shows her the daguerreotype of the judge he made some time ago. He then shows her one he just completed, and she surmises that the judge is dead. Holgrave tells Phoebe that he has not told anyone about the death because he believes that with Hepzibah and Clifford gone and the similarity between the judge's death and uncle Jaffrey Pyncheon's, the two will be implicated. Holgrave believes that the judge's death, if evaluated properly, will show that his death occurred because of an inherited family condition.

He also tells Phoebe that he believes the judge made uncle Jaffrey Pyncheon's death look violent after the man had already died of the same affliction. Holgrave then professes his love

for Phoebe and vice versa. Just then, Hepzibah and Clifford return home. Clifford is glad to be home and seems stronger than Hepzibah, who is in tears.

### ***XXI: The Departure***

The judge's death creates a stir until the public learns that he died of natural causes. They seem to easily forget him except for the rumors that now surface about his less than benevolent past. A rumor now prevails that the night of old Jaffrey Pyncheon's death, the younger Jaffrey rummaged through the elder man's papers. Part way through the task, old Jaffrey surprised his nephew. As a result of the shock and his hereditary disposition, the elder Jaffrey died of apoplexy. The younger Jaffrey continued to look through the papers and destroyed a new version of his uncle's will, which left a favorable portion of the man's estate to Clifford.

To avoid suspicion, the judge arranged clues that pointed police to Clifford as the assailant. Jaffrey did not intend Clifford be tried for murder; however, he never told authorities about his own part in his uncle's death. In subsequent years, the younger Jaffrey wrote the incident off to youth and rarely thought about it. Next, readers learn that the judge's only heir, his son, has died of cholera while traveling and that as a result, Clifford, Hepzibah, Phoebe, and Holgrave are now to enjoy the judge's riches. Though Clifford is never restored to his former self, he is greatly brightened by the judge's death. Clifford, Hepzibah, Phoebe, and Holgrave move to the judge's country estate as do the Pyncheon hens, who become prolific egg layers.

In the face of the change, Holgrave's progressive views seem to be becoming more conservative. On the day of their departure, the foursome and Uncle Venner gaze upon Colonel Pyncheon's portrait and Clifford comments that he has a hazy remembrance about the portrait holding a secret about wealth. Holgrave taps a hidden spring on the portrait, which sends the picture toppling to the floor. In the open space that is revealed, everyone sees the legendary deed to the land in Maine. Hepzibah comments that Clifford must have mentioned something in his youth about the portrait to the judge, who then mistakenly believed that Clifford knew something about the whereabouts of their uncle's remaining estate. Holgrave reveals that he knows of the spring because he is the son of Thomas Maule, who hid the parchment behind the portrait when he built the house.

Uncle Venner ventures that the claim is now worthless. Phoebe insists that Uncle Venner come live in the cottage on the judge's property. Clifford seconds the invitation and when the foursome prepare to depart, Uncle Venner is to follow them a few days later. Children gather around the carriage, and Hepzibah notices Ned Higgins, to whom she gives some money. The two laborers pass and acknowledge Hepzibah's good fortune. Leaving the house, Uncle Venner fancies he hears Alice Pyncheon playing her harpsichord as she ascends to heaven.

## **Characters:**

### ***Ned Higgins***

Ned Higgins, a young boy, is Hepzibah's first shop customer. He is a repeat customer who enjoys the shop's gingerbread cookies. When Phoebe returns from her visit home and later discovers that the judge has died in the parlor, Ned warns her that something wicked has happened in the house. As Hepzibah, Clifford, Phoebe, and Holgrave leave to take up residence at the judge's country estate, Hepzibah gives Ned money.

### ***Holgrave***

Holgrave is a resident in one of the gables in the House of the Seven Gables. The narrator describes him as "a slender young man, not more than one or two and twenty years old, with a rather grave and thoughtful expression, for his years, but likewise a springy alacrity and vigor." He is exceptionally supportive of Hepzibah's opening of the cent shop. Holgrave falls in love with Phoebe and, in the final chapter, reveals that he is a descendent of Matthew Maule. Toward the end of the story, Holgrave tells Clifford, Hepzibah, and Phoebe where the now worthless deed to the Maine land can be found. Holgrave is a young and passionate character whose politics run contrary to the conservative ideals that the aristocratic Hepzibah embraces.

Both professionally and personally, he represents the coming of the modern age and the retiring of past traditions. Although he has dabbled in several occupations, including dentistry and teaching, Holgrave is now a daguerreotypist, or a photographer. His profession represents the way in which he is a forward thinker who enjoys the changes brought by technology. Unlike Clifford, who is at first nostalgic about the past, Holgrave favors the future. Like his ancestor, Matthew Maule, Holgrave has the power of mesmerism, or the ability to hypnotize people. Unlike the younger Matthew Maule, Holgrave does not use this power in harmful ways against other people, specifically Phoebe.

### ***Matthew Maule (The Elder)***

Matthew Maule is the first owner of the land upon which the House of the Seven Gables is eventually built. He is not a man of great wealth or power, yet he stands up against Colonel Pyncheon and refuses to give him his land. As a result, Maule is put on trial for practicing witchcraft and is ultimately convicted and hung. Just before his death, Maule curses Colonel Pyncheon, who watches the proceedings from horseback. Maule says, "God will give him blood to drink." When Pyncheon dies mysteriously after building a home on Maule's land, the curse is believed by some to be the reason. Maule's son, Thomas, served as the architect of the House of the Seven Gables.

### ***Matthew Maule (The Younger)***

The younger Matthew Maule is the grandson of Matthew Maule (the elder). His father, Thomas Maule built the House of the Seven Gables. The younger Matthew Maule makes a deal with Gervayse Pyncheon, telling him that he will tell him where the legendary deed is

for the land in Maine in trade for the House of the Seven Gables. Using his powers of mesmerism, Matthew hypnotizes Alice Pyncheon, Gervayse's daughter, and conjures the spirits of Colonel Pyncheon, the elder Matthew Maule, and Thomas Maule. The Maule spirits thwart his efforts and refuse to let the Colonel tell him where the papers are hidden. Matthew Maule (the younger) cancels the deal with Gervayse but keeps Alice Pyncheon under his spell. He makes her do humiliating things and eventually, releasing her from his spell, allows her to walk home improperly clothed for snow. She dies as a result.

### ***Thomas Maule***

Thomas Maule is the son of Matthew Maule (the elder) and the father of Matthew Maule (the younger). He is the architect that built the House of the Seven Gables. When Thomas builds the house, he hides the deed to the legendary land in Maine behind the portrait of Colonel Pyncheon.

### ***Alice Pyncheon***

Alice Pyncheon is the daughter of Gervayse Pyncheon, the granddaughter of Colonel Pyncheon, and Phoebe's great-great-grand-aunt. Hepzibah describes her as "exceedingly beautiful and accomplished." Alice is hypnotized by the younger Matthew Maule and forced to act in embarrassing and humiliating ways, including waiting on his bride. Once Alice is released from Matthew's spell, she walks home inappropriately clothed for the snow and dies. The flowers that grow in between two of the gables are said to have been sprinkled there by Alice. They are called Alice's Posies. Sometimes the sounds of her harpsichord are said to be heard in the house.

### ***Clifford Pyncheon***

Clifford Pyncheon is Hepzibah's brother and Judge Jaffrey Pyncheon's cousin. After being framed by his cousin for the murder of his uncle, Old Jaffrey Pyncheon, Clifford is imprisoned for thirty years. He returns to the House of the Seven Gables following his imprisonment and is cared for by Hepzibah and Phoebe. Prior to his incarceration, Clifford is a man of privilege who enjoys all that is beautiful. This quality persists in him and is evident in his inability to look at his unattractive, scowling sister and his desire to quit the "dismal house" for finer accommodations in the South of France and Italy. He fancies Phoebe and seems to lose himself in the sensual undertaking of eating.

Following his imprisonment, Clifford is a changed man. No longer masculine or mature, he is characterized by the narrator as feminine and childlike. When readers first meet Clifford, he is described as elderly and spiritless. The narrator writes "It was the spirit of the man, that could not walk" as though he "must have suffered some miserable wrong from its earthly experience." Early in the novel, Clifford is enamored of the past and watches wistfully from the arched window as modern inventions pass. He wishes to recover the life that is symbolized by the "antique fashions of the street." His past, however, is lost.

After finding Judge Jaffrey Pyncheon dead, Clifford seems more equipped to embrace the



future. As he and Hepzibah flee by train, he talks with a fellow traveler and lauds the advances of modern science and technology. Clifford's new attitude toward technology and his inherited wealth from Judge Jaffrey Pyncheon foretell a brighter future for him as well as for Hepzibah, Phoebe, and Holgrave, who all move out of the House of the Seven Gables to the judge's estate.

### ***Colonel Pyncheon***

Colonel Pyncheon is the man who had the House of the Seven Gables built 160 years before the action of the story takes place. He built the house on a piece of land that first belonged to Matthew Maule (the elder). Colonel Pyncheon was instrumental in having the elder Matthew Maule put to death for witchcraft. As a result of Matthew's death, Colonel Pyncheon was able to seize the land that he had long tried to obtain from Matthew.

On the day that Colonel Pyncheon hosts a grand house warming party with many important community members in attendance, he is found dead in his study. In the story that unfolds, Colonel Pyncheon's portrait still hangs in the house and the legend of the Pyncheon and Maule conflict serves as the basis for one of Hawthorne's themes, which is that the sins of the past are carried down through successive generations. Like the Colonel, two other Pyncheon men die of apoplexy, an unexpected hemorrhage.

### ***Gervayse Pyncheon***

Gervayse is Colonel Pyncheon's son and Alice Pyncheon's father. In the story that Holgrave relates to Phoebe, Gervayse is said to have returned from Europe and begun to search for the deed to the land in Maine that the Colonel was in the process of acquiring at the time of his death. Gervayse summons the younger Matthew Maule to the house and makes a deal to give him the House of the Seven Gables in exchange for information about the missing deed. Matthew (the younger) then hypnotizes Alice, who eventually dies due in part to his mistreatment of her. Gervayse's greed can be blamed for his daughter's death.

### ***Hepzibah Pyncheon***

Hepzibah is the struggling spinster heroine of the novel. She resides in the House of the Seven Gables. She is Clifford's sister and Judge Jaffrey Pyncheon's niece. In the novel, she represents "old Gentility" with a reverence for the past and her previously well-to-do life. The narrator describes her "cherished and ridiculous consciousness" of her privileged ancestry, "her shadowy claims to princely territory." He recounts her accomplishments as having "thrummed on a harpsichord, and walked a minuet, and worked an antique tapestrystitch on her sampler."

As an aristocrat who has fallen into poverty, Hepzibah must save herself from complete financial destitution by opening a cent-shop in her home. The townspeople have little compassion for her and suspect her enterprise will fail. For the most part, the residents of the town seem to dislike Hepzibah. The narrator writes "they cared nothing for her dignity, and

just as little for her degradation.” She is an unattractive woman who has a perpetual scowl. Her rough and unapproachable exterior, however, hides a tender heart.

She is deeply devoted to her brother and holds deep hatred and contempt for her cousin. Hepzibah’s impoverished existence seems to better her. The narrator writes “she had been enriched by poverty, developed by sorrow . . . and endowed with heroism, which never could have characterized her in what are called happier circumstances.”

### ***Judge Jaffrey Pyncheon (The Younger)***

Judge Jaffrey Pyncheon is Hepzibah and Clifford’s cousin and the nephew of old Jaffrey Pyncheon. The judge dies toward the end of the book, and because his son dies from cholera, Clifford inherits the judge’s riches. Prior to becoming a judge, the younger Jaffrey Pyncheon facilitated the death of his uncle. While the young Jaffrey was rifling through the old man’s papers, the elder Jaffrey Pyncheon happened upon him and died of apoplexy. The younger Jaffrey destroyed a newly revised version of the elder Jaffrey’s will, which favored Clifford, and successfully framed Clifford for their uncle’s death.

The judge later assists in Clifford’s release from jail and his return to the House of the Seven Gables in hopes that he can help him locate papers that will point him to the remainder of their uncle’s estate. As the narrator tells us, the judge was “reckoned rather a dissipated youth, but had at once reformed, and made himself an exceedingly respectable member of society.” He served in an “inferior court” and later “served a part of two terms in Congress.” Despite living a life “befitting the christian, the good citizen, the horticulturist, and the gentleman,” Judge Jaffrey Pyncheon’s status as a good man is a farce. Hawthorne evidences this fact by drawing strong comparisons between the judge and Colonel Pyncheon. When shown Holgrave’s photograph of the judge, Phoebe mistakes him for the Colonel, and the narrator comments of their likeness:

It implied that the weaknesses and defects, the bad passions, the mean tendencies, and the moral diseases which lead to crime, are handed down from one generation to another, by a far surer process of transmission than human law has been able to establish, in respect to the riches and honors which it seeks to entail upon posterity.

Like the Colonel, the judge is motivated by his own greed and strong desire for self-aggrandizement. He is a selfish, deceitful, and cruel man. His apparently benevolent attempts to help Clifford and Hepzibah are as false as the smiles he presents to the public. In the end, the public learns (albeit) through rumors, about his hand in the old Jaffrey Pyncheon’s death and Clifford’s imprisonment.

### ***Old Jaffrey Pyncheon***

Old Jaffrey Pyncheon is the uncle of Judge Jaffrey Pyncheon, Clifford, and Hepzibah. Like Colonel Pyncheon, old Jaffrey Pyncheon dies of apoplexy. His affliction is triggered when he finds the younger Jaffrey rifling through his personal papers. The younger Jaffrey Pyncheon inherits the elder’s wealth. Old Jaffrey Pyncheon believed that “Matthew Maule, the wizard,

had been wronged out of his homestead, if not out of his life,” and intended “to make restitution to Maule’s posterity” before his death, but was unable to do so.

### ***Phoebe Pyncheon***

Phoebe is a Pyncheon relation from the country. She comes to visit Hepzibah after her (Phoebe’s) mother remarries. She falls in love with Holgrave, cares for Clifford when he cannot bear to look at his sister, and much to the neighborhood’s delight, works in Hepzibah’s cent-shop. Whereas Judge Jaffrey Pyncheon (the younger) can be seen to represent all that is evil, Phoebe represents all that is good. The narrator describes her as “very pretty; as graceful as a bird, and graceful much in the same way; as pleasant, about the house, as a gleam of sunshine.”

In sum, she is the epitome of “feminine grace.” The narrator stresses Phoebe’s good nature and ability to transform the places and people she encounters by her sweet disposition and charming voice. Like the sunshine, she has a refreshing influence on all of the characters, particularly Hepzibah and Clifford. When Phoebe first arrives at the House of the Seven Gables, she fixes up her living quarters. The narrator notes that it had now “been purified of all former evil and sorrow by her sweet breath and happy thoughts.” Such is her effect throughout the narrative. For all of her beauty, Phoebe is not an intellectual and is naïve about the evil’s of human nature; however, she becomes wiser as the novel progresses.

### ***Uncle Venner***

Uncle Venner is one of the oldest habitants of Pyncheon Street who befriends Hepzibah, Clifford, and Phoebe. He is one of Hepzibah’s first customers. Clifford finds his company agreeable as well, and he joins the two along with Phoebe and Holgrave for picnics. The narrator says that he “was commonly regarded as rather deficient, than otherwise, in his wits,” but that there was “something like poetry in him.”

In sum, Uncle Venner is described as “a miscellaneous old gentleman, partly himself, but, in good measure, somebody else; patched together, too, of different epochs; an epitome of times and fashions.” In the end, Uncle Venner joins Clifford, Hepzibah, Phoebe, and Holgrave in their move to the judge’s country estate.

**##**

## from UNIT – 7

### Girish Karnad: *Tughlaq*

#### Introduction:

**Girish Karnad**, (born May 19, 1938, Matheran, Bombay Presidency [now in Maharashtra], India—died June 10, 2019, Bengaluru, Karnataka), Indian playwright, author, actor, and film director whose movies and plays, written largely in Kannada, explore the present by way of the past.

After graduating from Karnataka University in 1958, Karnad studied philosophy, politics, and economics as a Rhodes scholar at the University of Oxford (1960–63). He wrote his first play, the critically acclaimed *Yayati* (1961), while still at Oxford. Centred on the story of a mythological king, the play established Karnad's use of the themes of history and mythology that would inform his work over the following decades. Karnad's next play, *Tughlaq* (1964), tells the story of the 14th-century sultan Muhammad ibn Tughluq and remains among the best known of his works.

*Samskara* (1970) marked Karnad's entry into filmmaking. He wrote the screenplay and played the lead role in the film, an adaptation of an anticaste novel of the same name by U.R. Ananthamurthy. Karnad followed with *Vamsha Vriksha* (1971), codirected by B.V. Karanth. During this period Karnad continued to produce work as a playwright, including *Hayavadana* (1971), widely recognized as among the most important plays of post-independence India.

*Hayavadana* is based on Thomas Mann's novella *The Transposed Heads*, a retelling of a Sanskrit tale found in the collection *Kathasaritsagara*. *Hayavadana* explores the tangled relationship between the bosom friends – Devadatta (a man of the mind) and Kapila (a man of the body) – and Padmini. Devadatta marries her; Kapila falls in love with her; she is attracted towards Kapila.

Another of his famous play is *Nagamandala* (1988) which won him the Karnataka Sahitya Academy Award for the Most Creative Work of 1989.

For his contributions to theatre, he was awarded the **Padma Shri**, one of India's top civilian honours, in 1974. In 1992 the Indian government awarded Karnad another of its highest honours, the Padma Bhushan, in recognition of his contributions to the arts. He was the recipient of the **Jnanpith Award**, India's highest literary prize, in 1999 for his contributions to literature and theatre. He continued to work in film, directing such movies as *Kanooru Heggadithi* (1999) and acting in *Iqbal* (2005), *Life Goes On* (2009), and *24* (2016), among others.

### **The Gist of the Play:**

The first scene of Girish Karnad's second play, *Tughlaq*, published in Kannada in 1964 when he was 26 years old and later translated by the playwright into English, begins with a conversation between an old and young man. "Old man: God, what's this country coming to! /Young man: What are you worried about, grandfather? The country's in perfectly safe hands — safer than any you've seen before." The play, in 13 scenes, woven around the life and times of Muhammad bin Tughlaq, the 14th century sultan of Delhi, an authoritarian but idealistic king who disintegrates into failure in a span of 20 years, is eerily contemporary.

The king wanted to build a secular state, moving his capital from Delhi to Daulatabad, a Hindu-majority city; his ideas about the economy were new but he turned into a whimsical tyrant who couldn't control the kingdom any more. When it came out, writer U.R. Anantha Murthy felt it reflected the political mood of disillusionment which followed the Nehru era of idealism in the country. But it was as relatable during subsequent moments of crisis in our history as it is to the present.

All sorts of hangers-on mill around the court — a Muslim dhobi (Aziz) disguised as a Brahmin (Vishnu Prasad) will turn the king's welfare measures on their head and feast on the spoils. As Tughlaq works towards "greater justice, equality, progress and peace," he announces the move from Delhi to Daulatabad, much to the bewilderment of the people. The old man whispers, "Who do you appeal to against such madness?" It is this madness that Aziz and his pickpocket friend Aazam exploit, and others too. A voice of reason saying, "Religion! Politics! Take heed, Sultan, one day these verbal distinctions will rip you into two," goes unheard.

The king plays chess, as affairs of the state heat up. His advisers include the shrewd politician, Najib, and the gentle historian, Barani, but will Tughlaq be able to stand up to his harshest critic, the Maulvi, Sheikh Imam-ud-din? At the new fort in Daulatabad an old man and a young man speak, foretelling the future. "Young man: What a fort! What a magnificent thing! ...No army could take this. Old man: No, if this fort ever falls, it will crumble from inside."

In the Oxford University Press edition, U. R. Anantha Murthy writes in the introduction that the play is more than a political allegory: "It has an irreducible, puzzling quality which comes from the ambiguities of Tughlaq's character, the dominating figure in the play." It relates the character of Tughlaq to "philosophical questions on the nature of man and the destiny of a whole kingdom which a dreamer like him controls," making it a universal story for the ages.

## Excerpts from the Text:

### *Tughlaq: A play in thirteen scenes*

(Kannada, 1964; English, 1975)

*The action of the play takes place first of all in Delhi in the year 1327, then on the road from Delhi to **Daulatabad**, and lastly in and around the fort in Daulatabad five years later.*

#### SCENE ONE

**MUHAMMAD** [TUGHLAQ]: My beloved people . . . Later this year the capital of my empire will be moved from Delhi to Daulatabad.

...

**AAZAM**: Complicated!

**AZIZ**: . . . Why don't you come along too? I'll get you a job under me. You know, a Brahmin with a Muslim friend—the Sultan will like that.

**AAZAM**: No, thanks, I'm quite happy—

**AZIZ**: Come along. It won't be for long. I don't intend to be a Brahmin all my life! There's money here and we'll make a pile by the time we reach Daulatabad.

#### SCENE TWO

**STEP-MOTHER**: Muhammad, why don't you tell them about your chess?

**MUHAMMAD**: Because they aren't interested. Barani is a historian—he's only interested in playing chess with the shadows of the dead. And Najib's a politician—he wants pawns of flesh and blood. . .

...

**NAJIB**: . . . Sheikh Imam-ud-din is in Delhi. . . He has become a backbone of the rebels.

**MUHAMMAD**: . . . Is it true he looks like me?

...

**BARANI**: It's obvious, Your Majesty. He [Najib] wants the Sheikh dead.

**NAJIB**: Nonsense! That'll make him a martyr. You can't kill the dead. If we kill him now, we're finished. We might as well surrender to Ain-ul-Mulk.

**BARANI** (*startled*): Surrender to whom?

**NAJIB**: Ain-ul-Mulk. He is marching on Delhi.

#### SCENE FOUR

**SHIHAB-UD-DIN**: And the Sultan? Didn't he do anything?

**RATANSINGH**: He did! The Sheikh [Imam-ud-din] plunged down from the elephant and over his corpse we fled in confusion. The enemy [Ain-ul-Mulk] was convinced the Sultan was dead and they pursued us. They walked right into the trap. It was the

bloodiest massacre I've ever seen . . . We won!

### SCENE SIX

**MUHAMMAD:** . . . From next year, we shall have copper currency in our empire along with the silver dinars.

### SCENE NINE

*A hide-out in the hills . . .*

**MAN:** You'll soon know, you scoundrels. I am Ghiyas-ud-din Abbasid. The descendant of Khalif Abbasid. I am the Guest of Honour of His Majesty.

...

**AZIZ:** I am not going with you. I am going in your place.

**AAZAM:** Aziz, listen—

**AZIZ:** . . . Now the Sultan's picked this rat up from the gutters for some game of his own. Who will worry about this fool when people are dying without food in Daulatabad.

### SCENE THIRTEEN

**MUHAMMAD:** Who are you? How long did you hope to go on fooling us with your masquerade?

**AZIZ:** . . . I insist I am Your Majesty's true disciple.

. . . I was a poor starving dhobi, when Your Majesty came to the throne and declared the brotherhood of all religions. Does the Sultan remember the Brahmin who brought a case against him and won? I was that Brahmin. . . Soon after that Your Majesty introduced the new copper currency. I succumbed to its temptation. . . I admit I killed Ghiyas-ud-din and cheated you. Yet I am your Majesty's true disciple

**MUHAMMAD:** . . . you think I would succumb to you? A dhobi, masquerading as a saint?

**AZIZ (quietly):** What if I am a dhobi, Your Majesty? When it comes to washing away filth no saint is a match for a dhobi.

*MUHAMMAD suddenly bursts into a guffaw. There is a slight hysterical tinge to the laughter.*

**MUHAMMAD (laughing):** Checkmate! Checkmate! I don't think I have ever seen such insolence. This man's a genius—all right, tell me. What punishment should I give you for your crimes?

**AZIZ:** Make me an officer of your State, Your Majesty.

**MUHAMMAD:** That would be punishing myself—not you. . . It's time for the prayer. Remember, you are still His Holiness Ghiyas-ud-din Abbasid and you have to be there to lead the prayer. Be off now.

**AZIZ:** Your Majesty's most faithful servant.

...

**BARANI:** But why? Why?

**MUHAMMAD:** All your life you wait for someone who understands you. And then—  
you meet him—

. . . There is only one place to go back to now. Delhi. Back to Delhi, Barani.

. . . I am suddenly feeling tired. And sleepy.

**MUEZZIN** (*off-stage*): Alla-Ho-Akbar! Alla-Ho-Akbar! . . .

*As the MUEZZIN'S call fades away, MUHAMMAD suddenly opens his eyes. He looks around dazed and frightened, as though he can't comprehend where he is.*

\*\*\*

## **The Summary of the Text:**

### **Scene 1**

*AD 1321- The Yard in front of the chief court of Delhi. A crowd of citizens—mostly Muslims, with a few Hindus here and there.*

The first scene of Tughlaq starts with a conversation between an Old Man, a Young Man, a Third Man and a Hindu man. They are talking about the rule of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq/Sultan. The old man says that Muhammad has ruined the country and is an insult to Islam. The young man defends Muhammad saying that he is a true Islamist and that he made a rule that people should pray five times a day.

The announcer comes out of the court and announces that a Brahmin, Vishnu Prasad has filed a case against the Muhammad because the state officers had seized his land. The claims of the Brahmin were found to be just and in compensation, he would receive five hundred silver dinars and a post in the Civil Service.

The Muhammad comes out from the court. He announces to the crowd that he is shifting the capital from Delhi to Daulatabad as the capital city should be in the centre and not on the border of the country. He says that it will show the bond between the Muslims and Hindu. He says that people should accompany him.

Again, the conversation between the old and the young man occurs. They do not like this plan. The Third man says that Sheikh Immam-ud-din has claimed that the Muhammad is guilty of murdering his father and brother. The Guard comes out of the court and asks them to disperse.

Aazam, a pickpocket awaits to see the Brahmin. He soon finds out it is his friend Aziz. Aziz reveals his disguise and tells him that he cooked up a story and has got compensation. Previously the Muhammad had made a rule that any Hindu can file a case against the Muhammad asking for compensation for the loss caused by his officers. This is the reason why he disguised as a Brahmin. Aziz then suggests that Aazam should accompany him to the Civil Service and he would help him get a job.



## Scene 2

*A room in the Palace.*

A conversation between the Muhammad and his stepmother takes place. Muhammad tells her of his sleepless nights. Muhammad asks his stepmother if she believes the gossip (that Muhammad murdered his father and brother) for which she denies to say a thing. She says she wants to forget it and not to talk about it. He also says that Ain-ul-Mulk with an army of thirty thousand soldiers is marching towards Delhi. The stepmother is shocked as they both are good friends.

Then Najib(Politician) and Barani(Historian) – Muhammad’s most trusted friends enter. Najib is worried that Sheik-Imam-ud-in id is in Delhi and that they should get rid of him. Although Barani expresses that it is unnecessary. They talk about Ain-ul-Mulk and his sudden march towards Delhi. Najib says that he had refused the post as the Governor of Deccan as he already made friends with the Citizens of Avadh and didn’t want to leave. It is also mentioned by Najib that the Sheik has a striking resemblance to the Muhammad. The Muhammad wants the army to be ready to March to Kanauj the day after. He assigns Najib and Shihab-ud-in to lool after the administration when he is absent. Muhammad and Najib exit to see the commander-in-chief.

The stepmother and Barani are having a conversation. The stepmother is worried about Muhammad and his friends who are a bad influence (Najib). Barani agrees with her. The stepmother asks him to never leave the Muhammad and says that she cannot tolerate Najib anymore. Barani is shocked about her remark though promises that he will always be with the Muhammad.

An announcer has an announcement for the public. He asks all the people to be present in front of the Great mosque for a meeting. Sheik-Imam-ud-in will address the meeting and talk about the Muhammad’s administration and wrong measures.

## Scene 3

*The yard in front of the Great Mosque.*

The Muhammad, Sheik-Imam-ud-in and a few servants are present. Nobody turns up to the meeting. The Muhammad had already sent servants to threaten the people that they should not come to the meeting. The Muhammad did this to make a fool out of Sheik-Immam-ud-Din. There is a long conversation where he Muhammad is accused of his wrongdoings. The Muhammad says to Sheik that Ain-ul-Mulk is marching to Delhi and that he won’t see any of Muhammad’s envoys. He persuades the Sheik to go see him as Ain-ul-Mulk will only see him. The Muhammad says that there will be a war and that Muslims will die. The Sheik should go immediately to save the lives of Muslims. He is given royal robes and headdress. Now both of them look alike.

#### Scene 4

*The Palace. Shihab-ud-din is reading a few letters. There is an announcement.*

Shihab-ud-din and the stepmother are having a conversation. Sardar Ratansingh (Shihab's half-brother) enters, announces that Sheikh Imam-ud-din was killed in the battle and that the Muhammad will be arriving soon. The Muhammad enters along with Barani and Najib. The Muhammad says that he forgave Ain-ul-Mulk because he had solved a chess game (that he took days to solve) in a few minutes and even spotted a flaw in his solution. He had asked him to stay in Avadh and look after the people. Barani is happy that the Muhammad is capable of generosity. All except Shihab-ud-din and Ratansingh go. A brief Silence.

Ratansingh now tells Shihab the truth about Sheikh's death. Ratansingh had also gone along with the army. Muhammad was hiding behind the hills and laying a trap for the sheikh. When they went to propose peace, the soldiers of Muhammad started firing and when Ain-ul-Mulk's army fired back the Sheikh died. Ratansingh had escaped somehow. Shihab is confused about all the happenings. Ratansingh says that there is a secret meeting among the nobles of the court and some citizens. Ratansingh asks Shihab also to join.

#### Scene 5

*A house in Delhi. A collection of Amirs and Sayyids. Shihab and Ratansingh.*

They are talking about the rule of Muhammad. The Amirs say that the capital city is being shifted to Daulatabad to weaken the Amirs. They have to pay taxes for everything they do. There is a man named Sheikh Shams-ud-din in the meeting, he says that the Sheikh Haidari is in prison and the Sheikh Hood in exile. He says there is a lot of politics going on. An example of Sheikh Imam-ud-din's life is also discussed. Also, the fact that Muhammad's soldiers went from door to door threatening the people to not attend the meeting of Sheikh Imam-ud-din. Muhammad faults are displayed in the meeting to convince Shihab to join them in their secret plan, as he is a trusted person of the Muhammad. So they plan that the following Tuesday the Amirs would be seeing the Muhammad for the Durbar-i-Khas, and at that time Muhammad and his soldiers would be unarmed. They plan to kill him during the prayer. Shihab is still confused but is convinced to be a part of the conspiracy by Ratansingh.

#### Scene 6

*The Palace.*

The Muhammad, Barani and Najib are present and the Amirs enter. The Muhammad tells them that Abbasid Ghiyas-ud-din Muhammad (a member of the Abbasid Khalifs) has accepted his invitation to visit the capital. He also announces that from the following year there will be copper currency along with silver dinars in his empire and that it will have the same value. It is the prayer time, Muhammad unbuckles his sword and settles. Half-

way thought the prayer the Amirs draw out their Sword. Muhammad's soldiers surround the Amirs and drag them away, while Muhammad continues to pray. The Muhammad kills Shihab. Then the Muhammad asks Najib to kill everyone who is involved in this conspiracy. He asks for an announcement to be made saying that Shihab defended and saved Muhammad's life. He says that everyone should move to Daulatabad immediately.

### **Scene 7**

*A Camp in Delhi-Daulatabad route.*

Aziz is in disguise as Vishnu Prasad (Brahmin) and Aazam is with him. A Hindu woman is kneeling in front of Aziz, asking for a day leave as her daughter is unwell. Aziz asks her to bribe him to take a day off. But she has no money and her daughter dies. Then a man, his wife and their six children. Aziz tells them that they were supposed to be there before the sunset. The man replies that he got delayed because he was burying the corpses on the way. The man says that he watches over the corpses of the men that Muhammad has killed. If their family wanted the dead bodies, they had to pay. Hearing the rumours of copper currency, Aziz tells Aazam that they should mint copper coins and become rich.

### **Scene 8**

*The Fort at Daulatabad.*

There are two sentries, one young and the other past his middle age. They are standing near the fort and admire it. The old man says that he lost his father, son and his wife on the way. They talk about a python-like passage inside the fort that swallows people.

The Muhammad enters and asks the old man to bring Barani. A conversation occurs between Muhammad and the young man. The Muhammad says that he supervised the building when he was twenty-one.

Barani enters. The Muhammad tells him that Fakr-ud-din and Bahal-ud-din in Deccan have risen against him in Bengal. He says that at this point he can only trust Ain-ul-Mulk and Shihab's father.

The old man enters and announces that Najib has been found dead.

### **Scene 9**

*A Hide-Out in the hills.*

Aziz and Aazam are stretched out on the floor. They are having a conversation reflecting the Muhammad's life. Aazam is fed up with life. Aziz tries to tell him that he must be able to rob and punish the man for being robbed. That is the real King.

Karim brings a gagged man, thought to be a Turkish Merchant. The Man introduces himself as Ghiyas-ud-din Abbasid, a descendant of Khalif Abbasid and the Guest of

Honour of Muhammad. He threatens Aziz for treating him like this. Aziz says that the Muhammad has killed many people since he came to Daulatabad. Aziz says that he killed a man, filled the body with straw and strung up in the market place because he pretended to be a descendant of a Prophet. Ghiyas-ud-din says that he has a letter and a ring that the Muhammad sent to him as recognition.

Aziz kills Ghiyas-ud-din and plans to go see Muhammad in disguise.

### **Scene 10**

*The Palace.*

The Muhammad and the Stepmother are having a conversation. The stepmother questions Muhammad about the copper currency situation and says that it is a foolish act. Then they talk about Najib's death. She confesses that she killed Najib. Muhammad thinks that she did this to gain control over Muhammad. The Muhammad orders the soldiers to take her to prison and to stone her to death. He says that she is worse than an adulteress.

Barani enters. Muhammad says that he was about to pray against his own rules. Barani says that the Governor has sent a letter saying that they call all begin to pray.

The announcer enters. He announces that Ghiyas-ud-din will be arriving there day after at noon and all the people should gather. The prayers would restart on the following Friday and that Muslims should pray five times a day.

### **Scene 11**

*A Plain outside the fort of Daulatabad.*

Crowds of citizens have gathered to welcome Ghiyas-ud-din. The people say that they want food and not prayers. Aziz disguised as Ghiyas-ud-din enters and Muhammad embraces him. He falls on the feet of the holy man to wash away all his sins.

The Hindu woman recognizes Aziz. She comes out of the crowd and says that Aziz had killed her child. But nobody listens to her. Riot begins.

### **Scene 12**

*The palace.*

Aziz and Aazam are in the Palace. Aazam is afraid of standing with Aziz in doing all the wrong things. So decides to leave the palace. Aazam tells Aziz that he has bribed two servants to bring two horses and that they'll be ready in half an hour. Aazam says that the city is in chaos and that they have to escape through the secret passage. They talk about the coins heaped outside the palace. Aziz says that many of the coins were made by them. Aazam said that he saw the Muhammad dig his fingers into the coins, let them trickle out

and stood there for half an hour. Aazam tries to convince Aziz to come along but Aziz refuses. Aazam leaves the palace.

### **Scene 13**

*Another part of the Palace.*

The Muhammad and Barani are having a conversation. Barani wants to leave for his mother's funeral who died in the riots. He is unsure if he will return to the Muhammad.

A soldier enters. He announces that Aazam Jahan has been murdered in the tunnels. The Muhammad asks the soldier to keep this a secret and sends for Ghiyas-ud-din.

Aziz (in Disguise) enters. Aziz then reveals his disguise as he is questioned by the Muhammad. He says that he is a dhobi from Shiknar. He says that he shouldn't be punished as he has followed every order and instruction with great attention. He says that he has been welcomed publicly and called a saviour by the Muhammad. The Muhammad has also fallen to his feet to get blessings. Then he also revealed that the Brahmin-Vishnu Prasad was him. Aziz had taken the silver dinar to Doab and brought some land for farming. He also admits that he had killed Ghiyas-ud-din. He asks Muhammad to make him an officer in the state to show him his loyalty. The Muhammad agrees to send him to Deccan as an officer. The Muhammad asks him to lead the prayer as if he were Ghiyas-ud-din. Aziz Exits.

Barani cannot understand why the Muhammad has not punished Aziz. The Muhammad tells him that when he forgave Ain-ul-Mulk Barani was happy with the decision. Barani replies that he is a good friend and that Aziz is not the same. Ain-ul-Mulk has invited the Muhammad and people to stay at the capital. The Muhammad says that he must return to Delhi with his people. Barani is very upset. Barani asks permission to leave. He doesn't reply for a while. He says that he is sleepy after five years. He asks Barani to go and before that to pray.

Prayer.

**The End**

**##**

## from UNIT – 8

### Phonetics and Phonology

- **Phonetics**

It is the study of human speech sounds in general: how they are made (articulatory phonetics), how they are perceived (auditory phonetics), and the physics involved (acoustic phonetics). International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)

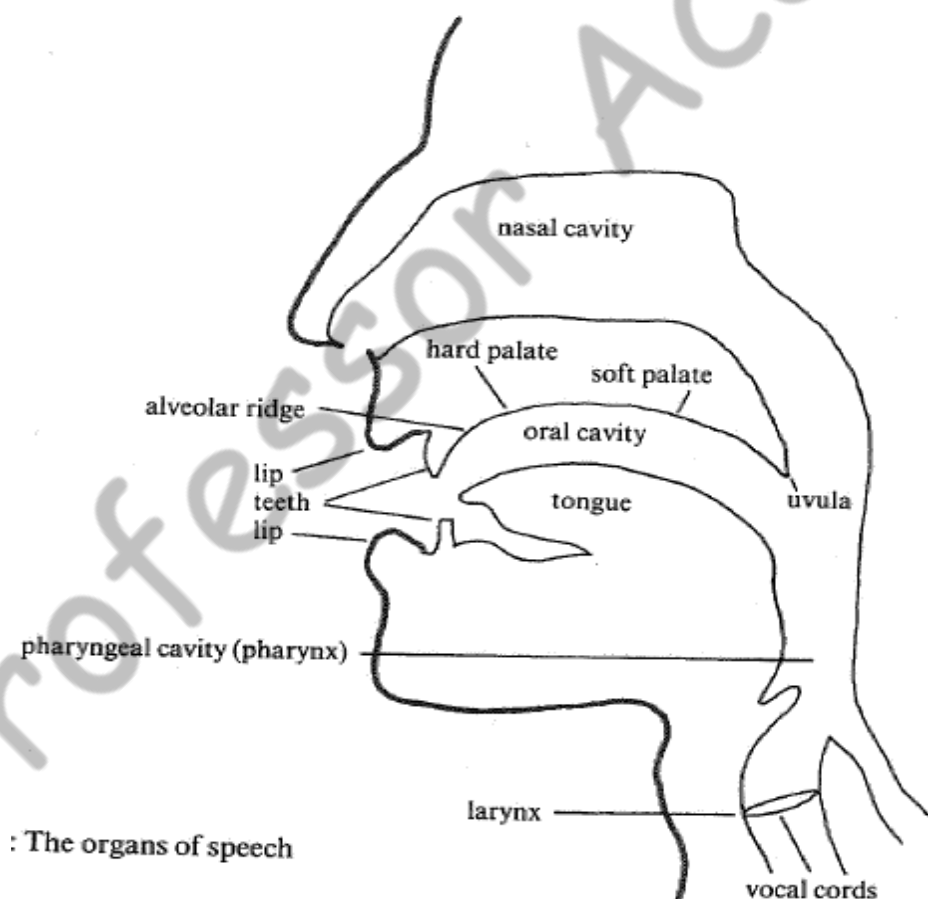
- **Phonology**

It is the study of the sound system of a particular language. It deals with how these speech sounds are organized into systems for each language. The Phonology of British English (44 speech sounds / phonemes)

- **Phoneme**

A minimal sound unit. As a norm, it is enclosed in slanted brackets / / .

For instance, /b/ as in ‘best’ is a phoneme; so is /v/ as in ‘vast’.



- **Airstream mechanism**

Pulmonic egressive (the travelling of the air used in speech from the lungs outwards)

[In Latin, *pulmo* means ‘lung’.]

- **The roof of the mouth**

1. Alveolar ridge [Alveolar]
2. Hard palate [Palatal]
3. Soft palate (or Velum) [Velar]
4. Uvula [Uvular]

- **Tongue:** tip, blade, front, body, back, root

- **Articulators**

1. Active articulators: the lower lip, the tongue
2. Passive articulators: the upper lip, the teeth, the roof of the mouth, the pharynx

- **Stricture**

The distance between the active and the passive articulators

- **Articulation**

The physical movements involved in altering the flow of air to produce speech sounds

- i. **Manner of articulation:** How a speech sound is produced  
Plosives, Affricates, Fricatives, Nasals, Laterals, Rhotic / Trills, Glides (semi-vowels), Frictionless continuants (Approximants)
- ii. **Place of articulation:** From where a speech sound is produced  
Bilabial, Labio-dental, dental, alveolar, palato-alveolar, palatal, velar, glottal, labial-velar

- **State of the vocal cords (vocal folds)**

- i. **‘Voiced’**  
The sounds that are those produced when the vocal cords vibrate: /b/  
A plus sign ( + ) is used to indicate a voiced phoneme.
- ii. **‘Voiceless’**  
The sounds are those produced when the vocal cords do not vibrate: /p/  
A minus sign ( - ) is used to indicate a voiceless phoneme.

- **Minimal pair**

- ❖ A pair of words (pin, pen) which differ in meaning when only one sound (*i* for *e*) is changed is called a ‘minimal pair’. For example:
- ❖ ten – den  
big – beg  
pin – pig
- ❖ Thus, a minimal pair which is distinguished by a single phoneme shows phonemic differences.

## PHONOLOGY OF BRITISH ENGLISH

- i. The English language has 1 alphabet (a series of 26 letters). But, **44 phonemes**:
  - Vowels (20)
  - Consonants (24)
- ii. Vowels (20):
  - Monophthongs or Pure vowels (12)
    - ❖ Front (4), Central (3), Back (5)
  - Diphthongs (8)
    - ❖ Closing (5), Centering (3)
- iii. Consonants (24):
  - Pure consonants (22)
    - ❖ Plosives (6), Fricatives (9), Affricates (2), Nasals (3), Lateral (1), Trill / Rhotic (1)
  - Semi-vowels (2)

## VOWELS AND THEIR CLASSIFICATION

1. All the vowels are VOICED.

### 2. Vowel Height

- a) It's determined by measuring the distance between the articulators (the tongue and the roof of the mouth).
- b) Classified as: High, Mid, Low [Manner of articulation]
- c) Sometimes 'Close' is used instead of 'High' and 'Open' instead of 'Low' [High = Close; Low = Open]

### 3. Backness

- a) It refers to which part of the tongue is highest.
- b) Classified as: Front, Central, Back [Place of articulation]

### 4. Rounding

- a) Rounding of the lips
- b) Classified as:
 

Rounded	– / ʊ /
Unrounded	– / e /

### 5. Vowel Length

- a) How long the vowel sound can last
- b) Classified as: Short / ɪ /, Long / iː /
- c) The colon indicates a long vowel.



**VOWELS:** (20)

- They are speech sounds produced without any obstruction to the flow of air from the lungs.
- Two types of vowels:

a) **Monophthongs or Pure vowels:** (12)

Vowels which do not involve tongue movement and the tongue is relatively steady and stays almost in the same position.

E.g. / e / as in 'bed'

b) **Diphthongs:** (8)

They are combination of two vowels and they involve tongue movement.

Diphthongs are therefore called 'gliding vowels': the voice glides from one vowel to another.

E.g. / eɪ / as in 'pay'

▪ **Stricture**

- a) **'Open approximation'** (the articulators are wide apart and the air flows out unhindered)

For instance, the long vowel / i: / as in 'beat' is produced by letting the air flow freely between the raised tongue and the roof of the mouth.

Further, the vowel sound can be kept producing until one runs out of breath.

'Frictionless continuants':

The sounds produced with an extremely less degree of stricture (or narrowing) and without audible friction is classified as '**approximants**' (also called 'frictionless continuants'), which include all vowels, semi-vowels ( / w /, / j / ), lateral ( / l / ), and rhotic ( / r / ).

**Pure vowels:** (12)

## 1. Front vowels (4)

/ ɪ / – hit                      or / i / – many, happy

/ i: / – heat

/ e / – get                      or / ɛ /

/ æ / – gap                      or / a /

## 2. Central vowels (3)

/ ə / – about

/ ɜ: / – thirst

/ ʌ / – run

## 3. Back vowels (5)

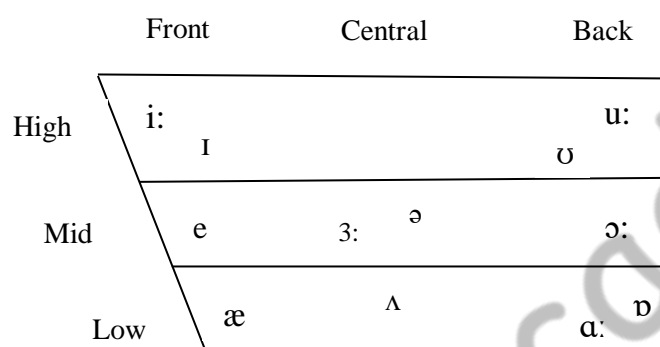
/ʊ/ – put

/u:/ – fool

/ɑ:/ – father            part    cart

/ɒ/ – got                pot    cot

/ɔ:/ – prawn            port    caught

**Vowel chart****Classification of Vowels**

No	Symbol	Vowel length	Vowel height	Backness	Rounding
1	/i:/	long	high	front	unrounded
2	/ɪ/	short	high	front	unrounded
3	/e/	short	mid	front	unrounded
4	/æ/	short	low	front	unrounded
5	/ə/	short	mid	central	unrounded
6	/ɜ:/	long	mid	central	unrounded
7	/ʌ/	short	low-mid	central	unrounded
8	/u:/	long	high	back	rounded
9	/ʊ/	short	high	back	rounded
10	/ɔ:/	long	low-mid	back	rounded
11	/ɒ/	short	low	back	rounded
12	/ɑ:/	long	low	back	unrounded

### General classification (vowel)

E.g.: The phoneme / i: / is a high front unrounded vowel.  
 / e / is a mid front unrounded vowel.  
 / ɜ: / is a mid central unrounded vowel.  
 / ʌ / is a low-mid central unrounded vowel.  
 / ʊ / is a high back rounded vowel.  
 / ɑ: / is a low back unrounded vowel.

### Diphthongs: (8)

1. / ɔɪ / – **toy**
2. / eɪ / – **say**
3. / aɪ / – **buy**
4. / ɪə / – **near**
5. / eə / – **hair**
6. / ʊə / – **poor**
7. / əʊ / – **go**
8. / aʊ / – **now**

- Closing diphthongs: / ɔɪ / / eɪ / / aɪ / / əʊ / / aʊ /
- Centering diphthongs: / ɪə / / eə / / ʊə /

## CONSONANTS AND THEIR CLASSIFICATION

**Consonants** (24): (Pure) consonants (22) and Semi-vowels (2)

- Consonants are speech sounds produced by completely or partly stopping the flow of air from the lungs.
- They are either VOICED or VOICELESS.
- **Stricture**
  - a) ‘**Complete closure**’: the articulators are pressed together. E.g. / b /
  - b) ‘**Close approximation**’: the articulators are close together but without complete closure. E.g. / v /

### Glides / Semi-vowels

- Semi-vowels are vowels that behave like consonants.
- They are more like vowels than consonants. When a semi-vowel is produced, there is hardly any contact between the articulators (like when a vowel is produced).  
E.g.: / j / as in ‘yes’
- However, they behave like consonants — they do not form syllabic nuclei, and they, like consonants, appear at the edge of syllables.  
E.g.: / w / as in ‘wet’

## Briefly put

1. Vowels : open approximation; form syllabic nuclei
2. Consonants : complete closure / close approximation; don't form syllabic nuclei
3. Semi-vowels : open approximation; don't form syllabic nuclei

### Explanation:

The **nucleus** of a syllable: vowel

The **onset** of a syllable: consonant(s) / semi-vowel preceding the nucleus

The **coda** of a syllable: consonant(s) / semi-vowel following the nucleus

### Examples:

The word 'rabbit' has two syllables: ra-bbit /ræ.bit /.

The first syllable /ræ/ has:

- an onset / r / (consonant)
- a nucleus / æ / (vowel)
- no coda.

The second syllable / bit / has:

- an onset / b / (consonant)
- a nucleus / ɪ / (vowel)
- a coda / t / (consonant)

Similarly, the word 'yes' has one syllable: / jes /

The syllable / jes / has:

- an onset / j / (semi-vowel)
- a nucleus / e / (vowel)
- a coda / s / (consonant)

## CLASSIFICATION OF CONSONANTS

1. **Manner of articulation:** The kind of closure or narrowing

a) **Plosives:** (6)

Sounds made when the air pressure behind a complete closure is suddenly released like an explosion.

/ p / – **pin** – voiceless

/ b / – **bat** – voiced

/ t / – **tell** – voiceless

/ d / – **dip** – voiced

/ k / – **kin** – voiceless

/ g / – **gun** – voiced

[The term 'stop' is used to refer to any sound that is made by a complete closure in the vocal tract, and so 'plosives' are 'stops'.]

b) **Fricatives:** (9)

Sounds made when two articulators come very close together and the air that passes between them produces audible friction.

/ f /	– fan	– voiceless
/ v /	– van	– voiced
/ θ /	– health	– voiceless
/ ð /	– this	– voiced
/ s /	– sip	– voiceless
/ z /	– zip	– voiced
/ ʃ /	– ship	– voiceless
/ ʒ /	– measure	– voiced
/ h /	– hut	– voiceless

c) **Affricates:** (2)

Sounds made when the air pressure behind a complete closure is gradually released; and the initial release produces a plosive / t / or / d / and the ensuing gradual release produces audible friction / ʃ / or / ʒ /.

/ tʃ /	– chin	– voiceless
/ dʒ /	– jet	– voiced

d) **Nasals:** (3)

Sounds produced when the velum is lowered to let an audible release of air through the nose.

/ m /	– mat	– voiced
/ n /	– nut	– voiced
/ ŋ /	– wing	– voiced

e) **Lateral:** (1)

Sound produced when the air escapes around one or both sides of a closure made in the mouth.

/ l /	– leg	– voiced
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f) **Trill:** (1)

Sound produced by a single rapid contact between two articulators.

/ r /	– red	– voiced
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g) **Semi-vowels:** (2)

Sounds which are vowel-like in manner of articulation but consonantal in function.

/ w /	– win	– voiced
/ j /	– yet	– voiced

2. **Place of articulation:** Where the closure or narrowing takes place

No.	Place of articulation	Active articulator	Passive articulator	Consonant(s)
1	Bilabial	Lower lip	Upper lip	/ p /, / b /, / m /
2	Labio-dental	Lower lip	Upper teeth	/ f /, / v /
3	Dental	Tongue tip	Upper teeth	/ θ /, / ð /
4	Alveolar	Tongue tip	Alveolar ridge	/ t /, / d /, / s /, / z /, / n /, / l /, / r /
5	Palato-alveolar / Post-alveolar	Tongue blade	Area immediately behind alveolar ridge	/ tʃ /, / dʒ /, / ʃ /, / ʒ /
6	Palatal	Tongue front	Hard palate	/ j /
7	Velar	Tongue back	Velum	/ k /, / g /, / ŋ /
8	Glottal	Vocal cords	Vocal cords	/ h /
9	Labial-velar [bilabial]	With rounded lips, the back of the tongue (active) raised towards the velum (passive)		/ w /

### General classification (consonant)

**Three-term description:** Voicing, place of articulation, manner of articulation

E.g.: The consonant / v / is a voiced labio-dental fricative.

### Three-term Description of Consonants

1. / p / – voiceless bilabial plosive
2. / b / – voiced bilabial plosive
3. / t / – voiceless alveolar plosive
4. / d / – voiced alveolar plosive
5. / k / – voiceless velar plosive
6. / g / – voiced velar plosive
7. / f / – voiceless labio-dental fricative
8. / v / – voiced labio-dental fricative
9. / θ / – voiceless dental fricative
10. / ð / – voiced dental fricative
11. / s / – voiceless alveolar fricative
12. / z / – voiced alveolar fricative
13. / ʃ / – voiceless palato-alveolar fricative
14. / ʒ / – voiced palato-alveolar fricative

15. / h / – voiceless glottal fricative
16. / tʃ / – voiceless palato-alveolar affricate
17. / dʒ / – voiced palato-alveolar affricate
18. / m / – voiced bilabial nasal
19. / n / – voiced alveolar nasal
20. / ŋ / – voiced velar nasal
21. / l / – voiced alveolar lateral (approximant)
22. / r / – voiced alveolar trill / rhotic (approximant)
23. / w / – voiced labial-velar semi-vowel (approximant)
24. / j / – voiced palatal semi-vowel (approximant)

- **Sibilants:** Sounds produced with a hissing sound. E.g. / s /, / z /, / ʃ /, / ʒ /, / tʃ /, / dʒ /

- **Intensity of Articulation**

- ❖ **Fortis:**

a sound made with a relatively *strong* degree of muscular effort and breath force.

Voiceless consonants — / p /, / t /, / f /, / s / — are produced with fortis articulation.

- ❖ **Lenis**

a sound made with a relatively *weak* degree of muscular effort and breath force.

Voiced consonants — / b /, / d /, / v /, / z / — are produced with lenis articulation.

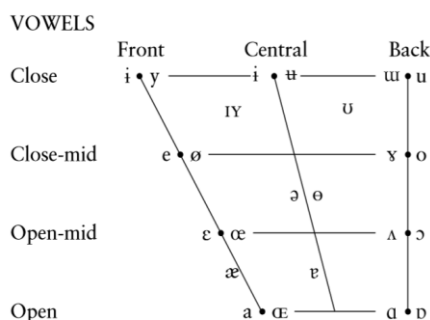
- ❖ **‘Schwa’ vowel** (also ‘indefinite vowel’): / ə /

E.g. ago, enemy, water.

The most commonly used vowel in English, ‘schwa’ vowel frequently appears in unstressed syllables as in ‘mother’ / ˈmʌðə(r) /. It is produced with the body of the tongue in the neutral position and without lip rounding.

- **Cardinal vowels**

- a) Cardinal vowels are an arbitrary set of universal reference-vowels devised by the British phonetician **Daniel Jones** to classify vowels.
- b) They are based on a combination of articulatory and auditory judgements.
- c) They are not the vowels of any particular language. Rather, they are reference points to locate any vowel articulation. Cardinal Vowel Chart:



## PUTTING THEM ALL TOGETHER

### Phonemes (44)

#### Vowels (20)

##### Monophthongs

##### Front (+)

/ ɪ /

/ i: /

/ e /

/ æ /

##### Central (+)

/ ə /

/ ɜ: /

/ ʌ /

##### Back (+)

/ ʊ /

/ u: /

/ ɑ: /

/ ɒ /

/ ɔ: /

##### Diphthongs

##### Closing (+)

/ ɔɪ /

/ eɪ /

/ aɪ /

/ əʊ /

/ aʊ /

##### Centering (+)

/ ɪə /

/ eə /

/ ʊə /

#### Consonants (24)

##### Plosives

/ p / (-)

/ b / (+)

/ t / (-)

/ d / (+)

/ k / (-)

/ g / (+)

##### Affricates

/ tʃ / (-)

/ dʒ / (+)

##### Fricatives

/ f / (-)

/ v / (+)

/ θ / (-)

/ ð / (+)

/ s / (-)

/ z / (+)

/ ʃ / (-)

/ ʒ / (+)

/ h / (-)

##### Nasals

/ m / (+)

/ n / (+)

/ ŋ / (+)

##### Lateral

/ l / (+)

##### Trill

/ r / (+)

##### Semi-vowel

/ w / (+)

/ j / (+)

#### ▪ The Syllable

A unit of pronunciation: a group of phonemes that are pronounced together. This group mostly contains a vowel.

The consonant-vowel sequence (CV) is found in most languages: 'go'.

Besides, the consonant-vowel-consonant pattern (CVC) is very common in English: 'get'.

##### a) Syllable structures

The opening segment of a syllable is called 'onset'.

The central segment is called 'nucleus'.

The closing segment is called 'coda'.



In metrical phonology, the nucleus and coda are viewed as a single constituent of syllable structure, called the **rhyme** (or rime)

b) **Phonotactics**

The study of the possible phoneme combination of a language

In English, a word-initial /s/ may be followed by a voiceless stop /sp/, /st/ or /sk/ but not a voiced stop \*/sb/, \*/sd/or \*/sg /.

c) **Syllabic consonants**

Consonants occurring alone (without a vowel) to form the syllable, indicated by a small vertical mark beneath the consonant phoneme [ , ] .

E.g. the / n / in 'mutton' forms the syllabic 'n' [ ŋ ] — [ 'mʌtŋ ]. Here, the syllable / ən / at the end of 'mut.ton' is realized as the consonant syllable [ ŋ ]. In the sense, the schwa vowel / ə / is not articulated and the nasal / n / forms the nucleus of the syllable.

Similarly, the / l / in 'cattle' forms the syllabic 'l' [ l̩ ] — [ kæt̩l̩ ].

d) **Consonant cluster**

A sequence of adjacent consonants; or, two or more consonants coming together in a syllable onset or syllable coda

E.g. speed, test, glimpse, stretch

A syllable in English can have up to three consonants in the onset (spread / spred /) and up to four in the coda (texts / teksts /).

▪ **Suprasegmental features / Connected speech**

a) **Assimilation**

- A process whereby two neighbouring sounds become more similar to each other. In other words, a sound takes on the feature of another sound because of proximity. E.g. 'ten boys': the / n / of *ten* assimilates to the place of articulation of the following bilabial stop / b /: the / n / becomes the bilabial [ m ]: [ t<sup>h</sup>embɔɪz ].
- '**Nasalization**' is a type of assimilation in which a vowel becomes nasalized under the influence of an adjacent nasal sound. For instance, in American English, the vowel / æ / is mostly nasalized when followed by a nasal stop, as in [ pæ̃n ] 'pan'.

b) **Elision**

- The omission or suppression of a sound or syllable in pronunciation.
- E.g.
  - 'want to go' becomes 'wanna go'
  - 'do not' becomes 'don't'
  - French: 'le homme' becomes 'l'homme', meaning 'the man'

c) **Liaison**

- A final-word consonant, normally silent, is pronounced, before words beginning with a vowel

- E.g. Liaison is an intrinsic feature of French: 'les amis', meaning 'the friends', is pronounced [lezami]. Here, the silent 's' in the definite article 'les' is pronounced /z/ as it comes before the vowel 'a' in 'amis'.
- In English, a 'linking /r/' occurs between words beginning with a vowel. The 'here' /hɪə/ in 'here are' becomes /hɪər/.

#### d) Stress

- 'Stress' refers to the degree of force used in uttering a syllable; in other words, the emphasis given to certain syllables in a word.
- Therefore, a stressed syllable requires a great amount of articulatory force to be produced than an unstressed syllable. Naturally, the duration of a stressed syllable is longer, its pitch is higher, and its intensity is greater. By contrast, the duration of an unstressed syllable is shorter, its pitch lower, and its intensity relatively low.
- In transcription, the stressed syllable is usually marked with a raised vertical line [ ' ]. E.g. *finish* / 'fɪnɪʃ/. However, if a word has more than one stressed syllable, then the syllable that sounds more prominent takes **the 'primary' stress**, which is indicated by a raised bar [ ' ], and the syllable that sounds less prominent takes **the 'secondary' stress**, which is indicated by a lowered bar [ , ]. E.g. *denomination* / dɪ , nɒmɪ 'neɪʃn /
- Further, the placement of the stress is inextricably connected with semantics.

E.g.:

**contract** (n) / 'kɒntrækt / – a written or spoken agreement

**contract** (v) / kən'trækt / – to decrease size or number

**content** (n) / 'kɒntent / – the subject dealt with in a piece of writing, a TV programme

**content** (adj.) / kən'tent / – satisfied

- As the stressed syllables occur at a fairly constant rate in **English**, it is called the **stress-timed language**.
- Generally, the stress falls on the first syllable of disyllabic nouns or adjectives, whereas the stress falls on the second syllable of disyllabic verbs.

E.g.

**decrease** (n) / 'di:kri:s /

**decrease** (v) / di:'kri:s /

**object** (n) / 'ɒbdʒekt /

**object** (v) / əb'dʒekt /

**conduct** (n) / 'kɒndʌkt /

**conduct** (v) / kən'dʌkt /

**convict** (n) / 'kɒnvɪkt /

**convict** (v) / kən'vɪkt /

**record** (n) / 'rekɔ:d /

**record** (v) / rɪ'kɔ:d /

- For **words with weak prefixes** (a-, be-), the stress falls on the root.  
E.g. a'rise, a'loud, be'come, be'neath
- For **words ending in '-ion'**, the stress falls on the penultimate syllable (the second syllable from the end).  
E.g. ,admi'ration, ,appli'cation, ,determi'nation
- For **words ending in '-ity'**, the stress falls on the ante-penultimate syllable (the third syllable from the end).  
E.g. ca'pacity, fu'tility, ,oppo'r'tunity
- For **words ending in '-ic', '-ical', '-ically', '-ial', '-ially', and '-ious'**, the stress falls on the syllable before the (said) suffix(es).  
E.g.
  - ic: pa'thetic, ter'rific,
  - ical: bio'logical, e'lectrical,
  - ically: ,eco'nomically, ,psycho'logically,
  - ial: com'mercial, me'morial,
  - ially: ,confi'dentially, dra'matically,
  - ious: a'trocious, no'torious

#### e) Pitch

- The speed at which the vocal folds vibrate
- Higher pitch: faster vibration of the vocal folds
- Lower pitch: slower vibration of the vocal folds

#### f) Intonation

- The variation in pitch – how the voice goes up and down – across an utterance. This pitch variation (intonation) helps convey one's emotions, attitudes and intentions.
- There are two types of intonation:
  1. Falling intonation
  2. Rising intonation
- **Falling intonation**  
The voice falling at the end of an utterance. It is used for 'wh-questions' to seek information and for 'statements' to convey certainty or finality. Falling intonation helps a speaker to indicate that s/he has finished talking and to sound confident and certain.
  - a) Wh-question : *What did you buy?* ∨
  - b) Statement : *I bought a car.* ∨

### ▪ Rising intonation

The voice rising at the end of an utterance. It is used for ‘yes-no’ questions to ascertain confirmation or denial and for turning a statement into a question. Rising intonation helps a speaker to convey doubt, uncertainty and surprise.

- a) Yes-no question : *Did you buy a car?* /  
 b) Statement-question : *You bought a car?* /

### ▪ Allophone

The different realisations of a phoneme; or, the phonetic variants of a phoneme.

E.g.

- ❖ “[T]he consonants at the beginning of *shoe* and *she* feel as if they are the same, but in fact they have very different sound qualities. For *shoe*, the lips are rounded, because of the influence of the following [u] vowel; for *she*, the lips are spread.” from David Crystal’s *How Language Works*
- ❖ Similarly, the / b / in ‘beef’ is different from the / b / in ‘book’. In ‘beef’ / bi:f/, the lips are unrounded when producing the consonant / b / as it is followed by an unrounded vowel / i: /. By contrast, in ‘book’ / bok /, the lips are rounded when producing the consonant / b / as it is followed by a rounded vowel / ʊ /.
- ❖ The phoneme / t / as in ‘eight’ is articulated in alveolar position. However, / t / as in ‘eighth’ / eɪθ / is articulated in dental position because of the influence of the following *th* – / θ/. The IPA symbol for the dentalized / t / is [ t̪ ].
- ❖ The phoneme / l / as in ‘leak’ is articulated with the front of the tongue raised towards the hard palate, and this realization — palatalized [ l̟ ] — is called “**clear / l /**”. On the other hand, / l / as in ‘heel’ is articulated with the back of the tongue raised towards the soft palate (the velum), and this realization — velarized [ l̠ ] — is called “**dark / l /**” whose IPA symbol is: [ l̠ ].
- ❖ However, it should be noted that allophonic variations can’t change the meaning: the substitution of one allophone for another doesn’t alter the meaning of words.

### ▪ Diacritics

A mark added to a phoneme to alter or represent the way it is pronounced. E.g.

- ❖ Voiceless : [ ŋ̥ ], [ ɖ̥ ] (‘devoiced’ – a partial / complete loss of voicing)
- ❖ Voiced : [ ʒ̤ ], [ ʈ̤ ]
- ❖ Aspirated : [ tʰ ], [ dʰ ]
- ❖ Nasalized : [ æ̃ ], [ ẽ̃ ]
- ❖ Dentalized : [ t̪ ], [ ŋ̪ ]
- ❖ Labialized : [ tʷ ], [ dʷ ] (‘rounded’ – lip-rounding)
- ❖ Syllabic : [ ŋ̩ ], [ l̩ ]

For symbols with a descender such as [ ɡ ] or [ ʒ ], diacritics are placed above them: [ ɡ̊ ], [ ʒ̊ ].

## ▪ Aspiration

- ❖ An audible breath that follows the plosive consonants (usually a Stop)
- ❖ Aspirated / p /, / t /, / k / are symbolized by a raised [ <sup>h</sup> ]: [ p<sup>h</sup> ], [ t<sup>h</sup> ], [ k<sup>h</sup> ].
- ❖ Aspirated — pill, till, kill (/ p /, / t /, / k / appearing at the beginning)
- ❖ Unaspirated — spill, still, skill

## ▪ Transcription

The representation of speech sounds using symbols that correspond to their phonetic values is called ‘transcription’. It is of two types:

### a) Phonemic transcription

- ❖ The representation of the speech sounds of a particular language – using only the phonemic symbols of that language – is called ‘phonemic transcription’.
- ❖ So “exotic” symbols such as diacritics are generally avoided in the phonemic transcription.
- ❖ Phonemic transcription is usually shown inside forward slashes / /.
- ❖ E.g. the phonemic transcription of ‘tip’ is / t ɪ p /.

### b) Phonetic transcription

- ❖ The representation of speech sounds using special phonetic symbols to indicate their distinctive features is called ‘phonetic transcription’.
- ❖ It is usually shown inside square brackets [ ].
- ❖ E.g. the phonetic transcription of ‘tip’ is [ t<sup>h</sup> ɪ p ], in which the phonetic symbol [ t<sup>h</sup> ] indicates that the plosive consonant / t / is ‘aspirated’, that is, accompanied with an audible breath, [ <sup>h</sup> ].
- ❖ The purpose of the phonetic transcription is to denote allophonic distinctions and to represent the distinctive features of speech sounds in various contexts: an actual utterance (in connected speech), an individual’s peculiar pronunciation of words.

# #

## from UNIT – 9

### S. T. Coleridge: *Biographia Literaria*

#### Introduction:

*Biographia Literaria*, in full *Biographia Literaria; or Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*, a work of philosophical autobiography and Romantic literary criticism by Samuel Taylor Coleridge, was published in two volumes in **1817**. Another edition of the work, to which Coleridge's daughter Sara appended notes and supplementary biographical material, was published in 1847.

Originally conceived in **1814** as a short explanatory preface to the *Sibylline Leaves*, it rapidly expanded into a two-volume apologia for his 'literary life and opinions'.

Part I is broadly autobiographical, describing Coleridge's friendship with Southey and with the Wordsworths at Stowey, and going on to trace his struggle with the 'dynamic philosophy' of Kant, Fichte, and Schelling in Germany. The humorous narrative is gradually overwhelmed by Romantic metaphysics; chapter XIII contains his famous distinction between Fancy and Imagination.

Part II is almost entirely critical, attacking Wordsworth's preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* and then marvellously vindicating the poetry itself. Coleridge concentrates on the psychology of the creative process, and propounds new theories of the origins of poetic language, metre, and form, as the interpénétration of 'passion and will' (chapters XV-XVIII). Other chapters discuss the poetry of Shakespeare, Milton, Samuel Daniel, George Herbert, etc., as exemplary of true 'Imagination' and the 'language of real life'. Though maddeningly unsystematic in structure, the book is a touchstone of Romantic criticism; it also gives some impression of Coleridge in full conversational flight.

#### The Story of *Biographia Literaria*:

In March, 1815, Coleridge was collecting some "scattered and manuscript poems, sufficient to make a volume". In May he tells Wordsworth he is designing a preface for it "which I shall have done in two, or at farthest three days". Two months later he has been kept a prisoner by the necessity to amplify "a preface to **an Autobiographia Literaria**, sketches of my literary Life and Opinions". This next becomes 'a full account (raisonné) of the controversy concerning Wordsworth's poems and theory" with (fatal accession) "a disquisition on the powers of Association . . . and on the generic difference between the Fancy and the Imagination". At this Coleridge writes on and on, until it becomes too long for a preface, and the whole too long for a single volume. His next proposal is to extend the work to three volumes; and his next step after that, to quarrel with his printers. Fresh publishers are found, and with them, too, differences arise: the second volume is not long enough. Fresh matter (Chapter XXII, on the Defect and Beauties of Wordsworth's Poetry) was added; and then, as the volume obstinately remained too small, he tossed in *Satyrane*, an epistolary account of

his wanderings in Germany, topped up with a critique of a bad play, and gave the whole painfully to the world in July, 1817.

### Coleridge's poetic theory:

In **Chapter XIII** of *Biographia Literaria*, Coleridge defines:

- ❖ The **primary Imagination**  
the living Power and prime **Agent of all human Perception**, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM.
- ❖ The **secondary Imagination**  
an echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will . . . **It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates**, in order to re- create; or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still at all events it struggles to idealize and to unify. It is essentially vital, even as all objects (as objects) are essentially fixed and dead.
- ❖ **Fancy**  
on the contrary, has no other counters to play with, but **fixities and definites**. The Fancy is indeed no other than a mode of Memory emancipated from the order of time and space; while it is blended with, and modified by that empirical phenomenon of the will, which we express by the word CHOICE. But equally with the ordinary memory the Fancy must receive all its materials ready made from the law of association.

### Chapter XIV of *Biographia Literaria*

- ❖ A poem is that species of composition, which is opposed to works of science, by proposing for its *immediate* object pleasure, not truth . . . [P]oetry of the highest kind may exist without metre . . . **[W]illing suspension of disbelief for the moment**, which constitutes poetic faith.
- ❖ GOOD SENSE is the BODY of poetic genius, FANCY its DRAPERY, MOTION its LIFE, and IMAGINATION the SOUL that is everywhere, and in each; and forms all into one graceful and intelligent whole.

### Wordsworth vs. Coleridge

- ❖ After *Lyrical Ballads* (1798), Wordsworth and Coleridge grew apart.
- ❖ In his "Preface" (1800), Wordsworth claims that he describes "common life" in a "language really used by men".
- ❖ In "**Chapter XVII**" of *Biographia Literaria* (1817), Coleridge challenges the claim: "[T]he language of Mr. Wordsworth's homeliest composition differs from that of a common peasant . . . varies in every country, nay in every village."
- ❖ Although he was closely associated with Wordsworth, Coleridge does not hesitate to indicate the points at which he differed from his colleague. **He takes issue most strongly with Wordsworth's assertion** that the speech of low and rustic life is the natural language of emotion and therefore best for poetry.
- ❖ Coleridge **stresses rather the choice of a diction as universal as possible, not associated with class or region**, and he says that it is this kind of language that

Wordsworth has, in fact, used in almost all of his work. He argues that in the famous preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, Wordsworth was, to a certain extent, exaggerating in order to make clear the advantages of natural, simple language over the empty poetic diction typical of the poetry of the time.

- ❖ He criticizes **Wordsworth's "inconstancy of the style,"** a tendency to shift from a lofty level to a commonplace one; his occasionally excessive attention to factual details of landscape or biography; his poor handling of dialogue in some poems; his "occasional prolixity, repetition, and an eddying instead of progression of thought" in a few passages; and, finally, his use of "thoughts and images too great for the subject."

### **The Synopsis of the Text:**

In the opening chapter, Coleridge pays tribute to his most influential teacher, **the Reverend James Bowyer of Christ's Hospital**, who insisted that his students learn to think logically and use language precisely, in poetry as well as prose. Coleridge also discusses the poetry he preferred in the years when his literary tastes were being formed; he turned toward the "pre-Romantic" lyrics of minor writers rather than to the terse, epigrammatic intellectual poems of the best-known of the eighteenth-century literary men, Alexander Pope and his followers. At an early stage, Coleridge developed sound critical principles, looking for works that gained in power through rereading and for words that seemed to express ideas better than any phrases substituted for them could. He quickly learned to distinguish between the virtues of works of original ideas and the faults of those that made their effect through novel phraseology. He confesses, however, that his critical judgment is better than his creative talent: His own early poems, though he thought highly of them when he wrote them, leave much to be desired.

The harshness of the critics of his time is a theme that recurs throughout Coleridge's biography. In his second chapter, he ponders the tendency of the public to side with the critics rather than with the poets, who are considered to be strange, irritable, even mad. The greatest writers—**Geoffrey Chaucer, William Shakespeare, Edmund Spenser, and John Milton**—seem to him unusually well balanced, and he suggests that the popular heresy results from the frustrations of the second-rate writer who pursues fame without real talent. These general comments are closely linked to Coleridge's sense of outrage at the vituperative attacks on him that issued regularly from the pages of the popular reviews, partly as a result of his association with **Wordsworth and Robert Southey**. The three poets were accused of trying to revolutionize, to vulgarize, poetry; they were avowedly interested in freeing poetry from the limitations of the eighteenth-century poetic tradition. Coleridge denies that they deserved the abuses hurled at them.

After commenting on the works of Wordsworth and Southey, Coleridge turns to a number of philosophical problems that fascinate him, among them questions of perception, sensation, and the human thought processes. It is this section of the work that provides the greatest difficulty for the uninitiated reader, for Coleridge assumes considerable familiarity with the works of German philosophers and English psychologists and mystics. He surveys the



theories of **Thomas Hobbes, David Hartley, Aristotle, René Descartes**, and others as they relate to problems of perception and of the development of thought through the association of ideas, and he assesses the influence of **Immanuel Kant** on his own philosophy.

Coleridge digresses from the complex history of his intellectual growth to describe his first literary venture into the commercial side of his world, his publication of a periodical called *The Watchman*. His attempts to secure subscriptions were ludicrous, and his project met with the failure that his friends had predicted; one of them had to pay Coleridge's printer to keep Coleridge out of debtors' prison.

One of the most important episodes of Coleridge's life was **his 1798 trip to Germany**, where he widened his knowledge of the literature and philosophy of that country. He returned to England to take a position with a newspaper, writing on literature and politics; he attacked **Napoleon Bonaparte** so vehemently that the French general actually sent out an order for his arrest while Coleridge was living in Italy as a correspondent for his paper. Coleridge evidently enjoyed his journalistic work, and he advises all would-be literary men to find some regular occupation rather than to devote all of their time to writing.

Returning to his philosophical discussion, Coleridge lists several of his major premises about truth and knowledge. He is particularly concerned about distinguishing between the essence of the subject, the perceiver, and of the object, that which is perceived. Related to this distinction is **the nature of the imagination**, which Coleridge divides into two parts. The primary imagination is the human power that perceives and recognizes objects; the secondary imagination acts on these initial perceptions to produce new thoughts: "It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to re-create."

Coleridge next turns to a presentation of his literary standards, referring especially to the *Lyrical Ballads* (1798), the revolutionary volume that contained much of Wordsworth's poetry and some of his own. He tries to define poetry, pointing out that it has as its "immediate object pleasure, not truth," and that it delights by the effect of the whole as well as of individual parts. In one of the book's most famous passages, he discusses the function of the poet who, by the power of his imagination, must bring unity of diversity, reconciling "sameness, with differences; of the general, with the concrete; the idea, with the image; the individual, with the representative; the sense of novelty and freshness, with old and familiar objects; a more than usual state of emotion, with more than usual order; judgment ever-awake and steady self-possession, with enthusiasm and feeling profound or vehement."

Coleridge applies these general tenets to specific works, analyzing Shakespeare's early poems *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594) to determine what in them reveals genius and what is the result of the poet's immaturity. He praises particularly Shakespeare's musical language and his distance from his subject matter, saying, with reference to the latter point, that the average youthful writer is likely to concentrate on his own sensations and experiences. Shakespeare's greatness seems to him to lie, too, in the vividness of his imagery and in his "depth, and energy of thought."

Although he was closely associated with Wordsworth, Coleridge does not hesitate to indicate the points at which he differed from his colleague. He takes issue most strongly with Wordsworth's assertion that the speech of low and rustic life is the natural language of emotion and therefore best for poetry. Coleridge stresses rather the choice of a diction as universal as possible, not associated with class or region, and he says that it is this kind of language that Wordsworth has, in fact, used in almost all of his work. He argues that in the famous **preface to the *Lyrical Ballads***, Wordsworth was, to a certain extent, exaggerating in order to make clear the advantages of natural, simple language over the empty poetic diction typical of the poetry of the time.

Coleridge's comments on Wordsworth lead him to an extended attack on the practices of the critical reviews, which published commentary on his friend's works that seemed to him both biased and absurd. He ridicules the tendency of anonymous reviewers to offer criticism without giving examples to support their assertions; they hardly seem to have read the works they lampoon. To counteract their ill-tempered, inconsistent judgments, he sets down his own views on Wordsworth's most serious flaws and outstanding talents. He criticizes **Wordsworth's "inconstancy of the style,"** a tendency to shift from a lofty level to a commonplace one; his occasionally excessive attention to factual details of landscape or biography; his poor handling of dialogue in some poems; his "occasional prolixity, repetition, and an eddying instead of progression of thought" in a few passages; and, finally, his use of "thoughts and images too great for the subject."

With these defects in mind, Coleridge commends **Wordsworth's work** for the purity and appropriateness of its language, the freshness of the thoughts, the "sinewy strength and originality of single lines and paragraphs," the accuracy of the descriptions of nature, the pathos and human sympathy, and the imaginative power of the poet.

The major portion of the *Biographia Literaria* ends with a final assessment of Wordsworth's work; Coleridge thereupon adds **a section of letters written to friends** while he was traveling in Germany. The letters contain amusing accounts of his shipboard companions, a description of his meeting with the poet **Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock**, and some of his literary opinions. To show how little his critical standards had changed, he also includes a long and devastating critique of a contemporary melodrama, **Charles Robert Maturin's *Bertram: Or, The Castle of St. Aldobrand*** (pr., pb. 1816).

Coleridge's concluding chapter, as rambling in subject matter as the rest of the book, treats briefly the harsh critical reaction to his poem *Christabel* (1816), then turns to his affirmation of his Christian faith and his reasons for holding it. He makes no attempt to summarize his volume, which has presented a remarkably full portrait of his wide-ranging, questioning mind.

## The Contents of the Text:

### CHAPTERS.

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#### **The Gist of the Text:**

The **opening chapter** emphasises the formative influence exerted on Coleridge's understanding of poetry by James Boyer and William Lisle Bowles. From Boyer, his headmaster at Christ's Hospital, Coleridge learned that poetry was fundamentally and formally distinct from other modes of writing and that it possessed 'a logic of its own, as severe as that of science; and more difficult, because more subtle, more complex, and dependent on more, and more fugitive causes' (*BL*, I 4). From Bowles, whom he considered

the first modern poet to combine 'natural thoughts with natural diction', he learned that poetry could (and should) bring together thought and feeling, that it should reconcile the workings of both the head and the heart.

In the poetry of Bowles he first caught the accents of the true voice of feeling, and what he heard led him to appreciate that the epigrammatic couplets of fashionable eighteenth-century verse were artificial and were characterised 'not so much by poetic thoughts, as by thoughts *translated* into the language of poetry' (*BL*, I 11). These insights from Boyer and Bowles originated in Coleridge's mind the whole question of the nature of poetry, and they prompted him to labour at establishing 'a solid foundation, on which permanently to ground my opinions, in the component faculties of the human mind itself, and their comparative dignity and importance' (*BL*, I 14). From the outset, then, philosophy and psychology were intimately connected with poetry and poetic experience in the search for aesthetic principles and an individual poetic vision.

In **chapters 2 and 3**, which superficially appear gratuitously digressive, Coleridge exposes the malicious inadequacy of the pseudo-criticism of anonymous reviewers, whose views, unsupported by sound principles, are both wrongheaded and uncritical. Since Coleridge's purpose in *Biographia Literaria* is to establish sound critical principles as the basis for literary judgement, these chapters are far from irrelevant.

In **chapter 4** Coleridge returns to the early formation of his poetic creed and to the third (and most important) influence upon it - the poetry of Wordsworth. Boyer and Bowles provided indispensable preliminary insights, but Wordsworth struck him with the disturbing force of radical revelation. While still at Cambridge, Coleridge had read Wordsworth's *Descriptive Sketches*, and 'seldom, if ever,' (he declared) 'was the emergence of an original poetic genius above the literary horizon more evidently announced' (*BL*, I 56). The full revelation of Wordsworth's genius and power, however, came two years later in September or October 1795, when, at their first meeting, Wordsworth recited his manuscript poem 'Guilt and Sorrow'. The effect of this reading on Coleridge was instant, profound and revolutionary: what made 'so unusual an impression on my feelings immediately, and subsequently on my judgement' was

the union of deep feeling with profound thought; the fine balance of truth in observing, with the imaginative faculty in modifying the objects observed; and above all the original gift of spreading the tone, the *atmosphere*, and with it the depth and height of the ideal world around forms, incidents, and situations, of which, for the common view, custom had bedimmed all the lustre, had dried up the sparkle and the dew drops. (*BL*, I 59)

Here was the seminal insight, though Coleridge found it difficult to define its nature precisely. To a degree unknown in English literature since Milton, Wordsworth had unified thought and feeling in poetic utterance, had both realised and idealised the commonplace, had made the reader see man and nature as if he were seeing them for the first time. Wherein lay the source of this 'freshness of sensation'? What was it in Wordsworth's poetry, what

power there manifested itself, that distinguished his poetry from that of eighteenth-century writers? 'Repeated meditations', says Coleridge, anticipating yet laying the ground-work for arguments and illustrations to follow,

led me first to suspect, (and a more intimate analysis of the human faculties, their appropriate marks, functions, and effects matured my conjecture into full conviction,) that fancy and imagination were two distinct and widely different faculties, instead of being, according to the general belief, either two names with one meaning, or, at furthest, the lower and higher degree of one and the same power. (*BL*, I 60-1)

The desynonymisation of fancy and imagination lies at the heart of *Biographia Literaria* and is, in a very real sense, its *raison d'être*. Coleridge's object in the work is 'to investigate the seminal principle' of imagination and, in so doing, 'to present an intelligible statement of my poetic creed; not as my *opinions*, which weigh for nothing, but as deductions from established premises' (*BL*, 165). The *terminus a quo* of this investigation is largely Wordsworth, whose 'Guilt and Sorrow' first directed Coleridge's attention to the subject of poetic imagination; the *terminus ad quem*, which will follow the philosophic deduction of the imagination, is a mature assessment of Wordsworth's poetic achievement.

**Chapters 5-13** constitute the philosophic core of the *Biographia Literaria* - and the major stumbling-block for the majority of its readers. They are, certainly, difficult reading; but they are integral to the book's purpose and meaning. They trace the growth of Coleridge's philosophic consciousness, his rejection of empirical epistemology and the influence on his thought of German idealism, and they lead, in chapter 12, to an outline (heavily dependent on Schelling) of his own 'dynamic' philosophy – an outline intended as the metaphysical substratum from which was to arise the promised (but undelivered) deduction of a theory of imagination. Chapters 5 – 7 are devoted to a detailed refutation of associationist psychology, especially that of David Hartley, among whose fervent adherents Coleridge had once (and Wordsworth still) counted himself; chapter 8 deals, briefly but effectively, with the problem of Cartesian dualism and the inadequacy of post-Cartesian materialism; and chapter 9 sketches Coleridge's intellectual obligations, in breaking free of materialism and associationism, to the mystics (such as Jacob Boehme) who 'contributed to keep alive the *heart in the head*', to Immanuel Kant who 'took possession of me as with a giant's hand', and to the post-Kantian idealists, especially Schelling, in whose work 'I first found a genial coincidence with much that I had toiled out for myself, and a powerful assistance in what I had yet to do' (*BL*, I 98-9, 102). There is, as J. A. Appleyard observes, an imbalance in these chapters (5-9) that is not easily explained and is, in the final analysis, unsatisfactory:

This ninth chapter disappoints the reader who hopes to find in the *Biographia* some clue to the extent of the idealist influence on Coleridge's thinking. What he gives by way of comment amounts to not much more than a hasty outline, a cartoon that will not do where a finished painting is demanded .... The fact is that Coleridge devotes most of four chapters to a long and very circumstantial refutation of associationist psychology, but only one short chapter to the influence of the whole idealist tradition on his thought.

To say that there is a structural imbalance in these chapters is not, however, to say that they are irrelevant. Indeed, both their relevance and their peculiar emphasis on philosophical positions that Coleridge rejects rather than on those he accepts may be explained - though perhaps not excused - by bearing in mind two things. First, Coleridge's theory of the imagination as a vital, active, *poietic* ('making') power was achieved only after he had exploded the doctrine of passive perception on which the associationist hypothesis depended. In England the prevailing epistemology was stolidly empirical, holding that the human mind was merely a passive receiver of external impressions through the senses; and Coleridge, for whom perception involved an active and vital interchange between the perceiver and the perceived, was only too conscious that he was swimming against the current. Given the intellectual climate of the day and the philosophic preconceptions of English readers (who knew little or nothing of German transcendentalism), it is not surprising that Coleridge considered a detailed confutation of associationism more important than a lengthy acknowledgement of his obligations to obscure or unknown foreign thinkers.

In the second place, the emphasis on associationism in Chapters 5-8 is partly to be explained as an answer to Wordsworth's indistinct but essentially Hartleian doctrine of association in the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*. Since 1802 Coleridge had regarded this tenet of his friend's theory as inadequate and jejune; it formed part of the '*radical* Difference' that he perceived and came gradually to understand between their theoretical views on poetry. In later chapters of the *Biographia* Coleridge would deal with the other areas of his disagreement with Wordsworth's theory (namely, the problems of poetic diction and metre); but here, on the threshold of the proposed deduction of imagination, it was necessary to explore in detail the failure of associationism - a doctrine which had encumbered Wordsworth's theory in the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* and which, in Wordsworth's 1815 Preface, had led him to muddle and misconstrue Coleridge's fancy-imagination distinction. Obviously, such a doctrine could not go unchallenged.

**Chapters 10 and 11** are confessedly digressive. Like the 'Landing-Place' essays in *The Friend*, they are largely anecdotal interludes interposed for amusement, retrospect and preparation. They shift our attention in an engaging manner from Coleridge's intellectual history to more personal episodes in his biography, narrating with relish such events as his trials with enrolling subscribers for his early periodical *The Watchman* and the now legendary 'Spy-Nosy' incident belonging to his Somerset years with Wordsworth. They stress, too, with respect to his political and theological thinking especially - and this is not often enough noticed - his lifelong commitment to the 'establishment of *principles* . . . by [which] all *opinions* must be ultimately tried' (*BL*, I 124). More is meant, more is implied in these apparently unassuming chapters, than meets the eye of a purely casual reader. They are digressive, it is true, but not without purpose - for they pursue and consolidate insights already gained, applying them to other of Coleridge's myriad-minded interests, and so prepare the ground indirectly for insights still to come.

**Chapters 12 and 13**, the most difficult and perplexing in the book, resume the discussion of Imagination. No summary of their contents is possible, although some rudimentary signposts and milestones may help the belabyrinthed traveller keep his bearings and hold the journey's end in sight. Chapter 12, heavily indebted to Schelling's *Abhandlungen* and *System des transcendentalen Idealismus*,<sup>37</sup> is concerned with establishing the postulates of the *dynamic* (as opposed to mechanistic) philosophy upon which Coleridge's theory of imagination depends. The chapter is very heavy reading, full of what James Joyce would call 'abstrusities'. From anyone familiar with Carlyle's comically vindictive portrait of Coleridge snuffling about 'sum-m-mject' and 'om-m-mject', it elicits an involuntary shudder of recognition:

I have heard Coleridge talk, with eager musical energy, two stricken hours, his face radiant and moist, and communicate no meaning whatsoever to any individual of his hearers. . . . He began anywhere: you put some question to him, made some suggestive observation: instead of answering this, or decidedly setting out towards an answer of it, he would accumulate formidable apparatus, logical swim-bladders, transcendental life-preservers and other precautionary and vehiculatory gear, for setting out; perhaps did at last get under way .... He had knowledge about many things and topics, much curious reading; but generally all topics led him, after a pass or two, into the high seas of theosophic philosophy, the hazy infinitude of Kantian transcendentalism, with its 'sum-m-jects' and 'om-mmjects'.

In **chapter 12** Coleridge (*via* Schelling) postulates the existence and the simultaneous reality of two diverse states of being, which he distinguishes as SUBJECT and OBJECT. By *subject* he means human intelligence, the self and self-consciousness, the I AM; by *object* he means external Nature, the non-self, the IT IS. The *existence* and *reality* of these polarities are assumed (on the basis of experience) as axioms, and the problem is to discover the *relationship* between the subjective and the objective in any act of knowledge. If the perceiving subject and the perceived object are equally 'rear yet equally distinct, then (a) what is a *perception* (the product of their union), and (b) how does it come about? To the first question Coleridge answers, satisfactorily enough, that in all acts of perception there is an interpenetration of self and non-self resulting in a *tertium aliquid* or third entity partaking of both. Perceptions, then, are modifications of self-consciousness: the perceiver knows himself in and through the objects which he perceives.

This hypothesis yields, as Coleridge says, the paradox that true idealism 'is only so far idealism, as it is at the same time, and on that very account, the truest and most binding realism' (*BL*, I 178). So far, so good - but *how* (turning to the second question) does this fusion of subject and object take place? Coleridge does not say. At the crucial point of his argument he defers 'the demonstrations and constructions of the Dynamic Philosophy' to the third treatise of his projected 'Logosophia' and is content to restate, in the categorical form of ten 'theses' (largely appropriated from Schelling), the main conclusions already reached. Now, we know from chapter 7 (esp. I 85-6) of *Biographia Literaria*, as well as from elsewhere in his writings, that Coleridge proposed to defend his 'true and original realism' and explain the relationship between *thoughts* and *things* by positing the existence of 'an



intermediate faculty [of the mind], which is at once both active and passive'. This faculty is, of course, the imagination. Why, then, does he draw up short in chapter 12, asking us to 'assume such a power as [a] principle' (*BL*, I 188) so that he can deduce from it in his next chapter what is, after all, merely another aspect or degree (i.e. the *poetic* imagination) of the very power he wishes us to assume as an axiom? Perhaps he was too short of time with the printer snapping at his heels to elaborate such a complex argument; perhaps, in a work concerned with his *literary* opinions, he felt it improper to develop in the detail required so purely philosophical a proposition; perhaps, as Father Appleyard maintains, he was himself confused by his own arguments and found it necessary (in 1815) to resort to Schelling in order 'to bolster a not very satisfactory theory which he had obligated himself to explain'.<sup>40</sup> Perhaps all of these factors were involved.

**Chapter 13**, 'On the imagination, or esemplastic power', is fragmentary and disappointing, and its failure is doubtless to be explained as a flow-on from the untidy and inconclusive arguments of chapter 12. After a brief excursus into Kant and Schelling, Coleridge abruptly breaks in with a 'letter from a friend' advising him to postpone his deduction of imagination to fuller consideration in his 'Logosophia'. (This letter, as Coleridge told Thomas Curtis in April 1817, he had written himself 'without taking my pen off the paper except to dip it in the inkstand' - *CL*, IV 728). Chapter 13 stops (rather than ends) by 'stating the main result' of the unwritten chapter in the celebrated definitions of Primary Imagination, Secondary Imagination, and Fancy.

This is not the place to enter into a discussion of the meaning and critical utility of these distinctions. However, one or two brief explanatory notes will not be out of place. From a structural point of view, the three definitions constitute a watershed between the philosophy of chapters 5-13 and the literary criticism of chapters 14-22. In opposition to the empirical philosophies of the followers of Locke and Hume, for whom the mind was like an inert block of wax or a blank sheet of paper on which external objects imprint themselves, Coleridge asserts that the mind is *active* in perception. This activity, which is subconscious and is the common birthright of all men, is the work of the Primary Imagination, which may be defined as the inborn power of perceiving that makes it possible to know things. This vital, synthesising power effects a coalescence of subject (self) and object (non-self), yielding, as its product, a modified combination of the percipient and the thing-perceived; by blending and fusing 'thoughts' and 'things', self and non-self, Man and Nature, this *esemplastic* power generates new realities in which opposites are reconciled, unity is drawn from diversity, and parts are shaped into wholes.

Moreover, since the Primary Imagination is 'a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM' (*BL*, I 202), it has a theological as well as a philosophical dimension: Coleridge insists, as he had done for over a decade (see *CL*, II 1034), that the activity of the perceiving mind is an analogue, at a finite level, of the eternally generative activity of God. And finally, by denominating the power of perception as 'primary Imagination', Coleridge establishes *at one stroke* the intimate relationship between philosophy and poetry: like the poetic or Secondary Imagination, the Primary Imagination is

*poietic* - that is to say, *seeing is making*.

The Secondary Imagination is, in effect, the poetic imagination. It differs from the Primary Imagination in *degree*, but not in kind. While all men possess the Primary Imagination, only some men possess the heightened degree of that universally human power to which the poet lays claim. Secondary Imagination differs in two important respects from Primary Imagination. First, Primary Imagination is subconscious, while Secondary Imagination coexists 'with the conscious will' and involves, therefore, elements of conscious and subconscious activity. Poetic 'making' - I take it that this is Coleridge's meaning - blends conscious selection with subconscious infusion: a poem is both predetermined and preterdetermined, some elements intentionally chosen while others are mysteriously given or supplied from the deep well of the poet's subconscious mind.

Indeed, the two impulses may (and probably do) operate simultaneously in many instances: for example, a poet may consciously choose a particular image or expression without being consciously aware of its full implications - such an image or expression, therefore, being both voluntary and involuntary. Second, the Secondary Imagination is described as a power that 'dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to recreate' (*BL*, I 202). Dissolves *what?* Presumably, it dissolves the original union of subject and object effected by the Primary Imagination, a union which most of us take for granted, and then reintegrates the components in a new way that draws attention to their coalescence. In works of genius, this idealising and unifying power operates (as Coleridge had noted in chapter 4) by producing 'the strongest impressions of novelty, while it rescues the most admitted truths from the impotence caused by the very circumstance of their universal admission' (*BL*, 160). Through the agency of the Secondary Imagination, as Shelley (in a very Coleridgean moment) observes, poetry

reproduces the common universe of which we are portions and percipients, and it purges from our inward sight the film of familiarity which obscures from us the wonder of our being. It compels us to feel that which we perceive, and to imagine that which we know. It creates anew the universe, after it has been annihilated in our minds by the recurrence of impressions blunted by reiteration.

Fancy, on the other hand, is distinguished from Imagination (both Primary and Secondary) because it is not *poietic*. Fancy differs from Imagination in *kind*. Imagination is coadunative, blending Man and Nature in modified educts participating in, and bridging the gap between, the divided and distinguished worlds of spirit and matter. Imaginative writing is characterised by its seamless fusion of perception, intellect, feeling (or passion), memory, association and language. Fancy, however, is merely aggregative and associative; it is a 'mode of Memory' receiving 'all its materials ready made from the law of association' (*BL*, I 202). In other words, Fancy joins without blending, yokes together preexisting sensations without creating anything organically new, fabricates without refashioning the elements which it combines.

An image or illustration may be useful in clarifying these abstractions. Take two metal rods, one of tin, the other of copper. If we simply *weld* these two rods together, then we produce a single rod which is half tin and half copper, in which the elements are joined yet still

separate: this is an emblem of the operation of Fancy. If, however, we put the two rods (one copper, one tin) into a crucible together and melt them down, we shall end up producing a *bronze* rod in which the original elements of copper and tin have coadunated to form a third form (a *tertium aliquid*) which is both and yet neither: this is an emblem of the blending, synthesising power of Imagination. Fancy, which manifests itself in poetry chiefly through *formal similes*, is (Coleridge would argue) inferior to Imagination, which operates primarily through *symbols*. However - and this is important - he would maintain that both Fancy and Imagination are appropriate to poetry and that both modes may coexist in a single poet or an individual poem; but Imagination is the higher mode and the most predominant characteristic of 'great' poetry. 'A Poet's *Heart & Intellect*', he told William Sotheby in September 1802,

should be *combined, intimately combined & unified*, with the great appearances in Nature - & not merely held in solution & loose mixture with them, in the shape of formal Similies. I do not mean to *exclude* these formal Similies - there are moods of mind, in which they are natural - pleasing moods of mind, & such as a Poet will often have, & sometimes express; but they are not his highest, & most appropriate moods. (CL, II 864)

The bridge between philosophy and aesthetics provided in the fancy-imagination distinction is followed, in chapters 14-22, by a detailed examination - an analysis promised from the beginning - of Wordsworth's theory and art. Coleridge's method in these chapters is interesting. Basically, as R. H. Fogle has pointed out,

Coleridge establishes an ideal Wordsworth, or an idea of Wordsworth, and finds him at fault when he does not measure up to this ideal. ... That is to say, Coleridge attempts to provide not a Wordsworth of literal actuality, but rather an interpretation in which something of himself is infused. Along with an idea of Wordsworth go an idea of poetry and an idea of criticism. The ideal poetry is characterized by universality, and the ideal criticism is a reconciliation of a deduction from critical principles with an induction or intuitive apprehension of the body of poetry to be criticized.

In other words, Coleridge's object in these chapters is, by using Wordsworth as an example and an ideal, to establish the ground-rules or fixed principles of poetic criticism generally. Such a procedure allows Coleridge (a) to articulate what poetry should ideally be and on what fundamental criteria it should be judged or assessed; (b) to measure Wordsworth's poetry and poetic theory against the ideal on the basis of these criteria; (c) to identify and explore discrepancies between Wordsworth's theory and actual poetry, and to mark out clearly Coleridge's disagreement with aspects of Wordsworth's theory and its poetic application; and (d) to demonstrate how Wordsworth's critics have erred because they have not assessed his achievement in the light of fixed canons of criticism. The movement in these chapters is from the general to the particular, from the establishment of critical principles to their application to Wordsworth's poetry. Coleridge's concern is *not* to provide 'recipes' for writing poems or 'rules' to be used in passing judgement on them; rather, he proposes, like Aristotle in the *Poetics* or Sidney in his *Apologie for Poetrie*, to deduce from an existing body of poetry the principles of its construction.

In **chapter 14** Coleridge outlines his poetic creed. All the major issues to be discussed are raised here. He begins by recalling how conversations with Wordsworth on 'the two cardinal points of poetry' (namely, 'the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty by the modifying colors of imagination' - *BL*, II 5) had originated the plan of the *Lyrical Ballads*; and he describes how their different contributions to the volume were intended as explorations of different ideas about poetry. He then turns to Wordsworth's Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, declaring that with 'many parts' of it he had 'never concurred; but on the contrary objected to them as erroneous in principle, and as contradictory (in appearance at least) both to other parts of the same preface, and to the author's own practice in the greater number of the poems themselves' (*BL*, I 8).

While it is necessary for Coleridge to state where he differs from Wordsworth, it is imperative first to state the essential tenets of his own position. This he accomplishes in the famous definitions of *poem* and *poet*. Both definitions describe an ideal against which to set particular examples. A *poem* he defines as an organic construct which, unlike works of science, proposes 'for its *immediate* object pleasure, not truth' (*BL*, I 10). In other words, while truth is the *ultimate* end of poetry, pleasure is its *immediate* end: Coleridge is reversing the emphasis in the Christian humanist poetic dictum *docere cum delectatione*, 'to teach with delight', in which the didactic element is pre-eminent both as immediate and ultimate end, while pleasure or delight is a kind of sugar-coating to help the moral pill go down. Coleridge's second definition, that of the ideal poet, is characterised by its emphasis on imagination (and it repeats in formal terms his earlier description, in chapter 4, of the impact of Wordsworth on him in 1795):

The poet, described in *ideal* perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other, according to their relative worth and dignity. He diffuses a tone and spirit of unity, that blends, and (as it were) *fuses*, each into each, by that synthetic and magical power, to which we have exclusively appropriated the name of imagination. This power, first put in action by the will and understanding, and retained under their irremissive, though gentle and unnoticed, controul (*laxis effertur habenis*) reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities. (*BL*, I 12)

In a final image, poetic genius is described in the organic metaphor of a human figure in which the various elements are united in 'one graceful and intelligent whole': Imagination (the unifying power) is the omnipresent soul, Good Sense (sound logic, meaning, and judgement) forms the body, and Fancy provides the superficial drapery in which this living, moving figure is clothed.

**Chapter 15**, substantially a reproduction of Coleridge's 1811 lecture on Shakespeare's early narrative poems (see *CN*, III no. 4115), at first seems wantonly excursive. But it is not. In fact, two important things are happening. First (and most obviously), the discussion of Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* and selected sonnets allows Coleridge to apply the critical

principles of chapter 14 to the greatest of English poets and to demonstrate how his poetic genius manifested itself in even his earliest productions before he turned to dramatic writing. Second, there is an oblique admonition of Wordsworth's theory and practice that both anticipates and prepares the ground for the criticism in the following chapters. At the end of chapter 15 Coleridge distinguishes two imaginative modes: the centrifugal imagination of Shakespeare and the centripetal imagination of Milton. While Shakespeare (especially in his dramatic works) 'darts himself forth, and passes into all the forms of human character and passion', Milton 'attracts all forms and things to himself, into the unity of his own IDEAL' (*BL*, II 20).<sup>50</sup> The Miltonic mode is explained in more detail in Coleridge's *Table Talk* (18 Aug 1833):

In the *Paradise Lost* - indeed in every one of his poems - it is Milton himself whom you see; his Satan, his Adam, his Raphael, almost his Eve - are all John Milton; and it is a sense of this intense egotism that gives me the greatest pleasure in reading Milton's works. The egotism of such a man is a revelation of spirit. (*TT*, pp. 267-8)

Now, in Coleridge's view, Wordsworth's particular genius was Miltonic, not Shakespearean; his strength lay, as *The Prelude* had demonstrated, in impressing the stamp of his own mind and character on all that he chose to write about. The 'egotistical sublime' (as Hazlitt and Keats later deprecatingly denominated it) was the mark of his mind and the proper province of his poetic voice. In *The Excursion*, however, which Coleridge had criticised in letters to Lady Beaumont and Wordsworth himself (*CL*, IV 564, 572-4), Wordsworth had adopted unsuccessfully a pseudo-Shakespearean mode of refracting his own personality through externalised, theoretically 'dramatic' characters. Some of the Lyrical Ballads had also suffered from Wordsworth's 'undue predilection for the *dramatic* form'. And Coleridge's dicta on Shakespeare in chapter 15 are, as U. C. Knoepfelmacher has demonstrated convincingly, 'as integral to the explanation of [Coleridge's] reservations about Wordsworth's theories as they are to his wider efforts to reclaim Wordsworth from practicing forms of poetry unsuited to a peculiarly Miltonic genius'

**Chapter 16** is transitional. In it, by detailing some of the 'striking points of difference between the Poets of the present age and those of the 15th and 16th centuries', Coleridge prepares the ground for examining the specific qualities of Wordsworth.

In **chapters 17-20** Coleridge concentrates on those aspects of Wordsworthian theory in the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* with which he disagrees - specifically, the theories of poetic diction and metre. Both are misguided, because both falsify Wordsworth's true inclinations, aptitude, and actual practice in the best of his poetry. In these four technical chapters Coleridge believed, as he told R. H. Brabant in July 1815, that 'I have done my Duty to myself and to the Public, in (as I believe) compleatly subverting the Theory & in proving that the Poet himself has never acted on it except in particular Stanzas which are the Blots of his Compositions' (*CL*, IV 579). His purpose in refuting Wordsworth's theories of poetic diction and metre was twofold: on the one hand, he wished to make clear his own position and to settle 'the long continued controversy' (*BL*, I 1) between himself and Wordsworth on these

issues; on the other hand, he wished (as Nathaniel Teich has said) 'to restore critical perspective and rescue Wordsworth from the incomplete and misleading theorizing that left him vulnerable to attack and ridicule' in the contemporary journals. While not all recent commentators would accept that Coleridge is entirely fair or accurate in his analysis of Wordsworth's theory, most (if not all) readers would accept R. H. Fogle's general assessment of Coleridge's critique. According to Coleridge's account, Fogle says,

Wordsworth's defects both of theory and of practice are defects of his positive qualities. His faults of theory are truths that have been carried beyond their proper limits; his faults of practice are virtues inadequately controlled and realized. They arise from imperfect knowledge of the craft of poetry, and from imperfect knowledge of himself as a poet. Coleridge would not have said of Wordsworth, as he did of Shakespeare, that his judgment was equal to his genius.

Having admonished in **chapter 21** the journals (in particular the *Edinburgh Review*) for their want of critical principles and their wanton *ad hominem* vituperation, Coleridge turns in **chapter 22** to 'a fair and philosophical inquisition into the character of Wordsworth, as a poet, on the evidence of his published works' (*BL*, II 85). His examination, based on the fixed principles established in earlier chapters, takes the form of an illustrated exploration of Wordsworth's *characteristic* poetic defects and strengths. Of the five 'defects' listed, the two most important are (1) '*matter of -fact ness*', which reveals itself either 'in a laborious minuteness and fidelity in the representation of objects' or in 'a *biographical* attention to probability, and an *anxiety* of explanation and retrospect' (*BL*, II 101, 103); and (2) a form of '*mental* bombast' in which thoughts or images - such as the panegyric on the child philosopher in stanzas 7 and 8 of the 'Ode: Intimations of Immortality' - are 'too great for the subject' (*BL*, II 109).

Wordsworth's poetic excellences, which set his work apart from all other contemporary poets, are six in number: (1) 'an austere purity of language' in which there is 'a perfect appropriateness of the words to the meaning' (*BL*, II 115), (2) a fine balancing of 'Thoughts and Sentiments, won - not from books, but - from the poet's own meditative observation' (*BL*, II 118), (3) 'the frequent *curiosa felicitas* of his diction' (*BL*, II 121), (4) 'the perfect truth of nature in his images and descriptions, as taken immediately from nature' (*BL*, II 121), (5) 'a meditative pathos, a union of deep and subtle thought with sensibility; a sympathy with man as man' (*BL*, II 122), and (6) lastly and pre-eminently, 'the gift of IMAGINATION in the highest and strictest sense of the word' - although in 'the play of *Fancy*, Wordsworth, to my feelings, is not always graceful, and sometimes *recondite*' (*BL*, II 124). One has only to set this assessment against that of any other contemporary or, for that matter, modern commentator on Wordsworth to appreciate the sensitivity and acuity of Coleridge's criticism. On Wordsworth in particular, and on poetry in general, Coleridge first said what most of us now take for granted.

Chapter 22 is followed by '**Satyrane's Letters**' and the critique of Maturin's *Bertram*, both of which (as makeweight materials) we may disregard.

**Chapter 24**, the 'Conclusion', however, merits a word, although it was not part of the book conceived and written in the summer and early autumn of 1815. This chapter was added in the spring of 1817, shortly before printing of the volumes was completed by Rest Fenner, Coleridge's London publisher. It is partly exculpation, partly explanation, partly assertion. Coleridge declares that the long delay in publication has not been due to any laziness or neglect on his part; he defends 'Christabel' and laments the 'malignity and spirit of personal hatred' by which it had been assailed in the *Edinburgh Review* without motive, without substance, without principle; and he laments, too, that much that has appeared under his name in print has been 'condemned beforehand, as predestined metaphysics' (*BL*, II 212). *The Statesman's Manual* had excited such motiveless malignity, even before its publication, from the pen of William Hazlitt.

What then is to be done? Nothing, nothing more. Coleridge has prompted the age to quit its clogs, to judge by principles in geniality of spirit, but the age has chosen to ignore him. The truths which he has sought to propagate are, however, none the less true - in politics, in philosophy, in literary criticism, and, most of all, in religion; and he closes by asserting that Christianity,

though not discoverable by human Reason, is yet in accordance with it; ... that Religion passes out of the ken of Reason only where the eye of Reason has reached its own Horizon; and that Faith is then but its continuation: even as the Day softens away into the sweet Twilight, and Twilight, hushed and breathless, steals into the Darkness. (*BL*, II 218)

Truth, known in the pulses of the heart and corroborated by the activity of the head, is a goal and a refuge beyond the reach of scorners, beyond the quills of Hazlitt, beyond the myopic temporising of the unimaginative and the unprincipled.

### **Excerpts from the Text:**

#### **CHAPTER XIII:**

The IMAGINATION then, I consider either as primary, or secondary. The **primary IMAGINATION** I hold to be **the living Power and prime Agent of all human Perception**, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM. The **secondary Imagination** I consider as an echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the *kind* of its agency, and differing only in *degree*, and in the *mode* of its operation. It **dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to re- create**; or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still at all events it struggles to idealize and to unify. It is essentially vital, even as all objects (as objects) are essentially fixed and dead.

**Fancy**, on the contrary, has no other counters to play with, but **fixities and definites**. The Fancy is indeed no other than a mode of Memory emancipated from the order of time and space; while it is blended with, and modified by that empirical phenomenon of the will, which we express by the word CHOICE. But equally with the ordinary memory the Fancy must receive all its materials ready made from the law of association.



## CHAPTER XIV:

*Occasion of the Lyrical Ballads, and the objects originally proposed—  
Preface to the second edition—The ensuing controversy, its causes and acrimony—  
Philosophic definitions of a Poem and Poetry with scholia.*

### [Lyrical Ballads – Two cardinal points of poetry]

During the first year that Mr. Wordsworth and I were neighbours, our conversations turned frequently on the two cardinal points of poetry

- 1) the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a **faithful adherence to the truth of nature**, and
- 2) the power of giving **the interest of novelty** by the modifying colours of imagination.

The thought suggested itself . . . that a series of poems might be composed of **two sorts**. In the one, the incidents and agents were to be, in part at least, **supernatural** . . . For the second class, subjects were to be chosen from **ordinary life** . . .

In this idea originated **the plan of the LYRICAL BALLADS**; in which it was agreed, that **my endeavours** should be directed to persons and characters **supernatural**, or at least romantic; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that **willing suspension of disbelief for the moment**, which constitutes **poetic faith**.

**Mr. Wordsworth**, on the other hand, was to propose to himself as his object, to give the charm of **novelty to things of every day**, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind's attention to the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us . . .

With this view I wrote **THE ANCIENT MARINER**, and was preparing among other poems, **THE DARK LADIE**, and the **CHRISTABEL**, in which I should have more nearly realized my ideal, than I had done in my first attempt.

**But Mr. Wordsworth's industry** had proved so much **more successful**, and the number of his poems so much greater, that my compositions, instead of forming a balance, appeared rather an interpolation of heterogeneous matter.

To the second edition he added **a preface** . . . he was understood to contend for the extension of this style to poetry of all kinds . . . **the language of real life** . . . From this preface . . . arose the whole long-continued controversy.

### [The controversy and its aftermath]

**Had** Mr. Wordsworth's poems been the silly, the childish things, which they were for a long time described as being . . . they must have sunk at once, a dead weight, into the slough of oblivion, and have dragged the preface along with them.

**But** year after year increased the number of Mr. Wordsworth's **admirers**. They were found too not in the lower classes of the reading public, but **chiefly among young men of**



**strong sensibility and meditative minds**; and their admiration . . . was distinguished by its intensity, I might almost say, by **its religious fervour**.

**With** many parts of this preface . . . **I never concurred**; but on the contrary objected to them as **erroneous in principle**, and as contradictory . . . both to other parts of the same preface, and to the author's own practice in the greater part of the poems themselves.

At all events, considering it as the source of a controversy, in which **I have been honoured more than I deserve** by the frequent conjunction of my name with his, I think it expedient to declare once for all, in what points I coincide with **the opinions supported** in that preface, and in what **points I altogether differ**.

But in order to render myself intelligible I must previously, in as few words as possible, explain my views, first, of a Poem; and secondly, of Poetry itself, in kind, and in essence.

#### [Prose vs. Poem]

A poem contains **the same elements** as a prose composition; **the difference** therefore must consist **in a different combination of them** in consequence of a different object being proposed.

[I]t is **distinguished** from prose **by metre, or by rhyme**, or by both conjointly . . . So much for the superficial form. A difference of object and contents supplies an additional ground of distinction.

But the **communication of pleasure** may be the immediate object of **a work not metrically composed**; and that object may have been in a high degree attained, **as in novels and romances**.

Would then the **mere superaddition of metre**, with or without rhyme, entitle these to the name of poems? The answer is, that nothing can permanently please, which does not contain in itself the reason why it is so, and not otherwise.

#### [Poem]

The final definition then, so deduced, may be thus worded. **A poem is that species of composition**, which is opposed to works of science, by proposing for **its immediate object pleasure**, not truth; and from all other species—(having this object in common with it)—it is discriminated by proposing to itself such **delight from the whole**, as is compatible with a distinct gratification from each component part.

[A] legitimate poem, I answer, it must be one, **the parts of which mutually support and explain each other**; all in their proportion harmonizing with, and supporting the purpose and known influences of metrical arrangement.

The philosophic critics of all ages coincide with the ultimate judgment of all countries, in equally **denying the praises** of a just poem, on the one hand, **to a series of striking lines** or distiches, each of which, absorbing the whole attention of the reader to itself, becomes **disjoined** from its context, and forms a separate whole, instead of a harmonizing part . . .

**The reader should be carried forward**, not merely or chiefly by the mechanical impulse of curiosity, or by a restless desire to arrive at the final solution; but **by the pleasureable activity of mind** excited by the attractions of the journey itself.

**Like the motion of a serpent**, which the Egyptians made the emblem of intellectual power; or like the path of sound through the air;—**at every step he pauses and half recedes**; and from the retrogressive movement collects the force which again carries him onward.

### [Poetry and the Poet]

My own conclusions on the nature of poetry, in the strictest use of the word, have been in part anticipated in some of the remarks on the **Fancy and Imagination** in the early part of this work.

**What is poetry?**—is so nearly the same question with, **what is a poet?**—that the answer to the one is involved in the solution of the other. For it is a distinction resulting from the poetic genius itself, which sustains and modifies the images, thoughts, and emotions of the poet's own mind.

**The poet**, described in ideal perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity . . . He **diffuses a tone and spirit of unity**, that blends, and (as it were) fuses, each into each, by that synthetic and magical power, to which I would exclusively appropriate the name of **Imagination**.

This power, first put in action by the will and understanding, and retained under their irremissive, though gentle and unnoticed, control . . . reveals "itself in the balance or **reconcilement of opposite or discordant**" qualities: of sameness, with difference; of the general with the concrete; the idea with the image; the individual with the representative; the sense of novelty and freshness with old and familiar objects . . .

### [Conclusion]

Finally, **Good Sense** is the Body of poetic genius, **Fancy** its Drapery, **Motion** its Life, and **Imagination** the Soul that is everywhere, and in each; and forms all into one graceful and intelligent **whole**.

\*

### CHAPTER XVII:

Mr. Wordsworth adds, 'accordingly, such a language' (meaning . . . the language of rustic life purified from provincialism) 'arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent . . .

**I object . . . to an equivocation in the use of the word 'real'**. Every man's language varies, according to the extent of his knowledge, the activity of his faculties, and the depth or quickness of his feelings. Every man's language has, first, its *individualities*; secondly, the common properties of the *class* to which he belongs; and thirdly, words and phrases of *universal* use.

[T]he language of Mr. Wordsworth's homeliest composition **differs from that of a common peasant**. . . [T]he language so highly extolled by Mr. Wordsworth varies in every country, nay in every village . . . the existence or non-existence of schools . . . and readers of the weekly newspapers . . .

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**CHAPTER XXII:**

[See **Appendix** for full text of Ch. XXII]

In poetry, in which every line, every phrase, may pass the ordeal of deliberation and deliberate choice, it is possible, and barely possible, to attain that *ultimatum* which I have ventured to propose as the infallible test of a blameless style; namely; its *untranslatableness* in words of the same language without injury to the meaning.

# #

## from UNIT – 10

### Henrik Ibsen: *The Lady from the Sea*

#### Introduction:

**Henrik Ibsen**, in full **Henrik Johan Ibsen**, (born March 20, 1828, Skien, Norway—died May 23, 1906, Kristiania [formerly Christiania; now Oslo]), major Norwegian playwright of the late 19th century, is considered “**the father of Modern Drama**”.

He wrote his first drama, *Catiline*, in 1850 and although this work generated little interest and was not produced until several years later, it evidenced Ibsen’s emerging concerns with the conflict between guilt and desire. While *Catiline* is a traditional romance written in verse, Ibsen’s merging of two female prototypes—one conservative and domestic, the other adventurous and dangerous—foreshadowed the psychological intricacies of his later plays.

Shortly after writing *Catiline*, Ibsen became **assistant stage manager at the Norwegian Theater** in Bergen. His duties included composing and producing an original drama each year. Ibsen was expected to write about Norway’s glorious past, but because Norway had just recently acquired its independence from Denmark after five hundred years, medieval folklore and Viking sagas were his only sources of inspiration. Critics generally divide Ibsen’s work into three phases.

#### **Phase One: Verse and the Stage, a Transition from Poetry**

These plays are noted primarily for their idiosyncratic Norwegian characters and for their emerging elements of satire and social criticism. In *Love’s Comedy*, for example, Ibsen attacked conventional concepts of love and explored the conflict between the artist’s mission and his responsibility to others. *Brand* (1866), an epic verse drama, was the first play Ibsen wrote after leaving Norway and was the first of his works to earn both popular and critical attention. The story of a clergyman who makes impossible demands on his congregation, his family, and himself, *Brand* reveals the fanaticism and inhumanity of uncompromising idealism. More significant still was Ibsen’s *Peer Gynt*, written while Ibsen was traveling in Italy and published in Denmark in 1867. Written in verse, *Peer Gynt* was not originally intended for stage performance, but has gone on to become a significant piece in Ibsen’s oeuvre, in good part because of the score written for it by composer Edvard Grieg.

#### **Phase Two: Social Realism and the Prose Drama**

Ibsen wrote prose dramas concerned with social realism during the second phase of his career.

- “**Problem Plays**” are plays which address social problems. Practitioners:
  - ❖ Henrik Ibsen (*An Enemy of the People*, 1882)
  - ❖ G. B. Shaw (*Mrs. Warren’s Profession*, 1893)
  - ❖ John Galsworthy (*Strife*, 1909)
  - ❖ Lillian Hellman (*The Children’s Hour*, 1934)
  - ❖ Arthur Miller (*All My Sons*, 1947)

❖ Arnold Wesker (*Roots*, 1959) and so on.

A philosophical historical drama on the Roman emperor Julian the Apostate had long been on his mind; he finished it in 1873 under the title *Kejser og Galilaeer* (***Emperor and Galilean***) but in a 10-act form too diffuse and discursive for the stage. He wrote a modern satire, *De unges forbund* (1869; ***The League of Youth***) and then during his stay in Munich, when he was becoming increasingly attuned to social injustice, Ibsen wrote *The Pillars of Society* (1877). A harsh indictment of the moral corruption and crime resulting from the quest for money and power, this drama provided what Ibsen called a “contrast between ability and desire, between will and possibility.”

Ibsen’s next drama, *A Doll’s House* (1879), whose protagonist is Nora, is often considered a **masterpiece of realist theater**. The account of the collapse of a middle-class marriage, this work, in addition to sparking debate about women’s rights and divorce, is also regarded as innovative and daring because of its emphasis on psychological tension rather than external action. A contemporary reviewer said, “When Nora slammed the door shut on her marriage, walls shook in a thousand homes.” *Ghosts* (1881) and *An Enemy of Society* (1882) are the last plays included in Ibsen’s realist period.

### **Phase Three: Negotiating the Symbolic**

Among his later plays are *Fruen fra havet* (1888; ***The Lady from the Sea***), *Hedda Gabler* (1890), *Bygmester Solness* (1892; ***The Master Builder***), *Lille Eyolf* (1894; ***Little Eyolf***), *John Gabriel Borkman* (1896), and *Naar vi døde vaagner* (1899; ***When We Dead Awaken***).

With *The Wild Duck* (1884) and *Hedda Gabler* (1890), Ibsen entered a period of transition during which he continued to deal with modern, realistic themes, but made increasing use of symbolism and metaphor. ***The Wild Duck***, regarded as one of Ibsen’s greatest tragicomic works, explores the role of illusion and self-deception in everyday life. In this play, Gregers Werle, vehemently believing that everyone must be painstakingly honest, inadvertently causes great harm by meddling in other people’s affairs.

***Rosmersholm*** was published in 1886 and performed in 1887. The play’s plot revolves around ex-parson Johannes Rosmer, a representative of high ethical standards, and his housekeeper, the adventuress Rebecca West. Both are haunted by the spirit of Rosmer’s late wife, who committed suicide under the subtle influence, the reader learns, of Rebecca West and because of her husband’s high-minded indifference to sex.

***Hedda Gabler*** concerns a frustrated aristocratic woman and the vengeance she inflicts on herself and those around her. Taking place entirely in Hedda’s sitting room shortly after her marriage, this play has been praised for its subtle investigation into the psyche of a woman who is unable to love others or confront her sexuality. Ibsen himself returned to Norway in 1891 and there entered his third and final period with the dramas ***The Master Builder*** (1892), ***Little Eyolf*** (1894), ***John Gabriel Borkman*** (1896), and ***When We Dead Awaken*** (1899). In

these final works, Ibsen dealt with the conflict between art and life and shifted his focus from the individual in society to the individual alone and isolated.

### **The Birth of Modern Theater:**

It is usually assumed that the shock caused by Ibsen, and the furiously hostile reaction his early plays provoked, were due to this political and social subversiveness. But that is only part of the truth. Another important cause of the violent reaction by audiences and critics alike lay in the revolutionary nature of Ibsen's dramatic method and technique. This is an aspect which is far more difficult for us to comprehend today as we have become completely conditioned to what were then "revolutionary" conventions. Much of the fury directed at the time against Ibsen had nothing to do with his supposed obscenity, blasphemous views, or social destructiveness. What was criticized above all was his obscurity and incomprehensibility. Ibsen, it was said again and again, was a troublemaker who was obscure on purpose in order to mask the shallowness of his thinking, and whose dark hints and mysterious allusions were never cleared up in his plays.

### **The Gist of the Text: *The Lady from the Sea***

*The Lady from the Sea*, play in five acts by Henrik Ibsen, published in Norwegian as *Fruen fra havet* in **1888** and first performed in early 1889. It was the first of several mystical psychological dramas by Ibsen. When a sailor returns to fulfill the promise, a lighthouse keeper's daughter must choose between her landlocked marriage and the mesmerizing allure of the sea. The play traces the increasing distraction of **Ellida Wangel**, the second wife of **Dr. Wangel**. She is obsessed with images of the sea because she once loved a sailor with a powerful will who promised to someday claim her. When the sailor does arrive, her husband releases her from her wedding vows. This act restores her equilibrium and breaks the sailor's spell over her.

### **The Synopsis of the Text:**

from George Bernard Shaw in *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* (1891):

"Ibsen's next play, though it deals with the old theme, does not insist on the power of ideals to kill, as the two previous plays do. It rather deals with the origin of ideals in unhappiness, in dissatisfaction with the real. The subject of *The Lady from the Sea* is the most poetic fancy imaginable. A young woman, brought up on the sea-coast, marries a respectable doctor, a widower, who idolizes her and places her in his household with nothing to do but dream and be made much of by everybody. Even the housekeeping is done by her stepdaughter: she has no responsibility, no care, and no trouble. In other words, she is an idle, helpless, utterly dependent article of luxury. A man turns red at the thought of being such a thing; but he thoughtlessly accepts a pretty and fragile-looking woman in the same position as a charming natural picture. The lady from the sea feels an indefinite want in her life.

She reads her want into all other lives, and comes to the conclusion that man once had to choose whether he would be a land animal or a creature of the sea; and that having chosen the land, he has carried about with him ever since a secret sorrow for the element he has

forsaken. The dissatisfaction that gnaws her is, as she interprets it, this desperate longing for the sea. When her only child dies and leaves her without the work of a mother to give her a valid place in the world, she yields wholly to her longing, and no longer cares for her husband, who, like Rosmer, begins to fear that she is going mad.

At last a seaman appears and claims her as his wife on the ground that they went years before through a rite which consisted of their marrying the sea by throwing their rings into it. This man, who had to fly from her in the old time because he killed his captain, and who fills her with a sense of dread and mystery, seems to her to embody the mystic attraction the sea has for her. She tells her husband that she must go away with the seaman. Naturally the doctor expostulates — declares that he cannot for her own sake let her do so mad a thing. She replies that he can only prevent her by locking her up, and asks him what satisfaction it will be to him to have her body under lock and key whilst her heart is with the other man. In vain he urges that he will only keep her under restraint until the seaman goes — that he must not, dare not, allow her to ruin herself. Her argument remains unanswerable.

The seaman openly declares that she will come; so that the distracted husband asks him does he suppose he can force her from her home. To this the seaman replies that, on the contrary, unless she comes of her own free will there is no satisfaction to him in her coming at all: the unanswerable argument again. She echoes it by demanding her freedom to choose. Her husband must cry off his law-made and Church-made bargain; renounce his claim to the fulfilment of her vows; and leave her free to go back to the sea with her old lover. Then the doctor, with a heavy heart, drops his prate about his heavy responsibility for her actions, and throws the responsibility on her by crying off as she demands.

The moment she feels herself a free and responsible woman, all her childish fancies vanish: the seaman becomes simply an old acquaintance whom she no longer cares for; and the doctor's affection produces its natural effect. In short, she says No to the seaman, and takes over the housekeeping keys from her stepdaughter without any further maunderings over that secret sorrow for the abandoned sea.

It should be noted here that Ellida [call her Eleeda], the Lady from the Sea, seems more fantastic to English readers than to Norwegian ones. The same thing is true of many other characters drawn by Ibsen, notably Peer Gynt, who, if born in England, would certainly not have been a poet and metaphysician as well as a blackguard and a speculator. The extreme type of Norwegian, as depicted by Ibsen, imagines himself doing wonderful things, but does nothing. He dreams as no Englishman dreams, and drinks to make himself dream the more, until his effective will is destroyed, and he becomes a broken-down, disreputable sot, carrying about the tradition that he is a hero, and discussing himself on that assumption. Although the number of persons who dawdle their life away over fiction in England must be frightful, and is probably increasing, yet their talk is not the talk of Ulric Brendel, Rosmer, Ellida, or Peer Gynt; and it is for this reason that Rosmersholm and The Lady from the Sea strike English audiences as more fantastic and less literal than A Doll's House and the plays

in which the leading figures are men and women of action, though to a Norwegian there is probably no difference in this respect.

### **The Summary of the Text:**

#### ***The Characters:***

Doctor Wangel, a physician

Ellida, his second wife

Boletta and Hilda, his daughters by his first marriage

Arnholm, a schoolmaster

Lyngstrand, a sculptor

Ballested

A Stranger

Young people of the town

Tourists and Summer visitors

The action takes place during the summer in a small town on a fjord in northern Norway.

There is no real affection between Ellida Wangel and her two stepdaughters, Boletta and Hilda. Ellida married their father, Doctor Wangel, several years before, soon after the death of his first wife. She met him in the seacoast town that was her home, which she loved because it was near the sea. In fact, the sea had always dominated her life, and she feels stifled in her new home, which is surrounded by mountains.

Arnholm, Boletta's former tutor, pays a visit to the Wangel home. He had known and loved Ellida before her marriage to Doctor Wangel, but she had refused his suit because she was already betrothed to another. As the two old friends talk, a traveling sculptor, Lyngstrand, stops to tell them of a group he hopes to model. Lyngstrand has been at sea, where he met a sailor who told him a strange story. The sailor had married a woman who had promised to wait for him, but three years earlier he had read that his wife had married another man. The sailor told Lyngstrand that his wife was still his, that he would have her even though she had broken her vows.

This strange tale moves Ellida, seems even to frighten her. She is moody after hearing it, which makes her husband think she is unhappy because she is away from the sea. He offers to move his family to the seashore so that Ellida can regain her peace of mind, but Ellida knows that a move will not bring her happiness, whereas it certainly would make him and the girls unhappy to leave their home. She tells him the real cause of her misery. Some years before, she had come under the spell of a sailor whose ship was in port for only a few days. He, too, loved the sea and seemed to be part of it.

Indeed, he and Ellida seemed to be animals or birds of the sea, so closely did they identify themselves with the vast waters. When the sailor murdered his captain, he was forced to flee. Before he left, he took a ring from his hand and one from hers, joined them together, and threw them into the sea. He told her that this act joined them in marriage and that she was to



wait for him. At the time, she seemed to have no will of her own and to be completely under his spell. Later, she regained her senses and wrote to tell him that she did not consider the joining of the rings a lasting bond. He ignored her letters, however, and continued to tell her that he would come back to her.

Ellida tells her husband that she had forgotten the sailor until three years ago, when she was carrying the doctor's child. Then, suddenly, the sailor seemed very close to her. Her child, who lived only a few months, was born—or so she believed—with the eyes of the sailor. She has felt such guilt that from that time on she has not lived with her husband as his wife. The anguish she has suffered is affecting her mind, and she fears that she will go mad. She loves her husband, but she is drawn to the man of the sea whom she has not seen in ten years.

Doctor Wangel tries to comfort his wife, but he is also worried about her sanity. One day, a stranger appears in their garden. He is the sailor, come to claim Ellida. He tells her that he has come to hold her to the vow she had taken years before. Ellida says that she could never leave her husband, but the stranger will not listen. The doctor tells the man that he will never allow his wife to leave him and that the stranger cannot force her to go against her will. The stranger responds that he would never force her but that she will come to him of her own free will. Those words, "of her own free will," seem to fascinate Ellida. She repeats them over and over and gains strength from them. The stranger leaves, saying that he will return for her answer the next night; if she refuses to join him then, she will never see him again.

Ellida begs her husband to save her from the stranger. He tries to persuade her that her mind has been conditioned by Lyngstrand's story of the sailor and his unfaithful wife, and he also reminds her that the sailor does not even look as she had remembered him. Ellida will not be comforted, however. She concludes that there is only one way she can make the right decision and save her sanity: The doctor must release her from her marriage vows, not by divorce but verbally. Then she will be free to choose between her husband and the stranger. She says that she has never been free, for first she was under the will of the stranger and then she has been under the will of her husband.

The doctor refuses her request because he thinks he must save her from the stranger and from herself. He feels that the stranger exerts an evil influence over her, and he wants to save her from disaster. He promises her, however, that after the stranger leaves, he will release her from her vow to him and give her the freedom she wishes.

The next night, the stranger comes again as promised, and Ellida and her husband meet him in the garden. When the stranger asks Ellida to come with him of her own free will, the doctor orders the stranger to leave the country or be exposed as a murderer. The stranger shows them a pistol and says that he will use it to take his own life rather than give up his freedom.

Ellida again tells her husband that he must release her from her marriage vows; although he can keep her body tied down, he cannot fetter her soul and her desires. Seeing that she is right

and that his refusal will drive his wife out of her mind, the doctor tells her that he will release her from her commitment to him. When she sees that he loves her enough to put her happiness above his own, she turns to the stranger, who is pleading with her to leave with him on the ship standing offshore, and tells him that now she can never go with him. The stranger, realizing that there is something between these two that is stronger than his will, leaves them, promising never to return.

Ellida assures her husband that her mind is whole once more and that she will never again long for the stranger or the sea. The unknown no longer has any power over her, for at last she has made a decision of her own free will. Because she has been free to choose or reject the stranger, his fascination is gone. Now she can go with her husband and live with him again as his wife. She knows too that she can now win the affection of his daughters and come to think of them as her own. Ellida will never again feel like the wild, eager birds of the sea. In binding herself forever to the land, she will find freedom.

### **An Appreciation of the Text:**

In the last phase of his career, Henrik Ibsen turned from the realistic social plays of his middle period toward a more psychological and, eventually, symbolic drama. He also shifted his emphasis from characters who are “normal,” if extreme, to those more obviously “abnormal.” He became fascinated by what he called the “trolls” or “demons” present in the back of the mind—that is, the irrational, subconscious side of the human personality that could erupt and dominate the actions of the most apparently stable individuals. Although there are important aspects of this transition in some of Ibsen’s earlier plays, such as *Vildanden* (pb. 1884; *The Wild Duck*, 1891) and *Rosmersholm* (pb. 1886; English translation, 1889), it was in *The Lady from the Sea* that he first overtly dramatized this new preoccupation with the “demonic.” *The Lady from the Sea* may lack the stature of Ibsen’s major plays, both in the level of its craftsmanship and in the depth of its perceptions, but it remains a pivotal play in his development and also offers one of the author’s most fascinating female characters.

Ellida Wangel, “the lady from the sea,” is an intelligent, sensitive, vivacious, sensuous woman. She is also, clearly, on the edge of an emotional breakdown. She feels oppressed by her domestic routine and alienated from her immediate surroundings. Her husband loves her but is unable either to understand her or to communicate with her. Ellida respects and feels gratitude toward him, but, because she feels her marriage to have been a “business arrangement,” she is unable to confide in him or to respond to him emotionally. She is even more isolated from his daughters, Boletta and Hilda, who treat Ellida as an intruder. They make this evident by celebrating their dead mother’s birthday behind her back.

Such a stifling environment is, of course, common to many of Ibsen’s great heroines—among them Nora Helmer, Mrs. Alving, Gina Ekdal, and Hedda Gabler—but only in *The Lady from the Sea* does it actually threaten to drive a woman to madness. Ellida’s grasp on reality is precarious. She cannot forget that her own mother died in an asylum, and she is irrationally

drawn to the sea; she is obsessed with the memory of her dead son, whose eyes, she believes, “changed with the seas.” Her mood shifts are abrupt and erratic; she cannot even remember what people look like when they are out of her sight.

The focus of Ellida’s obsession is, of course, the mysterious sailor whom she met before meeting Wangel. Although the vow she made to him was unsanctioned by law, Ellida cannot disregard it. She has felt his presence ever since her marriage to Wangel, and especially since the death of her son. The final crisis is provoked by his return to claim her as his “bride.”

When he does appear, however, Ellida’s reaction is a curious one, for she does not recognize him until she looks him directly in the eyes. It is not the stranger for whom Ellida longs but what he has come to represent to her. The sea, not the sailor, is the primary symbol, and it suggests the life of the imagination, of daring (the stranger once killed a man), of experience, and of total personal and spiritual fulfillment. The risk, however, is self-destruction. The real contest, all three participants realize, lies not in any contention over the physical possession of Ellida but within the mind and heart of the woman herself. “The root of that fascination lies in my own mind,” she tells Wangel, “what can you do against that?” Wangel finally realizes that even if he forces her to remain with him, he will lose her to insanity. As a trained and sensitive doctor, he also sees that she will be destroyed if she goes with the stranger. Caught on the horns of this dilemma, he makes a desperate and, for him, soul-wrenching decision: He gives her the absolute freedom to make her own choice and be responsible for the consequences of it.

Those two words, “freedom” and “responsibility,” give Ellida power over herself, and they resolve the play. Three factors free her from the stranger’s power: Hilda’s emotional reaction to the news that Ellida may be going away suggests to Ellida the real possibility of a relationship with the girls, Wangel’s obvious agonizing over his decision proves the depths of his devotion, and her own restored responsibility has given her the strength to look directly at the stranger.

Once she sees things clearly, the choice is not difficult. Because Ellida is allowed—indeed, forced—to take control of her own life, she does so, thus not only resolving her marital difficulties but also, more important, regaining her mental and emotional stability.

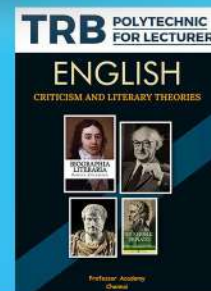
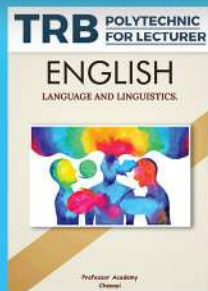
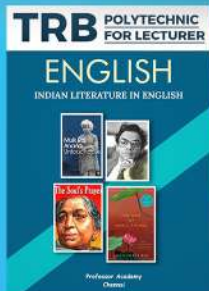
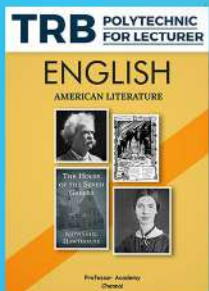
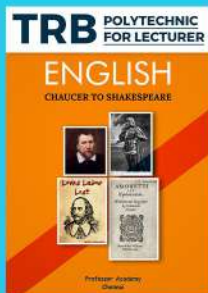
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