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CRITICISM

(B.A. English Sem. V)

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UNIT-1 SOME LITERARY TERMS IN CRITICISM

1. TEXTUAL CRITICISM

Textual criticism is a branch of textual scholarship, philology, and of literary criticism that is concerned with the identification of textual variants, or different versions, of either manuscripts or of printed books. Such texts may range in dates from the earliest writing in cuneiform, impressed on clay, for example, to multiple unpublished versions of a 21st-century author's work. Historically, scribes who were paid to copy documents may have been literate, but many were simply copyists, mimicking the shapes of letters without necessarily understanding what they meant. This means that unintentional alterations were common when copying manuscripts by hand.[1] Intentional alterations may have been made as well, for example the censoring of printed work for political, religious or cultural reasons.

The objective of the textual critic's work is to provide a better understanding of the creation and historical transmission of the text and its variants. This understanding may lead to the production of a "critical edition" containing a scholarly curated text. If a scholar has several versions of a manuscript but no known original, then established methods of textual criticism can be used to seek to reconstruct the original text as closely as possible. The same methods can be used to reconstruct intermediate versions, or recensions, of a document's transcription history, depending on the number and quality of the text available.

On the other hand, the one original text that a scholar theorizes to exist is referred to as the urtext (in the context of Biblical studies), archetype or autograph; however, there is not necessarily a single original text for every group of texts. For example, if a story was spread by oral tradition, and then later written down by different people in different locations, the versions can vary greatly.

There are many approaches or methods to the practice of textual criticism, notably eclecticism, stemmatics, and copy-text editing. Quantitative techniques are also used to determine the relationships between witnesses to a text, with methods from evolutionary biology (phylogenetics) appearing to be effective on a range of traditions

In some domains, such as religious and classical text editing, the phrase "lower criticism" refers to textual criticism and "higher criticism" to the endeavor to establish the authorship, date, and place of composition of the original text.

2. LEGISLATIVE CRITICISM

It also includes the rhetoric. It is the earliest kind of criticism. It is that form of critical endeavour which lays down rules for the art of writing, largely based on standard works of literature, especially those of Greek and Latin. It claims to teach the poet how to write or how to write better. It assumes that the critic is the law giver and the writer's duty is to put those rules into practice without any interrogation. The Augustans thought that the key function of criticism was to frame set rules for the guidance of writers, and then to judge a work on the basis of these rules. Writers

must strictly follow these rules when they create, and critics must judge strictly on the basis of these rules. Aristotle, Horace, Dionysius, Quintillian and Longinus among the ancients; and Vida, Racine, Boileau, Roscommon etc. among the moderns were the masters of criticism, whom the writers must follow with utmost fidelity. Legislative criticism was practised during the Elizabethan period. Sidney was the only exception. Nearly all Elizabethan critics directed their remarks to poets rather than to readers of poetry.

3. POST-STRUCTRALISM

Post-structuralism is the literary and philosophical work that both builds upon and rejects ideas within structuralism, the intellectual project that preceded it.[1] Though post-structuralists all present different critiques of structuralism, common themes among them include the rejection of the self-sufficiency of structuralism, as well as an interrogation of the binary oppositions that constitute its structures. Accordingly, post-structuralism discards the idea of interpreting media (or the world) within pre-established, socially-constructed structures. Structuralism proposes that one may understand human culture by means of a structure modelled on language. This understanding differs from concrete reality and from abstract ideas, instead as "third order" that mediates between the two. Building upon structuralist conceptions of reality mediated by the interrelationship between signs, a post-structuralist critique might suggest that to build meaning out of such an interpretation one must (falsely) assume that the definitions of these signs are both valid and fixed, and that the author employing structuralist theory is somehow above and apart from these structures they are describing so as to be able to wholly appreciate them. The rigidity, tendency to categorize, and intimation of universal truths found in structuralist thinking is then a common target of post-structuralist thought. Writers whose works are often characterised as post-structuralist include: Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, Judith Butler, Jean Baudrillard and Julia Kristeva, although many theorists who have been called "post-structuralist" have rejected the label.

4. Marxist Criticism

According to Marxists, and to other scholars in fact, literature reflects those social institutions out of which it emerges and is itself a social institution with a particular ideological function. Literature reflects class struggle and materialism: think how often the quest for wealth traditionally defines characters. So Marxists generally view literature "not as works created in accordance with timeless artistic criteria, but as 'products' of the economic and ideological determinants specific to that era" (Abrams 149). Literature reflects an author's own class or analysis of class relations, however piercing or shallow that analysis may be.

Karl Marx (1818-1883) was primarily a theorist and historian (less the evil pinko commie demon that McCarthyism fretted about). After examining social

organization in a scientific way (thereby creating a methodology for social science: political science), he perceived human history to have consisted of a series of struggles between classes--between the oppressed and the oppressing. Whereas Freud saw "sexual energy" to be the motivating factor behind human endeavor and Nabokov seemed to feel artistic impulse was the real factor, Marx thought that "historical materialism" was the ultimate driving force, a notion involving the distribution of resources, gain, production, and such matters.

The supposedly "natural" political evolution involved (and would in the future involve) "feudalism" leading to "bourgeois capitalism" leading to "socialism" and finally to "utopian communism." In bourgeois capitalism, the privileged bourgeoisie rely on the proletariat--the labor force responsible for survival. Marx theorized that when profits are not reinvested in the workers but in creating more factories, the workers will grow poorer and poorer until no short-term patching is possible or successful. At a crisis point, revolt will lead to a restructuring of the system.

For a political system to be considered communist, the underclasses must own the means of production--not the government nor the police force. Therefore, aside from certain first-century Christian communities and other temporary communes, communism has not yet really existed. (The Soviet Union was actually state-run capitalism.)

Marx is known also for saying that "Religion is the opiate of the people," so he was somewhat aware of the problem that Lenin later dwelt on. Lenin was convinced that workers remain largely unaware of their own oppression since they are convinced by the state to be selfless. One might point to many "opiates of the people" under most political systems--diversions that prevent real consideration of trying to change unjust economic conditions.

5. OBJECTIVE CO-RELATIVE

Objective Correlative is a term popularized by T.S. Eliot in his essay on 'Hamlet and His Problems' to refer to an image, action, or situation – usually a pattern of images, actions, or situations – that somehow evokes a particular emotion from the reader without stating what that emotion should be.

Explaining his view Eliot says, "The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an 'objective correlative'; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked' it is from this point of view that he finds *Hamlet* defective and "an artistic failure." He also says that in *Macbeth* Shakespeare is successful in finding an 'objective correlative' to express the emotions of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. Eliot says: "If you examine any of

Shakespeare's more successful tragedies, you will find this exact equivalence; you will find that the state of mind of Lady Macbeth walking in her sleep has been communicated to you by a skilful accumulation of imagined sensory impressions; the words of Macbeth on hearing his wife's death strike us as if given the sequence of events, these were automatically released by the last even in the series. The artistic "inevitability" lies in this complete adequacy of the external to the emotion; and this is precisely what is deficient in Hamlet. Hamlet (the man) is dominated by an emotion which is inexpressible because it is in excess of the facts as they appear ……Hamlet is up against the difficulty that his disgust is occasioned by his mother but that his mother is not an adequate equivalent for it; his disgust envelops and exceeds her. It is thus a feeling which he cannot understand; he cannot objectify it, therefore remains to poison life and abstract action. None of the possible actions can satisfy it: and nothing that Shakespeare can do with the plot can express Hamlet for him.

According to Eliot, when writer fails to find objective correlatives for the emotions they wish to convey, readers or audiences are left unconvinced, unmoved, or even confused. Eliot applied his theory of 'Objective Correlative' to Shakespeare's play *Hamlet* (1602), arguing that it is an "artistic failure" because occurrences in the play do not justify Hamlet's depth of feeling and thus fail to provide convincing motivation.

Objective Correlative was the term first used in a mid-nineteenth-century art lecture given by the American poet and painter Washington Allston, but later it was redefined by T.S. Eliot and became widespread among the critical circles specially the New Critics.

The phrase 'Objective Correlative' and the concept lying there in have gained great currency since then. It has become so popular with the people that critics like Wimsatt and Brooke have gone to the extent of saying that "the phrase objective correlative has gained a currency probably far beyond anything that the author could have expected or intended." The phrase has been used by Eliot to express how emotion can be best expressed in poetry and it is a part of his impersonal theory of poetry concentrating not on the poet but on the poetry. The theory of impersonal art implies that greater emphasis should be laid upon the work of art itself as a structure. Eliot has learnt from the French symbolists that emotion can only be evoked; it cannot be expressed directly. Eliot's theory was also anticipated by Ezra Pound in 'The Spirit of Romance.' Pound admitted that in the ideographic process of using

material images to suggest immaterial relations, the poet has to be as impersonal as the scientists: “Poetry is a sort of inspired mathematics, which gives us equations, not for abstract figures, triangles, spheres, and the like, but equations for the human emotion."

6. BIOGRAPHICAL CRITICISM

Biographical criticism is a form of literary criticism which analyzes a writer's biography to show the relationship between the author's life and their works of literature. Biographical criticism is often associated with historical-biographical criticism, a critical method that "sees a literary work chiefly, if not exclusively, as a reflection of its author's life and times". This longstanding critical method dates back at least to the Renaissance period, and was employed extensively by Samuel Johnson in his Lives of the Poets (1779–81).Like any critical methodology, biographical criticism can be used with discretion and insight or employed as a superficial shortcut to understanding the literary work on its own terms through such strategies as Formalism. Hence 19th century biographical criticism came under disapproval by the so-called New Critics of the 1920s, who coined the term "biographical fallacy" to describe criticism that neglected the imaginative genesis of literature. Notwithstanding this critique, biographical criticism remained a significant mode of literary inquiry throughout the 20th century, particularly in studies of Charles Dickens and F. Scott Fitzgerald, among others. The method continues to be employed in the study of such authors as John Steinbeck, Walt Whitman and William Shakespeare.

7. STRUCTURALISM

The advent of critical theory in the post-war period, which comprised various complex disciplines like linguistics, literary criticism, Psychoanalytic Criticism, Structuralism, Postcolonialism etc., proved hostile to the liberal consensus which reigned the realm of criticism between the 1930s and `50s. Among these overarching discourses, the most controversial were the two intellectual movements, Structuralism and Poststructuralism originated in France in the 1950s and the impact of which created a crisis in English studies in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Language and philosophy are the major concerns of these two approaches, rather than history or author.

Structuralism which emerged as a trend in the 1950s challenged New Criticism and rejected Sartre‘s existentialism and its notion of radical human freedom; it focused instead how human behaviour is determined by cultural, social and psychological

structures. It tended to offer a single unified approach to human life that would embrace all disciplines. Roland Barthes and Jacques Derrida explored the possibilities of applying structuralist principles to literature. Jacques Lacan studied psychology in the light of structuralism, blending Freud and Saussure. Michel Foucault's The Order of Things examined the history of science to study the structures of epistemology (though he later denied affiliation with the structuralist movement). Louis Althusser combined Marxism and Structuralism to create his own brand of social analysis.

Structuralism, in a broader sense, is a way of perceiving the world in terms of structures. First seen in the work of the anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss and the literary critic Roland Barthes, the essence of Structuralism is the belief that "things cannot be understood in isolation, they have to be seen in the context of larger structures they are part of", The contexts of larger structures do not exist by themselves, but are formed by our way of perceiving the world. In structuralist criticism, consequently, there is a constant movement away from the interpretation of the individual literary work towards understanding the larger structures which contain them. For example, the structuralist analysis of Donne's poem Good Morrow demands more focus on the relevant genre (alba or dawn song), the concept of courtly love, etc., rather than on the close reading of the formal elements of the text.

The fundamental belief of Structuralism, that all human activities are constructed and not natural or essential, pervades all seminal works of Structuralism. Beginning with the trailblazers, Levi Strauss and Barthes, the other major practitioners include A. J. Greimas, Vladimir Propp, Terence Hawkes (Structuralism and Semiotics), Robert Scholes (Structuralism in Literature), Colin MacCabe, Frank Kermode and David Lodge (combined traditional and structuralist approaches in his book Working with Structuralism). The American structuralists of the 1960s were Jonathan Culler and the semioticians C. S. Peirce, Charles Morris and Noam Chomsky.

With its penchant for scientific categorization, Structuralism suggests the interrelationship between "units" (surface phenomena) and "rules" (the ways in which units can be put together). In language, units are words and rules are the forms of grammar which order words.

Structuralist believe that the underlying structures which organize rules and units into meaningful systems are generated by the human mind itself and not by sense perception. Structuralism tries to reduce the complexity of human experiences to certain underlying structures which are universal, an idea which has its roots in the classicists like Aristotle who identified simple structures as forming the basis of life. A structure can be defined as any conceptual system that has three properties: "wholeness" (the system should function as a whole), "transformation" (system should not be static), and "self-regulation (the basic structure should not be changed).

Structuralism in its inchoate form can be found in the theories of the early twentieth century Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure (Course in General Linguistics, 1916), who moved away from the then prevalent historical and philological study of language (diachronic) to the study of the structures, patterns and functions of language at a particular time (synchronic). Saussure's idea of the linguistic sign is a seminal concept in all structuralist and poststructuralist discourses. According to him, language is not a naming process by which things get associated with a word or name. The linguistic sign is made of the union of "signifier" (sound image, or "psychological imprint of sound") and "signified" (concept). In this triadic view, words are "unmotivated signs," as there is no inherent connection between a name (signifier) and what it designates (signified). The painting This is Not a Pipe by the Belgian Surrealist artist Rene Magritte explicates the treachery of signs and can be considered a founding stone of Structuralism. Foucault's book with the same title comments on the painting and stresses the incompatibility of visual representation and reality.

Saussure's theory of language emphasizes that meanings are arbitrary and relational (illustrated by the reference to 8.25 Geneva to Paris Express in Course in General Linguistics; the paradigmatic chain hovel-shed-hut-house-mansion-palace, where the meaning of each is dependent upon its position in the chain; and the dyads male-female, day-night etc. where each unit can be defined only in terms of its opposite). Saussurean theory establishes that human being or reality is not central; it is language that constitutes the world. Saussure employed a number of binary oppositions in his lectures, an important one being speech/writing. Saussure gives primacy to speech, as it guarantees subjectivity and presence, whereas writing, he asserted, denotes absence, of the speaker as well as the signified. Derrida critiqued this as phonocentrism that unduly privileges presence over absence, which led him to question the validity of all centres.

Saussure's use of the terms Langue (language as a system) and Parole an individual. utterance in that language, which is inferior to Langue) gave structuralists a way of thinking about the larger structures which were relevant to literature. Structuralist narratology, a form of Structuralism espoused by Vladimir Propp, Tzvetan Todorov, Roland Barthes and Gerard Genette illustrates how a story's meaning develops from its overall structure, (langue) rather than from each individual story's isolated theme (parole). To ascertain a text's meaning, narratologists emphasize grammatical elements such as verb tenses and the relationships and configurations of figures of speech within the story. This demonstrates the structuralist shift from authorial intention to broader impersonal Iinguistic structures in which the author's text (a term preferred over "work") participates.

Structuralist critics analyse literature on the explicit model of structuralist linguistics. In their analysis they use the linguistic theory of Saussure as well as the semiotic theory developed by Saussure and the American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce. According to the semiotic theory, language must be studied in itself,

and Saussure suggests that the study of language must be situated within the larger province of Semiology, the science of signs.

Semiology understands that a word's meaning derives entirely from its difference from other words in the sign system of language (eg: rain not brain or sprain or rail or roam or reign). All signs are cultural constructs that have taken on their meaning through repeated, learned, collective use. The process of communication is an unending chain of sign production which Peirce dubbed "unlimited semiosis". The distinctions of symbolic, iconic and indexical signs, introduced by the literary theorist Charles Sande Peirce is also a significant idea in Semiology. The other major concepts associated with semiotics are "denotation" (first order signification) and "connotation" (second order signification).

Structuralism was anticipated by the Myth Criticism of Northrop Frye, Richard Chase, Leslie Fiedler, Daniel Hoffman, Philip Wheelwright and others which drew upon anthropological and physiological bases of myths, rituals and folk tales to restore spiritual content to the alienated fragmented world ruled by scientism, empiricism and technology. Myth criticism sees literature as a system based or recurrent patterns.

UNIT-2 THE ESSAY ON DRAMATIC POESY:-

Essay of Dramatic Poesy is a work by John Dryden, England's first Poet Laureate, in which Dryden attempts to justify drama as a legitimate form of "poetry" comparable to the epic, as well as defend English drama against that of the ancients and the French. The Essay was probably written during the plague year of 1666, and first published in 1668. In presenting his argument, Dryden takes up the subject that Philip Sidney had set forth in his Defence of Poesie in 1580.

The treatise is a dialogue between four speakers: **Eugenius, Crites, Lisideius, and Neander.** The four speakers are Sir Robert Howard [Crites], Lord Buckhurst [Eugenius], Sir Charles Sedley [Lisedeius], and Dryden himself (neander means "new man" and implies that Dryden, as a respected member of the gentry class, is entitled to join in this dialogue on an equal footing with the three older men who are his social superiors).

On the day that the English fleet encounters the Dutch at sea near the mouth of the Thames, the four friends take a barge downriver towards the noise from the battle. Rightly concluding, as the noise subsides, that the English have triumphed, they order the bargeman to row them back upriver as they begin a dialogue on the advances made by modern civilization. They agree to measure progress by comparing ancient arts with modern, focusing specifically on the art of drama (or "dramatic poesy").

The four men debate a series of three topics:

(1) the relative merit of classical drama (upheld by Crites) vs. modern drama (championed by Eugenius);

(2) whether French drama, as Lisideius maintains, is better than English drama (supported by Neander, who famously calls Shakespeare "the greatest soul, ancient or modern"); and

(3) whether plays in rhyme are an improvement upon blank verse drama—a proposition that Neander, despite having defended the Elizabethans, now advances against the skeptical Crites (who also switches from his original position and defends the blank verse tradition of Elizabethan drama).

Invoking the so-called unities from Aristotle's Poetics (as interpreted by Italian and refined by French scholars over the last century), the four speakers discuss what makes a play "a just and lively imitation" of human nature in action. This definition of a play, supplied by Lisideius/Sedley (whose rhymed plays had dazzled the court and were a model for the new drama), gives the debaters a versatile and richly ambiguous touchstone. To Crites' argument that the plots of classical drama are more "just," Eugenius can retort that modern plots are more "lively" thanks to their variety. Lisideius shows that the French plots carefully preserve Aristotle's unities of action, place, and time; Neander replies that English dramatists like Ben Jonson also kept the unities when they wanted to, but that they preferred to develop character and motive. Even Neander's final argument with Crites over whether rhyme is suitable in drama depends on Aristotle's Poetics: Neander says that Aristotle demands a verbally artful ("lively") imitation of nature, while Crites thinks that dramatic imitation ceases to be "just" when it departs from ordinary speech—i.e. prose or blank verse.

A year later, the two brothers-in-law quarreled publicly over this third topic. See Dryden's "Defense of An Essay of Dramatic Poesy" (1669), where Dryden tries to persuade the rather literal-minded Howard that audiences expect a play to be an imitation of nature, not a surrogate for nature itself.

John Dryden’s An Essay on Dramatic Poesy presents a brief discussion on Neo-classical theory of Literature. He defends the classical drama saying that it is an imitation of life and reflects human nature clearly.

An Essay on Dramatic Poesy is written in the form of a dialogue among four gentlemen: **Eugenius, Crites, Lisideius** and **Neander**. Neander speaks for Dryden himself. Eugenius favours modern English dramatists by attacking the classical playwrights, who did not themselves always observe the unity of place. But Crites defends the ancients and points out that they invited the principles of dramatic art paved by Aristotle and Horace. Crites opposes rhyme in plays and argues that though

the moderns excel in sciences, the ancient age was the true age of poetry. Lisideius defends the French playwrights and attacks the English tendency to mix genres.

Neander speaks in favour of the Moderns and respects the Ancients; he is however critical of the rigid rules of dramas and favours rhyme. Neander who is a spokesperson of Dryden, argues that 'tragic-comedy' (Dryden's phrase for what we now call 'tragi-comedy') is the best form for a play; because it is closer to life in which emotions are heightened by mirth and sadness. He also finds subplots as an integral part to enrich a play. He finds single action in French dramas to be rather inadequate since it so often has a narrowing and cramping effect.

Neander gives his palm to the violation of the three unities because it leads to the variety in the English plays. Dryden thus argues against the neo-classical critics. Since nobody speaks in rhyme in real life, he supports the use of blank verse in drama and says that the use of rhyme in serious plays is justifiable in place of the blank verse.

UNIT-3 PREFACE TO SHAKESPEARE

Eighteenth-century writer Samuel Johnson ((1709-1784) is one of the most significant figures in English literature. His fame is due in part to a widely read biography of him, written by his friend James Boswell and published in 1791. Although probably best known for compiling his celebrated dictionary, Johnson was an extremely prolific writer who worked in a variety of fields and forms.

Chief Critical Approaches of Dr. Johnson are:

Johnson tried teaching and later organized a school in Lichfield. His educational ventures were not successful, however, although one of his students, David Garrick, later famous as an actor, became a lifelong friend. Johnson, having given up teaching, went to London to try the literary life. Thus began a long period of hack writing for the Gentleman's Magazine.

He founded his own periodical, The Rambler, in which he published, between 1750 and 1752, a considerable number of eloquent, insightful essays on literature, criticism, and moral

Beginning in 1747, while busy with other kinds of writing and always burdened with poverty, Johnson was also at work on a major project—compiling a dictionary commissioned by a group of booksellers. After more than eight years in preparation, the Dictionary of the English Language appeared in 1755. This remarkable work

contains about 40,000 entries elucidated by vivid, idiosyncratic, still-quoted definitions and by an extraordinary range of illustrative examples.

Johnson published another periodical, The Idler, between 1758 and 1760.

In 1764 he and the eminent English portraitist Sir Joshua Reynolds founded the Literary Club; its membership included such luminaries as Garrick, the statesman Edmund Burke, the playwrights Oliver Goldsmith and Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and a young Scottish lawyer, James Boswell.

Johnson's last major work, The Lives of the English Poets, was begun in 1778, when he was nearly 70 years old, and completed—in ten volumes—in 1781. The work is a distinctive blend of biography and literary criticism.

Shakespeare's characters are a just representation of human nature as they deal with passions and principles which are common to humanity. They are also true to the age, sex, profession to which they belong and hence the speech of one cannot be put in the mouth of another. His characters are not exaggerated. Even when the agency is supernatural, the dialogue is level with life.

Shakespeare's plays are a storehouse of practical wisdom and from them can be formulated a philosophy of life. Moreover, his plays represent the different passions and not love alone. In this, his plays mirror life.

Shakespeare's use of tragic comedy: Shakespeare has been much criticized for mixing tragedy and comedy, but Johnson defends him in this. Johnson says that in mixing tragedy and comedy, Shakespeare has been true to nature, because even in real life there is a mingling of good and evil, joy and sorrow, tears and smiles etc. this may be against the classical rules, but there is always an appeal open from criticism to nature. Moreover, tragic-comedy being nearer to life combines within itself the pleasure and instruction of both tragedy and comedy.

Shakespeare's use of tragicomedy does not weaken the effect of a tragedy because it does not interrupt the progress of passions. In fact, Shakespeare knew that pleasure consisted in variety. Continued melancholy or grief is often not pleasing. Shakespeare had the power to move, whether to tears or laughter.

Shakespeare's comic genius: Johnson says that comedy came natural to Shakespeare. He seems to produce his comic scenes without much labour, and these scenes are durable and hence their popularity has not suffered with the passing of time. The language of his comic scenes is the language of real life which is neither gross nor over refined, and hence it has not grown obsolete.Shakespeare writes tragedies with great appearance of toil and study, but there is always something wanting in his tragic scenes. His tragedy seems to be skill, his comedy instinct.

Johnson's defence of Shakespeare's use of unities:

Samuel Johnson ((1709-1784)

Shakespeare's histories are neither tragedy nor comedy and hence he is not required to follow classical rules of unities. The only unity he needs to maintain in his histories is the consistency and naturalness in his characters and this he does so faithfully. In his other works, he has well maintained the unity of action. His plots have the variety and complexity of nature, but have a beginning, middle and an end, and one event is logically connected with another, and the plot makes gradual advancement towards the denouement.

Shakespeare shows no regard for the unities of Time and place, and according to Johnson, these have troubled the poet more than it has pleased his audience. The observance of these unities is considered necessary to provide credibility to the drama. But, any fiction can never be real, and the audience knows this. If a spectator can imagine the stage to be Alexandria and the actors to be Antony and Cleopatra, he can surely imagine much more. Drama is a delusion, and delusion has no limits. Therefore, there is no absurdity in showing different actions in different places.

As regards the unity of Time, Shakespeare says that a drama imitates successive actions, and just as they may be represented at successive places, so also they may be represented at different period, separated by several days. The only condition is that the events must be connected with each other.

Johnson further says that drama moves us not because we think it is real, but because it makes us feel that the evils represented may happen to ourselves. Imitations produce pleasure or pain, not because they are mistaken for reality, but because they bring realities to mind. Therefore, unity of Action alone is sufficient, and the other two unities arise from false assumptions. Hence it is good that Shakespeare violates them.

Faults of Shakespeare: Shakespeare writes without moral purpose and is more careful to please than to instruct. There is no poetic justice in his plays. This fault cannot be excused by the barbarity of his age for justice is a virtue independent of time and place.

Next, his plots are loosely formed, and only a little attention would have improved them. He neglects opportunities of instruction that his plots offer, in fact, he very often neglects the later parts of his plays and so his catastrophes often seem forced and improbable.

There are many faults of chronology and many anachronisms in his play. His jokes are often gross and licentious. In his narration, there is much pomp of diction and circumlocution. Narration in his dramas is often tedious. His set speeches are cold

and weak. They are often verbose and too large for thought. Trivial ideas are clothed in sonorous epithets. He is too fond of puns and quibbles which engulf him in mire. For a pun, he sacrifices reason, propriety and truth.He often fails at moments of great excellence. Some contemptible conceit spoils the effect of his pathetic and tragic scenes.

Merits of Shakespeare: He perfected the blank verse, imparted to it diversity and flexibility and brought it nearer to the language of prose.

UNIT-4 STUDY OF POETRY

'A Study of Poetry' is a critical essay by Matthew Arnold. In this essay Arnold criticizes the art of poetry as well as the art of criticism. Arnold believes that the art of poetry is capable of high destinies. It is the art in which the idea itself is the fact. He says that we should understand the worth of poetry as it is poetry that shows us a mirror of life. Science, according to Arnold, is incomplete without poetry, and, religion and philosophy will give way to poetry. Arnold terms poetry as a criticism of life thereby refuting the accusation of Plato and says that as time goes on man will continue to find comfort and solace in poetry.

Arnold says that when one reads poetry he tends to estimate whether it is of the best form or not. It happens in three ways- the real estimate, the historic estimate, and the personal estimate. The real estimate is an unbiased viewpoint that takes into account both the historical context and the creative faculty to judge the worth of poetry. But the real estimate is often surpassed by the historic and personal estimate. The historic estimate places the historical context above the value of the art itself. The personal estimate on the other hand depends on the personal taste, the likes and dislikes of the reader which affects his judgment of poetry. Arnold says that both these estimates tend to be fallacious.

The historic and personal estimate often overshadows the real estimate. But Arnold also says that it is natural. The study of the historical background of poetry and its development often leads to the critic skipping over the shortcomings because of its historical significance. Historic estimate raises poetry to a high pedestal and thus hinders one from noticing its weaknesses. It is the historic estimate that leads to the creation of classics and raises the poet to a nearly God like standard. Arnold says that if a poet is truly a classic his poetry will give the reader real pleasure and enable him to compare and contrast other poetry which are not of the same high standard. This according to Arnold is the real estimate of poetry. Thus Arnold appeals to his readers to read classics with an open eye and not be blind to its faults. This will enable one to rate poetry with its proper value.

Arnold here speaks about the idea of imitation. He says that whatever one reads or knows keeps on coming back to him. Thus if a poet wants to reach the high standards of the classics he might consciously or unconsciously imitate them. This is also true for critics who tend to revert to the historic and personal estimate instead of an unbiased real estimate. The historic estimate affects the study of ancient poets while the personal estimate affects the study of modern or contemporary poets.

Arnold proposes the 'touchstone' method of analyzing poetry in order to determine whether it is of a high standard or not. He borrows this method from Longinus who said in his idea of the sublime that if a certain example of sublimity can please anyone regardless of habits, tastes or age and can please at all times then it can be considered as a true example of the sublime. This method was first suggested in England by Addison who said that he would have a man read classical works which have stood the test of time and place and also those modern works which find high praise among contemporaries. If the man fails to find any delight in them then he would conclude that it is not the author who lacks quality but the reader who is incapable of discovering them. Arnold applies the touchstone method by taking examples from the time tested classics and comparing them with other poetry to determine whether they possess the high poetic standard of the classics. He says that the poems need not resemble or possess any similarity to the touchstones. Once the critic has lodged the touchstones in his mind in order to detect the possession of high poetic quality he will have the tact of finding it in other poetry that he compares to the touchstones. Arnold quotes Homer, Dante, Shakespeare and Milton in an attempt to exemplify touchstone poetry. He says that the examples he has quoted are very dissimilar to one another but they all possess a high poetic quality. He says that a critic need not labour in vain trying to explain the greatness of poetry. He can do so by merely pointing at some specimens of the highest poetic quality. Arnold says that the high quality of poetry lies in its matter and its manner. He then goes by Aristotle's observation and says that the best form of poetry possesses high truth and seriousness that makes up its subject matter along with superior diction that marks its manner. However, Arnold mentions that the true force of this method lies in its application. He therefore urges critics to apply the touchstone method to analyse and rate poetry.

Arnold then speaks about French poetry which had a tremendous influence on the poetry of England. He differentiates between the poetry of northern France and the poetry of southern France. The poetry of southern France influenced Italian literature. But it is the poetry of northern France that was dominant in Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth century. This poetry came to England with the Anglo-Normans and had a tremendous impact on English poetry. It was the romance-poems of France that was popular during that time. But Arnold says that it did not

have any special characteristics and lacked the high truth, seriousness and diction of classic poetry and remain significant only from the historical point of view.

Next Arnold speaks about Chaucer who was much influenced by French and Italian poetry. Arnold says that Chaucer's poetic importance is a result of the real estimate and not the historic estimate. The superiority of Chaucer's verse lies both in his subject matter and his style. He writes about human life and nature as he sees it. Arnold speaks highly of Chaucer's diction and calls it 'liquid diction' to emphasise the fluidity in the manner of Chaucer's writing which he considers to be an irresistible virtue. Arnold however says that Chaucer is not a classic. He compares Chaucer to Dante and points out that Chaucer lacks the high seriousness of the classics thereby depriving him of the high honour.

Next Arnold mentions Milton and Shakespeare and credits them as classics and moves on to speak about Dryden and Pope. According to the historic estimate Dryden and Pope are no doubt great poets of the eighteenth century. Arnold observes that Dryden and Pope were better prose writers than poets. The restoration period faced the necessity of a fit prose with proper imaginative quality and this is what Dryden and Pope provided. Arnold therefore concludes that they are classics not of poetry but of prose.

After Dryden and Pope Arnold speaks about Gray. Gray did not write much but what he wrote has high poetic value. Arnold therefore considers Gray to be a classic.

Arnold now speaks about Robert Burns in the late eighteenth century and says that this is the period from which the personal estimate begins to affect the real estimate. Burns, according to Arnold, is a better poet in Scottish than in English. Like Chaucer Arnold does not consider Burns to be a classic. He says that Burns too lacks the high seriousness desired of poetry. He compares Burns to Chaucer and finds that Burns' manner of presentation is deeper than that of Chaucer. According to the real estimate Burns lacks the high seriousness of the classics but his poetry nevertheless has truthful substance and style.

Then Arnold moves on to speak about Byron, Shelley and Wordsworth but does not pass any judgement on their poetry. Arnold believes that his estimate of these poets will be influenced by his personal passion as they are closer to his age than the classics and also because their writings are of a more personal nature. Finally Arnold speaks about the self-preservation of the classics. Any amount of good literature will not be able to surpass the supremacy of the classics as they have already stood the test of time and people will continue to enjoy them for the ages to come. Arnold says that this is the result of the self preserving nature of humanity. Human nature will remain the same throughout the ages and those parts of the classics dealing with the subject will remain relevant at all times thus preserving themselves from being lost in time.

UNIT-5 DEFENSE OF POETRY

Percy Bysshe Shelley, (born Aug. 4, 1792, Field Place, near Horsham, Sussex, Eng.—died July 8, 1822, at sea off Livorno, Tuscany [Italy]), English Romantic poet whose passionate search for personal love and social justice was gradually channeled from overt actions into poems that rank with the greatest in the English language.

S1) According to one mode of regarding those two classes of mental action, which are called reason and imagination, the former may be considered as mind contemplating the relations borne by one thought to another, however produced; and the latter, as mind acting upon those thoughts so as to colour them with its own light, and composing from them, as from elements, other thoughts, each containing within itself the principle of its own integrity.

Shelley divides the mental faculty into two parts: reason and imagination. Reason implies a kind of logical process that enables one to connect ideas together and/or determine their relationships to one another. It is a passive thing. Imagination, meanwhile, acts upon those thoughts. It enables creation; it is the source of our artistic desires.

2) Reason is the enumeration of quantities already known; Imagination is the perception of the value of those quantities, both separately and as a whole. Reason respects the differences, and Imagination the similitudes of things. Reason is to Imagination as the instrument to the agent, as the body to the spirit, as the shadow to the substance.

The distinction between reason and imagination is akin to the distinction between quality and quantity. We acknowledge the significance of each, all the while holding one in higher regard compared to the other. Reason is a lesser faculty, but it is necessary and instrumental to imagination. Reason implies a mechanical knowledge of things. However, until the imagination allows us to recognize the importance of such facts, they hold no value. It is the soul to the mere vessel of the body. One is inextricably linked with the other.

3) Poetry, in a general sense, may be defined to be "the expression of the Imagination:" and Poetry is connate with the origin of man. Man is an instrument over which a series of external and internal impressions are driven, like the alternations of an ever-changing wind over an Æolian lyre; which move it, by their motion, to ever-changing melody.

Poetry is man's real and outward expression of his imagination, and Poetry is an innate characteristic of man. A human being is that body with the imaginative soul. Like Nature creating music on Coleridge's Eolian harp, our interactions with the

world are themselves forms of poetry. We are constantly processing things, evaluating, and revising who we are.

4) For language is arbitrarily produced by the Imagination and has relation to thoughts alone; but all other materials, instruments and conditions of art, have relations among each other, which limit and interpose between conception and expression... We have thus circumscribed the meaning of the word Poetry within the limits of that art which is the most familiar and the most perfect expression of the faculty itself.

Poetic language expresses the Imagination best because speech is directly related to our thoughts. It is the problem of mediation; words are our best mode of conveying our thoughts. The Imagination creates thoughts, and language is "a more direct representation of our the actions and passions of our internal being." Shelley holds poetry as the highest form of art, superior to music, painting, and sculpture.

5) A man, to be greatly good, must imagine intensely and comprehensively; he must put himself in the place of another and of many others; the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own. The great instrument of moral good is the imagination; and poetry administers to the effect by acting upon the cause. Poetry enlarges the circumference of the imagination by replenishing it with thoughts of ever new delight, which have the power of attracting and assimilating to their own nature all other thoughts, and which form new intervals and interstices whose void for ever craves fresh food.

This is the social aspect of Shelley's poetry. Poetry is not just to induce delight and pleasure, which granted, it does well. It can and must inspire goodness in man, but at the same time, it must not be didactic. It should allow for a wealth of interpretation.

6) We want the creative faculty to imagine that which we know; we want the generous impulse to act that which we imagine; we want the poetry of life: our calculations have outrun conception; we have eaten more than we can digest.

Shelley also says, "a poem is the very image of life expressed in its eternal truth." This divine attribute of poetry is not unlike Coleridge's conception of the primary Imagination. He cautions us, however, that although we want always to be able to imagine and to create, there is also a danger in allowing our innovations to enslave us. He ascribes a dualistic nature of the divine to poetry; it is both as "God and the Mammon of the world."

7) A man cannot say, "I will compose poetry." The greatest poet even cannot say it: for the mind in creation is as a fading coal which some invisible influence, like an inconstant wind, awakens to transitory brightness...when composition begins, inspiration is already on the decline.

The composition of poetry is uncontrollable. Because Poetry is innately human, there is no translation from observation that occurs. The source of creation is internal, and we have no control over when or how inspiration strikes. Furthermore, the composition cannot hold up against what was imagined; it will always be inferior because there is no adequate way of capturing that always-elusive Truth. Though Poetry expresses an eternal truth of life, it is truth captured in imperfection.

8) Poetry thus makes immortal all that is best and most beautiful in the world; it arrests the vanishing apparitions which haunt the interluminations of life, and veiling them or in language or in form sends them forth among mankind, bearing sweet news of kindred joy to those with whom their sisters abide-- abide, because there is no portal of expression from the caverns of the spirit which they inhabit into the universe of things. Poetry redeems from decay the visitations of the divinity in man.

As an "expression of the Imagination," Poetry does capture these things. The "vanishing apparitions" are the thoughts residing in the Imagination, and Poetry allows us to express them with language. However imperfect they are, Poetry ensures that they are never wholly lost.

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