

# ***WOMEN'S WRITING***

***VI SEMESTER***

***CORE COURSE***

***BA ENGLISH***

*(2011 Admission/2012 Admission)*



**UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**

**SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**

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# UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT

SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

## STUDY MATERIAL

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BA ENGLISH

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## *WOMEN'S WRITING*

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## UNIT 1

### SHAKESPEARE'S SISTER VIRGINIA WOOLF

#### ABOUT THE WRITER:

Virginia Woolf, the English author, feminist, essayist, publisher and critic, was one of the founders of modernist movement. Adeline Virginia Stephen was born on 25<sup>th</sup> January 1882 in London, as the daughter of Leslie Stephen, a man of letters and Julia Jackson Duckworth, a member of Duckworth publishing family. Her youth was a traumatic one shadowed by a series of emotional shocks, with the early deaths of her mother and brother, a history of sexual abuse and the beginnings of a depressive mental illness that plagued her intermittently throughout her life. Following the death of her father in 1904, Woolf, along with her sister and two brothers moved to the house in Bloomsbury where they befriended Leonard Woolf, Clive Bell, Lytton Strachey and Maynard Keynes. This was the nucleus of Bloomsbury group. Later in 1912 she married Leonard Woolf, the political theorist, writer and critic. Woolf's books were published by Hogarth Press, which she founded with her husband. During the Nazi invasion, Woolf and Leonard made provisions to kill themselves. After the final attack of mental illness, Woolf loaded her pockets full of stones and drowned herself in the river Ouse on March 28, 1941. On her note to her husband she wrote "I have a feeling I shall go mad. I cannot go on longer in these terrible times. I hear voices and cannot concentrate on my work. I have fought against it but cannot fight any longer. I owe all my happiness to you but cannot go on and spoil your life."

*The Voyage Out* (1915) was Woolf's first book. Her other works include *Jacob's Room* (1922), *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), *To the Light House* (1927), *The Waves* (1931), *Orlando: A Biography* (1928), *A Room of One's Own* (1929) and *Three Guineas* (1938)

#### A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN: AN OVERVIEW

*A Room of One's Own* was first published on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1929 by the Hogarth Press in England. In October 1928, Virginia Woolf delivered a lecture on "Women and Fiction" at Newnham (the college established especially for women), and Girton (the first British college which accepted women students) colleges under Cambridge University. These talks on the topic Women and Fiction were later revised and devised into a full length book titled *A Room of One's Own*.

A Room of One's Own is considered the first major work in feminist criticism. Woolf analyses women's struggle as artists, their position in literary history and their need for independence citing Bronte sisters and Jane Austen as examples. By incorporating real and fictional people into the essay, Woolf tries to find answer to the historical and contemporary questions regarding women's art and social position. Woolf says that it is the gender consciousness of both women and men that cripple their creative genius. Men derogate women to safeguard their dominance in the society whereas women become angry and insecure about their inferior status. According to Woolf, a real genius should possess an androgynous (borrowing Coleridge's term) mind so that their writings will reflect both male and female feelings. The mantra which runs throughout the essay is that a woman must possess 500 pounds and a room of her own if she is to write creatively.

### **SHAKESPEARE'S SISTER**

The part titled 'Shakespeare's sister' comprises the third chapter of the whole work. The narrator alludes to history to dig the facts so as to find out the relationship between women and literature. It deals with the differences between women represented in fiction and women in history. It also tells us about the condition of Shakespeare's sister. If such a sister lived in that same era, what would her fate be?

Woolf begins the chapter by analyzing the condition of woman in the Elizabethan era. Elizabethan era which is hailed as the golden era of English literature had many male poets, sonneteers, playwrights and prose writers. But the same era did not witness even one female writer, at least for namesake. So Woolf thought of analyzing the history of women who lived in that era. She took out Professor Trevelyan's *History of England* to find out the position of women in the history of Elizabethan England. Woolf was astounded to know what reality was. Wife beating was the recognized right of man and it was practiced by the poor as well as the wealthy. The daughter who refused to marry the person of the parent's choice could be locked up and beaten by the parents. Marriage was not the outcome of love between two persons; instead, daughters were married off to uphold the family's honor. Child marriages were not news at all. Women were puppets in the hands of men. But women in fiction were the other way round. The characters like Clytemnestra, Antigone, Cleopatra, Lady Macbeth, Desdemona and many others had a personality and character of their own. Imaginatively, she is given higher position, she pervades poetry from cover to cover but practically she has no value at all. Woolf writes, "She dominates the lives of kings and conquerors in fiction; in fact she was the slave of anybody whose parents forced a ring upon her finger. Some of the most inspired words, some of the most profound thoughts in literature fall from her lips; in real life she could hardly read, could scarcely spell, and was the property of her husband."

This is the confused view that we get after reading women in history and women in fiction. Woolf tells us to think imaginatively and poetically at the same time. “that she is Mrs. Martin, aged thirty-six, dressed in blue, wearing a black hat and brown shoes; but not losing sight of fiction either- that she is a vessel in which all sorts of spirits and forces are coursing and flashing perpetually.”

She goes through Professor Trevelyan’s history to find out what history meant to him. History for him consists of many movements and wars where men are involved. Occasionally a woman is mentioned, an Elizabeth or a Mary and there ends the history of women. These women belonged to high class family. No middle class women who were very intelligent and good were mentioned in these history books. This woman, who has only brains and character, has not kept any record of her existence, no plays or poems, no anecdotes or diary entries. No history of such a woman existed. Woolf also suggests the students of Newnham and Girton colleges to supply such a history where women had a role. They should collect a mass of information like; at what age did she marry, how many children she had, had she a room to herself, did she do the cooking or did she have a servant and so on. All these account of an average Elizabethan woman would be scattered somewhere. The students should find it and bring it to the limelight and supplement the existing male dominated history with women’s history. Nothing is known about women before the eighteenth century. Woolf enquires into the state of women in the Elizabethan era. Why did not any woman produce a poem? What did she do from morning to night? Where they educated? Did they have sitting rooms for themselves? These women had no money and they were married off at an early age itself. It would have been quite odd to know that Shakespeare’s plays were written by a woman. Woolf quotes a bishop who had once declared that it was impossible for any woman, past, present or future to have the genius of Shakespeare.

Woolf then moves on to an imaginative world where she creates a sister to Shakespeare. What would have happened if Shakespeare had a sister named Judith who was wonderfully gifted and as talented as Shakespeare? Shakespeare went to grammar school and probably learnt Latin grammar and logic. He was a wild boy who poached rabbits shot a deer and in the very early age itself married a woman who bore him a child, too early than is usual. He fled the place to seek fortune in London. He had a taste for theatre and very soon became a successful actor, practiced his art, met everyone, became the focus of everyone. Woolf then analyses what would have happened to his extraordinary sister. She too had the same mentality as her brother had. But she was not sent to school, had no chance to learn anything. She went to her brother’s library and occasionally read a book or two. But the parents wouldn’t allow her to read. They, instead, told her to mend the stockings or mind the stew in the kitchen. The parents were not able to encourage their daughter’s talents because they were very much aware of the

circumstances in which women were supposed to live. The girl perhaps scribbled a line or two but hid it from everyone. Then she found out that she was to be betrothed to the son of a wool-stapler. She cried out, but no one paid heed to her voice. She was severely beaten and her father began to blackmail her emotionally. She was hurt; she couldn't disobey her father so she packed all her belongings and left her native place to London to fulfill her dream. She was not even seventeen years old. She too had a tune for words, a taste for theatre as her brother had. She stood at the stage door. She wanted to act. Men laughed at her. According to the theatre manager, no woman could become an actress. He said that women acting were like poodles dancing. At last the theater manager, Nick Greene took pity on her and she found herself with a child in her womb. This is the result when a woman's body gets tangled with a poet's heart. She killed herself and her body was buried in some unknown place because no monuments were built for this wonderfully talented woman.

Woolf agrees with the bishop that no woman will have the genius of Shakespeare because genius was not found among the servile, downtrodden and the working class. How could then a girl who was forced into homely duties and responsibilities at a tender age have genius? Though not as Shakespeare, genius of some sort would have existed among the working classes and the women. Women did not get the opportunity to get them expressed. If one reads of a witch being ducked, of a woman possessed by devils, of a wise woman selling herbs, or even a very remarkable man who had a mother, then we are on the track of a lost novelist, or a suppressed poet. Woolf also says that the writing we now label anonymous, the ballads and the folksongs might have been written by a woman.

Woolf wanted to say that a woman of Shakespeare's genius living in the Elizabethan age would certainly have gone mad and killed herself. Because, instead of acknowledging her genius in writing, men focus on her body and molest her. And chastity was very important in women's life and to cut free from it, needed rarest courage. Even though she had written some lines it might have gone unsigned and unmentioned. It is because of the sense of chastity in women writers that we have a roll of women writers writing under male pseudonym. Women writers like Currer Bell, George Eliot and George Sand were all victims of inner strife and they veiled themselves under male pseudonyms, thus paying homage to a male dominated tradition. They had to veil themselves in order to express their inner conflict. Pericles is of the opinion that the chief glory of a woman is not to be talked of. Anonymity runs all along women's blood.

If a man wants to express his mind through writing, it is a quite difficult job. Material circumstances will be against it. Making money to live becomes a problem. People will be indifferent towards it. People are least bothered about whether the writer gets the apt word or not. But for a woman these difficulties are much more severe. She will not possess a room of her own, she will not have

enough money to live as she is completely dependent on her father or brother, and she cannot go round the world, from one shelter to another shelter. All these are material difficulties. There lies an immaterial and the hardest difficulty to face. When people are indifferent to men, they are hostile toward women. Woolf says, "The world did not say to her as it said to them; write if you choose; it makes no difference to me. The world said with a guffaw, write? What's the good of your writing?" They have the same opinion as Mr. Oscar Browning had about women that the best woman was intellectually inferior to the worst man.

The enormous body of masculine opinion is that women are incapable of any intellectual activities. Though no one told this explicitly, it was implicit on everyone's faces which lowered her vitality and affected her work in a negative way. Women novelists have overcome these kinds of protests and have become successful in producing women novelists of merit. The woman composer and woman painter stands where the actress stood in the time of Shakespeare. "A woman composing is like a dog walking on his hind legs". History repeats itself.

Through this description Woolf wanted to tell us that even in the nineteenth century woman was not encouraged to be an artist. There is something called masculine complex which makes men forbid their women from reaching heights; be it in arts, politics or any walk of life.

## **GLOSSARY:**

- Perennial: recurrent
- Newnham: Women's college of the University of Cambridge.
- Girton: also in Cambridge.
- Joanna Baillie: Scottish poet and dramatist
- Poe: Edgar Allen Poe. American author, poet, editor, literary critic.
- Ovid: Publius Ovidius Nasa, was a Roman poet popularly known for his work *Metamorphosis*.
- Virgil: Publius Vergilius Maro, classical Roman poet well known for his work the *Aeneid*
- Horace: Quintus Horatius Flaccus was the Roman lyric poet during the time of Augustus Caesar.
- Elephant and Castle: major road intersection in South London.
- Currer Bell: pen name under which Charlotte Bronte wrote.

- George Eliot: pen name of Mary Ann Evans, the English novelist.
- George Sand: pseudonym of Amantine Lucile Dupin, who later became Baroness Dudevant, was a French novelist and memoirist.
- Sieges Allee: A broad boulevard in Berlin.
- Rousseau: Jean Jacques Rousseau, philosopher, writer and composer of the 18<sup>th</sup> century whose political philosophy influenced the French Revolution.
- Thomas Carlyle: Scottish essayist, philosopher and historian.
- Gustave Flaubert: French writer who shot to fame with his first novel Madame Bovary.
- Lord Birkenhead: Statesman, lawyer, orator and member of the British Parliament under Winston Churchill.
- Dean Inge: William Ralph Inge, English author and Anglican priest was professor of divinity at Cambridge. He was the dean of St. Paul's cathedral London which gave him the name Dean Inge.
- Oscar Browning: English writer, historian, educational reformer and cofounder of Cambridge University Day Training College.
- Mlle Germaine called Tailleferre: French composer and only female member of the famous composers group les six. She changed her name from paillef to paille feme in protest against her father who did not support her musical studies.
- Lord Granville: Granville George Levesin Gower, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Granville, British Liberal Statesman, Secretary of State for foreign affairs.
- Lady Bessborough: Lady Henrietta Frances Spencer was the wife of Frederick Ponsonby, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Bessborough.

**I Answer the following questions in two or three sentences each.**

Who is Judith Shakespeare?

What does history say about the position of women?

How does she show that history repeats itself through the example of women who try to compose music?

**II Answer the following questions in a paragraph not exceeding 100 words.**

What was the setting of Virginia Woolf's book?

How does Woolf open up the territory of modern feminist criticism through this work?

Define the author's purpose in generating the figure of Judith Shakespeare?

What does Woolf have to say about women in the Elizabethan age?

What are the factors according to Woolf, that would prevent Shakespeare's sister from achieving literary greatness?

**III Answer the following questions in not more than 300 words**

Why in Woolf's view, did Elizabethan women not write poetry?

How does the essay explore the history of women in literature through an unconventional and highly provocative investigation of the social and material conditions of the time?

## UNIT 2

### THE FEMINIST NOVELISTS

(FROM A LITERATURE OF THEIR OWN: BRITISH NOVELISTS FROM BRONTE TO LESSING)

ELAINE SHOWALTER

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Elaine Showalter was born on 21st January, 1941 in Boston, Massachusetts, US. She is an American literary critic, teacher and the founder mother of gynocriticism, a movement concerned with “woman as a writer with history, themes, genres and structures of literature by women”. She studied at Bryn Mawr College, Brandeis University and the University of California. She joined the faculty of Douglass College, women's division of Rutgers University in 1969, where she developed women studies courses and began editing and contributing articles to books and periodicals about women's literature. Later she taught at Rutgers and Princeton University.

She developed her doctoral thesis into her first book, *A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Bronte to Lessing* (1977). Her other works include *The Female Malady: Women, Madness and English Culture, 1830-1980* (1985), *Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siecle* (1990), *Hystories: Hysterical Epidemics and Modern Culture* (1997) and *Inventing Herself: Claiming a Feminist Intellectual Heritage* (2001).

#### SHOWALTER’S FEMINIST LITERARY THEORY:

According to Elaine Showalter, feminism is divided into two distinct varieties; Feminist Critique and Gynocritique.

Feminist critique:

Feminist critique envisions woman as a reader- woman as the consumer of male produced literature. The feminist readings of literary texts investigate into the images and stereotypes of woman in literature, the omissions and misconceptions of women in criticism, the notion of woman as a sign in the semiotic systems and into the fissures of male constructed literary history. It analyses the exploitation and manipulation of female audience and looks for the sins and errors of the past. Feminist critique is essentially political and polemical. The problem with feminist critique is that it is male oriented and studies the different stereotypes of women and the limited roles that women played. It never focuses on the real experiences of women, what they thought, felt and experienced.

### Gynocritique:

Gynocritique focuses on woman as a writer- woman as the producer of textual meanings. It discusses the history, themes, genres, styles and structures of literature by woman. It eschews the male models and theories and discusses various subjects like the psychodynamics of female creativity, the problem of female language, the trajectory of individual and collective female literary career, literary history and analyses particular female writers and their works. It seeks a purely female model by constructing a female framework for the analysis of women's literature and by developing new models based on the study of female experience instead of emulating female models. Showalter remarks " Gynocritics begin at a point when we free ourselves from the linear absolutes of male literary theory, stop trying to fit women between the lines of male tradition." Gynocritics wish to move towards the promised land of feminist vision.

In the book *A Literature of Their Own* Showalter discusses the patterns and phases in the evolution of female tradition. Showalter has divided woman's evolution into three stages; feminine, feminist and female.

### Feminine Phase (1840-1880):

In the feminine phase women wrote to equal the intellectual achievements of the male culture. They internalized the male aesthetic standards and identified themselves with the male culture. Writers like George Eliot, Currer Bell, Acton Bell and Ellis Bell made use of male pseudonyms because women were not allowed to write.

### Feminist Phase (1882-1920):

In the feminist phase emerged the New Woman Movement. Women won the right to vote. Women began to reject and protest the stereotypical image of womanhood and used literature to dramatize the ordeals of wrong womanhood. They created Amazon Utopias in the 1890's to protest against the male government, male laws and male medicine. Elizabeth Robins and Francis Trollope belong to this period.

### Female Phase (1920 onwards):

The female phase witnessed a rejection of both imitation and protest which are two forms of dependency. Women writers began to see their experiences as a source of autonomous art and began to express their experiences which are individualistic. Dorothy Richardson and Virginia Woolf began to think in terms of male and female sentences.

## **ABOUT THE ESSAY:**

In the work *A Literature of Their Own* Showalter traces a tradition of women's literature in England by examining the works and lives of novelists from the 1840's to the present. She deals with both major and minor writers placing them in their own social, political and cultural background. In the work she divides British women's literature into three periods; the feminine, feminist and the female phase. The chapter titled *The Feminist Novelists* comes under the feminist phase when women wrote against patriarchal values and shows how women's literature has evolved from 1880 till 1920. Showalter rebukes the uncritical standards applied to the works of English women writers in the nineteenth century and contends that, female artists paid a terrible price in terms of guilt, self loathing, and frustrated effort.

## **SUMMARY OF THE ESSAY:**

Elaine Showalter begins the essay by asserting the role that women writers of 1880's and 1890's played in the formulation and propagation of the feminist ideology. Unlike the male writers who believed in the artist's cheap commercialism, women were thrilled by the upcoming new age where they would have more scope. Women, who were very uncomfortable with the three decker novels began to experiment with varied styles like dreams, allegories, fantasias and keynotes.

Unlike the feminine novelists, the feminist novelists had a high sense of responsibility, belonging and kinship to a sisterhood of women writers which they unveil through their writings. Mary Haweis, in her 1894 address to the Women Writers Dinner says "our first duty as women writers is to help the cause of other women, whilst keeping up the daily and monthly journals." As a tender support for the suffering women Olive Schreiner wrote a novel *From Man to Man* through which she wished to strengthen women. The women writer's duty is to regenerate the world by cleansing, repairing and beautifying it. According to Mrs. Haweis, women writers are "Recording Angels" who exposes and rectifies the society's vice with love, care and concern.

Ruskin in his essay "Of Queen's Gardens" articulates the Victorian feminine ideal by projecting the hope that national redemption is possible only through the spiritual virginity of women. Men who are laboring outside are liable to get hurt, whereas women are safe and secure from the terrors of the society. According to Ruskin, wherever a true wife comes, home comes along with her. Ruskin is of the opinion that home is a mystic projection of female psyche. "home is yet wherever she is" says Ruskin.

Instead of discarding the Victorian feminine ideal, the feminists transposed it into an activist key, marking the ideal of true womanhood the basis of the politics of female subculture. The feminist writers of 1880's and 1890's; instead of fulfilling their own fantasies of sexual freedom, demanded self control for men. The evolutionary theory of Darwin attracted many feminists because it offered a new model for the enforcement of female influence.

The Contagious Diseases Acts campaigns came with traumatic force in the year 1864-1884. A manifesto demanding the abolition of the Acts was signed by 124 prominent women including Florence Nightingale and Harriet Martineau. After this many women had to face a series of shocking events of male brutality. The women accused of prostitution were examined by policemen and doctors who became the agents of the government. Innocent women were put under pelvic examination which was more severe than death. Many women preferred death to such examinations and committed suicide. More than the Contagious diseases campaign women were shocked to know about the sensational series of child prostitution reported by WT Stead in his PALL MALL GAZETTE. It provided with the information that men preferred virgins, whips and rape. Jack the Ripper, a doctor and a syphilitic, dissected the sex organs of whores he killed and laid them out for the police. He was taking revenge on women because he thought they carried the venereal disease.

The fear of the venereal disease was an important factor in sexual attitudes. The graphical portrayal of syphilis and its disfigurement in medical books of the day was horrible and disgusting. More than that venereal disease, in its worst form, was hereditary. Syphilitic fathers carried this dreadful disease to the innocent wives and children as we witness in the play Ghosts written by Ibsen. Thus thinking of the coming generations that are going to be endangered women decided to take up the battle and arouse sexual morality in men.

Some of the feminist writers hoped that men and women would liberate together, but extremists say that there is no use trading with men. The women writers decided to begin with maternal love and the maternal instinct. According to Vernon Lee "woman's love is so essentially maternal, whereas, man's love ...is possessive and BESTIAL". Florence Nightingale and Beatrice Webb saw motherhood as a trap which drained women's political and intellectual energies and it needs rare boldness and willpower on the part of the women to remain celibate and to transmit their womanhood and motherly feelings towards the public. The Victorian feminine ideal rejected the resistance power of women.

Victorians believed that a wife is not supposed to refuse a husband's advances; marriage becomes a legal prostitution where the woman bears a lot of children out of her responsibility. It is not always a communion between two persons; instead it has become a routine drudgery. According to the study done

by some feminists the periodicity of desire in women is identified as a fortnightly phenomenon; or, according to Frances Swiney, once in every few years.

Feminists began to make explicit statements on sexual attitudes and openly made sexual protests which were often shocking. Flora Annie Steel in her autobiography *The Garden of Fidelity* (1929) blamed heredity for her lifelong frigidity. "There was nearly three years between my birth and that of my elder brother...I have often wondered if this voluntary cessation of marital relations on my father's part had anything to do with my inborn dislike to the sensual side of life." But this lack of ability to enjoy sex is a cherished quality in Victorian women.

Many Victorian feminists disgusted sex and were terrified by child birth. This hostility and fear came not because they were feminists but because they were women. Victorian ladies were supposed to dislike sex. In order to get rid of pregnancy, venereal disease and child bearing; the only way out was abstinence.

This veneration of motherhood and repugnance to intercourse led feminists to have many peculiar fantasies. They do not need men to produce children. Women were thinking of freeing themselves from men and to have virgin births. They wanted to be liberated from menstrual cycle. But these are all fantasies and cannot be put into practice in future.

In order to break away from the male clutches, the feminists had an urge to be male. Women writers were in a hurry to become male, they began to portray young men from a man's point of view.. One of Oliver Schreiner's heroines muses "how nice it would be to be a man". The revolutionary energies of the women novelists are entirely projected on to male figures that are androgynous in nature. For Schreiner it is awful to be a woman. Her character Lyndall in *The Story of an African Farm* (1883) wears a ring which she will give to the first man who tells her that he would like to become a woman. But no man would volunteer to become a woman, to bear children and know the pain.

The feminists who were fed up with the physical and sexual exploitation began to identify themselves with prostitutes. They began to call a spade a spade even though they were not allowed to do so. They used obscene words which were once reserved for men alone. The feminist writers were diseased with psychosomatic illnesses and stress diseases and this affected their literary outcome. They began to produce less and less literature. The feminine invalidism was a strategic evasion of the feminine role; whereas feminist invalidism was a complete abstinence from their job. Though they were spared of the three decker novels, they found it difficult to write books. Writers like Eleanor Marx, Charlotte Mew, Adela Nicolson and Amy Levy, because of this writer's block, even committed suicides.

Elaine Showalter draws to the readers the picture of Olive Schreiner, a paradoxical feminist. “A free thinker marked to the marrow of her bones with the Calvinism of her missionary parents; a disciple of Darwin, Will and Spencer who floated in seas of sentimentality; a dedicated writer who could never finish a book; a feminist who hated being a woman; a maternal spirit who never became a mother- everything about her life is a paradox.” Schreiner is a feminist who distances herself from women. She has a mystical connection with her fellow women. Though, through her works she exposes the problems of her fellow women, though she possess a genuine compassion for her suffering sisters; though in all her works there is the presence of a potent female symbol; for her, “it’s awful to be a woman”.

In most of Schreiner’s novels like *The Story of an African Farm* and *From Man to Man*, she pictures femaleness growing monstrous in confinement. Em and Baby Bertie are victims of physical oppression and sexual exploitation as a result of which they grow grotesque, swollen and destructive. Though Schreiner was a great writer whose books had become a great success, she was not a productive and self disciplined writer. After the huge success of *The African Farm*, the publisher’s asked for another work; but unfortunately she developed writer’s block. She was not even able to produce an introduction to Mary Wollstonecraft’s “*A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*”, let alone a whole book.

Schreiner had a morbid fear of self exposure and rejection. She was not anxious about thousands of people reading it; instead, she was worried about the thought that people will stamp it under their feet. Male writers could not understand the great contribution that she made to the female tradition. They couldn’t understand her female symbolism and mistook her for writing about domestic matters.

Frances Clarke McFall alias Sarah Grand was a writer who hailed from a silent culture and through her sheer will power became a writer. After a series of unhappy personal associations, she created a new persona for herself , saw herself as a great teacher and a woman of genius. Her most successful novel *The Heavenly Twins* is a strong feminist novel which deals with sex role conditioning, venereal diseases and women’s right to independence. The twins in the title Angelica and Diavolo, representations of angelic female and devilish male, were androgynous in their childhood, but age brings the socially constructed differences in them. It is Diavolo who gets all the opportunities to get educated and Angelica ends up into early domesticity.

The second half of the novel deals with two young brides Edith and Evadne who diverges ways and ends up differently. Edith, who was purely religious and conventional marries a syphilitic officer Mosley Menteith and ends up with a diseased child and mental deterioration. Evadne, who is educated, discovers that

her husband Major George Colquhoun is unchaste and refuses to consummate her marriage and lives platonically with him to avoid scandal. At last she sickens from sexual frustration and blocked maternal drives.

*The Beth Book* (1898), another novel by Schreiner has many auto biographical touches. After a series of depressed childhood memories she gets married to a doctor who treats prostitutes in the Lock hospital, who practices vivisection, spends all her money and brings his mistress to live in his house. Unlike Evadne, she frees herself from the ideology of marriage and retreats to a secret space where she plans to write for women. She never had any expectations from her husband and ceased to worry about her domestic difficulties. She becomes successful in publishing her book anonymously and got it reviewed by an influential journal. Thus she grew as an artist, as a staunch suffragette, as a member of Women Writers Suffrage League and as the president of Tunbridge Wells branch of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies. But her last years were flat, stale and profitable; literary projects failed.

George Egerton is another woman writer of the nineties. Showalter analyses Egerton's two short stories titled "Keynotes" and "Discords" which dealt with intensely observed fragments of female experience and disillusion. In short, it appeared as if all the feminists had a similar story to tell, but had exhausted themselves in the process. These feminists represent a turning point in the female tradition which begins with a sense of unity and a sense of mission and ends, like Sarah Grand, with the dream of finding a higher female truth. The private rooms are mere Amazon Utopias they create for their own defensive womanhood.

#### **GLOSSARY:**

- Mary Hawies: Born Mary Eliza Joy (1848-1898) was a noted British journalist, artist and author of numerous books for women. She was married to Hugh Reginald Hawies
- Olive Schreiner: (1855-1920) was a South African author, anti-war campaigner and intellectual
- Rapacious: avaricious
- Grant Allen: Charles Grant Blairfindie Allen (1848-1899) was an author, novelist, and an upholder of the theory of evolution. He later became an agonistic.
- Social Darwinism: is a term commonly used for theories of society that emerged in England and the United States in the 1870s, seeking to apply the principles of Darwinian evolution to sociology and politics.

- Havelock Ellis: Henry Havelock Ellis, known as Havelock Ellis(1859-1939),was a British physician and psychologist, writer and social reformer who studied human sexuality.
- The Contagious Diseases Acts: instituted during the Crimean War, attempted to control syphilis by enforced examination, detection and treatment of prostitutes in garrison towns. Women objected because men were neither examined nor punished for their part in the transaction.
- Lock hospital: The London Lock Hospital was the first venereal disease clinic, being the most famous and first of the Lock Hospitals, which opened on 31 January 1747.The 'Lock Hospitals' were developed for the treatment of syphilis.
- Harriet Martineau:(1802-1876)was an English social theorist and Whig writer, often cited as the first female sociologist.
- WT Stead: William Thomas Stead (1849-1912)was an English journalist and editor who, was one of the most controversial figures of the Victorian era. Stead entered upon a crusade against child prostitution by publishing a series of articles entitled The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon. The Maiden Tribute campaign was the high point in Stead's career in daily journalism.
- Pall Mall Gazette: was an evening newspaper founded in London on 7 February 1865 by George Murray Smith.
- Mona Caird: see Mona Alison, also called Alice Mona Henryson Caird,(1854-1932) was a Scottish novelist and essayist whose feminist views sparked controversy in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- Vernon Lee: was the pseudonym of the British writer Violet Paget (1856-1935).She was a fiction writer and literary theorist.
- Beatrice Webb: Martha Beatrice Webb(1858-1943)was an English sociologist, economist socialist and social reformer.
- George Egerton: Mary Chavelita Dunne Bright(1859-1945),better known by her pen name George Egerton, was a writer and feminist. She was widely considered to be one of the most important of the "New Woman" writers of the nineteenth century.
- Maria Stopes: Married Carmichael Stopes(1880-1958) was a British author, campaigner for women's rights and pioneer in the field of birth control. The organization that bears her name, Marie Stopes international, works in over 40 countries.

- Frances Swiney: Rosa Frances Emily Swiney(1847-1922) was an early feminist.
- Flora Annie Steele: Flora Annie Steele(1847-1929) was an English writer.
- Linda Gordon: Linda Gordon (born 1940 Chicago) is an American historian. The reference is to her essay.
- Voluntary Motherhood: The Beginnings of Feminist Birth Control ideas in The United States”
- Lady Florence Dixie: Lady Florence Caroline Dixie(1855-1905), Lady Florence Douglas, was a British traveler, war correspondent, writer and feminist.
- Ellis Ethelmeor: Elizabeth Clarke Wolstenhome Elmy(1833-1918) was a British essayist and poet, who wrote under the pseudonyms E, Ellis, Ellis Ethelmer and Ignota.
- Charlotte Perkins Gilman:(1860-1935) was a prominent American Sociologist, writer of short stories, poetry and nonfiction, and an advocate for social reform.
- Lamarckian: Lamarckism (or Lamarckian inheritance) is the idea that an organism can pass on characteristics that it acquired during its lifetime to its offspring (also known as heritability of acquired characteristics or soft inheritance). It is named after the French biologist Jean Baptiste Lamarck (1744-1829)
- Germaine Greer: is an Australian writer, academic, journalist and scholar of early modern English literature, widely regarded as one of the most significant feminist voices of the later 20<sup>th</sup> century. Her book *The Female Eunuch* created great controversy ever since it was published in 1970
- Sheila Rowbotham: (born 1943 Leeds, West Yorkshire ) is a British socialist feminist theorist and writer.
- Mary Coleridge : Mary Elizabeth Coleridge (1861-1907) was a British novelist, poet, essayist and reviewer. She was the great grandniece of Samuel Taylor Coleridge.
- Mrs. Gaskell: Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell, (1810-1865), often referred to simply as Mrs. Gaskell, was a British novelist and short story writer during the Victorian era. Her novels offer a detailed portrait of the lives of many strata of society.

- Dinah Craik: Dinah Maria Craik(1826-1887)was an English novelist and poet. She was determined to become a writer. Starting with children's fiction, she went on to become one of the front rank women novelists of her day.
- Ms.Butler:Josephine Elizabeth Butler was British feminist of the Victorian era who was especially concerned with the welfare of prostitute. She led the long campaign for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts
- Associationists: associationism: a psychological theory that explains complex thoughts and feelings in terms of associations with simpler elements.
- Women's Vegetarian Union: was founded in March 1895,with an aim to bring about a reform in food habits. It conducts lectures and demonstrations on vegetarian cooking.
- Anti-Vivisection League: an organization opposing experimenting on animals for research purposes.
- Sarah Grand;(1854-1943)Frances Elizabeth Bellenden Clarke was British feminist writer. Her works dealt with the new Woman in fiction. She was also known as Frances Clarke McFall
- Mrs.Craigie: Pearl Mary Teresa Craigie(1867-1906)was an Anglo-American novelist and dramatist who wrote under the pen-name of John Oliver Hobbes.
- Beatrice Harraden: (1864-1936)was a British writer greatly involved with the women's rights movement
- Ethel Lilian Voynich(1864-1960)was a British novelist and musician, and a supporter of several revolutionary causes.
- Menie Muriel Dowie:1867-1945 was a British writer.
- Psychosomatic: describes a physical illness that is caused by mental factors such as stress, or the effects related to such illnesses.
- Eleanor Marx: was the English born youngest daughter of Karl Marx. She was a social activist and a literary translator. Involved in an unhappy personal relationship she committed suicide by poison at the age of 43.
- Adela Nicholson: (1865-1904) was an English poet who wrote under the pseudonym Laurence Hope.

- Amy Levy: (1861-1889) British poet and novelist. Suffering from depression and deafness, she committed suicide.
- Hottentot Venus : Sarah “Saartjie” Baartman was a Khoikhoi woman, an ethnic group of South West Africa. She was exhibited as a freak show attraction under the name Hottentot Venus. “ Hottentot”,now an offensive term was the then current name for Khoi people.
- Venus: goddess of love
- Bertha Mason: the violently insane first wife of Edward Rochester in Jane Eyre who also appears in Jean Rhys’ Wide Sargasso Sea.
- *Fin de siècle*: French expression meaning ‘end of the’. It refers to a period of transition which ends one era and begins the next. The term also refers to the cynicism, boredom and pessimism that was characteristic of the 1880’s and 1890’s.
- Solipsism :in philosophy the theory that self is the only reality.
- Holloway prison :HM Prison Holloway is a high security prison for adult women in London. It is managed by Her Majesty’s Prison service. Started as a prison for all, it was converted to a prison for women in 1903.
- George Meredith:(1828-1909) was an English novelist and poet of the Victorian era.
- Rider Haggard: Sir Henry Haggard, (1856-1925) was an English writer of adventure novels. Belonging to the Victorian era his novels are set in exotic locations, predominantly Africa.
- Andrew Lang: a 19<sup>th</sup> century Scottish writer, literary critic and anthropologist.
- Maggie Tulliver: protagonist of George Eliot’s novel *The Mill On the Floss*.
- Dorothea Casaubon: a young female character in *Middlemarch: A Study of Provincial Life* by George Eliot.
- Mulatto: a term for somebody who has both white and black ancestors.
- Plumbingo: an ornamental evergreen shrub of tropical Africa, flowering all year, commonly used as borders or hedge.
- Karoo: semi desert region of South Africa.
- Debauched: wicked, corrupt

- Prophylactics: protecting against infection or disease.
- Rhoda Broughton: Welsh novelist. Nell L' Estrange is a character in her novel *Cometh Up as a Flower*.

**I Answer the following questions in two or three sentences each.**

1. What is feminist invalidism?
2. What is Sarah Grand trying to show through the story of the twins?
3. What is the Contagious Diseases Act?

**II Answer the following questions in a paragraph not exceeding 100 words.**

1. What, according to Jacobson is the real problem of the colonial writer?
2. What happens to Lyndall?
3. Why was the campaign launched for the abolition of Contagious Diseases Act?
4. What was Schreiner's important contribution to the female tradition?

**III Answer the following questions in not more than 300 words**

1. In Schreiner's *Story of an African Farm* what happens to Men and Women?
2. Trace how Showalter shows the growth and development of the *New Woman*.

## UNIT 3

### AN INTRODUCTION

#### KAMALA DAS

#### ABOUT THE POET

*“I cannot fold  
My wayward limbs to crawl into  
Coffins of religions  
I shall die, I know  
But only when the tire of love  
Tire of life and laughter  
Then fling me into a pit  
Six feet by two  
Do not bother to leave  
Any epitaph for me”*

Kamala Surayya, “the mother of modern Indian English poetry”, formerly known as Kamala Das (also known under the pen name Madhavikutty), was one among the most significant voices of India. A bilingual writer, her popularity resides on her short stories, poems, novels and autobiography. She was born in Punnayurkulam, Thrissur district on 31<sup>st</sup> March 1934 to V.M Nair, the former managing editor of the Malayalam daily Mathrubhoomi and Nalappatt Balamaniamma, a renowned Malayalam poetess. She spent her childhood shuttling between Calcutta, where her father was employed, and the Nalappatt ancestral home in Punnayurkulam. At the age of 15, she got married to a bank officer Madhava Das, who encouraged her writing interests. On 31<sup>st</sup> May 2009, aged 75, after a prolonged illness she kissed the earth at a hospital in Pune.

Das’ poetry is characterized with frustrations and disillusionment expressed with disarmed frankness through which she is trying to assert her individuality and to maintain her feminine identity. She gives full vent to the woman’s causes and protest against the oppression of the female class. She wants to emancipate woman from the stereotypical picturization of her colonized status. She has received many awards and honors, including the P.E.N.

Philippines Asian Poetry Prize (1963), Chiman Lal Award for fearless journalism (1971), Kerala Sahitya Academy Award for her writing in Malayalam (1969), The Sahitya Academy Award for her poetry in English (1985), Vayalar Award (2001) and Ezhuthachan Award (2009). In 1984, she was nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature. Das' works in English has been widely anthologized in all parts of the world, and is included in the syllabi of most universities around the globe. Her works have been translated into nearly thirty Indian and foreign languages. The rebel Indian writer's autobiography has not stopped selling like hot cakes since it was first published in 1975. Her major poetry collections include *Summer in Calcutta* (1965), *The Descendants* (1967) *The Old Playhouse and Other Poems* (1975), *Only the Soul Knows How to Sing* (1996) and *YaAllah* (2001)

### **KAMALA DAS AND HER POETRY**

*“If I had been a loved person, I wouldn't have become a writer; I would have been a happy human being.”*

Kamala Das, one of the pioneering post independence Indian English poets, has contributed immensely to the development of modern Indian English poetry. This queen of erotica, through her unorthodox style, uninhibited frankness and the virtue of sincerity, has poured her heart and soul into poetry. Quest for love and the failure to find emotional satiation through physical love is a recurrent theme in Das' poetry. Her love poetry is purely rooted in her own personal experiences. A child who was denied love and affection from her father (a patriarchal symbol) and mother (uncaring) turned to grandmother from where she procured unconditioned love. But when that outpouring of love was suddenly put to a stop by her premature marriage, she became completely alienated from every one. Her sense of isolation was intensified with her marriage when she found lust in the guise of love. This sense of isolation and frustration, unrequited love, unfulfilled desires, tortured psyche and anguished sufferings found place in her poetry.

Love and sex reign in her poetry. A note of nostalgia runs through the poem “The Grandmother's House” which has the reminiscences of the love that was showered upon her by her grandmother in her good old salad days.

“There is a house now far away where once

I received love...That woman died”

Her grandmother and the ancestral home are remembered in a number of lyrics.

The memory makes her sad and broken. The loving woman died and she yearns for love, begs for it even from strangers but fails to get it. Her hunger for love remains unsatiated and there lies a blank within her.

“I who have lost  
My way and beg now at strangers doors to  
Receive love, at least in small change.”

With the death of her grandmother she sinks into the morass of loneliness and feels completely alienated from the society.

Kamala Das is grouped among the confessional group of poets who dares to pour her heart into poetry inviting her reader's to her tortured and anguished inner psyche. In the poem “The Freaks”, through the images of repulsion and horror she brings out the emotional emptiness and sterility of her married life. She speaks for a woman who is in search of love.

“His right  
Hand on my knee, while our minds  
are willed to race towards love;  
But they only wander, tripping  
Idly over puddles of  
Desire...Can this man with  
Nimble fingertips unleash  
Nothing more alive than the  
skin's lazy hungers?”

The woman is filled with contempt. Though his hands are moving all around her body he can only unleash skin's lazy hungers. She is never able to find emotional gratification through this lustful love.

Prof. Syd Harrex says, “Kamala Das’ poems epitomize the dilemma of modern Indian woman who attempts to free herself, sexually and domestically, from the role bondage sanctioned by the past”. There is an assertion of femininity in most of her poems where she looks into the consciousness of women and analyses man woman relationship and woman's quest for true love. The poem “The Looking Glass”, on the surface level seems to be a kind of advice for women on how to get a man, but if we dig deep into the lines it tells about the fate of women in the male dominated society.

“Stand nude before the glass with him  
So that he sees himself the stronger one  
And believes it so, and you so much more  
Softer, younger, lovelier... Admit your  
Admiration”

In her poem “Introduction” she shakes off her womanliness and protests the male confined roles assigned to women by the so called “categorizers”.

Then...I wore a shirt and my  
Brother’s trousers, cut my hair short and ignored  
My womanliness. Dress in sarees, be girl,  
Be wife, they said. Be embroiderer, be cook,  
Be a quarreler with servants. Fit in. Oh,  
Belong, cried the categorizers.”

There is an outpouring of alienation and a sense of frustration which is intensified by her marital relationship with her husband. This loneliness which resulted from alienation is best penned in her Krishna poem “Ghanashyam”.

“At three in the morning  
I wake trembling from dreams of stark white loneliness  
Like bleached bones cracking in the desert sun was my loneliness.”

Kamala Das becomes the representative of every woman who is in search of love. She challenges the male dominated society and becomes the spokesperson of the voiceless in the society.

Through these kinds of writings Kamala Das is often labeled as a feminist, a claim which she denies in one of her interviews. She says *“I am not a feminist, as it is understood. I don’t hate men. I feel a woman is most attractive when she surrenders to her man. She is incomplete without a man.”*

### **SUMMARY OF THE POEM:**

“It is highly revealing of the poetess of her political knowledge, of her linguistic acquirements, of her physical growth and marriage, of her sad experience in married life, of her belongingness, of her love to another man and of her eventual frustration and loneliness.” – A.N Dwivedi

Kamala Das’ poem ‘An Introduction’ is included in her first collection of poems titled *Summer in Calcutta* (1965). It is a purely subjective and feminist poem in which she speaks in the voice of a girl. The tone of the poem is very unconventional and unorthodox. She rebels against the dos and don’ts the society has dictated for women.

The poet begins the poem with a self assertion. She asserts her ignorance and frank dislike of politics in a society where politics is considered the domain of men and where chosen elite rules the roost. Though she is innocent of the seamy side of politics she is equipped with the knowledge of the names those in power and can repeat them as easily as one repeats the days of weeks and months.

Subsequently she comes down to her roots. She asserts her identity. She is far from religious prejudices. She defines herself first by her nationality, then by her colour.

“I am Indian, very brown, born in  
Malabar, I speak three languages, write in  
Two, dream in one.”

She says that she has the right to write in any language she likes and needs no one's advise. The society tells her not to write in English as English is not her mother-tongue. Das implores to the public to leave her alone and let her speak in any language she likes.

“the language I speak  
becomes mine, its distortions, its queerness  
All mine, mine alone.”

The choice of using language is personal. It may be half English, half Indian, may be funny too; but after all it's her own, honest and human. It expresses her feelings, longings, joys, hopes. It's very natural to her as cawing is to crows and roaring to lions.

From the politics of language the poem moves on to sexual politics. Her biological changes were reminded to her by the society. They told her that she

grew and became tall. These biological changes were taken as cultural restrictions. When she became adolescent and asked for love she was forced in to a bedroom where her body was crushed. Kamala Das criticizes the concept of marriage which provides a man with the legal right to commit marital rape on his teenage bride. She was startled by her sudden marriage and her first sexual encounter. Though he did not beat her physically, she felt very beaten. Afterwards she defied the gender codes and dressed up like a man. She completely ignored her womanliness and her femininity. The society cried;

“dress in sarees, be girl  
be wife... be embroiderer, be cook,  
be quarreler with the servants.”

The society warns her to fit in to the standards of the society, tells her to remain confined in the four walls of the home. Society tells her to be Amy or Kamala or at least Madhavikutty. If one is normal she is to fit in or else she is thought to be diseased by schizophrenia or will be a nympho.

Then, at last she met a man and loved him. It is not a single man the poet is talking about. Instead it is everyman and every woman. She is not voicing her feelings alone; instead she becomes the spokesperson of universal womanhood. She identifies herself with the rest of the suffering women in the world. It is everywoman who makes love and at last feels a rattle in the throat. She calls herself the beloved and the betrayed. Though the poem is basically concerned with the question of human identity, it also focuses on a woman's identity and an Indian woman English poet's identity in the contemporary male defined culture.

#### **GLOSSARY:**

- Belong: adjust to the surroundings
- Categorizers: those who group other people in different brackets
- Don't sit... Jilted in love: in traditional society women are not allowed to express emotions
- Schizophrenia: a mental disorder characterized by indifference, withdrawal, hallucinations.
- Nympho: a nymphomaniac
- In my throat: refers to a permissive society where women have total freedom.

➤ Myself I: the ideal love, a platonic kind of relation between lover and beloved.

➤ **I Answer the following questions in two or three sentences each.**

1. What does Kamala Das mean when she says “I know the names of those in power?”
2. What does she mean when she says that the medium is not significant?
3. How did she know that she had grown up?
4. Why does she attribute the term “everyman” to her husband?
5. What does the poet mean by the expression “the sword in its sheath” in the poem?

**II Answer the following questions in a paragraph not exceeding 100 words.**

1. How does Kamala Das show self assertion?
2. Explain Das’ encounter with a man?

**III Answer the following questions in not more than 300 words**

3. Discuss *An Introduction* as a confessional poem.

## UNIT: 4

### WE ARE GOING

#### NOONUCCAL OODGEROO

##### ABOUT THE POET:

Noonuccal Oodgeroo, known till 1988 as Kath Walker, was born Kathleen Jean Mary Ruska on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1920 on North Stradbroke Island in South East Queensland. She was best known for her poetry and was the first aboriginal Australian to publish a book of verse. Noonuccal was an Australian poet, political activist, artist and an educationist and was also the campaigner for aboriginal rights. Though she has a plain speaking style, there lies a strong element of protest in her poetry. Her poetry collections include *We are Going* (1964), *The Dawn is at Hand* (1966), *My People: A Kath Walker Collection* (1970) and *Stradbroke Dreamtime* (1972). The theme of many of her works is the hope for understanding and peace between black and white Australians.

In 1988 she adopted her traditional name: Oodgeroo (meaning paper bark tree) and Noonuccal (her tribe's name). She died in 1993. Oodgeroo spent her last days on Stradbroke Island where she established a cultural and environmental education centre known as Moongalba (resting place).

##### SUMMARY OF THE POEM:

The poem was published in her first collection of poetry titled *We are Going: Poems*. This is a politically didactic poem which gives an aboriginal perspective on the colonization in Australia. The poem contains a clear and a strong message expressed in simple language which is easy to understand. Oodgeroo becomes the spokesperson of the natives and comments on the fears of the aborigines by creating a voice that expresses the pain of dispossession.

The poet begins by describing the arrival of a 'semi naked band' of men who are 'subdued and silent'. This is the native people of Australia. They are the only remaining members of their tribe. The little band has come to this little town to locate the old bora ground which was their sacred place once. A bora ring is a special piece of ground used for the initiation ceremony of the males in Australian aboriginal tribal culture. Women were forbidden to enter the area or discuss any aspect connected with the bora ring. Now the white men have occupied the place and they are moving about busily like ants. These strangers have placed a sign board on the bora ground which read "Rubbish May Be Tipped Here". The place to which the natives attach a divine position is being transformed in to a place where they heap garbage.

Now in this place the native people have become the strangers. But in the olden days these white men who roam about were the strangers of the land. The natives assert their own belonging-ness to the land by saying that they belong to each and every thing present there. They belong to the old ways, the corroboree, the bora ground, the old ceremonies and the laws of the elders. We are the lightning, the thunder, the shadow ghosts, the camp fires, everything. But now everything is gone. They have lost touch with their own land, old ways, laws and legends.

“We are nature and the past, all the old ways  
Gone now and scattered”

These people have lost their link with nature. The scrubs, eagle, emu and kangaroo are gone. With all these connected to nature the natives are also bidding adieu to the land. They do not have a place there any longer and it is better for them to look forward for the new things to come.

The mood that the poem creates is nostalgic and assertive. One can feel the aboriginal people’s pain and agony which makes the reader sympathetic. The theme of the poem is about the white men’s taking over the native land everything has moved on and been destroyed; there is nothing left for the natives or the future. Their culture has been destroyed, so the only thing left to do is to move on and look for a new beginning. The title is ironic for to the whites ‘going away’ sounds pleasing, but to the blacks it is a challenge to action and not to fade away in the face of such injustice and rejection.

**GLOSSARY:**

- They: the tribesmen
- Ants : white men represented as ants because they were busy like ants.
- Bora ring : a sacred ground where the aboriginals would dance, sing and hold ceremonies.
- Corroboree : an aboriginal festival of singing and dancing.
- Dream time : the time they spend in conveying the legends to the younger generation through the oral tradition of festivals.

**I Answer the following questions in two or three sentences each.**

1. Explain why the tribesmen are ‘silent and subdued’?
2. How are white men represented? Why?

3. Why does Thunder have a capital letter?
4. Explain line eight.

**II Answer the following questions in a paragraph not exceeding 100 words.**

1. What is the effect produced by lines 9-17?
2. Comment on the significance of metaphors used in the poem?
3. What is bora ring and explain why is it so central to the poem?

**III Answer the following questions in not more than 300 words**

1. Attempt a critical appreciation of the poem.

## UNIT:5

### SHE ROSE TO HIS REQUIREMENTS

#### EMILY DICKINSON

#### ABOUT THE POET

Emily Dickinson, ‘the Belle of Amherst’ was an American poet and is considered one of the most original of 19<sup>th</sup> century American poets. She was born in Amherst, Massachusetts on December 10, 1830. Throughout her life she seldom left her house and led a secluded life, except for the short time when she attended Amherst Academy and Holyoke Female Seminary, until her death on May 15, 1886 due to Bright’s disease. Emily was an energetic and outgoing woman while attending the Academy and Seminary. It was later, during her mid-twenties that she began to grow reclusive.

#### DICKINSON AND HER POETRY

Emily Dickinson’s poems have many distinguishable features. The poet reflects her loneliness and the speaker’s of her poems generally live in a state of want. The major themes in her poetry include friends, nature , love and death. Adrienne Rich once said “Dickinson is the American poet whose work consisted in exploring states of psychic extremity”. Most of her love poems are psychological and autobiographical. Dickinson never married, but reading her poems we understand that she was in love at least one point in her life. She uses the syllogistic method of reasoning to describe the importance of love that she had in her life. She says that love is life, life is eternal and therefore love is eternal.

“That I shall love always-  
I argue thee  
That love is life-  
And life hath immortality-”

The poem “I cannot live without you” is considered the best love poem and the most famous love poem by Dickinson. She pictures the feelings of two lovers who cannot live together, cannot die together, and cannot rise after death together, cannot be judged by God together. All they can do is to maintain the possibility of communication though oceans apart.

“So we must keep apart  
You there, I here,  
With just the door ajar  
That oceans are,  
And prayer  
And that pale sustenance  
Despair”

As Dickinson’s life was marked by witnessing a series of deaths, the tragic deaths of those close to her we find death becoming a recurrent theme in most of her lyrics. She maintains an ambivalent attitude towards death; death being a terror and death as a relief through which she can move towards immortality. Death is personified in many poems. In the poem “Because I could not stop for Death” death is personified as a gentle, courteous and polite man who takes her on a ride in a carriage.

“Because I could not stop for death  
He kindly stopped for me”

She travels along different ways and sees different things all along this journey.

“We passed the fields of Gazing Grain  
We passed the setting sun”

In the end she speaks of ‘eternity’, death leads us to an eternal world.

She speaks of God and heaven in her religious poems. She craves for a day when she will be able to meet God.

“I went to heaven  
‘T was a small town,  
....  
Beautiful as pictures  
No man drew”

The poem “I heard a Fly buzz- when I died” is told by a dead woman who is still speaking and hearing things. Lying on her death bed, surrounded by her family, she claims “I heard a Fly buzz – when I died”. She is irritated by the presence of the buzz which distracts the attention of the kith and kin

surrounding her. In this poem death is seen as an extension of life, death as the beginning of an eternal life.

Pain and suffering run all through Dickinson's poems. She speaks about the two aspects of pain, its timelessness and its irresistible dominance.

“Pain has an element of blank;  
It cannot recollect  
When it began, or if there was  
A time when it was not”

Most of her lyrics, though on the surface level seem to be mere short moral sayings have deep underlying meaning beneath. She writes aphoristically by compressing a great deal of meaning into a very small number of words.

Many of her poems' allusions come from her education in the Bible, classical mythology and Shakespeare. Dickinson did not give titles to her poems and often the first line of the poem is used as the title. She wrote short lines, preferring to be concise in her images and references and the poems did not have more than six stanzas. The rhythm in most of her poems is called the common meter or ballad meter. Both types of meter consist of a quatrain with the first and third lines having four iambic feet and the second and fourth lines having three iambic feet. She had a complete disregard for the rules of grammar and sentence structure as a result of which she is said to anticipate the way modern poets use language. Her compressed use of language often becomes incomprehensible; the language instead of communicating confuses us.

### **ABOUT THE POEM**

The poem describes how women were in Dickinson's time. When a woman meets a man and falls in love with him, or when a woman is married to a man she is to give up everything in her life just to make him happy. The poem depicts a woman about to be married and is in the process to shed all her personality and become another person. She drops the playthings of her life in order to take up the honorable responsibility of a wife. The playthings of woman include all her dreams, aspirations, skills, imagination and everything she possess. This may be mere playthings in a male dominated society, but for a woman they are serious things connected with her very being.

The woman dropped all the playthings of her life in order to take up the honorable duty of a wife. Emily Dickinson is making a sarcastic remark of the society where rising to her husband's requirement was considered an honorable job. The second stanza deals with the things that she loses once she takes up the

duty of a wife. She loses material, spiritual potential and gold. The society expects a complete submission on the part of the woman whereas, it neglects man's role altogether. The woman wears a mask by fashioning herself to the norms of the society. The image of pearl and weed in the poem is significant. Her own dreams and desires are unmentioned as the sea develops pearl and weed. The woman's virtues are compared to the pearls and weeds under the sea. The fathoms they abide are known to her husband alone. 'Himself' can mean husband or God. It is God alone who realizes the depth of her emotions and her silence.

**GLOSSARY:**

- Playthings of her life: personal characteristics; what a woman has to give up when she gets married.
- Aught: anything
- Amplitude: multiplicity
- It lay unmentioned: what she missed
- Pearl and weed: woman's desires suppressed like the pearl and the weed hidden under the sea.
- Fathoms: depths

**I Answer the following questions in a paragraph not exceeding 100 words.**

1. Discuss the title of the poem.
2. How does the poet show the disappointment of the woman?
3. Comment on the rhythm.

**II Answer the following questions in not more than 300 words**

1. Trace the male dominance in the poem.
2. Attempt a feminist reading of the poem.

## UNIT 6

### AUNT JENNIFER'S TIGER

#### ADRIENNE RICH

##### ABOUT THE POET

Adrienne Rich was born on May 16, 1929, in Baltimore, Maryland, United States. She was one of America's foremost public intellectuals. A poet, essayist and a radical feminist she has been called "one of the most widely read and influential poets of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. She attended Radcliffe College, graduating in 1951 and was selected by W.H Auden for the Yale Series of Younger Poets Prize for *A Change of World* that same year. In 1953 she married Alfred H Conrad, Harvard University economist and in 1955 came out her second volume of poetry *The Diamond Cutters*.

Rich was one of the most eloquent and provocative voices in America and spoke on various themes like the politics of sexuality, race, language, power and women's culture. Her collections include *Snapshots of a Daughter-in-law* (1963) and *Leaflets* (1969). She has also authored several nonfiction prose including *On Lies, Secrets and Silence: Selected Prose, 1966-1978* (1979), *What is Found There: Notebooks on Poetry and Politics* (1993), *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution* (1986) and *Arts of the Possible: Essays and Conversations* (2001).

Rich's poem *Aunt Jennifer's Tiger* reflects the gender struggle prevailing in the male dominated society. It is a feminist poem which explores the alternative world created by Aunt Jennifer through sewing. It has become a Hobson's choice for her to create an imaginary world of freedom and self expression which the patriarchal society denies her. The poem deals with the weight of marriage, the unhappy and submissive station of a woman in life and the stagnation of married life. Sewing becomes a metaphor of escape into another world, the world of art.

##### ABOUT THE POEM

The poem *Aunt Jennifer's Tiger* describes the confinement that every woman faces in her married life. The speaker is a small child who tells about the aunt and her married life which turned out to be the biggest disappointment in her life. The fearless tigers prancing on the screen are contrasted with the real life of the aunt where she carries the massive weight of her wedding band. Aunt Jennifer, by creating the tigers in needlepoint, tries to escape from the fret and fever of real life to an imaginative world where she too can be free and happy as the tigers are.

On the literal level the aunt is sewing tigers on a cloth. The tigers are being described as the “bright topaz denizens of a world of green”. The tigers are least afraid of men beneath the tree and they prance with self assurance and self confidence. This life of the tigers among the woods, the energy and the pride they possess, the chivalric manner in which they move is contrasted with the life of the aunt. The tigers pace about as if they are the kings of the domain. She is sewing as fast as her fingers allow her to because of the feeling that she will not live to complete her creation or that she will be interrupted by somebody.

The last stanza deals with the transient nature of human life and transcendental nature of art. Aunt Jennifer’s ordeals will remain with her till her death but the tigers that she has created will remain proud and unafraid for ever. Aunt Jennifer’s life was not in vain, she has created something that will live on after her death and burial. Despite the woes of her life, she has created something which will immortalize her.

The poem can be interpreted in many ways. It can be about a woman who tries to immortalize herself through art. She will live forever through the tigers she has created. The poem can also be counted as self actualization where she tries to lead an independent life without being afraid of anyone. The readers get a glimpse of aunt’s sub conscious mind where she makes an escape to a jungle ruled by beasts. The beasts in these woods are not afraid of their predators as the aunt is. The uncle is depicted as the predator that has hunted and captured the aunt and kept her in a cage from which her only escape is through sewing.

**GLOSSARY:**

- Aunt Jennifer : symbolic of all women rather than one individual
- Tigers : symbolize freedom of spirit that every woman dreams of
- Topaz: yellow
- Denizens: inhabitants
- Massive weight: restrictions of marriage
- Band: ring
- Ordeals: in marriage
- Mastered: controlled
- Panel: screen

**I Answer the following questions in two or three sentences each.**

1. What are the emotions described in the middle stanza?
2. Who will get the stitched panel or the embroidery of the tigers, after Aunt Jennifer's death?
3. Explain the image of tigers in the first stanza?
4. Explain the image of wedding band in the second stanza?
5. What happen to the tigers after Aunt Jennifer's death?

**II Answer the following questions in a paragraph not exceeding 100 words.**

1. How does Aunt Jennifer symbolize women as a whole rather than an individual?
2. Does the poem reflect the transcendental nature of art? How?

**III Answer the following questions in not more than 300 words**

1. How does the poem reflect gender struggle?
2. Write a critical appreciation of the poem *Aunt Jennifer's Tiger*.

## UNIT 7

### GIRLS

#### MRINAL PANDE

##### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mrinal Pande was born in 1946, at Tikamgarh, Madhya Pradesh. She was the editor of the popular women's magazine *Vama* from 1984-87 and is currently the executive editor of the Hindi edition of *Daily Hindusthan*. She has studied English and Sanskrit literature, ancient Indian history, archaeology, classical music and visual arts. Her first story was published in the Hindi weekly *Dharmayug* at the age of 21. She writes both in Hindi and English and has authored many short stories, novels and drama. Her major works include *The Subject is Woman* (1991), *That Which Ram Hath Ordained* (1993), *My Own Witness* (2001), *Devi: Tales of the Goddess* (2000) and *Stepping Out* (2003). *Girls* was first published in 1983 in *Dharmayug*, and the English translation in the same year in *Manushi*- a journal about women and society, New Delhi.

##### GIST OF THE STORY:

The story is narrated by an eight year old girl, the second daughter of a middle class family in an Indian society. It deals with the way girls are treated in our society. The story begins with the protagonist, a little girl who leaves home to her Ma's parental house. Ma is a very irritable person, for her, everything in life is a problem; breaking the surahi by Baabu, children at home or school, ill or playing around, everything is a problem. She is going through her fourth pregnancy and fervently hopes that it will be a boy this time.

When they reach the station, Ma had to handle many things; mind the luggage, the wobbling surahi, and the three children. At one of the stations they bought many samosas but the girl couldn't eat it because she saw a woman making her child pee through the window. The narrator girl scared her younger sister by crushing a piece of potato into the shape of an insect. Her elder sister scolded her calling her a nuisance but despite that she realizes that she loves the narrator very much.

Maama was waiting at the railway station to receive them. When they reached Naani's home, another surahi was broken. This time Ma blamed the girl for troding on it. "You are the cause of all my problem!" This was the reaction of the mother. When she entered Naani's house, she was told to bend down and touch Naani's feet. When she tried to do it, someone rectified her saying "Not like that... bend properly. You are born a girl and you will have to bend for the rest of

your life". For Ma, the girls are always a nuisance. She keeps on complaining about her girl children.

Every one in the family talks of delivering a boy. For Naani, it has become a matter of safeguarding her honor. She folds her hands and prays "Oh goddess, protect my honor. At least this time let her take a son back from her parent's home". For Ma giving birth to a boy is all about relieving herself from the burden of delivery forever.

The girl is addressed as a witch by her mother when she came to know that the girl has eaves dropped the conversation of Ma and Maami. Ma gets angry with her when she insists Hari's mother on saying that girls are nice. Mother remarks "she was born only to plague my life".

The next day was Chaitya Shukla Ashtami day of the Hindu calendar when young girls are worshipped as the living incarnations of Devi or the divine feminine principle. A roli spot or tikka of red powder is put on the girl's foreheads, the aarati ceremony is done by waving the sacred flame around their faces, and Prasad, food given to the devotees after the worship, is distributed to all the participating women. The girl didn't allow Naani to put tikka on her forehead. Instead of that, she feels that she is an engine. Ma gets angry with her and shouts at her. When the elders try to coax her to obey, the girl retorts, "When you people don't love girls, why do you pretend to worship them? ..... I don't want this halwa-puri, tikka or money. I don't want to be a goddess".

The story tells us about the unjustified idolatry of the male child in an Indian society. Indian families always had in need of male children as they were supposed to be the bread winners and caretakers of the family. When a girl child is born, condolences are showered on the family whereas when a boy child is born ladoos are distributed in and outside the family. Indian society, despite all the modernization and progress, continues to victimize girl children and they are looked down as the inferior 'other'. The author presents a middle class family where there is a compulsion to give birth to a boy to stop bearing children anymore.

Girls in Indian families are told to bend and live and are not respected or even acknowledged as boys are. The story is told from a child's perspective and it effectively brings out the actual feelings of a girl child when she is discriminated in her own home. For Ma, her children are always creating problems. Had they been sons and even if they had been naughty she would not have been angry, because sons are always considered as assets to the family.

The little girl's cry and anguish at the end of the story is the voice of all the girls in Indian society. One day worship of the girl child, one day viewing the girl as Devi shows the hypocritical nature of the rituals in our society. It is contrasted

to the subjugation of girls happening every moment. Rituals in itself have become a formality. The whole story is a wake up cry of the narrator and the author, on behalf of all the girls in India, to realize the value of girls and the respect and care they need from their own home.

**GLOSSARY:**

- baabu: father of the narrator
- Ma: mother
- Bari: elder
- Chhoti: younger
- Dai: midwife
- emli: tamarind
- eekh: sugarcane
- Gopalji: another name for god Krishna, worshipped as a young boy.
- goli: sugar sweets
- halwapuri: special sweet made during celebrations and festivals.
- maama: mother's brother
- maami: mother's brother's wife
- maasi: mother's sister
- naani: grandmother
- paan: betel nut and spices wrapped in a betel leaf
- Surahi : earthenware water pot
- Eavesdrop: to listen secretly to the private conversation of others
- Squat : to sit in a crouching position
- Scramble: to move or climb hurriedly
- Wobble: to tremble or quaver
- Smack: to strike sharply and with a loud noise
- Reprimand: to reprove severely
- Zari: gold-thread work
- Druva star: the pole star. according to legend, a boy was rewarded for his goodness and faith by being turned into this symbol of constancy

**I Answer the following questions in two or three sentences each.**

1. Why is the narrator leaving for the Naani's house?
2. What makes the narrator say that only her elder sister loved her?
3. "You are born a girl and you will have to bend for the rest of your life". What is the significance of this statement?
4. According to Naani how can her honor be protected?
5. What provokes the narrator to compel Hari's mother into saying 'girls are nice'?
6. Why does the narrator feel that for her mother everything is a problem?
7. "Do mother birds too think their girl birds are inferior?" Why does the narrator ask this question?

**II Answer the following questions in a paragraph not exceeding 100 words.**

1. Explain the attitude that the narrator's mother's family has towards girl children?
2. Why does the narrator not trust the Dhruva star?
3. What is the significance of Ashtami day?

**III Answer the following questions in not more than 300 words**

1. Analyze the circumstances that led to the narrator refusing to be worshipped on Ashtami day?
2. A girl child is always a problem among the middle class Indian society even in this contemporary era. elucidate the statement.

## UNIT: 8

### THE GARDEN PARTY

#### KATHERINE MANSFIELD

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Katherine Mansfield Beauchamp Murry was born on 14th October 1888 in the colonial New Zealand. She was a prominent short fiction writer and wrote under the pen name Katherine Mansfield. She left for Britain in 1908 where she befriended DH Lawrence and Virginia Woolf. During the First World War Mansfield contracted extra pulmonary tuberculosis which made her return to New Zealand impossible and she died at the age of 34. Among her most well known stories are *The Garden Party*, *The Daughter's of the Late Colonel* and *The Fly*.

*The Garden Party* was first published in 1922 in a collection entitled *The Garden Party and Other Stories* and it immediately became a success. Mansfield mainly deals with New Zealand, childhood, adulthood, social class, class conflict, innocence and experience.

#### GIST OF THE STORY:

Katherine Mansfield's short story "The Garden Party" opens with frantic preparations being made for an afternoon garden party. The main character, Laura, is an idealistic and sensitive young girl. She is surrounded by her more conventional family: her sister, Jose, her mother, Mrs. Sheridan; her father, a businessman; and her brother, Laurie, to whom she feels most similar in feeling and ideals.

The weather, a cloudless summer day, was suitable for a party that day. Before the breakfast was over, the workers were concerned about where to place the marquee. Meg had already washed her hair and was sitting drinking her coffee. Jose had also got ready. So mother, Mrs. Sheridan, assigned the job of handling the men to Laura. She was very artistic in nature. She goes outside to do her duty.

When she spoke to the workmen, she found that they were very friendly and soft spoken and she liked them very much. There were suggestions to put the marquee on the lily lawn, on the corner of the tennis court from Laura, but at last it was placed against the karakas. Though Laura was in charge of the whole thing she felt confused because the worker's knew better. She liked the workmen for their concern for the beauty of flowers and she even wished the workmen be her friends instead of the silly boys she danced with and who came to the Sunday

night supper. She despised the stupid conventions of class discriminations and wanted to be a work girl.

A voice from the house called Laura to the phone. When she reached the hall Laurie, her brother, told her to press his coat before the afternoon. She nodded and went to the phone. It was her friend Kitty on the other side. She invited her to lunch and following the instruction of her mother, told her to wear the sweet hat she had. She put back the receiver and listened all around. The house was alive. She heard running voices everywhere. Everyone was busy with the preparation of the party, and she loved parties very much. A florist came with a lot of canna-lillies for the garden party to look gorgeous. Meg played the piano in case she was asked to play it in the afternoon. Mother told everyone to dress up quickly and help her with the envelopes. Godber's brought in cream puffs. Everything was going very well.

Laura wanted to go to the workers in the garden to see if they could place the marquee well. But the back door was blocked by cook, Sadie, Godber's man and Hans. Something had happened. A man was killed. Mr. Scott, who lived in a little cottage nearby, was killed when his horse shied at a traction- engine in the corner of Hawke Street this morning and he was thrown out on the back of his head. He's survived by a wife and five little children.

Hearing the news of this death, Laura felt like stopping the party. She thought that it is not suitable for them to have a garden party when a neighbor is dead. She expressed this to everyone but none of them were least bothered. Mother was even amused of hearing the death. Mother instead diverted the topic on to the hat which was made for her. But when she reached her room and saw herself in the mirror, she too felt that mother was right. Laura wanted to inform Laurie about the accident but she couldn't.

The party was over. It was a great success altogether. Some people mentioned the accident at the party. People sympathized with the wife and half a dozen kiddies. Mrs. Sheridan had a brilliant idea of sending all the waste, the scraps of the food to the house of the dead as a treat to his children. Laura was assigned this job. Laura, in her white frocks and her beautiful hat went down the hill, down the lane to the place where a man lay dead. She felt that everyone was looking at her. Her frock and her hat shone very well. She thought that she could have put on a coat. She reached the house. She was taken inside by a woman. She was shocked to see the widow, the children and above all the dead man. When Laura went near the dead man; she felt that he was in a fast and sound sleep. He was far away, in a remote place, he was dreaming; garden parties, baskets and lace frocks meant nothing to him. He was wonderful and beautiful even in death. She couldn't leave the room without a sob. She cried "forgive my hat". She ran back. Laurie was waiting on the way. Mother was becoming

anxious. Laura was crying. She was not able to explain what life is. She still couldn't utter anything. She simply stammered "Isn't life, isn't life" that was enough. Laurie understood everything.

The story is about a little girl Laura, who sheds all her innocence once she witnesses the reality of life. A girl who was stuck in a world of high class housing, food, family and garden parties discovers reality upon witnessing death. For Laura, death is fast sleep far away from the troubles of human life.

**GLOSSARY:**

- The garden: throughout the story the garden represents the growth of the Sheridan children as well as a kind of Eden in which their parents confine them.
- desert island: symbolizes Sheridan's estate.
- Marquee: tent; here it symbolizes the over protection of the parents.
- karaka trees: woody plant that grows to a height of several feet resembling a palm or fern tree. Here the trees symbolize the children.
- squiz: glance
- baize: coarse woolen
- meringue: a mixture of egg whites and sugar beaten until stiff, cooked and used as topping for pies or to make cookies and shells.
- Chesterfield: sofa or couch
- lillies: purity, innocence
- flags: little paper flags stuck in a plate of small triangular sandwiches in each plate - an English custom adopted by the New Zealand middle class as a sign of gentility.
- names: names of the sandwich fillings to be written in each flag
- hat: symbolizes class consciousness.

**I Answer the following questions in two or three sentences each.**

1. What is the role of money in the story?
2. What does innocence and experience mean as a theme ?
3. Why is Laura said to be a difficult character?
4. Where and what is the climax of The Garden Party?
5. Why does Laura's mother stop her from going to the young man's house?
6. Why did Laura want to stop the garden party?

**II Answer the following questions in a paragraph not exceeding 100 words.**

1. What is the question with which the story ends?
2. What passages in the story suggest that Laura is on her way to becoming more mature?
3. Should the Sheridan's have called off the party as Laura suggested? Give Reasons.
4. Analyze the relationship that Laura has with her brother Laurie in the story?
5. Write a short note on Mr. Scott's death and Laura's reaction?

**III Answer the following questions in not more than 300 words**

1. Discuss the themes in The Garden Party.
2. How does Mansfield present the character of Laura?
3. The underlying class conflict in the story.

## UNIT 9

### BAYEN

#### MAHESWETA DEVI

##### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mahashweta Devi, the eminent Indian Bengali writer, was born into a middle class family in 1926 in the city of Dacca in East Bengal (modern Bangladesh). Her father Manish Ghatak was a well known poet and novelist who wrote under the pseudonym Jubanashwa. Devi's mother Dharithri Devi was also a writer and social worker. As an adolescent she moved to West Bengal in India. She received her education from the prestigious Shantiniketan set up by the great Indian philosopher Rabindranath Tagore that now became a part of Vishwa Bharati University. After completing her Post Graduation from Calcutta University, she pursued her career in teaching and journalism.

Her first book *Jhansir Rani* (The Queen of Jhansi) was published in 1956 which marked the beginning of her prolific literary career. She has been the recipient of several literary awards like the Sahitya Academy award (1979), the Jnanpith, India's highest literary award (1995), Magsaysay award (1997) and the Padma Vibhushan (2006). Presently she is known better as an activist who fights for the welfare of tribal people in Bihar, Chattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and West Bengal. In most of her fictional works she themes the brutality and the oppression faced by the Dalits, women and other marginalized communities at the hands of upper elite Indian society.

##### ABOUT THE PLAY

The play *Bayen* presents a moving account of the cruel reality that a woman had to face in rural India. Chandidasi belongs to Gangaputta and Gangadasi cult. After her father's death she had to take up the profession of her father, burying dead children. She continued her ancestral job till she got married and gave birth to a child. The play focuses on the transformation that a normal woman undergoes through the process of scapegoating by the society.

The society ostracized Chandidasi by labeling her Bayen, a woman who breastfeeds dead children and has the ability to curse others. She is debarred entry into the society, she is not allowed to cast her evil eyes on any one, and she should carry a string with a canister tied to it and clang it along the floor while walking so that no one comes the way. The villagers are afraid to kill her, so they caged her in a little hut near the rail tracks.

Chandidasi was labeled Bayen when many of the children in the village died of many diseases. Since she works in the burial ground and was at that time lactating, the society deserted her by calling her Bayen. It is only after her death, at the end of the play, that the villagers are ready to accept her as a normal human being. That too only after the attempts of her son, Bhagirath.

The play opens with a lullaby droning offstage and Chandidasi, now Bayen, enters singing. She is very exhausted due to starvation and despondent because she is barred from entering the mainstream society. She wears a filthy saree, her hair is disheveled, and she puts on no jewellery at all. Bayen is shown singing a song to an unseen child. She is also followed by an unseen dog, Jhumra. She has come to fill her pitcher with water. She says “ I don’t have anybody anymore, nobody. When I hadn’t become a Bayen I had everybody.” She feels that her child god sleeps in her lap. She was deprived of her motherhood in a society where motherhood is considered as the most sacred and responsible matter. The society did not permit her to look after her child. The play moves on to describe how a normal woman, because of the prevalence of superstition in the society, was turned into a Bayen.

Bayen was given ration on Saturdays. That too; a little rice and salt, all mixed with dirt and worms in the lentil. It was while she was brooding over all these matters that Malindar and his son Bhagirath arrives. They have a discussion on sending Bhagirath to high school with scholarship. Bayen stands with her back to them because it will be an ill omen for them. When Bayen called Malindar “Gangaputta”, he instinctively closed his eyes and covered his sons eyes too. Bayen, tired of the superstition’s baggage, told him to tie knots in their hair and dhoti and also to spit on the head of the child to get rid of her evil cast. When Malinder shouted at her, Bayen replied that she came to plead to provide her with some oil, kerosene and rice. She is not provided with all these things in a proper way. Malinder wanted to help her by giving her money but as no one would sell her anything she couldn’t take the money too. At last Malinder told that he will buy everything for her and keep it at the foot of a tree and told her to pick it from there. When Malinder threatened her that he will strike her, she became afraid and left the place.

Once she went away, Malinder regretted his actions and told his son “ How could I do it? I hurled stones at her body? It used to be a body soft as butter. How could I be such a beast?” Bhagirath had heard that one who speaks to a Bayen will be doomed to die. When Bhagirath asked his father about speaking to the cursed Bayen, he replied “ no dear, she won’t kill me. She’s a Bayen now, but.....but, Bhagirath...she’s your mother.” Bhagirath was startled to hear this. He had heard that Bayen is a supernatural woman, one who breast feeds dead children, one who talks to unseen beings, and one who curses others. How can such a person be his mother?

The story moves twelve years back. When Harishchandra became king again, he had gifts for everyone. Gangaputtas were provided with all the cremation grounds in the world. Bhagirath's mother, Chandidasi Gangadasi, was a descendent of Kalu Dome and she used to bury children. Malinder fell in love with her and married her. It is through a tribal song that Mahashweta Devi celebrates their love and marriage. After marriage they were leading a happy life. Then Bhagirath was born. Before his birth she didn't have any difficulty in burying children. But after his birth she feels very bad when she buries children under the banyan tree. Besides, some children died due to some diseases. People began to feel that she has an evil eye. If she stares at a child it is sure to die. And people even began to hurl stones at her. So she was not interested to bury children anymore. But Malinder was very indifferent to her feelings. According to him people were very jealous of him. He was the only educated man in the village and he also had a government job. Everyone was envious of him. He got education, a government job and a beautiful wife. He says that people do not recognize the value of Chandidasi's job. For Chandidasi, guarding the graves throughout the night makes her breast burst with milk and her heart aches for Bhagirath. She couldn't stay without him. Her mind was full of conflict between her motherhood and her ancestral duty.

It was while all this happenings that Tukni, Shashi's and Pakhi's daughter died of some illness. They were Malinder's sister and brother-in-law. The whole blame of the death was put on Chandidasi as a result of which she denied to bury Tukni. When they pleaded before her she replied that would be her final burial. Chandidasi had almost turned mad by then. That night when she was guarding the graveyard the whole mob, including her husband were watching her. They enter the stage. Everyone was watching her raving and raving. She dreams, she is afraid, she is talking to herself, she sings lullaby. The mob advances towards her. Even her own husband misunderstood her and proclaimed through a drum beating that his wife has turned a Bayen.

After describing the story Malinder tells Bhagirath that ever since his mother had been a Bayen not a witch. No one will kill a Bayen thinking of the curse that may befall them.

Afterwards Bhagirath meets his mother. As he was not allowed to look on to her face he faced her shadow in the pond and talked to her. Bhagirath used to go to the railway tracks and hear her crying every evening. He asked her the reason for her crying. He asked her whether she was afraid of darkness, afraid to be alone. All the time Chandidasi was telling him to go back home or else she will inform Malinder.

The same day Chandidasi saw some of the men in the village placing bamboos on the rail tracks to make an accident so that they can loot the train.

She sees the impending danger and tries to avert it. She waves her hands to make the train stop. At last the train stops, but she was killed by the train. It was by her death that she was roused to the heights. The authorities were thinking of awarding her posthumously for her bravery. They wanted to hand over the body to her kith and kin and Bhagirath came forward to give all the explanations regarding her. At last he cried “She’s not a Bayen. She is my mother.

The play describes how far the ignorance and superstition of people can lead. A woman who was leading a normal life was suddenly transformed into a scapegoat for the society to play on. Even her husband who was supposed to be very brave couldn’t stand against the society. The society separates the mother from her only child. She received a heavy blow when she was blamed for the death of Tukni, the girl whom she loved very much. As a result she lost her mental balance and began to utter and do abnormal things. Her husband too misunderstood her for being a Bayen. It was the society which was responsible for the tragedy of this Gangadasi woman.

**GLOSSARY:**

- Tether: rope or chain for tying an animal to a spot.
- Canister: metal container
- Somber: dark, gloomy
- Callous: showing no concern for other people’s feelings.
- Bighas: in South Asia a measure of land occasionally used on the Indian subcontinent, varying in size between one eighth of a hectare/ one third of an acre and one hectare/ one acre.
- Palmyra: a tall fan leafed palm tree whose fronds, wood, and sap are harvested for various uses. Native to Asia.
- Predatory: habitually hunting and killing other animals for food.
- Progeny: children
- Dhol: South Asian drum a large, barrel shaped, often double-ended drum used in South Asian music.
- Keening: wailing

**I Answer the following questions in two or three sentences each.**

1. Why should the Bayen keep out of the Malinder’s path?
2. What is the reason for Malinder telling his son that he has no mother?
3. How did Malinder happen to have a government job?

4. When did the Bayen begin to feel pain while burying children?
5. Why were the people envious of Malinder and his family?
6. What does Jhumra, the dog symbolize?
7. Why does Chandidasi want to give up her job?
8. “ a Bayen is not for killing’. Why?

**II Answer the following questions in a paragraph not exceeding 100 words.**

1. Narrate the circumstances that led Chandidasi to bury children?
2. Why does Malinder tell his son that he regrets throwing stones at the Bayen?
3. Why do people fear Chandidasi?
4. Why is it dangerous to speak to the Bayen?
5. The meeting between Bayen and Bhagirath.

**III Answer the following questions in not more than 300 words**

1. Describe the circumstances that led to Chandidasi being branded a Bayen.
2. Trace the life of Chandidasi and her final victory.

## UNIT 10

### THE DAY I BECAME A WOMAN

#### (Roozi ke zan shodam)

#### FILM REVIEW

##### ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Marzieh Meshkini is an Iranian cinematographer, film director and writer. She was born in 1969 in Tehran, studied film at Makhmalbaf film school from 1996-2001. She was married to film director Mohsen Makhmalbaf, who wrote the script for her debut film *The Day I Became a Woman (Roozi ke zan shodam)*. The film won many awards. It attended the Critics Week Category in the 2000 Venice Film Festival. Her second film *Stray Dogs (sag-haye velgard)* competed in the best film category at Venice film festival in 2003 and received two awards from the festival. She has worked as the assistant director in 'The Apple', 'The Blackboards', 'At Five in the Afternoon' and 'Two Legged Horse' with her daughter Samira Makhmalbaf. She has also collaborated with her husband in several recent films. She is also the script writer of the award winning film *Buddha Collapsed out of Shame* by Hana Makhmalbaf.

##### ABOUT THE FILM

*The Day I Became a Woman (Roozi Khe Zan Shodam)* is a 2000 award winning Iranian movie directed by Marzieh Meshkini. The movie grew out of a small film school started by her husband, the acclaimed Iranian film maker Mohsen Makhmalbaf. The movie has won a raft of awards from various film festivals. The film is very neatly and tidily presented, it has got no overt violence or sex. Yet it deals with the most important issue faced by Iranian women. Directed by a woman it rightly voices the pathetic condition of women in the Middle East.

The film which is episodic in nature deals with woman's struggle for identity in Iran. Three stories are told each depicting different stages in the lives of Iranian women; from young to the elderly. The first part takes us to the morning of Havva's ninth birthday. In the first part of the film, the mother and the grandmother of the nine year old Havva keeps her from playing with her childhood play mate Hassan. The girl is told that she is a woman from now on. In traditional communities in accordance with the Islamic law, a girl will become a woman once she turns nine years old. Playing with boys in the street is considered a sin from that day on. From now onwards she should veil herself under the chador. But because it is only 11 am and Havva was born around noon she pleads to her mother and grandmother to allow her play till noontime.

Havva, literally the Eve, is going to be expelled from the paradise for no sin of her own. She requests one more hour so that she can drink her free life to the lees. This plea was granted on one condition that she will return home at the appropriate time. She is given a stick by which she could measure time and return when the stick no more has shadow. She is also reminded of the fact that if she does not come back at the correct time she will not be forgiven by God.

This story of Havva tells us about the end of innocence of a girl child in an Iranian society. The mother and grandmother entering with chador in their hands symbolize the farewell to all childhood plays and transition to womanhood.

The second tale revolves around a young woman Ahoo who decides to participate in a bicycle race by the seashore and who is all the way pursued by her angry husband on a horse back. The film shows lots of women clad in burqas speeding on the bicycle, peddling on and on towards their goal. The bicycle race can also be taken as a travel towards freedom which is unattainable for women in their real life. Her husband, in-laws, local religious leaders and the village elders follow her demanding her to give up her profane behavior and to stop the race. If she does not obey she will be divorced then and there. When every woman in the competition is racing she is flying as if it is an escape from her own life to a new world of freedom, and selfhood. The threatening words of her husband and all other people are ignored by her; as she, an embodiment of the new woman, moves on and on.

The third part shows us an old woman Hoorra who has some money and who is adamant on purchasing all the material comforts that she has desired in her good salad days. Now she has become a free woman and spends wads of money and is also free to do what she wishes. She has bought many things ranging from teapots to refrigerator. She enlists the help of a young boy and his friends to carry her appliances. They follow her with the new appliances to the beach. As she floats out on a waiting ship, free from the bonds of womanhood, she is watched by both Havva and Ahoo. Both of them may be looking at their own possible future.

Meshkini's thesis film *The Day I Became a Woman*, which was set on the island of Kish, is a scathing indictment of the harsh and stifling treatment of women in Islamic Iran. It is a three part allegory which was once banned in Iran. The three stories tell us about the impossibility for a woman to escape from the male clutches of the society. How far they try to flee, the sea is always the limit beyond which she cannot pass.

**I Answer the following questions in two or three sentences each.**

1. What happened to Havva, the day she turned nine?
2. What does the *chador* symbolize?
3. What is the metaphorical dimension of the bicycle race?
4. When Hoorra floats out on a waiting ship, Havva and Ahoo watch her from a distant. What does it symbolize?

**II Answer the following questions in a paragraph not exceeding 100 words.**

1. How does innocence give way to womanhood? Explain with respect to the first tale told.
2. How does Ahoo try to free herself from the clutches of male dominated society?

**III Answer the following questions in not more than 300 words.**

1. How far does society influence in creating a woman's identity? Elucidate with respect to the film.
2. Substantiate the title of the film *The Day I Became a Woman*.
3. Is there any connection between the three tales told? If so enumerate.

## UNIT 11

### MITR: MY FRIEND FILM REVIEW

#### ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Revathi alias, Asha Kelunni Kutty was born on 8th July 1966 in Kochi, to Major Kelunni and Lalitha Kelunni. She is an Indian actress and film director who has almost 16 years of experience in the entertainment industry. She has acted in Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, Telugu and Hindi, directed many feature films, produced many television programs and has won many awards including three National Film Awards. In 1983, she was spotted by noted Tamil director Bharatiraja, who was searching for a new heroine for his next film, and went on to play the heroine of *Mann Vasana* which became a silver jubilee hit. Since then she didn't ever had to turn back. *Mitr: My Friend* was Revathi's debut directorial venture. The film is also noted for having an all- woman crew. The movie won the Best Film of the year award at the 49th National film awards with Shobhana and Beena Paul winning the Best Actress and Best Editor awards respectively.

#### ABOUT THE FILM

Based on Silicon valley, the film exposes the problems of an NRI couple Lakshmi and Prithvi and their 17yr old daughter Divya. The film opens with the marriage proceedings of a South Indian marriage between Lakshmi and Prithvi. Lakshmi is a typical south Indian girl from Chidambaram and Prithvi is a software engineer from California. After the marriage both of them shift to America. Lakshmi, who is born and brought up under the Indian culture finds it very difficult to cope up with the new environment. She gives up everything for her husband. Everything goes well between them, she looks after her husband and he too works hard in the office for the family.

Lakshmi gives birth to a baby girl and then the second part of the film begins. Lakshmi looks after her husband and her daughter Divya. Divya, once she turns adolescent becomes too Americanized that she rebels against her mother's archaic and foolish Indian traditions. As a result of an argument with Lakshmi, she drops out from the college and decides to live on her own. Her husband too becomes very indifferent to her needs and is contend with his own life. The very things he liked in his wife soon started irritating him.

The second half of the film shows the transformation of Lakshmi into her own person. She begins to develop her own interests, goes for dance classes, and tries out new ways of hairstyle. She realizes that there is more to life than

cooking and cleaning. She identifies a new friend in her neighbor who seems to be able to read other characters.

One day she finds an anonymous chat friend named Mitr who speaks her own language, Tamil, and understands her feelings and tries to give advises to resolve her issues. They become close to each other. She too, in turn, tries to solve his problems he comes across with his girl friend. Thus she makes a new world of her own in which she resides happily.

The climax of the movie comes when Lakshmi realizes that her chat friend is none other than her own husband. Prithvi and Lakshmi who scarcely spoke to each other in person became close confidants, sharing their innermost thoughts electronically. The film comes to a happy ending when Divya too comes back home and even began to like some of her mother's Indianness.

The film was shot in 30 days mainly in California. The usual song and dance sequences are avoided. The characters are well thought out, all doing a fairly decent job. They are effortlessly integrated into the progress of the story and the progression of events that shape the relationships, and motivation. The teenager Divya, rebelling against her mother's Indianness might strike a chord in many Indian families with offspring of that age. Shobhana, as Lakshmi and Nasir Abdullah as Prithvi enacts their roles with ease with the help of the rest of the crew.

**I Answer the following questions in two or three sentences each.**

1. Why did Divya decide to leave the house?
2. How did Lakshmi overcome her alienation?
3. How does the film end?

**II Answer the following questions in a paragraph not exceeding 100 words.**

1. Describe the social relevance of the film.
2. Elucidate the cultural differences portrayed in the film.
3. There are a lot of criticisms regarding the dubbing of the film. Discuss.

**III Answer the following questions in not more than 300 words.**

1. Discuss the circumstances that led to the self discovery of Lakshmi.
2. The film is about the plight of women who sacrifice their life for the betterment of their family. Discuss.

## UNIT:12

### WIDE SARGASSO SEA

#### JEAN RHYS

#### ABOUT THE WRITER:

Ella Gwendolen Rees Williams, alias Jean Rhys, was born on August 24, 1890 in Roseau, Dominica, one of the former English colonies in the Caribbean islands. She was of Creole heritage: father being a British and mother being native white West Indian. Being a white girl in a predominantly black community she was intellectually and socially isolated by the rest of the society. She moved to England at the age of 16 and pursued her higher studies there. *Voyage in the Dark* (1934) was her first written novel which was the most autobiographical of all her writings. Her other works include *After Leaving Mr. Mackenzie* (1930), *Good Morning, Midnight*(1939), and *Wide Sargasso Sea*(1966). She died in the year 1979.

#### SUMMARY OF THE NOVEL

##### PART:1

Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso sea* attempts to fill in the blanks of a fictional characters life story. Here Rhys creates a biography for Bertha Mason, the insane wife of Edward Rochester in Charlotte Bronte's novel *Jane Eyre*. As Rhys' novel begins, Bertha Mason, through most of the narrative as Antoinette Cosway, is a child living on the overgrown and impoverished Coulibri Estate in Jamaica.

The story begins in 1839, six years after slavery was abolished in British Empire, of which Jamaica was part. Antoinette, the young narrator of part 1, describes both her family's isolation and poverty in the wake of emancipation. She lives alone with her mother Annette, her brother Pierre, and three black servants, Christophine, Godfrey, and Sass on the sprawling, but crumbling Cosway family plantation. No neighbors visit the family because Annette Cosway, who was born on Martinique, is considered an outsider. The family's only friend, Mr Luttrell, kills himself on the novel's opening page. Antoinette believes that he was tired of waiting for the world of former slave owners to improve. Soon after, Annette's horse is poisoned, presumably by former slaves. Voicing the precariousness of their position, Annette remarks, "Now we are marooned."

Antoinette is even more isolated than her mother. Her mother devotes her time and attention to Pierre, who is mentally retarded, and repels Antoinette's affectionate advances. Black children taunt Antoinette, calling her a "white

cockroach". When she finally does make friends with Tia, a black girl, the friendship soon ends. After that Antoinette calls Tia a "nigger,". Tia retaliates by saying that Antoinette and her family are "white niggers," not like the "real white people" who have money and position. Tia then steals Antoinette's clothes ,forcing Antoinette to dress herself in Tia's rags. Just at these moments, Antoinette meets some "real white people," new friends of her mothers. Her mother is embarrassed that Antoinette is so unrepresentable. Believing that her mother is ashamed of her, Antoinette decides that what Tia said must be true. She fears that she can never belong to white or black people.

Selling the last of her jewelry, Annette Cosway is able to dress well and attend the parties of the white elite. She soon has a wealthy English man, Mr. Mason ,falling in love with her. Gossiping women whisper that perhaps Annette literally bewitched him. After all, she has in her employ Christophine, a known practitioner of obeah, a type of voodoo. Antoinette is distressed when she overhears these rumors at her mother's wedding to Mr. Mason. The rumors signal to her how far from really belonging she and her family are.

Soon after the wedding, the family, including Antoinette's Aunt Cora, return to Coulibri. Mr. Mason is able to fix up the plantation and hire many more servants. Aunt Cora and Annette fear that their new wealth may leave them even more vulnerable than they were in their poverty. Aunt Cora warns Mr. Mason not to speak of replacing the black laborers with East Indian "coolies " in front of the black servants. Mr. Mason laughs off such warnings ,saying that blacks are like children and not to be feared. He thinks that if no one molested the Cosway family when they were poor and defenseless ,surely no one will harm them now. Annette pleads with him to leave Coulibri, but he accuses her of being irrational. Antoinette, who remains silent through the debates, agrees with Mr. Mason that they should stay at the plantation. It is the only place where she feels safe.

Aunt Cora and Annette are proved right, however, when black laborers burn down Coulibri. The fire begins in Pierre's room after his black nurse abandons him. As the family tries to escape the fire, they realize that an angry mob awaits them outside. In the chaos that ensues, Annette runs back into the house to try to save her parrot, coco. She fails and coco, all afire, falls from the house into the crowd. Taking this as a bad omen, the mob disperses. Before she can be taken away, Antoinette spies her old friend Tia in the distance. She runs toward her, "for she was all that was left of my life as we had eaten the same food, slept side by side , bathed in the same river. As I ran, I thought I will live with Tia and I will be like her. Not to leave Coulibri. Not to go." But Tia interrupts this reverie by throwing a rock at Antoinette. As the blood trickles down Antoinette's face, she looks at Tia: "We stared at each other, blood on my face, tears on hers. It was as if I saw myself like in a looking glass."

When the narrative resumes, Antoinette have just woken up from a long illness. She learns that Pierre died from the injuries he sustained in the fire. She further learns that her mother has gone insane. In her madness, Annette attempted to kill Mr. Mason. Relative follows these revelations. Antoinette attends a convent school where she feels safe and at peace. Her stepfather, Mr. Mason, often visits her there. As part1 comes to a close ,Antoinette learns that Mr. Mason wants her to leave the convent. She fears returning to the outside world, and her sleep is troubled by nightmares.

## **PART 2**

The narrator of part2 is Edward Rochester, the hero of Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* .He is never named in Rhys' novel, but the details he gives of his life make it clear to the reader that he is a younger version of Bronte's character. The narration of part2 begins several months after Antoinette voiced her fears of leaving her sanctuary of the convent for the outside world. In that time, Mr. Mason has died and his son, Richard has arranged the marriage, the marriage of Antoinette to Rochester. Put ashore in the town of Massacre ,Dominica with his new bride, Rochester thinks to himself, "so it was all over". He has gone through with a marriage arranged primarily for financial reasons and has now come to the "honeymoon house", a property Antoinette inherited from her mother.

Almost immediately, Rochester begins to doubt his wife. He questions her racial purity: "Creole of pure English descent she may be, but {her eyes}are not English or European either." He also questions what he has been told about her : "The girl is thought to be beautiful. And yet..."As he muses on his marriage, he thinks frequently of his father and back in England. As a younger son, Edward is not guaranteed an inheritance. To make his way in the world, he has come to the West Indies. His father has enjoined him to marry a Caribbean heiress to secure a fortune. Rochester wonders, though, whether he has sold his soul to fulfill his family's ambitions.

Despite the strong physical attraction Rochester feels toward Antoinette, he still questions their relationship .When he receives a letter from a man claiming to be her to half brother, Rochester finds it easy to believe the worst of her. His correspondent, Daniel Cosway, tells Rochester of Annette Cosway's insanity and promiscuity and suggests that Antoinette was engaged in an illicit sexual relationship with her black cousin Sandi Cosway. Armed with this information ,Rochester believes he has been deceived by Richard Mason, his own father, and by Antoinette .He thinks they hid the fact of Antoinette's promiscuity and her propensity for madness. He spurns the sexual advances of his affectionate wife, and begins to sleep alone.

At this point ,Rochester's narrative is interrupted ,and Antoinette begins to tell her own story. She has fallen deeply in love with Rochester and is hurt by his coldness. She seeks out her old nurse, Christophine, and asks for a magic potion to make Edward love her again. Edward then resumes the narration .Antoinette drugs his wine with the love potion Christophine made. The drug works: Rochester makes love to Antoinette, when he awakes, he is angered by what his wife has done. In an act of revenge, he has sex with Amelie, the "half-caste" serving girl who reminds Rochester of Antoinette .Antoinette hears the two making love ,and becomes very better .She tells her husband that he has destroyed the one place where she felt free and happy. Christophine believes that Rochester's actions will break Antoinette. She needs Rochester to return her passionate love. When he looks at her, he sees only her "blank lovely eyes". He decides that he will never touch her again, and that he will lock her away from the caresses of others. As part2 comes to a close, Antoinette and Rochester leave the honeymoon-house, and Rochester determines to sell the property.

### **PART 3:**

Grace Poole ,another character from Bronte's *Jane Eyre*, begins the narration of part3.In Bronte's novel, Grace is the woman hired to care for Bertha/Antoinette when she is locked in the attic of Thorn field Hall, Rochester's home in England. In Rhys's novel, Grace tells of how Rochester's father and brother have died and how Edward has become very wealthy. He has instructed his housekeeper to hire Grace at extremely high wages to look out for the mad woman, Antoinette. Grace calls her "that girl who lives in her own darkness." She describes Antoinette as "still fierce" and finds that she needs to be watched carefully.

Antoinette resumes the narration. She reveals what happened to her after she and Rochester left the honeymoon house. Rochester kept her in a house in the countryside and hardly visited her. She was often visited by her cousin Sandy and they fall in love. Rochester, when he came to know of this, took her to England.

It is not clear how Antoinette has been confined in the attic. She is not able to distinguish between reality and nightmares. She envisions herself burning down the Thorn field hall. She imagines jumping from the roof to the cold stones down and ending her life. Her dreams get mixed up with the fire that destroyed Coulibri, the burning parrot, her old friend Tia. She grabs a candle in preparation to torch Thorn field Hall, just as Bertha Mason does in *Jane Eyre*.

## Model Question Paper

### BA PROGRAMME IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

#### SIXTH SEMESTER

#### Core Course EN6B1

#### WOMEN'S WRITING

**Time: 3 Hours**

**Total Weightage:30**

**I. Answer the following bunch of questions.3X1=3)**

**A.**

1. .... is the name of the theatre manager who took pity on Shakespeare's imaginary sister.(Professor Trevelyan, Nick Greene, Graham Greene, Mr. Greg)
2. .... describes Schreiner's feminism as "a mystical connection to other women with whom she could communicate only through the common experience of pain." ( Eleanor Marx, George Egerton, Sheila Rowbotham, Elaine Showalter)
3. Lolita is written by ..... ( Sarah Grand, Azar Nafisi, Vladmir Nabokov, Virginia Woolf)
4. Tukni is the daughter of ..... ( Pakhi, Chandidasi, Bhagirath, Malindar)

**B.**

5. .... is the female character in the first part of *The Day I Became a Woman*?( Hoorah, Ahoo, Havva, Eve)
6. Girls was first published in 1983 in ..... (*Dharmayug, Saptahik Hindustan, Manushi, The Hindustan Times*)
7. .... is a politically didactic poem which gives an aboriginal perspective on the colonization in Australia. (*Introduction, She Rose to his Requirements, We are Going, Aunt Jennifer's Tiger*)
8. .... are the "bright topaz denizens of a world of green". ( whites, aborigines, tigers, lions)

**C.**

9. Katherine Mansfield hails from ..... ( Australia, New Zealand, India, Canada)
10. .... acted out the part of Prithvi in *Mitr, My Friend*. ( Nasir Abdullah, Om Prakash, Rakesh Roshan, Prem Nasir)
11. Ella Gwendolen Rees Williams was popularly known as ..... ( Adrienne Rich, Virginia Woolf, Jean Rhyss, Katherine Mansfield)
12. Dhol is the name of ..... ( a city, a person, a sweet , a drum)

**II. Answer the following questions in two or three sentences. (9X1=9)**

13. What does the 'bora ground' symbolize in the poem *We are Going*?
14. Why is the narrator girl leaving for her Naani's house in the story *Girls*?
15. What is the climax of *The Garden Party*?
16. Why is it dangerous to speak to the Bayen?
17. What is the role of Divya in the film *Mitr, My Friend*?
18. What does the bicycle race symbolize in the film *The Day I Became a Woman*?
19. Why does the young woman drop the 'playthings of her life'?
20. What does 'the uncle's wedding band' symbolize in *Aunt Jennifer's Tiger*?
21. Who are the "categorizers" mentioned in the poem Introduction?

**III. Answer any five of the following in a paragraph not exceeding 100 words. (5X2=10)**

22. Feminine, feminist and female phase.
23. The theme of female subjugation in the poem *She Rose to his Requirements*.
24. Sketch the character of Annette in *Wide Sargasso Sea*.
25. "Ah, a woman's fate..." or 'Oh, three girls...' There is always a silence after these half statements." Explain.
26. Write a short note on Mr. Scott's death and Laura's reaction.
27. *Bayen* is a play which focuses on the marginalization of women by labeling them as witches. Explain.

28. Indian-ness in the film *Mitr, My Friend*.

**IV. Answer two of the following in not more than 300 words.(4X2=8)**

29. *The Day I Became a Woman* is a parable of three stages in the lives of Iranian women. Elucidate.

30. Kamala Das criticizes the institution of marriage which provides man with the legal right to commit marital rape on his teenage wife. Explain with respect to the poem *Introduction*.

31. How does Virginia Woolf analyze the relationship between women and literature through the extract Shakespeare's sister?

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