



KAMARAJ COLLEGE

SELF FINANCING COURSES

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STUDY MATERIAL FOR B.A. ENGLISH

SHAKESPEARE

VI - SEMESTER



ACADEMIC YEAR 2022 - 2023

PREPARED,

BY

DEPARTMENT OF B.A. ENGLISH (SF)

KAMARAJ COLLEGE,

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SHAKESPEARE



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Unit I

SONNETS – 18 “SHALL I COMPARE THEE TO A SUMMER'S DAY”

This is one of the most famous of all the sonnets, justifiably so. But it would be a mistake to take it entirely in isolation, for it links in with so many of the other sonnets through the themes of the descriptive power of verse; the ability of the poet to depict the fair youth adequately, or not; and the immortality conveyed through being hymned in these 'eternal lines'. It is noticeable that here the poet is full of confidence that his verse will live as long as there are people drawing breath upon the earth, whereas later he apologises for his poor wit and his humble lines which are inadequate to encompass all the youth's excellence. Now, perhaps in the early days of his love, there is no such self-doubt and the eternal summer of the youth is preserved forever in the poet's lines. The poem also works at a rather curious level of achieving its objective through dispraise. The summer's day is found to be lacking in so many respects (too short, too hot, too rough, sometimes too dingy), but curiously enough one is left with the abiding impression that 'the lovely boy' is in fact like a summer's day at its best, fair, warm, sunny, temperate, one of the darling buds of May, and that all his beauty has been wonderfully highlighted by the comparison.

SONNETS – 29 “WHEN IN DISGRACE WITH FORTUNE AND MEN'S EYES”

It is uncertain whether the state of disgrace referred to in this sonnet is a real or imaginary one, for we have no external evidence of a dip in Shakespeare's fortunes which might have contributed to an attack of melancholy and a subsequent castigation of fate as the perpetrator. It is tempting to relate works to periods in an author's life. Certainly the years in which Shakespeare wrote *Lear* and *Timon of Athens* seem not to have been the happiest of times, but it is almost impossible to correlate particular events in his life, and the possible emotional crises that they could have produced, with publication dates, or known dates of production of his plays.

The sorrow quoted here might be more rhetorical than real, being part of the sonnet tradition, in which many misfortunes contrive to make the lover



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unhappy. It also serves to highlight the great joy which ends the poem, when he thinks once more on his beloved, as in the psalms, and rises above the clouds.

SONNETS – 33 “FULL MANY A GLORIOUS MORNING HAVE I SEEN”

A sonnet that hardly needs an introduction. This and the following record a rejection by the youth of the poet. How serious or real this was we have no means of knowing. Perhaps it is an imaginary interlude in the sonnet sequence. Most readers however take it as having autobiographical content, and that approach is given credence by what appears to be the genuineness of the sorrow, and by the fact that the episode of estrangement, whatever caused it, is dealt with in this and the following three sonnets.

The fact that we are more disposed to believe in the biographical truth of the sonnet because of its beauty of imagery and language is a reality of human nature which cannot be easily dispensed with. It would be disappointing to learn that the youth and the poet's impassioned love for him were mere creations of an idle brain, with deliberate intent to lay a false trail and make truth out of fiction. For while we may allow that a Macbeth and a Hamlet are engendered in the heat of artistic creation, their existence gives us a vicarious experience which is not harmed by their fictional reality. I am not convinced that this is so with the sonnets, for we long to trust their sincerity, and to see what it teaches us of our own capacity for love, what it explores and what it defines. Therefore I always assume what I take to be the standard or Wordsworthian approach (pace Browning), that this is a true record of love, no doubt edited and embellished, “for who could ever be word perfect in such matters?”.

But we have to acknowledge also that the lover's frown and her (in this case his) overcast brow, like the sun clouding over on a fine morning, was also a part of the sonnet tradition. Shakespeare was here making use of that rich tradition, as well as recording in his own inimitable way the feelings of one so cast down by his beloved's disdain.

SONNETS – 104 “TO ME, FAIR FRIEND, YOU NEVER CAN BE OLD”



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Sonnet 104 indicates for the first time that the poet and young man's relationship has gone on for three years. Evoking seasonal imagery from previous sonnets, the poet notes that "Three winters cold . . . three summers' pride, / Three beauteous springs to yellow autumn turned / In process of the seasons I have seen." Only now is the poet willing to question whether the youth's beauty remains as it was "when first your eye I eyed": "So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand, / Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceived." No matter, though, the poet argues in the concluding couplet, if the youth's beauty has deteriorated: No beauty has ever equaled the youth's appearance, nor will anything in the future outshine his lovely visage.



UNIT II

AS YOU LIKE IT

As You Like It is a play with two main plots: there is the conflict between Orlando and his older brother Oliver, and there is the usurpation of the ducal throne by Duke Frederick from his brother Duke Senior. The play opens with Orlando complaining to a servant named Adam about the way Oliver treats him. Oliver, as the eldest brother, has inherited the entire estate from their father, Sir Rowland De Bois. As such, he is in charge of raising his two younger brothers.

This plot is complemented by the fact that Duke Frederick, a younger brother to Duke Senior, has usurped his brother's position. Duke Senior has been banished from the duchy and now lives in the Forest of Ardenne with several other nobles, living off the land and killing the local animals for food. Duke Frederick has a daughter Celia who is very close friends with Duke Senior's daughter Rosalind. As a result, Rosalind is still at court with her cousin when the play begins.

Orlando tells Adam that he is upset because Oliver has refused to educate him or help him become a proper gentleman. Oliver arrives and soon the two brothers are in a fight that Orlando wins by grabbing his brother and choking him. After Orlando leaves, Oliver meets with the Duke's wrestler, Charles, and asks the wrestler to seriously harm Orlando if he chooses to fight him in the wrestling contest the next day. Charles promises to make sure Orlando can never walk again.

Rosalind and Celia, the two respective daughters of Duke Senior and Duke Frederick, are at court talking. Rosalind is depressed that her father has been banished and Celia is trying to cheer her up. A court fool named Touchstone arrives and entertains them with some witty dialogue. Soon thereafter Le Beau, a courtier, informs the women that Charles has already won three wrestling matches that morning. He further tells them that Charles will next wrestle on the spot where they are standing.



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Duke Frederick arrives and is trying to dissuade Orlando from becoming the next victim of Charles' great skill. Orlando refuses and insists on challenging. Rosalind, liking Orlando's looks, asks the Duke if she may try and convince him to not fight. However, she is also unable to stop Orlando. The two men fight and Orlando manages to throw Charles, thereby winning the match. Rosalind is so happy for him that she gives him a necklace to wear. He is speechless and does not know what to say to her.

When Orlando arrives home, he is greeted by Adam who tells him to flee immediately because Oliver has vowed to kill him. Orlando and Adam gather their things and depart for the forest of Ardenne.

Meanwhile Duke Frederick has become fearful of Rosalind's influence over Celia. He meets with her and banishes her as well. Celia is distraught by this and promises to accompany Rosalind into banishment. Rosalind decides to dress as a young man in order to escape detection, and she chooses the name Ganymede. Celia pretends to be Ganymede's sister Aliena, meaning "the estranged one".

Rosalind and Celia convince Touchstone to join them and they arrive in the forest nearly famished. They come across a shepherd named Corin and asks him for food but he tells them he is not allowed to help strangers due to his master's orders. However, Corin admits that his master is trying to sell the land. Rosalind (dressed as Ganymede) offers to buy it and together they go to a shack with Corin.

In the forest the men the Duke Senior presides over spend their time hunting and playing games. One man named Jaques is a melancholy character who disagrees with killing the deer. He spends his time alone and prefers to contemplate how awful his life is. Duke Senior tries to find Jaques because he finds his melancholy friend quite funny to listen to. After much searching the Duke gives up and prepares a large meal for his men. Jaques finally returns to where the Duke and his men are staying and informs them that he met Touchstone the fool in the forest.



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Orlando and Adam reach the forest in a state of exhaustion. Adam is so tired that Orlando is forced to carry the old man on his back. Orlando finally puts Adam down and goes to search for food. He comes across Duke Senior and sees the food that the men are about to eat. Orlando then rushes into the clearing and orders them to stop eating. Duke Senior politely asks him to join them and Orlando gratefully goes to get Adam so they can eat.

Duke Frederick has in the meantime learned about the escape of Celia and Rosalind. He learns that the two women were obsessed by Orlando and concludes that they must have run off with Orlando. Frederick makes Oliver show up at court and demands to know what happened to Orlando. Oliver cannot tell him since Orlando has run away, but Duke Frederick orders Oliver to find his brother and confiscates all of Oliver's land until he does so. Oliver dejectedly prepares to go into the forest in search of Orlando.

Having joined the Duke's men, Orlando now spends his time writing poetry to Rosalind. He carves her name into all the trees and hangs his poems on the tree branches. She comes across the writing and reads some of it. Touchstone also has found the poems and he mocks the poor style in which they are written. Rosalind is embarrassed by the fact that her name is appearing wherever she looks and asks Celia if she knows who is doing this. Celia tells Rosalind that it is Orlando.

At that moment Jaques and Orlando enter, forcing Rosalind and Celia to hide. Jaques urges the younger man to stop putting his poems on all the trees. Rosalind, excited by seeing Orlando again, emerges and greets him. Rosalind informs Orlando that she can cure him of his love. He does not want to be cured, but agrees to try out her remedy. She makes Orlando pretend that she is Rosalind so he may woo her. The joke of course is that she really is Rosalind disguised as Ganymede.

Touchstone has meanwhile fallen in love with a goatherd named Audrey. She and he are about to be married in the forest when Jaques appears. He tells Touchstone to wait a while and tries to convince the court fool not to marry.



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Rosalind and Celia go to a spot where Orlando agreed to meet them the last time they spoke with him. Corin arrives first and tells Rosalind that there are two lovers she should see. She goes with him and watches as Silvius tries to woo Phoebe, a young shepherdess who scorns his love. Rosalind gets fed up with watching them and emerges from her hiding spot. She tells Phoebe that she should be begging a man as kind as Silvius to marry her, "you are not for all markets". Phoebe immediately falls in love with Ganymede in spite of the harsh words that Rosalind is saying to her. After Rosalind leaves, Phoebe and Silvius both suffer from being in love with someone who scorns their love. Phoebe then convinces Silvius to write a poem with her so she can send it to Ganymede.

Rosalind and Celia return to their spot to wait for Orlando who arrives nearly an hour late. Rosalind chides him for his tardiness, accusing him of not really loving her. He now pretends that Ganymede is Rosalind and starts to woo her. Rosalind plays with him a little and tries to teach him the proper way to win her heart. She further tries to make Orlando realize that she is not perfect and will have some flaws when he meets her. They agree to meet again later that day. Celia accuses Rosalind of misusing her sex by playing with Orlando the way she just did.

Rosalind and Celia return to the same spot and wait for Orlando again. He is late for a second time and Silvius arrives first. He presents Ganymede (Rosalind) with a poem from Phoebe, claiming he never helped her write it. Rosalind does not believe him but opens the letter and reads it. Silvius is crushed when he realizes that Phoebe tricked him into delivering a love letter rather than a letter expressing anger at the way Ganymede spoke to her.

Silvius leaves and Oliver arrives with a bloody handkerchief. Oliver first ascertains that Celia and Rosalind are the two people he was sent to find. He then tells them that Orlando has sent the bloody handkerchief along with an excuse for being late.

Oliver tells them that Orlando came across him sleeping under a tree. A snake was curled around Oliver's neck and about to enter his mouth when Orlando scared it off. Next a large lioness emerged and was about to attack Oliver when Orlando started to fight with it. Orlando killed the lion but was



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wounded in the process. Oliver, realizing his younger brother saved his life, immediately recanted his hatred and they were reunited as friends. Oliver hands Rosalind the handkerchief as a sign that Orlando was wounded in the arm and therefore could not come himself.

Rosalind faints after hearing the story and Oliver has to revive her. He is skeptical when she pretends that the faint was only pretend, but agrees to tell Orlando that it was Touchstone and Audrey are still together, wandering around the forest hoping to get married soon. A young man who loves Audrey arrives and is greeted by Touchstone. After exchanging a few pleasant words, Touchstone tells the man to go away and leave Audrey alone. He threatens to kill the man if he should return.

Rosalind meets with Orlando, Silvius, and Phoebe. Phoebe is now in love with Ganymede, Silvius in love with Phoebe, and Orlando in love with Rosalind who is pretending to be Ganymede. Rosalind finally finds a way out of the entire crisis and orders them to all meet her the next day. She promises Orlando that he will marry Rosalind and Silvius that he will marry Phoebe. Rosalind promises Phoebe that she will marry her if Phoebe still wants her at the time of the marriage ceremony the next day. Otherwise, Phoebe must marry Silvius.

Everyone gathers the next day including Duke Senior and his men. Rosalind arrives and makes all of the lover's reaffirm their promises and vows. She and Celia then leave and change back into women. Rosalind reemerges as Rosalind and Celia as Celia. Orlando is overjoyed but Phoebe realizes that she must now marry Silvius. Meanwhile, Celia and Oliver have fallen in love and plan to get married as well. Lastly, Touchstone and Audrey arrive.

Hymen, the god of marriage, performs all four ceremonies. Jaques, the melancholy character, comments that it is like watching the couples be led into Noah's ark two-by-two. In the last moments of the play the brother to both Orlando and Oliver arrives. He informs them all that Duke Frederick met a holy man and converted to a religious life. In the process Duke Frederick returned the duchy to his brother Duke Senior and abdicated his position. This happy ending means that Orlando is the heir to the duchy, Oliver retains his estate, and Duke Senior returns to his former position. Rosalind ends the play by asking the audience to favor the actors with applause.



As You Like It Character List

Duke Senior

The elder brother to Duke Frederick, he is living in banishment since his brother usurped his throne. Duke Senior inhabits a cave in the forest of Ardenne where he spends time with other noblemen who have joined him. He is described as living like Robin Hood with his band of men.

Rosalind

The daughter of Duke Senior, she still lives with her cousin Celia and Duke Frederick at the beginning of the play. After Duke Frederick banishes her, she disguises herself as a young man named Ganymede and flees to the forest of Ardenne. She is in love with Orlando and marries him at the end.



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UNIT III

OTHELLO

Othello begins in the city of Venice, at night. Iago, an ensign in the Venetian army, is bitter about being passed over for lieutenant in favor of Cassio. Iago tells Roderigo that he serves Othello, the Moor who is the army's general, only in order to serve himself. Iago knows that Desdemona, the daughter of nobleman Brabantio, has run off to marry Othello. He also knows that Roderigo lusts after Desdemona, so Iago manipulates him into alerting Venice. Iago's duplicity arises even in the first scene.

Learning of his daughter's elopement, Brabantio panics, and calls for people to try and find Desdemona. Iago joins Othello, and tells him about Roderigo's betrayal of the news of his marriage to Brabantio. Cassio comes at last, as do Roderigo and Brabantio; Brabantio is very angry, swearing to the men assembled that Othello must have bewitched his daughter. Brabantio's grievance is denied, and Desdemona will indeed stay with Othello. However, Othello is called away to Cyprus, to defend it from an invasion of Turks. Iago assures an upset Roderigo that the match between Othello and Desdemona will not last long, and at any time, Desdemona could come rushing to him. Iago decides to break up the couple, using Roderigo as his pawn.

A terrible storm strikes Cyprus, and the Turkish fleet is broken apart by the storm. While Othello is still at sea, Cassio arrives. Iago, Desdemona and Emilia follow in another ship. Somehow, Iago and Desdemona enter into an argument about Iago's low opinion of women. Othello arrives at last, and is very glad to see Desdemona.

Iago speaks to Roderigo, convincing him that Desdemona will stray from Othello, as she has already done with Cassio. He convinces Roderigo to attack Cassio that night, as he plans to visit mischief on both Othello and Cassio.

While on watch together, Iago convinces Cassio to drink, knowing he can't hold his liquor. Iago stokes a fight between Cassio and Roderigo. The



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ruckus wakes Othello. Iago fills him in, making sure to fictionalize his part in the fight.

Cassio laments that he has lost his reputation along with his rank. Iago tries to convince him that if he talks to Desdemona, maybe he can get her to vouch for him with Othello. Iago knows he will be able to turn their friendship against them both.

Desdemona pledges to do everything she can to persuade her husband to restore Cassio's rank. Cassio leaves just as Othello enters because he does not wish for a confrontation. Iago seizes on this opportunity to play on Othello's insecurities, making Cassio's exit seem guilty and incriminating. Soon, Othello begins to doubt his wife's fidelity.

Desdemona drops the handkerchief that Othello gave her on their honeymoon. Emilia gives it to Iago, who then tells Othello that Cassio has the handkerchief. Othello is incensed to hear that Desdemona would give away something so valuable, and comes to believe that Desdemona is guilty. Othello then swears revenge.

Desdemona tells Cassio and Iago that Othello has been acting strangely, and Iago goes to look for him, feigning concern. Emilia thinks that Othello's change has something to do with his jealous nature. Cassio asks Bianca to copy the handkerchief that he found in his room; Cassio has no idea it is Desdemona's.

Othello tries not to condemn Desdemona too harshly. But, soon, Iago whips Othello into an even greater fury through mere insinuation. Iago calls Cassio in, while Othello hides; Iago speaks to Cassio of Bianca, but Othello, in his disturbed state, believes that Cassio is talking of Desdemona. Convinced of her infidelity, Othello is resolved to kill Desdemona himself, and charges Iago with murdering Cassio.

When Desdemona mentions Cassio in front of nobleman Lodovico, Othello becomes very angry and slaps her. Othello questions Emilia about Desdemona's guilt, and she swears that Desdemona is pure and true. Emilia



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thinks that someone has manipulated Othello, however, Iago is there to dispel this opinion.

Iago comes across Roderigo; he is not pleased that Iago has failed to deliver on his promises regarding Desdemona. Iago quiets him by making him believe that if he kills Cassio, then he will win Desdemona; Roderigo decides to go along with it, but Iago is coming dangerously close to being revealed. Desdemona knows that she will die soon; she sings a song of sadness and resignation, and decides to give herself to her fate.

Spurred on by Iago, Roderigo and Cassio fight, and both are injured badly. Iago enters, pretending that he knows nothing of the scuffle; Gratiano and Lodovico also stumble upon the scene. Roderigo is still alive, so Iago feigns a quarrel, and finishes him off. Bianca comes by, and sees Cassio wounded; Iago makes some remark to implicate her. Cassio is carried away.

Othello enters Desdemona's room while she is asleep. Desdemona awakens and pleads with Othello not to kill her, but he begins to smother her. Emilia knocks and Othello lets her in. He tries to conceal Desdemona, who he thinks is already dead. Emilia brings the news of Roderigo's death, and Cassio's wounding.

Emilia soon finds out that Desdemona is nearly dead, by Othello's hand; Desdemona speaks her last words, and then Emilia pounces on Othello. Othello is not convinced of his folly until Iago confesses his part, and Cassio speaks of the use of the handkerchief. Othello is overcome with grief.

Iago fatally stabs Emilia for uncovering his plots. The Venetian nobles reveal that Brabantio, Desdemona's father, is dead, and thus cannot be grieved by this tragedy now. Othello stabs Iago when he is brought back in; Othello then tells all present to remember him how he is, and kills himself.

Cassio becomes the temporary leader of the troops at Cyprus, and Lodovico and Gratiano are to carry the news of the tragedy back to Venice.



Characters:

Othello

A Moor and an officer in the Venetian military. He falls in love with, and marries, the delicate Desdemona though he is middle-aged, and she is still young. Othello is bold and a good warrior, but he is a good man undone by his two main failings - jealousy and pride. Although Othello is very eloquent, he believes his manners and words are both rough.

Desdemona

Othello's wife, a young Venetian woman of high birth and good breeding. Desdemona is almost overly virtuous, which causes her to feel that she must defend Cassio, and speak in a public sphere when necessary. She is stronger than Othello believes her to be, and is not the private, withdrawn, meek woman he wish she were.

Cassio

Othello's lieutenant, though he has little field experience. Cassio is a smooth-talking Venetian courtier, the opposite of Othello in many respects, which is why Othello admires him. Othello is led to believe that Cassio has had an affair with his wife, though Cassio has only honorable intentions toward Desdemona.

Iago

Othello's ensign who was passed over for the lieutenant position in favor of Cassio. Iago is young and treacherous; he is a villain from the start, and though he cites his wounded pride and Othello's alleged infidelity with his wife Emilia, his actions are without justification. He is immoral, but very perceptive, keen, and able to manipulate people into falling for his deceptions.

Emilia

Iago's wife and Desdemona's handmaiden. She is entrusted with bringing people into Desdemona's presence, staying with her at all times, etc. Emilia is not aware of her husband's machinations, or his darker qualities. She remains loyal to Desdemona above all others, although she unwittingly plays a key part in Iago's treachery.



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UNIT- IV

JULIUS CAESAR

Julius Caesar opens with a scene of class conflict, the plebeians versus the tribunes. The plebeians are celebrating Caesar's victory over the sons of Pompey, one of the former leaders of Rome. The tribunes verbally attack the masses for their fickleness in celebrating the defeat of a man who was once their leader.

Caesar enters Rome accompanied by his supporters and a throng of citizens. It is the feast of Lupercalia, February 15, a day when two men run through the street and strike those they meet with goatskin thongs. Caesar orders Mark Antony to strike his wife Calpurnia in order to cure her barrenness.

A soothsayer calls out to Caesar as he passes and warns him against the ides of March, March 15. Caesar ignores the man and dismisses him as a dreamer. Upon seeing Cassius, Caesar informs Antony that he would rather be surrounded by men who are fat and happy than thin men like Cassius. He is worried that Cassius is dangerous because he "thinks too much". Antony tells him not to worry about Cassius.

Meanwhile, Brutus and Cassius meet and talk about how much power Caesar has gained. During their conversation they are interrupted three times by cheers from the crowd. Cassius informs Brutus that he is forming a plot against Caesar and wants Brutus to join it. Brutus tells him he cannot commit to anything immediately. Casca soon joins them, and informs them that the cheers they heard were Caesar turning down the crown. According to Casca, Antony offered Caesar a crown three times, and three times he refused it.

Casca meets with Cicero and tells the orator that there are many strange things happening in Rome that night, such as a lion in the streets and an owl screeching during the day. Cicero tells him that men construe omens the way they see fit. Cassius eventually arrives and learns from Casca that the senators are planning on making Caesar a king the next morning. He starts to tell Casca about the plot to kill Caesar, but Cinna shows up and interrupts him. He hands



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Cinna some letters to plant anonymously in Brutus' home and invites Casca to dinner that night in order to convince him to join the conspiracy.

Brutus discovers the letters from Cinna, not knowing who wrote them. He reads one of the letters and interprets it as a request to prevent Caesar from seizing power. Brutus attributes the letter to Rome as a whole, saying, "O Rome, I make thee promise", implying that he will carry out what he perceives as the will of the Roman people.

Brutus meets with Cassius and the other conspirators and shakes all their hands, agreeing to join their plot. He convinces them to only kill Caesar, and not his most loyal friend Antony, because he does not want them to "seem too bloody". After the other men leave, Brutus is unable to sleep. His wife Portia finds him awake and begs him to tell her what is troubling him. At first he refuses, but after she stabs herself in the thigh to prove her strength and ability to keep a secret he agrees to inform her.

Meanwhile, Caesar's wife Calpurnia dreamt of a statue of Caesar bleeding from a hundred wounds. Caesar, naturally superstitious, orders the priests to kill an animal and read the entrails to see if he should go to the Senate that day. The priests tell him that the animal did not have a heart, a very bad sign. However, Decius, one of the conspirators, arrives and reinterprets Calpurnia's dream to mean that all of Rome sucked the reviving blood of Caesar for its benefit. Caesar finally agrees with him that it is laughable to stay home on account of a dream. The other conspirators, including Brutus and Cassius, arrive at his house to escort him to the Senate House.

On the way to the Senate House Caesar is approached by the same soothsayer that previously warned him about the ides of March. He again refuses to listen to the man and continues. A man named Artemidorus then comes up to him and tries to give him a letter revealing the entire conspiracy, but Decius cleverly tells Caesar the Trebonius has a suit he would like Caesar to read instead. Caesar refuses to look at what Artemidorus offers him on account of its being personal. He explains, "What touches us ourself shall be last served"

The conspirators arrive at the Senate House and Caesar assumes his seat. A man named Metellus kneels before him and petitions to have his banished



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brother returned to Rome. Caesar refuses, but is surprised when Brutus and then Cassius come forward and plead for the brother as well. However, he continues to refuse to change the sentence even as all of the conspirators gather around him. On Casca's comment, "Speak hands for me" the group attacks Caesar, stabbing him to death.

The conspirators, now led by Brutus and Cassius, dip their hands in Caesar's blood and prepare to run to the streets crying out "peace, freedom, and liberty". Antony arrives and begs them to let him take the body and give Caesar a public eulogy. Brutus agrees, overriding Cassius' misgivings about allowing Antony to speak. They move out into the streets of Rome and Cassius and Brutus split up in order to speak to the plebeians.

Brutus defends his murder of Caesar on the grounds that he was removing a tyrant who was destroying the freedom of all Romans. He ends his speech by asking the crowd if they want him to commit suicide for what he has done, to which they reply, "Live, Brutus, live, live!". Next, Brutus allows Antony to speak and returns home.

Antony takes full advantage of his speech and informs the crowd that Caesar was a selfless man who cared for Rome above everything. The highlight of his speech is when he pulls out Caesar's will and reads from it, telling the citizens that Caesar has given every Roman a part of his inheritance, in both land and dachmas. The plebeians now believe Caesar to have been great and good, seize his body and vow revenge upon Brutus and the rest of the conspirators. Their rioting develops into pure anarchy. Antony comments that he has done his part in creating social upheaval, and now must wait to see what happens.

Brutus and Cassius are forced to flee the city, and in the meantime the young general Octavius Caesar, loyal to Julius Caesar, arrives and allies with Antony. He, Antony and Lepidus form a second triumvirate and prepare to purge the city of anyone who is against them. They map out their plans to scour the city and make a list of names of those whom they wish to kill, including relatives and friends.



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Cassius and Brutus set up camp in Sardis, located in what is now western Turkey. Cassius arrives with his army at the campsite where Brutus is waiting for him, but is furious with Brutus for having ignored letters he sent asking Brutus to release a prisoner. Brutus has instead punished the man for accepting bribes, an act which provided one of the reasons for Caesar's murder. Cassius and Brutus argue until Cassius, in exasperation, pulls out his dagger and asks Brutus to kill him if he hates so. Of course, Brutus refuses. The two men embrace and forget their differences.

Next, Brutus sadly informs Cassius that his wife Portia is dead. She swallowed live embers after Antony and Octavius assumed power. When two underlings enter the tent, Brutus stops talking about Portia and focuses on the military matters at hand. In fact, when one of the men asks him about his wife, he denies having heard any news about her. Brutus convinces Cassius during the strategy meeting that it would be best for them to march to where Antony and Octavius are located in Philippi in order to defeat them before they get too strong, gaining additional soldiers on their march. Cassius reluctantly agrees to Brutus' plan and departs for the night.

Brutus calls some men into his tent in case he needs to send them away as messengers during the night. He makes them go to sleep. He himself stays up reading, but he is disturbed by the ghost of Julius Caesar who appears. The ghost tells Brutus that he is his "evil spirit" and that he will be on the battlefield at Philippi. Brutus is so shaken by this image that he wakes up all the men in his tent and sends them to Cassius with orders that Cassius should depart before him the next morning.

On the battlefield at Philippi, Antony and Octavius agree to their battle plans. They meet with Brutus and Cassius before entering battle, but only exchange insults. Battle is imminent. All four men return to their armies to prepare for war.

In the middle of the battle Brutus sees a chance to destroy Octavius' army and rushes away to attack it. He leaves Cassius behind. Cassius, less militarily adept, quickly begins losing to Antony's forces. Even worse, Pindarus misleads him, telling him Titinius has been taken by the enemy near Cassius' tents. Upon



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hearing this news, Cassius orders Pindarus to kill him. After completing the task, Pindarus flees. Brutus arrives, finds his friend dead and remarks, "O Julius Caesar, thou art mighty yet".

Cato is quickly killed, and Lucillius, a man pretending to be Brutus, is soon captured and handed over to Antony. Antony recognizes him and tells his soldiers to keep attacking until they capture Brutus. Brutus, now almost completely defeated, begs several of his soldiers to kill him. They all refuse and leave him rather than carrying his blood on their hands. Finally, Strato accepts Brutus' request. Brutus runs into his sword as Strato holds it for him, killing himself.

Antony and Octavius arrive and find Brutus dead upon the ground. Antony remarks, "This was the noblest Roman of them all". Octavius, unemotional through all of the carnage, merely ends the play with the lines, "So call the field to rest, and let's away / to part the glories of this happy day".

Characters

Julius Caesar

The titular character. When the play starts, he is the only man capable of giving orders and ensuring they are carried out. Caesar fails to understand the many signs indicating a plot against him and is killed by a conspiracy led by Cassius and Brutus. His ghost haunts the remainder of the play, and his name is invoked by both Cassius and Brutus before they commit suicide in the final act.

Marcus Brutus

A noble Roman opposed to Caesar. He is an idealist who upholds honor above everything else. Brutus only agrees to kill Caesar after becoming convinced that it is necessary for the Roman Republic. He dies on the battlefield by impaling himself on his own sword.



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Mark Antony

A ruler of Rome after Caesar's death. Antony is Caesar's friend from the beginning and he gives a rousing speech to the masses which causes riots in Rome. Brutus and Cassius are chased out of the city in the ensuing chaos, and Antony forms the second triumvirate with Octavius and Lepidus.

Octavius Caesar

A ruler of Rome after Caesar's death. Octavius is a young general who joins the second triumvirate. He and Antony fight against Brutus and Cassius; he historically becomes the future emperor of Rome.



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UNIT – V

THE ELIZABETHAN STAGE

During the early part of the 16th century, there were two distinct types of theatre in England. One was represented by small groups of professional actors who performed in halls, inns, or marketplaces. The location of a play was established by the words and gestures of the actors. As in the commedia dell'arte, these localities had little significance. The second type of theatre, found in the London area, was made up of amateurs, usually university students, performing for the royal court and assorted gentry. The audience and the actors were educated, acquainted with the classics, and knowledgeable about theatre in other countries, particularly France. The stage was probably set with buildings made of laths, covered with painted canvas, with cloud borders masking the upper part of the acting area.

The significant achievement of the Elizabethan stage was connected with the theatres of professional acting groups, not the court theatre. During the second half of the 16th century, as they became successful, the troupes no longer needed to remain itinerant. In 1576 the first permanent public theatre, called simply the Theatre, was erected by the actor James Burbage. The building boom continued until the end of the century; the Globe, where Shakespeare's plays were first performed, was built in 1599 with lumber from the demolished Theatre.

ELIZABETHAN AUDIENCES:

What a treat the theater was for the people of Elizabethan London. William Shakespeare, greatest playwright has written Histories, Tragedies and Comedies.

The popularity of the theater reached people from all walks of life - from Royalty to the Nobility and the Commoners. What was a day out at the Elizabethan theater like for the audiences? Where did they sit? How much did it



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cost? What did they eat? What were the amenities like? How did illiterate members of the public know what plays were being presented?

- London Theatregoers - The London playgoers loved the Theatre. It was their opportunity to see the great plays and each other.
- Elizabethan Audience Capacity - the theatres could hold 1500 people and this number expanded to 3000 with the people who crowded outside the theatres
- **Royalty** - Queen Elizabeth I loved watching plays but these were generally performed in indoor playhouses for her pleasure. She would not have attended the plays performed at the amphitheatres
- **The Nobles** - Nobles would have paid for the better seats in the Lord's rooms paying 5d for the privilege
- **The Commoners called the Groundlings** or Stinkards would have stood in the theatre pit and paid 1d entrance fee. They put 1 penny in a box at the theatre entrance - hence the term 'Box Office'
- **The Box Office** - the prices were determined by the comfort of the seats
- Special effects were also a spectacular addition at the Elizabethan theaters thrilling the audiences with smoke effects, the firing of a real canon, fireworks (for dramatic battle scenes) and spectacular 'flying' entrances from the rigging in the 'heavens'.
- The Facilities ranged from basic to non-existent.
- **Flags, Crests and Mottos - Advertising** - Flags were erected on the day of the performance which sometimes displayed a picture advertising the next play to be performed. Colour coding was used to advertise the type of play to be performed - a black flag meant a tragedy, white a comedy and red a history. A crest displaying Hercules bearing the globe on his shoulders together with the motto "Totus mundus agit histrionem" (the whole world is a playhouse) was displayed above the main entrance of the Globe Theater. This phrase was slightly re-worded in the William Shakespeare play As You Like It - "All the world's a stage" which was performed at the Globe Theater.

FOOLS AND CLOWNS

Fools, or jesters, would have been known by many of those in Shakespeare's contemporary audience, as they were often kept by the royal



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court, and some rich households, to act as entertainers. They were male, as were the actors, and would wear flamboyant clothing and carry a ‘bauble’ or carved stick, to use in their jokes. They were often allowed to get away with satirical comments that others in the court could not, but they would still have to be careful (as we see in *King Lear*, when the fool is whipped for going too far).

Shakespeare utilizes these characters of fools, also sometimes equated with the word ‘clown’, throughout his plays to a variety of differing ends, but in general terms he most often portrays two distinct types of fool: those that were wise and intelligent, and those that were ‘natural fools’ (idiots that were there for light entertainment). You can see some of Shakespeare’s wise fools in *Touchstone* (from *As You Like It*, who was Shakespeare’s first use of a fool), *Feste* (from *Twelfth Night*), and *Lear’s Fool* (from *King Lear*), whereas some of his ‘natural fools’ include *Lance* (from *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*), *Bottom* (from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*), and *Dogberry* (from *Much Ado About Nothing*).

WOMEN IN SHAKESPEARE

Shakespeare’s presentation of women in his plays demonstrates his feelings about women and their roles in society. As our guide to the types of female roles in Shakespeare demonstrates, women had less freedom than their male counterparts in Shakespeare’s time. It’s well known that women weren’t allowed on the stage during Shakespeare’s active years. All of his famous female roles like *Desdemona* and *Juliette* were in fact once played by men.

Women in Shakespeare’s plays are often underestimated. While they were clearly restricted by their social roles, the Bard showed how women could influence the men around them. His plays showed the difference in expectations between upper and lower class women of the time. High-born women are presented as “possessions” to be passed between fathers and husbands. In most cases, they are socially restricted and unable to explore the world around them without chaperones. Many of these women were coerced and controlled by the men in their lives. Lower-born women were allowed more freedom in their actions precisely because they are seen as less important than higher-born women.



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Broadly speaking, female characters that sexually aware are more likely to be lower class. Shakespeare allows them more freedom to explore their sexuality, perhaps because their low-status renders them socially harmless. However, women are never totally free in Shakespeare's plays: if not owned by husbands and fathers, many low-class characters are owned by their employers. Sexuality or desirability can also lead to deadly consequences for Shakespeare's women. Desdemona chose to follow her passion and defied her father to marry Othello. This passion is later used against her when the villainous Iago convinces her husband that if she would lie to her father she would lie to him as well. Wrongfully accused of adultery, nothing Desdemona says or does is enough to convince Othello of her faithfulness. Her boldness in choosing to defy her father ultimately leads to her death at the hands of her jealous lover.

Sexual violence also plays a major role in some of the Bards work. This is seen most notably in Titus Andronicus where the character Lavinia is violently raped and mutilated. Her attackers cut out her tongue and remove her hands to prevent her from naming her attackers. After she is able to write their names her father then kills her to preserve her honor.

Women in power are treated with distrust by Shakespeare. They have questionable morals. For example, Gertrude in Hamlet marries her husband's murdering brother and Lady Macbeth coerces her husband into murder. These women show a lust for power that's often on par or surpassing that of the men around them. Lady Macbeth especially is seen as a conflict between the masculine and feminine. She forgoes normal "feminine" traits like motherly compassion for more "masculine" ones like ambition, which leads to the ruin of her family. For these women, the penalty for their scheming ways is normally death.

SUPERNATURAL ELEMENTS IN SHAKESPEARE

Even in Shakespeare's day people were extremely superstitious. During the Elizabethan era people blamed unexplainable events such as the Bubonic Plague, unexplained deaths or unpleasant illnesses - as the work of witches. Some of Shakespeare's most well-known plays such as Macbeth,



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Hamlet, The Tempest and Julius Caesar were very much influenced by witchcraft and the supernatural. He often used ghosts, witches, floating daggers and prophetic apparitions throughout his plays.

Due to the widespread obsession with the supernatural, Shakespeare was compelled as a writer to adopt the views of the majority. The people who crowded the theaters and paid the money demanded fairies, ghost, and witches, and all the commonly held beliefs regarding them. So Shakespeare packed his works with popular beliefs about the supernatural.

Magic and supernatural beings occur in one-fourth of Shakespeare's comedies, 60% of his plays, and 60% of his tragedies (Hoffman67). Witches appear in Macbeth, a ghost appears in Hamlet, and fairies appear in A Mid-Summer Nights Dream. In addition, magic cures are given in All Is Well, evil curses are chanted in Richard III, and prophecies are told in Julius Caesar. Most of Shakespeares works contain some form of the supernatural. Shakespeare, however, was too great of a writer to lower the quality of his work to satisfy the taste of the Elizabethans. Although the court sometimes pressured his into including some form of the supernatural in his plays that had nothing to do with his themes, he rarely allowed Elizabethans demands to affect his own conception of how the supernatural should be used.

Shakespeare was always ready to accept the beliefs of the Elizabethans. His ready acceptance was also typical of the young Shakespeares attitude toward life overall. In his years of optimism, he wrote his early plays. However, Shakespeares happy enthusiasm didnt last. Schiller believes that when he left Stratford and moved to London, He entered a new environment filled with scholars (49). As he developed as a thinker and a philosopher, he lost his cheerfulness and joy of being alive which are so apparent in his early works. The passage of years replaced it with seriousness and later with pessimism. Shakespeare, however, didnt end his days in mental gloom. When he retired again to the peace and quietness of Stratford when he had become rich and famous, he then returned to the enthusiasm and hopefulness of his youth (Schiller 49).



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William Shakespeare was a genius. Not only was he able to use the supernatural in his works to the fullest extent of Elizabethan belief, but he was skillful at molding the supernatural into remarkable assets to his plot. However, Elizabethan beliefs weren't the only influences that shoved their way into the meanings of his plays. His whole outlook on life also played a major part in the way that he shaped the supernatural. Not only does his use of supernatural elements within his works reveal the Elizabethans' obsession with mythical beliefs, but it also reveals his attitude toward these beliefs at different points of his career. His remarkable handling of the supernatural is one reason why William Shakespeare is generally regarded as the greatest writer of English literature.