The Islamia University of Bahawapur

Department of English

Course Material Bundle for MA English (Language and Literature) 2nd semester, Section B

Classical Drama II

Course Instructor: Dr. M. Ayub Jajja

**Course Outline:** The Merchant of Venice, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Twelfth Night, The School for Scandal, The Way of the World

**Important Topics:** (i)The Merchant of Venice as a tragi-comedy/as a romantic comedy(ii) The character of Shylock (iii) The character of Portia (iv) A Midsummer Night’s Dream as a romantic comedy (v)Character of Hermia (vi) Twelfth Night as a romantic comedy( vii) Character of Olivia (viii) The School for Scandal as a comedy of manners (ix) The Way of the World as a comedy of manners.

**Recommended Supplementary Reference Books and Articles:** A Marxist Study of Shakespeare’s Comedies by Eliot Krieger, Macmillan. Shakespeare and the Nature Women by Juliet Dusinberre, Palgrave. “Women in Shakespearean Comedies: A Feminist Perspective” by Muhammad Ayub Jajja,2013, Vol.16 (2) Journal of Educational Research IUB,pp. 34-44

The Merchant of Venice Text:

<http://shakespeare.mit.edu/merchant/full.html>

Reference Articles:

https://scholarcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi? article=1064&context=etd

http://www.worldscientificnews.com/wp-content/uploads/ 2016/01/WSN-50-2016-186-196.pdf

<https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2012/04/merc-a14.html>

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/whyscholars-still-debate-whether-or-not-shakespearesmerchant-venice-anti-semitic-180958867/>

http://www.ajms.co.in/sites/ajms2015/index.php/ajms/ article/view/2395

https://scholarship.law.nd.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi? article=1942&context=ndlr

https://uh.edu/honors/Programs-Minors/honors-and-theschools/houston-teachers-institute/curriculum-units/pdfs/ 2002/shakespeares-characters/green-02- shakespeare.pdf

The Merchant of Venice Drama:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cRrQ5kaLHNc>

Midsummer Night’s Dream Text:

<http://shakespeare.mit.edu/midsummer/full.html>

Reference Articles:

https://kb.gcsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi? article=1057&context=thecorinthian

http://www.english-literature.uni-bayreuth.de/en/teaching/ documents/courses/Essay-MND-11.pdf

https://www.ukessays.com/essays/english-literature/ midsummer-nights-dream-shakespeare.php

<https://www.folger.edu/midsummer-nights-dream>

Twelfth Night Reference Articles/Slides:

<http://www.chipspage.com/2121/TwelfthNight.html>

http://toto.lib.unca.edu/sr\_papers/literature\_sr/ srliterature\_2006/crowder\_stephen\_travis.pdf

<https://study.com/academy/lesson/twelfth-night-themesquotes-and-cross-dressing-characters.html>

<https://www.josbd.com/643-2/>

<https://www.slideshare.net/AbubakrAzam/features-oftwelfth-night-as-a-comedy>

School for Scandal Book:

<http://pinkmonkey.com/dl/library1/book1659.pdf>

Reference Articles:

<https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-school-for-scandal#context>

<https://lit.mit.edu/wp-content/uploads/jPicker-4Disturbing.pdf>

<http://www.rjelal.com/5.1.17/162-164%20KRISHMA.pdf>

https://www.academia.edu/9529737/ Study\_Guide\_for\_Richard\_Sheridans\_SCHOOL\_FOR\_SCANDAL\_1777\_

<https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007%2F978-1-349-08301-5_4>

The Way of the World:

<http://freehelpstoenglishliterature.blogspot.com/2007/11/on-way-ofworld.html>

<https://www.sinifogretmenim.com/odev-arastirmalari/14103-williamcongreve-and-the-way-of-the-world-as-a-restoration-comedy.html>

https://www.academia.edu/14210841/ SEMINAR\_PAPER\_TITLE\_A\_CRITIQUE\_OF\_WOMEN\_CHARACTERS\_IN\_CONGREV ES\_THE\_WAY\_OF\_THE\_WORLD

https://www.academia.edu/9360141/ The\_Way\_of\_the\_World\_as\_a\_Restoration\_Play\_Introduction

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/2873172?readnow=1&seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents>

<http://artsalive.ca/pdf/eth/activities/the_way_of_the_world_guide.pdf>

<https://www.englitmail.com/2016/12/the-way-of-world-reflectssocial-life.html>

Way of the World Presentation:

https://www.slideshare.net/indranil49/the-way-of-the-world

**One Consolidated Final Term Exam:** There will be a compulsory question of 20 marks of critical explanation of five passages. There will be Four more subjective questions.

**Set of Lecture Notes Per Topic. Topic (1) The Merchant of Venice as a Tragi-Comedy/ The Merchant of Venice as a Romantic Comedy:** (i) Antonio is the richest merchant of Venice, which is the primary world(the real world) of the play(ii) When the play opens, Antonio is depressed(melancholy) without any apparent reason, “In sooth I know not why I am so sad” .(iii) His friends offer their explanations for this and try to amuse him (iv) Bassanio, Antonio’s best friend, shares his plan of going to Belmont (the secondary world of the play) to try his luck for the hand of Portia, “In Belmont is a lady richly left, and she is fair, and of wondrous virtues”. (v) Anyone who chooses the box, with a picture of Portia in it, out of the three, is to marry her.(vi) She is not happy with this arrangement, “O me the word choose! I may neither choose who I would, nor refuse who I dislike, so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father”. (vii)Portia is a dream girl. She is beautiful, rich and virtuous. (viii) Bassanio hopes to win the lottery so that he can pay his debts to Antonio from the fortune of Portia and then live in style off the wealth of Portia for the rest of his life. Bassanio knows that Portia loves him, “sometimes from her eyes I did receive fair speechless messages”. Antonio does not have the ready cash of three thousand ducts to meet the need of Bassanio. (viii) Antonio pledges his body to Shylock, the money lender, and Bassanio goes to Belmont. Of all the princes and knights, Bassanio wins the box with the picture of Portia in it, because of the romantic love of Portia for Bassanio, “Now he goes with no less presence but with much more love than young Alcides, when he did redeem the virgin tribute, paid by howling Troy. I stand for sacrifice… go Hercules, live thou I live”. (ix) He is married to Portia. Antonio fails to return the borrowed money to Shylock in time. (x) Shylock demands the penalty, a pound of flesh, from close to Antonio’s heart. (xi)Antonio is feared to die as a result. Shylock does not listen to anyone. (xii) Portia comes from Belmont disguised as a lawyer, pleads the case of Antonio in the court of Duke. Portia saves Antonio and inflicts a very heavy penalty upon Shylock and also forces Shylock to become a Christian. There are two more love marriages in the play. (xiii) The funny character of Launcelot and the ring episode add to the comic colour of the comedy. (xiv) These three love marriages and the happy ending of play makes it a romantic comedy. (xv) The opening sadness, the tense trial scene and severe punishment against Shylock make the play a mixture of tragedy and comedy.

**Notes/Points for The Character of Portia: Topic No.(2):** (i) She is unhappy and feels miserable for restrictions imposed upon her by her dead father regarding her marriage, , “O me the word choose! I may neither choose who I would, nor refuse who I dislike, so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father”. (ii) She does not always do what she says. She says making fun of people is not good, but actually makes fun of everyone on one pretext or the other. She delivers a long speech in favour of mercy, but does not show any mercy to Shylock. (iii) She is represented as a sovereign and fully developed human being. She loves Bassanio and is fully determined to marry him and finds a way to achieve this. (iv).She is very resourceful and intelligent. She succeeds where everyone else has failed. She is the deliverer and rescuer of Antonio. (v) In spite of her extra-ordinary qualities, she has the fullest possible respect and regard for her husband Bassanio. (vi) She punishes Shylock (vii) She is very modest and is not conscious of either her looks or wealth (viii) She is witty and has a sense of humour, which is revealed through the ring episode. (ix) She is very generous and large hearted. (x) She is very virtuous.

**Notes/Points for A Midsummer Night’s Dream as a Romantic Comedy: Topic (3):** (i) Hermia’s father, Egeus, wants her to marry Demetrius. He is very disturbed at this and makes a complaint to the duke, “full of vexation come I, with complaint against my child”. (ii) Hermia loves Lysander and refuses to obey her father. (iii) The punishment for a daughter who disobeys her father in a patriarchal culture( the primary world) is very severe, “I beg the ancient privilege of Athens: as she is mine, I may dispose of her; which shall be either to this gentleman, or to her death”. (iv) The duke of the city, Theseus, tries to persuade Hermia, “To you your father should be as a god: one that composed your beauties, yea, and one to whom you are but as a form in wax, by him imprinted, and within his power to leave the figure, or disfigure it”. ( v ) Hermia is fully resolved to marry Lysander, “So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord, ere I will yield my virgin patent up unto his lordship whose yoke my soul consents not to give sovereignty”. (vi) They plan to run away from the city, “the lunatic, the lover and the poet are of imagination all compact”. (vii) At night they break their journey in a forest ( the secondary world) ( viii) Demetrius and her ex-beloved, Helena, also come to the same forest (ix) Puck, a supernatural being plays magic tricks upon them (x) All problems are resolved, Demetrius marries Helena and Lysander marries Hermia. (xi) Theseus marries Hippolyta. Oberon and Titania are reconciled. (xii) A group of actors provide fun and laughter.(xiii) Everybody is happy.

**Notes/ Points for Topic (4) Twelfth Night as a Romantic Comedy:** (i) Duke Orsino, a true hero, falls in love with Olivia. (ii) Olivia does not love him back in spite of his greatness, “I cannot love him, yet I suppose him virtuous, know him noble, of great estate, of fresh and stainless youth; in voices well divulged, free, learned, and valiant, and in dimension, and shape of nature, a gracious person”. (iii)The unreciprocated love is unbearable for Orsino,“O, when mine eyes did see Olivia first, me thought she purged the air of pestilence; that instant was I turned into a hart, and my desires, like fell and cruel hounds, ever since pursue me”. (iv) Olivia cannot reciprocate her love because she is mourning the death of her brother, “the element itself, till seven years heat, shall not behold her face at ample view; but like a cloistress she will veiled walk, and water once a day her chamber round with eye-offending brine”. (v) A ship is wrecked off the coast of Illyria, a brother and sister, who are identical twins, unaware of each other, survive and come to Illyria. Viola, disguised as Cesario, comes to the court of Orsino and joins the service of the duke. (vi) She falls in love with Orsino at first sight (vii) Orsino sends her as his new messenger of love to Olivia, “Get the to yond same sovereign cruelty, tell her my love, more noble than the world, prizes not quantity of dirty lands; the parts that fortune hath bestowed upon her, tell her I hold as giddily as fortune: but it is that miracle and queen of gems that nature pranks her in, attracts my soul” . ( viii) Olivia mistakes Viola for a man, due to her disguise, and falls in love with Viola/Cesario at first sight, “How easy is it for the proper false in women’s waxen hearts to set their forms! Alas, our frailty is the cause, not we, for such as we are made of, such we be”. ( ix) Olivia violates her oath of self-confinement and shows her face to Viola/Cesario, “we will draw the curtain and show you the picture”. (x) The twin brother of Viola, Sebastian, comes outside the palace of Olivia. She mistakes him for Viola/Cesario and immediately marriage is solemnized between the two.(xi) when next time Viola/Cesario comes with a message from Orsino, Olivia mistakes her for Sebastian and addresses her as “husband” (xii ) A very funny and confusing situation is created . Orsino is furious with Viola/Cesario. (xiii ) Confusion clears when Sebastian reappears. Olivia is married to Sebastian and Orsino marries Viola. (xiv) Everyone is happier and all difficulties are resolved at the end of the play.

**Notes/Points for Topic (5) The School for Scandal:** (i) Definition of Comedy of Manners. This kind of comedy makes fun of a group of people (usually upper class) at the cost of their false /artificial manners, fashions and extravagant life style. (ii) The playwright wants people to get rid of their moral and social weaknesses. (iii) Significance of Title. The title highlights the negative social behavior of the upper class English people of 18th century. They busy themselves with scandal mongering. (iv) The names of the characters (Lady Sneer well, Snake, Backbite, Careless, Mr Teasel, Mr. Surface) throw light upon the characters of English upper class of 18th or earlier centuries. The same kind of thing is witnessed in other satirical writings of the time. (v) The comedy is produced through funny dialogues and situations. (vi) People are shown indulging in character assassination, spreading rumours, sowing discord within families. “She has been the cause six matches being broken off, and three sons being disinherited, of four forced elopements, as many close confinements, nine separate maintenances and two divorces”. (vii)Their extravagant life styles can lead them to bankruptcies. (viii) The representation of the difference between appearance and reality (ix) The play is full of funny and comic situations, like the funny situations and dialogues between old Peter Teasel and his very young wife.(x) The dialogues of the play are very witty and funny, “Lady Sneer Well can do more with a word or a look than many can with the most labored detail, even when they happen to have a little truth on their side to support it”. “She wants (lacks) that delicacy of hint, and mellowness of sneer, which distinguish your ladyship’s scandal”.

**Notes/Points for Topic (6) The Way of the World:** (i) Definition of Comedy of Manners/Restoration. This kind of comedy makes fun of a group of people (usually upper class) at the cost of their false /artificial manners, fashions and extravagant life styles. (ii) The playwright exposes their moral and social weaknesses. (iii) Significance of Title. The title throws satirical light on the subject matter of the play. (iv) It is the social behavior of the upper class English people of 17th century. (v)They busy themselves with intrigues and schemes. (vi) Love and money are the major themes of the play (vii) The shallowness and hypocrisy of people are exposed (viii) The obsession of the ladies with their appearance is made fun of , “Let me see the glass—Cracks, sayest thou? Why I am arrantly flayed—I look like an old peeled wall. Thou must repair me, Foible, before Sir Rowland comes; or I shall never keep up to my picture”. (ix) The hypocrisy of the society ladies and the false manners are satirized, “Will he be importunate, Foible and push? For if he should not be importunate, I shall never break decorum—I shall die with confusion, if I am forced to advance—Oh, no I can never advance. I shall swoon if he should expect advances. No, I hope Sir Rowland is better bred, than to put a lady to the necessity of breaking her forms. I won’t be too coy neither, I won’t give him despair. But a little scorn is alluring”. (x) The dialogues are very witty and funny, “A wit should no more be sincere than a woman constant; one argues a decay of parts, as the other of beauty” .