

ENH 304 - Restoration and 18th Century Poetry and Drama - Exam 2024

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Suggestion and Answer for Part C (Essay-type)

by Literature Xpres

Restoration and 18th Century Poetry and Drama - ENH 304

Absalom and Achitophel

1. Evaluate *Absalom and Achitophel* as a political allegory. Or, consider Absalom and Achitophel as a satire/political satire. ★★★
2. How does Achitophel persuade Absalom to stand against his father?
3. 'In *Absalom and Achitophel*, Dryden is both typical and universal.' Discuss.

The Rape of the Lock

4. Show how *The Rape of the Lock* reflects the 18th-century society of England. Or, *The Rape of the Lock* as a social satire. ★★★
5. Elucidate Pope's treatment of supernatural elements in *The Rape of the Lock*. ★★★
6. Examine the significance of the title *The Rape of the Lock*. ★★★

The Way of the World

7. Discuss *The Way of the World* as a comedy of manners. ★★★
8. 'The character of Lady Wishfort evokes more pathos than pleasure.' Comment. Or, 'Lady Wishfort in *The Way of the World* is more pathetic than comic.' Comment. Or, sketch the character of Lady Wishfort. ★★★
9. 'The proviso scene between Mirabell and Millamant serves the dual purpose of providing fun and defining the basis of a harmonious married life.' Discuss. Or, discuss the significance of the proviso scene. ★★★
10. How does Congreve treat the themes of love, marriage, and money in the drama *The Way of the World*? ★★★

She Stoops to Conquer

11. Show how *She Stoops to Conquer* reflects the 18th-century society of England.
12. Comment on the use of wit and humor in *She Stoops to Conquer*. ★★★
13. *She Stoops to Conquer* as a comedy of intrigue. ★★★

Answers

1. Evaluate *Absalom and Achitophel* as a political allegory.

Or, consider "Absalom and Achitophel" as a satire/political satire. ★★★

John Dryden (1631-1700) is one of the best satirists in English literature. His poem "Absalom and Achitophel" (1681) is a great example of satire and political allegory. In this poem, he attacks political enemies using smart and funny words. He hides real people behind biblical names. This way, he criticizes their actions without saying their real names. This answer will evaluate Dryden's satire and his success as an allegorist.

Satire with a Purpose: Dryden's satire is not only for fun. He writes it to fix the wrong in society. He wanted to stop people from being fooled by false leaders. The poem was written during a time of political crisis. The Duke of Monmouth tried to take power from his father. Dryden used this event to write a poem. In it, he laughed at selfish people. He showed how their pride and lies can hurt a nation. His satire is sharp, strong, and full of meaning. He politely

criticizes politicians. He shows a politician's thoughts in the following way.

"Plots, true or false, are necessary things."

Allegory and Its Use:

An allegory is a story with a hidden meaning. The outside story seems simple. But behind it, there is a big message. In this poem, Dryden uses the Bible story of David and his son Absalom. But he means King Charles II and the Duke of Monmouth. Achitophel stands for the evil Lord Shaftesbury. The poet writes that Achitophel is:

"Resolv'd to ruin or to rule the state."

In this way, Dryden tells a political story. He does not need to take names. He portrays all these characters vividly.

Power and Pride: Dryden shows how the hunger for power leads to pride and fall. Achitophel wants power. So, he uses kind words to fool Absalom. He tells him that he should be king. Absalom, who is young and proud, listens to him. But David, the father, is wise and kind. He waits and watches. Dryden shows that bad men use tricks to get power. But good leaders are patient and strong, as David (Charles II) says,

"Beware the fury of a patient man."

Satire to Heal:

Dryden says a good poet is like a doctor. A doctor gives bitter medicine to cure a sick man. In the same way, a poet gives bitter truth to cure society. His poem shows that politics without truth is dangerous. He does not want to hurt for fun. He wants to fix. He attacks false leaders. But he also shows respect to good people. In the end, he stands with peace, unity, and justice. His aim is to save, not to destroy.

From the light of the above discussion, Dryden's "Absalom and Achitophel" is both a strong satire and a smart allegory. He uses simple stories to say deep things. He attacks the bad, praises the good. He also warns the evil people. His writing is short, sharp, and wise. He teaches that pride and greed destroy peace. As a satirist, Dryden is fair, funny, and firm. As an allegorist, he hides real people in stories but shows real truths. That is why this poem is still praised today.

2. How does Achitophel persuade Absalom to stand against his father?

Absalom and Achitophel (1681) is a political satirical poem by John Dryden (1631-1700). In this poem, Dryden uses a Biblical story to show real political events of his time. King David represents King Charles II, Absalom represents the Duke of Monmouth, and Achitophel represents the Earl of Shaftesbury. Achitophel is a clever but dangerous man. He uses words like weapons. He slowly and cleverly persuades Absalom to rebel against his own father, King David. Dryden shows how ambition and flattery can destroy loyalty and peace.

Achitophel's Clever and Corrupt Mind: Achitophel is shown as a very intelligent man, but his intelligence is used for evil purposes. He understands human weakness very well. He knows that Absalom is brave, handsome, and popular, but also proud and ambitious. So, Achitophel plans to use these weaknesses. Dryden says Achitophel has a sharp brain but a crooked heart:

"A daring pilot in extremity."

This means Achitophel is bold and fearless, even in dangerous situations. He is ready to risk everything to gain power. His clever mind helps him plan the rebellion very carefully.

Flattering Absalom's Pride: First, Achitophel flatters Absalom again and again. He tells him that people love him more than King David. He reminds Absalom of his beauty, youth, and charm. He says the people already see him as a future king. He makes Absalom feel special and proud. Dryden warns us against pride and says it is a great sin.

"Desire of greatness is a god-like sin."

Achitophel fills Absalom's heart with pride. Slowly, Absalom starts to believe that he deserves the throne.

Questioning David's Rule: After flattering Absalom, Achitophel targets King David's rule. He does not openly insult the king. Instead, he speaks gently and wisely. He says David is old and weak. He says the nation needs a young and energetic ruler. Achitophel suggests that the country is in danger under David's rule. He says that people are unhappy and want change. In this way, he creates doubt in Absalom's mind about his own father. In reality, Achitophel wants the power himself. Dryden writes that Achitophel is:

“Resolv'd to ruin or to rule the state.”

This shows how some men use others to get power.

Using the Issue of Illegitimacy: One of Achitophel's strongest tricks is the issue of Absalom's birth. Absalom is not a lawful son. Achitophel tells him that this should not stop him from becoming king. He argues that merit is more important than birth. He says nature itself has marked Absalom as a ruler. Achitophel makes Absalom forget the law and think only about his strength and popularity.

Creating Fear and Urgency: Achitophel then creates fear in Absalom's heart. He says that if Absalom does not act now, his enemies will destroy him. He warns that once David dies, others may seize power. He presents rebellion as self-defense. This makes Absalom feel that rebellion is not a crime, but a necessity.

Absalom's Weak Resistance: At first, Absalom is gentle and loyal. He loves his father and does not want rebellion. But Achitophel's words slowly poison his mind. His ambition grows stronger than his loyalty. Dryden shows Absalom as a good man led astray by bad advice.

To sum up, Achitophel persuades Absalom through flattery, fear, false logic, and clever speech. He uses Absalom's pride, popularity, and ambition to turn him against his own father. Dryden clearly shows that rebellion does not begin with swords, but with words.

3. ‘In Absalom and Achitophel, Dryden is both typical and universal.’ Discuss.

John Dryden (1631-1700) is one of the greatest English satirists. His poem “Absalom and Achitophel” (1681) is special. It talks about old English politics. But its ideas are still fresh today. The poem is “typical” as it follows classic satire rules. It is “universal” as its themes touch all people. Dryden uses a Bible story to hide real events. This makes the poem deep but simple. We will see how Dryden fits his time, yet speaks to all ages.

Political Voice of His Time: Dryden speaks for the king and the ruling party. He supports King Charles II and the Tories. He writes to defend the king against enemies. Dryden attacks the Whigs in the poem. He says,

“The Jews, a headstrong, moody, murmur'ring race,...

No king could govern, nor no God could please;"

These lines satirize Whig rebels as unruly and ungrateful. Dryden uses satire to fight back. He wants to protect the royal line. This shows he is a typical poet of his time. Many poets in his age did this.

Use of Bible Story: Dryden tells the story of David and Absalom. But this is not just a holy story. David means King Charles II. Absalom means his son Monmouth. Achitophel means Shaftesbury. Dryden shows Absalom's ambition in the following line:

"Desire of greatness is a god-like sin."

Dryden uses allegory to hide real names. This is very typical of poets in his time. Poets often used old stories to speak about present events. But this way also makes the poem universal.

Common Human Feelings: Dryden shows the love of a father. In the end, David speaks with power. He says he is both a father and a king. He will not let Absalom take the crown. He says God is with him. David is ready to fight. But he is also patient. He says,

"Beware the fury of a patient man."

This shows Charles as a wise and strong king. Dryden also shows ambition, flattery, lies, and fear. These are human feelings. People of all times feel them. So, even if the poem is political, it speaks to all people. This makes it universal.

Clear Message for All: Dryden writes with a purpose. He wants peace, order, and strong rule. He warns people not to follow rebels. He says,

***"Kings are the public pillars of the state,
Born to sustain and prop the nation's weight."***

The author asserts that power must follow law. These ideas are not only for 17th-century England. Every country needs law and peace. Every country faces fights over power. Dryden's poem speaks to all people in power. It speaks to common people too. So, his message is typical for England but universal for the world.

In conclusion, Dryden is typical because he writes for his king. He uses Bible stories and supports one political group. He follows the style of his time. But he is also universal because he shows deep truths about human life. He talks about love, ambition, power, and loyalty. These things are the same in every age and place. So, "Absalom and Achitophel" is not only about England. It is about all people, at all times. That is why Dryden is both typical and universal.

4. Show how *The Rape of the Lock* reflects the 18th-century society of England. Or, The *Rape of the Lock* as a social satire. ★★

As a writer of the Neoclassical Age, Alexander Pope (1688-1744) mainly focused on moral lessons, social criticism, and classical style. He wrote "The Rape of the Lock" (1712) to show the foolish life of rich people in London. He made fun of their fake manners, love of fashion, and silly quarrels. In the poem, a young man cuts a girl's hair. This small act becomes a big matter. Pope uses this story to show how people care too much about beauty and clothes. This makes the poem a strong social satire.

Beauty over Religion: Belinda forgets about God in her daily life. She cares more about her beauty than her faith. Her mirror becomes her place of worship. She prays to makeup instead of to God. Even the Bible lies beside her powder and perfumes. This shows that she puts looks above religion. The narrator says,

*"First, rob'd in White, the Nymph intent adores
With Head uncover'd, the cosmetic Pow'rs.
A heav'nly Image in the Glass appears."*

Here, Belinda is shown as praying to makeup. She looks at her own face in the mirror. The poet makes fun of her love for beauty.

False Importance to Trivial Things: The Baron cuts Belinda's lock of hair. He does this for fun. But Belinda cries loudly and calls it a great insult. Her friends shout and fight to get the lock back. They forget that it is only a small piece of hair. Pope writes this small event like a big war. The narrator says,

"What dire Offense from am'rous Causes springs,

What mighty Contests rise from trivial Things."

These lines start the poem with a big idea. The poet talks about love, war, and silly things. These lines show what the poem will be about.

False Friends and Fake Love: Pope also shows how rich people had no true love. Their friendship was false and selfish. Clarissa helps the Baron to cut the lock. Later, she gives a speech about good sense. The following lines show this.

***"How vain are all these Glories, all our Pains,
Unless good Sense preserve what Beauty gains."***

Satirising the Legal System:

Pope also portrays the picture of the judges and jurymen in the poem. The judges and jury feel hungry in the afternoon. The judges pass death sentences hastily without studying the case properly. The jury members are hurrying to leave the court to eat dinner. They deliver a verdict of guilty (death) against the accused without discussing the evidence given by witnesses. Here is a quotation to support the point.

***"The hungry judges soon the sentence sign,
And wretches hang that jurymen may dine."***

In summary, Pope's poem is more than a joke. It is a mirror of the rich society of London. He shows how people loved fashion more than values. The girls prayed to beauty tools. The boys played with emotions. A small curl became a war. This makes the poem a strong and funny satire. Pope wants us to laugh but also to learn. We must not live for face and fashion only. True beauty is in the heart and the mind.

5. Elucidate Pope's treatment of supernatural elements in *The Rape of the Lock*.

Alexander Pope's (1688-1744) *The Rape of the Lock* (1712) is a mock-epic poem. In this poem, Pope uses supernatural beings in a playful and humorous way. These supernatural beings do not create fear or wonder like in true epics. Instead, they make fun of fashionable society and its silly values. Pope borrows the epic tradition of gods and spirits. But he uses the spirits to

show how vain and foolish the upper-class society is.

Idea of Supernatural Beings: Pope introduces supernatural beings called Sylphs, Gnomes, Nymphs, and Salamanders. These spirits come from Rosicrucian belief. They are not powerful gods like those in *The Iliad* or *Paradise Lost*. Instead, they are humorous and playful. They are concerned only with beauty, fashion, and love affairs. Pope uses the spirits to show the daily affairs of fashionable but foolish women, like Belinda.

Ariel and the Sylphs: Ariel is the chief Sylph who guards Belinda. He behaves like an epic god. He declares:

"A watchful sprite, and Ariel is my name."

But his duty is very trivial. He protects Belinda's dress, fan, hair, and smile. Ariel warns Belinda in a dream that "some dread event" will happen. But even Ariel does not know what it is. This is funny because the "dread event" turns out to be only the cutting of a lock of Belinda's hair. Pope mocks epic seriousness by using a supernatural warning for such a small matter. Ariel says the Sylphs must guard Belinda carefully. He notes that they must not think a woman's love for fashion dies with her. It continues even after death.

***"Think not, when woman's transient breath is fled,
That all her vanities at once are dead."***

So, the Sylphs must protect Belinda's beauty and fashion. Here, Pope is using Ariel to laugh gently at women's vanity.

Protection of Beauty: The Sylphs form a protective army around Belinda. They guard her eyes, hair, dress, and jewellery. This looks like a heroic battle plan, but the goal is very silly. Pope compares Belinda's beauty to a battlefield. Ariel divides duties among the Sylphs just like a general in war. Some guard her ear-rings and some her shining hair. Pope describes this mock-epic preparation in a heroic tone:

"Swift to the Lock a thousand Sprites repair."

This line shows how many supernatural beings are busy protecting only one lock of hair. The epic seriousness makes the situation funny. When the Baron cuts the lock, the Sylphs fail. Ariel cannot stop it because Belinda secretly enjoys attention from men.

Umbriel and the Cave of Spleen: After the lock is cut, Umbriel, a gloomy gnome, goes to the Cave of Spleen. Umbriel goes there to collect bad moods and emotional outbursts for Belinda. The Cave of Spleen is dark, strange, and full of sadness. Here live Ill-nature, Affectation, and spleenful spirits. The Queen of Spleen sits lazily, surrounded by vapours, yawns, and dreams. Umbriel politely bows and receives:

“A bag of Sighs, a Phial filled with Tears.”

He pours them on Belinda. This explains why Belinda suddenly becomes very angry and dramatic. So, Pope uses supernatural action to make the scene very funny and satirical.

Mock-Epic Purpose: In real epics, gods decide wars and the fate of nations. In *The Rape of the Lock*, supernatural beings fight over a lock of hair. This contrast creates humour. Pope raises a small social event to an epic level. He shows how empty and meaningless high society quarrels are. The supernatural elements make the poem lively, but also expose the shallow values of the upper class.

In conclusion, Pope's treatment of supernatural elements in *The Rape of the Lock* is playful, satirical, and clever. He uses Sylphs, Ariel, and Umbriel not to create fear or mystery, but to laugh at society's obsession with beauty, pride, and fashion. Through supernatural machinery, Pope successfully turns a small social incident into a grand mock-epic.

6. Examine the significance of the title “*The Rape of the Lock*.”

Alexander Pope's (1688-1744) *The Rape of the Lock* (1712) is a mock-epic poem. The title of the poem is very important because it clearly shows Pope's main purpose. At first glance, the title sounds serious and shocking. The word “**rape**” suggests a violent crime. But in reality, the poem deals with a very small and silly incident: the cutting of a lock of hair. With this title, Pope creates humour and satire. The title helps us understand the poem's mock-epic nature and its criticism of fashionable society.

Meaning of the Word “Rape”: In modern times, the word “rape” has a very strong and painful meaning. But in Pope's time, it was often used to mean “to seize” or “to steal.” In the poem, no physical violence happens. The “rape” refers to the stealing of Belinda's lock of hair by the Baron. So, the title literally means “the stealing of a lock of hair.”

Still, Pope deliberately chooses this strong word. He wants to show how upper-class people treat small matters as if they are great crimes. By using such a serious word for such a trivial

act, Pope makes the incident look funny and foolish.

A Mock-Epic Title: The title shows that the poem is a mock-epic. In real epics like *The Iliad* or *Paradise Lost*, great wars, heroes, and serious events are described. The word “rape” is often connected with tragic stories in classical epics. Pope borrows this epic seriousness but applies it to a very small social quarrel.

The “**lock**” in the title is only a curl of hair. But Pope treats it like a priceless treasure. This contrast between the grand title and the small incident creates comedy. The title itself prepares the reader to see how Pope will make fun of epic traditions and high society.

Significance of the “Lock”: The “lock” is very important in the poem. It stands for beauty, pride, and vanity. Belinda is very proud of her beauty, especially her hair. Even supernatural sprites guard Belinda’s dress, eyes, and hair. Ariel is the chief Sylph who guards Belinda. Thousands of sprites are always ready to protect Belinda’s lock of hair.

“Swift to the Lock a thousand Sprites repair.”

This epic seriousness makes the situation funny. When the Baron cuts the lock, Belinda feels deeply insulted. For her, it is not a small joke but a serious attack on her honour.

Pope shows that fashionable society values appearance more than character. The fight over a lock of hair shows how shallow and empty their lives are. The title highlights this idea by focusing on the lock as if it were something extremely valuable.

Social Satire in the Title: The title also shows Pope’s satire on upper-class society. The quarrel between Belinda and the Baron grows into a big social issue. Friends take sides. Emotions run high. Umbriel brings sighs and tears from the Queen of Spleen:

“A bag of Sighs, a Phial filled with Tears.”

All this happens because of one lock of hair. By calling this incident “rape,” Pope laughs at society’s habit of exaggerating small problems. He shows that people with easy lives often turn trivial matters into serious conflicts.

Lesson at the End: In the end, Pope uses Belinda’s lock to give us a moral lesson in a playful way. Belinda’s lock of hair does not remain a cause of quarrel. It rises to the sky and becomes a star.

"This Lock, the Muse shall consecrate to Fame,

And mid'st the Stars inscribe Belinda's Name!"

Pope shows that beauty does not last forever, and people should not fight over small things.

In conclusion, the title “*The Rape of the Lock*” is highly significant. The title itself tells us that it is a mock-epic poem. The word “rape” adds false seriousness, while the “lock” represents vanity and pride. Through this title, Pope makes fun of fashionable society and its shallow values.

7. Discuss *The Way of the World* as a comedy of manners. ★★

A Comedy of Manners is a funny play. It shows the silly lifestyle of rich people. These people live in big cities and follow high society rules. They talk in a clever and funny way. Their main goal is love, money, fashion, and gossip. These plays make fun of lies, cheating, and fake love. William Congreve’s (1670-1729) “*The Way of the World*” (1700) is a good example. It shows the funny and foolish life of rich people. It has all the things of a Comedy of Manners.

City Life and Rich People: This play shows rich people in London. They go to parties and play cards. They talk in a clever and joking way. They do not care about truth or kindness. They only care about love, marriage, and money. Lady Wishfort, Millamant, and Fainall live like this. They follow high society rules. In the following way, Fainall makes a humorous remark about city women.

"Now I remember, last night was one of their cabal-nights: they have 'em three times a week and meet by turns at one another's apartments, to sit upon the murdered reputations of the week."

Fake Love and Marriage:

In this play, marriage is not for love. It is for money or gain. Mirabell wants to marry Millamant for her money. Through the subsequent words, Mirabell falsely shows his love for Millamant.

"I like her with all her faults; nay, like her for her faults."

Lady Wishfort wants her daughter to marry a rich man. Mrs. Fainall once loved Mirabell and then married Fainall. Nobody truly loves each other. Love is a tool to get something. This fake love makes the story funny and sad. So, the play clearly shows false love and marriage.

Wit and Clever Talk: This play is full of wit. The people talk in smart and funny ways. They use jokes and sharp words. Millamant and Mirabell talk in this way. Their “proviso scene” is full of clever words. They talk about marriage and set funny rules. Even foolish people like Witwoud and Petulant speak in odd and silly ways. This clever talk is a key part of the Comedy of Manners.

Fashion and Vanity: The people in this play love fashion. Lady Wishfort is fifty-five. But she tries to look young. She puts on heavy makeup. Millamant also talks about her fashion. She wants freedom even after marriage. The following quote shows Lady Wishfort’s extreme vanity.

“I look like an old peeled wall. Thou must repair me, Foible, before Sir Rowland comes.”

Here, she acts like a foolish lover. She wants Sir Rowland to like her. This foolish fashion life is a big part of this comedy.

Moral Weakness: All the people in the play are weak in values. Fainall and Mrs. Marwood are both cheaters. Mirabell also cheated Lady Wishfort. Mrs. Fainall had a love affair before marriage. Nobody in the play is honest. They lie, cheat, and plan to hurt others. They do not care about good or bad. The play shows this moral fall in a funny way.

In summary, “The Way of the World” is a true Comedy of Manners. It shows the funny and fake life of rich people. It has wit, love tricks, fashion, and lies. It makes fun of city people and their silly lifestyle. The play also shows how people forget good values. It is full of sharp talk and comic acts. William Congreve uses smart jokes to show deep truths. So, this play is a great example of this type of comedy.

8. ‘The character of Lady Wishfort evokes more pathos than pleasure.’ Comment.

Or, ‘Lady Wishfort in *The Way of the World* is more pathetic than comic.’ Comment.

Or, sketch the character of Lady Wishfort. ★★

Lady Wishfort is a funny but sad character in William Congreve’s (1670-1729) play “The Way of the World” (1700). She is old, rich, and full of pride. She wants to look young and get married again. She falls in love with a fake man called Sir Rowland. She hates Mirabell because he

fooled her. She is also very proud and vain. People laugh at her, but we also feel sad for her. So, she is more pathetic than comic.

Proud and Vain: Lady Wishfort is very proud of her beauty. She puts on heavy makeup to look young. She wears rich clothes and acts like a young girl. But people laugh at her silly look. She cannot see her own foolishness. She thinks all men love her beauty. That makes her easy to fool. Her pride becomes her weakness. This makes her a comic figure. But also, we feel sorry for her age. The following quote shows her extreme vanity.

"I look like an old peeled wall. Thou must repair me, Foible, before Sir Rowland comes."

Here, Lady Wishfort acts like a foolish lover. She tries hard to look young. She wants Sir Rowland to like her.

Easily Fooled: Lady Wishfort always trusts the wrong people. She believes Mrs. Marwood is her true friend. But Marwood secretly works against her. She depends on her maid Foible. He also helps Mirabell trick her. When she discovers Foible's betrayal, she angrily asks,

"Have you made a passive bawd of me?"

Even her own daughter and niece hide Mirabell's plans from her. By the end, she realizes everyone deceived her. This makes her feel helpless and alone. Her foolish trust brings her pain.

Role as a Mother: She is the mother of Mrs. Fainall. But she fails in her duty as a mother. She does not know about her son-in-law's plan. She does not see Fainall's evil mind. She also tries to control Millamant's life. She wants to choose her husband. But her choices are always wrong. She cannot protect her family's honour. She becomes a weak and helpless woman. Her failure gives us pain, not joy. So, we feel sorry for her situation.

Desperation for Love: Lady Wishfort wants to remarry. She falls for any man who flatters her. She even loves Mirabell, who tricks her. Her need for love is sad. She is old but acts like a young girl. This makes her funny but also pitiful. Her loneliness drives her actions. She is a victim of her own desires. This makes her more pathetic than comic. The following quotation supports this idea.

"Bring what you will; but come alive, pray come alive."

Here, she begs Sir Rowland (actually Waitwell in disguise) to return quickly. This shows how desperately she wants love and attention.

To sum up, Lady Wishfort looks funny at first. We laugh at her love and makeup. We enjoy her silly words and acts. But slowly, we feel sorry for her. She is old and lonely inside. She wants love, but gets fooled. Her own daughter is in trouble. She cannot help her family. She becomes a victim of others' plans. So, she gives us more pain than fun. She is a sad figure, not just comic.

9. Discuss the significance of the proviso scene.

Or, 'The proviso scene between Mirabell and Millamant serves the dual purpose of providing fun and defining the basis of a harmonious married life.' Discuss.

William Congreve's (1670-1729) "*The Way of the World*" (1700) is a comedy of manners. It shows the life, love, and marriage ideas of fashionable society. One of the most important scenes in the play is the Proviso Scene, which occurs in Act IV, Scene V. In this scene, Mirabell and Millamant discuss the conditions of their future marriage. This scene is important because it shows their true love and the equality between husband and wife. With this scene, Congreve shows how a harmonious married life should be.

Meaning of the Proviso Scene: The word "proviso" means a condition or agreement. In this scene, Mirabell and Millamant place conditions before marriage. They do not want a marriage based on control or false authority. Instead, they want freedom, respect, and understanding. This makes the scene very important in the play.

Millamant's Desire for Freedom: Millamant clearly shows that she does not want to lose her independence after marriage. She loves her freedom and privacy. She wants to live as she wishes even after becoming a wife. She says clearly that marriage should not take away her liberty. Her famous line shows this desire:

"My dear liberty, shall I leave thee?"

She wants to wake up late, choose her friends, write letters freely, and control her own tea-table. This conversation with Mirabell also creates laughter. Through Millamant, Congreve presents a strong, modern woman who refuses to become a controlled wife. This was a bold idea for Congreve's time.

Criticism of False Married Life: Millamant also criticises the artificial behavior of married couples in society. She hates fake love, public kissing, and showing off marriage in front of others. She does not want to be called sweet names like “joy” or “jewel.” She finds it disgusting. She wants politeness and distance even after marriage. She says:

“Let us be as strange as if we had been married a great while...”

This line shows Congreve's satire on fashionable marriage, where couples pretend to be happy but are unhappy inside.

Mirabell's Conditions and Balance: Mirabell is not angry with Millamant's demands. Instead, he accepts them calmly and intelligently. This shows his maturity and true love. He also gives his own provisos. He wants honesty and trust.

Mirabell also does not want false beauty. He jokes about women using too much makeup and medicine. This humour also makes the play very funny. Mirabell asks Millamant:

“Have I liberty to offer conditions?”

This question proves that marriage here is a mutual agreement, not domination by one partner.

Equality and True Love: The Proviso Scene is important because it presents marriage as a partnership. Both Mirabell and Millamant speak freely. Both listen. Both compromise. This scene shows true love based on understanding, not money or social pressure.

At the end, Mirabell accepts Millamant's strong nature, and Millamant accepts Mirabell's honesty. Mirabell says:

“Then we're agreed. Shall I kiss your hand upon the contract?”

It shows that their marriage is based on consent, respect, and love. This scene is Congreve's way of saying how marriages should be.

Comic and Dramatic Importance: The scene is full of wit, humour, and playful argument. It makes the play lively and intelligent. At the same time, it prepares us for the happy ending of the play. It also contrasts with unhappy marriages like that of Lady Wishfort.

In fine, the Proviso Scene is the heart of “*The Way of the World*.” It shows Congreve’s modern idea of marriage, where love, freedom, equality, and respect are most important. The scene is serious in meaning but comic in style. That is why the Proviso Scene is the most significant and memorable scene in the play.

10. How does Congreve treat the themes of love, marriage, and money in the drama “*The Way of the World*”?

William Congreve’s (1670-1729) “*The Way of the World*” (1700) is a famous Restoration comedy. The play shows how people live, love, and marry in high society. Congreve does not give a romantic fairy tale. Instead, he shows real life. Love is mixed with money. Marriage is treated as a contract. People think more about wealth and reputation than true feelings. Through the story of Mirabell, Millamant, Lady Wishfort, Fainall, and others, Congreve explains how love, marriage, and money control human relationships.

Love as Freedom and Understanding: The true love story in the play is between Mirabell and Millamant. Their love is not too emotional. It is intelligent and witty. Millamant does not want to lose her independence. Her famous line shows this desire:

“My dear liberty, shall I leave thee?”

Mirabell also loves her and accepts her faults. This shows real love, not selfish desire. He says that beauty comes from love itself. When he loves Millamant, she becomes beautiful to him. This shows a modern idea of love. Love is based on understanding and freedom, not only looks.

Their love is equal. Both speak openly. Both respect each other’s wishes. This kind of love is shown as ideal in the play.

Marriage as a Contract, Not a Romance: Marriage in the play is not shown as a romantic dream. It is shown as a careful agreement. The best example is the proviso scene between Mirabell and Millamant. Before marriage, Millamant places many conditions. She wants freedom in dress, friends, and daily life. She does not want to be called sweet names like “joy” or “jewel.” She finds it disgusting. She wants politeness and distance even after marriage. She says:

“Let us be as strange as if we had been married a great while...”

Mirabell accepts her conditions calmly. He even asks if she has more demands. This shows that marriage should protect happiness, not destroy it. Congreve supports this modern view of marriage.

In contrast, Lady Wishfort represents old-fashioned marriage. She wants to marry Sir Rowland only to look young and desirable. As she tells her maid Foible:

"Thou must repair me, Foible, before Sir Rowland comes."

She covers her face with makeup and worries about her looks. Her behavior is foolish and comic. Through her, Congreve criticizes marriages based only on appearance and pride.

Money as the Center of Conflict: Money is very important in the play. Almost every action is connected to money. Millamant's fortune creates the main problem. Lady Wishfort controls it. She will not give it unless Millamant marries someone she approves. Mirabell truly loves Millamant, but he also needs her money. Even Millamant will not marry without her fortune. This shows how practical people are.

On the darker side, Fainall and Mrs. Marwood represent greed without love. Fainall marries Mrs. Fainall only for money. He spends it on his mistress. Later, he tries to blackmail Lady Wishfort. When his plot fails, he says,

"'Tis the way of the world."

This line shows his belief that greed rules society.

False Marriage and Broken Love: Mrs. Fainall's marriage is unhappy and cruel. She has no love or safety. At the end, she finally stands against her husband.

Mrs. Marwood also shows selfish love. She says it is better to be loved and left than never loved. Her love is possessive and harmful. Through her, Congreve shows how love without honesty becomes destructive.

To wrap up, Congreve presents love, marriage, and money as closely connected. True love exists, but it must survive in a world ruled by wealth and reputation. Marriage is shown as an agreement based on equality and freedom, not blind romance. Money controls actions, creates conflict, and exposes human greed.

11. Show how “*She Stoops to Conquer*” reflects the 18th-century society of England.

“*She Stoops to Conquer*” (1773) is a famous comedy by Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774). Through this play, Goldsmith presents a clear picture of 18th-century English society. He shows society through characters, their behavior, mistakes, love affairs, and daily life. By following the story of the Hardcastle family, Marlow, Hastings, and Tony Lumpkin, we can understand how people thought, lived, and behaved in England during that time.

Country Life and City Life: One important feature of 18th-century society was the strong difference between country life and city life. In the play, Mr. Hardcastle represents the old country gentleman. He loves tradition, simple living, and old manners. He dislikes modern city life. He believes that city life spoils people.

Mrs. Hardcastle represents the opposite side of society. Though she lives in the country, she dreams of the city. She says,

“Is there a creature in the whole country but ourselves, that does not take a trip to town now and then, to rub off the rust a little?”

This shows her boredom with country life and her attraction to London fashions. Through Mr. and Mrs. Hardcastle, Goldsmith shows how 18th-century England was divided between old rural values and new urban fashion.

Class Consciousness and Snobbery: 18th-century English society was deeply class-conscious. People were very careful about rank and social position. This is clearly shown when Marlow and Hastings mistake Hardcastle’s house for an inn. Because of this mistake, Marlow treats Mr. Hardcastle like a servant. He speaks rudely to him. Hastings even mocks Hardcastle by saying,

“His uncle a colonel! We shall soon hear of his mother being a justice of the peace!”

This line shows social snobbery and the habit of looking down on people of lower status.

Love, Marriage, and Money: Marriage in 18th-century England was closely connected with money and property, not only love. This is clearly shown in the case of Constance Neville. Mrs. Hardcastle wants Constance to marry Tony so that her jewels remain in the family. Love is less important to her than wealth.

However, Goldsmith also shows a changing idea of marriage through Kate and Marlow. Kate believes love should be sincere and says,

“A reserved lover... always makes a suspicious husband.”

In the end, Kate and Marlow marry because of love and understanding. It shows that society was slowly moving toward marriage based on mutual respect.

Mistakes, Deception, and Comedy: Another important feature of 18th-century society was the love of comedy and amusement. The play is full of mistakes and tricks. Tony Lumpkin enjoys playing jokes. He misleads Marlow and Hastings and later tricks his mother into thinking they are lost in a dangerous place. These comic mistakes present a society that enjoyed laughter. At the same time, Goldsmith uses humor to correct social faults like pride and arrogance.

Position of Women: The play also shows the position of women in 18th-century England. Women were expected to marry well and behave properly. Mrs. Hardcastle is obsessed with fashion and marriage. Constance's future is controlled by her guardian. However, Kate Hardcastle represents a new type of woman. She is intelligent, confident, and practical. She uses disguise to understand Marlow's true nature. Marlow praises modesty and says,

“A modest man can never counterfeit impudence.”

Kate proves this true by revealing Marlow's real goodness. Through Kate, Goldsmith shows that women could be clever and independent, even within social limits.

In fine, *She Stoops to Conquer* clearly reflects 18th-century English society. Through its story, characters, and gentle humor, the play shows country and city life, class differences, marriage customs, love of money, and the position of women. Thus, the play gives us a lively picture of the world of 18th-century England.

12. Comment on the use of wit and humor in *She Stoops to Conquer*. ★★

Wit refers to clever wordplay, while humour comes from funny situations. Oliver Goldsmith's (1728-1774) play “*She Stoops to Conquer*” (1773) is full of wit and humour. These elements make the play lively and entertaining. The play uses both to mock social norms and human flaws. Through jokes and smart dialogues, Goldsmith makes us laugh and think. This is why wit

and humour are called the "soul" of the play. This paper will clearly examine Goldsmith's use of wit and humour in this play.

Funny Mistakes: The whole play is full of funny mistakes. Marlow thinks Mr. Hardcastle is an innkeeper. Hastings thinks Mrs. Hardcastle is a landlady. These mistakes create many funny scenes. The audience knows the truth, but the characters do not. This makes the play more enjoyable. The jokes are not heavy or cruel. These are soft and sweet. These comic mistakes make the play very lively. Goldsmith uses them to keep the story moving with joy and fun.

Marlow's Shyness and Boldness: Many lines in the play are full of wit. Charles Marlow has two very different sides. He is shy with rich women but bold with poor ones. When he sees Kate as a barmaid, he talks freely. But when he sees her as a rich girl, he cannot even speak. As Marlow says,

"An impudent fellow may counterfeit modesty; but I'll be hanged if a modest man can ever counterfeit impudence."

This shows how Marlow changes his behavior based on class. Goldsmith uses this double-sided approach to make us laugh. But he also helps us understand Marlow's fear. Marlow's two identities help him learn more about love and himself.

Kate's Wit and Trick: Kate is one of the wittiest characters in the play. She speaks with clever words and sharp ideas. Her lines often make people laugh and think. For example, she says,

"A reserved lover, it is said, always makes a suspicious husband."

It means a man who is too shy in love may become jealous and doubtful after marriage. This shows she understands love well. Kate also uses a smart and funny trick. She dresses like a barmaid to win Marlow's heart. Marlow is shy with rich girls but bold with poor ones. So Kate "stoops" low to conquer his love.

Tony's Jokes: Tony is the main joker of the play. He does many silly and funny things. He fools Marlow and Hastings by calling the house an inn. He also tricks his mother by driving her around the garden. She thinks they are far away. He says,

"Ah, it's a highwayman with pistols as long as my arm. A damned ill-looking fellow."

With this, Tony scares his mother by pretending Mr. Hardcastle is a robber. These jokes are not bad. They are done with fun. Tony's humour brings joy to others. His actions keep the play light and happy. His jokes teach lessons but never hurt anyone.

Now, we can say that Wit and humour are the life of this play. The play is full of jokes, tricks, and funny talks. But all these are done in a soft and kind way. Goldsmith uses humour to bring out love, truth, and growth. He makes us laugh and learn at the same time. Every character shows some wit. Every act gives some fun. So, humour is not just a part. Instead, it is the soul of the play.

13. *She Stoops to Conquer* as a comedy of intrigue. ★★★

A comedy of intrigue is an entertaining play full of tricks, plans, and secrets. "She Stoops to Conquer" (1773) is an outstanding comedy of intrigue. It is full of jokes, plans, and tricks. The author, Oliver Goldsmith (1729-1774), shows that the characters plan to fool others. Sometimes, they do it for love. Sometimes, they do it for fun. These tricks create problems and funny scenes. At the end, all problems are solved. Let us see this.

Tony's First Trick: Tony plays the first big trick. He meets Marlow and Hastings at the alehouse. They are lost and looking for Mr. Hardcastle's home. Tony tells them a lie. He says it is not a house, but an inn. They believe him and go to the house. There, they act like rude guests. They treat Mr. Hardcastle like an innkeeper. This mistake starts all the fun. It is also a revenge. Tony wants to fool his stepfather. This trick creates many comic scenes.

Kate's Funny Plan: Kate plays a smart trick too. Marlow is shy with rich girls. But he talks freely with poor girls. Kate wants to test his love. So, she acts like a poor barmaid. Marlow talks to her without fear. He flirts and wants to kiss her. At a point, she says,

"O! sir, I must not tell my age. They say women and music should never be dated."

Kate wins his heart with her plan. She does not tell him the truth. She waits for the right time. Her trick helps to make love grow. It also makes the story more fun and sweet.

Tony Helps Constance: Tony helps Constance and Hastings. They want to marry in secret. But Mrs. Hardcastle wants Constance to marry Tony. So, Tony makes a new plan. He steals Constance's jewels and gives them to Hastings. When Hastings asks how he got the jewels, he says,

“Ask me no questions, and I'll tell you no fibs,”

The lovers plan to run away. But the plan fails. The jewels go back to Mrs. Hardcastle. Then she tries to send Constance far away. Tony again helps. He drives her in circles near the house. She thinks they are lost. This is a very funny scene.

Mrs. Hardcastle's Trick: Mrs. Hardcastle also plays a trick. She tells Tony he is still a child. She wants to control his life. She wants him to marry Constance. But Tony is already grown. When he learns the truth, he becomes free. He says he will not marry Constance. Now Constance is free too. She can marry Hastings and keep her jewels. This trick brings a happy ending. The truth wins in the end.

In conclusion, all the tricks in the play are light and funny. They help to create fun and love. Every character plays some trick. Some tricks are for fun. Some are for love. Some are for revenge. But none of them are cruel. All these funny plans make the story move. They bring joy and surprise. At the end, all is clear. The lovers unite, and the play ends with smiles. That is why “She Stoops to Conquer” is truly a comedy of intrigues.