



# Teaching Frameworks: Course Outline and Recourses for OBE

**Course Code: 0232-3121**  
**Course Name: Gender and Literature**  
**Teacher's Name: Jannatul Tajri**  
**Credit Value: 3**  
**Total Mark: 150**  
**Credit Hour: 51**



**Course Learning Outcomes: at the end of the course, the student will be able to-**

CLO 1	Understand key theoretical frameworks related to gender studies and feminist literary criticism	
CLO 2	Analyze literary texts through the lens of gender.	
CLO 3	Explore the historical and cultural contexts that shape gendered representations in literature.	
CLO 4	Identify the role of intersectionality (race, class, sexuality, etc.) in gender representations.	
CLO 5	Articulate informed perspectives on gendered narratives through critical writing and discussion.	

## ASSESSMENT PATTERN

Total Marks Per Credit 50 Marks	
3 Credits Course	150 Marks
2 Credits Course	100 Marks
CIE	60%
SEE	40%

### SEE- Semester End Examination (60 Marks-40%)

Bloom's Category	Tests
Remember	10
Understand	5
Apply	10
Analyze	10
Evaluate	5
Create	20

## CIE- Continuous Internal Evaluation (90 Marks-60%)

Bloom's Category Marks (out of 45)	Tests (45)	Assignments (15)	Quizzes (10)	External Participation in Curricular/Co- Curricular Activities (20)
Remember	5		05	Attendance : 10 Viva-Voce : 10
Understand	10	05	05	
Apply	05	10		
Analyze	10			
Evaluate	05			
Create	10			

Week	Topic	Teaching Learning policy	Assessments	CLO
1 <sup>st</sup>	Gender as a social construct, key terms and concepts, introduction to feminist literary criticism Virginia Woolf, A Room of One's Own (Chapters 1–2)	Lecture with PPT presentation, Discussion Reading text	Class attendance Class performance Mid exam	1 &2
2 <sup>nd</sup>	The Nature of the Problem Patriarchy, history of the writings and university Historical and Social Context	Lecture with PPT presentation, Discussion	Class attendance Class performance, Mid	1,3
3 <sup>rd</sup>	To Room Nineteen by Doris Lossing	Lecture with PPT presentation, Discussion Reading text	Class attendance Class performance, Mid Assignment	1,3



4 <sup>th</sup>	Subjectivity, Socital Expectation Isolation	Lecture with PPT presentation, Discussion	Class attendance Class performance, Mid	3,4
5 <sup>th</sup>	The Rise of the Novel and Female Voices Sultana’s Dream	Lecture with PPT presentation, Discussion Reading text	Class attendance Class performance, Mid Quiz,	4
6 <sup>th</sup>	Sultana’s Dream	Lecture with PPT presentation, Discussion Reading text	Class attendance Class performance, Mid Quiz	5
7 <sup>th</sup>	Science fiction Utopia	Lecture with PPT presentation, Discussion	Class attendance Class performance, Mid	2

8 <sup>th</sup>	Fragmentation of identity and gender in modernist literature Virginia Woolf, Orlando	Lecture with PPT presentation, Discussion Reading text	Class attendance Class performance, Mid Quiz	1,4
9 <sup>th</sup>	Androgyny, gender and time Fluidity, Biography	Lecture with PPT presentation, Discussion	Class attendance Class performance, Final Quiz	2,3
10 <sup>th</sup>	Contrast of mythological and textual Drapadi by Mahasweta Devi	Lecture with PPT, Discussion	Class attendance Class performance, Final Quiz	2
11 <sup>th</sup>	Look back in anger by John Osborne	Lecture with book, Discussion	Class attendance Class performance, Final Quiz	4

12 <sup>th</sup>	Question Gender role with the text	Lecture with PPT, Discussion	Class attendance Class performance, Final Quiz	3,4
13 <sup>th</sup>	Gender and Poetry Maya Angelou Phenomenal Women	Lecture with PPT presentation, Discussion Reading text	Class attendance Class performance, Final Quiz	1,2
14 <sup>th</sup>	Discussion on the theme. Rejection of beauty standered	Lecture with PPT presentation, Discussion	Class attendance Class performance, Final Quiz	5

15 <sup>th</sup>	The caged bird	Lecture with PPT presentation, Discussion, Reading text	Class attendance Class performance, Final Quiz	3
16 <sup>th</sup>	Discussion theme	Lecture with PPT presentation, Discussion	Class attendance Class performance, Final Quiz	4
17 <sup>th</sup>	Representation of gender in contemporary films, TV, and graphic novels ‘Thappar’	Lecture with PPT presentation, Discussion Presentation	Class attendance Class performance, Final Quiz	1,4



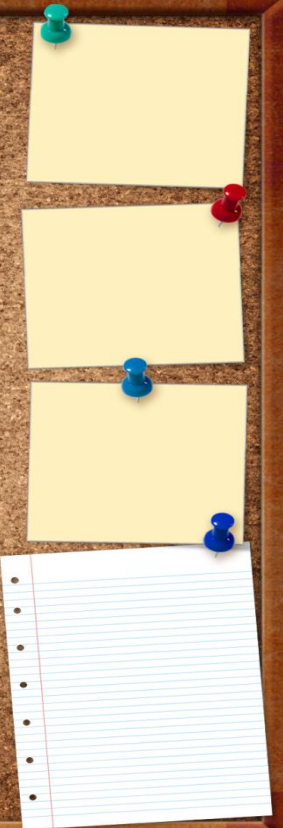


**University of Global Village  
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Department of English  
BA (Hons) Program**

## **Key concept of Gender and Literature**

**Week : 1<sup>st</sup>**

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# The Evolution of Gender Representation in Literature

## Early Literature

Early literature often depicted women in stereotypical roles, reflecting the patriarchal norms of the time.

## Modern Literature

The 20th and 21st centuries saw the rise of feminist literature, showcasing diverse female characters and challenging gender stereotypes.

# Defining Sex: Biological Differences

## Anatomy

Sex refers to biological differences between males, females, and intersex individuals, including anatomical distinctions of the reproductive system.

## Chromosomes

These differences also include genetic variations, such as the XX chromosomes for females and XY chromosomes for males.

## Hormones

Hormonal differences, including estrogen and testosterone, contribute to physical characteristics and development.





# Defining Gender: Societal Influence

## Roles

Gender encompasses societal expectations and roles assigned to men, women, and non-binary individuals based on perceived sex.

## Behaviors

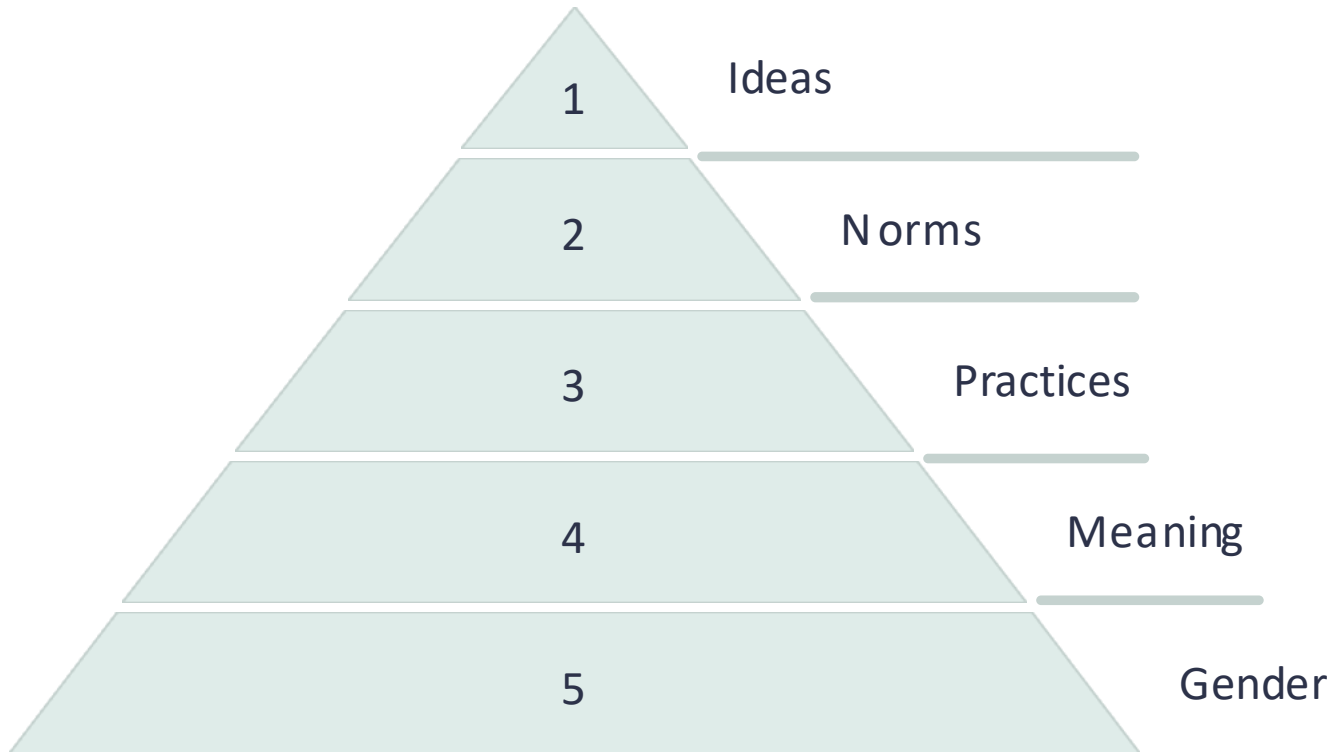
It encompasses the behaviors, activities, and interests considered appropriate for each gender by cultural norms.

## Norms

Gender is a social construct, shaped by cultural norms, traditions, and historical influences that vary across time and place.



# The Social Constructionist Perspective



- The informal rules and expectations that dictate appropriate behavior for individuals based on their gender.
- Examples: "Boys don't cry," or "Girls should be polite."

# Stereotyping and Subverting Gender Norms

1

Stereotypes

---

2

Subversion

---

3

Breaking Expectations

---

4

New Narratives

Literature has a history of perpetuating harmful stereotypes. However, it is also a tool for challenging these norms and creating new narratives that reflect the complexity of gender identities.



# The Spectrum of Gender Identity and Expression



## Transgender

Individuals whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.



## Non-Binary

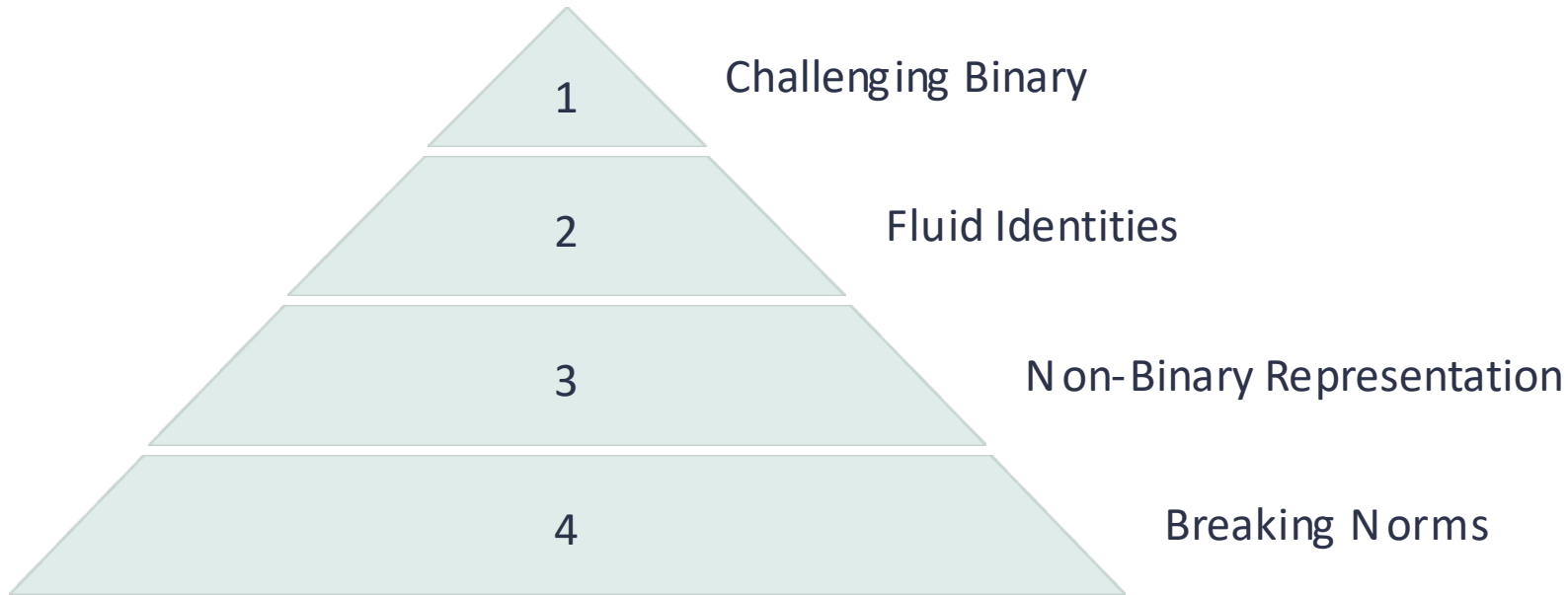
Individuals who identify as neither exclusively male nor female, embracing a range of gender expressions.



## Gender Fluid

Individuals whose gender identity fluctuates over time or varies across different situations.

# Gender Fluidity and Non-Binary Narratives



Contemporary literature embraces gender fluidity and non-binary identities, portraying characters who transcend traditional gender categories.

## 1. Challenging Binary

The classification of gender into two distinct, opposite categories: male and female.

- This binary framework excludes the experiences of non-binary, genderqueer, and other gender-diverse individuals.

A gender identity outside the male-female binary.

Behaviors or presentations that do not align with societal expectations of one's assigned gender.

## Fluid Identities

- Judith Butler argues that gender is not something one "is" but something one "does" through repeated actions and behaviors.
- Gender performativity highlights that societal norms are maintained through repetition and can also be disrupted through resistance.

# Gender Roles & Expression

- ❑ Societal expectations about how individuals should behave based on their perceived gender.
  - Examples: Associating nurturing and caregiving with women, and leadership or strength with men.
  - These roles vary across cultures and are subject to change over time.
- ❑ The outward presentation of one's gender through clothing, behavior, hairstyles, voice, etc.
  - Gender expression does not necessarily align with societal expectations tied to one's gender identity or assigned sex.



# Intersectionality: The Influence of Race, Class, and Sexuality

1

## Race

Racialized experiences can shape how gender is perceived and expressed.

2

## Class

Socioeconomic status impacts opportunities and access to resources, influencing gender roles and expectations.

3

## Sexuality

Sexual orientation intersects with gender identity, creating unique experiences and challenges for individuals.





# Hegemonic & Toxic Masculinity



## Hegemonic Masculinity

The dominant cultural ideal of masculinity, often associated with traits like toughness, dominance, and emotional restraint.

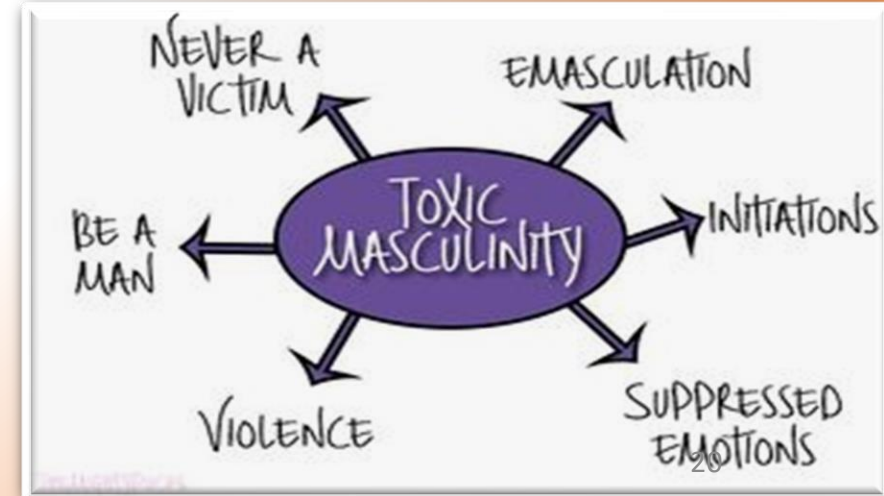


**Emphasized Femininity:** The culturally dominant form of femininity, often defined by compliance, nurturing, and sexual attractiveness



## Toxic Masculinity

A harmful cultural concept of masculinity that promotes aggression, emotional suppression, and dominance while discouraging vulnerability and empathy







# Patriarchal Structures and Feminist Perspectives

## Patriarchal Norms

Traditional literature often reinforced patriarchal structures, limiting female characters to domestic roles or passive figures.

## Feminist Critiques

Feminist literary theory critiques these structures, highlighting the ways in which women are marginalized and silenced in literature.

## New Perspectives

Feminist writing explores female experiences, agency, and resistance, offering alternative perspectives on the world.

## Feminist Theories on Gender

- **Liberal Feminism:** Focuses on achieving gender equality within existing structures (e.g., workplace equality, suffrage).
- **Radical Feminism:** Seeks to dismantle patriarchy and traditional gender roles entirely.
- **Postmodern Feminism:** Deconstructs fixed notions of gender and embraces fluidity



# Historical and Cultural Variations in Gender

1

## Ancient Egypt

Women could own property, conduct business, and hold positions of power.

2

## Victorian Era

Strict gender roles confined women to domestic spheres, emphasizing femininity and domesticity.

3

## Modern Era

Increased acceptance of gender fluidity and non-binary identities, with a shift towards greater equality and inclusion.



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## **A Room of One's Own (Chapters 1-2)**

**Week : 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>**

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# Virginia Woolf

## A Room of One's Own

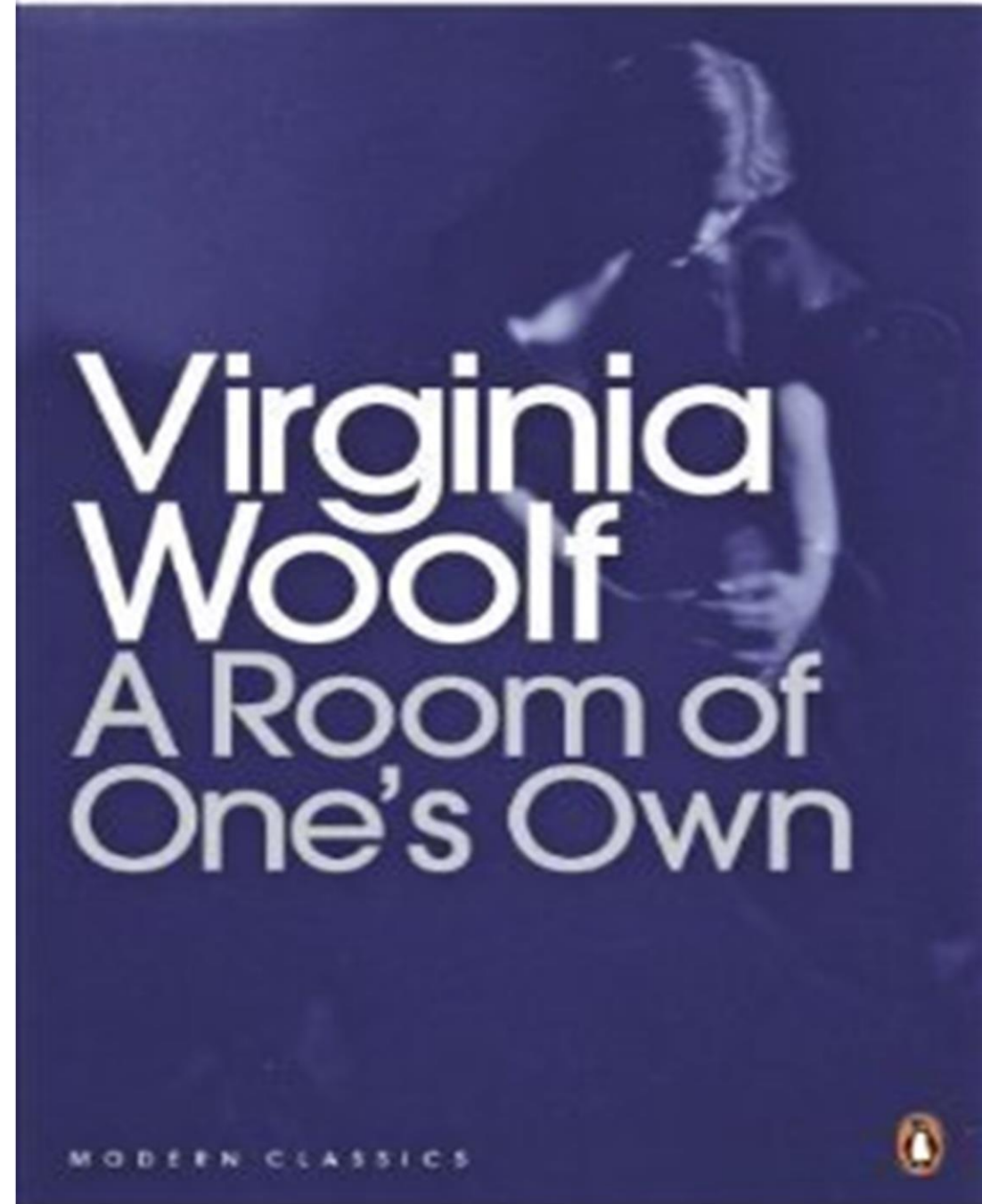


MODERN CLASSICS



Text Link:

<https://victorianpersistence.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/a-room-of-ones-own-virginia-woolf-1929.pdf>





# Introduction to Virginia Woolf's Essay

*A Room of One's Own* is considered the first major work in feminist criticism. It is an essay based upon two papers read at Newnham and Girton. (women's colleges at Cambridge).

Virginia Woolf didn't think much of her essays, maybe because they were commissioned. Some of them, nevertheless, such as *A Room of One's Own* and *Three Guineas* are truly modernist in style.

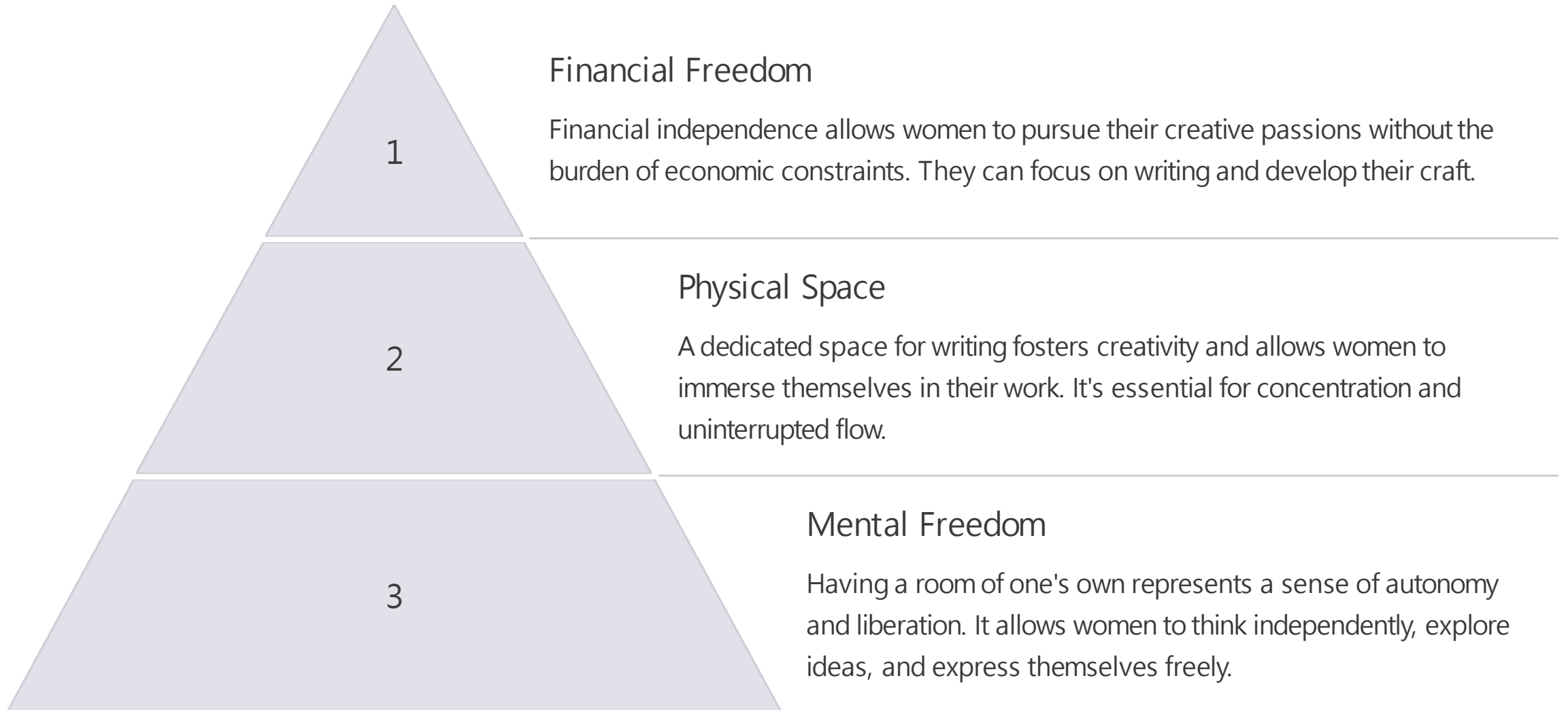
She argued that the aim of an essay was to give pleasure and not trying to inform or persuade the reader.

*A Room of One's Own* is an exploration of the material and psychological conditions and historical constraints encountered by women writers.

Published in 1929, this essay is based on lectures Woolf delivered at Newnham College and Girton College, both women's colleges in Cambridge.

Woolf explores the connection between financial independence and creative freedom for women, particularly female writers. She challenges traditional gender roles and societal expectations.

# The Importance of Having a Room of One's Own





In the **first chapter** she establishes her hypothesis about what women need to be able to write: **money and a room of their own**. But she also analyses the differences between male and female writing, among them the fact that men had university colleges and women were excluded from public places. She also points out the *"pervasiveness of women as the subjects of poetry and on their absence from history"* (Graham, 2000).



In chapter two she studies in detail the effect of poverty on the writing of fiction. She also exposes how men's anger against women (as a result of the new woman, the suffrage, etc.) affects their artistic production.





In **chapter three** she shows the contrast between the constant presence of women as characters in the fiction written by men and their exclusion as writers. To explain why women didn't have the access to the literary world, she introduces a fictional sister of Shakespeare and compares the difficulties met by both of them, equally gifted, when trying to be writers.

Judith and William represented the heads and tails of the coin.

In **chapter four** she states the need of **tradition**, apart from **social recognition** and **material conditions**, to learn the craft and master it. She considers women lack the necessary background. She analyses the works of women writers such as Charlotte Brönte or Jane Austen and advises women to write **without anger**. She prefers Austen to Brönte because she was free from anger. She affirms that women prefer novel because it is a new genre, more suitable for them than the traditional genres used by men.



In chapter five she explores a language suitable for women. Mary Carmichael will have to find a language that has never been used before. Women mustn't write like men, neither in theme nor in form. Time and experimentation is needed as well as tradition and reading works written by other women. She exhorts women to "*think back through our mothers*" and to express experience "*as a woman*". "*A woman's writing is always feminine,...the only difficulty lies in defining what we mean by feminine.*"



VIRGINIA WOOLF

In the last chapter, she introduces one of the most shocking ideas: the ideal state of mind to produce art is an androgynous one. She rejects determinism and she insists that men and women have a two faced mind, with a masculine and a feminine part, and both must be involved in the creative process if we want to create a lasting work of art.




TRUTH



# STORYLINE CHARACTERS SETTINGS



A woman with short brown hair, wearing a blue top and a yellow and white beaded necklace, stands behind a dark brown podium. She has a surprised expression. A large white speech bubble on the left contains text. Another speech bubble on the right shows a money bag and a door.

'A WOMAN MUST  
HAVE MONEY AND A  
ROOM OF HER OWN IF  
SHE IS TO WRITE  
FICTION'

(CHAPTER 1)



# AUTHOR SURROGATES

MARY BETON

MARY SETON

MARY CARMICHAEL



**THE 'MARYS' REPRESENT VARIOUS WOMEN**

# SETTING

# PORTMANTEAU

OXBRIDGE *A Room of One's Own*  
OXFORD  
+  
CAMBRIDGE  
*Women and Fiction*







## Chapter 1: The Nature of the Problem

The essay begins with a question – ‘But, you may say,... what has that to do with a room of one’s own?’ • Suggests that what is to come is unconventional, contrary to expectation. • It’s as if a conversation has been going on and you are entering in the middle of it. • It is not possible to tell an objective story of women and fiction. • Woolf herself has a close connection to the subject of the essay and this is evident in the emotions she expresses when discussing the topic

### A Woman’s Place in Fiction vs. Reality

- Woolf begins by contemplating the disparity between the portrayal of women in literature and their actual status in society. She observes that while women are often idealized or demonized in fiction, their real lives have been marked by oppression and exclusion from intellectual pursuits.
- She remarks that women, although central to stories as characters, have historically been denied the tools and spaces necessary to create stories of their own.





(CHAPTER 1)

'YOU KNOW THE  
LITTLE TUG -  
THE SUDDEN  
CONGLOMERATION  
OF AN IDEA...?'



**NARRATOR**

### ➤ Lack of Representation

Woolf observed that women's stories were often absent from mainstream literary narratives. This lack of representation limited understanding of their lives and experiences.

### ➤ Constrained Creativity

She argues that societal expectations and limitations placed on women often stifled their creativity. They were expected to conform to traditional gender roles

### ➤ Unique Perspective

Woolf emphasizes the value of a distinct female perspective in literature. Women have unique insights and stories to tell, adding richness and diversity to the literary landscape.



## Material Conditions and Creativity

Woolf asserts that poverty and lack of privacy are major barriers to women's literary achievements. She uses the metaphor of "a room of one's own" to symbolize the material and intellectual independence required for creativity. Her exploration of this concept is rooted in her fictional narrative of being invited to deliver a lecture on "Women and Fiction." She critiques the expectations placed on her as a female lecturer to speak authoritatively on such a vast topic despite the constraints placed on women historically.

The structure of the essay follows how Woolf came to her view about privacy and money.

Woolf points out that there are several questions and approaches to the topic of women and fiction:

- Pointing out certain women writers
- Women and what they are like
- Women and the fiction that is written about them

Woolf will consider how these three approaches are 'inextricably mixed together' • Concludes the chapter with a fictional personal experience, the description of two imaginary meals as a way of depicting the educational situation of women at her time, including that of those who might some day create fiction. • Woolf notes that a formal education is almost always the possession of great writers – but for the most of history women were excluded from most formal education. • Concludes by thinking about the poverty and insecurity that characterises the lives of women and the effect of tradition and the lack of tradition on the mind of the writer

# NARRATOR

HOW  
DARE  
YOU?!











## The Role of the University (Oxbridge)

- During her visit to a fictional university (Oxbridge, a blend of Oxford and Cambridge), Woolf highlights the exclusionary practices of elite institutions. She notes how women are denied access to the same resources, libraries, and opportunities as men.
- The imagery of being barred from entering the university lawn or library becomes a metaphor for the intellectual restrictions imposed on women

## The Locked Library

- The locked library at Oxbridge becomes a recurring symbol of women's exclusion from intellectual spaces. It represents the broader societal barriers that keep women from accessing knowledge and creative opportunities



# Exploring the Financial and Social Constraints

## Lack of Inheritance

Woolf highlights the fact that women were often denied inheritance rights, which limited their access to financial resources and autonomy.

## Limited Career Options

The traditional roles expected of women often excluded them from professional pursuits. They were limited to domestic work or low-paying jobs, restricting their financial freedom.

## Social Expectations

Societal expectations placed upon women often limited their opportunities for personal growth and independence. They were expected to prioritize their husbands and families.



I JUST  
WANTED  
TO BE A  
SCIENTIST.



((CHAPTER 1))

# Chapter 2: Historical and Social Context

## 1.The Economic Dependence of Women

1. Woolf reflects on the economic realities that have historically subjugated women, emphasizing that financial independence is crucial for intellectual freedom.
2. She contrasts the wealth of male institutions (such as Oxbridge) with the financial struggles of women's colleges, using this disparity to highlight the systemic inequities between men and women.

## 2.The Impact of Poverty on Women's Writing

1. Woolf explores how financial insecurity has stifled women's creative potential. She argues that literary genius cannot thrive in conditions of constant stress and material deprivation.
2. She notes that women's poverty is not just a financial issue but one that is tied to their legal and social disempowerment throughout history.

## 3.The Legacy of Patriarchy

1. Woolf examines the historical absence of women in intellectual and artistic fields, attributing it to the structural dominance of patriarchy.
2. She critiques the patriarchal system that relegates women to domestic roles and prevents them from accessing education, leisure, and autonomy—key ingredients for literary achievement.

## 4.The Importance of Imagination and Humor

1. Woolf's narrative in these chapters is laced with wit and irony, which she uses as tools to challenge deeply entrenched societal norms.
2. She invites readers to reflect critically on the absurdity of the restrictions imposed on women, fostering a sense of possibility and hope for change





WHY ARE  
WOMEN SO  
POOR!?

INDEED!  
IT'S A MIRACLE  
THEY BUILT  
FERNHAM BACK  
IN THE 1860S!

(CHAPTER 1)



HAHA -  
GOOD LUCK  
WITH YOUR  
WRITING!







1882





WHY ARE  
WOMEN SO POOR?  
I MUST KNOW  
THE TRUTH!





JOHANN WOLFGANG  
VON GOETHE



DR SAMUEL  
JOHNSON

WOMEN ARE MENTALLY,  
MORALLY, AND PHYSICALLY  
WEAK! THEY'RE  
SMALL-BRAINED! 



NAPOLEON  
BONAPARTE

WOMEN ARE TOO IDEALISTIC  
AND VAIN - THEY'RE  
INFERIOR TO MEN! 



BENITO  
MUSSOLINI

JOHANN WOLFGANG  
VON GOETHE



DR SAMUEL  
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WOMEN ARE MENTALLY,  
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NAPOLEON  
BONAPARTE

WOMEN ARE TOO IDEALISTIC  
AND VAIN - THEY'RE  
INFERIOR TO MEN! 



BENITO  
MUSSOLINI







WOMEN WILL  
BE ABLE TO  
WORK IN ALL  
KINDS OF JOBS!



'ENGLAND IS UNDER  
THE RULE OF A  
PATRIARCHY. NOBODY  
IN THEIR SENSES  
COULD FAIL TO DETECT  
THE DOMINANCE OF THE  
PROFESSOR. HIS WAS THE  
POWER AND THE MONEY  
AND THE INFLUENCE.'



(CHAPTER 2)

## Chapter Two

- Scene shifts from 'Oxbridge' to the British Museum in London.
  - Here Woolf suggests she might find 'the essential oil of truth' and the answer to such questions like:
    - Why men drink wine and women water?
    - Why one sex is prosperous and the other poor?
    - What effect does poverty have on fiction?
    - What conditions are necessary for the creation of a work of art?
- Woolf turns to books that are written by men about women. Her focus being women and what they are like.

- Finds men's thinking about women to be full of prejudice and contradiction. They are unscientific, emotional, angry.
- This anger is seen to come from fear of the knowledge that men need women to bolster their own self-confidence. Men need to feel superior to women. This is what they are concerned with. Image of the looking glass/mirror
- Woolf argues that with an independent income women would be free to relate differently to men and explore the nature of the other sex as theirs is explored.
- Liberation from injustice consists of women being treated in much the same way as men are treated.





# The Significance of Judith, Shakespeare's Hypothetical Sister

1

## Lost Genius

Woolf imagines Judith, a fictional sister of William Shakespeare, who possessed equal talent but lacked the opportunities available to her brother.

2

## Unfulfilled Potential

Judith's story is a powerful reminder of the countless women writers who may have been silenced or their talents suppressed due to societal constraints.

3

## Impact on History

Woolf argues that the absence of women's voices in literature has shaped our understanding of history and culture. Their stories deserve to be told.

*Well bever ther io cornd the fhe  
bosnt the and sereius to handly  
surout with fice 'te bittng coonaf.*

— — VIRGINIA WOOLF —

# Conclusion and Key Takeaways

In these chapters, Woolf sets the stage for her broader exploration of gender and literature. She emphasizes the critical need for financial independence, personal space, and societal change to enable women to write and create. These chapters are both a critique of historical injustices and a call to action for future generations of women writers



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**To Room Nineteen**

**Week : 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>**

**Page: 59-68**





**Prega News**  
*Means Good News*



# A Descent into Isolation

## Synopsis

Susan Rawlings, a seemingly ordinary woman, descends into a spiral of loneliness and despair as she confronts the realities of her marriage and societal constraints. The novel's chilling narrative follows her mental deterioration as she becomes increasingly detached from reality.

## Themes

Isolation, identity, and the human condition are central themes explored by Lessing. Susan's struggle to define herself in the face of societal expectations and her own inner turmoil is a powerful exploration of the human psyche.



# Susan Rawlings: Trapped by Societal Expectations



## Protagonist

Susan is a complex and flawed character who is both a victim and a perpetrator of her own circumstances. She is trapped in a loveless marriage and struggles to reconcile her own desires with societal expectations.

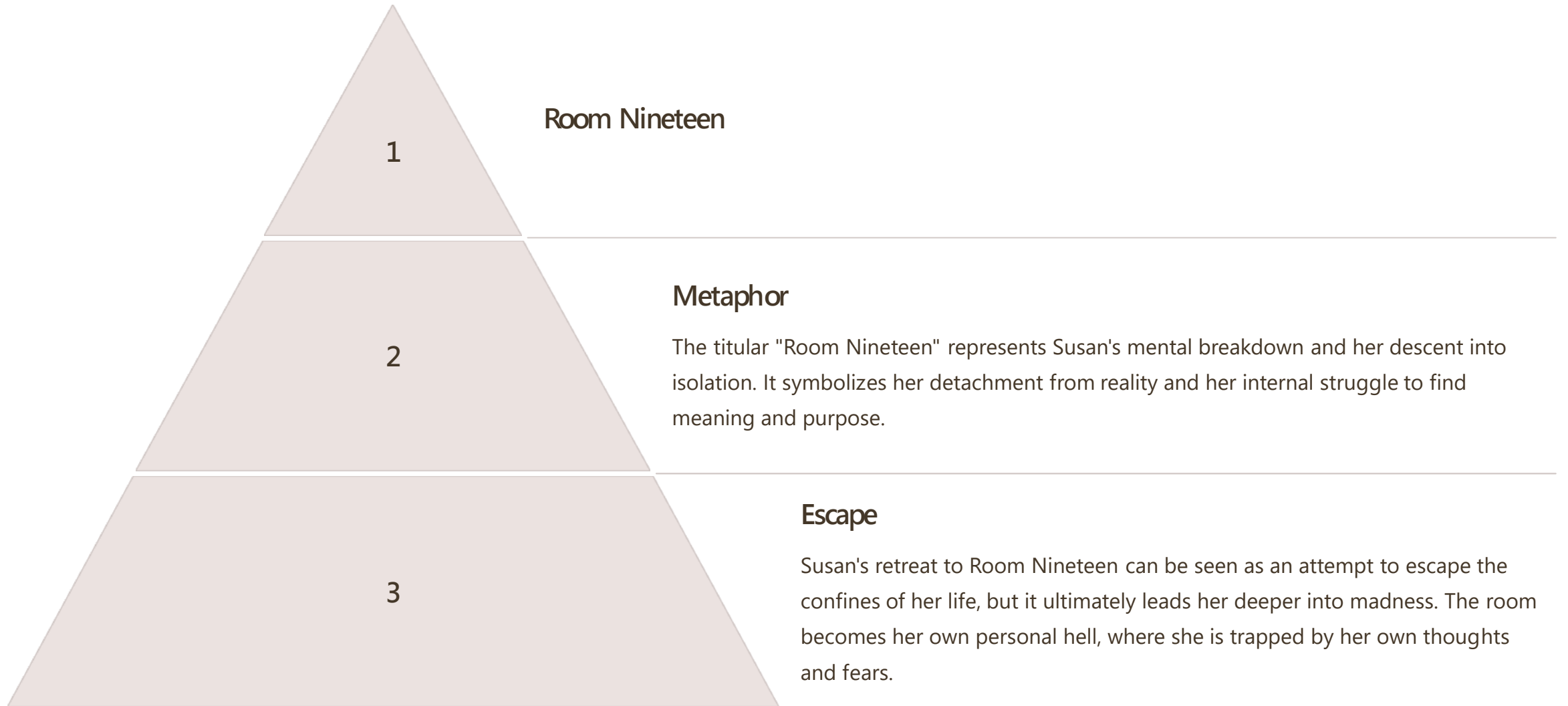


## Domestic Life

Susan's domestic life becomes a microcosm of her confinement. The novel explores the complexities of gender roles and the struggles women face in balancing societal expectations with their own aspirations.



# The Symbolic Room





# Exploring Gender Roles and Expectations



## Women's Struggles

Through Susan's journey, Lessing critiques societal expectations placed upon women in the mid-20th century. She explores the limitations imposed by marriage, motherhood, and domesticity, highlighting the internal struggles women face in a patriarchal society.



## Marriage and Freedom

Susan's marriage is a catalyst for her descent. Her husband, a well-meaning but distant man, represents societal norms and expectations that stifle Susan's desire for personal growth and freedom.



# Lessing's Literary Techniques

1

## Stream of Consciousness

Lessing employs stream of consciousness narration, allowing readers to delve into Susan's fragmented thoughts and internal turmoil. The novel's structure reflects Susan's disintegrating mental state, blurring the lines between reality and delusion.

2

## Symbolism

Symbolism plays a crucial role in the novel, with objects and settings holding deeper meanings. Room Nineteen, the house, and Susan's surroundings all contribute to the novel's symbolic richness.





# Enduring Impact

## 1

### Relevance

"To Room Nineteen" remains relevant today, as it explores universal themes of identity, isolation, and the challenges of navigating societal expectations.

## 2

### Legacy

Lessing's powerful and unflinching portrayal of mental breakdown and societal constraints has left a lasting impact on literature and continues to resonate with readers.

# Key Takeaways

1

## Individuality

The novel emphasizes the importance of individual expression and the need to break free from societal expectations that limit personal growth and fulfillment.

---

2

## Mental Health

Lessing's work sheds light on the complexities of mental health and the importance of acknowledging and addressing internal struggles.

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3

## Social Commentary

"To Room Nineteen" serves as a powerful critique of societal norms and the limitations they impose on individuals, especially women.



# Conclusion

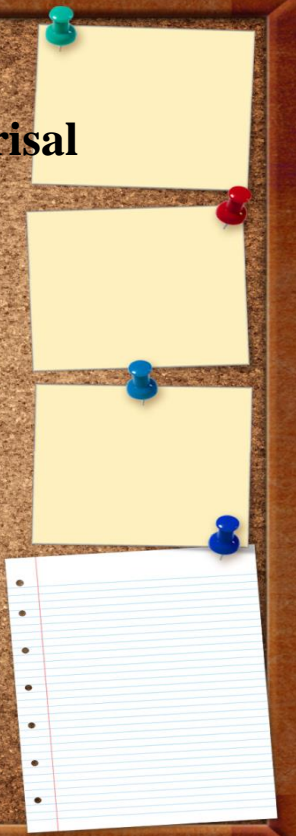
Through Susan's journey, Lessing masterfully weaves together psychological realism, social commentary, and symbolic storytelling. "To Room Nineteen" continues to captivate readers with its exploration of the human psyche, the complexities of modern life, and the enduring search for individual meaning and purpose.





**University of Global Village (UGV), Barisal**  
**Department of English**  
**BA (Hons) Program**

**Sutana's Dream**  
**Week : 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>**  
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# Begum Rokeya and the Status of Women

## Colonial India

Begum Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain was a Bengali writer and social activist who lived in British-ruled India. She was deeply concerned about the status of women in society, who were often marginalized and denied opportunities.

## Gender Inequality

The social, political, and economic realities of the time dictated limited access to education, employment, and public life for women.



# Introduction to Sultana's Dream

## A Visionary Tale

In her short story "Sultana's Dream," Rokeya presents a utopian world called Ladyland, ruled by women, where gender roles are reversed.

## Exploring Gender Roles

The story challenges traditional gender norms and explores the potential of a society where women are empowered.





# The Reversal of Gender Roles

## Ladyland

In Ladyland, men are confined to domestic duties, while women are engaged in science, technology, and politics.

## A Different World

The story imagines a world where women have achieved equal rights and have taken control of their lives.

# Women's Scientific Advancements



## Technological Prowess

Women in Ladyland have made remarkable advancements in science and technology, developing flying machines and other innovative inventions.



## Global Connectivity

The story envisions a world where women have broken free from traditional constraints and are leading the way in scientific progress.





## Critique of Patriarchy

### Challenging Norms

The story serves as a powerful critique of patriarchal societies, where women are often relegated to secondary roles.

### Call for Empowerment

It emphasizes the need for female empowerment and equality to achieve a more just and equitable world.



# The Transformative Power of Imagination

1

## Imagination as a Tool

Rokeya's story demonstrates the transformative power of imagination and its ability to envision a better future.

2

## Challenging the Status Quo

By imagining a world where women hold positions of power and leadership, the story inspires readers to challenge the status quo.



# Connecting to Modern Feminism

1

## Relevance Today

"Sultana's Dream" remains relevant today, as it continues to inspire feminist movements around the world.

2

## Gender Equality

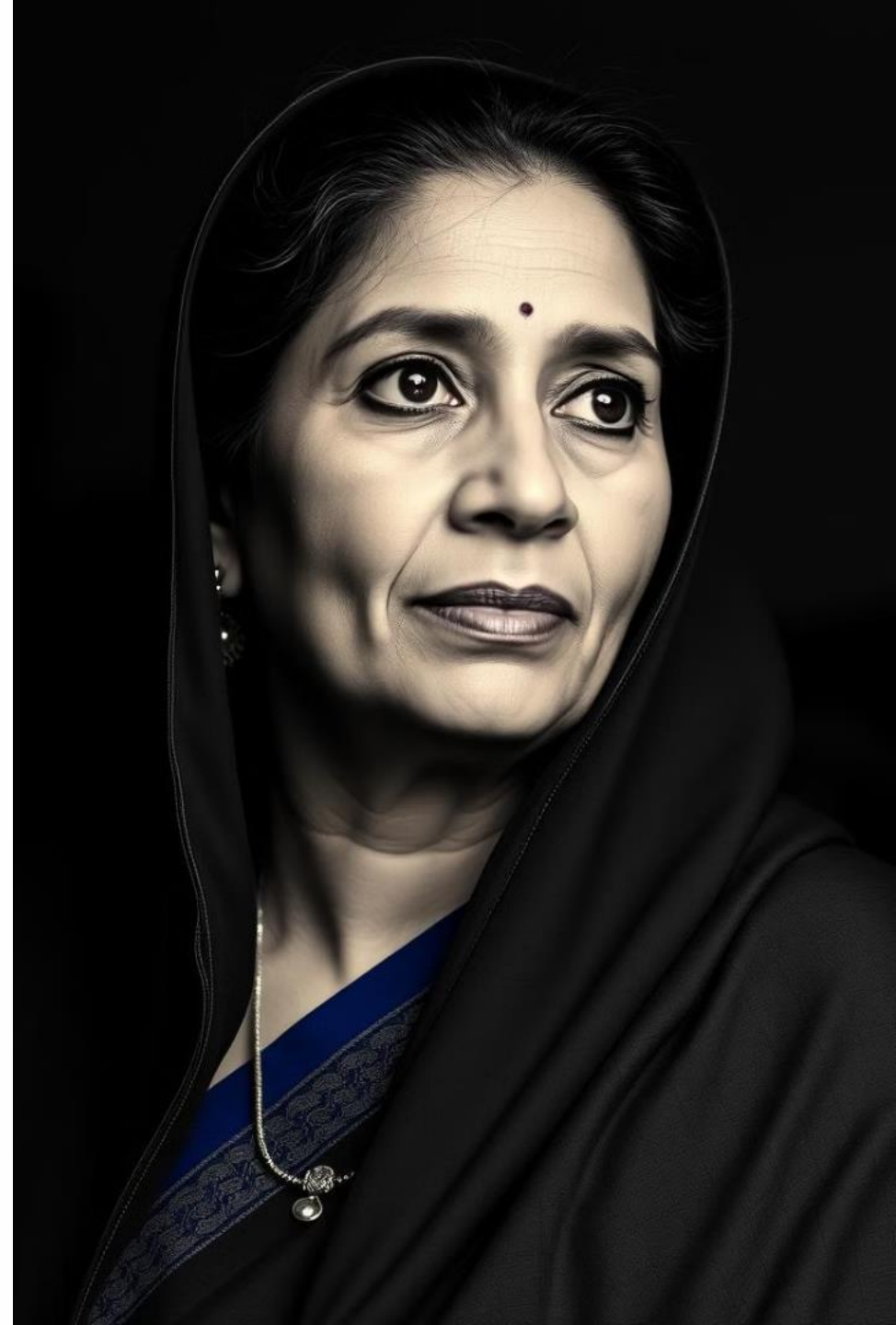
The story's message of gender equality resonates with contemporary struggles for women's rights and empowerment.





# Enduring Legacy

Begum Rokeya's visionary work continues to inspire and provoke conversations about gender roles, equality, and the transformative power of imagination. Her enduring legacy is a testament to the importance of challenging societal norms and fighting for a more just and equitable world.







## **CHITRA GANESH** (American, born 1975)

is a visual artist based in Brooklyn, New York. A multimedia artist known for articulating feminist and queer narratives that weave together religious, mythological, and popular iconographies, Ganesh was born and raised in a Hindu Indian immigrant family in Brooklyn and Queens. Her wide-ranging practice, which includes drawings, photographic digital collages, text-based works, and collaborations, draws from

a vast array of sources, both religious and vernacular. The resultant work both reveals narratives from the past and imagines new visions of the future.

Ganesh graduated magna cum laude from Brown University in with a BA in Comparative Literature and Art-Semiotics, and received her MFA from Columbia University in 2002. Her work has been widely exhibited both nationally and internationally, including at the Queens Museum, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Baltimore Museum of Art, the Saatchi Museum in London, and the Brooklyn Museum of Art. Ganesh's work is widely recognized in South Asia, and has been shown at several venues, including The Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts (New Delhi), Prince of Wales Museum (Mumbai), and Devi Art Foundation.





1

## *The Condition of Womanhood*

2019.12.3

*One evening I was lounging in an easy chair in my bedroom and thinking lazily of the condition of Indian womanhood. I am not sure whether I dozed off or not. But, as far as I remember, I was wide awake. I saw the moonlit sky sparkling with thousands of diamond-like stars, very distinctly.*

The first print in the series shows the protagonist Sultana reclining in her chair, perhaps dozing, perhaps daydreaming. The image balloon that seems to float toward the open window is filled with various enigmatic symbols in silhouette, including a female kneeling, her hair flung back and an image balloon emerging from her mouth, and a single eye set within a flower form.

The curtains are open to the night sky, which is, as the text proclaims, sparkling with thousands of diamond-like stars.





## 2

### *The Visitation*

2019.12.4

*All on a sudden a lady stood before me; how she came in, I do not know. I took her for my friend, Sister Sara.*

*"Good morning," said Sister Sara. I smiled inwardly as I knew it was not morning, but starry night. However, I replied to her saying, "How do you do?"*

*"I am all right, thank you. Will you please come out and have a look at our garden?"*

The shadowy figure Sultana believes to be her friend Sister Sara looms large above her. The interior space of the first print has given way to a dark background also filled with diamond-like stars. Sister Sara shows Sultana an hour glass that she holds in the palm of her hand. It contains images of a crescent moon and stars in the top; a man's head, his brain rendered in the form of mechanical gears and enclosed in a crystal ball, is in the lower part. This face, which recurs several times, is what Ganesh imagines to be a motherboard or oracle.





### 3

## *Leaving the House*

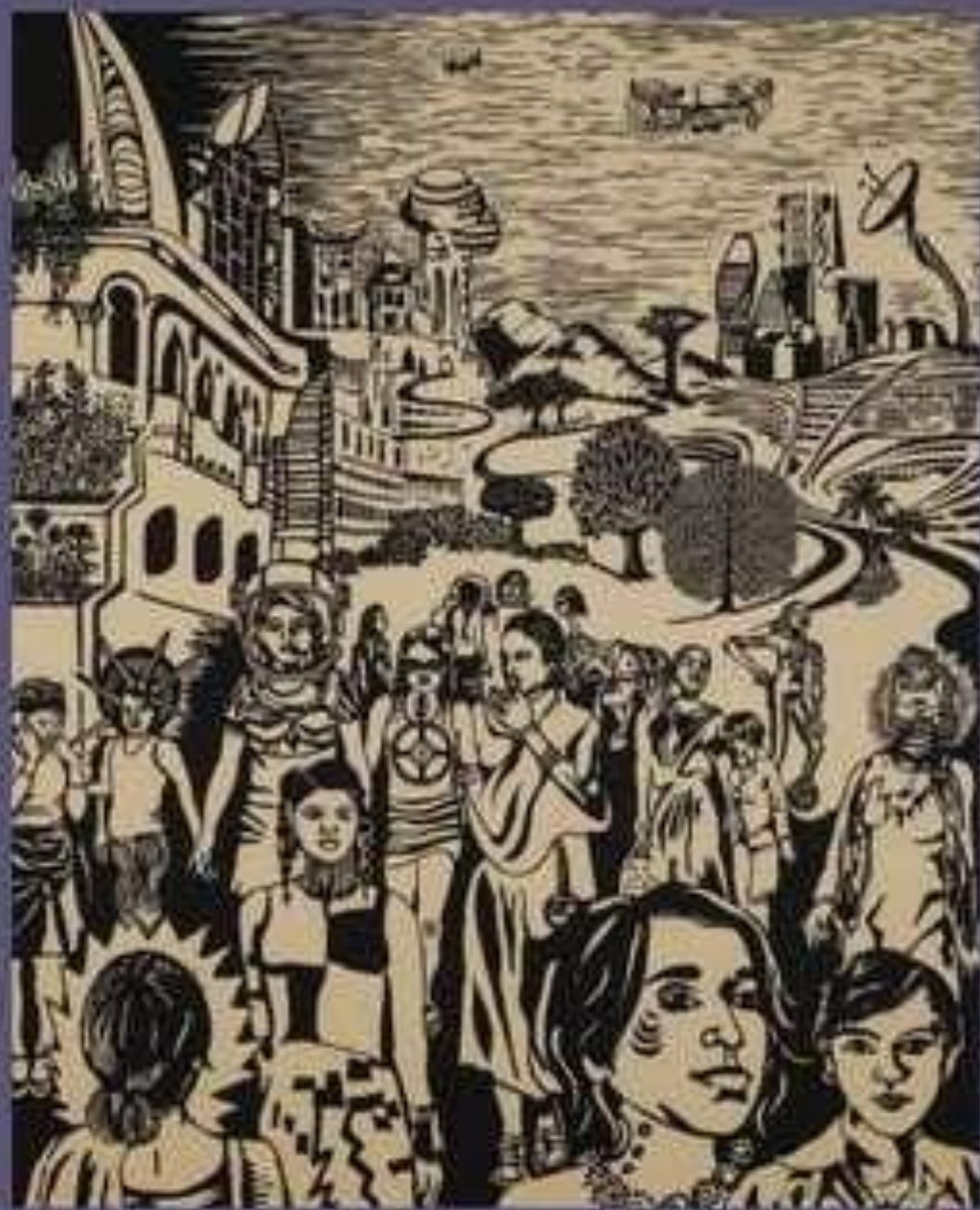
2019.12.5

*I looked again at the moon through the open window, and thought there was no harm in going out at that time. The men-servants outside were fast asleep just then, and I could have a pleasant walk with Sister Sara.*

In this image, Sultana gazes out the window into the night. A large crescent moon with the symbol of a single eye within shines brightly above the house. A large hand beckons her from the tree on the right. The rickshaw puller sleeps on the steps of his vehicle; another man naps beneath the tree, his head resting on the sleeping dog beside him.

Ganesh's imagery evokes a tension between the inside and outside worlds. The outside world poses a risk to women unless the men are absent or asleep. It is, though, the outside world that beckons Sultana through the window.





## 4

### *City in Broad Daylight*

2019.12.6

*When walking I found to my surprise that it was a fine morning. The town was fully awake and the streets alive with bustling crowds. I was feeling very shy, thinking I was walking in the street in broad daylight, but there was not a single man visible.*

Despite her trepidation, Sultana accepts Sister Sara's invitation to go out. She is amazed that it is day rather than night, and that there is a complete absence of men on the street. The people on the street laugh at her, and Sister Sara lets her know the reason: because of her hesitancy, she is "shy and timid like men."

Ganesh depicts the skyline as futuristic, with flying machines hovering above. The urban setting appears more as park than street, with trees and grass rather than pavement.





## 5

### *Justice is a Virtue*

2019.12.7

*You need not be afraid of coming across a man here. This is Ladyland, free from sin and harm. Virtue herself reigns here.*

Sister Sara reassures Sultana, telling her that she doesn't need to be hesitant or feel awkward, because there is no possibility of seeing a man during their walk. Men are equated with sin and harm; women, with virtue, and it is clear that women rule Ladyland.

Ganesh interprets this narrative with several symbols. The three-headed figure references the Trimurti, or Triple deity of supreme divinity in Hinduism. The figure on the left holds a scale, which represents justice. Monkeys are sacred in Hinduism, and two perch on the arm of the goddess on the right. The central figure is crowned with a flame that is inset with a single eye. The two animals in the foliage, a pangolin and a peacock, are both native to India.





## 6

### *Chappals in the Grass*

2019.12.8

*By and by I was enjoying the scenery...I mistook a patch of green grass for a velvet cushion. Feeling as if I were walking on a soft carpet, I looked down and found the path covered with moss and flowers.*

When Sister Sara asks Sultana if she likes the path, Sultana responds that she is worried about destroying the flowers. Sister Sara responds

*Never mind, dear Sultana; your treading will not harm them; they are street flowers.*

In the image, Sultana, who is wearing traditional Indian chappals, or sandals, gazes down at her feet. A lizard occupies part of the ground scape, which is covered with flowers and foliage.





7

## House in Heart Garden

2019.12.9

*By this time we reached Sister Sara's house. It was situated in a beautiful heart-shaped garden. It was a bungalow with a corrugated iron roof. It was cooler and nicer than any of our rich buildings.*

Ganesh has interpreted the heart-shaped garden as a literal heart, with valves that hold flowers and seemingly wrap around the bungalow. The garden is rich with foliage, and the shape of the house organic. The motif of two hands stretched out beckoning occurs again in this print; a single eye — another recurrent motif — is set within each palm.





## 8

### *Cooking with Light*

2019.12.10

*"How do you cook?" I asked.*

*"With solar heat," she said, at the same time showing me the pipe, through which passed the concentrated sunlight and heat. And she cooked something then and there to show me the process.*

Sister Sara stands at the stove in the center of her kitchen, which is filled with foliage and flowers. A fixture located above Sister Sara's head contains two hands on truncated arms reaching straight up toward the sky. Beams of light extend from the fingers, indicating the source of the solar heat. At the right, Sultana, identifiable by her eyeglasses, reaches up to pluck a fruit from one of the plants.





9

## *Glorious Fruit*

2019.12.11

Sultana: "What is your chief food?"

Sister Sara: "Fruits."

Like a few other prints in the series, Ganesh chose to place this one earlier than the reference appears in Hossain's narrative. By placing *Glorious Fruit* after *Cooking with Light*, she relates it to the notion of food and nurturance.



# 10

## *Sitting Side by Side*

2019.12.12

*We sat side by side, She brought out of the parlour a piece of embroidery work and began putting on a fresh design.*

*Sister Sara: "Do you know knitting and needle work?"*

*Sultana: "Yes; we have nothing else to do in our zenana."*

*Sister Sara: "But we do not trust our zenana members with embroidery!" she said laughing, "as a man has not patience enough to pass thread through a needlehole even!"*

This intimate scene shows the two women in deep conversation, seated in the garden. The stars in the sky and the figure with the telescope suggest that it is night. Sister Sara holds what appears to be an embroidery hoop. There is another embroidery hoop held by a disembodied pair of hands in the sky at right.





# 11

## *Lions are Stronger than Men*

2019.12.13

Sister Sara: *"Why do you allow yourselves to be shut up?"*

Sultana: *"Because it cannot be helped as they [men] are stronger than women."*

Sister Sara: *"A lion is stronger than a man, but it does not enable him to dominate the human race. You have neglected the duty you owe to yourselves and you have lost your natural rights by shutting your eyes to your own interests."*

This image epitomizes the influence of comic art on Ganesh's work. The men are wearing lion heads. In the upper left, one woman — perhaps Sultana — is peeking through two fingers at the scene before her. Another woman, dressed as a comic book heroine, is tossing a lion-headed man over her shoulder. It is interesting to note that she has two pair of arms — one pair is on her hips, while the other lifts the man above her.





# 12

## *In the Zenana*

2019.12.14

A *zenana* is the part of the house where women are secluded from men. In *Ladyland*, a variety of circumstances led to the men being housed permanently in the *zenana*, while the women were free to study, create, and conduct society. As Sister Sara explains to Sultana:

*Now that they are accustomed to the purdah system and have ceased to grumble at their seclusion, we call the system "Mardana" instead of "zenana."*

*Since the "Mardana" system has been established, there has been no more crime or sin...*

In Ganesh's exquisite representation of the *zenana*, the architecture appears with distinctive Indian decorative schemes. The men are seen only as shadowy figures isolated behind the screens.



# 13

## *Baby Queen*

2019.12.15

*Sultana: How did you manage to gather and store up the sun heat?" I asked her in amazement.*

*Sister Sara: Thirty years ago, when our present Queen was thirteen years old, she inherited the throne.... Our good Queen liked science very much. She circulated an order that all the women in her country should be educated.*

Sultana's question to Sister Sara begins the conversation, not only about solar heat, but about how Ladyland came to be. Sister Sara tells her that the Queen had no real power—a Prime Minister ruled the country—but she loved science and was able to mandate that all women be educated. She admits to Sultana that at the time, the country followed purdah and women were sequestered. Ganesh has portrayed the Queen with the recurrent motif of the oracle that appears in several other prints.





14

## *Sultana University*

2019.12.16

*In the capital, where our Queen lives, there are two universities,*

These two universities were both for women. Ganesh shows a number of women engaged in scientific or mechanical projects. The woman at lower left, for example, wears a cap with electrodes attached; two other women work on a piece of machinery. What appears to be a mechanical figure floats above the machinery. The woman at lower right writes diligently in a book.





# 15

## Water Storage

2019.12.17

*One of these [universities] invented a wonderful balloon, to which they attached a number of pipes. By means of this captive balloon which they managed to keep afloat above the cloud land, they could draw as much water from the atmosphere as they pleased.*

Ganesh shows the large balloon with flexible hoses stretching toward a cloud as torrents of rain fall. The disproportionately large head of a woman, seemingly supported by a mechanical gear attached below her neck, floats above the building; she gazes up toward the balloon.





# 16

## *Solar Hands*

2019.12.18

*When the other university came to know of this, they became exceedingly jealous and tried to do something more extraordinary still. They invented an instrument by which they could collect as much sun-heat as they wanted.*

The two universities may have been in competition, but it is clear that they were competing for the common good. Whereas the first harnessed the weather, the second turned to solar power. Ganesh repeats the motif of extended hands with a single eye in each palm, stretching toward the sun. Sister Sara makes clear to Sultana that the heat stored would be distributed among the population as necessary.





# 17

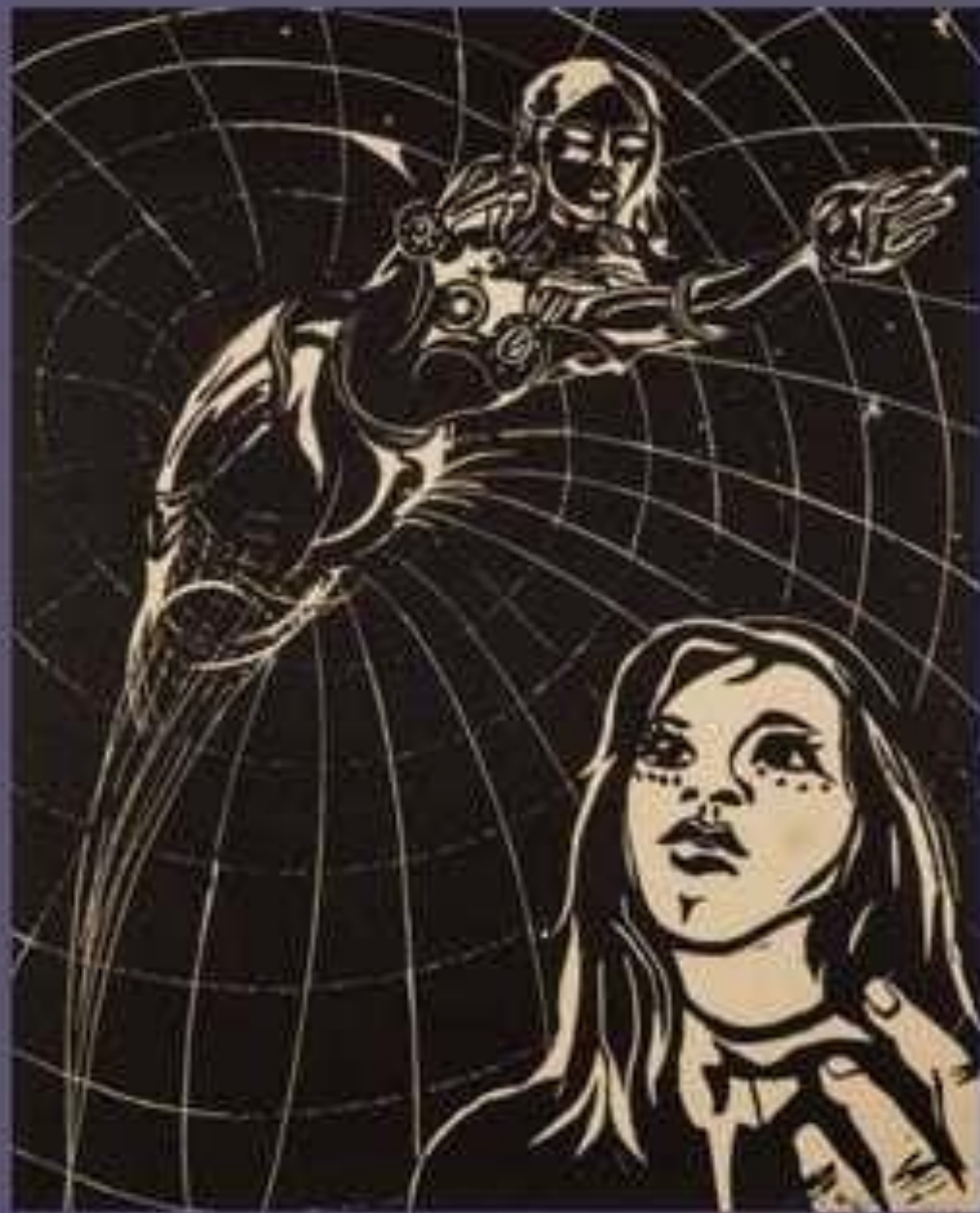
## *Oracle in the Baoli*

2019.12.19

Although this scene is not specific to Hossain's text, it references the parts of *Sultana's Dream* that have to do with water and energy storage. Ganesh has represented here a *baoli*, a Hindi word for step well or water temple. Baolis functioned to store water, but also served as a place for social gatherings and religious ceremonies. Women were often associated with these wells because one of their societal roles was to collect water. Women also prayed and offered gifts to the goddess of the well for her blessings.

In this case, the baoli is used to store energy, and connects to the flower like hands swaying in the sky. The face at the bottom of the well, prefigured in the second print, is the oracle that Ganesh imagines as the guardian of the energy reserves.





18

## *Event Horizon*

2019.12.20

*Event Horizon*, another image not found in the narrative of Hossain's short story, is a personal reflection by the artist. As Ganesh wrote in correspondence with the curator,

*I was thinking about the figure or potentiality of female power emerging from space time fabric, and realized this scene as happening within and through the fabric of an event horizon of a black hole.*



19

## Sentimental Nightmare

2019.12.21

*While the women were engaged in scientific research, the men of this country were busy increasing their military power. When they came to know that the female universities were able to draw water from the atmosphere and collect heat from the sun, they only laughed at the members of the universities and called the whole thing "a sentimental nightmare."*

An armed man aggressively leans over the fence, pointing toward the image balloon that extends up from the three young women studying below. The image balloon contains the recurring motif of a pair of outstretched hands as well as a woman riding an airborne machine. The title *Sentimental Nightmare* refers to their scientific accomplishments.





20

## Refugees and Queen

2019.12.22

*Soon afterwards certain persons came from a neighboring country and took shelter in ours.*

This powerful image shows the Queen cradling several figures, their faces terrified, in her arms. According to the story, they were political refugees. When she refused the king's demand to hand over the refugees to his officers — "it was against her principles to turn out refugees" — the king declared war against the country.





## 21

### *Wise Ladies Meeting*

2019.12.23

*A meeting of a number of wise ladies was held at the Queen's palace to advise us to what should be done to save the land.*

After the invasion, the men in the country went out to fight. The enemy, though, was too strong, and they were losing the war. Most of the warriors had been killed; the invading army was a short distance from the capital when the Queen called a meeting of wise women. They arrived at a plan, and all agreed that if they failed, they would not be taken prisoner but would commit suicide.

Before they implemented their plan, though, the Queen recalled the remaining military fighters and had them enter the zenanas "for the sake of honor and liberty." They agreed because they were so exhausted and relieved to leave the battlefield.

They remained sequestered, and that is how Ladyland came to be.





22

## Art of War 1

2019.12.24

*Then the Lady Principal with her two thousand students marched to the battle field, and arriving there directed all the rays of the concentrated sunlight and heat towards the enemy.*

The plan of the Queen and her committee of wise women was to utilize the solar power they had harnessed as a weapon against their enemies. This image shows a vast number of women in orderly formation directing rays in all directions.





23

## *Art of War 2*

2019.12.25

*The heat and light were too much for them to bear. They all ran away panic-stricken, not knowing in their bewilderment how to counteract that scorching heat.*

This print is the end of Sister Sara's account of how the men came to be enclosed in the zenana. When Sultana asked if they had tried to come out, Sister Sara answered that they wanted to be free, but the Queen said she would call on them as needed. Eventually, men became accustomed to the purdah system and "have ceased to grumble at their seclusion."





24

## *To Assemble a Flying Car*

2019.12.26

*Then she screwed a couple of seats onto a square piece of plank. To this plank she attached two smooth and well-polished balls.*

Sultana tells Sister Sara she would like to meet the Queen, who "is so sagacious and far-sighted and who has made all these rules." So an air-car, or flying machine, is assembled from a plank, wheels, and two hydraulic balls that control gravity. The image is again set in Sister Sara's garden; several women work together to assemble the car while others observe.



25

## *Over the City*

2019.12.27

Ganesh shows three airborne vehicles—the air-car from the garden as well as what appear to be a winged motorcycle and cart—flying above the futuristic buildings and lush gardens of the city below.





## 26

### *After the Dream*

2019.12.28

*After visiting the above places of interest we again got into the air-car, but as soon as it began moving, I somehow slipped down and the fall startled me out of my dream. And on opening my eyes, I found myself in my own bedroom still lounging in the easy-chair.*

Ganesh sets this scene in the same tiled room as the first print, *The Condition of Womanhood*, but Sultana is not shown lounging in the easy chair. She instead sits upright, as if in a throne; her head has been replaced by what appears to be a lantern with a flame inside. A crown is on her head, and rays emanate from her body. The overall impression is one of transformation and enlightenment: Sultana will never see the world in the same way after her journey.





27

## *Birth of Three Sultanas*

2019.12.29

The imagery of this print, which follows the lantern head print where Sultana emerges from her dream enlightened and awake, is outside the narrative of Hossain's short story. As Ganesh explains, the three sultanas represented here extend the continued cycle of transformation and rebirth, or awakening, that the dream catalyzes in the protagonist.





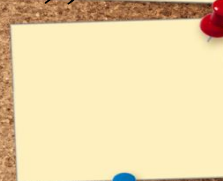
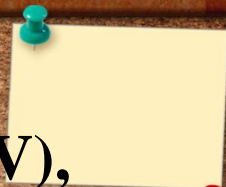
**University of Global Village (UGV),  
Barisal**

**Department of English  
BA (Hons) Program**

**Orlando**

**Week : 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>**

**Page: 106-120**







## "Orlando"

is a groundbreaking novel that transcends traditional narratives and explores themes of gender, identity, and the passage of time through the life of its protagonist, Orlando. Born as a nobleman in the Elizabethan era, Orlando undergoes a mysterious transformation into a woman in the 18th century, living through several centuries without aging significantly. This transformation allows Woolf to critique societal norms and gender roles, as Orlando experiences life from both male and female perspectives. Woolf's lyrical prose and the fluidity of time in the narrative challenge conventional understandings of gender and identity, making "Orlando" a pioneering work in gender-fluid and feminist literature. Through Orlando's journey, the novel celebrates the complexity of the human spirit and the boundless possibilities of the self, unfettered by the constraints of time and societal expectations.







## Youth in Elizabethan England

Orlando begins as a young nobleman in Elizabethan England, passionate about literature and adventure. He enjoys the favor of Queen Elizabeth I, who showers him with titles and properties. This early part of his life is marked by a vibrant court life, a keen sense of exploration, and a deep love for literature, setting the stage for his extraordinary journey through time.







## The Russian Princess

Orlando falls deeply in love with Sasha, a mysterious Russian princess visiting the English court. Their passionate affair is filled with promise, but Sasha ultimately betrays Orlando, leaving him heartbroken. This experience profoundly affects him, igniting a period of introspection and questioning of his previously unexamined life and ideals.







## **Ambassador to Constantinople**

Orlando's life takes a dramatic turn when he is appointed as the ambassador to Constantinople by King Charles II. In the exotic and bustling city, Orlando embraces his role with zeal, but his life is about to undergo its most startling change. During a night of civil unrest in the city, Orlando falls into a deep sleep.







## Transformation

Orlando awakens from his slumber to find that he has transformed into a woman. This metamorphosis challenges Orlando's understanding of identity, gender, and society's norms. Despite the initial shock, she embraces her new identity, exploring the freedoms and restrictions imposed by her changed gender in society.







## Life as a Woman

As a woman, Orlando experiences the world differently, confronting the limitations society places on her gender while also discovering new avenues of independence and expression. Her journey as a woman is a commentary on the fluidity of gender and the constructed nature of gender roles, highlighting the arbitrary barriers that society erects.





## Return to England

Orlando returns to England, finding herself legally dead and stripped of her properties. She must navigate the complex legal system to reclaim her estate, a process that mirrors her internal struggle to reconcile her past and present selves. This period is marked by reflections on property, legacy, and the continuity of self despite external changes.







## The Victorian Era

As time progresses, Orlando lives through the centuries, witnessing the cultural and social transformations of England. By the Victorian era, she is a celebrated poet, but she grapples with the era's restrictive views on women and art. Her struggle reflects the tension between creativity and societal expectations.





## Marriage and Motherhood

Orlando marries Marmaduke Bonthrop Shelmerdine, a sea captain, in an unconventional relationship that defies traditional gender roles. Their deep connection is based on mutual respect and understanding rather than societal expectations. Orlando's experience of marriage and later motherhood adds new dimensions to her exploration of identity and continuity.





## The Twentieth Century

Orlando enters the twentieth century, continuing to write and reflect on her centuries-long life. She publishes "The Oak Tree," a poem she had been working on since her youth, to critical acclaim. This achievement symbolizes the culmination of her personal and artistic journey, intertwining her identity with her creative expression.





## Reflection and Continuity

The novel concludes with Orlando in the present day, reflecting on her life and the changes she has witnessed. Despite the passage of time and the transformations she has undergone, Orlando remains fundamentally the same person, challenging the notion of fixed identity. Woolf's narrative ends on a note of continuity and perpetual change, affirming the complexity and resilience of the human spirit across time and gender.







## Art and Creativity

"Orlando" celebrates the power of art and creativity as means of self-expression and immortality. Orlando's dedication to writing "The Oak Tree" across centuries symbolizes the enduring nature of art and its capacity to capture the human experience. Through Orlando's artistic journey, Woolf examines the relationship between the creator and their work, suggesting that creativity is a fundamental aspect of human identity and a bridge across time, allowing individuals to connect with others and leave a lasting legacy beyond their physical existence.

## The Search for Identity

Orlando's centuries-long life is a quest for self-knowledge and authenticity. Throughout the novel, Orlando seeks to understand who they are beyond the labels and roles imposed by society. This search for identity is not only about gender but also about finding a true voice as a writer and an individual. Woolf suggests that identity is complex, multifaceted, and ever-evolving, and that the journey to self-discovery is an ongoing process that transcends time and societal expectations.

## The Passage of Time

The novel explores the nature of time, depicting it as both cyclical and fluid. Orlando lives for centuries, witnessing historical changes and societal evolutions, yet remains physically unchanged. This portrayal of time challenges conventional narratives of aging and mortality, suggesting a continuity of the self that defies temporal constraints. Woolf's narrative technique, which blends history with fiction, invites readers to reconsider their perceptions of time, history, and the constancy of human nature across ages.

## Gender Fluidity and Identity

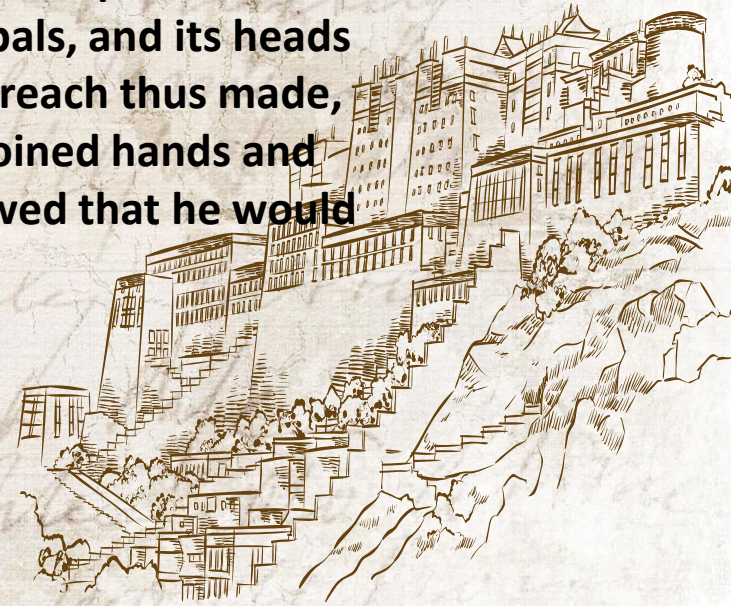
"Orlando" challenges traditional notions of gender and identity through the protagonist's transformation from male to female. This metamorphosis, which occurs without altering Orlando's essential self, suggests that gender is a fluid and socially constructed concept rather than a fixed biological reality. Woolf uses Orlando's experiences to explore the ways in which gender roles shape societal expectations and personal freedom, advocating for a more nuanced understanding of identity that transcends binary classifications.



**1. "Nature, who has played so many queer tricks upon us, making us so unequally of clay and diamonds, of rainbow and granite, and stuffed them into a case, often of the most incongruous, for the poet has a butcher's face and the butcher a poet's; nature, who has so much to answer for besides the perhaps unwieldy length of this sentence, has further complicated our task and added to our confusion by providing...a perfect rag-bag of odds and ends within us...[and] has contrived that the whole assortment shall be lightly stitched together by a single thread. Memory is the seamstress and a capricious one at that"**

**2. Up to this point...documents, both private and historical, have made it possible to fulfill the first duty of a biographer, which is to plod, without looking right or left, in the indelible footprints of truth... on and on methodically until we fall plump into the grave and write finis on the tombstone above our heads**

**3. It is these pauses that are our undoing. It is then that sedition enters the fortress and our troops rise in insurrection. Once before he had paused, and love with its horrid rout, its shawms, its cymbals, and its heads with gory locks torn from the shoulders had burst in....Now again he paused, and into the breach thus made, leapt Ambition, the harridan, and Poetry, the witch, and Desire of Fame, the strumpet; all joined hands and made of his heart their dancing ground. Standing upright in the solitude of his room, he vowed that he would be the first poet of his race and bring immortal lustre upon his name**





4. Different though the sexes are, they intermix. In every human being a vacillation from one sex to the other takes place, and often it is only the clothes that keep the male and female likeness, while underneath the sex is the very opposite of what it is above. Of the complications and confusions which thus result every one has had experience; but here we leave the general question and note only the odd effect it had in the particular case of Orlando herself

5. Orlando then for the first time noticed a small cloud gathered behind the dome of St. Paul's. As the stroke sounded, the cloud increased, and she saw it darken and spread with extraordinary speed. ... Height upon height above the city was engulfed by it ... With the twelfth stroke of midnight, the darkness was complete. All was dark; all was doubt; all was confusion. The Eighteenth century was over; the Nineteenth century had begun.





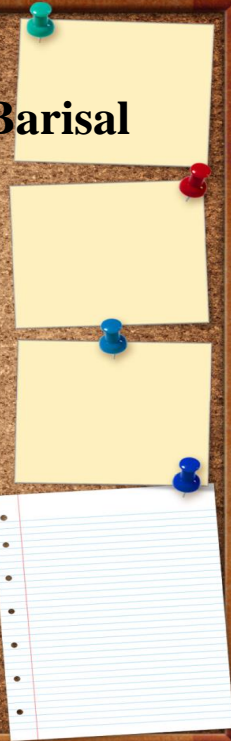


University of Global Village (UGV), Barisal  
Department of English  
BA (Hons) Program

## Drapadi

Week : 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>

Page: 121-127





# Introduction

- ▶ Mahasweta Devi (14 January 1926 – 28 July 2016)<sup>[1][2]</sup> was an Indian writer in Bengali and an activist who worked hard for the growth of the tribal people.
- ▶ Her notable literary works include Hajar Churashir Maa, Rudali, and Aranyer Adhikar.
- ▶ She was honoured with various literary awards such as the Sahitya Akademi Award (in Bengali), Jnanpith Award and Ramon Magsaysay Award along with India's civilian awards Padma Shri and Padma Vibhushan.
- ▶ Draupadi is a short story of around 20 pages originally written in Bengali by Mahasweta Devi. It was anthologized in the collection, Breast Stories, translated to English by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak.



# Summary:

**The story of Draupadi** is set among the tribal's in Bengal. **Draupadi** or Dopdi as her name appears in dialect, is a Santhal tribal girl, who is a rebel. She is being hunted down by the government in their attempt to overcome these groups. **Draupadi** and her husband **Dulna** are on the 'most wanted' list in West Bengal.





They murder wealthy landlords to claim wells and tube-wells which are their main sources of water in the village. They fight for their right to basic means of nourishment.

**Dulna** is eventually gunned down by policemen; however Draupadi manages to escape and begins to operate helping fugitives who have murdered corrupt property owners and landlords, escape. She tactfully misleads the cops who are on her trail, so that the fugitives' campsite remains a secret. However, she is finally caught and kept in police custody. This is where the story actually begins.

Over the course of a few days, **Draupadi** is repeatedly raped, deprived of food and water and tortured by multiple officers who state that their orders to "make her" have come from their Bade Sahib, officer Senanayak, in charge of her case.



The Senanayak, an officer appointed by the Government to capture **Draupadi** and stop her activities. The Senanayak the military official, is a senseless and cruel officer. After days, the policemen take her back to the tent and tell her to clothe herself, because it is time for her to meet Senanayak. As the guard pushes a bucket of water forward, for her to wash herself, she laughs, throws the water down and tears the piece of cloth on her body. She proceeds to walk out of her tent, towards Senanayak, naked and with her head held high.

Senanayak is taken aback and quickly turn away his eyes from her body. She walks right up to him, hands on her hips and says *“the object of your search, Dopdi Mehjen. You asked them to make me. Don’t you want to see how they made me?”*





When Senanayak asks where her clothes are, she replies angrily, that clothes were useless because once she was stripped, she could not be clothed again. She spits on Senanayak with disgust and says *“How can you clothe me? Are you a man? There isn’t a man here, that I should be ashamed.”* She pushes **Senanayak** with her exposed breasts and for the first time, he is afraid to counter an unarmed woman.

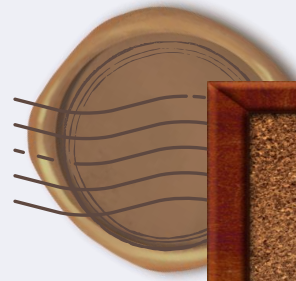
In that moment, though **Draupadi** has no weapons, she uses her body as her greatest weapon. The body which was abused, tortured and seen as the cause of her downfall becomes the very weapon with which she stands up for herself.



She refuses to let them take advantage of her emotions, even though she has been physically assaulted. Draupadi realizes that raping women does not make the male species 'masculine'. The story ends with a magnificent final scene in which she faces her abusers, naked and bloody, but fiercely strong.





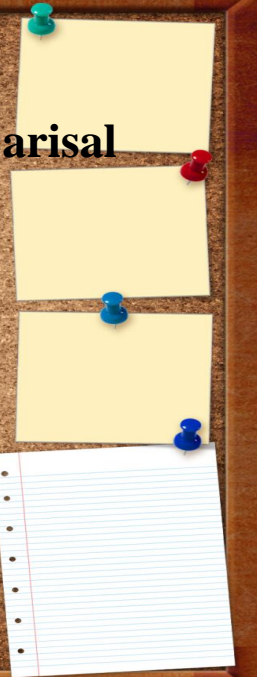


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## **Look Back in Anger**

**Week : 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup>**

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# Introduction to the Play

## A Play of Its Time

John Osborne's *\*Look Back In Anger\** premiered in 1956, a time of profound societal change in Britain.

## A Controversial Premiere

The play's realistic portrayal of anger and disillusionment shook the British theater establishment.





# The Angry Young Man

## Jimmy Porter

The play's central character, Jimmy Porter, is a brilliant but angry young man struggling to find his place in post-war society.

## Disillusionment with the Establishment

Jimmy is deeply cynical about the traditional values and social structures of his time.

# Themes: Class, Gender, and Social Change



## Class Conflict

Jimmy represents a new generation of working-class youth questioning the privileges of the upper class.



## Social Change

\*Look Back In Anger\* captures the anxieties and aspirations of a generation grappling with rapid social and political changes.



## Gender Roles

The play explores traditional gender roles and the changing expectations for men and women in post-war society.





# Characterization: Jimmy, Alison, and Cliff

1

## Jimmy Porter

The angry, passionate protagonist.

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2

## Alison Porter

Jimmy's wife, a sensitive and passive woman.

---

3

## Cliff Lewis

Jimmy's friend, a more tolerant and understanding figure.

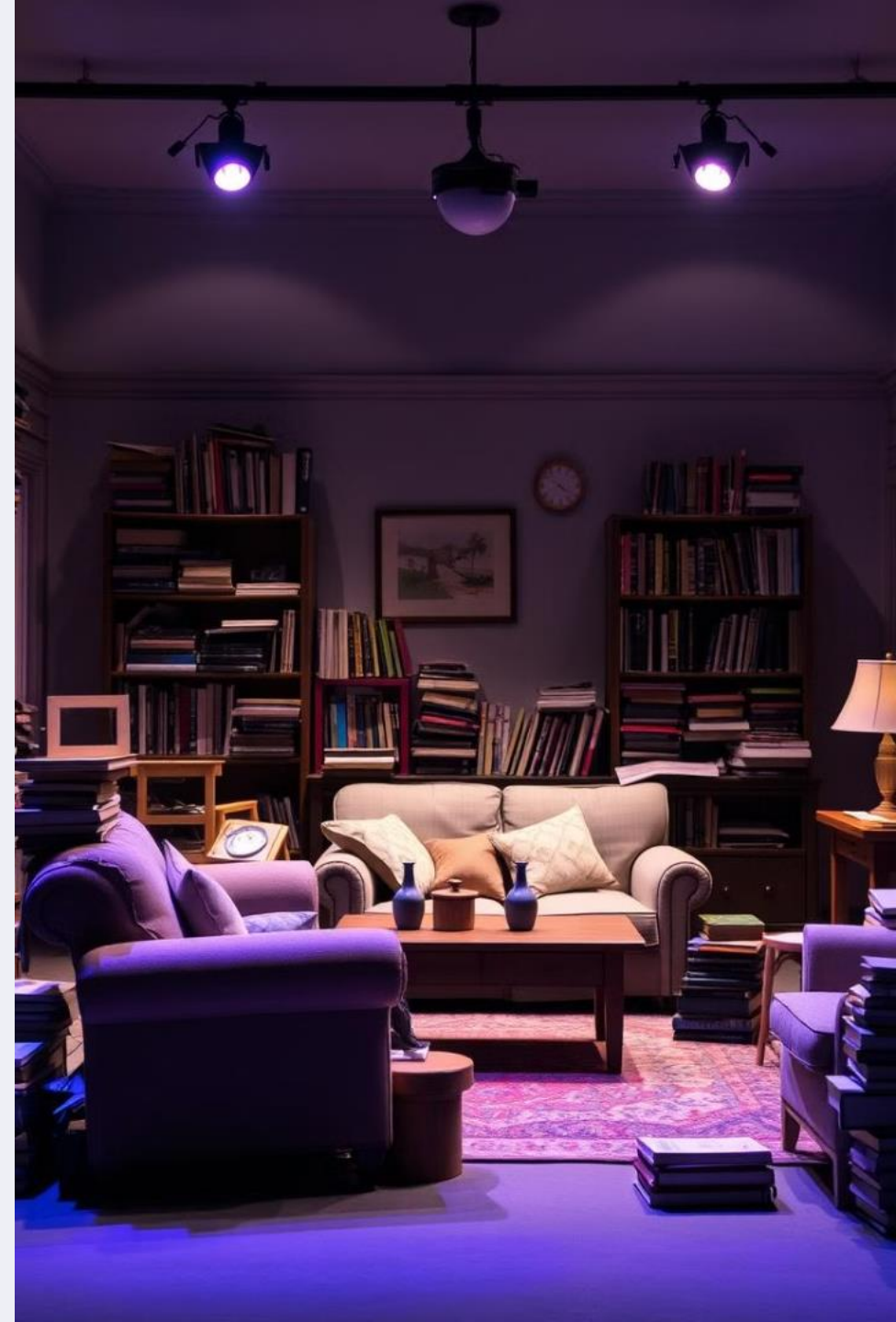
# Revolutionary Language and Stage Design

## Raw Dialogue

- 1 Osborne's writing style is raw and confrontational, reflecting the characters' anger and frustration.

## Minimalism and Realism

- 2 The play's minimalist stage design focuses on realism, bringing the characters and their struggles to life.





# Reception and Critical Analysis

## Critical Acclaim

\*Look Back In Anger\* was praised for its realism and its portrayal of post-war disillusionment.

## Controversy and Debate

The play sparked controversy for its frank language, its unconventional characters, and its critical stance on traditional values.





# The Legacy of \*Look Back In Anger\*

1

## Influence on Theater

\*Look Back In Anger\* helped pave the way for a new wave of British playwrights who explored social and political issues in a more realistic and confrontational way.

2

## Cultural Impact

The play's themes and characters resonated with a generation and helped shape cultural attitudes about class, gender, and social change.



# Conclusion and Discussion

\*Look Back In Anger\* remains a powerful and relevant play, offering insights into the human condition and the challenges of navigating societal change.





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## **The Phenomenal Women**

**Week : 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>**

**Page: 137-141**



## Phenomenal Woman

BY [MAYA ANGELOU](#)

Pretty women wonder where my secret lies  
I'm not cute or built to suit a fashion model's size  
But when I start to tell them,  
They think I'm telling lies.  
I say,  
It's in the reach of my arms,  
The span of my hips,  
The stride of my step,  
The curl of my lips.  
I'm a woman  
Phenomenally.



Phenomenal woman,  
That's me.

Men themselves have wondered  
What they see in me.  
They try so much  
But they can't touch

My inner mystery.  
When I try to show them,  
They say they still can't see.  
I say,  
It's in the arch of my back,  
The sun of my smile,  
The ride of my breasts,  
The grace of my style.  
I'm a woman  
Phenomenally.

Phenomenal woman,  
That's me.

.



Now you understand  
Just why my head's not bowed.  
I don't shout or jump about  
Or have to talk real loud.  
When you see me passing,  
It ought to make you proud.  
I say,  
It's in the click of my heels,  
The bend of my hair,  
the palm of my hand,  
The need for my care.  
'Cause I'm a woman

Phenomenally.  
Phenomenal woman,  
That's me.





# **A Phenomenal Woman**

## **Maya Angelou**

**"A Phenomenal Woman" is a poem by Maya Angelou, published in 1978. The poem is a powerful expression of self-love, confidence, and womanhood.**



# **A Phenomenal Woman**

## **Maya Angelou**

### **Themes**

**Self empowerment**

**Self acceptance**

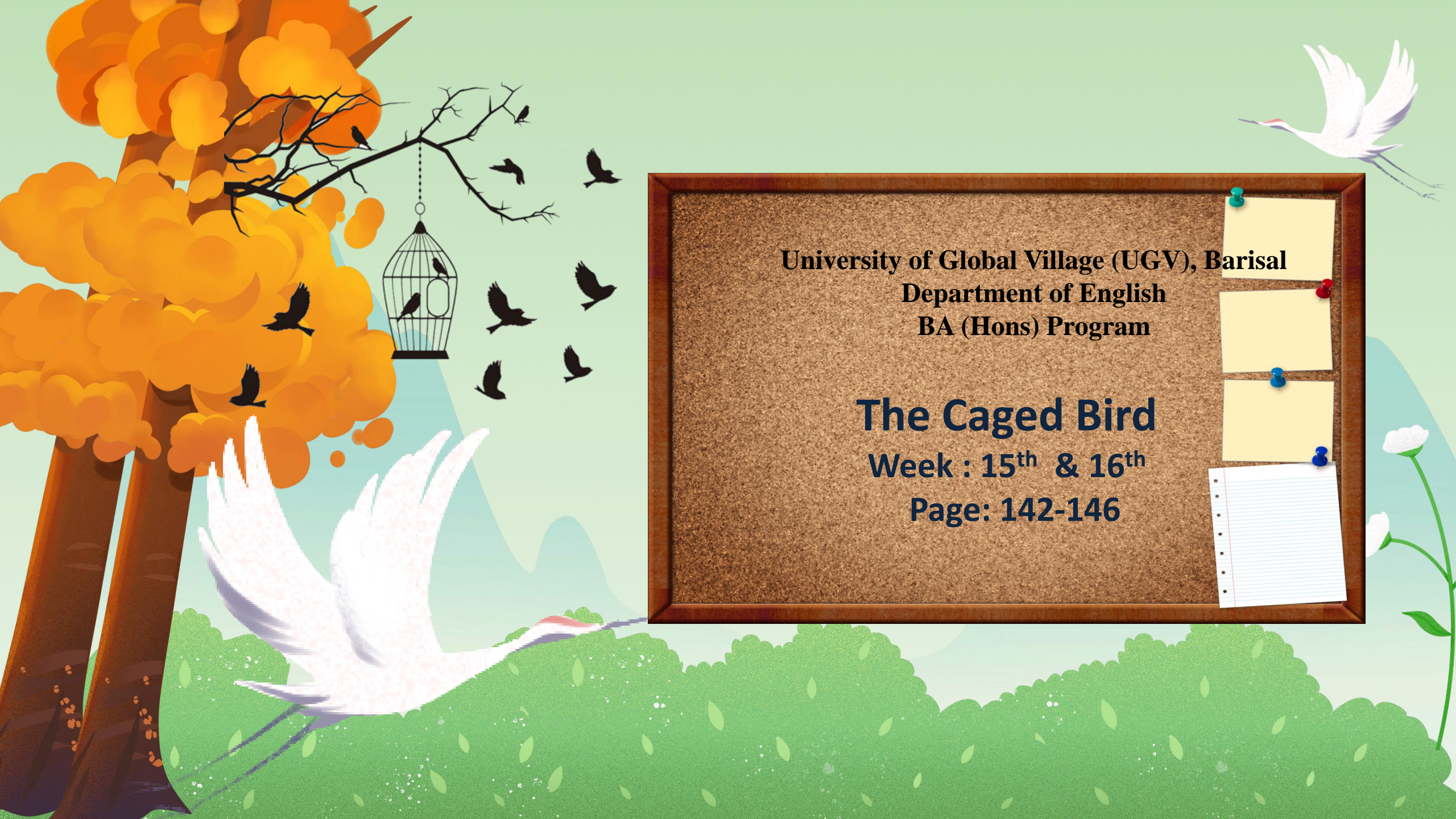
**beauty**

**identity**

**Pride**







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## **The Caged Bird**

**Week : 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>**

**Page: 142-146**



## Caged Bird

BY [MAYA ANGELOU](#)

A free bird leaps  
on the back of the wind  
and floats downstream  
till the current ends  
and dips his wing  
in the orange sun rays  
and dares to claim the sky.

But a bird that stalks  
down his narrow cage  
can seldom see through  
his bars of rage  
his wings are clipped and  
his feet are tied  
so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings  
with a fearful trill  
of things unknown  
but longed for still

and his tune is heard  
on the distant hill  
for the caged bird  
sings of freedom.





The free bird thinks of another breeze  
and the trade winds soft through the sighing trees  
and the fat worms waiting on a dawn bright lawn  
and he names the sky his own.

But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams  
his shadow shouts on a nightmare scream  
his wings are clipped and his feet are tied  
so he opens his throat to sing.

The caged bird sings  
with a fearful trill  
of things unknown  
but longed for still  
and his tune is heard  
on the distant hill  
for the caged bird  
sings of freedom.



A close-up portrait of Maya Angelou, showing her face and curly hair. She is looking slightly to the left with a gentle expression.

# Background information

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Maya Angelou was an American poet and a civil rights activist.

As an African American, she experienced first-hand racial prejudices and discrimination which she often hints at in her writing.

She is known for her autobiography titled *I know why the caged bird sings* which is based on her experiences and tough working-class background.





# Structure

The poem consists of 38 lines and 6 stanzas.

Enjambment is evident.

The poem has a chorus (or a refrain):  
A section of the poem that is repeated.

The theme deals with freedom and oppression.

Rhyme: End rhyme is used in the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> lines of the 3<sup>rd</sup> stanza - 'trill', 'still'. Internal rhyme is used in the 4<sup>th</sup> stanza - *and the fat worms waiting on a dawn bright lawn*

The tone of the poem changes (due to diction):

Stanza 1: Playful

Stanza 2: Anger/bitterness


Stanza 3: Frustration

Stanza 4: Positive

Stanza 6: Depressing

Diction switches between harsh, strong words such as 'stalks' and 'fearful trill' in stanza 3, to more gentle words such as 'floats' and 'sighing trees'.





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**Movie**  
**Week : 17<sup>th</sup>**  
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**FINISH**