

Tribhuvan University

Debating Women: Reading Augustan Verse

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Abstract

Some of the works of Swift and Pope use satiric bite towards gender and sexuality. Moreover, their misogynistic attitude towards female and feminine virtues, and characters had sparked controversy. Women poets of their time mocked at their misogynistic attitude.

Misogynistic impact on Pope and Swift has been much discussed in terms of their physical appearance and the reality that they were life-long bachelors. Swift hates human pride, or the illusion that we can rise above the sinfulness and frailty that are our nature impure, fallen creatures and he never misses a chance to shatter that illusion. Hence women, associated romantically with beauty and love, must be dragged down to earth and have their cosmetics rubbed off. His focus on bodily function in “The Lady’s Dressing Room” has often been ascribed to a fixation or frustrated desire, as in Lady Mary Wortley Montagu’s counterattack. Pope, like Swift, attracts attack on his misogynistic attitude from some female poets of his time. Despite his patronizing attitude towards female wit as in the exchange with Lady Winchilsea, he certainly takes a strong interest in female and domestic arrangement. Anne Irwin and Mary Leapor dismisses Pope’s characterization of women.

Contents	Page No.
Letter of Approval	
Acknowledgements	
Abstract	
Chapter – I	1-11
Introduction: Debating Women in the Eighteen Century	1
Chapter – II	12-23
Satire and Irony as Tools for Denunciation and Debate	12
Chapter – III	24-35
Attacking Women: Reading Swift and Pope	24
Chapter – IV	36-47
Rebutting Swift and Pope: Reading Montagu, Irwin, Finch and Lepor	36
Chapter – V	48-49
Conclusion	48
Works Cited	

Chapter – I

Introduction: Debating Women in the Eighteen Century

From an ancient time, satire on women is not a new practice. In many cultures male writers have defined the nature of women, distinguished them sharply from men, laughed at their faults and told them how to behave. Female writers do not like such male supremacist behavior and have countered by pointing out the virtues of women and biasness of men. Especially, in Augustan age male poets have with their satiric view inferiorized women in their literary works. Female rage and rigidity towards such literary arts also increased in numbers. They try to debate in their literary arts to resist the male urge. Thus, debating women in literary arts comes to light.

Writers with masculinist sensibility show their misogynistic attitude. As literary texts increased to unprecedented numbers, much of reading public began to consist of women whose concern were addressed directly by Mary Astell and others. New forms of writing were sprouting and these writings were developed to give women rules and models for living. In eighteenth century, satire was an utmost weapon with the help of which writers either they were male or female threw the sharp wit to blame the vices and follies in each race. Male always thought that females are weak. They have no sense of social co-operation, moral dignity and spiritual insight. Females are in their heart void, decadent and immoral. No beauty, power and wisdom of female race could reach in generosity. Thus in eighteenth century, male satirists could not resist the urge to reflect on or try to reform women's follies nor could female satirists resist the urge to reply that men were just as bad or worse and did not know what they were talking

about. This led a lively exchange in which women were not only the subject of the debate but also agents who spoke for themselves.

Throughout the eighteenth century, while male rhetoric was almost universally, perhaps unprecedentedly, valued and studied, women's silence was universally commended, recommended and virtually enforced. Enjoined silence had always been a primary tool for hegemonic reminders of inferiority. Women and children, working people and subservient of every order were directed to speak only when spoken to. There had no doubt always been female resistance to a societal decree for silence when men were beginning to practice vocal expression in a previously unimaginable manner. Women made many particular efforts to be heard domestically, socially and publicly. In a struggle against the male view, women's speech was insurrectional, either prate or overbearing, and should be put down or at least ignored. And as women's regression in general was contingent on their keeping silence, their speech became a forrunner of revolution. Most women who wished to marry, maintained a tactical silence. In such view, William Harrison's verse *The Medicine* is remarkable in which, female who had ceased to attract her husband sexually, she must obey the doctor's instruction to be silent:

“Be silent, and complying you'll soon find

Sir John, without a medicine will be kind” (27-28)

Thus, women were a puppet in the hands of man. According to Christopher smart “women's purpose on earth is to decorate, amuse, oblige, cater, arrange the domestic scene, provide sex, progeny and approval, but never to reason, pronounce or be heard”(26). John Gregory's *A Father's Legacy to his Daughters*

advises young unmarried women to avoid entirely from speech in company, thus proclaiming their willingness only to listen, absorb and agree. They were, however, obliged not to appear idiotic but rather to seem capable of appreciating the wisdom of others, which they were to demonstrate by reacting with appropriate facial expression. In this way, women in this century were obsessed with oratorical performance. This was long assumed to be proper only in men.

But gender mobility inspired ladies to participate in oratory. The Temple of Taste and the Female Lyceum, two institutions invited only women to debate. The debate of women thus comes into existence. Later, Charles Macklin established the British Inquisition, a combination restaurant, coffeehouse and debate hall which also made participation of ladies, however soon failed. Many exhibitions by actresses were fashioned gradually. Women's interest on debate and discussion practiced in the exercise of not only reading but of speaking their own composition aloud. However with the permission of women's debate, there also rose out some critical remarks too.

Critical remarks against public speaking were directed at women and at men of lower social orders, in whom oratory or debating practice was regarded as an unseemly distraction from their useful but silent vocations. Anyway, many questions concerning with female beauty and sex, were all debated in the spring of 1780 at the Oratorical Academy in Portugal street. Ladies were invited to participate and masks were available for the modest. One year later, a beautiful lady had dressed herself as a man "and spoken on the questions and gained uncommon applause." On such case, many paper remarked it with the mental

faculties of the sexes. Then, a letter to the *St. James's Chronicle* of 18 January 1780 protested the confinement of ladies at the forum to the galleries.

The women's debating societies could not be political forums. Some other motivation was necessary for their support, and though the women themselves may have petitioned for a forum of their own. Though their debates were very popular and well-attended, the true reason for their existence was probably the profit they provided their entrepreneurs. In these meetings women rarely spoke on current political questions. But such interference in affairs of state would not then have been easily tolerated. Subsequently questions debated by women included such topic as "In acts of real humanity, whether does the generous given or the grateful receiver feel the greater pleasure? Thus, debating of women is not only on their own particular feminine issues but on other social, ethical and moral issues too.

"Was Adam or Eve the more culpable in paradise?" and "Does jealousy in a woman more frequently arise from love or pride?" are some of the important questions to be discussed by ladies only. These questions are discussed to delete the illusion on women's mind created by male patriarchal writings. Male writings, arts and poems are based on inferior and immoral character of women. 'Eve' was supposed to be a fallen and decadent woman who make Adam to eat a ripen apple and caused him to fall down to earth as she herself has. So, men always present women's prejudices, vices and follies in their literary arts, especially in verse. The question of women's modesty was always on the table, the threat of overstepping the bounds ever present.

When women appear to announce they have found the field like public speaking, declamation, rhetoric, eloquence and oratory. By the time the women's societies were active. The dynamic behind the male and the female societies are therefore different. Both were mounted by producers as profitable enterprises. But the impulse behind the male societies was political in one sense and of the female societies political in another, for the second comprised a protofeminist gender revolution. As the female societies rarely engaged with politics, their meetings were more subtly influential. The sensational novelty of women speaking out publicly was exploited to sell tickets. The male speakers were probably ambitions to succeed in their professions; there may also have been intrepid women of no profession. And the appearance of women rising to speak in public had its own effect. And the female societies offered women not only a genuine opportunity to speak, but more importantly, a claim of woman's right to speak, a claim supported by the endorsement and applause of audiences.

There had been a continuing stream of not-so-covert argument against the silencing of women. Many women writers in their novels were longing for the right to be in equal foot with men. Many novelists in their novels certify the equal ability to men. Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote*, Sarah Scott's *A Journey Through every Stage of Life* are some texts which praise the female virtue and power as equal to man. Sarah Scott's another novel *A Description of Millennium Hall* has women who expound their system to the visiting males. Another covert suggestion is that women have both the abilities of men and much to teach them. Elizabeth Hayley, in her remarkable book *Female Restoration, by a Moral and Physical Vindication of Female Talent* observed that:

Indeed, nature seemed to destine women for orators; their natural untutored eloquence so far surpassing all the rhetoric and logic of the schools. With what graceful ease they deliver themselves! They seem by intuition, to choose the most energetic expressions; and though they are but seldom allowed to study grammar, their forms of speech are the most perfect idioms of their language. (44)

It is Haley's contention that the learning of men incapacitates them for speaking intelligibly rather than argue for the equal education of women. She argues that male education is harmful. She comments that "it is clearly prove they (men) have no more pretensions than ourselves, except those that are founded in custom, prejudice and injustice."

Here it seems that male and female power moves side by side. Men seem a step ahead powerful in one point but women ran fast in another. They are criticizing themselves one after another. After the free-voice of women, some fashionable magazine prints an article without referring them and there ran a series of unfavorable remarks on women's voice. Satire abounded. Many letters complain that women are much discussed but never heard in the coffeehouses; why should they be debarred from "a little pleasant confab?"

The protests and claims of women in this short period continued in the next two decades. There were some women who took the challenge to speak in spite of the severe criticism and satiric beat of male society. With great effort and endeavor, women come in the stage of open debate. More than they joined themselves in the literary creation. They have mimed out the style of satiric poets like Pope and Swift and tried to throw their wit on male rigidity and their bias

voice. Through the medium of verse, they respond to the male supramist and chauvinist. The misogynistic approach of them is somehow loosed by debate of women. Thus, debate between men and women filled the critical gap of inferior treatment towards women.

Among the male supramists and misogynistic poets, Jonathan Swift and Alexander Pope are two male representative poets of Augustan age. They are brilliant satirist and friends as well as life long bachelors. Swift's misogyny is a part of his misanthropy. He hates the human pride. Humans are fallen creatures and we can rise above the sinfulness and frailty that are by nature impure. Hence, women must be dragged down to earth and have their cosmetics rubbed off. To Swift's admirers this is realism and for women this is hatred. Pope, too, has a anti-feminine sensibility. Despite his patronizing attitude towards 'Women wit', he certainly looks a strong interest in female psychology and his pleasure in delicate and domestic arrangements appealed to many women. Anne Irwin and Mary Leapor argue with Pope's characters of women, but they are clearly influenced by the way he sees their world as well as by his poetic style. In this regard, his satire might be thought more as spreading without notice but causing serious harm than Swift's. His sympathy for women is a deep analysis of their flaws and his distinctions between the sexes seem rooted in nature not merely in custom. Thus, Pope's portrayals of the ways that women waste their lives can be very chilling.

A certain view of Swift has been powerfully represented in Middleton Murry's shocked denunciation:

Nevertheless, it is not his direct obsession with ordure which is the chief cause of the nausea he arouses. It is the strange and disquieting combination of his horror at the fact of human evacuation with a peculiar physical loathing of women. It is an unpleasant subject; but it can not be burked by any honest critic of Swift. The conventional excuses made for him are ridiculous ... lust is natural and wholesome compared to the feeling Swift arouses. (44)

According to this view, Swift is not only obsessed and perverted but professedly hostile to womankind. His 'animus' against women became more and more disproportioned, abusive and derogative. The mad Irishman's wandering dirty thoughts betray the chiefest of misogynists. Swift detests the female and feminine.

Swift looks upon women rather as busts, than as whole figures. Women are not experienced; they are justness of proportion delicacy of limb. His poem *The Lady's Dressing Room* merely discovers his inexcusable "want of delicacy and decorum"; he frequently forgets politeness and tenderness of manner." (Bayle 78)

If Swift is guilty of inexcusable misogyny, of shrill animus against women, then surely women readers in particular ought to have taken notice and umbrage. Surely, then, women writers of the eighteenth century must have mocked Swift or expressed horror of him or shunned him. Indeed, many female writers censure the misogyny of Swift. Sarah Green, in her conduct book *Mental Improvement for a young Lady; on her Entrance into the world; Addressed to a favorite Niece* (London, 1973) quite simply advises.

‘That favourite niece’ to shun all of Swift’s writings save his sermons; the other works are vulgar, indelicate and satiric. Nobody could say this is not true. Swift’s vulgar works may be dismissed from the presence of refined young ladies but it is Pope who is especially misogynist. (69)

Indeed there are several female poets who could not resist the urge of male poets. They are trying their best to satirize male. These female poets are admired by women because of the satirical attack to men. Montagu is one of the female poets who favours female ethics. She speaks on behalf of female. Although, she is in favour of women yet, many critics remark her as anti-feminist.

Isobel Grundy, a female critic, remarks that “as an attack on women, it stands out oddly among her works (210).” But, for Sandra Shreman the charge to Montagu as an anti-feminism prospect “does not reflect bouts of gender disaffection. Rather, it is gambit instrumental to a unisex view of politics that requires each sex to act responsibly—and men to nurture that potential— both in the public sphere and in conjugal relations.” (1) Female conduct that is politically irresponsible and destructive to the commonwealth is identified for redirection. Conversely, Machiavelles who persue ends that are politically correct do not engender reproof of their sex. Montagu’s anti-female satire does not, therefore, attack women as an always already constituted base (hence monolithic, incorrigible) of power. Rather it cites women not yet conversant with Montagu’s prescription for better politics to reform. Such anti-feminism’ is explicable which finally consistent with Montagu’s feminism that is contingent, a trope to justify

women's engagement in edifying rational discourse that is not over women's head.

For Montagu, the joke on females faces ends in a tense political conceit. Her object is to shame women into reformation. She does not attack them as inherently given to vice but attempts to show them away towards regaining virtue. Such virtue is constituted in a politics. Montague provisionally rescues women from the stereotypes: they act irrationally but may react positively to rational discourse. Once again her attack is voidable subject to women's changing their politics.

From the point of view of feminist logic, Montagu mounts a brilliant gambit, conceding to the opposition women's frivolous, egoistic tropes but demonstrating to women how they can turn to account. Thus, her anti-feminism is contingent and distinct from that of Mary Wollstoncraft, who satirized women with direct "feminist" objective of rescuing women from misogynist paradigms. Montagu's 'anti-feminism' is similarly co-operative, demonstrating to men the ironic relation between patriarchal culture codes and economic rationality.

Yet women also could write satire. They respond to Pope and Swift and poke fun at the smug assumptions that men can tell women what women are thinking and feeling. Poets like Montagu answers to Swift's poem. Her answer turns the table on his disgust at the body. She dismisses Pope and Swift together. She turns for defensive consolation, in a rather pitiful snobbery, to the rights of birth; these genius enemies were low.

Irwin suggests that Pope is the problem, not the solution. What Pope has given the hints to females are not logical. Because of the lack of education makes

all the differences between men and women. A truly good poet would devote himself to educating women, not to ridiculing faults. By the way of Pope's way, they can not help them (women). Similarly, Leapor regards satire of women as blaming the victim. She argues that what suffers women is the lack of any good choice in a man's world. They are imposed to choose bad choices. The female satirists in this debate do not belong to any set nor do they agree with each-other diagnoses. They do agree, on one main point, when the ways of women come into question, women must speak for themselves.

In this way, debating women in Augustan verse bears many obstacles and hinders to get the smooth way. But, this is taken seriously by the male patriarchal society. Any way, through the rocky and sharp satire females also do not sit behind rather they try their best to make fail the charge and blame notified by male poets to women.

Chapter - II

Satire and Irony as Tools for Denunciation and Debate

A satire, generally speaking, is an attack on foolish or wicked behavior by making fun of it often by using sarcasm and parody. The word 'satire' comes from the Latin word 'satura' which means primarily 'full', and then comes to mean "a mixture full of different things." According to Gilbert Highet "the essence of the original name was variety in a certain down to earth naturalness, or coarseness or unsophisticated heartiness"(231).

Satire has usually been justified as a corrective of human vice and follies. Satires are the jokes about serious things. Satirists, like ironists, say one thing and mean other. Satire uses laughter as a weapon but it is different from the comic. Satire has usually been justified by those who practice it as a corrective of human vices and follies. Alexander Pope in *Glossary of Literature Terms* remarked that "those who are ashamed of nothing else are so of being ridiculous"(276). An attempt to diminish a subject by ridicule is the primary principle of satire.

Satirists present one thing or situations under the garb of another which may appear ridiculous at the surface. The combination of jest and earnest is a permanent mark of satiric writing – the central method of device. A satirist, though, he jokes and makes readers laugh, tries to reveal human vices and follies, which (to him) is the truth. Satirists declare that their truth is what people do not want to hear.

While tracing the history of satire back to the ancient time we find, there prevail two main conceptions of its purpose: one is not to cure but to wound, to punish, to destroy, and the other is to warn and cure.

The first type of satirists believes that the rascalities is triumphant in the world, and are pessimistic. Jonathan Swift says that though he loves individual, he detests humankind. These misanthropic satirists look at life and find it, not tragic, nor comic, but ridiculously contemptible and nauseatingly hateful.

The misanthropic satirist believes evil is rooted in man's nature and the structure of society. Nothing can eliminate or cure it. Man, or the particular gang of miserable manikins who are under his scrutiny, deserves only scorn and hatred.... The satirist is close to the tragedian. He believes that folly and evil are not innate in humanity, or, if they are, they are eradicable. They are diseases which can be cured. They are mistakes which can be corrected.... Sinners are her devils, fallen forever. They are men, self blinded, and they can open their eyes.

Satire has been justified by those who practice it as a corrective of human vices and follies. Satire aims to ridicule, to corrigible faults, excluding those for which a person is not responsible. An attempt to diminish a subject by ridiculing its subject for the purpose of correction, improvement and to give a right way is the primary organizing principle of satire. Satire writing can be taken as an important sector of literary practice to show the upper classes voidness, hypocrisy and autocratic capitalistic behavior. In Eighteenth century, many satiric essays, narratives and other literary arts can be adapted to the purpose of rebelling against political, social, economical dominance.

Generally, Satires are of two types: direct and indirect. Direct Satire has persona who speaks out in the first person. This 'I' may address either the reader as in Pope's moral essays or else a character within the work itself. Horatian satire and Juvenile satire are the sub-divisions of satire. In Horatian satire, satire occurs through literary art which make audience laugh out of their vices and follies. Speaker manifests the character of an urbane witty and tolerant man of the world, who is moved more often to wry amusement than to indignation at the spectacle of human folly, pretentiousness and hypocrisy and who uses a relaxed and informal language to evoke from readers a wry smile at human failings and absurdities.

In juvenile satire the character of the speaker is serious moralist who uses a dignified public style of utterance of decry modes of vices and errors which are no less dangerous because they are ridiculous.

Indirect satire is often come through fictional narratives in which the objects of the satire are characters who make themselves and their opinions ridiculous by making their sayings, thinking and doing more ridiculous by the authors comments and narratives. A major feature of indirect satire is a series of extended dialogues and debates in which a group of literary people serve to make ludicrous attitudes. They typify by the arguments. They urge in their support.

The two most important satirists were Juvenal and Horace, who represent pessimist and optimist view respectively. Juvenal illustrates rhetorical or tragic satire, of which he is at once the inventor and the most distinguished master. His satire attacks vice wrongs, or abuses in a high pitched strain of impassioned declamatory eloquence. Horace and his followers assail the enemies of common

sense with the weapons of humor and sarcasm so that the wrong doer will get rid of the wrongs. This kind of satirists writes in order to heal and the pessimistic satirists in order to punish. In Horatian satire, according to Abrams, “the character that the speaker manifests is a witty and tolerant man of the world, who is moved more often to wry amusement than to indignation at the spectacle of human folly, pretentiousness and hypocrisy (188).” But in Juvenalian satire the character of the speaker is that of a serious moralist who decries modes of vice and error in a dignified and public style.

Satirists always aim at revealing the bitter truth; no matter whatever motives that may have behind their works early experiences of life make the people view the world differently. In this regard Highet says:

In fact, most satirists seem to belong to one of two main classes.

Either they were bitterly disappointed. Early in life and see the world as a permanent structure of justice; or they are happy men of overflowing energy and vitality, who see the rest of mankind as poor ridiculous puppets only half-alive, filmsy fakes and meager scoundrels. (214)

Satirists wish to stigmatize crime or ridicule folly, and thus to aid in diminishing or removing it. Dryden says he who draws his pen for one party must expect to make enemies of the other. According to him, the true end of satire is the amendment of vices by correction. He says he who writes honestly is no more an enemy to the offender than the physician to the patient, when he prescribes harsh remedies to an inveterate disease; for those are only to prevent painful surgery.

A satire, at the surface, appears to be full of aesthetic feelings or like a romance, but its underlying intentions are attacking a particular target in a disguise. Satire, according to Abrams, is “the literary art of diminishing or derogating a subject by making it ridiculous and evoking toward it attitudes of amusement, contempt, scorn or indignation’ (187). New Encyclopedia Britannica defines satire as

artistic form, chiefly literary and dramatic in which human or individual vices, follies, abuses or shortcomings are held up to ensure by means of ridicule, derision, burlesque, irony or other methods, sometimes with an intent to bring about improvement” (10:467).

The satire therefore is mainly literary. It is fluent, witty and diverting: sometimes stinging, but rarely bitter. But all ironies are not satires. However, satires are often stable irony Morton Gurewicz, in his Ph. D. Dissertation on European Romantic Irony, describes irony as only corrosive:

The Meaning of Irony

Generally irony means a gap between some kind of appearance and reality. The distance between speech and its actual meaning, purpose and result, one’s understanding of a situation and the reality one’s expectation and fate are ironies. Saying one thing and meaning quite different is irony. Irony is an indirect meant. Mainly, irony is made due to understatement, overstatement and juxtaposition. Irony often mocks or complains the vices and follies with the use of words. The pungent criticism to the pretentious social, cultural as well as educational, political hypocrisy is irony. It distances oneself from the message one conveys.

Irony is frequently described as a position, attitude, personality, point of view or way of seeing. Claire Colebrook in his article “The Meaning of Irony” says

according to Richard Rorty irony is not a way of speaking or a style of language. It is an attitude adopted towards whatever vocabulary one speaks. The ironist recognizes that all we have are our ways of speaking and there is nothing beyond our vocabularies as a philosophical attitude is in many ways in accord with a long tradition running from Socrates to Kierkegaard that understands irony as a point of view adopted towards language or meaning (80).

On the other hand if we were to begin with ordinary language use and some of the recent linguistic and philosophical material on irony, we would be inclined to define irony, like metaphor as a peculiar type of speech act.

One of the recent linguistic and philosophical material on irony, we would be inclined to define irony, like metaphor as a peculiar type of speech act. Colebrook again in his article “The Meaning of Irony” writes the view of John Searle. John Searle in his book *Speech Acts; An essay in the Philosophy of Language* defines irony “as a specific relation between speaker meaning and sentence meaning. Thus, irony, like metaphor, can be described from within a theory of meaning” (196).

What the situation seems to suggest is that if we want to understand irony, we might need to draw a distinction between irony as a figure of speech and irony as a theory of meaning. Thus, meaning of irony is divided accordingly, however, such distinction is neither possible nor valuable. Irony is a type of speech act, but

it is one that also opens the question of a theory of meaning. It means there is a relation between language and world. Irony, as a necessary possibility of any speech act is furthermore, the interminable opening of a theory of meaning. There are certain acts within language which open that language up for question.

Irony as a linguistic act or as a certain way of speaking, raising the possibility of an existential event, where our linguistic acts is no longer recognizable. So, the existential understanding of irony as a theory of meaning depends upon some idea of point of view. The ironist views language or meaning in certain way. The ironist is capable of adopting a distanced attitude towards language. On the contrary, the perceived difference between what we say and what there is the gap or distance of the ironic view point. An ironic reflection on what we say is aware if there is a world it can not be reduced to our language game, rhetoric or context. Socrates took this difference between rhetoric and world as transcendence of idea. Irony is a point of view adopted towards meaning; it is a specific way of living one's language.

Irony is thus found by context as well as point of view of the speaker's mind. Expectations, recognition, understanding and context determine the irony. It is precisely the connection between point of view as a personality, way of life or position, and point of view as the attribution of what is said to a speaker which characterizes much modern literary irony and produces the problem of separating the ironic speech act from the problem of a theory of meaning. Irony as saying one thing and meaning the opposite is an indirect speech act.

Traditional demands of irony are saying something other than what is understood. On Fowler's account "irony is exclusive and depends upon only part

of the audience recognizing the irony” (7). Irony according to context has a clear recognition of context and a distinct separation between sentence meaning and the speaker’s ironic meaning. Irony would then be a way of speaking which depends upon ordinary meaning and its contextual recognition, and the possibility that this meaning might be relocated in another context which establishes the ironic meaning. Thus to say something other than what is understood can be explained the ironic meaning as speech act acquired by context.

The irony is identified by recognizing a certain style of thought. In the poem *Tyger* by William Blake, there is the irony of such type. In the poem the literal meaning is asking about the nature of a God who could create this tyger. But if we ask who is speaking, we start to get a sense of irony. Irony is perceived only with the recognition of the limits of thought. The ironic utterance leads beyond itself to a critical thought. Sometimes, irony also shows that the way of seeing is not itself seeing. In the case of Blake’s irony most of the songs are instances of moral or religious rhetoric which accept their way of speaking as so much fact, as simply the way things are, and are not aware that what they say.

As Rorty has mentioned that irony as recognition that

What we say is really is not a representation of what is and that we ourselves are nothing more than our ways of speaking: irony as theory of meaning or language; an attitude towards truth and representation defined in terms of improving morally the ways of speaking. For him irony is more than a speech act within language. It is recognition of the way language works is general. (10)

Irony is a healthy skepticism of one's own language game, a preparedness to adjust one's lexicon and refigure one's vocabularies.

Irony is a term that has been used to encompass several related phenomena. The term itself takes its name from a stock character in Greek comedy known as eiron who got the best opponents through wit and resourcefulness. Over time, however, the concept of irony has been expanded to include at least four distinct concepts: Socratic irony, irony of fate, dramatic irony and verbal irony. Although, many other types of irony have been suggested e.g. nihilistic irony, romantic irony, the four types of ironies have emerged as the basic descriptors of ironic states. These four types of irony share only one feature: that is the discrepancy between mental representations and state of affairs.

Types of Irony

There are four types of irony which are universally accepted. They are: Socratic Irony, Irony of Fate, Dramatic Irony and Verbal Irony. Socratic irony refers to the rhetorical technique of pretending ignorance to reveal a flaw in the thinking of another. Socratic irony is the notion of pretense; the speaker knows the answer but acts as if he or she does not.

Irony of fate is used by speakers and authors to call attention to a peculiar relationship between two events. These utterances are usually signaled explicitly.

Dramatic irony refers to the tension created when an audience possesses information that characters in a dramatic work do not. The conflict between what characters do not know and what audiences have known already is a hallmark of dramatic irony.

Verbal irony is such irony in which ironists intentionally make statements opposite to their beliefs. Most typically, ironists express attitudes toward something by contradicting the true state of affairs. Verbal irony has long been a topic of interest to researcher in a variety of fields. A subtype of verbal irony is sarcasm in which attitude expressed is typically negative and directed towards an individual or group. Pretense and echoic mention theories capture distinct aspects of verbal irony; verbal irony highlights the importance of repeating the words or thoughts of another person.

Satire and Parody:

Both satire and parody are literary genres both can be described in terms of three features of irony: pretense, echoic mention, and the maintenance of multiple mental representations. Pretense is an important part of satire and that echoic mention is an important part of Parody. Such distinctions are useful because distinctions among text genres appear to have psychological significance.

Satire and Parody share some features of another poorly understood and frequently misinterpreted concept: Irony. Irony refers to the rhetorical technique of pretending ignorance to reveal a flaw in the thinking of another. Satire has been defined as the ridicule of a subject to point out its faults. At various times satire has been used by those writing to avoid censure for a more distinct statement of their views. In satire, multiple representations are constructed only when the audience goes beyond the narrative and considers issues external to the story. Irony and satire share many points and they differ to each other in some respects too. Likewise sarcasm, satires share the quality of derisive.

Unlike sarcasm, however, satire typically comments on society rather than an individual. Like irony of fate the goal of satire is to comment on a state of the world. Irony of fate is an explicit, satire however, accomplishes this commentary implicitly. Although parody also requires the construction of multiple mental representations, it differs from satire because it relies on echoic mention and not pretense.

As Holman and Harmon described “Parody can be taught as imitation intended to ridicule or to criticize”(102). For Beckson and Ganz “Parody is a form of burlesque”(102). Highet considers that “Burlesque is a form of parody” (Highet, 1962). Therefore, it may be helpful to evaluate parody in terms of ironic features like satire. Parody does not expose ignorance rather it flatters or criticizes. Unlike irony of fate, and like satire, parody is an implicit commentary. Both parody and satire require the reader to construct multiple mental representations. In parody, the audience does not need to go beyond the boundaries of the original work to consider societal implications as they do in satire.

The satire is also a parody due to the multiple mental representations: representations of the events in the text itself, representations of how the events in the text imitate the original work and representation of how the events in the text have implications both beyond the text and beyond the original work. An example of parodic satire is Jonathan Swift’s poem ‘The Ladies Dressing’ Room where swift has imitated John Milton. Celia is compared to Eve. When satire and parody function together within the same work, they achieve their unique goals independent to each other.

Satire is effective with an understanding of Parody whereas parody can not be effective without an understating of satire, parody is only satiric when the target extends beyond one's style. Therefore, a parodic satire would be the same as a satire parody. But satire and parody are not same genre though they share some qualities. Pretense, echoic mention, and multiple text representations can be used to differentiate between the closely related genres of parody and satire.

Chapter - III

Attacking Women: Reading Swift and Pope

Jonathan Swift as a master of satire always artfully presents his sharp wit in his poems. His poems though vigorous and original are generally satirical often coarse and seldom rise above doggerel. Swift sees only a mask for hypocrisy and often uses his verse to shock the new born modesty by pointing out some native ugliness which his diseased mind discovered under every beautiful exterior. In the poem “The Lady’s Dressing Room” too he has presented the sharp ironic indictment of women by pointing out the ugliness and filthiness of female character.

In the beginning line of the poem, poet has shown the proud and egoist nature of Celia who spends five hours in her furnishing and haughtily says — who can do it less in? Most of the lines of the poem are about the loose character and dirtiest manner of women. Women are undermined and the reality is versified in fanciful imaginative twist. The room where Celia has been dressing up is void and unpleasant according to the narrator of the poem. Some kind of ooze like reeking prevails in the room. Her clothes and gowns are stinking like. But such kind of naughty girl is addressed as goddess. In this point, an irony is hidden connotatively. The vast gap between Strephon’s calling her goddess and his peeping out her room while dressing up is an ironic indictment of women in this poem.

On the one side, Strephon treats Celia as his beloved and goddess but on the other side there is an offensive treatment of Celia with the excremental and

scatological vision. She is an exaggerated, representative women of Eighteenth century England. She is presented as haughty, proud and immoral character. The spirituality of Celia is totally ruined and her morality, good conduct and ordeals are migrated from her heart. She is presented in careless manner. Celia's act of spreading perfume is also depicted as careless act. Being a misogynistic poet, Swift seeks to undermine the female in the twistfull and radical manner.

At the third stanza of the poem, there is the description of various combs of Celia which she uses for different purposes. If she uses these combs one by one for various purposes, they must be clean, neat and attractive. But the presentation of these combs in the poem is different. Strephon comments these combs are dirty and greasiness of dirt could not force out by a brush. They are intermingled tightly. In his own poetic line Swift says:

The various combs for various uses
Filled up with dirt so closely fixed
No brush could force away betwixt
A paste of composition rare
Sweat dandruff, powder, lead and hair.(20-24)

This description is an ironic unraveling of women which is quite opposite in practical life. The poet mentions that however Celia makes her up, her skin becomes wrinkled and the steams exhaled from sour unsavory streams. The cosmetics are treated as slops, waste and boxes are identified with gallipots and vials. These gallipots and vials also indicate the negative character of women.

In each and every point, there is a bitter tracement towards the women virtues. The basin which Celia uses is filthy. Poet indirectly relates her dressing

room with Bathroom and Toilet. But who can accept that the dressing room is seminame of bathroom and toilet? It is nothing rather than the violent and shameful treatment of women by so called acknowledged male. Celia's stocking, handkerchief, towel, slippers all are ironically shown in the poem.

Celia is presented as rough and notorious girl but the poet does not consider his male character, Strephon an inferior while he is having a voyentish look at Celia where she is doing herself up. Another vicious and brutal example of ironic indictment of women is the smelling and reeking of petticoats and gowns which causes him almost vomiting. The glasses, towels, dressing table, slippers, handkerchief of Celia are being criticized by Strephon. The natural and reasonable character of woman is reversed as offensive and savagery. The beautiful and timid nature of womanhood is vulgarized and satirized here. But in a virtuous manner, ladies are respected as a goddess.

In the first stanza of poem poet has regarded Celia as goddess arrayed in brocade and lace. On the contrary to this he curses her as careless wench! at the last part of the poem. It is a brilliant ironic indictment of women. Nobody identified a girl as a goddess and wench at the same time. Needless to say, Strephon is a swain of Celia. Whatever he has blamed and inferiorised to the women, Strephon himself is an unknown lover of Celia. The poet has artfully presented the gap between what we read in the poem and what is there in reality. This gap is an ironic realization of the women.

"The Lady's Dressing Room" is one of the best excremental poem in which there are many example of scatology. Swift's intention is to correct the follies and vices of society by using satire. In such satires, he especially attacks

the women. Swift, who seems a pseudo-psycholunatic, likes to create poems full of scatological abstracts. The Lady's Dressing Room itself is undoubtedly about women. It is void, unpleasant and litters are scattered everywhere. Strephon peeps out the room and describes the room as it is a bathroom and toilet. He finds everything is a dirty and stinking. The scatological vision we easily find in calling the combs 'betwixed by paste made by rare substances' like 'dandruff', 'powder', 'oil' etc. He calls the room as dustbin and combs, cosmetics boxes and bottles are dusts. They are litters. The greasy paste is probably the human stool as we analyze this point as scatological. The vials and gallipots are filled up with gutters and urines. The dandruff and greasy earwax make the towel begummed. It means, everything in her dressing room is stinking with human excrets. Here 'scraping' and 'scouring' are best example of scatology. Celia's 'spiting' and 'spewing' in the basin is another illustration of scatological vision. 'Sniff' and 'snot' which varnished Celia's handkerchief add another brick in poet's view about scatology. The petticoats smell badly because of uncontrollable drops of urine, slops and waste products from her body. Sour unsavory smell like odorous steam is coming out from her body and she has used alum flower to stop this. Here her breathe is badly treated. "Exhaled", "sour unsavory streams", "sweat" are some words which directly indicate the waste thing related to human body. Here, Celia's breathe itself is similar kind of smell like that of from sour unsavory streams. Her breathe is smelling bitter to which we can relate to the scatological objects.

Another strong point of scatological vision is filthy basin standing near her which has the mixture of scraping of her teeth, gums, snot, sniff and other waste products from Celia's body. There is a layer made by different colors due to

cough, blood, sniff etc. It is all what give us plentiful space to analyze the poem from scatological point of view. It shows how Celia is careless to her health and her dirtiness made her inferior. How outwardly beautiful women are degrading and ruined in their inner reality is quietly presented in this poem thus.

Anyway, whatever is presented as decorative principles for Celia's dressing it does not draw the attention of reader. Readers compare her beauty with the flower rose out from dung. Her creams, hair oil, lotions, powder are compared with liquid from wounded body. They make her situation worse day by day. Thus, Swift has designed his art embroidering with scatological features and sharp ironic indictment of women.

As Pope is a great poet with his witty satire, some of his poems are on theme of characters of women. He has incurred severe censure on the characters of women. The censure has been exaggerated. Pope clearly had no high opinion of the characters of women, and in some respects he is highly reprehensible. His treatment of the character of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu under the name of Sappho is vile and unmanly. It goes beyond the legitimate satire and by its excess defeats its own end.

The poem 'Epistle 2 to a Lady' by Pope is severe criticism on the character of women. Pope as a male chauvinist always uses words to suppress the female. He uses male patriarchal lenses to see the women. He has colored the female with patriarchal codes and conducts. In the beginning line of the poem he blames women as such:

Nothing so true as what you once let fall

"Most women have no character at all." (1-2)

When we read his poem 'Epistle 2 to a Lady', there are many inferior treatment on character of women. 'Most women have no characters at all' (2), or that "every woman is at heart a rake", are some false ideas. We know that it is untrue. He is there not to say smooth things, but to expose defects. The character of Atossa, however legitimate satire, is severe more. So is that of Cloe.

Here what he says about women's morality, conduct and character is ironical. What Pope has said is not completely logical. Poet portraits the gallery of nymphs, goddesses and other mythical characters to show such rude kind of behave. To prove his view about loose character of women, his illustrations are not so bold. Being mythical and historical characters, they may have good characters as we think, but Pope charges them as weak and lacking. If these nymphs are not good in their character, why he identified them in his poem then? Here lies an irony.

Pope's characters such as Rufa, Leda, Cynthia, Magdalen, Arcadia, Calista, Narcissa, Silia, Papillia etc. were ancient nymphs and goddesses. However, they are presented as odious, variegated, weak and defective in themselves. As Pope asserts they have less wit;

Ladies, like variegated tulips, show;
Tis to their changes half their charms we owe;
Their happy sports the nice admirer take
Fine by defect and delicately weak. (40-44)

Here, demonstrations of ladies are defective. They are fine but at the same time full of defect and weakness. But no sources of ancient period gives us such view about ladies. Rather, they are blessed with higher degree of wit, wise, tolerance,

sense and so on. So, Pope may inferiorize them due to the defect of his own physical body. The gap between what he says and what reality is far matching. So, the irony comes to the fore.

You purchase pain with all that joy can give
And die of nothing but a rage to live. (99-100)

In line 99, 100 Pope sees the female life as nothing Female sight and mind both are slow. Their talent is a waste and education does not guide them. They purchase the pain in those things which can rid them from pain and provides the pleasure. They live the life of nothing. In opposite to this view, we see various glorious task done by women. They handled the power in neo-classical period.

The comparison between women and fool in line 113-115 is quite ironic.

Women and fools are two hard things to hit,
For true no-meaning puzzles more than wit. (114-115)

Women and fool are two things which have no meaning at all and they puzzle men more than by wit. The death equals them. However, Pope brings the name of Chole as a spotless character. Chole is:

“Yet Chole sure was formed without a spot—” (157)

Pope here defeats in his idea. At first he says no women characters are perfect. But, Chole is a perfect and formed without a spot. Thus, Pope seems hasteful at first part of the poem and become subordinate towards females at last part of the poem.

Pope also highlights two guiding rule in women the rule of passion and rule of power. But we see various rules in women’s mind too. They have done the things which male wants to do. So, the ruling guide does not affect them. As, he

says, women a part and counterpart for male, these two principles of women also can be underlined in men too. But, he forgot the reality and seems as a male supramist. For him, female virtue and idealism do not constant. They have inconsistency and volatility. Due to the limited power they entangled within two spheres which cause them to be not static mind.

In men, we various ruling passions find;
In women, two almost divide the kind;
Those, only fixed, they first or last obey,
The love of pleasure, and the love of sway. (207-210)

Due to the effect of these two, they are weak, subordinate to men and frail. They are cursed by men's oppression. Poet takes various illustrations to prove his view as they are weak, lack, a part and counterpart of men. Women's beauty, wealth, power do not reach perfection according to Pope. He asks them to dissociate from the general failings to her sex.

Epistle 2 To a Lady interacts with the subject of the poem itself which is not simply women but their characterlessness more specifically. Pope has taken as his model to 'Martha Blount' in the poem. He has cursed women race at first but takes Martha, his own friend as a good-natured sensible and well-being character. Here, Pope's impotence and rude proud is perished. If his blame to the character of women is bold and appropriate, he must not take 'Martha' as his model. Here the irony is indicated towards Pope himself.

As Pope has notified Martha Blount a model female, his earlier view towards female's rudeness immorality and characterlessness is quite reverse. The

irony lies in this point when at first his view towards women is quite opposite in the representation of Blount. Pope objectified women here both as a sign of their own insignificance and as a medium for Pope's self-reference. The portrayal of Martha Blount itself may be read as well as and perhaps more fundamentally as the vehicle for a conception of the female as a lack. Having no meaning in herself, woman here is at best a part and counterpart of men whom she at the same time mirror and complete.

In the line 'But every woman is at heart a rake' (216), Pope generalizes one particular case. It may be true at certain immoral women but it is a severe derogatory charge to whole women race. For women, says Pope, whether she remains discreetly hidden inside the law or flamboyantly transgresses the boundaries inhabit a place of non meaning. They have no meaning in themselves. They are a lack. Indeed, in Pope's system incomprehensibility is valorized as a woman's "proper pleasure". A woman's perfection is in her imperfection. She is "fine by defect". "Women and fool are two hard things to hit" also brings a metaphor as they are riddles in being unintelligible. A "good woman" is impossible to find and being woman and not woman a lady is a radical contradiction. But, these all descriptions are false and based on gender biasness.

Pope's men are generative, active; seminal. They are celebrated with the language of power and positive action. Women in 'Epistle 2 To a Lady' are "uncharactered" and so do not circulate as autonomous entities. They are identified with gold, inactive state and thereby associated with unfruitful, decadent and useless art. Pope's women are "unformed", "matter" "inert"

“useless things” (line 3, 112, 252). Here, too Pope has inferiorized women by bringing such stereotypes.

Thus, Pope’s view of women is not stand on one point either they are totally uncharactered or they have a good morality, well-being and virtue like that to Martha Blount. His view is not bold. So, irony is embedded within poem itself. There is a gap between verbal and visual mode of representation. He draws women as they are not but as they described in manner. Indeed very essence of Pope is to generate the difference between seeming and being. This gap of seeming and being is an irony.

In the poem ‘Impromptu to Lady Winchilsea’ poet Alexander Pope attacks to Lady Winchilsea with flattery and shows his misogynistic attitude towards women. He sees the female progress as a sign of their doom and the female who writes appreciately of women destined to doom.

Alexander Pope likes to show himself as superior. He comes out as a male chauvanist. He does not regard female and feminine virtues. Rather for him ‘women are at heart a rake’. They are immoral and characterless. His use of words like ‘dame’, ‘Sappho’s’ in the poem indicate his dominating influence to women. His misogynistic attitude becomes clear from addressing of women as “dame”. “Dame” refers to careless women.

Instead of respect women as goddess, mother and wealth, Pope’s hatred and inferior indication as Sappho’s and dame shows his misogyny. ‘Sappho’ is the name of goddess who was famous for her notorious slatternly and personal

uncleanliness. Here, his remark to female poets as Sappho is quite disgusting. His flattery to Lady Winchilsea in his some poems quite contrarily depicts her as defeated lady like her mistress Queen Anne.

Misogynistic attitude of Pope is quite clearly seen in the point

In vain you boast poetic domes of yore,

And cite those Sappho's we admire no more;

Fate doomed the fall of every female wit,

But doomed it then when first Ardelia writ. (1-4)

In the eyes of male, female are judged. Whether they are wise, talent or reasonable, they are evaluated by male patriarchy. 'We admire no more' means, those who are not likeable to male are not good and they are not allowed to be good. As he has not admired the women poets of long ago, they are not acceptable in writings of female poets too. It shows how defensive and biased is the society? Pope neither admires them nor is hopeful on the bright future of them nor could he be happy when lady Winchilsea writes about their fame. He rather says 'fate doomed every women virtue'. Here, the influence of patriarchal culture is inserted. Pope, as a life-long bachelor and deformed man might be poured his own suffering and pain in his writing by crushing the women. For him, women are the things to be seen only. So, he may confess his reality through the poem. It may be his mouth vocation to satisfy his own position.

The words like 'quarrel', 'subdues', 'doomed' etc are some negative words attached to ladies virtues in the poem. Ladies virtue is doomed and they are always defeated being. Thus, Pope's inferior treatment to ladies shows how resentful he is towards women.

Pope's scolding of Lady Winchelsea is the result of his misogyny. Lady's praiseful writing about great ladies poets is vain and fruitless essay for Pope. His objections are an outcome of his ambitions and hypocritical sensibility. He has deepened in the psychology of patriarchal superiority. So, he no longer accepts the name and fame of women poets. If a lady writes by praising other women it would be the reason of her own doom as Pope has mentioned in the poem:

To write their praise you but in vain essay

Even while you write you take that praise away (9-10).

How women are trapped in patriarchal social and cultural norms is obscured in this point. Women must be silent otherwise they are blamed as immoral lady. Society's rule is overall rule for all. Their wisdom and ethics is trodden and their talent is thus faded away. Females are inferior and they are the things to be played. Anyway, females also can do progressive work but their progress is no more admirable.

Thus, seen from feministic point of view, the poem is flush with male hatred towards female progress and talent. They are imposing the false rules to women. The poem is ironic too. The difference between what would be the result if women get the freedom to write and what is there in the poem is the irony. Pope's charge to Lady Winchelsea's writing as an impromptu is not true. Her writing is quite remarkable but Pope intends to write her off.

Chapter – IV

Rebutting Swift and Pope: Reading Montagu, Irwin, Finch and Leapor

The poem ‘The Reasons That Induced Dr. Swifts to Write a Poem Called the Lady’s Dressing Room’ deals with Swift’s hypocrisy and shows how misogynistic sensibility is grown within Swift’s spirit. Swift’s misogyny is not the cause of any other fact but his frustrated desire and illicit relationship with his Betty. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu attacks Swift’s vanity, hypocrisy and defiant indecency with means of parody, satire and irony.

Swift’s ideology seems moral and spiritual. He criticizes the follies and does not forgive the spiritual voidness in the heart of human race, outwardly. He is misogynist poet after Pope. But, his misogyny bound him to criticize the female virtues in more fragile and dominating way. He is a doctor yet his morality is repressive and parochial. His immoral relationship with his Betty is shameful though he hides his immoral acts by criticizing women.

The poem describes how Swift shamelessly engages in vulgar activities like-‘kissing’, ‘peeping’, and ... He appears as proud while going to meet his Betty.

While grave he stalks down ... streets

His dearest Betty ... to meet (5-6)

The poet substitutes vulgar names for its mock-pastoral, Betty instead of Celia. Swift in his poem ‘The Lady’s Dressing Room’ treats to Celia bitterly. He extremely demoralizes her. The exact reason of this is Swift’s own pornographic

presentation. But, to hide his vulgar engagement with Betty, he exposes her room as dirty, stinking and her as characterless. Betty is purchased with sum. This action does not behoove doctor's personality like Swift.

“For twice two pound you enter here;

My lady vows without that sum;

It is in vain you write or come.” (18-20)

Here, ‘My lady’ refers to Betty and it is spoken by her maid Jenny to whom Swift expects to taste a rhyme. Means, in absence of his Betty, Jenny could also give pleasure for Swift. His ‘bawdy’ and ‘gallantry’ way of speaking mixing up flattery to move the heart of Betty is the sign of spiritual decadence. His epithet to Betty as ‘dull hard-hearted creature’, ‘dame’ and ‘saucy quean’ refer his dominating and superior being. But, the poet gives quite contrary meaning by using some respectable attributes as ‘doctor’, ‘reverend’ and ‘dean’ to Swift. By using high respective noun, she intends to undermine his character exposing his brutal, savagery and fragile wantonous behave.

Swift's exchanging prostitute with some pound and gold is not surprising act. He often engages to his new Prunella which also experimented with Betty too. He has exposed herself lecherous person.

The poet brings a parody of Horace to Swift's so called superior wit and intelligent. Swift in his paradise of thought thinks as he is for many pleasures by cheating more Betties. On one hand, he himself criticizes female virtue. But on other hand he cheats many Betties in exchange of gold and money. It is how Swift is decadent, hypocrite and outwardly intelligent?

It is how unfortunate for female to expose the follies and vices of male. They are immoral and characterless if they show men's faults. Women are stared by morals if they indicate the vices and follies of men. Men are wise and intelligent with their several odds but females are destined to be fragile, characterless and spiritual decadence without their faults. Betty is also such victim character in poem who without her own mistakes is blamed.

The reverend lover with surprise
Peeps in her bubbies, and her eyes,
And kisses both and tries — and tries.
The evening in this hellish play,
Beside his guineas thrown away,
Provoked the priest to that degree
He swore, "The fault is not in me.
Your damned close stool so near my nose,
Your dirty smock, and stinking toes, (63-71)

Here, the speaker is Swift, who takes pleasure and quenches his frustrated desire by peeping and kissing Betty's bubbies and eyes. He romantically engages with Betty to which the poet called 'hellish play'. Shamelessly, Swift blames Betty and becomes pretentious with provoking "the fault is not in me". More than this, he points out the dirty smock, stinking toe and stool of Betty as the cause of his arrival in her room and engaging with her.

"By god ! the blame lies all in sixty odd,
And scornful pointing to the door
Cried, "fumbler, see my face no more" (75-77)

Here the speaker is Betty herself, a victim female character of the poem. The male character perhaps Swift himself does not take any responsibility of his fault. Rather than with vanity he has sworn that 'The fault is not in me' (69). He also assures that he'll not come again but revenge her by describing her dressing room.

"I'll be revenged, you saucy quean
I'll so describe your dressing room
The very Irish shall not come." (85-87)

Poor Betty is double victimized lady. She neither gets gold nor any thankful attitude. She gets only domination. Swift is a cheater. But one point that Celia gets satisfaction is she will be glad if he described her room because it is about her shit. By writing such, Swift will expose his own vanity, low breeding and pornographic picture of him. It'll hamper Swift's own moral dignity, wit and intelligent.

Thus, the poem has shown what makes Swift to write such poem 'The Lady's Dressing Room'. The poet attacks him by exposing his low breeding. The parodic satire helps us to understand the real position of Swift. His misogynistic emotion is not the cause of other fact rather the engagement with many new prunella and frustrated desire rooted within him.

The poem 'An Epistle to Mr. Pope Occasioned by his Characters of Women' primarily is a counter attack of Irwin to Pope's view on character of women. Pope's idea about character of women is quite regressive and 'most women are at heart a rake' (216, Epistle 2 to a Lady), signifies his disgustful generalization and parochial idea indicating to women's character. But, Irwin

attacks at this point and says if women got the chance of education they would also be wise and bold as men.

Pope's Misogynistic attitude towards female is not surprise among female character. Though, his satiric verses are directly towards them, it is with the purpose of improving them. His hateful generalization as 'women have no character at all' is quite debatable. Pope always treats women as inferior and they deserve to be included in such stereotypes like flirt, decadent, defective, ruin void and second. But, men are quite deserved for their wit, wise and so they are superior, educated and first. According to Irwin, her response to Mr. Pope is helpful to be a rational, logical and understandable being towards female and feminine ethics.

Irwin's description of what makes the women such inferior draws the attention of male chauvinists. Without true recognition of reality, Pope's conclusive inferiority of women is only a way of male domination. Men's respect women as a goddess is far away rather they are defective and secondary thing. For Pope Epistle2 to a Lady is full of his hatred towards women.

Culture and narrow concept of social tradition is grown up in favoring the male ethics and virtues. Tradition always puts the women in second position. Neither women got the priority in getting education nor can they speak raising the voice of their domination. So, the real cause of women's foolishness is the lack of education

In education all the difference lies'

Women if taught, would be bold and wise (33-34)

Due to the lack of proper education male and female seem different. But their joys, pleasure, love, age are same. Different sexual growth and different acts seem them as different but the inner impulse is same within both.

Though different acts seem different sex's growth,

'Tis same principle impels them both' (7-8).

Pope's idea as women are variegated tulips, they are fine by defect and delicately weak, is attacked by Irwin. She says as haughty man can improve by art and rules, woman can also be cured and strengthened if she gets proper education and cultural ethics. Women are guided by false moral laws and parochial lesson of patriarchal custom. Due to the misled of custom their mind is full of weeds. Such weeds are grown spontaneously without sowing any seed. Therefore, their mind is always defective and they have no proper guidance. So, culture must be taught to them appropriately. Then only they can improve the fruits of human mind and they become wise, witty and bold as men:

Culture improves all fruits, all sorts we find,

wit, judgment, sense-fruits of the human mind (47-48).

Woman's impracticability is a charge that Pope has given. Pope shows female character as unpractical. But to counter him, Irwin's view is quite regardful. She attacks Pope by bringing an analogy of such kind:

Ask the rich merchant, conversant in trade,

How nature operates in the growing blade;

Ask the philosopher the price of stocks,

Ask the gay courtier how to manage flocks;

[...]

They'll all reply, unpracticed in such laws,

The effect they know, though ignorant of the cause (49-58).

Irwin's answer to Pope is logical. If women are deprived to engage in the fruitful tasks and social adjustment how can they be practical then? Nobody can be perfect without practice and this is true in case of women too. If women have right of equality to men, if they are properly guided by education, if false ethos of cultural dogmas is rubbed by their mind, women, too, become able to judge, wit and rational power. So, Pope's reason is no reason at all. If reason is not applicable to practical life then that is not reason at all. So is the case to women's practicability

The whole is comprised in application,

Reason, if not exercised is not reason (63-64).

Irwin's idea is in favor of female virtue. If women can be respected in every field, their future is bright. Her illustration of Roman women figures is an attack to Pope's view as 'No female's wit reach in generosity'. Portia, Celia, Lucretia, Cornelia were some Roman females whose fame was spread all over the Earth. Portia was the glory of female race. There is still the remarkable fame of Spartan female's virtue. Their wit and courage could reach them in generous point. Due to their bold and rational fight, they won the Spartan war. Thus, her humble answers logically fight with Pope and it is believable for us that Pope's misogyny is almost in climax. Therefore, he does not regard the name and fame of women.

However, Irwin's view is somehow resembled to Pope in the point that modern women have no such generous sentiments. Modern women have been

going much decadent but it is the result of male suppression and dominating tendency. Although such voidness is seemed yet we can rescue them with the philosophical knowledge. Since knowledge is ceased, philosophy is unknown, it makes the situation of such emptiness.

No more such generous sentiment we trace;
In the gay moderns of the females race,
No more, alas! Heroic virtue's shown;
Since knowledge ceased, philosophy's unknown. (105-108)

Thus, the loss of generous sentiment in modern female race is due to the cease of knowledge. In contrast to Pope's view, it is quite reasonable answer to males. With contradicting the idea of Pope, thus, Irwin's depiction of reality is quite satisfactory.

In this way, Irwin's counter attack to Mr. Pope through this epistle is the revolt of female domination, suppression. Females no longer like be submissive, docile and dependent upon male according to Irwin. Thus, women must speak for themselves to get the equal opportunity in the field of education. The real difference lies in education not in their sex.

Similarly in the poem 'The Answer to Pope's Impromptu' Anne Finch attacks Pope with witty ironical flattery and also imitates the myth of Orpheus to threaten the men's power.

Finch is dissatisfied with Pope who charges her writing as an impromptu. Pope's misogynistic sensibility never gives the generous place for female wit, talent and wisdom. For him, female wit fizzles out. So no female wit reached in generosity.

The very beginning line of the poem flatters Pope. The word 'genteel' is used for Pope. This shows his polite and humble manner but at the same time, he pretends as he is from higher class. Poetess diverts the expectation of reader and presents the image of Pope as misogynistic who shocks the female sex.

Disarmed with so genteel air,

The contest I give over,

Yet, Alexander! have a care

And shock the sex no more (1-4)

The exclamation mark in third line attached to name Alexander gives us a hint that there is something bad. Alexander is sympathized here, who have done many mistakes by criticizing the female virtue and ethics.

Men make a bad mistake, when they underestimate women's power is the theme of the poem. Women's power is not so weak as Pope has said. They can rule the whole race and be ready to be 'slaves' and then 'martyrs' later. Words 'slaves' and 'martyrs' signify the courage and power of female. So, women's power does not fade away rather their power is noted everywhere.

The poem has parody too. Parody refers to an imitation of something in an exaggerative way of ridiculing. The poet, in this poem imitates the myth of Orpheus to undermine the power of men. Orpheus's wit and power were destroyed when he left his wife in hell. If men do not regard the power of women, they are caused to destroy. Thus, Orpheus mythic style is imitated to ridicule the men's power.

There is a vast gap between the poet's suggestive admiration and its intensified meaning. Finch gives the suggestion which seems flattery but her

intention is to ridicule and undermine him. Her advise as “sooth ladies more and treat the follies of women finely” gives the connotative meaning than its literal meaning which is quite opposite. She means that Pope’s treatment of follies of women is a bad mistake. So, he must not mistake again. Thus, saying one thing and meaning the quite opposite is irony.

Thus, what the poet says and what it means, there is a gap. This gap is an irony. It seems flattery but finely intermingled with irony.

The poem ‘An Essay on Woman’ reflects careful study of the character of women and predicts the future of women very much darker. If women are living in contradictions, as Pope had asserted, the reason is that whatever they are and whatever they do can be turned against them. The poet Mary Leapor regards satire of Pope to women as blaming the victim.

Leapor’s imitation of Pope shows us that she admires him. Her own poem’s preface reports that “the author she most admired was Mr. Pope, whom she chiefly endeavored to imitate” (2603). But, Pope’s satirical arrow to female is only to hit the victim according to Leapor which cause him to suffer more and cause to dead with suffocated psychology.

It seems in the poem that the poet is against the female. She does not favor the wise, intelligent, beauty, wealth and power of women.

Woman—a pleasing but a short lived flower,

Too soft for business and too weak for power: (1-2)

Women’s beauty will be betrayed, wit will be shunned, and pursuit of wealth will shrink their soul. The metaphor ‘flower’ signifies temporary pleasure of women and their power is weak.

As other female poet suggest that wisdom, education and wealth can uplift the power of women. But for Leapor, to say wealth inspires every grace and blooming face calls the extreme happiness is the calling of destruction of female hood. To cultivate the flower of womanhood is a hard job. If women's wise is greater then there starts to envy each-other. Education also is not a complete solution rather it makes women envious and men resentful. So, the way to uplift the position of women by giving education brings a darker future of women.

Despised if ugly; if she's fair-betrayed (4)

Women are never deserved and taken as good. If they are ugly, they are despised and if fair, they are betrayed. So, women are always victim by nature.

Education and wealth both bring a small advantage to them. It is, therefore, better to remain in whatever position as they are in. If they try to be educated, beautiful and powerful, it damages them a lot.

Pale Lilies fade and when the fair appears,

Snow turns a negro and dissolves in tears;

And where the charmer treads her magic toes,

On English ground Arabian odors grow; (11-14)

English ground is virtuous and it is a land of creativity. If woman appears fair and charmer, then in English ground, an Arabian odor grows. It means female themselves are the land of creativity. Like 'snow', they are white and pure. But their education, beauty, charm turn them as black and dissolve them into pond of tears. Thus, it is suggested that despite the blame of Pope, their character is chaste, pure and creative in itself.

‘Wisdom serves to make woman know’ is only the keen sensation of superior woe. There is something lack due to education and wisdom. As Leapor has said wisdom also is not a complete solution.

And wisdom only serves to make her know

The keen sensation of superior woe (31-32)

Thus, cultivating a flower of womanhood is very hard job. Whatever they do that can be turned against them. All the fruits of wealth education, wisdom, beauty give them nothing more than wounds.

What small advantages wealth and beauties bring. (20, Essay on Women)

Therefore, women are by nature prone to be fallen. Nature has armed them for growing ill. There is no tablet which can cure the illness. This ‘ill’ refers to the oppression, suppression, domination and sufferings from andocentric society. That’ll being oppressive in patriarchal culture. So, if women are naturally ill, Leapor asks to Pope, why again and again Pope you tease women. To satire women is wound them more.

In this way, Leapor’s view on character of women is by nature suppressive. Their snow like purity and English ground like creative land could not get respect since a long time.

Chapter IV

Conclusion

Some of the works of Swift and Pope use satiric bite towards gender sexuality. Moreover, their misogynistic attitude towards female and feminine virtues, and characters had sparked controversy. Women poets of their time mocked at their misogynistic attitude.

In fact, Swift's misogyny is part of his misanthropy. As a Christian he hates human pride, or the illusion that we can rise above the sinfulness and frailty that are our nature impure, fallen creatures and he never misses a chance to shatter that illusion. Hence women, associated romantically with beauty and love, must be dragged down to earth and have their cosmetics rubbed off. His focus on bodily function in "The Lady's Dressing Room" has often been ascribed to a fixation or frustrated desire, as in Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's counterattack.

Pope, like Swift, attracts attack for his misogynistic attitude from some female poets of his time. Despite his patronizing attitude towards "Female wit" as in the exchange with Lady Winchilsea, he certainly takes a strong interest in female and domestic arrangement. Anne Irwin and Mary Leapor dismiss Pope's characterization of women.

Montagu's reply to Swift's 'The Lady's Dressing Room' gives a defensive consolation in a rather pitiful snobbery. Swift's hypocrisy, vanity and misanthropy treat women's manners oddly. His foolishly amoral association with many women exposes his hypocrisy.

Pope's generalization as 'most women have no character at all' (2, Epistle II), 'women are at heart a rake' (216, Epistle II) and 'no female wit reach generosity' (162, Epistle II) upset the female race. So Irwin in 'Epistle to Mr. Pope' suggests that lack of education makes all the difference between men and women. So, truly good poet would devote himself to educating women, not to ridiculing faults. Similarly, Leapor regards satire of women as blaming the victim. Her characters resemble Pope's but what dooms them is not the bad choices they make but the lack of any good choices in a man's world that turns their dreams against them.

Anne Finch's 'The Answer (to Pope's Impromptu)' flatters Pope to satirize his bad mistake that he underestimates women's power. Playfully threatening him with retribution by women, she satirizes the men's power and wit bringing the myth about the destruction of Orpheus.

Both Pope and Swift create their female characters as weak, other, submissive, victim and uneducated. On the contrary, male is witty, wise, educated, strong. The context which gives meaning is ironical. Their male characters do one thing but the context gives the meaning quite opposite. But, the female poets counterattack their follies and faults by making fun of it by using parody. They intensify their satire as a corrective of men's vices and follies. By criticizing Swift Montagu reveals the bitter reality of Swift's hypocrisy.

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