

HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE 2
SEMINAR & LECTURE (2nd year)

Dr Eva Antal

'COURSE PACKET'

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Contents:

John Donne, "The Flea"; "The Good-Morrow"
Andrew Marvell, "To His Coy Mistress"
John Milton, "On His Deceased Wife"; "On His Blindness"
Alexander Pope, "The Rape of the Lock"
Thomas Gray, "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard"
Samuel Johnson, "The Vanity of Human Wishes"
William Cowper, "The Poplar Field"; "The Castaway"
Robert Burns, "A Red Red Rose"; "To a Mouse"; "John Anderson My Jo"
William Blake, "Introduction"; "The Lamb"; Holy Thursday"; "The Little Black Boy"; "The
Little Boy Found"; "The Chimney Sweeper" (from *Songs of Innocence*); "Introduction"; "The
Earth's Answer"; "A Poison Tree"; "The Schoolboy"; "The Chimney-Sweeper"; "The
Tyger"; "Holy Thursday"; "London" (from *Songs of Experience*)
Jonathan Swift, "A Modest Proposal"
John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, *The First Book* and selections from 3 Books
John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress* (extracts)

1-52 p.

To His Coy Mistress

by Andrew Marvell

Had we but world enough, and time,
This coyness, Lady, were no crime.
We would sit down and think which way
To walk and pass our long love's day.
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side
Shouldst rubies find: I by the tide
Of Humber would complain. I would
Love you ten years before the Flood,
And you should, if you please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.
My vegetable love should grow
Vaster than empires, and more slow;
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes and on thy forehead gaze;
Two hundred to adore each breast;
But thirty thousand to the rest;
An age at least to every part,
And the last age should show your heart;
For, Lady, you deserve this state,
Nor would I love at lower rate.

But at my back I always hear
Time's wingèd chariot hurrying near;
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.
Thy beauty shall no more be found,
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound
My echoing song: then worms shall try
That long preserved virginity,
And your quaint honour turn to dust,
And into ashes all my lust:
The grave's a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace.

Now therefore, while the youthful hue
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,
And while thy willing soul transpires
At every pore with instant fires,
Now let us sport us while we may,
And now, like amorous birds of prey,
Rather at once our time devour
Than languish in his slow-chapt power.
Let us roll all our strength and all
Our sweetness up into one ball,
And tear our pleasures with rough strife
Thorough the iron gates of life:
Thus, though we cannot make our sun
Stand still, yet we will make him run.

JOHN DONNE, "The Flea"

Mark but this flea, and mark in this,
How little that which thou deniest me is;
It sucked me first, and now sucks thee,
And in this flea our two bloods mingled be;
Thou know'st that this cannot be said
A sin, nor shame, nor loss of maidenhead,
Yet this enjoys before it woo,
And pampered swells with one blood made of two,
And this, alas, is more than we would do.

Oh stay, three lives in one flea spare,
Where we almost, nay more than married are.
This flea is you and I, and this
Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is;
Though parents grudge, and you, w'are met,
And cloistered in these living walls of jet.
Though use make you apt to kill me,
Let not to that, self-murder added be,
And sacrilege, three sins in killing three.

Cruel and sudden, hast thou since
Purpled thy nail, in blood of innocence?
Wherein could this flea guilty be,
Except in that drop which it sucked from thee?
Yet thou triumph'st, and say'st that thou
Find'st not thy self, nor me the weaker now;
'Tis true; then learn how false, fears be:
Just so much honor, when thou yield'st to me,
Will waste, as this flea's death took life from thee.

THE GOOD-MORROW.

I WONDER by my troth, what thou and I
Did, till we loved? were we not wean'd till then?
But suck'd on country pleasures, childishly?
Or snorted we in the Seven Sleepers' den?
'Twas so; but this, all pleasures fancies be;
If ever any beauty I did see,
Which I desired, and got, 'twas but a dream of thee.

And now good-morrow to our waking souls,
Which watch not one another out of fear;
For love all love of other sights controls,
And makes one little room an everywhere.
Let sea-discoverers to new worlds have gone;
Let maps to other, worlds on worlds have shown;
Let us possess one world; each hath one, and is one.

My face in thine eye, thine in mine appears,
And true plain hearts do in the faces rest;
Where can we find two better hemispheres
Without sharp north, without declining west?
Whatever dies, was not mix'd equally;
If our two loves be one, or thou and I
Love so alike that none can slacken, none can die.

On His Blindness

When I consider how my light is spent
 Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
 And that one talent which is death to hide
 Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent
 To serve therewith my Maker, and present
 My true account, lest he returning chide,
 "Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"
 I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent
 That murmur, soon replies: "God doth not need
 Either man's work or his own gifts: who best
 Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
 Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed
 And post o'er land and ocean without rest:
 They also serve who only stand and wait."

John Milton

On his Deceased Wife by John Milton

METHOUGHT I saw my late espoused saint
 Brought to me like Alcestis from the grave,
 Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
 Rescued from Death by force, though pale and faint. 5
 Mine, as whom washed from spot of childbed taint
 Purification in the Old Law did save,
 And such as yet once more I trust to have
 Full sight of her in Heaven without restraint,
 Came vested all in white, pure as her mind.
 Her face was veiled; yet to my fancied sight 10
 Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shined
 So clear as in no face with more delight.
 But, oh! as to embrace me she inclined,
 I waked, she fled, and day brought back my night.

*Methought I saw my late espoused saint
 Brought to me like Alcestis from the grave
 Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave
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 Full sight of her in Heaven without restraint
 Came vested all in white pure as her mind
 Her face was veiled yet to my fancied sight
 Love sweetness goodness in her person shined
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 But oh as to embrace me she inclined
 I waked she fled and day brought back my night*

Alexander Pope

1688-1744

After a retired childhood in Windsor Forest, under the double disability of retarded growth from chronic ill-health and of Catholic parentage in an age of civil penalties, Pope showed precocious talent in his *Pastorals* (1709) and *Essay on Criticism* (1711); *The Rape of the Lock* (1714, enlarged version) placed him at the forefront of contemporary poetry, while he became associated with the wits and satirists of the Scriblerus Club (Gay, Swift, Arbuthnot). His translation of Homer's *Iliad* (1715-20) established his financial security, permitting his long residence at Twickenham (then well outside London), where by the river he built up his famous garden and grotto, which show his interest in the visual arts. Despite his friendships with literary men, and with Martha Blount and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (see p. 256), his growing fame and his collaboration in the Scriblerian ridicule of bad writing increasingly involved him in literary warfare: Theobald criticised his edition of Shakespeare and was enthroned in *The Dunciad* (1728; revised in four books with C. Cibber as hero, 1743). Partly under the influence of the former politician Henry St John, Viscount Bolingbroke, Pope produced *An Essay on Man* (1733-4); the four *Moral Essays* (1731-5) are epistles to friends on appropriate topics. Also in the 1730s, he cultivated *Imitations of Horace*, in which he fruitfully exploits the parallels between his situation and the Roman satirist's, to criticise the decay of morality and literature, opposing the life of retired contemplation and friendship to the money-grubbing and corruption of business and public life: the *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* stands as the prologue to these satires.

Pope laboured to refine the verse techniques inherited from Dryden, and attempted the traditional genres from pastoral to epic (mock, in his case). His great satires transcend personal animosity in their traditional concern to expose deviation from sound social and moral values. The romantic reaction against the heroic couplet reached its apogee in Matthew Arnold's verdict (1880) that 'Dryden and Pope are not classics of our poetry, they are classics of our prose'.

THE RAPE OF THE LOCK†

Canto I

What dire offence from amorous causes springs,
What mighty contests rise from trivial things,
I sing — This verse to Caryll, Musel is due;
This, even Belinda may vouchsafe to view:
Slight is the subject, but not so the praise,
If she inspire, and he approve my lays.
Say what strange motive, Goddess! could compel
A well-bred lord t' assault a gentle belle?
Oh, say what stranger cause, yet unexplored,
Could make a gentle belle reject a lord?

5

10

Canto V was added in 1717. The poem continually juxtaposes the trivial modern action with the mock-heroic manner: the speeches, battles, descent to the underworld, are epic in origin, with many echoes of the *Iliad*, *Aeneid*, and *Paradise Lost*; but the comparison is not entirely to the discredit of the modern world.

The Rape of the Lock Pope's friend John Caryll (l.3) hoped he might laugh away the quarrel caused when Lord Perce cut a lock of hair from Arabella Fermor ('Belinda'). The two-canto version of 1712 was expanded by the 'machinery' and further incidents into five cantos in 1714; Clarissa's speech in

dire offence begins by traditional epic statement of the subject

In tasks so bold can little men engage,
 And in soft bosoms dwells such mighty rage?
 Sol through white curtains shot a timorous ray,
 And oped those eyes that must eclipse the day;
 Now lapdogs give themselves the rousing shake,
 And sleepless lovers just at twelve awake:
 Thrice rung the bell, the slipper knocked the ground,
 And the pressed watch^t returned a silver sound.
 Belinda still her downy pillow pressed,
 Her guardian Sylph^t prolonged the balmy rest:
 'Twas he had summoned to her silent bed
 The morning dream that hovered o'er her head.
 A youth more glittering than a birthnight beau^t
 (That even in slumber caused her cheek to glow)
 Seemed to her ear his winning lips to lay,
 And thus in whispers said, or seemed to say:
 'Fairest of mortals, thou distinguished care
 Of thousand bright inhabitants of air!
 If e'er one vision touched thy infant thought,
 Of all the nurse and all the priest have taught,
 Of airy elves by moonlight shadows seen,
 The silver token, and the circled green,^t
 Or virgins visited by angel powers,
 With golden crowns and wreaths of heavenly flowers,
 Hear and believe! thy own importance know,
 Nor bound thy narrow views to things below.
 Some secret truths, from learned pride concealed,
 To maids alone and children are revealed:
 What though no credit doubting wits may give?
 The fair and innocent shall still believe.
 Know then unnumbered spirits round thee fly,
 The light militia of the lower sky;
 These, though unseen, are ever on the wings,
 Hang o'er the box,^t and hover round the Ring.^t
 Think what an equipage thou hast in air,
 And view with scorn two pages and a chair.^t
 As now your own, our beings were of old,
 And once enclosed in woman's beauteous mould;

pressed watch it indicates each quarter-hour
 by chiming

Sylph a spirit of the air (as gnomes of earth,
 nymphs of water, salamanders of fire), with
 a hint of 'guardian angel'
birthnight beau Courtier in magnificent attire
 for the sovereign's birthday

circled green marks left on grass by fairies
box in theatre
Ring fashionable circular drive in Hyde Park
chair sedan chair, for carrying passengers

Thence, by a soft transition, we repair
 From earthly vehicles to these of air.
 Think not, when woman's transient breath is fled,
 That all her vanities at once are dead:
 Succeeding vanities she still regards,
 And, though she plays no more, o'erlooks the cards.
 Her joy in gilded chariots,^t when alive,
 And love of ombre,^t after death survive.
 For when the fair in all their pride expire,
 To their first elements^t their souls retire:
 The sprites of fiery termagants in flame
 Mount up, and take a Salamander's name.
 Soft yielding minds to water glide away,
 And sip with Nymphs their elemental tea.
 The graver prude sinks downward to a Gnome,
 In search of mischief still on earth to roam.
 The light coquettes in Sylphs aloft repair,
 And sport and flutter in the fields of air.
 'Know further yet; whoever fair and chaste
 Rejects mankind, is by some Sylph embraced:
 For spirits, freed from mortal laws, with ease
 Assume what sexes and what shapes they please.
 What guards the purity of melting maids,
 In courtly balls and midnight masquerades,
 Safe from the treacherous friend, the daring spark,^t
 The glance by day, the whisper in the dark,
 When kind occasion prompts their warm desires,
 When music softens, and when dancing fires?
 'Tis but their Sylph, the wise Celestials know,
 Though Honour is the word with men below.
 'Some nymphs there are, too conscious of their face,
 For life predestined to the Gnomes' embrace.
 These swell their prospects and exalt their pride,
 When offers are disdain'd, and love denied.
 Then gay ideas crowd the vacant brain,
 While peers and dukes, and all their sweeping train,
 And garters,^t stars, and coronets^t appear,
 And in soft sounds, "your Grace" salutes their ear.
 'Tis these that early taint the female soul,
 Instruct the eyes of young coquettes to roll,

chariot pleasure carriage

ombre the card game played in Canto III

elements earth, air, fire, water: basic

constituents of matter

spark a lively man, a lover

garters . . . coronets

aristocratic rank

90 Teach infant cheeks a bidden blush to know,
 And little hearts to flutter at a beau.
 'Oft when the world imagine women stray,
 The Sylphs through mystic mazes guide their way,
 Through all the giddy circle they pursue,
 And old impertinence expel by new.
 95 What tender maid but must a victim fall
 To one man's treat, but for another's ball?
 When Florio speaks, what virgin could withstand,
 If gentle Damon did not squeeze her hand?
 With varying vanities, from every part,
 100 They shift the moving toyshop of their heart;
 Where wigs with wigs, with sword-knots^t sword-knots strive,
 Beaux banish beaux, and coaches coaches drive.
 This erring mortals levity may call;
 Oh blind to truth! the Sylphs contrive it all.
 105 'Of these am I, who thy protection claim,
 A watchful sprite, and Ariel is my name.
 Late, as I ranged the crystal wilds of air,
 In the clear mirror of thy ruling star
 I saw, alas! some dread event impend,
 110 Ere to the main this morning sun descend,
 But Heaven reveals not what, or how, or where:
 Warned by the Sylph, Oh pious maid, beware!
 This to disclose is all thy guardian can:
 Beware of all, but most beware of Man!
 115 He said; when Shock,^t who thought she slept too long,
 Leaped up, and waked his mistress with his tongue.
 'Twas then, Belinda, if report say true,
 Thy eyes first opened on a billet-doux;
 Wounds, charms, and ardours were no sooner read,
 120 But all the vision vanished from thy head.
 * And now, unveiled, the toilet^t stands displayed,
 Each silver vase in mystic order laid.
 First, robed in white, the nymph intent adores,
 With head uncovered, the cosmetic powers.
 125 A heavenly image in the glass appears;
 To that she bends, to that her eyes she rears;
 Th' inferior priestess,^t at her altar's side,
 Trembling begins the sacred rites of pride.

sword-knots decorative ribbons on sword hilt

Shock a shough, rough-haired lap-dog

toilet the dressing-table, an altar at which

inferior priestess the maid, commonly called

Betty (l. 148)

epic dream-warning, *Pepe* parodies religious

ritual and the arming of the hero

inferior priestess the maid, commonly called

Betty (l. 148)

130 Unnumbered treasures ope at once, and here
 The various offerings of the world appear;
 From each she nicely culls with curious toil,
 And decks the goddess with the glittering spoil.
 This casket India's glowing gems unlocks,
 And all Arabia^t breathes from yonder box.
 135 The tortoise here and elephant unite,
 Transformed to combs, the speckled and the white.
 Here files of pins extend their shining rows,
 Puffs, powders, patches,^t bibles, billet-doux.
 Now awful beauty puts on all its arms;
 140 The fair each moment rises in her charms,
 Repairs her smiles, awakens every grace,
 And calls forth all the wonders of her face;
 Sees by degrees a purer blush arise,
 And keener lightnings quicken in her eyes.
 145 The busy Sylphs surround their darling care;
 These set the head, and those divide the hair,
 Some fold the sleeve, whilst others plait the gown;
 And Betty's praised for labours not her own.

Canto II

Not with more glories, in th' ethereal plain,
 The sun first rises o'er the purpled main,
 Than, issuing forth, the rival of his beams
 Launched on the bosom of the silver Thames.
 5 Fair nymphs and well-dressed youths around her shone,
 But every eye was fixed on her alone.
 On her white breast a sparkling cross she wore,
 Which Jews might kiss, and infidels adore.
 Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose,
 10 Quick as her eyes, and as unfixed as those:
 Favours to none, to all she smiles extends;
 Oft she rejects, but never once offends.
 Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers strike,
 And, like the sun, they shine on all alike.
 15 Yet graceful ease, and sweetness void of pride,
 Might hide her faults, if belies had faults to hide:

Arabia eastern perfumes; the combs are of

tortoise-shell and ivory

patches artificial beauty-spots

If to her share some female errors fall,
 Look on her face, and you'll forget 'em all.
 This nymph, to the destruction of mankind,
 Nourished two locks, which graceful hung behind
 In equal curls, and well conspired to deck
 With shining ringlets the smooth ivory neck.
 Love in these labyrinths his slaves detains,
 And mighty hearts are held in slender chains.
 With hairy springs¹ we the birds betray,
 Slight lines of hair surprise the finny prey,
 Fair tresses man's imperial race ensnare,
 And beauty draws us with a single hair.
 Th' adventurous Baron the bright locks admired,
 He saw, he wished, and to the prize aspired:
 Resolved to win, he meditates the way,
 By force to ravish, or by fraud betray;
 For when success a lover's toil attends,
 Few ask if fraud or force attained his ends.
 For this, ere Phoebus rose, he had implored
 Propitious Heaven, and every power adored,
 But chiefly Love — to Love an altar built,
 Of twelve vast French romances,² neatly gilt.
 There lay three garters, half a pair of gloves,
 And all the trophies of his former loves.
 With tender billet-doux he lights the pyre,
 And breathes three amorous sighs to raise the fire.
 Then prostrate falls, and begs with ardent eyes
 Soon to obtain, and long possess the prize:
 The powers gave ear, and granted half his prayer,
 The rest, the winds dispersed in empty air.
 But now secure the painted vessel glides,
 The sunbeams trembling on the floating tides,
 While melting music steals upon the sky,
 And softened sounds along the waters die.
 Smooth flow the waves, the zephyrs gently play,
 Belinda smiled, and all the world was gay.
 All but the Sylph — with careful thoughts oppressed,
 Th' impending woe sat heavy on his breast.
 He summons straight his denizens of air;
 The lucid squadrons round the sails repair:

springs snares (two syllables)

French romances long love stories, bound in
gold-stamped leather

Soft o'er the shrouds aerial whispers breathe,
 That seemed but zephyrs to the train beneath.
 Some to the sun their insect-wings unfold,
 Waft on the breeze, or sink in clouds of gold.
 Transparent forms too fine for mortal sight,
 Their fluid bodies half dissolved in light.
 Loose to the wind their airy garments flew,
 Thin glittering textures of the filmy dew,
 Dipped in the richest tincture of the skies,
 Where light disports in ever-mingling dyes,
 While every beam new transient colours flings,
 Colours that change whene'er they wave their wings.
 Amid the circle, on the gilded mast,
 Superior¹ by the head was Ariel placed;
 His purple pinions opening to the sun,
 He raised his azure wand, and thus began:
 'Ye Sylphs and Sylphids, to your chief give ear!
 Fays, Fairies, Genii, Elves, and Daemons, hear!
 Ye know the spheres and various tasks assigned
 By laws eternal to th' aerial kind.
 Some in the fields of purest ether play,
 And bask and whiten in the blaze of day.
 Some guide the course of wandering orbs on high,
 Or roll the planets through the boundless sky.
 Some less refined, beneath the moon's pale light
 Pursue the stars that shoot athwart the night,
 Or suck the mists in grosser air below,
 Or dip their pinions in the painted bow,
 Or brew fierce tempests on the wintry main,
 Or o'er the glebe² distill the kindly rain.
 Others on earth o'er human race preside,
 Watch all their ways, and all their actions guide:
 Of these the chief the care of nations own,
 And guard with arms divine the British Throne.
 'Our humbler province is to tend the fair,
 Not a less pleasing, though less glorious care:
 To save the powder from too rude a gale,
 Nor let th' imprisoned essences exhale;
 To draw fresh colours from the vernal flowers,
 To steal from rainbows e'er they drop in showers

superior taller; Ariel's attributes and speech
again suggest the epic hero

glebe cultivated land

