

Character Analysis of Belinda: The Rape of the Lock.

'Belinda', the protagonist of the mock-heroic poem 'The Rape of the Lock', represents the fashionable and aristocratic ladies of the time. She is a lady of superb beauty and charm. In the beginning of the poem, she is compared to the sun. The brightness of her eyes surpasses the brightness of the sun. She does possess the divine beauty. Besides this she possesses many denouncing qualities in her character.

With the exception of beauty, Belinda has many faults. The poet fully reveals to us her petty pleasure-seeking nature. She suffers from all the vanities, laziness, follies and moral scruple of the aristocratic ladies of her time. She is treated as an object of mockery, ridicule and even condemnation because of her shallowness, superficiality and lack of any intellectual interest and moral elevation in her life. Belinda sleeps till 12^o clock, noon. Her dog licks her and she get up everyday. Belinda is proud to be secretly in love with the Baron just after opening her eyes; first thought is about love letter which has been addressed to her. Next, she get ready for her toilet and her

day begins at noon. The toilet-table is like church to her. She takes help of "Cosmetic powder" and her maid-servant Betty assists her in preparing. This shows her insincerity and her superficial nature with lack of moral awareness.

Her rendezvous is the Hamton Court where she along with fashionable girls and men of upper-class society gather. There she becomes the centre of attraction and love. Gossip, Cards - playing, Coffee-drinking etc, consumes much of her time in the day.

She does seem to have any intellectual interest. Spiritual shallowness and incapacity for moral awareness are deep in her. She has transformed all spiritual exercise and emblems into a Coquette. Self-display and self-adoration she used as her ornaments.

After cutting off her lock, the lamentation of Belinda again brings out the shallowness and superficiality of her mind, as she says that she would not have been ^{so} wounded if some after hair, except her golden-curl would have been stolen.

Pope attributes divinity to Belinda's character. She is an incarnation of the goddesses of beauty. She is brighter than the sun. She eclipses the sun by bringing joy and gaiety into the world of

position, as the poet says:

"Belinda smiled, and all the world was gay.
Hurt to cause pride, to wound (morally) to damage"

Pope has mixed the complicated attitude of Belinda. He admires her but does not spare to criticize her. The Paradoxical nature of Pope's attitude is intimately related to the paradox of Belinda's situation. Although, Pope has ridiculed many of Belinda's manners, he did not leave her to be judged a bad woman.

There is no doubt that Belinda has a number of "fall". This fall consists in her manner of life, yet Pope presents her an agreeable form and we are led to forget her frivolities or morality. But the actual aspiration is laid on the very society of which she is the product. She is the medium through whom Pope expresses his dislike of the society which was given to mirth and merriment at any cost.

— x x — x x —