

## **Department of English**

### **B.Sc. - II**

#### ***Varieties of Expression***

### **The Rising of the Moon**

#### ***By Lady Gregory***

*The Rising of the Moon is a play by Augusta, Lady Gregory.*

*It is a political play which examines Anglo - Irish relations and Ireland trying to fight for freedom.*

*It was first produced on March 9, 1907.*

The play revolves around a man who has escaped from the gaol and a sergeant who happens to be looking for the prisoner everywhere.

The character of the sergeant is torn between duty and patriotism. While the ragged man (the prisoner) tries to persuade him by singing Irish ballads highlighting the sufferings and agony of Irish people. By forcing him to think, how certain events can greatly affect the kind of role we end up playing in our society, by saying, "it's a queer world sergeant, and its little any mother knows when she sees her child creeping on the floor what might happen to it before it has gone through his life, or who will be who in the end." It's funny to think about how if we had taken a slightly different route, how altered our present destination would be. And eventually, the thought of being a citizen of a country takes precedence over the feelings of duty towards a foreign nation.

#### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TITLE**

The title of any text, literary piece or play reflects its main theme and when the title fulfills this condition, it is called a justified title. Here the title of Lady Gregory's play "The Rising of The Moon" is not at all an exception.

The playwright has given the title to this play in a symbolic way. This title has a symbolic meaning and to understand it, we have to learn about the background of the play. This play is a Irish political play. At the time Ireland was under the rule of British and in 1798 Irishmen wanted their freedom from the British. Irishmen begin to seek freedom from the bondage of slavery. When persecution became unbearable and the people of Ireland raised their voice against the British empire. On that plot many Irish revolutionaries were born. They began the movement for their motherland.

In this play we see that Police of Ireland under the command of British is searching for the rebel who has escaped from jail. That rebel is determined to free Ireland from British. He in disguise comes across a Sergeant who is searching for him to arrest. That Sergeant is also an Irishman. The rebel by his songs, behaviour, attracts the mind of the Sergeant and has able to rouse And finally the rebel reveals his identity and getting the favour of the Sergeant, flees away from there. Before going away, he expresses his optimism that one day Ireland will be free. Here in the title the word 'Rising' symbolizes getting fulfillment of desire and the word 'Moon' symbolizes freedom. Just as at night, the moon perishes the darkness, in the same way the playwright thinks that one day the darkness of bondage will get light from the rise of revolution. So in every sense, the title of the one act play "The Rising of the Moon" is very appropriate.

**Quotation:-**

*MAN:- "Well, good-night, comrade, and thank you. You did me a good turn to-night, and I'm obliged to you. Maybe I'll be able to do as much for you when the small rise up and the big fall down . . . when we all change places at the rising of the Moon."*

**Other important questions:-**

- Describe the ragged man's efforts to make the Sergeant afraid of the runaway prisoner?
- In the beginning of the play what reasons does the sergeant give for wanting to catch the runaway prisoner?
- Character sketch of the sergeant.
- Character sketch of the ragged man.