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BA-104)
Dr. AINUL ABEDIN

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MAY
WEDNESDAY

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13/ 231 WK 20

Toilet scene in 'The Rape of the Lock'

Toilet scene in 'The Rape of the Lock' is delightful. It is a perfect illustration of mock-epic in Pope's poetry. It is a parody on the Arming of Hector in Homer's Iliad. It offers a ludicrously trivialised parallelism of Homer's elevated epic.

Toilet scene is a delightfully comic. It shows the craze of the 18th century aristocratic ladies for artificial make-up and embellishments. Like Pope, Swift's 'The Lady's Dressing Table' manifested it as an evil and with good deal of anger. Disraeli is said to have observed on:

'This was the golden period of cosmetics. The beaux of the day used the abominable art of painting their faces as well as the women. Addison also gave the description of toilet scene of cosmetics in 'the Spectator'. He wrote "The Toilet is their great scene of business, the sight adjusting of their hair". Unlike them, Pope's description is more detailed but his satire is not as harsh as Swift's and Addison's. Pope's satire is amiable and delightful.

Despite satirical implication, the toilet scene

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THURSDAY

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is a homage paid to Blinda's beauty and charm. It is more than a satirical portrait. The toilet scene may be aesthetic. There is 'mystic order' on Blinda's toilet table. She proceeds in all seriousness in a systematic manner without disturbing the order of the things on the table. Blinda is presented to stress the charm of elegance, refinement and systematic. Lastly Pope portrays sensual poetry. The lines constituting the toilet scene are exceptions to give light on his poetic genius, pleasures from senses have been derived as the poet says:

This casket India's glowing gems unlocks
And all Arabia breathes from yonder box
This shows visual senses. For all these reasons the scene is richly ambiguous.