

B.A. Semester-III, MJC-4

Dr Sharique Haider

Assistant Professor

Department of English

Maharaja College, Ara

Sonnet

Question: What do the tides or waves symbolize in Sonnet LXXV: One day I wrote her written by Edmund Spencer.

Answer: The waves and tides serve as a metaphor for the inexorable passage of time just as waves gradually wear away the shore and obliterate any traces of speaker "inscription, time similarly diminishes human being and effaces all remnants of their existence. The speaker engraves his beloved name on the seashore in an attempt to extol her virtues and ensure her remembrance, but his efforts are thwarted by the relentless waves. Despite repeating the process, the tide persistently obliterates his endeavours. The poem implies that cycle will continue indefinitely as the waves incessantly lap the shoreline, rendering the speaker attempts to preserve evidence of his beloved futile.

The narrative suggests that the relentless and inevitable passage of time mirrors the ceaseless nature of the waves, i.e., the speaker cannot prevent death's approach, nor can he halt time's gradual erasure of his beloved's earthly presence. This use of waves and tides symbolism was a prevalent theme in Elizabethan poetry "reflecting poets" concerns not only about the enduring memory of their subjects but also about the legacy of their own work and English literature as a whole.