The present thesis seeks to provide a fairly comprehensive comparative statement on parody in English and Marathi poetic traditions. As part of this intellectual endeavour, the researcher has sought to define parody in its various historical contexts.

The term ‘parody’ means ‘caricature of a poem made by applying its words with burlesque effect’. A parody imitates the serious manner and characteristic features of a particular literary work in order to make fun of those same features or someone else. The humorist achieves parody by exaggerating certain traits common to the work, much as caricaturist creates humorous depiction of a person by magnifying and calling attention to the person’s most noticeable features. In contemporary usage, parody or lampoon is a work that imitates another work in order to ridicule, ironically comment on, or poke some affectionate fun at the work itself, the subject of the work, the author or fictional voice of the parody, or another subject. There are various kinds of humour in literature. They are ‘Burlesque, Caricature, Farce, Lampoon, Parody, Travesty.’

Parody is an intentional imitation- of a text, style, genre or discourse-which includes an element of humour and which has an aim of interpreting its target in one way or the other. Three kinds of parody can be specified for proper study of this mode.

1) Parodies of texts and personal styles
2) Parody of genre or genre parody and
3) Parody of discourse.
Some critics divide the parodies into two classes: Parodies of sounds and parodies of sense. There are, however, three great divisions, which are called ‘word-rendering’, ‘form-rendering’ and ‘sense-rendering’.

‘Word-rendering’ is merely an imitation of the original that depends for its interest entirely upon the substitution of a trivial or commonplace motive for a lofty one. ‘Form–rendering’ is the imitation of the style of an author. ‘Sense-rendering’ is most meritorious style and diction but precisely follows a train of thought. This class of parody can be found at its best in Catherine Fanshawe’s ‘Imitation of Wordsworth’ and Calverley’s ‘The Cock and the Bull’.

The absolute origin of parody is uncertain and various ‘Fathers of Parody’ have been named, yet we can safely assume that it began with the Greeks. Aristotle attributes the first Greek parodist to Hegemon of Thasos in ‘Poetics’, though other writings credit the playwright Hipponax with the first creation of theatrical parody. Aristophanes makes use of parody in the ‘The Frogs’ (in which he mocks the style of Euripides and Aeschylus). Plato also caricatures the style of the various writers in the ‘Symposium’. A history of parody in English, however, would have to begin by considering the mass of medieval burlesque directed at church, or at the conventions of chivalry and courtly love. In the Middle Ages, the first well-known is a parody of Chaucer’s ‘Sir Thopas’ and Chaucer is himself the basis of parodies written by Alexander Pope and W.W. Skeat. Cervantes creates a
parody of Medieval romance in ‘Don Quixote’. Rabelais creates parodies of contemporary intellectual history in ‘Gargantua’ and ‘Pantagruel’. Erasmus parodies Medieval scholastic writings in ‘Moraiae Encomium’. In ‘Shamela’ (1741), Henry Fielding makes a parody of Samuel Richardson’s novel ‘Pamela.’

Miss Cary was regarded as a pioneer of parody of America. She was one of the few women writers, who have done clever work in this sort.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth century, the art of parody began to improve, and during the nineteenth century, it was at its peak and therefore, demanded recognition from the literary world. The masterpieces as the ‘Rolliad’ and ‘Anti-Jacobin’, ‘The Rejected Addresses’ and ‘Bon Gaultier Ballads’ ushered in and prospered the age of English parody. The nineteenth century witnessed a prodigious outpouring of parody, which continued undiminished into the twentieth. There were parodists of every variety, from hack humorists beyond number to virtuoso performers like C. S. Calverley and J. K. Stephen. The same writers could work at very different levels too. Lewis Carroll’s best parodies are pure poetry, but he was also capable of routine Victorian jocosity—of producing a parody of Swinburne entitled ‘Atalanta in Camden Town’. The parodists like Thackeray, Calverley, Swinburne and Lewis Carroll, Bayard Taylor, Bret Harte, Phoebe Cary certainly enriched the century. Then comes more
modern work of Rudyard Kipling, Antony C. Deane, H. C. Bunner and Owen Seaman.

Literature played a very pivotal role in Victorian and post-Victorian culture. Parody, therefore, in the same period, was at the peak of popularity. The parodies would never have had the appeal they did if large numbers of people had not had some familiarity with what was being parodied. There was, in fact, no guarantee of quality. The parodists’ favourite targets were inevitably anthology-pieces, sentimental classics, and the kind of poems that were regularly assigned as school-work or chosen for recitation. The legacy of the Victorian schoolroom lived on well into the twentieth century.

In the early twentieth century parody acquired a new significance mainly through the Russian Formalists, whose major aim was to develop a theory that would enable them to approach and analyse literature ‘scientifically.’ The best twentieth-century parodies impress by their sophistication. There was a strong impulse towards parody in many of the leading masters of modernism, from Joyce to Nabokov. Parody plays a very significant role in the Formalists’ theory of literature. These Formalists and Bakhtin’s fruitful arguments about the nature and function of parody played a significant role in increasing the interest in parody as a subject of critical analysis.

Parodies are also apt to make people think in the process. The form of parody writing has been around for centuries and ceaselessly continues
to have a profound effect on entertainment today. Parodies appear in many shapes and forms. “Literature, film, the visual arts, and music all can use parody today to comment on the “world” in some way” (Hutcheon: 111). Parodies are extensively used in films as well as in the variety of programmes on radio and television. Parody basically seeks to enlighten and entertain. The function of entertainment, however, does not cease to be there. It possesses the instructive values too. The parodic work must draw attention to the earlier work. Its writing ought to be tightly crafted and thought-provoking. The subject-matter is so ridiculously different from the original that parody naturally stirs a smile. So, more contrast, the better. There are three factors that make the parodist select a poem for parody. One, it should have impressed the parodist; two, the specialties of the poem should be well understood by him; three, those specialties are appropriate for parodying. Normally, there are two objectives behind poetic parody. One is to show the defects of the original poet, an example being Atre’s *Shyamales*. Another objective of parody is to use the good material of the original and to apply it to an ordinary object in a pseudo-serious way and thereby mock that ordinary object. This second objective is more comprehensive as compared to the first one. In fact, for parodying, the poet must be filled with pure and innocent love for poetry. He needs to delve deep into the stylistic attributes that he wants to parody in detail.
Parody is a type of high quality humour enjoyed by rational, choosy readers. All the features of a first class humorist must be present in a parodist, too. Excellent parody is not just a parody of external expression but also of the content. Great parody imitates everything right from the prosody, style and mannerisms to the tiniest features of the content of the original. The parodist has to portray the inconsistency within the very serious content of the original. He creates laughter by striking a contrast between the façade of the diction, rhythm and tune of original and the hollow content of the imitation. For achieving all this precisely, he needs to be aware of the existent tendencies in the current literature. He needs to be a good listener and his taste of literature must be good. Imitating a style of expression directly cannot be achieved without command on language. It is not possible to aim at the content and target it precisely without knowing well the entire personality of the original writer. In other words, parody is no longer worthy of name, if it loses sight of its target. “Good parody is always based on affection. You have to be fond of a writer before you can enter to his spirit, as opposed to merely aping his mannerisms” (Gross: xii). Though many excellent parodies are motivated by exasperation or contempt, and they are designed to annihilate, most parodies are relatively benign. Although parody is the nearest literary equivalent of caricature, its connotations are playful.
The proliferation of text parody directed at the work especially of those poets well-known for their idiosyncratic styles is attributed to mounted Romantic indulgence in the individuality of the author. Parody in the nineteenth century has similarly been analysed. The extensive use of text parody in this period has also been linked to the Romantic tendency towards social and political satire—probably a consequence of both French Revolution and the political unease in the Regency period. The need to satirise has again been regarded the primary factor in the pervasive use of discourse parody in Victorian comic literature. During the first half of the twentieth century, the prevalence of text parody too, has been accounted for mainly through the literary avant-grade introduced by modern writers. All these different cases have evinced once again that it is impossible for the parody to contain in a single comprehensive definition. This is perhaps most evident in the fact that even the same parodic kinds employed throughout history manifest widely differing aims, intentions, functions and attitudes. The same diversity applies to parody in postmodern age. Here, too, parody, which is much more pervasively and conspicuously employed compared to earlier periods, exhibit a wide variety of aims, functions, and the attitudes. The same research has made some efforts to demonstrate that postmodern parody is primarily a discourse parody—a phenomenon that can be accounted for through the characteristics of postmodernism in general.
and post-structuralism in particular. Discourse is, almost always the object of parody in postmodern fiction.

The historical approach adopted in this research denotes that different parodic kinds are widely employed at different literary-historical periods—a phenomenon usually determined by the literary, cultural, social, and ideological characteristics of each period. This applies to parody in the postmodern age, too, where the general characteristics of postmodernism as a movement have determined the kind of parody most pervasively produced at the time.

Robert Mack has a significant remark regarding the pervasiveness nature of parody: “Parody ought clearly to be included within the legitimate taxonomies of culturally valued literary endeavour. The practical analysis entailed by such a study further insists that we are today in a position not only to confront the long-standing demand on the part of parody to be recognised as a respectable literary activity, but that we ourselves—in various capacities as scholars, critics, educators, and informed readers—finally begin to redress that same demand; parody has played a significant and very often determining role in a wide range of works by both canonical and non-canonical English authors” (Mack 20-21).

According to Margaret Rose, “Parody should also be able both to maintain a place in the centres of literary awareness from which it was excluded in the past by those who did not, or could not, appreciate either its
heritage or potential because of previous distortions or misunderstandings of its history and functions and to assist those centre towards new and interesting developments” (Rose 284). Linda Hutcheon has the most appropriate remark pertaining to the ubiquitous nature of parody: “Parody is, indeed, in the eyes of beholder. But beholder needs something to behold” (Hutcheon xvi). Macdonald goes even further about its ubiquity, when he says that nothing, and no one, is sacred and that the ridiculous may also be found in the sublime. Macdonald relishes parody because he states: “I like parody because I feel comfortable with it. I like its bookish flavour because I like books and parody is a kind of literary shop talk. I like its classical moderation, its common sensibility. And I feel at home with it because an elderly culture like ours is suffused with parody” (Macdonald xv).

“Parody and the parodic forms more generally are inevitable manoeuvres in the to-and-fro of language, in the competition between genres, and in the unceasing struggle over meanings and values that make up any social order. Undoubtedly, at some historical moments and some societies, parody has been more centrally present than at others” (Dentith 188). Sometimes, excessive growth of meaningless symbols hampers the prosperity of the poetic genre. This surfeit of symbols provides a subject to the parodist. He makes the conventional as well as progressive temperaments aware of the reality. We can even say criticism in the guise of a parody is more effective and intense than ordinary criticism. The
emphasis of parody is on inconsistency rather than consistency, on rationalism rather than emotions and on incompleteness rather than perfection.

“Parody is the custodian of the artistic legacy, defining not only where the art is, but where it has come from” (Hutcheon: 75).

“The fact that poor parodies outnumber the good ones in the ratio of about ten to one (which is not an unusual percentage in any branch of literature), is because a wide and generous sense of humour is rarely found in combination with the somewhat circumscribed quality of good taste. It is, therefore, on account of the abuse of parody, and not the use of it, that a defence of the art has been found necessary” (Wells: xxxiii).

Sometimes the reputation of a parody outlasts the reputation of what is being parodied. For example, Don Quixote, which mocks the tradition Knight errant tales, is much more well-known than the novel that inspired it, Amadis de Gaula (although Amadis is mentioned in the book). Another notable case is the novel Shamela by Henry Fielding (1742), which was a parody of the gloomy epistolary novel Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded (1740) by Samuel Richardson. Many of Lewis Carroll’s parodies, such as “You Are Old, Father William”, are much better known than the originals. Most of the parodies of Acharya Atre have an everlasting impression. His parody, Parita Yeshil Kadhi Paratun outlasts the reputation of the parodied poem of Rev. Tilak’s Pakhara Yeshil Kadhi Paratun.
The present research attempts to deal chiefly with the tradition of parody in ‘poetry’, since poetry is more prone to being parodied than prose. The true realm of parody is poetry. Imitation is the soul of parody. Even the etymological meaning of the Mararhi word *vidamban* is imitation. This imitation becomes enjoyable only if it’s of a familiar object. This is why popular poems are given the first preference for parody. The parody poem is a humorous form of imitation that seeks to entertain the audience. Parody is as old as antiquity. It has emerged almost simultaneously with the appearance of “serious” literature, and has continued its existence then. According to Acharya Atre, “Parody is a type of attraction of opposites. It is not possible to parody any ordinary poet or poetry. Parodying a poet is an indirect way of showing respect towards him or her” (Atre 2005: 56).

This research has sincerely endeavoured to throw light on the tradition of parody in both English and Marathi poetry, and prevalence of different kinds of parody at different literary-historical periods in English and Marathi literature. It has been argued that parody in the Middle Ages was especially directed at the sacred texts, on account of the emphasis on religion and the pervasiveness of religious texts during this time. Similarly, the prevalence of parody directed especially at classical texts during the Renaissance has been accounted for through the heightened interest in art and culture of antiquity. Moreover, the fairly widespread use of genre parody during the period has been linked both to the Renaissance spirit of
creating new literature out of the old. Like Renaissance, the neoclassical interest in literature of ancient Greek and Rome has been considered as a reason for the proliferation of parodies directed at texts during this period.

The tradition of Marathi parody may not be longer than the tradition of English parody. It is, however, richer and much glorious one. Marathi parody has both the entertaining as well as instructive elements. English parody possesses entertaining elements. However, the instructive elements are rarely found in the same. In Marathi parody, the contribution of P. K. Atre is unique. He is regarded as the chief exponent of Marathi parody. Most of his parodies have left an inerasable mark in Marathi literature. He is aptly acknowledged as an icon in Marathi parody. Yet, the pioneering work in Marathi parody was done before Atre. According to a research by Patankar, Mangesh Ramchandra Telang is regarded as the first recognised parodist in Marathi literature. The parody written by him in 1889 is considered as the first one that heralded parody in Marathi. The name of the parody was *Sangeet Hajamat*, which is quite amusing. It is quite interesting to note that some significant parody elements are found in Saint Eknath’s *Arjadast*, a religious and thought provoking song–namely *bharud*. Many writers have served meritoriously as the parodists. J. K. Upadhye, Dattu Bandekar, Suresh Khedkar, Raja Badhe, P. L. Deshpande, Yashwant Dev, Mangesh Padgoankar, Dr. Dilip Kulkarni are some of the noteworthy parodists, who have done remarkable work in Marathi parody. The present
research has sincerely attempted to introduce the glorious tradition and the monumental and unfailing parody work of some significant parodists in Marathi Poetry.

The research has earnestly endeavoured to prove that in addition to the entertaining values, Marathi parody has an instructive value, and it has acted as a reforming, correcting influence against mannerisms and other glaring defects. It has been rightly said that good parody makes us love the original work better; it may even lead us to know the original work more thoroughly. Parody has been given a parasitical importance. It can, however, sustain without the support of the original one. It would not be an exaggeration to say that a true parodist can create his own universe like Sage Vishwamitra, who with his exquisite power, created counter-universe. Parody should, no longer, be considered as ‘pejorative’ in intent and ridiculing in its ethos or intended response. It is intended to have higher semantic authority than its original. Parody is not a new phenomenon. Its ubiquitous, pervasive existence in all the arts has necessitated to undertake this present research.

There is a glorious tradition of the parodists in both Marathi and English literature, but very little account of their literary work is available. There is a scarcity of parody work of many parodists in English. Most of the parody poets have remained ‘unacknowledged legislatures’ in the world of parody. It is, therefore, the sincerest endeavour of the present research to
unfold the importance and the greatness of parodists with their work and show the genuine gem of the parody in both Marathi and English literature. People do have a relish for a parody, but are ignorant and oblivious of the work and achievement of the parodists. It would, therefore, be pertinent to travel in the realms of the tradition of Marathi and English Parody poets.

Nowadays, there is a plethora of various kinds of parody. Parody plays the pivotal role in almost every sphere of life. The media like radio and television are teeming with the novelty of parodical programmes. Undoubtedly, parody of today is at the peak of popularity. Numerous newspapers, magazines are known for their significant contribution of parodical articles. However, according to Dr. Bapurao Desai, “no attempt has ever been made to undertake research on Parody” (Desai 23). The present research is a modest attempt in this direction.

Parody, like Almighty, is omnipotent and omnipresent. Parody is not the privilege of any country or any period. In its broader connotation, it is an aspect of thought, or an aesthetic energy. Though it is pleasing to perceive the spate of parody and its pervasiveness, it is the onus of the true devotee of parody to nourish and indulge in only the genuine parody and keep the cheap parodic entity at bay. Let us brace ourselves to do away with the chronic attitude that parody has a parasitical value. We should start on our pilgrimage, buoyed up only with the anticipation to understand, perhaps, a little better, the ubiquitous nature of parody, and regard the
parody as ‘omnipresent and omnipotent’ part of literature, a sovereign emperor in the province of art and literature.

A comparative statement on the tradition of parody in English and Marathi traditions of poetry will have to conclude by making some crucial observations. First, parody in English poetry has a much longer and more continuous tradition than in Marathi. This is so because parody as a genre presupposes prior availability and accessibility to the parodied text. In English, the Gutenberg revolution brought about this availability and accessibility much earlier. In Maharashtra, literature in print was a phenomenon that emerged only after the advent of the colonial rule, that is, after 1818. Second, parody in Marathi seems to have emerged only when a set of literary conventions and norms reaches its point of saturation, exposes its weaknesses, and thus becomes worthy of parody. Atre’s Zenduchi Phule is a classic example in this context. Third, parody seems to be operative in multiple contexts in a class-based society than in a caste-based society. In a caste-based society, certain texts, historical figures and themes can not be parodied because they can hurt the feelings of people. A class-based society, however, being more open, is responsive to a variety of parodies, ranging from the sacred to the secular.