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(The views expressed in the articles are not of the Editor but of their respective writers.)

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EDITORIAL

This is the third year and the third issue of the Journal since the Indian Association for English Studies took over the publication and distribution from commercial publishers; and I take this opportunity to express thanks on my own behalf and on behalf of the Editorial Board to all the members contributors and subscribers who have shown their appreciation of the improvements brought about during this not very long period. I need not recount here the achievements of Vols. XIX and XX but I feel I must draw the attention of the readers to the new features of the current issue.

Specimens of creative writing in the form of short poems have been maintained, in spite of the advice to the contrary from certain quarters. Not only that, the present issue carries a long poem, a sustained effort in episodic narrative. The purpose is to provide an incentive to our member poets who write poetry in English to try out their poetic talent beyond short lyrics which they usually write. Indian poetry in English needs such compositions for world recognition.

A second, new and welcome, feature is the Literary Debate. I feel happy to acknowledge my indebtedness to those readers who at long last responded to my repeated appeal, and gave me a start on this forum. Although comments on the articles of the preceding volume came in limited numbers, the rejoinders to the comments were invariably spirited, some so spirited, indeed, that I had to withhold them from publication. Others had to be cut and pruned before being sent to the press. The fact is we have yet to learn the virtue of tolerance. In a subject like literary criticism, there can be no final view or opinion. To the best argument for, and demonstration of a point of view or interpretation, every reader has a right to oppose: "But sir....." The Journal will deem itself of some service if it succeeds in promoting, through its Literary Debate forum, this much desirable virtue among its contributors and readers.

Although twenty years is not a very long span in the life of a literary journal, it does good to stand at certain stages of an uncertain journey to look back and take cognizance of distance covered and to count the milestones. It was thought proper, therefore, that this Volume XXI should

carry a cumulative subject / title index of the foregoing twenty volumes. I need not comment on its value to the research scholars and general readers.

A fifth new feature, though not literary, yet of great value in promoting the Journal, is the appearance of advertisements of four leading American literary Journals on reciprocal basis. I wish to thank the Editorial and Managerial authorities of Philological Quarterly; Studies in Romanticism; Classical and Modern Literature; and Iowa Review. Well known American literary Journals, for having agreed to terms of reciprocal advertisement with our Journal on long term basis. The Editors, PMLA deserve our thanks for having agreed to publish a descriptive note about our Journal in their forthcoming issue for January 1982. I also thank, in my personal as well as official capacity, my one-time student, Dr. Harish C. Gupta, now Professor in the Department of Economics, University of Nebraska, U. S. A., for his help in finalising this arrangement.

Naresh Chandra
Editor-in-Chief.

CONTENTS

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THE TWO WORLDS OF EMILY BRONTE'S POETRY

B. D. Singh

Like the two worlds of Catherine in *Wuthering Heights*,[1] Emily Bronte very often refers to two mutually exclusive and incompatible worlds in her poetry. These two worlds are seen as separated by an impassable divide. They can be termed as the eternal and the temporal. The former is her vision of existence in an infinite and changeless world of Spirit in contrast to the mundane existence in the finite and ever-changing world of matter. The eternal world is perceived as the ultimate destiny of the soul. It is conceived as the "eternal home/the steadfast, changeless shore," inhabited by the Deity while the world of matter is seen as one of "suffering and corruption."[2] The former is negation of the latter and it is only through the rejection of the temporal that the eternal is supposed to be attainable:

> . . long or short though life may be
> 'Tis nothing to eternity:
> We part below to meet on high
> Where blissful ages never die.[3]

This vision of two worlds was at the source of Emily Bronte's rejection of earthly joys in her poetry and of her unfailing faith in the realization of the spiritual:

> . . every phase of earthly joy
> Will always fade and always cloy—
> This I foresaw and would not chase
> The fleeting treacheries. . . .
> . . . . . .
> There cast my anchor of Desire
> Deep in unknown Eternity;
> Nor ever let my spirit tire
> With looking for what is to be.[4]

The vision of the soul's being in 'that land divine'[5] is related to Emily Bronte's faith in life after death.[6] The soul is pictured as having its origin

in the world of eternity inhabited by Divinity to which it is ultimately 'restored'.[7] While picturing the 'embodied' existence of the soul in the world of matter Emily Bronte has expressed the faith that though the soul does pass through the experiences of the world of corruption and suffering, it in essence retains its purity:

If thou has sinned in this world of care
'Twas but the dust of thy drear abode—
Thy soul was pure when it entered here,
And pure it will again go to God.[8]

This life of the soul in eternity is seen as that of submergence into the Deity:

O for the time when I shall sleep
Without identity....[9]

Man's life in this world has been envisaged by Emily Bronte as microcosm of these two planes of existence. Corresponding to the eternal and the temporal worlds is Emily Bronte's conception of the inner world of imagination and the outer world of senses. Through imagination man partakes of the changeless existence in eternity and through his senses he is related to the temporal life in the world of things. That is to say, man's life in the inner world of imagination is an expression of the spiritual and his outer life in the world of things that of the material. Emily Bronte's vision of the inner world is related to purely personal experience. It arises out of the creations of the imagination. It is self-sustained and has its existence independent of the world of things. Hence it is perceived as immune to the principle of mortality of the material world. Thus man has an immortal life in the inner world of imagination. The world of things on the other hand has a mortal existence and man's life in it is subject to the principles of mortality and change because the material world lacks the creative energy of the soul, i. e., imagination. Imagination is a 'principle of life, intense/Lost to mortality.'[10] As the world of things lacks this power it is dark and grim and full of 'all the woe/Creation knows.'[11] The world of imagination, on the contrary, is the 'heaven of glorious spheres/..rolling on its course of light/In endless bliss through endless years.'[12] It whispers intimations of immortality as it always inspires the faith in an enduring life of the soul beyond the mutability of the objective world:

Let Time and Tears destroy,
That we may overflow the sky
With universal joy.[13]

The soul remains chainless through life and death because the imagination continues to unfold

New glories....
And call a lovelier life from death,
And whispers with a voice divine
Of real worlds....[14]

This life of the soul in the inner world is a vision of spiritual existence because in it the creative energy of the soul finds an expression and fulfilment beyond the needs of the material life. It is also symbolical of the soul's being in the infinite and of its release from the temporal:

So hopeless is the world without,
The world within I doubly prize;
.. ..
Where Thou and I and liberty
Have undisputed sovereignty.[15]

It is not a state of annihilation but one of 'unuttered harmony', of the 'vision divine', 'when heaven drops not, when earth is still'.[16] Thus in imagination man has a spiritual principle through which he is linked with the eternal principle:

O God within my breast,
Almighty ever-present Deity,
Life that in me has rest
As I Undying Life have power in thee.[17]

A comparison of imagination' in Emily Bronte with that in Wordsworth will be quite illuminating and helpful in understanding the former's attitude towards imagination and its special significance. Both were deeply inspired by their personal visions of life and moved by their belief in a divine principle of life. Wordsworth had a harmonious vision of life in which the entire creation was seen instinct with a 'Presence.' His spiritual visions emanated from the perception of the inspiring and beautiful forms of the objective world, i. e., nature. He was led from the perception of the world of senses to the vision of an invisible spirit in the forms of the objective world. Emily Bronte on the contrary had no single vision of life.[18] Her spiritual visions are independent of the objective forms and she appears to have been inspired by a spirit working in a sort of 'vacuum'.[19] In Wordsworth the senses are the necessary means of spiritual and even mystical experience.[20] His 'imagination' is a spiritual power in the sense that it brings about the

consciousness of a spirit pervading the universe. In Emily Bronte the senses and the sensory world on the one hand, and the imagination and its creation on the other are opposed as the former is seen as the hindrance to the realization of the latter. They in fact belong to two different kinds of reality. Unlike Wordsworth, there is no evidence in Emily Bronte that the sense experience is transformed into spiritual consciousness. On the contrary, Emily Bronte, like Blake,[21] felt that the senses were treacherous and distorted the vision of reality. A note of deep anguish is heard when the world of things represented by sense perception begins to intrude on that of the imagination :

> Oh dreadful is the check—intense the agony
> When the ear begins to hear and the eye begins to see ;
> When the pulse begins to throb and the brain to think again,
> The soul to feel flesh and the flesh to feel the chain.[22]

Moments of spiritual bliss are realized beyond the world of the sense :

> I'm happiest when most away
> .. ..
> When I am not and none beside—
> But only spirit wandering wide
> Through infinite immensity.[23]

Emily Bronte's tragic vision of the human condition is a corollary to her vision of the two planes of existence. As the two planes of existence are incompatible, the soul's being in eternity can find fulfilment only through the death of the earthly life. The condition of the embodied soul implies a conflict between the inner life of the imagination and the outer life of the senses. The embodied soul finds the habitual life (of the self in the material sense) as an obstacle to the fulfilment of its spiritual destiny and craves for liberation from the constraints of the self and therefore of the body. The imagination offers a momentary vision of the spiritual world for which the soul strives. Thus through the contrast between the inner world of imagination and the outer world of senses Emily Bronte has tried to present her conception of the contrast between the eternal and the temporal in the ultimate sense.

NOTES

1. *Wuthering Heights*, CH. XV.
2. C. W. Hatfield (ed.), *The Complete Poems of Emily Jane Bronte.* First published 1941. (London : OUP, 1952), No. 177.
3. Ibid., No. 41.
4. Ibid., No. 188.
5. Ibid., No. 177.
6. Loc. cit.
7. Loc. cit.,
8. Ibid., No. 61.
9. Ibid., No. 181.
10. Ibid., No. 148.
11. Ibid., No. 157.
12. Ibid., No. 157 : Cf. No. 170.
13. Ibid., No. 170.
14. Ibid., No. 174.
15. Loc. cit.
16. Ibid. No. 190 ; & 67.
17. Ibid., No. 191. 18s
18. See Mark Kierk-Weekes, "The Place of Love in *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*," in *The Brontes : Twentieth Century Views.* Ed. Ian Gregor. (Englewood Cliffs, N. J. : Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970), p. 86.
19. See Ibid,, Denis Donoghue, "The Other Emily," pp.159 ff.
20. See Wordsworth *Tintern Abbey*, L1. 23-28.
21. See William Blake, *The Peopehtic Writings.* Ed. D. J. Sloss and J. P. R. Wallis (Oxford, 1926), I, 539.
22. Hatfield, op. cit., No. 190.
23. Ibid., No. 44.

AFTER ALL THE PROVOCATIONS

I

After all the provocations
what next ?
Is not toleration now timidity ?
forbearance frigidity ?
and goodness depravity ?
So pick up your axe,
if you have aught
of MAN in you,
and let it fall,
to bring destruction and despair,
Who cares what remains here
or here-after
When both your glory
and ground are in danger ?

MY BLOSSOMS

II

You told me to bribe them.
They asked me to come through contacts.
As I have neither,
I bring my purest blossoms,
to be culled,
or to be left to wither.

MY DREAM

III

I loved him from the beginning
from the first bursting forth
of me in me,
the first blossoming
of my womenhood.
He was always with me
to thrill, to charm, to infatuate,
in all my pangs and pains,
and in the depth of ecstasies
of many a physical bliss :
I was never a virgin.
He was always with me.

Maya Ghosh
Jamshedpur

A DEFENCE FOR ROBERT BRIDGES

Mrs. Nighat Kamal

It is one of the ironies of literary history that Robert Bridges received public honours in his life time, but adequate critical appreciation has not been his lot after death. He is unceremoniously dismissed as a mere versifier, or un-inspired artificer bestowing his virtuosity on jejune subjects devoid of all fresh possibilities. While the world around him was sensing the challenge of new situations in life calling for new sensibilities for their adequate grasp and assessment, and a new idiom for their formulation and expression, Bridges was preoccupied with time-honoured but also time-beaten and time-exhausted subjects of poetry like Beauty, Love and Nature, as though the world had never grown out of its primordial stage. With his ears deaf to the sirens of industry, Pan still seemed to pipe to him pleasing tunes in every thicket and glade. He closed his eyes to the ugliness of life in his adoration of Beauty. Incapable of grasping the complexity and problems of social life of his day, he still thought that man had his perennial preoccupation in Love. In short, he utterly lacks modern sensibility.

This is the view that is generally held about Bridges, the poet, in academic circles and among general readers who evince any interest in poetry. Enthusiasts of Modern poetry are particularly disparaging in their references to Bridges. The main force of attack on Birdges has been directed against the themes and the subject matter of his poetry which are remote from actual life. Nor is his perfectionist virtuosity in technique allowed as a point of credit in his favour. At a time when poets were engaged in an earnest quest to evolve a poetic idiom commensurate with the boredom and horror and meaninglessness of modern life, Bridges was busy chiselling ever more musical and beautiful phrases, and experimenting with forms of verse as much with the purpose of making them answer to the theme and the emotion as to mystify the readers. Was there really time in the press of modern life for all this beautification of language and verse ? and even if there were, was it worth the time and the lobour spent, except for a poet who by sheer stroke of good luck found himself protected from the cares of

life by his economic prosperity and the secluded comfort of a Chilswell House on Boars Hill overlooking the grandest prospect in the academic world, to wit, the University of Oxford.

It should not be surprising in such a state of affairs to find that Bridges has found few defenders and enthusiasts. Herbert Warren is one who championing the cause of Bridges, observes :

> "He does not attempt to break with the past and cut himself off from it. He is content to remain in the direct, legitimate classic line. But he has advanced his art. He is himself a new combination of the eternal elements, a combination happy and rich. He has achieved in consequence a music of his own. He sings his own songs in his own way."[1]

And what does Warren find in Bridges to take his stand on in the championship of his poetry ? Continuity of the Tradition, advance on the Tradition in point of art, a new music resulting from the combination of eternal elements of poetry in his own way, and his own way of singing his songs, which last phrase admits of a dubeity in its interpretation. Does Warrren mean a distinctive way of his own, or a total unconcern with other modes of poetry ? If latter, it is hardly a praise, and would contradict the earlier characterisation as being in the Tradition. If he is mindful of the Tradition and strives to carry it forward, how could he affect a total unconcern with other modes of poetry besides his own ?

Against this seemingly half-hearted and not quite thorough going-defence is the spear-headed attack of a critic like Sola Pinto who drives his point home with the relentlessness of an unsparing adversary :

> "As far as Bridges was concerned, industrial England might never have existed..... (with him it is always) a world of gentle English landscapes, clear streams, downlands, gardens and birdsong, haunted by the memories of the classics, of music and poetry, and decorous Victorian love-making."[2]

This also is a misfortune of Robert Bridges to have half-hearted, fumbling defenders, and relentless, thorough-going adverse critics. One cannot but be reminded of what Sir Thomas Browne said of the indiscretion of championing a cause one is not competent to champion, or one does not have his heart in ;

> "Every man is not a proper Champion for Truth, nor fit to take up the Gauntlet in the cause of Verity : Many from the ignorance of

> these Maxims and an inordinate zeal unto Truth, have too rashly charged the Troops of Error, and remain as Trophies unto the enemies of Truth."[3]

If the cause of Bridges suffers in the advocacy of Warren, it is because of the poorness af the advocacy rather than the poverty of the cause itself. What Warren notices as chief virtues in Bridges' poetry is the outcome of a half hearted probe. There is much else of solid merit, but I must desist from anticipating myself.

Before coming to what I consider to be the solid merit of Bridges' poetry, let us glance over some other critics' judgement of the poet and his work. It is not surprising that the writers in the *Pelicam Guide to English Literature* should find him worthy of only a biographical notice of seven lines[4] besides a couple of indictments for his erroneous judgement and advice in regard to Hopkins, and one to the failure of *The Testament of Beauty*.[5] As is well known, most of the contributors to the *Pelican Guide* belong to the school of F. R. Leavis, and as such they cannot have patience with poetry like that of Bridges. But what is surprising is that a scholarly critic like Rosamond Tuve should dismiss *The Testament of Beauty* as a didactic Victoriam poem, notwithstanding the late date of its publication (1929), and bracketing it with Tennyson' *In Memoriam*, should cite it as an example of "unsuccessful attempt at expounding ideas in poetry."[6] One may find warrant to disagree with this sort of a disparaging judgement. Certainly Bridges is more successful in expounding ideas in poetry than Tennyson; and then his *Testament of Beauty*, as I propose to show, is much else besides an attempt at expounding ideas in poetry.

Of appreciative criticisms of Bridges, the best that I have come across is the joint venture of Edith C. Batho and Bonamy Dobree, and it is worthy of being quoted at length:

> "Hardy was not a master of versification as Bridges was; and indeed Bridges was a useful influence in bringing back a certain scholarly quality which it is necessary should occasionally be injected into English poetry as a call to order. To say that he was too much of a scholar to be a great poet—a common criticism is, of course, nonsense. Good scholarship never spoilt a good poet; and Bridges, though a good poet, lacked the imaginative leap, the ability to transform experience, which makes a great poet."[7]

He may lack the alchemy of poetry by which experience is transformed, but even the critics who make this reservation in the case of Bridges, ungrudgingly

allow him the power to "express an intense joy in the mere fact of existence, and the emotion of love" particularly in his earlier poetry, and I think poetry has its origin in the intense joy in the mere fact of existence.

(II)

We have before us a fairly good sampling of the kind of criticism, both adverse and appreciative, that Bridges has evoked, and now we are in a position to meet the adverse criticism with just answers and to provide further assurance to the favourable critics to remove or tone down their reservations. We do not commit ourselves in any way to declare Bridges a great poet, whatever the odds against him, but we do intend to remove prejudices by looking at his poetry from new angles and to discover what lies hidden from common view.

Isn't there a certain amount of jealousy behind the indictment that Bridges could afford to ignore much in contemporary life which was ugly, evil and painful because of his aristocratic legacy and economic security ? Otherwise too, this indictment seems to be the outcome of a narrow and committed concept of the profession of poetry. Is it agreed by any means that the poet must be a crusader against the evils of society, or if he does not rage and cry by turns against those evils in his poetry, he is not aware of them ? Must the poet take on himself the role of the prophets of old like Isaiah or Jeremaiah ? Bridges' definition of the poet as a man "who is possessed of the idea of beauty as the mind of Keats was"[8], carves out a different role for the poet. After all, the evils of society are the creations of unscrupulous exploiters who are blind to the good and the beautiful. The poet's role is to open their eyes to these. He writes categorically in 'Meloncholia' :

> Not love or beauty or youth from earth is fled :
> If they delite thee not ; 'tis thou art dead.[9]

To elaborate the point we may allude to the distinction which Carlyle makes between the soul as a spiritual entity making man aware of all transcendental truths, and soul as a preservative chemical to keep the fleshly corpus from decay. We all bring a transcendental soul with us at birth, but in most people it deteriorates into a mere preservative. The function of poetry according to this concept will be not to depict the storm and stress and sick hurry of life or to fight against them, but to reconvert the deteriorated soul into its primal spiritual state. And this the poet can do by making men sensitive to beauty and love :

For beauty being the best of all we know
Sums up the unsearchable and secret aims
Of nature, and on joys whose earthly names
Were never told can form and sense bestow;[10]

Wallace B. Nicolls, claiming for Bridges the title of a rhapsodist has another explanation to offer:

"..... Wordsworth tore a serenity out of Nature, a serenity not always there; while Robert Bridges abstracted an inward joy out of life—a joy likewise not always there.....[11].

what is there and what is not there, has been a perpetual dispute in philosophy. The visible and the invisible have always been at odds with each other for their claim on the attention of man, and now and again the invisible has asserted and established its claim more effectively than the visible. The Beauty that is invisible to others is very much visible to Bridges, and in his faith there is no salvation for man unless his eyes are opened to beauty all round. This to him is a better remedy for the evils of life than putting up a losing fight against the ever-mounting wave of evil.

A close reading of his well known poem 'Nightingales' will bring out the point. The inward vision can see beauty and a source of inspiration even in barren mountains and spent streams. Bridges is of like view with Coleridge who sang:

"..... we receive but what we give
And in our life alone does nature live:
Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud."[12]

(III)

This much about the first charge that Bridges is unpardonably unconcerned with the real world around him, and the evil and suffering in it, and that he takes an indecent advantage of his economic security and aristocratic position. Now to turn our attention to the second charge, viz. that he chose not only wrong subjects for his poetry, but also subjects which had become completely exhausted and offered no possibility except chewing the cud of the old masters. Here comes the delicate question of originality versus repetition. It is true that the subjects of Nature, Beauty and Love have engaged the ingenuity of the poet from the very dawn of poetry in the history of human culture and civilization, and on a superficial view Bridges appears too late on the scene to hope to discover something new, hitherto lying hid-

den from the view of the earlier poets. This kind of apprehension had been expressed even before. It was said at one time that Petrarch had used up every imaginable conceit of love poetry so much so that there was no scope for any later poet to write a love lyric that would give the surprise of joy or echo the emotions of the reader's heart in such a way as to make him hear his heart heats with an unwonted intensity; and yet love lyrics continued to be written after Petrarch to produce the great harvests of the Renaissance and the Romantic age. Just as facets of the beauty of nature and experiences of the human heart in love are inexhaustible, so is human ingenuity to always distil a fresh drop with a new intoxication from these. This is particularly true of Robert Bridges whose rhapsodic spontaneity, abandonment to the joy of living, and technical mastery in structuring a po m and virtuosity in versification have been recognised even by his stern critics. For limitations of space, we shall produce here only two examples to illustrate how Bridges could infuse newness into poetry of love and the poetry of the beauty of nature.

In Sonnet 33 of *The Growth of Love*, Bridges develops a startlingly new conceit of love, which, I ihink, had not occurred to any poet before him. It is normally the apex of every lover's desire that the beloved should admit in accents sweet that she loves. It would fire the imagination of the lover to new heights and enthuse him with new zest for life. We have a classic instance in Keats' *Eve of St. Agnes*. Naturally, Bridge's assertion must come to every reader with a shock of surprise :

> I care not if I live, tho' life and breath
> Have never been to me so dear and sweet.
> I care not if I die, for I could meet——
> Being so happy—happily my death.
> I care not if I love ; today she saith
> She loveth, and love's history is complete.[13]

When love's' history is completed, there is no significance of the continuance of any event or act of love thereafter. The conceit is no less new than delightful ; and such novelty and such delight will encounter at every step any one who reads Bridges' love poetry with sympathy and understanding in a state of mind purified of the poison of prejudice.

My next instance is drawn from his nature poetry. If we are looking for Wordsworthian profundities in Bridges' nature poetry, we are likely to be disappointed. We have already quoted above an observation of Bridges from

which it would appear that his poetic ideal was Keatsian intimacy in relation to nature, an intimacy that yet preserves its objectivity, and exactly this is the quality of his own nature poetry which is marked by direct apprehension, intimate experience, and simple, sensuous yet decorous expression. He was happy in comprehending nature through the senses of sight, touch and smell and expressing her changing aspects and moods in terms that appealed to these senses. He did not impose his own emotion or intellect on the landscape, affecting an effacement of his own personality, and thus he came very close to achieving Keatsian Nagative Capability.

One of the miracles that nature poetry sometimes performs is the creation of new myths. Purely sensuous perception of nature and constant gazing upon it makes lifeless entities come alive and assume a personality. This is what the ancient Greeks did when they created the myth of Triton, which Wordsworth used so appropriately in his well known Sonnet. 'The World Is Too Much with Us' :

> So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
> Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;
> Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;
> Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.

and this is what Keats did in creating a myth about Autumn. If the Greeks and Keats were great poets because they could personify and mythicise nature, Bridges should rank no lower because his myths about nature are as original and pleasing as those of the ancient Greeks. Take this, for example, about the Spring :

> The Virgin-mother clad in green
> Walking the sprinkled meadows at sundown.[14]

or this one about the storm at sea :

> Whereon the timid ships steal out
> And laugh to find their foe asleep,
> That lately scattered them about
> And drave them to the fold like sheep.[15]

It is artistically far more difficult to recapture and assume the primal woder at wonted objects of nature and mythicise them than effect any of the gimmicks of later and modern poetry which are the product of a more sophisticated culture, for the simple reason that it is easier to acquire the gifts of sophisticat-

tion than to revive within us that wondering perception which we lost with our innocence.

This is a miracle of imagination freed from the shackles of sophistication which is given to very few. Bridges is one of the lucky few, with the added advantage of the power of effecting other miracles by his mastery of technique and craftsmanship. His short poem 'London Snow' is a happy example of this. The visual description becomes an aural experience for the reader in lines like :

> In large white flakes falling on the city brown
> Stealthily and perpetually settling and loosely lying.[16]

The soft muffled sound of the snow falling on the houses and pavements can almost be heard amidst the stillness of the night by virtue of appropriate images and right choice of words.

He combines the gift of exact observation with the imaginative power of modifying or intensifying the aspect of the observed object so that it becomes the symbol of the observer's mind and feeling. This is one of the marks of a true poet, and we see it in many poems of Bridges, such as 'Winter Nightfall' which begins with a picture of the bleakness of a rural landscape in winter to prepare us for the deeper gloom in the heart of the invalid who knows he will never see the spring, or go out again.

(IV)

Bridges is not only a superb master of the art of description but also no less of that of the narrative ; and when description and narration merge in one in his hands, we get some true poetry of the highest order. This is what Bridges achieves and exhibits in his long narrative poem 'Eros and Psyche.' Despite his unconcealed antipathy to Greek myths, G. M. Hopkins, a severe critic of many things in Bridges, was compelled to exclaim :

> "*Psyche* is to me full of beauty.....I admire the equable beauty of the work and the quintessence and freshness of the pictures..... .....I should think it would be widely and lastingly admired.... the beauties of the poem are extreme"[17]

It has been a well established tradition with the English poets to retell tales of earlier poets with added garnish. The spirit of emulation behind this practice does not need to be pointed out. Chaucer, even before *Canterbury Tales*, tried his skill in this kind of poetry in *Troilus and Criseyde*, most proba-

bly to see whether he could tell the tale in English after Boccaccio had told it in Italian, with more garnish than the Italian master. Among the nearer predecessors of Bridges, Keats had done the same kind of thing in *Isabella or the Pot of Basil*. In both the cases the English poets had recast the story, changed the emphasis by allocating different proportions of the poem to different parts, and altogether presented a more elaborate version. Bridges must have had these examples before him, but he deliberately set for himself a more difficult task than any of his predecessors. Chaucer and Keats both had complete tales before them to emulate, but Bridges had the merest hint in Apulius. He can thus be compared with Boccaccio in the case of the latter's *II Filastrato* for which he had the barest hint in Homer's *Iliad*. Almost the entire content and certainly the whole of the structuring of the poem is Bridges' with no acknowledgements to make. This is a tribute to his inventive faculty—to create a long poem in twelve books of thirty or thirty-one stanzas each out of the original which does not even fill twelve pages. The staple of the narrative is given proper dimensions and a shape by passages of nature description, description of characters, depiction of emotiom and appropriate dialogues; and yet none of these ever is allowed to hinder the progress of the story. Poetry merges with the narrative and the tempo that is once built is never allowed to slack, nor does slack the interest of the reader. Describing a sunset, Bridges makes full use of his pictorial genius:

> Broad and low down, where late the sun had been
> A wealth of orange-gold was thickly shed,
> Fading above into a field of green,
> Like apples ere they ripen into red,
> Then to the height a variable hue
> Of rose and pink and crimson freaked with blue,
> And olive-border'd clouds o'er lilacs led.[18]

and yet all this description and more that follows in the next stanza has not been indulged in for its own sake. Soon the reason comes out and it is closely linked up with the narrative:

> And Aphrodite knew the thing was wrought
> By cunning of Poseidon, and she thought
> She would go and see with whom he kept his feast.[19]

The jealousy of Aphrodite is well known, and Bridges makes an ingenius use of it to link the description with the narrative. The sunset glow is not a natural phenomenon at all but a device of Poseidon to provide a proper

setting for his revels with some new beloved of his, and this is enough to awaken the jealousy of Aphrodite. The description and the narrative are inseparable from each other. The wonder becomes greater, compelling our admiration, the more we reflect from the description to the narrative and from the narrative to the description. And yet a greater wonder awaits us just one stanza ahead which is made entirely of the names of sea nymphs invented by the imagination of Bridges:

> Apseudes and Nemertes, Callianassa,
> Cymothoe, Thaleia, Limnorrhea,
> Clymene, Ianeira and Ianassa,
> Doris and Panope and Galate,
> Dynamene, Dexamene and Maira,
> Ferusa, Doto, Proto, Callianeira,
> Amphithoe, Oreithuia and Amathea.[20]

Milton is famed for fitting proper names into verse with musical effect; and after Milton, Rossetti attempted the device in *The Blessed Damozel*; but both Milton, and Rossetti needed other words to maintain rhythmic harmony. Bridges is probably unique in marshalling forth proper names in verse without any extraneous aid. This is mastery of technique for which Bridges stands supreme among English poets.

I wish there were more space at our disposal to bring forward a few more examples of felicities of true poetry achieved by Bridges in this unique poem in English. But however pressed for space we may be, we cannot desist from reproducing at least one instance of conversational felicity in verse:

> 'Ha! Mistress!' cried she; 'Hath my beardless son
> Been hunting for himself his lovely game?
> Some young Orestiad hath his fancy won?
> Some Naiad? say; or is a Grace his flame?
> Or may be Muse, and then, 'tis Erato,
> The trifling wanton. Tell me, if thou know,
> Woman or goddess is she? and her name.[21]

To cite even a modest proportion of all the poetic felicities with which *Eros and Psyche* is teeming full would require a whole independent paper, and for obvious reasons we cannot afford it. We shall, therefore, turn our attention to what has been acclaimed by one and all as the crowning glory of Bridges' poetic achievement.

(V)

We have already alluded to and even cited some of the critical pronouncements on *Testament of Beauty* with which Bridges surprised and took by storm his adverse critics who by reason of his long-drawn silence had dubbed him "the dumb Laureate." They were taken aback when the dumb laureate suddenly sang out with a many harmonied tongue. Nothing like or approaching the sustained effort in poetry had been risked by any of the English poets before him, or has been since. Having no prior example before them, the critics did not know how to assess it. Many of the criticisms were, therefore, the result of sudden provocation, and they either simply recorded the spontaneous joy which an artistic soul must find in a joyous and so incredibly substained achievement of poetry. We can hardly call it criticism, because nothing has been argued, nothing demonstrated. It is at best an impressionistic reaction. And at the other extreme were those which tried to dismiss it as simply a Victorian moralistic poem. Nothing could be more wrong-headed than its comparison or bracketing with Tennyson's *In Memoriam* on the score that both appear to the critics as examples of unsuccessful attempt at expressing ideas in Poetry. The failure was much like the failure of the novel in verse, an infelicitous invention of the Victorian period. All these judgements were the outcome of the critics being caught unprepared.

No less unprepared was the poet himself when he found himself caught in the whirl of the revival of a child-like wonder at the prospect before him:

> 'Twas late in my long journey, when I had clomb to where
> the path was narrowing and the company few,
> a glow of childlike wonder enthralled me, as if my sense
> had come to a new birth purified,[22]

It was in this mood of 'as if a rose should close and be a bud again' that *The Testament of Beauty* was begun. Those who ignore this fact or are ignorant of it, have had the audacity to dismiss the poem as an instance of Victoriam moralism in verse, or of the failure of an attempt to express ideas in poetry. *The Testament of Beauty* is not all a sequence of dry prosaic argument and exposition. Bridges recognised sense perception as the anchor of Reason, and consequently how could he entrust to reason alone the truth he had to convey. He constantly appeals to sense perception, and thus the

whole poem is full of descriptive passages which brighten the poem and endow it with the power of making instantaneous and irresistible appeal:

> Long had the homing bees plundered the thymy flanks
> of famed Hymettus harvesting their sweet honey:
> agelong the dancing waves had lapp'd the Aegean isles
> and promontories of the blue Ionian shore
> .....where in her Mediterranean mirror gazing
> old Asia's dreamy face wrinkled to a westward smile——[23]

It is through these images that the argument is marshalled forth, and in this sense *The Testament of Beauty* is the most Lucretian poem in English, perhaps the only one. Metaphysical poetry in English has been a subject of controversy. The question has been posed whether the epithet came to be applied to the English poets by sheer coincidence or whether it belongs to them as a matter of right. Such a question would not be admissible with regard to Bridges' poem. It is as metaphysical as anything in the entire Western poetic tradition.

This comparison with Lucretius necessitates that Bridges should also face the question which has been directed against *De Natura Rerum*, viz the question of diachotomy. In other words, it is contended that a poem like *De Natura Rerum* or *The Testament of Beauty* is poetic only by virtue of passages of imagistic description with which it is thickly strewn; and, therefore, it should be possible to cull descriptive passages in one place and argumentative and expository in another and thus obtain two independent poems out of one. This kind of hypothetical statement is simply nonsense, because, in the first place, the argument will not remain the same if it is divested of illustrative descriptions; and in the second, the descriptive passages cut off from the argument which they are meant to support by way of illustration will lose much of their significance if deprived of their illlustrative function. A better refutation is that if the experiment were worth trying, the detractors of Bridges would not have rested without trying it and thus demonstrating the main point of their contention.

(VI)

There is much else that can be said in refutation of those who to dismiss *The Testament of Beauty* as a belated Victorian moralistic poem and nothing more, but paucity of space forbids. We shall, therefore, conclude with just one more remark on the significance of the poetry of Bridges. Although not possessed of a full-fledged modern poetic sensibility, he does give eviden-

ces of the presence of it though in a rudimentary form. Again, there is no space for elaborating the point, but it can be safely contended that it is not quite possible to understand the emergence modern sensibility in poetry without making a thorough study of the poetry of Bridges. In this lies one main significance of Bridges' poetry.

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19. Ibid. Stanza 26.
20. Ibid. Stanza 28.
21. Ibid. September, Stanza 14.
22. *The Testament of Beauty*. Book I, lines 9-12.
23. Ibid. Book I, lines 653-658.

CAN FACTS BE KILLED BY IDEAS

Yesterday they were the dreams of tomorrow
Today they are memories of the past—
Villages to replace heaven :
The unsheltered resting in villas :
Morals to be as firm as mountains :
With the hungry feeding at the Taj.
All this is history now of politics
That enriched country with poverty such long.
Will it be any use displacing our martyrs
Form their frames on the plastered walls ?
They are the blessed not to see our fall.
Like cat politics devours its own dreams
And looks for so much more to destroy from our souls :
If we didn't spill blood like French and Russians
Our wounds bleed slow to clot to our goals.
Freedom can't be put on as perfume
Nor a decoration awarded by the handsome Mountbatten
Flinched from the one-eyed Wavell who fought.
Did it seem so soapy to get rid of one's slavery
After Nero killing his mother to get rid of the past?
Facts can't be killed by ideas maneouvered in politics :
Nor frustrations gathered in pleats of hopes.
We must wait for the terror we missed
And everyman turn a guillotine
To axe hopes to our roles.
Even poets are now weary of dreams
Ready like Caligula to depart
Let struggle revive to make up for the loss
In art turn material hostile to art.

O. P. Bhatnagar
Amravati

FICTIONAL NARRATORS IN THE POETRY OF RANDALL JARRELL

N. K. Sharma

Randall Jarrell's approach to life is extremely original and critical. Life is complex, it may not be fully grasped by following one fixed point of view or frame of reference but must be approached from a wide perspective by using a number of fictional narrators. Jarrell's poetry frequently dramatizes some identifiable aspect of the human condition through the use of fictional narrators. The Chief narrators are: "I"—the poet, the child, the soldier, the woman and the adult or man. This paper is a study of fictional narrators in his poems and how they communicate his ideas.

Jarrell can easily identify himself with others. He can speak for himself and for others. The poet puts himself into his narrators and speaks as if it is these characters who have spoken. He has the ability of the author to divest himself of his own personality and assume that of the other narrator. The poet's mind is deeply involved in the narrators he created. The poet has expressed profound sympathy with them. The imaginary narrators look real for us as poeple we have known in our lives. The poem's thoughts are always appropriate to the narrator. The poet finds suitable words for the narrators to speak and invents speech in which imaginary narrators can discuss the complex and challenging problems of life and death. The best of Jarrell's drama comes to us through a mediation of a narrator.

Randall Jarrell is a leading confessional poet who frequently resorts to confessional mode to give an air of reality and credibility to his personal poems. The poet's voice is quite audible and he acts as a chief narrator in them. He is not only talking to himself but is also seen addressing others. The poet constantly looks inward and backward and gives free access to the reader so as to be closely associated with his inner and private world. No information is distorted or consciously withheld from the purview of the reader. The poet's voice maintains its own individuality, style and tone and can be easily identified and distinguished from other voices. Jarrell cannqt be separated from his autobiographical poems and his commitment to them is therefore total and final.

A poet of the past, he has unshakable faith in it. He goes back to it again and again to renew his strength and lost faith. There is a free movement from the present to the past and from the past to the present. The poet is immediately carried "Through time to my early childhood." He is automatically pulled backward: "I wave Back.[2]" "The Lost World" rediscovers the landmarks on his spiritual pilgrimage into the past. It is an evocation of the joys and terrors of his childhood. The poem, highly subjective, presents the definite period Jarrell spent in Hollywood with his grandparents and great grandmother: the Mama, Pop and Dandeen of the poem. It is a family drama packed with personal reminiscences:

I wash my hands, Pop gives his pay
Envelope to Mama; we sit down to our meal,
The phone rings: Mrs. Mercer wonders if I'd care
To go to the library.[3]

The poet's voice can be clearly identified and felt in capturing a thrilling moment from his past for us. "Thinking of the Lost World" vividly dramatizes a scene from Jarrell's life spent in the company of his father, mother and "tall brown aunt." The poet-narrator takes us back to Los Angeles, after many years of absence:

Come back to that calm country
Through which the stream of my life first meandered,
My wife, our cat, and I sit here and see
Squirrels quarreling in the feeder, a mockingbird,
Copying our chipmunk, as our end copies
Its beginning.[4]

Everything is lost and dead and yet it has left a permanent impression on his sub-conscious mind:

"LOST-NOTHING. STRAYED FROM NOWHERE.
NO REWARD.

I hold in my own hands, in happiness,
Nothing: the nothing for which there's no reward."[5]

"In those Days" presents the poet's point of view and ends in a glorification of the past:

How poor and miserable we were,
How seldom together!
And yet after so long one thinks:
In those days everything was better.[6]

Jarrell is extremely sensitive to the contemporary situation and there is no lack of contemporaneity in his poems. It is from the depth of the psyche that he views the "dailiness of life." Jarrell's poetry is a poetry of accepting the world for what it is, with regret. The poet is chiefly interested in people and the mystery of what happens to them, the strength and weakness of their lives. He discusses victimization, death, fear and other characteristics of the human condition. Jarrell is the most acute, precise poet of the particulars of the world, concerned to pinpoint the causes of our distress, in greed, and in misdirected dedication, and to explain explicitly its circumstances. In "The Bad Music", the poet-narrator is himself the coldblooded destroyer and it leads to a complete identification with his protagonist. The poem gives a fine dig at the modern life: "The world holds more than we can see or say,/And it stuffs us like a goose before it kills us."[7] The poet-narrator explodes the myth of modern life in "The Orient Express" by exposing its true and inner nature: "Behind everything there is always/The unknown unwanted life."[8] All of Jarrell is there, as simply apparent as possible. In "The Truth," the anguish and bewilderment are really the little boy's or Jarrell's. The poet's grown-up voice is reminiscing about his own memories.

Jarrell's poetry echoes with children's voices. The poet makes use of the child-narrator to avoid direct involvement and to realize an aesthetic distance. The child's view of human beings is not less real than the adult's and it is this that conditions his poetic universe. Jarrell can convincingly assume the narrative voice of distant childhood. He is a great and serious reader of childhood and celebrates it with vigour and honesty. He can easily identify himself with the child and makes him act as his mouthpiece to express his ideas and reactions on the intricate problems of life. The child-narrator appears throughout his poetry, first as a victim of war and finally in the reaction of a young boy. It is from the point of view of children that he launches attacks on present American culture.

Jarrell's poetry deals largely with childern, in years and in consciousness. It illustrates his concept of 'Enlightenment' and 'Primal innocence'. The poet feels that the child is an archetypal sufferer, victimized rather than blessed by his primal innocence. Being an outsider, the child is not welcomed and assigned any specific and honourable place in this harsh, efficient and technical age. Time is the arch—enemy of the child, and he makes frantic efforts to check it. He wants to retain his childhood and does not like to be transformed into an adult. "90 North" is a quest for meaning

in life which a child in the poem fondly thinks he discovers by a voyage of exploration. It not only dramatizes the unresolved discontents of childhood but also the loss of innocence: "Pain comes from the darkness/And we call it wisdom. It is pain."[9] "A Story" is a poignant poem, a monologue by a boy sent away to school. Here he feels lonely and fearful, finally, he disappears. He is delivered from the boring and crumbling impact of the school: "When I feel better, they'll wake up one day/And find my bed's the one that's empty."[10] For him, this escape will be from a life of confinement to one of freedom and involvement in life.

The child's point of view is further exploited in interpreting the exact nature of death. Jarrell thinks that a child's vision is relevant in resolving the dilemma and confusion caused by death. "The Night before the Night before Christmas" identifies death with dreaming. The poem transports us from a world of reality into the glittering world of dreams; it is focussed upon the normal way of escape from unpleasantness. The girl and her brother buried in their graves under snow, are quickly transformed into the wings of a bird. The poem ends on a note of hope and self-satisfaction:

> "*To End Hopefully*
> *Is a Better Thing--*
> *A Far, Far, Better Thing—*
> It is a far, far better Thing....
> She feels in her hand, her brother's hand."[11]

"The Black Swan" is another child's attempt to understand death by way of the hallucinatory imagination. Instead of facing the fact that her sister is dead, the little girl in the poem makes up a fairy tale about her: the swans have turned her into a swan. Through the intensity of her longing and loneliness she becomes her sister. There is no Jarring death, only transformation into the beautiful, floating bird. Her sister responds to her call. The swan and children are interchangeable.

Jarrell has created the soldier as speaker in revolt against the Second World War. There is no romantic idealization and effort is directed to approach the crisis realistically. Jarrell saw the reality behind the carnage and spoke of the strain, the madness and the futility of war. The war has no aim, no ideal, sacrifice is meaningless. He is conscious of the limitations of narrow nationalism. The glorification of death and sacrifice is a stark lie and it amounts to playing with the lives of innocent soldiers. Jarrell's

revulsion against war is deep and marked. He is full of intense pity for suffering humanity. The childlike psyche of Jarrell's soldiers speaks out its pain. As Karl Shapiro put it: "The anguish of the soldier is shown in his anonymity, his exile from the human race, than in his emotional sentimental desperation."[12] The speaker in "The Death of the Ball Turret" is a soldier who has been killed in the war. The poem consists almost entirely of questions the gunner asks about his past, his being sent away from his cat and his wife to the army and his death. Jarrell's vision of the soldier as a betrayed child is best illustrated here. It is a powerful satire against the hollowness and vulgarity of war. It, ironically, sums up how he is treated at the hands of the world for which he has sacrificed his precious life: "When I died they washed me out of the turret with a hose."[13] The soldier-narrator in "Losses" is not satisfied by his death and asks why they must kill and die. Jarrell speaks explicitly of the soldiers' lives as commodities. The soldier hits back at the nation state in "The Sick Nought" for selling them like eatables: "What is demanded in the trade of states/ But lives, your lives?-the one commodity."[14] "Gunner" gives another jolt to the world when he expresses his deep resentment at its typical behaviour: "Has my wife a pension of mice! Did the medals go home to my cat?"[15]

Soldier-narrators are also employed to discuss and define their relations with the past. They are totally obsessed with it and do not like to be separated from it. They prefer to glorify the dead past than to waste time in the uncertain and lifeless present. In "Stalag Luft," a captured flyer, dozed and daydreamed in the grass with his pet rabbit. No release comes to him in the poem, just the melancholy remembrance of happier days. In "The Dream of Waking" the wounded man imagines his old teacher comforting him from some long-ago hurt. In "Absent with Official Leave," a soldier dreams himself back to childhood, to love and acceptance which unfortunately never quite overcome his appearance of guilt. The poem suggests that in dreams he lives as he used to before the war, known and loved, while awake, he is merely a cipher.

Jarrell uses women as narrators to dramatize the anguish closest to his own. His mind goes "out in tenderness" and enters into their thoughts and feelings. Jarrell's best characters are women and he shows special interest and insight in their situation. The poet can perfectly assume the narrative voice of an aging housewife. He gives to female definite language. "The Woman at the Washington Zoo" shows that the poet is for the woman,

not against her. The themes of loneliness and aging are realistically and artistically presented in it. The voice of the woman "Change me, change me,[16] is clearly echoed in the poem. But there is no end to her misery and frustration. "A Girl in a Library" is written from the view point of a woman aging. It is an accusation against fate and an appeal to be transformed. "Next Day" is about a woman who narrates how she has completely changed and become old, and finds the change unbearable. The irony of her life is that she has everything and yet she is not happy: "I stand beside my grave Confused with my life, that is common place and solitary."[17] ',Seele in Raum" is a monologue about a woman who, for much of her life, saw an elend in her dining room table, but has now been "cured". The elend is a projection of the woman's entrapped soul, and although she is "cured" of her hallucination, her loneliness and anxiety remain. The woman who is the narrator still questions the identity of her life at the end: "Rich with a kind of longing satisfaction ;/To own an elend; That's what I call life:"[18] "The Face" ostensibly about an aging woman regretting the fading of her beauty, becomes a poem about dissatisfaction.

Lastly, the poet has made use of adult-narrators to express his ideas and reactions in an artistic and symbolic manner. They constitute an important group of fictional narrators in his poems. In "The Angels at Hamburg" the point of view is for once neither that of the killer-victim-soldier nor the innocent child-victim, but of the adult. He prefers the "reality" of waking life to the freedom of sleep, his "last Eden", but in the poem his sleep may be his personal death. The dreamer has not escaped the world and its judgement after all. Man has no future in this world and is gradually heading towards death. His life is so insignificant and cheap that he is sold like articles in the open market:

> Man is born in chains, and everywhere we see him dead.
> On your earth they sell nothing but our lives.[19]

"The Venetian Blind" reveals a man groping frantically for his identity, for his place in the cosmos, for his real self. He asks repeatedly: "But where am I?"[20] Even his body and soul feel sick, dull and old in his company. "Song: Not There" shows that there is no salvation for man and he cannot avert his fate. "The prince" presents a very dismal picture of modern man who lives and dies unknown. He is even worse than animals: "A man dies like a rabbit, for a use. What will they pay me, when I die, to die[21]?"

In the end, we can conclude that Randall Jarrell has been chiefly interested in the development of fictional narrators from the beginning to the end of his poetic career. *In Blood for a Stranger* (1942) neither voice nor tone is yet quite his own. The style is eclectic rather than personal. There is the lack of identifiable 'objective correlative' for the feelings of despair the poet wishes to communicate. It is a complaint against loss of the world of childhood and initiation into adulthood. In their language, generally, these early poems lack great distinction. *Little Friend, Little Friend* (1945) is a war book in which the poet is personally absent. He is no more under the direct impact of Auden or any other voice. There is an important shift in narrative technique, limiting the point of view to one individual. The childlike innocence is the unifying theme of this volume of poems. But there is no pronounced development in the themes or style. *Losses* (1948) centered on suffering individual persons, often woman. It deals with existential rather than a moral reality. The quest for transcendence, is at the heart of it. Dreams are attempts at transcendence, but they fail. The failure of men's transcendental myths is the cause for bitter irony. *The Seven-League Crutches* (1951) marks a considerable advance in the artistic isolation and redirection of his deepest motifs. It deals with a child's speculation, with the materials of dreams and fables. In tone and attitude, they are meditative. *The woman at the Washington Zoo* (1961) shows Jarrell's special interest in dramatizing woman-narrators. He thinks about them a great deal and passionately. *The Lost World* (1965) continues to explore the major themes of *The Woman at the Washington Zoo*, loneliness and aging, but in new ways. The poet is moving into his confessional period and shows the intimate realities of his own actual life and memory. Its narrators, though mostly women, are close to the poet. It continues Jarrell's development towards the objectification of the speaking self.

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NOTES

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7. *CP*. p. 368.
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13. *CP*. p. 141.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 174.
15. *CP*. p. 204.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 216.
17. *CP*. p. 280.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 39.
19. *CP*. p. 120.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
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PSCYHO – SPATIAL ARRANGEMENT OF 'THE HOLLOW MEN'

(Mrs. Ravender Choahan)

'The Hollow Men' at once draws a decisive line between the world that emerges out of Eliot's poetry upto 'The Waste Land' and the metaphysical realm called "the death's other kingdom" into which his poetry makes, as if a tentative entrance. The poem does seem to refer, though obliquely, to Dante's '*Divine Comedy*' due to the range of feeling it excites by the alliance of imagery. It has often been said that the various kingdoms of death referred to in the poem can be described by the cosmography of inferno, purgatory and paradise. As a matter of fact no physical existence is implied by "death's dream kingdom" and "death's other kingdom" or "death's twilight kingdom." ('The Hollow Men', pp. 84-85). They all refer to psychic states. "Death's dream kingdom" is the life of the natural or unregenerate man with ego as the centre of his being and death as its culmination. Death's twilight kingdom" also refers to this life only. It can be defined as a state of purgatory on this earth, whereas "death's dream kingdom" is a state of sterile suffering. "The other kingdom" with 'K' capital by implication of "Multifoliate rose" (p. 85)may be described as the state of bliss here on this earth in the aspect of Christian Revelation. For evidence we may refer to Plato's orrery (*Timaeus*) and Kant's Copernican doctrine along with one of the Indian Upanishads named *Kathopanishad*, which forms part of the *Atharva-Veda*. Here immortality does not imply the absolute immortality that the illumined one attains. He having destroyed the chains of death before the fall of the body itself realizes 'virat' (microcosm) in his own self and enjoys universal life here on this earth. It is a particular place of conscious life hence it is called 'Loka' (realm). The earlier part of *Phaedo* leaves us with a soul that separates herself from body so as to cognise the eternally real (79 d) but she is not herself regarded as one of these eternal Forms, still less as one of the passing embodiments of one of those forms in the flux of becoming. In *Timaeus* Plato declares that the Ultimate 'apxn kivnoews' though hard to find and never to bo declared to the majority of men, is as real as the Forms. Again in the *Sophistes* (249 a), we find the claim for "perect reality" in the words of Eleatic stranger :

"But are we to say that (the totality of the real)
possesses mind but yet does not possess life?"
"Impossible."
"But if you say it contains them both, can we
deny that it has them resident in Soul?"
"How else could it have them?"

That Eliot was aware of such implications of hell, death and resurrection is obvious from his remark on 'Inferno' in his essay on Dante:

It reminds us that Hell is not a place but a 'state'; that man is damned or blessed in the creatures of his imagination as well as in men who have actually lived: and that Hell, though a state, is a state which can only be thought of, and perhaps only experienced, by the projection of sensory images; and that the resurrection of the body has perhaps a deeper meaning than we understand.[1]

Man cannot resolve the mystery of his being until and unless he solves the mystery of death. "I believe the moment of birth/is when we have knowledge of death," as Mary says in *The Family Reunion* (p. 130). As far as Eliot's poetry is concerned we must put a full stop at death. For him "the supernatural is the greatest reality here and now."[2] According to the ancient Hindu scriptures the ultimate reality is a pure consciousness. Though they affirm that it can be perceived and apprehended by mind alone *i. e.*, human mind, yet they call it non-corporeal in nature. I believe that this is the reason that we have doctrine of Incarnation in certain religions like Christianity and Sikhism. Greek conception of Logos *i. e.*, word made flesh and subject to the tensions of this world also refers to this doctrine. Eliot portrays Incarnation as a transcendent mode of being based on pure consciousness which has to be realised in this world and in human form:

If the lost word is lost, if the spent word is spent
If the unheard, unspoken
word is unspoken, unheard;
still is the unspoken word, the word unheard,
The word without a word, the word within,
The world and for the world.....

(Ash wednesday.' p. 96)

True consciousness is opposed to ego consciousness. The natural or unregenerate man lives with ego as the centre of his being. Ego consciousness

refers to the temporal aspect of life and seeks temporal approval. If we were to take a hint from Plato's theory of essences, worldly approval can easily be transmitted into ego props. So that from temporal point of view a healthy normal man is he who is adequately stuffed with ego-props. From Eliot's as well as the metaphysical point of view it is precisely such a man who is diseased. "For what you call restoration to health" says Harry in *The Family Reunion* is "only incubation of another malady" (p. 314). Consequently, he says, "what you call the normal/is merely the unreal and the unimportant, "(Ibid., p. 326) In the 1956 lecture on "The Frontiers of Criticism" Eliot went rather out of his way to quote Aldous Huxley: "The aim of western Psychiatry is to help the troubled individual to adjust himself to the society of less troubled individuals——individuals who are observed to be well-adjusted to one another and the local institutions, but whose adjustment to the fundamental order of things no inquiry is made."[3] By the established pattern of Eliot's work "Stuffed men" are in the tradition of lord Elaverton who is no more than a stuffed dummy and therefore a fugitive from reality:

> what I want to escape from
> Is myself, is the past. But what a coward I am,
> To talk of escaping! And what a hypocrite![4]

A few minutes before the end of the play he sums up:

> I've been freed from the self that pretends to be someone,
> And in becoming no one, I begin to live.
> It is worthwhile dying, to find out what life is.[5]

'The Hollow Men' represents a Search for the deeper identity, requiring the painful shedding of illusion and the recognition of the falseness of the projections of what one wants to see and what one is. As William Irwin Thompson writes in an article published in Span (April 1979, p. 6) that in "order to survive we'll have to have deeper roots of identity than consumerism—than defining ourselves by a car or house or by the clothes we wear." Eliot repeats the same note when Julia says of Edward and Lavina (in *The Cocktail Party*) after they have left Reilly's office:

> All we could do was to give them the chance.
> And now when they are stripped naked to their souls
> And can choose, whether to put on proper costumes
> or huddle quickly into new disguises.....
>
> (p. 421)

The stripping away of illusions is a painful process; the identity one has to face may not fit at all with clearly held notions of oneself. It amounts to the dissolution of the personality so carefully hedged about by his owner. According to Jung the confrontation with our own inner darkness always means a bitter shock, though it is the indispensable prerequiste of every renewel of the spirit. "This confrontation is the first test of courage on the inner way, a test sufficient to frighten off most people, for the meeting with ourselves belongs to the more unpleasant things that may be avoided as long as we possess living symbol figures in which all that is inner and unknown is projected."[6] That is why man is a stranger first of all unto his own self. He holds off that final meeting with himself by a thousand small deliberations. He moves with the time:

Behaving as the wind behaves
No nearer———
Not that final meeting
In the twilight kingdom.

("The Hollow Men," p. 84)

Call this final meeting as passing through the valley of the shadow of death or underworld journey of the myths, the likelihood is that this "Meeting" this process of emptying oneself is going to prove more harrowing than myths or psychological terms can explain. Jung affirms this much that the collapse of the conscious attitude at first feels like the end of the world because it means a disruption of the existing conscious pattern. "The meeting with oneself is the meeting with one's own shadow. To mix a metaphor, the shadow is a tight pass, a narrow door, whose painful constriction is spared to no one who climbs down into the deep well-spring. But one must learn to know oneself in order to know who one is"[7] But his (Jung's) more revealing and pertinent view (which seems nearer the truth) can be found in his commentary on Taoism in Richard Wilhelm's translation of *The Secret of The Golden Bowl: A Chinese Book of Life*. Commenting on the symbolic description of Taoism he says "This is an apt description of schizophrenia, if it sticks."[8]

It is this moment of emptiness when the one world is dead and the other quite not there that 'The Hollow Men' bodies forth. Probably because the moment is in reality so dark that the poem has appeared as a statement of "the nadir of the phase of sterility and despair."[9] But it is not a despair like that of Macbeth for whom too life becomes only a meaningless proce-

ssion of "tomorrow and tomorrow." Nor is it like the pessimism of Hardy which is caused or generated by the inadequacy of local conditions. Here, says Jung, "we find ourselves outside the domain covered by the views of Freud and Adler, for we are no longer concerned with the question of how to deal with the obstacles that hinder a man in the practical expansion of his personal and social relationships. Instead we are confronted with the task of finding a meaning which will make possible the very continuance of life, in so far as it is to be more than mere resignation and mournful introspection."[10] It is the restless psyche seeking direction: a consciousness that is not itself in time. Behind the appearances moving between birth and death it is aware of a spiritual reality which cannot be defined in terms of temporal life though it must be sought through the processes of this world alone. Jung's contention is that human psyche contains all the facts, "they become accessible to consciousness only in the presence of that degree of self-awareness and power of understanding which enable a man to think what he experiences instead of just living it blindly."[11]

This assertion is also supported by Plato's observation in *The Republic* (bk. VI). He compares the sun with the Good, the source of good beauty and truth. The sun's light "causes the eye to see perfectly and the visible to appear."[12] The power of seeing in the eye is "a sort of effluence which is dispensed from the sun."[13] Similarly, the power in the mind of thinking and perceiving is a sort of effluence from the Good, which causes the world to be perceivable and the mind to perceive. What Eliot calls a temporary crystallisation of mind (in his essay on Pascal) therefore cannot be very different from what is implied by Jung and Plato. In *the Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism* Eliot gives an explicit statement of his meaning. The implication, again, is that mind can see: "Our lives, he says "are mostly a constant evasion of ourselves, and an evasion of the visible and sensible."[14] The symbolism of eyes used in 'The Hollow Men' refers to the power of perception and understanding which flows from goodness. Since on natural level no one is absolutely good or honest all we get is intutive hint of reality like a sudden flash of light on a broken column:

> Eyes I dare not meet in dreams
> In death's dream Kingdom
> These do not appear:
> There the eyes are
> Sunlight on a broken column
>
> ('The Hollow Men,' p. 95.)

you may call these the eyes of judgement as Helen Gardner does. But they cannot be eyes of judgement if they are not eyes of illumination in the first place. The moment of expiation and the moment of metaphysical penetration is one moment just as the moment of death and birth is one moment. Because, as Eliot reflected of Baudelaire "the recognition of the reality of sin is a New Life"[15] Therefore man is :

Sightless, unless
The eyes reappear
As the perpetual star
Multifoliate rose
Of death's twilight Kingdom.

It is a constant assertion of Eliot that we live on projections——projections of what we want other persons to be and what other persons want us to be. We refuse to face either our own selves or go near other persons, because :

We like to be thought well of by others
So that we may think well of ourselves
And any explanation will satisfy :
We only ask to be reassured.....

(The Family Reunion, p. 302)

The only recourse, as he portrays in 'Portrait of a Lady' is to take refuge in the objectively conventional :

——Let us take the air, in a tobacco trance,
Admire the monuments
Discuss the late events,
Correct our watches by the public clocks,
Then sit for half an hour and drink our bocks.

(p. 19)

The same note is repeated by the Chorus in *The Family Reunion* :

The whisper, the transparent deception
The reeping up of appearances
.....
We must listen to the weather report
And the international catastrophes.

(p. 329)

It is a logical conclusion that truth and goodness cannot issue from deception and appearance. The "Shadow" that falls :

> between the idea
> And the reality
> Between the motion
> And the response

('The Hollow Men,' p. 85)

must be removed. Until that is done our life is but a parody and make-believe based, not on Truth but falsehood and therefore on sin.

Thus in spite of the fact that "the perpetual star" reminds us of Dante's Divine Essence and the phrase "Multifoliate rose" comes directly from his 'Paradiso' and that the symbolism of eyes must have come from the stern gaze of Beatrice we might conclude with Eliot that the 'Divine Comedy' itself is complete scale of the depth and heights of human emotion. His assertion that the 'Purgatorio' and 'Paradiso' are to be read as extensions of the ordinary very limited human range is owning to the fact that in the actual world as it stands it is possible to imagine degrees of Hell but not of Beatitude. Paradise can occur only in eternity, and outside the limitations imposed by time and subjective self: 'inferno' and 'purgatorio' are as a matter of fact, metaphors for the condition of man in the actual world as it exists at present, that is the temporal world in the aspect of Time. 'Paradiso' is the embodiment not only of a transcedent world but also of a transcendent self.

What I have said has been mainly directed towards removing preliminary prejudices against the charge that Eliot's poetry is merely a grouse against life. We cannot insist on these observational facts dogmatically but it is better to admit frankly that theory has, and is entitled to have, an important share in determining belief.

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NOTES

1. T. S. Eliot: "Dante," *Selected Essays*, (1932; rpt. x London: Faber and Faber, 1951) p. 250.
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3. T. S. Eliot in an unpublished lectrue on English Letter Writers, "quoted in F. O. Matthiessen, *The Achievement of T. S. Eliot : A Essay on the Nature of Poetry* (1935; rpt. Oxford : Univ. Press, 1959), p. 96.
4. T. S. Eliot: The Elder Statesman. *The Complete Poems and Plays of T. S. Eliot* (London: Faber and Faber, 1969). p. 565.
   Note: References to the text have been made from this edition.
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6. C. G. Jung, *The Integration of Personality*. trans. by Stanely M. Dell (London: Kegan Paul, 1940), p. 69.
7. Ibid., p. 70.
8. Richard Wilhelm, (translator) *The Sceret of the Golden Bowl: A Chinese Book of Life*, with a European Commentary by C.G. Jung. translated into English by Cary F. Baynes (London: Kegan Paul, 1935). p. 86.
9. Edmund wilson, *Axel's Castle: A Study of the Imaginative Literature of 1870-1930* (1931; rpt. Charles Scribner's sons, New york 1959) p 128.
10. C. G. Jung, *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, p. 76.
11. *The Integration of Personality*, p. 25.
12. & 13. Plato, *The Republic* Book Six, trans. by Benjamin Jowett. (Groiler, New York 1968), p.263.
14. T. S. Eliot, *The Use of Poetry and Use of Criticism* (1933: rpt. Faber and Faber, London (1964) p. 155.
15. T. S. Eliot, "Baudelaire," p. 427.

THE MYTH OF DEATH IN SRI AUROBINDO'S SAVITRI

R. K. Singh

In Sri Aurobindo's poetics, a poet is expected to transmute the external experiences into a vision of eternity, and archetypes are the means to transmute personal destiny into the destiny of mankind. Poets with archetypal vision use myths and images "not as an imaginative indulgence, but as living parables." Archetype is Real-Idea, the creative aspect of the Supermind or the Truth-Consciousness that expresses itself in various modes with infinite potentialities.[1] The poetic experience communicated through the structure and framework of a poem is timeless and impersonal: "it has at once a universal and an individual character, creating itself anew in different minds by virtue of those universal emotional energies to which it gives experssion."[2] As the spiritual experiences of *Savitri*, the result of nearly four decades (1914-1950) of mythopoetic concentration, are at once individual and collective, the epic has an archetypal significance. It is not about two characters but about all men and women too.

In the archetypal design of the poet, myth turns into the structural principle rather than the psychoanalyst's collective unconscious expressing itself in dream. It is an intellectual strategy rather than a philosophical proof of human behaviour in a particular way. To articulate the cultural values of a race, it may be considered as the "primitive habit of mind." It is, as Richard Chase has said, an "aesthetic creation of the human imagination" and as Such, it has a fictional character which is imaginatively true. As a product of the poetic faculty, it is a thing-in-itself, single, whole, complete and without ulterior purpose. In its purest form it is the closest verbal approach to an immediate intuition of reality. Northrop Frye observes that myth is expressive of the total vision of the human situation, human destiny, human inspirations and fears.

In Aristotle's *Poetics* the word myth (*muthos*) is used for the plot of a play: "Muthos" itself means 'utterance', something one says in the form of a tale or a story, commonly understood by the ancient Greeks as tradi-

tional tale." G. S. Kirk points out that myth is a narrative with a dramatic structure and a climax and bears "important message about life in general and life-within-society in particular."[3] As an aesthetic means to explore and recreate the individual experience and to apprehend the contemporary man's response to the central question of his time, myth is a mode of expression of the complex interaction of the self and the world. It provides "an essential matrix" to poetry. Referring to this mythical matrix, Frye writes: "literature is only a part, though a central part of the total mythopoeic structure of concern which extends into religion, philosophy, political theory, and many aspects of history, the vision a society has of its situation, destiny, and ideals, and of reality in terms of those human factors."[4] In *Savitri* myth is the principle of construction of the language of argument and the crux-factor that dominates the entire process of structure. It is a fundamental way of apprehending the world.

The literary exploitation of mythology is not new : Aeschylus' *Oresteion* Virgil's *Aeneid* Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Shakespeare's *A Midsummer's Night Dream* and *The Tempest*, Milton's *Paradise Lost* are some of the notable examples. The mythic perception in the poetry of *Savitri* has not only a legendary origin but a future association, the future of humanity as a whole. The Vana-Parva legend of the *Mahabharata*, "the great epic of the soul"[5] of the Indian people, is the "original pattern" from which the all-imbibing symbol of *Savitri* is carved. The Savitri-Satyavan legend is transmuted to recover the human wholeness. The poet-innovator's mythic mode of awareness reorganises the life and culture with the sense of the total past as *now*. His adventure is directed towards the realisation of human unity, universal peace and happiness, based on a spiritual foundation, which ensure the orderly progress and fulfilment of man's destiny.

Savitri constructs a character and event which has archetypal bearings. Sri Aurobindo concerns himself with archetypal subjects like Love and Death in an archetypal situation which depicts the tension between the higher and the lower levels of consciousness in a person, the conflict of the male-female relationship, the search for the Mother, etc. Savitri, the heroine is conceived as an archetypal character, a mythic image. She assumes a personality overwhelmingly supernatural and her awareness is the glorification of the divinty of the soul. The poet's artistic programme of self-discovery and world-discovery through Savitri turns the legend into a mythologem, a universal symbol. The transformation of the legend on which evolves the symbolic contexture of the epic to sum the emotional, intellectual, aesthetic

and spiritual experiences emanating from his personal concern with self-preservation, spiritual evolution and quest for knowledge reflects, as is the nature of myth, his "persistent desire for extra-ordinary power, vision and control."[6] The ritual of yoga that drapes the mythical framework of the epic is the human conquest of the divine: the symbol of the past gets "a new emotional-spiritual dimension, and the process is a search for reassurance, an answer to some 'overwhelming question."[7]

The chief problem of the epic hero has been his confrontation with mortality, the end of his fallen existence with a view to proceeding toward self-transcendence. The heroine, Savitri, is educated in the self and in otherness by observing herself, her other half, her opposite, her false self, and finally, her whole transcendental being. Her yogic movement is the ritual to enact the ancient story with new motifs. The action is all internal, shifting back and forth on the various planes of consciousness and manifesting a spiritualised uplifting of thought, feeling and sense. The inner mind, the repertory of myth, is the focal point of the whole poem, the battleground of the two mighty opposites, Love and Death, Knowledge and Ignorance.

In the character of Savitri, close to Gilgamesh's, we find "the revolt of mortal man against the laws of separation and death."[8] Her stupendous task is to discover her own Timeless Being and her heroic qualities lie in internal struggle and victory: she faces the Lord of Death (Books Nine, Ten and Eleven of *Savitri*) not for her sake but for the sake of the human race. Satyavan as husband was her own choice, her "self-chosen Doom"[9]; she knew that he is destined to live only for one year, yet she chose him, agruing:

> I am stronger than death and greater than my fate;
> My love shall outlast the world, doom falls from me;
> Helpless against my immortality.[10]

Death and grief are nothing to her and as she has seen God in Satyavan, she cannot part with him.[11]

Savitri is born with a mighty mission, to wrestle with Death, to "confront the riddle of man's birth. The issue is: "Whether to bear with Ignorance and Death/Or hew the ways of Immortality."[12] She is born "not to submit and suffer" but "to lead, to deliver." She is a self-born Force and her strength is the World-Mother who resides in her and who has to be awakened in order to "stay the wheels of Doom."[13] It is this problem that sets the theme of the epic: "In the world's death-cave uphold life's helpless claim/And vindicate her right to be and love." Her desire to undo the fated

death of her husband, in other words, to conquer death, is an archetypal desire : her task is not only personal but universal, her problem is the problem of everyone.

The poet of *Savitri* conceives death and suffering as part and process of immortality, and not something alien and frightful: "Death is our road to immortality"[14] says Savitri's father while approving of her choice of Satyavan as husband. Even Fate, as Narad explains, "is Truth working out in Ignorance,"[15] a power from the Gods that imposes itself on men against all their will and endeavour, and drives them on. As the decreed death of Satyavan is the beginning of a greater life[16] and Savitri is destined to bring about a spiritual change in man, Narad persuades her parents not to come between "her spirit and its forcc/But leave her to her mighty self and Fate."[17]

In the universalised and philosophic drama of *Savitri* the heroine undergoes the fated sufferings and changes her doom by destroying it with her spiritual mind that strives through yogic illumination to reach upward and free the individual from the bond of individuality and by extension, liberate the whole mankind. She resigns to the divine power in her inner being, and controls her nature by a yogic withdrawal within. Her quiet inner action leads her to achieve Knowledge about the immortality of the spirit which emboldens her to face the death of anyone, even of Satyavan, as an event *in her*. Her conflict is inner *per se*, initiated and resolved in her consciousness, Her inner-liberation through God-realisation, her meditational quest, her progress through "inner countries" turns her to elevate man, to save him from the clutches of death, passion, and darkness. The realisation of an earthly immortality is her bold attempt.

She is unperturbed even when she encounters the Lord of Death. In the original story she scores over Yama by her chastity and love for the husband while in Sri Aurobindo's scheme, she is turned into a human-divine character facing Death like Eternity, "stripped of the girdle of mortality," a cosmic symbol of Light defeating Darkness. Her evolution to the higher planes of awareness does not mean any severance of the mind or life or body but their complete transformation; it is not withdrawing from life or mind but conquering them by the power of the spirit. She sees the problem of death not as an inherent characteristic of life's rhythm but only as subject to the operation of mind. As long as life is subject to the control of mind, the fear of death is bound to remain but as soon as life is freed from

the control of mind, giving way to supermind controlling it, there will be no death.

Savitri's lone and crucial wrestle with Death in his own regions, which is the climatic building-block of structure, holds the weight of the whole epic. Her confrontation with the Lord of Death is intensely dramatic with ironic sternness of the dark power gradually yielding to the power of love in the heroine. She bravely repudiates his authority as he is but the Mind's creation and, conscious of immortality as she is, she cannot stoop "with the subject mob of minds."[18] She unveils her being as a sun and her coming as "a wave from God" to conquer Death with the arms of Love. Death ultimately admits the archetypal relationship of Savitri and Satyavan as "the eternal bridegroom and eternal bride" and releases Satyavan from his clutches. As a result of the confrontation, he is himself transformed into an amiable figure before Satyavan rises at the touch of Savitri vaguely recollecting his separation from her by death and the "vision seen in a spiritual sleep."[19]

Implied in Savitri's rise to the apex of spiritual height through the yogic ritual is the wish to attain something unattainable: the inner movement of Savitri is directed toward the supreme force of God and Death; her quest is for the establishment of man's right to immortality on earth. Her action, in the main, centres round the vital issue of the death of Satyavan and transformation of the earth-life into the life divine. The attempt is to understand the "spiritual paradox" that this world is. T. S. Eliot's *Ash Wednesday* (1930), though it betrays the modern man's self-deception and confusion, is his search for spiritual discipline: his prayerful submission—"Teach us to care and not to care" "to sit still", to feel the essential oneness with the divine as also with everyone, "Suffer me not to be separated"; his ascent to redeem the time and hear the Word, to seek peace in His will; his inner struggle for moral and spiritual values amidst the ironic helplessness of his time, his desire to climb the staircase for "raising" oneself spiritually or becoming purified, all is echoed by the poet of *Savitri*.

Savitri's argument consists in the Upanishadic statement that "God must not be sought as something far away, separate from us, but rather as the very inmost of us, as the higher Self in us above the limitations of our little self. In rising to the best in us we rise to the Self in us, to Brahman, to God himself."[20] The action in the silence of the soul that *Savitri* presents is the Upanishadic concept of God whose silence and whose reality is apprehended in a consciousness of joy. The light of the soul which is love, the

eternal joy, shines in the inner quietude of Savitri and leads her to God, to that centre in her which is beyond time and space, to the Sun of the Spirit. Having liberated herself by becoming one with the Spirit, she assumes the role of the sovereign and protector of all beings as she knows she possesses spirit-wisdom.

One may notice her mythical similitude in the Sumerian Gilgamesh, who rises against the decree of his destiny and goes to the Land of Humbaba to destroy the evil. His success, as in *Savitri*, is characterised by a descent-ascent pattern. Like Savitri, he desires immortality and undertakes the quest, journeying through oppressive darkness and overcoming temptations. Death is analogous to the demonic powers of the lower world while Savitri turns out to be the deliverer, coming from the upper world.

She explores the darkness of Inconscience to bring out the Supreme Truth, rather it is turned into a means of transformation of Death. Her inner quest glorifies the concept of love and eternal life as advanced by Yajnavalkya in the *Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad*: it is not for the love of his body that Satyavan is dear to her but for the love of Soul in him.[21] Moreover, her marriage with Satyavan, the result of an explicit quest, is "a representation of their integration with and ultimate responsibility for social continuity."[22] Death appears as a tremendous obstruction in the establishment of a continuing and harmonious society. After removing the obstruction, rather transforming it, she returns to society to re-create it. The movement from Death's Law to Spirit's Liberty abolishing all bondages points to the strong 'comic' tendency in the quest-with-conflict structral pattern of the epic. The creation of a new world order, a divinised society—analogous to the *Aeneid's* theme of the building of the new city, the move from Troy to New Troy--by destroying Ignorance and Death in oneself is mythical.

The primeval creator, Prajapati, creates Death as a woman to preserve distinction between mortals and immortals.[23] The Japanese myth of Izanagi and Izanami, the original couple whose marriage produced various deities, can also be cited to explain the feminine motif related to death. After Izanami dies, she goes to Yomi, the land of the dead, not wanting anyone to see how ugly she has become. Filled with grief of separation Izanagi, however, visits her there but is frightened by the decayed state of her corpse and runs away. He is pursued by Izanami and other creatures of Yomi but somehow he manages to escape. While he flees, the dead wife in hatred

calls to him and says that she will each day strangle to death one thousand of the populace of Izanagi's country.[24] In one of his own poems, *The Fear of Death*, Sri Aurobindo presents death as a female figure. Thus, fighting Death, Savitri fights against herself and her confrotation with him is internalised in her consciousness.

The transformation of Death from the ugly, terrifying, dark power that frustrates life and freedom of the soul into the friend of mankind reminds one the Buddhist legend of the transformation of the fierce robber Angulimala, who, confronting Buddha, turned a monk. In the Bible also, death is not something to be feared but, as Christ testifies, the glory of eternal life is the fruit of death since it is to follow the resurrection of the Son of Man. Christ descends into grave for the sake of mankind and his lifting up is fraught with comfort for the whole humanity. Satyavan, the symbolic soul of the world, redeemed by the Divine Mother who descended in Savitri as Power that can defeat Death, is the archetype of rebirth: his death is somewhat like the Mariner's death-in-sleep in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. Savitri, with the "original Shakti" of the Supreme Divine in her, is the woman-image who brings to man glory and eternity. Death, as in the *Vedas* and *Upanishads*, is worlds' ignorance of its own divine self. Savitri turns this ignorance into knowledge.

The death and resurrection of Satayavan is characterised by a displacement : it is the shifting over from the old psyche to a new one, the disintegration and sloughing of the ignorance-bound old consciousness and formation of a new consciousness. His is a 'mock death' in that he dies the death of ignorance, heedlessness, unbelief; and is resurrected to the birth of spiritual life, entering into love of God, living the life of Spirit, which is deathless. In other words, he is transformed into a new consciousness through death.[25] He becomes a "new sun," and his death, as Narad says, is a beginning of greater life."[26]

The vision of defeat of Death that Sri Aurobindo presents in *Savitri* has biblical overtones. Death is not a tragedy but a triumph in the New Testament Bible. I Corinthian 15 describes the victory over death by Christ in his resurrection on the third day. Christ is risen from the dead, "and become the first-fruits of them that slept." The archetypal man, Adam, was responsible for death to come in our world, and the Bible says, "by man came also the resurrection of the dead." That is, Satyavan dies in Adam, but he is made alive in Christ; his redemption by Savitri is the

Biblical fulfilment. Man dies in weakness, like Satyavan in ignorance, and is raised in power. "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body", i. e. it is an evolution from natural to spiritual; the man of the earth is transformed into the man of the spirit. Satyavan's 'earthy' death is the part of the process of the spiritual life. I Cor. 51-53 reads: "Behold, I show you a mystery, we shall not all sleep, but shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption; and *this mortal must put on immortality.*" Paul simply says that "Death is swallowed up in victory" (verse 54). *Savitri* shows how victoriously it is swallowed up and how this is done.

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26. Sri Aurobindo, *op. cit.*, p. 459.

A SHORT HISTORY OF INDIA

The ochre air irritates
The tongue. Dust thickens it.
The squalid city groans
under the loo, familiar
as an ordinary afternoon in May.
It's a cemetery of stones
I see everywhere:
Khiljis, Tughluqs, Lodis, Mughals—
they stick to its face
like turds. When Ghazni knocked,
or was it Clive, we paid off
old scores in our backyard.
Eight hundred years of blood-letting
has made eunuchs of us,
once for all unsettled
our minds. Now, atop the Himalaya
unceremoniously grins
an ominous skull, the sun.

R. Parthasarathy

TRADITION AND FREEDOM

R. Parthasarathy

(1)

Quite often I find myself in the situation, at least hypothetically, when I am asked: 'How representative is Indian English verse of the literatures of India?' Not being an apologist by disposition, I shall here try not to appear defensive in offering to formulate some responses. It is unlikely a Tamil poet, for instance, will be asked: 'How representative is Tamil verse of the literatures of India?' because Tamil has been, for 2,000 years, part of the Indian literary tradition. But what is tradition, how does a poet relate himself to it, and does he ever become free of it altogether? Speaking of tradition, J. Krishnamurti remarks:

> Doesn't tradition mean carrying the past over to the present? The past is not only one's particular set of inheritances but also the weight of all the collective thought of a particular group of people....One carries the accumulated knowledge and experience of the race and the family. All this is the past——the carrying over from the known to the present——which shapes the future. Is not the teaching of all history a form of tradition?[1]

Tradition, then, is a body of knowledge and experience handed down from the past to the present. It indicates the continuity of development, similarity and influence linking writers of one period to those of another.

Indian English verse is over 150 years old. Henry Derozio's (1809-31) *Poems* and Kasiprasad Ghose's (1809-73) *The Shair or Minstrel and other Poems* appeared in the 1830s. The tradition initiated by them is still in the making, in spite of the attempts of Toru Dutt (1856-77) and Aurobindo Ghose (1872-1950) to indianize it. Not till the 1970s do we find an exceptional flowering of talent which has been actively engaged in a dialogue with the past with the express intention of discovering its own identity, and establishing, once for all, the relevance of Indian English verse to the literatures of India. However, let us briefly examine the history of Indian English verse if only

to familiarize ourselves with some of the reasons for its failure so far to establish itself.

It is true that Indian English verse has a past that is best forgotten. There are far too many skeletons in the cupboard for the poet to feel comfortable or secure today. By persisting to speak in the borrowed voice of the English poets, the Indian poets lost, over the years, the use of their own voice. Here is a sample from Manmohan Ghose (1869-1924).

> Whither fled Sleep, whither fled that soft Power
> World-stilling, when from Iris' side he rose
> From sentinelling the hush'd awful head
> Of brooding and thought-task'd Omnipotence.
> Where went he spreading his wide dewy wings
> To deepen slumber O' er the world's unrest.
> Far as to Oxus river, and where rolls,
> Where mighty Indus rushes. He had left
> To fade with ebbing light each noble stream
> And from Night's gloaming step, the dusk advance
> Of silence, to drink first of silver rest
> In glassing the bright peace of Hesperus![2]

The allusions Ghose uses are not taken from the deposits of a common Indian tradition. And therefore, for the reader, the validity of what is said is immeasurably lost, since it is outside his comprehension. We can only throw up our hands in despair, and exclaim: 'Milton! should'st *thou* be living at this hour?' It isn't the use of English that is appalling; it is the erosion of sensibility. Ghose was, of course, an extreme case of 'colonialitis'. In 1916, eight years before his death, he wrote to Laurence Binyon:

> For years not a friendly step has crossed my threshold....
> and with Indians my purely English upbringing and breeding puts me out of harmony; denationalised, that is then the word for me.[3]

Instead of being told to stop composing pastiches of the English poets, he was in fact commended by Binyon:

> No Indian had ever before used our tongue with so poetic a touch and he would coin a phrase, turn a noun into a verb with the freedom, often the felicity, of our own poets. But he remains Indian.[4]

More than one Indian English poet has been ruined by such adulation. Ghose's *Selected Poems*, with an introduction by A. Norman Jeffares, was

published in 1974 by the Sahitya Akademi, and in the following year he was honoured with a monograph in the 'Makers of Indian Literature' series.

It is an unfortunate truism of the Indian English literary scene that responsible criticism, is the exception rather than the rule. What exists, such as the few studies of individual Poets, is invariably laudatory in tone and makes embarrassing reading. There is no evidence in them of either scholarship or the critical faculty at work. Those who write are familiar with *only* English (or American) literature; their terms of reference are borrowed from that literature. The exercise becomes, as a result, inappropriate and futile. Familiarity with at least one of the Indian literatures would have offered a perspective in which to evaluate the work.

(2)

In spite of there being a *history* of Indians writing verse in English for 150 years, Indian English verse has no *tradition* to speak of. And during that long period, none of the poets helped to establish an indigenous tradition, involving the whole history of verse in one or more of the Indian languages. In fact, the history of Indian English verse is the history of lost opportunities. None of the poets seriously took up its challenge, and attempted to write verse that was authentically Indian in inspiration and was also, at the same time artistically viable.

The Indian renaissance, of which Rammohun Roy (1772-1833) was the representative spokesman, touched only a handful of educated Indians. There is no eveidance to show that it represented a general awakening of the Indian people. The poets failed to question, examine or reflect on the upheaval that was taking place as a result of the British conquest of India. The verse is, therefore, feeble and emasculated. It has the vitality, or what was left of it, of an enslaved nation.

> My country! in thy day of glory past
> A beauteous halo circled round thy brow,
> and worshipped as a deity thou wast.
> Where is that glory, where that reverence now?
> Thy eagle pinion is chained down at last,
> And grovelling in the lowly dust art thou:
> Thy minstrel hath no wreath to weave for thee
> Save the sad story of thy misery![5]

However, ever since the withdrawal of the British from India, Indian English verse has become increasingly separated from English literature to become a part of the mainstream of the literatures of India. It has, in effect, today acquired an obstinately national or regional bias. Such a bias is imposed on the poet by the culture and society of which he is an integral part. What the Kannada writer, U. R. Anantha Murthy, says is relevant in this context:

> We all write in the Indian languages, and this fact has a profound consequence on what we actually do in our languages, however much we expose ourselves to the west in search of ideas and forms.... If the ideas that are still not of my language are embodied in my language creatively, then they become a part of the living tradition of my language.[6]

This is the special concern of the ecology of language, that is, the 'study of interactions between any given language and its environment' (Haugen 1972: 325). In the Indian context, English has interacted with Indian languages in the minds of bilingual speakers and with Indian society in which it continues to be functionally used. It has, as a result, undergone the inevitable process of acculturation, and given rise to a subcontinental variety of English that we today recognize as Indian English. This includes pidgin and babu Englishes as well. I think it would be useful to keep in mind here J. R. Firth's comment on Indian English:

> Most Indian English is badly overdrawn. But it is kept going by the Government, and though it has therefore a certain local currency, it has no gold backing. English literature up to and including Addison is not a suitable security on which to issue current tokens of speech in the twentieth century. Babuism is not by any means confined to India. It is the common danger lurking in all purely literary education, and especially perilous if the languages are alien to the social life of the learners.[7]

Firth's misgivings about the status of English in India have turned out to be premature. The raj institutionalized English, and initiated a linguistic revolution unique in the history of India. But, as Braj B. Kachru reminds us, 'this phenomenon is consistent with the past linguistic assimilations of this country, for example, the indianization of Persian, the dravidiani-

zation of Sanskrit and the indo-aryanization of the Dravidian languages' (Kachru 1976a: 225).

Successive conquests for about 800 years, beginning with the rise of Muslim power in 1175 to the close of the raj in 1947, disrupted the continuity of the Hindu tradition. Our literatures have not been immune to the onslaught. The last great works in Sanskrit and Tamil, for instance—Jayadeva's (fl. 12th c.) *Gitagovinda* and Kampan's (probably between 9th c. and 12th c.) *Iramavataram*—appeared in the twelfth century. The raj especially struck at the roots of the Indian psyche, and it hasn't been fully assimilated by us. Our languages did not have the resources to come to grips with the modernization initiated by the raj.

(3)

The work of A. K. Ramanujan (b. 1929) offers the first indisputable evidence of the validity of Indian English verse. Both *The Striders* (1966) and *Relations* (1971) are the heirs of an anterior tradition, a tradition very much of this subcontinent, the deposits of which are in Kannada and Tamil, and which have been *assimilated* into English. Ramanujan's deepest roots are in the Kannada and Tamil past, and he has repossessed that past, in fact made it available, in the English language. I consider this a significant achievement, one almost without parallel in the history of Indian English verse. Ramanujan has, it seems to me, successfully conveyed in English what, at its subtlest and most incantational, is locked up in another linguistic tradition. He has, as a result, indicated the directions Indian English verse is likely to take in the future.

'Prayers to Lord Murugan' is an 'imitation' of the *Tirumurukarrupatai* in which the Tamil poet Nakkirar (fl.7th c.) sings the praises of Murugan, the Dravidian god of youth, beauty, love and war. Also known as Skanda and Karttikeya, Murugan is represented as a six-faced god with twelve hands riding on a peacock, holding a bow in one hand and an arrow in another. With the rise of bhakti literature by about A. D. 600 in the Tamil country, he is displaced by Siva and Vishnu. There was, however, a revival of the cult of Murugan towards the beginning of the sixteenth century. In Ramanujan's poem, Murugan is vividly invoked in the tradition of Tamil heroic verse. The *arrupatai* is a kind of poetical composition in which bards, having received favours from kings, direct others to seek their patronage. But in the *Tirumurukarrupatai* the bhakta who has received the grace

of Murugan shows others the way to salvation. Even the *arrupatai* form of 'Nakkirar's hymn is preserved, albeit ironically.

> Lord of new arrivals
> lovers and rivals
> arrive
> at once with cockfight and banner-
> dance till on this and the next three
> hills
> women's hands and the garlands
> on the chests of men will turn like
> chariotwheels
> O where are the cocks combs and where
> the beaks glinting with new knives
> at crossroads
> When will orange banners burn
> among blue trumpet flowers and the shade
> of trees
> waiting for lightnings?[8]

'Prayers to Lord Murugan' can be seen as being embedded in, and arising from, a specific tradition. It is the first step towards establishing an indigenous tradition of Indian English verse. And it can be established and kept alive only if Indian English verse increasingly aligns itself with the literatures of India.

(4)

Arun Kolatkar's (b. 1932) deepest roots are again in the Marathi past. He has made a considerable dent in the tradition of the bhakti poets, notably Tukaram (1598-1649) and Namdeo (1270-1350), in his appropriation of that tradition in *Jejuri* (1976). Apparently, the poem is about the poet's irreverent visit to the temple of Khandoba at Jejuri, a town 50 km south-east of Pune in Maharashtra. In reality, however, the poem oscillates between faith and scepticism in a tradition that has run its course. Khandoba is, in fact, Mailar in Karnataka and Murugan in Tamil Nadu. It is a fortuitous coincidence that both Ramanujan and Kolatkar should have chosen to resuscitate Indian English verse by invoking the same popular folk deity. Lord of the hills and of shepherds, Khandoba is represented as wrapped in a blanket and riding on a horse, with a sword in one hand. He has two wives, Mhalasa and Banai. A dog usaully accompanies him. To this day,

pepole from all over Maharashtra flock to his shrine. 'A Song for a Vaghya' (worshippers traditionally dedicated to Khandoba) has its roots in the *abhang* (short devotional poem).

Khandoba's temple
rises with the day.
But it must not fall
with the night.
I' ll hold it up
with a flame for a prop.
Don't turn me away.
I must have my oil, ma' am.
Give me a drop
if you can't spare a gram.
This instrument
has one string.
And one godawful itch.
As I scratch it,
it gives me just one pitch.
But if it plays
just the one note,
who am I to complain
when all I' ve got
is just a one-word song
inside my throat?
God is the word
and I know it backwards.[9]

Jejuri points the way to the future precisely because it has a firm hold on a specific tradition. Kolatkar has, like Ramanujan before him, significantly contributed to the making of an indigenous tradition for Indian English verse.

(5)

In 1972 I spoke of my resolve to write in Tamil in a poem which is now regarded as a 'paradigm of the entire Indo-English poetic milieu'.[10]

My tongue in English chains,
I return, after a generation, to you.
I am at the end

of my dravidic tether,
hunger for you unassuaged.
I falter, stumble.
Speak a tired language
wrenched from its sleep in the *Kural*
teeth, palate, lips still new
to its agglutinative touch.
Now, hooked on celluloid, you reel
down plush corridors.[11]

M. Sivaramkrishna commented that 'if the Indo-English poet of the nineteenth century had his tongue firmly entrenched in English chains, it is the unchaining of this that is suggested by Parthasarathy's poem'.[12] In attempting to formulate my own situation, perhaps, I stumbled upon the horns of a linguistic dilemma. From the beginning, I saw my task as one of acclimatizing the English language to an indigenous tradition. In fact, the tenor of *Rough Passage* is explitict: to initiate a dialogue between myself and my Tamil past. 'Homecoming', in particular, tries to derive its sustenance from grafting itself on to whatever I find usable in the Tamil tradition—— from the *Kural* (3rd or 4th c.) to the *Nalayiradivyaprapantam* (5th-9th c.). Something that had eluded me over the years, I was eventually able to nativize it in English——the flavour, the essence of Tamil mores. The result is a 'Tamil poem written in English' (Paniker 1979 : 19).

And so it eventually happened——
a family reunion not heard of
since grandfather died in '59—in March
this year. Cousins arrived in Tiruchchanur
in overcrowded private buses,
the dust of unlettered years
clouding instant recognition.
Later, each one pulled,
sitting cross-legged on the steps
of the choultry, familiar coconuts
out of the fire
of rice-and pickle afternoons.
Sundari, who had squirrelled up and down
forbidden tamarind trees in her long skirt
every morning with me,
stood there, that day, forty years taller,

her three daughters floating
like safe planets near her.[13]

I am aware of the hiatus between the soil of the language I use and my own roots. Even though I am Tamil-speaking and yet write in English, there is the overwhelming difficulty of using images in a linguistic tradition that is quite other than that of my own. If the images used are drawn from the deposits of a common tradition, the validity of the work is at once recognized by the reader. I believe that if a writer thought long and hard enough on his own use of language, even if it is English, sooner or later, I think, through the English language, he will try to come to terms with himself as an Indian, with his Indian past, with his environment, and the language will become acclimatized to the Indian evironment.

I'd like to think that every time a poem is written it appropriates, in a sense, all the poems that have been ever written in that particular language. This cannot be said of an Indian English poem, because there is no tradition to relate it with. If, however, the poet has access to an Indian language, though he may not find himself writing in it, he can gradually try to appropriate that tradition though he writes in English. This would, of course, mean reconciling ourselves to having Kannada English verse, Marathi English verse, Tamil English verse and so on—all inalienable segments of a pan-Indian mosaic that we know as the literatures of India. When that happens, the severed head, Indian English verse, will no longer 'choke to speak another tongue'.

(6)

Orissa is the hub of Jayanta Mahapatra's (b. 1928) iconoclastic perambulations. Through his translations of Oriya verse, he has successfully assimilated in his own work its literary tradition. He produces strange, evocative poems when he trains his poetic eye on the impoverished landscape of Orissa, overburdened with an intolerable past, such as the unorthodox rites centred around the temple of Jagannatha at Puri, the celebrated seat of Krishna bhakti in eastern India. To its festival of *Rathayatra* in the month of Ashadha (June-July) flock thousands of pilgrims when the idol of Jagannatha is brought out in the car for his 'symbolic tour of the world to study the state of mankind'. The emptiness of traditional rituals is obliquely exposed in 'The Faith'.

In these indistinguishable mornings
like pale-yellow hospital linen,

a legless cripple
clutters up the wide temple street,
the quiet early light crouched in his palms.

What sentence of old
moves him toward the furious wrinkled walls?
The Puri priest standing in indulgent sunshine
plays a small ridicule across the melting festival,
safe in place above a pile of hard-eyed ancestors.[14]

Another bilingual poet, Kamala Das (b. 1934) works out her emotional and sexual traumas in poems of unexceptionable frankness reminiscent of the medieval *Sahaja* (Skt. 'spontaneous') poets who espoused free love as a means of self-realization. The classic expression is found in Chandidas (fl. 15th c.).

What god is that
Who moulded me a woman?
I am always alone
Being married and watched.
Since falling in love
Is a disgrace for me,
I must then kill
My meaningless life.
I am not free
To open my mouth
But I am in rapture
With another man.[15]

Traditionally, Nayar women were sexually uninhibited because of the practice of *marumakkathayam* (matrilineal system of inheritance and succession'). Kamala Das' forthright treatment of sexual relations is an offshoot of her Nayar background.

It was not to gather knowledge
Of yet another man that I came to you, but to learn
What I was, and by learning, to learn to grow, but every
Lesson you gave was about yourself. You were pleased
With my body's response, its weather, its usual shallow
Convulsions. You dribbled spittle into my mouth, you poured
Yourself into every nook and cranny, you embalmed
My poor lust with your bitter-sweet juices.[16]

(7)

If the recent work of Nissim Ezekiel (b. 1924) and Keki N. Daruwalla (b. 1937) is any indication, its thrust is not toward shaping an indigenous tradition but in its relevance to the contemporary Indian situation. Ezekiel's statement about himself could be extended to include Daruwalla:

> I am not a Hindu and my background makes me a natural outsider; circumstances and decisions relate me to India....I cannot identify myself with India's past as a comprehensive heritage or reject it as if it were mine to reject. I can identify myself only with modern India.[17]

They write with irony and humour about the experience of living in India today. Their stance is critical as they explore and celebrate the sense of coming to terms with India.

It is a measure of Ezekiel's integrity as a man and poet that he recognizes and accepts his situation. *Hymns in Darkness* (1976) reveals his increasing concern with the nature of religious experience, even though he is 'not a religious or even a moral person in any conventional sense' (quoted in Singh 1980: 50). Unlike Ramanujan, he is not questioning the validity or otherwise of a traditional faith. He is simply content to evoke luminously but ironically the configurations of his experience.

> He has seen the signs
> but not been faithful to them.
> Where is the fixed star of his seeking?
> It multiplies like a candle
> in the eyes of a drunkard.
> He looks at the nakedness of truth
> in the spirit of a Peeping Tom.
> Changing his name would be no help.
> He is the man
> full of his name.[18]

The landscape of northern India sometimes erupts with unexpected violence in Daruwalla's poems: at other times, it broods over them like an ominous Himalaya.

> I broke my gun in two across the back
> of an ash-grey dawn. A brown bird left the crags

flying strongly, and as its shadow crossed us
it shrieked with fear and turned to stone
dropping at our feet.[19]

He is one of the few poets to have successfully rehabilitated the topography of the land in his work.

Unable to accept present-day India as it is, and unable to relate themselves comprehensively to traditional India, Ezekiel and Daruwalla fall back on irony to disclose the contradictions inherent in the Indian situation.

(8)

The literatures of India are increasingly conditioning Indian English literature and, therefore, familiarity with even one of them would appreciably enhance our understanding of the latter. The history of Indian English verse is therefore the history, on the one hand, of a growing relationship between two traditions and two languages and, on the other, of the reshaping of English to express the Indian experience. The tension of this dialogue has produced and is still producing significant and often excellent writing. To understand Indian English verse is to understand the traditions involved and how they interact. The individual work is for us the only focus of value. If, however, it is valid, its value will be outside the personal and traditional, and reach out to the universal. For the present, it appears to me, every poet has to make the imaginative grasp at identity for himself: and if he can find no means in his tradition to sustain him, he will have to start from scratch.

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R. PARTHASARATHY

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THE ROHINI AND THE KHADKHADA

On the day
the Rohini is launched
I watch a 'Khadkhada'
somehow holding ten bags of potatoes
and seven men,
as it jerks along the road
leading to the city.

The men sitting dangerously on the potato-bags wonder
how from chariot to tonga,
from tonga to ekka
from ekka to 'khadkhada'
their comforts have been moving

anti-clockwise.
Anyway, they want the horse
to move a little faster.
The whipped horse does not remember
when it galloped last.
Now the whip does not hurt——
it simply keeps the flies away.

The City is not very far:
they look around
on the speeding cars,
taxies and buses
and try to correlate time and distance,
Not quite certain
when they will reach the city,
though Rohini is certain of its orbit.

*('Khadkhada' is a horse-driven cart without seating arrangement.)

Siddheshwar Pande

META DRAMA[1] IN HENRY IV PART I

K. Chellappan

The greatest of dramatists not only embodied reality in drama but also saw drama as a metaphor for reality. There is this double awareness—reality is itself a drama or role-playing, role-playing seems to be the only safe a road to the perception of reality. From *Love's Labour's Lost to The Tempest* Shakespeare has been working out this relationship between art or dream and reality, between expression and experience. The terrible pull between the thinginess of a thing and its visionary reality is a fundamental epistemological problem which seems to have fascinated Shakespeare.

Eliot has in a different context[2] referred to the ability of some of Shakespeare's characters to see themselves as actors, and see themselves as others would do. Most important characters either 'act' or are conscious of being actors. There is a play within the play not only in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Hamelt*, but also in plays like *Macbeth*, where there is not only the stage image,[3] but we also see Macbeth becoming a conscious actor right from the beginning and his counterfeit is later countered by the counterfeit of reality itself when Birnam Wood 'moves' to Dunsinane. In fact the Banquet scene is itself a play within the play not only in the sense that he is pretending to the guests and ambiguous in his expressions but also because there is a dimension in the scene only revealed to himself. In fact when Duncan initially acts as though words were inadequate, Macbeth excels him in role-playing ; of course there are two kinds of role-playing, one in which there is more identification with the role. Rosalind's 'play' with Orlando and Viola's disguise and playing the role of somebody else and through the role of somebody else talking about herself–all belong to this category. The unravelling of the true identities of characters at the end of most of the comedies is also another instance of the play within the play.

In *Henry IV Part I* which occupies a central position in the Shakespeare canon, we have a synthesis of several things: comedy and history, comedy and tragedy; and the 'play' theme and imagery are pivotal to this play where

role-playing is almost a structural principle. This play also explores reality in terms of 'play' both as action and imagery, more in terms of action than imagery (whereas in a later play like *Macbeth* the 'play' imagery is as important as, if not more important than, 'play' as action). If the king is the subtlest, though the greatest, of the actor in the play, Falstaff is the most conscious, though detached, of the actors in the play; to the former, art (in the sense of artifice) is life: to the latter, life itself is art. The Prince not only refers to his mask in a metaphoric sense that he is acting in the midst of others, he also 'acts' in the literal sense when he mimicks Hotspur in II, iv and later when he plays the role of the king when Falstaff plays the role of the Prince in the same scene. In a serious sense there is a change of role in Hal and Hotspur in the beginning which is rectified only later when Hal identifies himself with his real role of the Prince and there is a symbolic exchange of roles also at the end: "The two have exchanged places."[4] In the scene when Falstaff narrates his adventure also there is an inner drama—Prince Hal is aware of certain things which Falstaff does not know.

The theme of role-playing finds its fullest expression in the Shrewsbury scene where we find Hotspur and Falstaff, the two opposites, marching with their troops. The very battle field is converted into a stage—when Douglas hits Falstaff, he falls down as if he were dead. More than that when Hall leaves after paying a tribute to the dead hero, Falstaff rises, 'wounds' the body of Hotspur and claims to have killed him. Here is role-playing at its best and we are tempted to believe that he enjoys the role most abundantly. Possibly he reprensents a sort of detachment which turns all seriousness into an elemental absurdity, just as death seems to convert all heroism into a profound nothingness. In the exaggerated gesture of the inflated ego of Hotspur, there is always an undercurrent of comic absurdity. 'Nothingness' seems to underly all our heroic gestures because the silence of death is the undercurrent of all our actions, and in one sense it is silence that gives meaning to all our actions.

The Hotspur tragedy also borders on comedy because of the absurdity of the inflated ego trying to pluck glory in spite of its creaturality. In Falstaff who seems to be his double, we find the correlative of this absurdity, or the transformation of this absurdity into a sort of art. It is significant that Falstaff and Hotspur are juxtaposed here also—the counterfeit of death by Falstaff followed by the real death of Hotspur. If Falstaff pretends to die, the role-playing becomes real in Hotspur, which would mean that in Falstaff

we have the artistic rendering or pretending of all seriousness. In the Falstaff comedy in the battle field, we find role-playing making inroads into the very heart of reality. The word counterfeit requires some comment. Falstaff himself refers to death as counterfeit

> To die is to be
> a counterfeit, for he is but the counterfeit of a man, who hath not the life of a man; but to counterfeit dying, when a man thereby liveth, is to be no counterfeit, but the true and perfect image of life indeed.
>
> (V. iv, 115-119)

If death is the counterfeit of life, that can also be closer to reality. That the death of Hotspur is also a kind of life is also implied here. Death and Honour seem to be two sides of the same coin, one, the counterfeit of the other. Falstaff by imitating death is also getting (the counterfeit of ?) honour. The juxtaposition of counterfeiting with reality brings out a central ambiguity in all experience. There are other conterfeits in the play—there are counterfeits of the king in the battle field and interestingly enough Douglas refers to the King himself as counterfeit.[5]:

> What art thou,
> That counterfeit'st the person of a king?

and the King replies:

> The king himself, who, Douglas, grieves at heart
> So many of his shadows thou hast met,
> And not the very king.
>
> (V. iv, 27-31)

This concept of counterfeit can be linked with the related notion of substitution in the play. Right in the beginning the King wishes that some fairy must have substituted Hal by Hotspur and says:

> That some night-tripping fairy had exchanged
> In cradle-clothes our children where they lay,
> And called mine Percy, his Plantagenet,
> Then would I have his Harry, and he mine:
>
> (I. i, 87-90)

And this is later rectified by the real substitution of Hotspur by Hal when he kills him. We may also see a symbolic substitution when Hotspur dies following the counterfeit of the death by Falstaff, and then Falstaff is 'renewed'

after the death of Hotspur. Critics have referred to Falstaff being the father substitute for Prince Hal, and instead of the sick King being killed, we have the scapegoat in Hotspur.[6] But Hotspur could be the substitute for Falstaff too-and when Falstaff marches triumphantly we can see the absorption of death by life, of tragedy by comedy: There is no doubt that in Hotspur's obsession with honour there is a kind of death wish which can be contrasted with the anarchic vitality of Falstaff. Of course we could also see the energy in both and the comic vitality of Falstaff is also not different from the energy symbolised by the sensuous gardens of Persephone. In this connection we may also think of the sun presiding political, world and the moon—presiding comic world and there is always the hint that theirs is an underworld. Just as in the fertility myths we have the renewal of life through death, we have the renewal of the rhythms of life symbolised by Falstaffian comedy through the death of Hotspur. When Hal accepts the Falstaffian version of having killed Hotspur, we find the total triumph of comedy over tragedy, of the willing suspension of disbelief which converts tragedy into comedy. But Falstaff is accepted only within the categories of this play where role-playing becomes really itself, and he will be rejected soon in terms of the different values of the political world. The King's initial reference to Christ's having been "nailed for *our advantage* on the bitter cross" (I, i, 26-27) and his reference again to Hal having *redeemed* (his) lost opinion" (V, iv, 48) can also be related to this substitution theme.

That the real opposition in the play is between Falstaff and Hotspur is clear even in their attitudes to 'time' and 'honour'. Whereas Hotspur lives in a time ridden world, Falstaff wishes that "time must have a stop." There is a timelessness or stillness about the comic scenes whereas the political scenes bustle with action, though not meaningful. The word 'honour' has no specific content in the play—in a sense each character gives his own significance and here again the major contrast is between Hotspur's and Falstaff's. In Hotspur we have both an emotion in excesss of facts and an inflated language which is a sign of the inflated ego, whereas in Falstaff the word has only physical content—it is only a signifier without any signified, it is a word, a mere scutcheon. To Falstaff all reality is only experiential or physical and he denies metaphorical content or meaning to experience as well as words, where as to Hotspur everything is only spirit and glory. This contrast between the body and disembodied spirit implied in the concepts of honour of Falstaff and Hotspur is also symbolised visually—by juxtaposing the glorious death of Hotspur with the 'body, of Falstaff on the one

hand and the dead body of Hotspur himself with the glory attached to him by the Prince. This contrast between the 'body' and the 'spirit',[7] between texture and abstraction, between existence and essence is to be found both in life and language.—i. e., in their attitudes both to life and literature. To Falstaff the physical content is real; and he gives importance to the thinginess of any thing as opposed to its inner essence.—and the irony is that Hotspur who was all the time all fire and air also becomes a thing, a body, but of course Hal endows the body with meaning. Shakespeare seems to have been exploring all the time the relation between word and its significance. In Hotspur we have disembodied significance : a in Falstaff we have only the body denying significance : in Hal, we have systhesis of both—he objectifies the meaning of Honour' in terms of a larger reality than self and that is why we may say that he progresses from role-playing to the role itself.[8]

All this is part of the fundamental question which the play asks : What is real, what is unreal? Is life real or counterfeit? The mythical basis of the play has been referred to by Barber[9] among others, with reference to the theme of renewal of life symbolised in the death and resurrection of Falstaff. That Shakespeare converts ritual into comedy has also been referred to. But the human drama is not free from the mythical dimension. The wonderful blend of the unreal and the real which is in the nature of all experience is brought out in the play, by imposing the play on the myth. The unreality of the mythical evolves into the unreality of the comic and the triumph over death in this play is the result of the comic perspective, and that itself imparts reality to the unreal. The descent of God into history, of myth into drama, is most complete here.

Asthetically the play within the play pattern in Shakespeare's plays seems to have ultimately the function of giving double perspective to human experience. This double perspective is a correlative to the central ambivalence in all experience. There is an element of play in the core of all experience. And so the metaphor of play—not only in the sense of play being used as imagery, but also the play scenes themselves functioning as mataphor of life seems to be the effective mode of perceiving the play of life. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Hamlet* reality makes inroads into role-playing and role-playing gives a perspective to reality. In *The Tempest* the role playing of Prospero in the island is a perfect image of our reality being a dream, though a really real dream. In *Henry IV Part I*, role-playing becomes almost an absolute reality in the figure of Falstaff. The play scenes in all

these plays build the 'play' and our response to it into the very structure of the play, and that is the only way to overcome 'the play' or to bring us nearer to the reality. Of course, one is always left with the question: which is the play, which is the reality?

K. CHELLAPPAN

NOTES

1. Refer to C. L. Calderwood, *Shakespeare's Metadrama* (Minneapolis, Minn, 1971) for the treatment of the play theme in a few plays of Shakespeare other than *Henry IV Part I.*
2. T. S. Eliot, "Rhetoric" and Poetic Drama', *The Sacred Wood* (1920; rpt. London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1969), p. 81.
3. V. Y. Kantak, "An Approach to Shakespearian Tragedy: The 'Actor' Image in Macbeth," *Shakespeare Survey No. 16* (1963; rpt. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 42-52.
4. Harold Jenkins, "The Structural Problem in Shakespeare's 'Henry IV,'" *Shakespeare: King Henry IV Parts 1 & 2: A collection of critical essays*, ed. G. K. Hunter (London: Macmillan, 1970), p. 158.
5. "His apology for counterfeiting cuts deeply indeed, because it does not apply merely to himself; we can relate it, as William Empson has shown, to the counterfeiting of the King"—C. L. Barber, "Rule and Misrule in 'Henery IV,'" *Shakespeare: King Henry IV Parts 1 & 2*, p. 225.
6. J. I. M. Stewart, "The Birth and Death of Falstaff," *Shakespeare: King Henry IV Parts 1 & 2*, p. 132.
7. *Henry IV Part I*, Act V, Scene iv, Line, 89.
8. This progress from role-playing to the discovery of role by Hamlet has been discussed in Niegeal Alexander, *Poison, Play and Duel: A Study in Hamlet* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971).
9. Refer to C. L. Barber, "Rule and Misrule in 'Henry IV.'"

J. B. : THROUGH THE MASKS

Nila Das

I

Man's inclination to play the part of what he is not is old. In the primitive myths and ritual protodramas the adaptation of the masks of gods and demons had been a way of stepping out of the self, transcending the temporal identity and becoming one with the spirit represented by the mask. To play a role, to move from person to persona was a spirituo-religious experience, a discipline upon the self, an awakening into the archetypal, the eternal[1]

Since the Renaissance, along with the decline of faith in the transcendental order, the ritual and the theatre dissociated, acting in masks fell into disuse in the Western drama except for occasional fantastic disguises or a cult of pose. In the contemporary experimental theatre masks are revived, with a difference. The mythical symbols ineffective, the masks today, all-too-human (sometimes the faces themselves appear as masks), embody the conflicts within man's mind, his motivations and reactions or the self-chosen yet obligatory roles that man plays in the society and life but is unable to come to terms with. "One's outer life passes in solitude haunted by the masks of others; one's inner life passes in solitude hounded by the masks of oneself," writes O'Neill in his *Dogma for the New Masked Drama.*[2] In an age of disintegrated values and meaning, the feeling is common.

In the recent plays, unmasking either creates new masks or exposes the self and existence as ever-changing, without any centre or wholeness. Flung in the abyss of non-being and nothingness, unaided by tradition, and unable or unwilling to attain any reconciliating self-vision, many of the contemporary masked actors are bewildered, terrified, lost.[3] A few grope for an identity or integrity, meaning of existence behind the facades.[4] Through non-identification with the non-self and the realisation of the non-values, they seek their way to the depths-psychic, social, spiritual. Their masks initiate them to the inner reality. It is a dark initiation.

In *J. B.* Archibald MacLeish uses both the patterns of the masked drama, the old and the new.

II

In an interview MacLeish said, "the question remains the same: who am I?....The problem is to answer the question in a new scene, a new setting, with other angles of light....but still to answer it."[5] A poet-dramatist of the Age of anxiety, rootlessness, nothingness MacLeish sees the contemporary existence as a masquerade of the incongruous and the unrelated."[6] The "battered, scattered, time-scared" men are a "masque of mummers," their faces still, their eyes staring at the impenetrable indifference above ("Question it/What art thou..../And no sound"). Yet believing (a faith in spite of) that "the vision of truth (is) hidden somewhere....behind the indifference of the universe and sordidness and misery"[7], MacLeish tries to penetrate the meaningless masquarade for a way to meaning, the masks of being, "the blundering, bewildered mortal maze" for Le Secret Humain, "something inviolate, a living something."

In *J. B.* MacLeish uses a variety of masks —masks within masks archetypal, temporal, theatrical. psychological. Focused through the masks, *J. B.*, a drama of the American moment, becomes a metaphor of the human situation of the time, all times.

III

The prologue is set in the pattern of the old masked play in a new setting. In an empty circus tent, two popcorn-vendors, the non-heroes in the contemporary circus of non-existence, the floried, imposing Zuss and the malicious, pathetic Nickles, both fixed in their attitudes, their unintended masks to play life's game, wish the myth of Job to be re-enacted. They work themselves up into theatrical flights in a grotesque attempt to playact as God and Satan in the myth. Throughout the drama, the myth of Job is an implicit critique on the contemporary men and situation. The two actors also are painfully aware, in spite of their clowning, of the unbridgeable distance between themselves and the roles they play: "we are actors. They're not actors/Never acted anything." ("We recognise ourselves by a wrong laugh," said MacLeish's Hamlet too).

The mythical figures do not become a reality in the contemporary imagination. The image of Job, Nickles has in his mind is of the modern hollowman,[8] "sick and stricken on a dung heap", "blind with the sight of

slight", "questioning everything, the times, the stars/God's *providence*." While speaking about Job, Nickles unknowingly switches over from the third person to the first ("I taste of the world/I've licked the stick that beat my brains out"). The hollowman is his own self-image. The modern actor, instead of moving out of himself, moves within. From the archetypal to the temporal to the personal the focus gets narrower. Zuss holds out the Godmask "huge, white,.... expressionless....with eyes lidded like the eyes of the mask in Michelangelo's Night." The mask embodies the absence of God. The Satanmask is another mirror of the contemporary void. Confronted with the negativity ("the no face of Nothing/Grinning with the not-there eyes/Nothing at all, nothing ever") the two actors are bewildered. The mythical-nonmythical masks on, in hallowed magnified voices they pantomime the Biblical lines of God and Satan. The masks removed, their voices tremble: "those eyes see....I know what Hell is *now*..../Consciousness of Consiousness." Their game of disguise, in spite of them, turs into a medium to penetrate reality.

The bulbs go out. In the darkness on the stage and in the mind of the two actors, a Distant Voice suddenly rings out, puzzling both:

The Distant Voice	:	When comest thou?
Mr. Zuss	:	That's my line
Nickles	:	I did'nt speak it

As expected, neither of the actors tries to identify the Voice, the lost dimension of the modern consciousness. Fixed in their negativity, they refuse to accept the opposite or its possibility. The absent-present Eternal Spectator within their soul looks on as the two non-heroes, afraid to participate in the drama of existence, prefer to watch it from a distance,[9] through the life of J. B., the modern Job.

J. B., the New England millionaire, the typical product of the secular, sensate, positivist culture, offering an abundant thanks–giving ("We get the earth for nothing/Its given to us gift on gift..../To be, become and end are beautiful") finds himself a victim to the "spinning joke" of life as a series of disasters wreck his familiar world of self-assured success. The Messengers of Darkness enter and re-enter in different disguises to announce the death of all his children, their voices alternating between shock, horror, helplessness, hopelessness:

I only, I alone to tell thee
I who have understood nothing, have known
Nothing, have been answered nothing

The felt reality suddenly turned relative, J. B. throws his elbows up as if to ward off the blows. Sarah whimpers, her tone increasingly fierce: "What had they done to Him-those children....and we....what had we done?" J. B.'s own demands for an answer, Job's demands across the ages, ring out in the empty space: "answer me, answer me." The silence above remains unbroken. Zuss and Nickless, at a distance, stare. Zuss' face is expressionless; Nickles wears a twisted grin. They are one with the masks in their hands, numb, fixed, dead.

Caught in the blind alleys of existence, the mask of habituated self-complacency torn, J. B. tries to escape into another mask, the role of Job; "Shall we take the good and not the evil?....We have to take the chances..../It does not mean there is no good." Having no reflection of Job's faith and self-confidence, the words sound like self-mockery.[10] The mythical role exposes the actor for what he is not. Nickles rages at J. B.'s escapism: "He does not have to act. He suffers/It is an old role played like a mouthorgan." The Messengers ask the ageless unanswered question: "What will it tell you? Will it tell you why?" J. B. tries desperately to cling to the role of Job: "The Lord giveth....the Lord taketh away." The sentence remains unfinished. His will numb. J. B. fails to instill in himself Job's spirit, his Courage to Be, his capacity to affirm in spite of. Zuss, eager to see J. B. in the mythical role, cries out: "Why won't he play the part he is playing?" Nickles, closer to J. B.'s confused, paralysed sensibility has a better understanding of the situation: "He's not playing/He is'nt in the play at all/He's where we all are-in our suffering."

There seems to be no exit. J. B. can neither identify himself with Job's role, nor can discard it. His children dead, millions gone, himself in rags, torn with grief, he increasingly feels uncertain and lost: "I do not know why God should strike..../Do not let my hand go, Sarah."[11] The next moment he shouts the given affirmation: "Blessed be the name of the Lord." The words deepen his torture. The Distant Voice rings out once again: "Hast thou considereth my servant Job/....a perfect and an upright man/....he holdeth fast his integrity." J. B. never bears the Voice. Zuss and Nickles, startled, search the dark. It is a fake search:

Nickles : Who said that?
Mr. Zuss : He was asking you
Nickles : Who was?
Mr. Zuss : He was
Nickles : Prompter probably

When Beckett's Pozzo asks "who is Godot?" Vladimir replies "Oh he's a....kind of acquaintance" and Estragon adds "Nothing of the kind, we hardly know him."[12] The lucidity of the mind gone, today's non-heroes wear their inner masks of denial and negativity as a self-chosen bondage.

Unable to bear her anguish and J. B.'s self-righteous escapistic passivity, Sarah leaves. Alone, struggling against the surging meaning-lessness, J. B. wishes to accept the responsibility of the disasters of his life. Guilt, he feels, is the only rationale in an unfathomable existence: "I've no choice but to be guilty..../Unless guilt matters the whole world is/ Meaningless, God too is nothing." When the mythical Adam accepted the responsibility of the fall, he invited all the punishments upon himself, so that Eve might be spared. In his compassion for Eve he transcended his egocentricity, his inner mask. The reponsibility was a mark of his widening consciouseness. A prisoner to his inelastic ego, J. B. never opens up in his mind to include the other.[13] When Bildad, the Materialist and Eliphaz, the psychologist try to disillusion him ("Guilt is a sociological accident"...."Guilt is a psychological situation/An illusion, a disease"), J. B. explodes:

I'd rather suffer
Every unspeakable suffering God sends,
Knowing it was I that suffered
I that earned the need to suffer
I that acted, I that chose

Neither freedom, nor distinction, J. B.'s frenzied assertion of the existential 'I' reflects his inner hollowness. For J. B. responsibility is evidently another shelter or mask to escape the void. The mask ill-fits him. Aware of it, J. B. craves the more for an identity as a sinner: "Teach me my sin: My wickednes Till I die I will not violate my integrity." Zophar unmasks him: "What integrity have you?/A man, a miserable mortal..../Man's heart is evil, man's will is evil." Denied an identity as a sinner, Ibsen's folk-hero Peer Gynt looked back at his own chequered life, the varied roles he played and realised that the roles, the layers of his being, were the illusions of identity. At the core he was a nobody. The egoless self was his

real self.[14] Unable and unwilling to be a witness to his own self and life, J. B. never attains Peer's vision. The masks of his varying attitudes falling off, he shudders.

Bewildered, terrified, self-piteous[15] (J. B. hardly cries against himself), J. B. repeats Job's words : "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." The Whirlwind never speaks. Unanswered, unredeemed,[16] undisciplined as at the beginning, J. B. abhors himself while he emptily voices Job's affirmation : "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear/But now mine eye seeth thee." An unending gloom envelops his mind.[17] Zuss and Nickless tear off their masks.

Mr. Zuss : I'm sick of it....
Sick to death.
I'd rather sell balloons to children....
Nickles : We never chose the lives we die of....
But God, if we have suffered patiently....
....gives our dirty selves back....
It can't be borne twice over. Can't be!

Their inner masks of disgust and despair remain, the inescapable self-imprisonments. All the three actors feel, in contradiction to the mythical roles they play, that the nothingness is everlasting; the sky is empty.

Then the miracle happens. Sarah returns, a changed person. Merged in and standing up to her dark experiences, she has realised the fundamental value of life, its relatedness.

Look Job, the forsythia....
The first few leaves....
I found it growing in the ashes
Gold as though it did not know

Her voice is delicate. All passion spent, she has overcome her confused, frightened, raging, despairing mind, the masks of her non-being. The inner drama has reached its finality unobserved. At a distance from herself and her experiences, Sarah now knows that to look up into the Unknown and to demand for an explanation is to invite suffering: "Cry for justice, and the stars will stare till your eyes sting..../Cry for your lost children..../ Snow will fall....snow will fall." That which sustains life is the acceptance and love of it: "In doubt, in dread,/The dark behind it....and still live and still love." To live through all is to know and to know is to Be. The wisdom is old.

Sarah's affirmation, arising out of her agony, has a magical impact on J. B. He shuns his most ingrained mask, his will not-to-Be and joins her in resetttng their shattered lives: "We'll see where we are..../Blow on the coal of the heart and we'll know."[18] Zuss and Nickles, the embodiments of uncertainty and negativity are long departed. The rold of Job is forgotten. Broken-unbroken as Sarah and J. B. seek their self-image and the meaning of life in the relatedeness with the Other and the earth, their consciousness is illumined.[19] Their unmasked drama of existence begins as the curtain falls.

IV

J. B.'s final unmasking and the leap to affirmation are dramatically unconvincing. His sensibility lacks preparation for the transformation that comes over him. The mythical role he adopted but failed to be identified with and the psychic masks he wore and never had the courage to discard, tossed him in the circus of life, increased his suffering, made him the more uncertain and weak instead of promoting his capacity to view the self and existence in a larger perspective. For Zuss and Nickles too the masks, both mythical and psychic were dramatically ineffective. Refusing to accept the mythical masks in their traditional spirit, and clinging to their inner masks of hopelessness and denial as the instruments for withdrawal from life, Zuss and Nickles could neither awake to a larger consciouseness, nor participate in life, nor be the witnesses of it. Their game in masks is lost in the spiritual crisis.

The failure of the actors both to move into the archetypal masks and to move out of the psychic, ensures the need for these. The masked drama, both old and new, is a drama of Becoming. Whether it is Becoming through identification with the archetype or Becoming through unmasking (not this, not that, that I am not, that the ego exists not) the process is similar. From the narrow self, to the not-self to the larger identity, the sensibility is disciplined if the wearer of the masks has the lucidity of the mind, the courage to plunge, discard, absorb and expand. The drama of Becoming presupposes an involvement in life, which includes pleasure and pain, the abyss of nothingness and the Voice of affirmation. The self that realises itself and the truth of life is the self masked unmasked. It is in the world but not of it, a lover of life as well as its pilgrim. *J. B.*, the modern non-modern masked play, confirms the age old wisdom.

NOTES

1. A thorough discussion by Mircea Eliade in his article on Masks, *Encyclopedia of World Art*, (MaGrow Hill Book Company, 1958) VOL IX.

2. "Memoranda On Masks", *American Spectator* (November, 1932), 3.

3. "Life is a continuous changing thing....everything vague, indefinite insubstantial.... a labyrinth where the soul wanders through countless conflicting images without finding a way out," sighs Pirandello's Diego (*Each in His Own Way*). "I don't know who I am. I don't know" screams MacLeish' Helen (*Music Crept By Me Upon the Waters*).

4. "Why am I afraid to live, I who love life?....Why was I born without a skin, O God, that I must wear armour in order to touch or to be touched?" cries O'Neill's Dion Anthony (*The Great God Brown*) struggling to outgrow his masks, "the fixed forcings" of his nature.

5. "The Art of Poetry" Benjamin Demott, *The Paris Review*, No. 58, (Summer, 1974), 73.

6. The universe....
   Atomic....
   Overflow;
   Sweep over into movement and dissolve.
   All differences in the indifferent flux.

   "Einstein"

   There with the vast wings across the cancelled skies
   There in the sudden blackness the black pall
   Of nothing, nothing, nothing—nothing at all.

   "The End of the World"

7. "Metaphor", *Poetry and Experience*, Archibald MacLeish, (Penguin, 1960), 159.

8. The modern sensibility cannot evergrow the mask of immediacy. As says MacLeish' Elizabeth (*Music Crept By Me Upon the Waters*): "Now, not late, not soon, but now/ They cannot lose now. They live there.

9. In the medieval plays the overviewers were the archetypes. In the earlier Greek plays, the chorus represented everyday wisdom. In the modern play, the overviewers are the embodiments of uncertainty and nonwisdom.

10. J. B.'s pose of piety has invited sharp criticism. Ref. John Chiardi, "J. B. Revisited", *Saturday Review*, Jan. 30, 1960 and Tom Driver "Notable Regretable," *Christian Century*, Jan. 7, 1959.

11. Some critics react against J. B.'s "insensibility" to the catastrophy (Ref. Kenneth Tynan, *New Yorker*, XXXIV, Dec. 20, 1958). J. B.'s dilemma is not his insensitiveness, (he is too sensitive) but his lack of courage to encounter reality in its own terms.

12. Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, (Faber and Faber).

13. In an interview MacLeish himself said, "You learn life by living it....You live it with and by people—yourself in your relation with people....with living things....You have to live relations to know." Quoted from Benjamin Demott, *The Paris Review*, 1974.

14. O'Neill's Cybel (*The Great God Brown*) has a similar realisation. When Brown, who is both Dion and Brown and neither dies and the Officer asks, "Well, what's his name?" Cybel replies: "Man." The not-self is the real self.

15. Finding that God does not destroy him for killing Abele, MacLeish' Cain (*Nobodaddy*) too has his existentialist freedom ("I am the man, Cain, who would never bow his head") crushed. He too runs blindly and in vain to get away from the resultant enveloping nothingness.

16. In MacLeish' *Nobodaddy*, while Adam cries in vain for an answer: "Will you not answer me? Can you not hear my voice with your silence?" Eve knows the reason: "Or it is we that cannot hear."

17. "When we drown in self-pity we throw ourselves on ourselves and go down," MacLeish on *Emily Dickinson's Poems, Poetry and Experience*, 97.

18. "It takes a kind of courage..../The courage to be–to trust/The wind that blows you" says MacLeish' Oliver (*Music Crept By Me Upon the Walters*).

19. Commenting on the ending MacLeish said, "only man, by his persistence can overcome Satan, the kingdom of death, and love God, the kingdom of life....It is in man's love that life is beautiful, in man's love that the world's injustice is dissolved," "The Men Behind *J. B.*," *Theatre Arts*, XLIII, April, 1959, 61–62.

THE SECOND CONVERSION

Like a man behind an opaque glass
When I look into my ghostly figure
Living on the margins of society
I feel the roots in me
of the unmoving Himalayas,
The ever moving Ganges,
The seas, the forests, the sands
And the roll of Vedic hymns
In my ancient being
Yet I am made to feel as dust
That never settled anywhere
In the land.

Like realities receeding at dusk
When I look out of my fading figure
I sense the fragrance of earth
After the first rains,
The look of spring,
In the rainbow colours,
The verve of Holi, the ring of Dassera
And the light of Diwali
In the inner fibres of my being
Yet I am made to believe
That though I may belong to this land
I don't belong to its people.

What other Gods have I worshipped ?
What customs differed ?
Yet what man had ordained
God could never change
So I have changed my God.

Cont. on page 86

LIVE LIKE PIGS : John Arden's Comedy in the Aristophanic mode

Pankaj Khanna

John Arden (b. 1930) is one of the most prolific contemporary British dramatists with a sustained career almost simultaneous with those of John Osborne and Harold Pinter. But unlike these two he has not found much favour with the critics or much success in the professional theatre. This, however, is not because he is in any way a lesser playwright. The reason why he still remains a sort of "enigma" to critics in general is that Arden has been overly interested in experimentation and innovation. In play after play he keeps experimenting with different subjects, forms, traditions and theatrical devices so that it becomes difficult to categorize his plays as belonging to any one particular type or trend. However, despite his varied experiments there is a certain consistency of theme and form in the plays. Paradoxically, Arden is also one of the few modern playwrights who work with a keen sense of tradition behind them, and the tradition Arden most consistently conforms to is the tradition of comedy.

People have noticed Arden's use of certain devices of comedy like Jonsonian humours, and features of commedia dell' arte, pantomime, music hall, etc., but hardly any attempt has been made to see his plays as comedies proper. This paper examines one of Arden's early plays, *Live Like Pigs* (1958), as a comedy written in an almost Aristophanic mode. Though among his early plays it is *Serjeant Musgrave's Dance* that has been appreciated the most, the play which has brought Arden recognition; yet *Live Like Pigs* too deserves more attention than it has received. In this play Arden effectively demonstrates his talent and skill in creating a vital dramatic form while using an ancient tradition; this play also sets up, or rather reveals, certain patterns of theme and design which Arden employsquite consistently in his later plays.

Arden's interest in the theatre of Aristophanes and the significance that he attaches to it are revealed in his various statements on dramatic art. In an interview published in *Peace News* in 1963 he observes: "one of the prime

functions of the theatre since the earliest time, Aristophanes and beyond, has been to inflame people's lusts—in something like the way tragedies produced a purgation of the spirit." He states that a scene should "be able to be nice and sexy, and at the same time make a serious point in the play."[1] This is what Aristophanes' theatre used to do and this is what Arden himself aims at doing.

In the Preface to *The Workhouse Donkey* (1964) Arden delineates the essential elements of comedy:

> the theatre must be catholic. But it never will be catholic if we do not grant pride of place to the old essential attributes of Dionysus:
>
> noise
> disorder
> drunkenness
> lasciviousness
> nudity
> generosity
> corruption
> fertility
> and
> ease.
>
> The Comic Theatre was formed expressly to celebrate them.[2]

The theatre of Aristophanes, that earliest great master of comedy, was the richest in the celebration of these essential attributes of Dionysus—be it *Peace*, *Birds* or *Lysistrata*, to mention only a few of them. His comedies are full of sex, drunkenness and wantonness; are wild, vulgar, vigorous and hilarious, and celebrate the irrational in man—be it in the form of sexual extravagance or the fantastic flights that the characters make to the upper and lower worlds. Arden also gives predominance to the "essential attributes of Dionysus" which appear in varied forms in his plays: in the form of an abundance of drinking, dancing and singing on the stage which creates an exuberant atmosphere appropriate for comedy. The celebration of the Dionysian is also significantly present in the exuberant, indomitable characters who remain at the centre of his plays.

Of Arden's plays *Live Like Pigs* is perhaps the most richly Dionysian in spirit and nearest to Aristophanes in its exuberance, vigour, wildness, hilarity, vulgarity, joy and celebration. Like Aristophanes' comedies this play is placed

in the immediate society, and in dealing with a contemporary problem the play gives occasion to an almost "anachronistic celebration of unconditioned man."[3]

The play builds on an attempt of the Housing Department to put into a Council house a gipsy family, the Sawneys, who had been earlier living in a broken tramcar on the caravan site. The Sawneys whom Arden describes as "the direct descendants of the 'sutrdy beggars' of the sixteenth century"[4] live a primitive kind of life which comes in direct conflict with the civilized middle class people, represented by their neighbours, the Jacksons. The Sawneys, with their gipsy ways, keep on taxing the tolerance and rousing the anger of their neighbours till an angry crowd attacks the Sawneys. However, the Sawneys are *very timely saved* by the intervention of the Police. But the Police and the Official from the Housing Department also have to ask the Sawneys to vacate the house because of other complaints. The Sawneys who are none too happy in their new abode get their freedom back, and the order of society which is threatened by their presence is preserved—a happy end for all, a resolution typical of comic plots.

The play deals with a social problem–the attempt to improve the lot of the wild, uncivilized half-gipsies, and the difficulty of bringing them into harmony with the socially civilized classes, but it is not a simple commentary on contemporary society or the Council Estate. It is concerned with a larger problem–the problem of freedom and order, of individual and society, of the irrational and the rational, and of bringing these contrarieties into mutual harmony. The theme is worked out through social interaction of various groups of characters, as is characteristic of Arden, or of comedy for that matter. In this play the conflict between the irrational, vital, anarchic impulses in man and the restricting rational order imposed on individual impulses by the society takes the form of conflict between the Sawneys and the Jacksons. The Sawneys are the living embodiments of the Dionysian, irrational aspact of man and the Jacksons represent the orderly, rational, restricting social order.

In the conflict between the two forces though the Sawneys are routed in the end, it is the Sawneys that dominate the scene with their sheer love of life, vigour and gusto, and keep it ringing with an almost Aristophanic celebration of Dionysus. Arden's brief notes on the characters of the play

show the Sawneys to be characters of vigour and vitality, lust and life. Sailor is "a strong broad-shouldered old tyrant of seventy." Rachel is "a tall handsome termagant aged about forty," having "very long hair worn loose and an alarming tigerish laugh." Col "is much given to uncouth noises to supplement his speech, and has swift and violent mannerisms." Blackmouth is "lean and sexy....both insolent and obsequious." Daffodil possesses "a sly juvenile lechery" and the little ten-year old girl Sally has "a great capacity for loud excitement" (p. 103). Violent, noisy, quarrelsome, merry, drinking, dancing, singing, shouting, howling' laughing, together they create scene after scene of immense vitality. The record that is played is "Cigareets and whisky and wild wild women—" (p. 115) with Sally and Col "beating time wildly" (p. 115). Col later dances to the music "in a very strange barbarous fashion, flinging out his legs and arms and whooping" (p. 118). Blackmouth keeps howling like a dog outside in the dark while "Sally and Croaker dance in the hall to the music" p. 149).

The Sawneys living like "pigs" give the impression of life being lived to the brim, even overflowing. The family next door lives like a "cow" (p. 113)—refined, restrained, civilized. "What kind of way to live is that?" (p. 162) is the question which both the families, bewildered, ask about each other. In keeping with his Characteristic way, Arden provides no conclusive answer. Though the play is saved from a catastrophic ending by the timely intervention of the Police, and though peace is restored, yet, as in satiric comedies, the surviving social order is not better in any way. If the Sawneys are bad, the victorious Jacksons are probably worse, with their hypocrisy, and the violence which can be even more destructive, once unleashed.

Unlike most of Arden's other plays, in *Live Like Pigs* sexuality is at the centre of the play. It is in their attitude towards sex that Arden demonstrates the different ways of life of the Sawneys and the Jacksons. Some of the boisterous scenes are built on sexual spisodes, for example, scene Four where Rachel and Sailor wrestle passionately, "biting one another and howling in their throats" (p. 122), and later on, scene Twelve that ends in the Sailor and Rachel singing together "Poor old horse, poor old horse" (p. 158). More comic scenes are also built on sex-episodes, for example, scenes Seven and Eight that depict Jackson running out in outrage and Rachel laughing. Finally the climax of this conflict between the two families which results in the siege of the Sawneys comes with Mrs. Jackson coming to know of her husband's visit to Rachel.

The songs in the play also give expression to the celebration of animal life and some of them have an Aristophanic ring :

> You angry man, you rage away
> Against the women's game
> But you served them your best part of you
> Without a wink of shame. (p. 159)

Daffodil sings in scene Fourteen :

> Up and down the road we go
> He comes fast and she comes slow
> Slowly slowly wait for me—
> Oh—I'm so blind that I can't see
>
> What can't you see?
> Twenty fingers holding tight
> Twenty toes in the middle of the night
> Four lips. Four eyes. Four ears.
> And all the rest as goes
> ....With his long red nose. (p. 171)

This scene ends also in a frantic community action—reminiscent of Aristophanic comedy but in an inverted way, since the action is not associated with a fertility ritual but is an image of destruction—when all the Sawneys start "tearing the washing up and shouting : 'We've got the washing.' Up and down the house they dance throwing the washing all round and over each other." (p. 171).

The Sailor sings of "the mermaid girls" "With golden hair and scaly tails/And eyes of bright green" (p. 110) who used to call on him when he was a strong young man. Rosie describes his virile days of youth with a certain amount of pride :

> My mam, when she wor living, he'd be out on a job, wind a crane, dig drains, heaving barrels, what you like, all day he'd be at it ; then into the boozer till closing—likely fight a pair o'men into canal dock, knock a copper over after—than home like a traction engine and revel her three times down to Rio without he'd even take off his boots. (p. 111)

This towering figure among these half-gipsies whom Arden describes as "the most barbarous yet least savage of the group" (p. 103) is a man of

some reason. When the tension is mounting it is the Sailor who gives the crucial advice: "Live and let live, I say" (p. 178).

"Live and let live" is a significant utterance. Arden celebrates the vital, passionate, unrestrained way of life of the Sawneys but they have to be turned out when their living poses a threat to others' security and peace. But, again, those who are allowed to live after on the Estate are in no way better human beings. Arden himself says in the Introductory Note: "I approve outright neither of the Sawneys nor of the Jacksons" (p. 101). Yet it would be wrong to maintain with John Russell Taylor that "you never know where he stands in the play."[5] Though it is true that Arden neither gives clear-cut solutions to the problems posed in the play nor clearly identifies himself with any of the characters; yet one can tell in most of his plays where his heart lies. He never paints his characters in whites and blacks, heroes and villains, and yet some of his characters remain more likeable than others.

The Sawneys, in spite of all their faults—violent, dirty, noisy, stealing—remain likeable because of their sheer love of life, their vitality, their openness and their lack of hypocrisy. In their vigour and zest for life they even look larger than life. The Jacksons look pale, dull and lifeless in comparision. Moreover, beneath their restrained, kindly manners these so-called civilized, decent people can be even more violent, ferocious and inhuman. Once the garb of reason and decency goes off the "domesticated animals"[6] they are equally wild roaring in the "throat like a bull," and give out sounds of "yelping....as of hounds worrying" (p. 175).

Certain elements in the Sawneys make them look very human and help them win our sympathy. In the lustful, animal, and disorderly world of the Sawneys there is Rosie, always holding the baby, looking after him. She is present throughout as a mother—image-loving, responsible, giving security to her children, and amidst all danger singing a lullaby to her child: "Sleep, O sleepy babby, now...." (p. 183). This lullaby does not have a "chiefly decorative" effect as Andrew Kennedy suggests.[7] It has a definite dramatic significance. Placed between the two scenes of mass violence this lullaby evokes feelings of spmpathy and tenderness for the mother and the child, and for the Sawneys in general. Rosie makes and sells clothes—pegs to earn money; she does not steal like others; nor does she

indulge in promiscuous sex. Regarding the letters they get from the Council Rosie says:

> They send these words at us under the door all the time. It's not right. What can *we* do when we get them? They put us, it's like a dog in a box, you can stick spikes through every corner at him and he's no place to turn at all. (p. 165)

These words become particularly effective when uttered by Rosie, and convey the helplessness of the Sawneys who are placed in a wrong environment, and who were never evil or wicked.

Arden does celebrate the Dionysian urges in man which need to be given expression but he is not for anarchic release of these energies. Some sort of order has to be imposed on anarchic individual energies to preserve the society from destruction. It is not only the Sawneys' anarchy that is to be checked. The Jacksons and other neighbours are also to be checked in their frenzy by the Police, who intervene to maintain peace and other. It is also significant to note that the representatives of order, the Official and the Serjeant, are no villains but very reasonable, tolerant and sympathetic persons. In fact, Arden sees life in its totality, in its complexity. The contradictions and paradoxes that are present in life occupy Arden and he structures his play on an interaction and reconciliation of a number of contrarieties such as reason and passion, order and anarchy—reflected in his contracters, in such contradictory images as a lullaby and a roaring mob, a ragtime tune and broken windows, and so on. It is significant that Aristophanes' comedy is also structured as a paradox of opposites such as the comic and the serious, satire and celebration, rebellion and order, fantasy and realism.

In the Introductory Note to the play Arden says that he is "more concerned with the 'poetic' than the 'journalistic' structure of the play" (p. 101) As such, he presents the play as an image of pulsating life with all its dualities and complexities rather than as a naturalistic presentation of the social scene. He creates the poetic structure by a number of devices, which also provide comic distancing; for example, the use of ballad-like songs which not only serve as introductory statements to different scenes but also bring in glimpses of the distant romantic world of ballads-of the sea and the mermaids-in the immediate world. The poetic structure of the play also builds on "a series of music-hall sketches."[8]

PANKAJ KHANNA

Another thing that Arden specifically mentions is that "The play is in large part meant to be funny" (p. 101). Arden enhances the comic effect by quickening the pace of action and by presenting his characters in a comic light, particularly Jackson in scenes Seven and Eight. He enters quite boisterous but suddenly gets alarmed and apprehensive, looks petty, and runs out like an idiot while Rachel keeps laughing unabashed. In scene Thirteen he looks like a ridiculous fool inflating and deflating in turns, threatening the Sawneys but terrified and frantic that he may not be exposed before his wife. Scenes like this, rich in dramatic irony, are particularly hilarious. All along in the play the scenes of trouble and confiict are interspersed with noise, sex and laughter.

The play is structured in seventeen scenes and each scene is introduced with a song in a rather Brechtian style. The feeling of suspense is checked by the songs announcing the action or the theme of each scene before hand, yet this does not have a disjointing effect on the play. The play has a well organised plot with a profuse variety of episodes, and a quick pace of action almost in the Aristophanic vein. The tension mounts effectively, beginning in little clashes and culminating in the tearing of washing and Mrs. Jackson's coming to know of Jackson's sex-encounter with Rachel. The climax is superbly conceived with the towering, unabashed, giant-like figures suddenly cowering down, huddled together in fear, and the erstwhile tame "cows" turning into "leopards" (p. 177) attacking the house and howling in a wild frenzy.

One of Arden's most hilarious comedies, *Live Like Pigs* reveals some of the patterns which Arden follows quite consistently in most of his plays. The theme of order and anarchy, the rational and the irrational, individual and society, is recurrent in most of his plays, as a major strain or as a minor one. As in *Live Like Pigs*, he usually picks up contemporary social problems and focuses on the interaction of groups of characters who are individuals only in part and are largely representatives of particular traits, as is characteristic of comedy in general. Just as he does not approve outright of the Sawneys or the Jacksons he does not approve categorically of any of his characters; nor does he identify himself with any character. In the *Peace News* interview he said:

> I think you can identify with any character at any given moment of the play. I never write a scene so that the audience can identify with any particular character. I try and write the scene truthfully from the point of view of each individual character.[9]

This technique also gives a multiple focus to the play which is usually found in comedies. Arden gives a comic treatment to serious themes and all his plays are meant to be "funny". Not only in *Live Like Pigs* but in all his plays he is more concerned with the poetic structure of the play rather than with simply producing a realistic social drama in the "journalistic" style. In the article "Telling a True Tale" Arden says:

> What I am deeply concerned with is the problem of translating the concrete life of today in terms of poetry that shall at the one time both illustrate that life and set it within the historical and legendary tradition of our culture.[10]

NOTES

1. John Arden, "A Theatre of Sexuality and Poetry." an interview reported in *Peace News* 30 August 1963, quoted in *The Playwrights Speak*, ed. Walter Waler (1967; London: Longmans, Green & Co. 1969), p. 192.
2. John Arden, *The Workhouse Donkey* (London: Methuen, 1964), pp. 8-9.
3. Robert Brustein, "Two Plays about Ireland: *Richard's Cork Leg* and *The Ballygombeen Bequest*," in *The Culture Watch: Essays on Theatre and Society, 1969-1974* (New York: Alfred K. Knopf, 1975(, p. 55. Brustein says these words about *Richard's Cork Leg*.
4. Introductory Note to *Live Like Pigs*, in *Three Plays: The Waters of Babylon, Live Like Pigs, The Happy Haven*, introduced by John Russell Taylor (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1967, p. 101. All subsequent references to the play are to this edition.
5. John Russell Taylor, Introduction to Arden, *Three Plays*, p. 10.
6. Paul W. Day, "Individual and Society in the Early Plays of John Arden," *Modern Drama*, 18 (1975), 240.
7. Andrew Kennedy, *Six Dramatists in Search of a Language: Studies in Dramatic Language: Shaw, Eliot, Beckett, Pinter, Osborne, Arden* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1975), p. 219.
8. Albert Hunt, *Arden: A Study of his Plays* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1974), p. 49. The point is well illustrated by Hunt on pp. 48-51.
9. Quoted in Hunt, *Arden*, p. 25.
10. John Arden, "Telling a True Tale," *Encore* 7, No. 3 (May-June 1960), rpt. in *Drama Criticism: Developments since Ibsen* (Casebook), ed. Arnold p. Hinchliffe (London: Macmillan, 1979), p. 212.

Not repentence but hurt
That I have escaped their tyranny
The impotent custodians of religion
Now want me to return to their fold.
With their God given up
To what humanity may I return :
It's not I who needs a second conversion
but those, who held it as virtue
never to change.

Though a cave unvisited, a well unused
I don't suffer from any castration anxiety
Nor any angst of loss
The dust atlast having turned
into a stone.
So much of indignity
And insult suffered
That there is nothing left
At the funeral
To mourn.

O. P. Bhatnagar

THE SWORD OF HONOUR

B. K. Sinha

"The Sword of Honour," popularly known as Evelyn Waugh's Army Triology and consisting of the three volumes, e. g. *Men at Arms*; *Officers* and *Gentlemen*; *and Unconditional Surrender*, may well be looked upon as a major achievement. It is a work that bears the stamp of Waugh's creative imagination assuming a concrete shape in the form of the three volumes of novel gaining in depth and insight—thanks to the three dimensional growth of his artistic career.

Written in a lucid and clear language, the work presents a convincing portrait of the Second World War that shook the very foundation of world morality and religion. While going through the three volumes one by one in sequence, the reader cannot but feel impressed by the kaleidoscopic vision of the author who stands as a true witness to the events and circumstances of the period of great historic importance.

In order to appreciate critically all the three volumes as a representative work of modern fiction, a profound insight into the meaning and depth of the trilogy by virtue of its being a record of the Second World War should seem essential. Moreover, the work deserves to be evaluated from the technical vew-point of fiction as an art form of no small significance.

One thing that strikes the mind of a reader at the outset is the underlying unity of the theme which might very conveniently be termed as the impact of the Second World War on the social, political, moral, intellectual and literary sensibility of the time. It is the recurrence of the same theme throughout the trilogy that principally draws the attention of the common reader. All the three volumes form an integral part of the trilogy deserving as such to be read and understood as a whole rather than as a part.

Men at Arms is the beginning, *Officers and Gentlemen* the middle and, *Unconditional Surrender* the end of the trilogy—a set-up that would easily satisfy one searching for an Aristotelian unity in a modern novel.

Waugh writes these novels in a mock-heroic style just because of the fact that the present age of arms and the man is quite unlike the past noted for the heroic exploits in the true sense of the term. It is Guy Crouchback, the principal character of the trilogy, who becomes the focus of his consciousness from the beginning to the end. It is through him that he finds himself in a position to explore the myth of the modern age in arms. The trilogy starts in almost the same epic grandeur as we do usually find epics to be opening with an invocation to gods and goddesses in consonance of the gravity and dignity of the theme and purpose. Evelyn Waugh, it appears, has to adopt this device intentionally, keeping in view the sudden breakdown in morals and manners of the people living in the modern age as a result of the two world wars. Waugh seems to be giving a false impression to his reader at the beginning about his aim to write an epic by the high altitude of his style and the ennobling theme, but he does not intend to keep him in a veil of illusion for a long time. He makes him encounter the realities of modern warfare which appear to be giving a lip service only to the code of conduct and the so-called morality observed by a man in the military field. It is Guy Crouchback as the *deus ex machina* who serves the artistic purpose of Waugh in achieving this aim throughout the trilogy; his varied portraits at varied circumstances owing to the tumultuous change brought about by the war illustrate, in full, the tragic fate of an innocent man enmeshed in the world of to-day. Being the protagonist of the trilogy, Guy Crouchback starts his career as a soldier with great zeal and ardour, invoking the blessings of Roger of Waybrooke, a British Knight whose sword serves as a source of divine inspiration to a fighting soldier. This invocation to the sword of Roger of Waybrooke lends a romantic touch to the trilogy enabling Waugh to uphold the grandeur of the epic style. Moreover, allusions to some specific names like St. Dulcina, the Reverend Mother at the Convent Mrs Garry at the Villa Datura, etc., associated with heroic virtues, give an illusion of epic grandeur. The following pasage, for instance, from *Men at Arms*, starting with St. Dulcina, titular patroness of the town and Roger of waybrooke, may be quoted here in this context :

> St. Dulcina, titular patroness of the town, was reputedly a victim of Diocletian. Her effigy in wax lay langourously in a glass case under the high altar. Her bones, brought from the Greek islands by a medieval raiding party, lay in their rich casket in the sacristy safe. Once a year they were carried shoulder high through the streets amid showers of fire works, but except on her feast day she was not

> much regarded in the town to which she had given her name. Her place as benefactor had been usurped by another figure whose tomb was always littered with screws of paper bearing petitions, whose fingers and toes were tied in bows of coloured wool as aides-memoire. He was older than the church, older than anything in it except the bones of St. Dulcina and a pre-Christian thunderbolt which lay concealed in the back of the altar (whose existence in Arciprete always denied). His name, just legible still, was Roger of Waybrooke, Knight, an Englishman, his arms five falcons. His sword and one gauntlet still lay beside him ... but the people of Santa Dulcina delle Rocce, to whom the supernatural order in all its ramifications was ever present and even more lively than the humdrum world about them, adopted Sir Roger and despite all clerical remonstrance canonised him, brought him their troubles and touched his sword for luck, so that its edge was always bright. All his life, but especially in recent years, Guy had felt an especial kinship with el Santo Inglesse'. Now on his last day, he made straight for the tomb and ran his finger, as the fishermen did, along the Knight's sword. 'Sir Roger, pray for me', he said,' 'and for our endangered kingdom.'[1]

The nostalgic touch of the passage quoted above, accompanied with a sublime sense of Roger Waybrooke and St. Dulcina legends is quite enough to prove the epic quality of the trilogy. This device, employed by him in course of writing the trilogy, adds a note of verisimilitude to the three dimensional growth of his fiction. It provides Waugh with a fine setting of the theme and structure of the novel to which he lends the shape of a trilogy.

The three volumes of the trilogy present Guy's portrait in three phases. In the first two volumes, Guy appears to be a 'flat' character, as there is hardly any attempt on his part to undergo a sharp mutation in his approaches and altitudes to the ghastly forces of the modern age which are at variance with the ethical notions of his life. Owing to his sense of pride and prejudice, he gives a smack of his ludicrous character in the context of the present world, but to one's utter surprise he seems to have changed himself in his ethical altitudes to the present age in the third volume of the trilogy. He bids farewell to the qualms of his conscience preventing him from adopting the little Trimmer, an illegitimate child produced by Me Tavish, the

hair-dresser. He is a cross-breed hardly to be accepted by him as a child in the line of his family which has got a glorious heritage of its own in the family history of England. In spite of that, he ultimately adopts him in view of all the differences in this world being theological only in nature. It is his father's letter that gives him enough moral support in confirming his views in this direction. His father had once writen to him: "Quantitative judgements do not apply. If only one soul was saved, that is full compensation for any amount of 'loss of face".[2] It is here that one can easily witness a 'flat' character in Waugh assuming the form of a round character which proves the validity of the theory of dynamism in the evolution of one's character.

The Sword of Honour presents a vivid sketch of character undergoing a curious transformation in the face of the ticklish circumstances brought about by the war. The meat of the book as such, in the words of Christopher Hollis, "is the study of the character of Guy Crouchback".[3] It is the metamorphosis of character against the background of the Second World War that becomes the main theme of the trilogy. Waugh presents the ordeal of Guy against the hostile forces of the modern world where the conventional notions of religion and morality appear to have undergone a revolutionary change in the wake of the war. Guy has to face a severe trial in the face of all this bankruptcy in morals and manners as well, and he goes on watching the goings-on of the world as a stoic without making any comments. Guy is a Catholic, melancholy and dull in sensibility and his actions are the butt of ridicule of a class of soldiers hailing from the lower strata of society. Guy's aristocracy suffers a good deal of ordeal at the hands of the common soldiers wearing the badge of military dignity but paying merely a lip service to it in spirit. It is the exhibition of this artificial sense of valour and strength that after all assumes the core of the theme of this army trilogy. In *Officers and Gentelemen* Waugh presents in the finest possible manner the absurdities of the modern age in arms. The sarcastic presentation of Trimmer, pitchforked into the status of a national hero in contrarst to the pious and innocent character of Guy as a soldier of conventional morality, reduces the military glory to its non-entity. Waugh's satiric art seems to be doubly benefited by the mock-heroic presentation, deriding on the one hand the conventional code of military life, and on the other the modern age in arms based on a foundation of deceit

and guerilla tactics. Waugh draws the character of Guy very adroitly in the following manner:

> Guy had joined the corps in a mood of acute shyness born of conflicting apprehension and exultation. He knew little of military life save from stories he had heard from time to time of the humiliations to which new officers were were liable; of 'Subalterns,' 'court-martial' and gross ceremonies of initiation.[4]

It is this lack of knowledge of the perplexities of modern warfare which makes Guy react in a surprising manner to the goings-on of the Second World War. It is on account of this acid test of his innocence that he becomes the most interesting subject matter of Waugh's study. Waugh appears as a veteran cartoonist who is painting the varied shades of Guy's character *vis-a-vis* Trimmer's whose figure is, in the words of Frederic J. Stopp, "the figure of the people in arms, a development of Hooper in the Brideshead Revisited." Not merely that, "he is the new and ugly reality", adds Fredric J. Stopp "which supplements the old illusion which was Apthorpe, he is the denial of all form, tradition, honour....His very metamorphosis from Trimmer the Cochnery to Gustave the hairdresser, then to Mc. Tavish the major of Argylls, parody the very roles of a Grimes or a Philbrick and the spasmic changes of military life....Heroes are in strong demand, but not such as Guy-the 'upper class' and the 'Fine Flower of the Nation'. 'This is a Peoples's war, says Ian Kilbannock, with cynical flare of the publicity man. We want heroes of the people, to or for the people, by with and from the people. In short they want Trimmer...."[5]

In the aforesaid passage, one gets, an insight into the apocalyptic imagination of Evelyn Waugh. It is thus the political, social and intellectual portrait of the modern generation that Waugh appears to be aiming at chiefly in the army trilogy. In Guy's natural reaction to the Nazi-Soviet pact in *Men at Arms*, Waugh draws the portrait of the unstable character of the age because of the shifting alliances of nations:

> News that shook the politicians and young poets of a dozen capital cities brought deep peace to one English heart. Eight years of shame and loneliness were ended....He lived too close to fascism in Italy to share the opposing enthusiasms of his countrymen. He saw it neither as a calamity nor as a rebirth, as

> a rough improvisation merely....when Prague fell he knew that war was inevitable. He expected his country to go to war in panic, for the wrong reason or for no reason at all, with the wrong allies, in pitiful weakness. But now, splendidly everything had become clear. The enemy at last was plain in view huge and hateful, all disguise cast off. It was the Modern Age in arms. Whatever the outcome there was place for him in that battle'.[6]

In this passage one gets an insight into the mind and art of Evelyn Waugh. Admittedly, the trilogy exposes the meaninglsness and futility of the modern age in arms. It shows the hollowness of modern civilzation as a whole which seems to be based on the foundation of lies and political chicanery. This amounts to a confirmation of the fact that vice has to pay only a lips-ervice to virtue these days. It is just because of this Hollis comments :

> "*Officers and Gentlemen* ends with Guy's depression on hearing of the Nazi invasion of Russia. While others around welcome this on purely apportunist grounds, to Guy it means the end of any possibility of finding meaning in the war with evil, as is now the case, embattled upon both sides.'"[7]

The trilogy thus presents a minute study of Guy's disillusionment, the evidence of which is found in clear-cut terms in his stiff reaction to the ghastly consequences of the war. Let us quote the following passage again for further confirmation in this context :

> It was just such a sunny, breezy Mediterranean day two years before when he read of the Russo-German alliance, when a decade of shame seemed to be ending in light and reason,when the enemy was plain in view, huge and hateful, all disguise cast off, the modern age in arms.
>
> Now that hallucination was dissolved, like the whales and turtles on the voyage from Crete, and he was back after less than two year's pilgrimage in a Holy Land of illusion in the old ambiguous world, where priests werespies and gallant friends proved traitors and his country was led blundering into dishonour.[8]

Keeping both the passages side by side, one could easily understand the agony of his soul during the Second World War.

Unconditional Surrender, the third volume of the trilogy, is the conclusion of Waugh's previous two volumes, *Men at Arms* and *Officers and Gentlemen*. In this volume Waugh appears to believe like Guy "that the just cause of going to war has been forfeited in the Russian alliance. Personal honour alone remanis." It is however in the words of a Jewish woman that Waugh seems to give vent to his thoughts:

> It is too simple to say that only the Nazis wanted war. These communists wanted it too. It was the only way in which they could come to power....It seems to me there was a will to war, a death-wish everywherer. Even good men thought their private honour would be satisfied by war. They could assert their manhood by killing and being killed.[10]

Unconditional Surrender as such may be looked upon as a fine sequel to the preceding volumes, *Men at Arms* and *Officers and Gentlemen*. Evelyn Waugh himself realises the importance of this volume quite candidly when he writes: "I knew that a third volume was needed. I did not then feel confident that I was able to produce it. Here it is."

Unconditional Surrender, thus, gives an introspective report of a man who is not in a mood to surrender himself to the challenging forces of modern generation in spite of his feelings having been injured by them. He seems to have taken his last refuge in Catholicism in view of an almost total disintegration of social, political, moral and intellectual values all around. He seems to have made a final discovery of his self and taken the ultimate decision to embrace the Catholic church. To quote Christopher Hollis:

> It leaves us with a picture of the world in which one institution alone—the Catholic church remains in protest against the nihilistic pointlessness of the modern age and of course the Catholic church in the world of Crouchback utters its protest in accents somewhat different from those that have been employed by some spokesmen of the church in this new age of aggior-namento. It is a church in protest against the age, not a church that seeks in any way to accommodate itself to the age.[12]

Even Gabriel Fielding pronounces this topical work 'instructive as a catholic declaration" and adds further that "it was in its way as signal a development in Mr. Waugh's work as was *A Burnt out Case* in Mr. Greene's. Just as I had seen the despair in Greene's novel as a consequence of connivance in the novelists, so I saw the trilogy as the outcome of a most subtle and retrograde romanticism. It seemed full of the medievalism. The Roman Catholic church is forever trying to absorb and forget .... I am in sympathy with its bitter impatience, it seems to be heavy with the dead weight of a spire grown old."[13]

It is, of course, on account of this satiric element in the work that a conscientious reader becomes aware of the underlying thread of Waugh's bitter impatience with the milieu of the time. It is the very set-up of the military organisation that becomes the butt of Evelyn Waugh's satire in the triology. In lending a mythical touch to the character of Virginia Troy Waugh seems to be putting the whole work in a mock-heroic garb. Perhaps Waugh seems to be realising from within that it is the only possible thing that could be written with success these days, paying merely a lip-service to the archaic ideals of heroism and military valour.

The Sword of Honour, known thus as a war-trilogy, mirrors the thoughts and reflections of Waugh's reaction to the war and its aftermath. It is, in the words of Bernard Bergonzi, "an episodic work certainly but it is big enough to accommodate a good deal of material which is rather casually linked together". He, hewever, goes on to say: "Indeed, one of the most semarkable things about *The Sword of Honour* is that, although written by an author of strongly right-wing views, it is one of the most thorough-going satires of military life on record".[14]

But the most candid and fearless observation is that of John St. John, who writes: "Evelyn Waugh's words are a splendid antidote to the glamorised, lying version of 1939-45 that is now the mode. They provide the truest as well as the funniest guide to the war as I know it."[15] *The Sword of Honour*, thus, is a work to be read over and over again and, in spite of being episodic in character, it contains the seeds of a classic in it.

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THE THOUGHT – PORCUPINE

Thoughts are all a porcupine
Seeking a nest
    Sucking scratching
shuffling striking
    gnawing with claws
and poisoned hair
    the walls of my breast
screwing up its ends

    and the porcupine
grows and burs and barks
    and hackles me and myself
round the clock
    though its hands've stopped

    Cannot Poetry come in and
    tame it and make it
    a gentle pet
    with a belt round its neck ?

Subhas Saha

GOLDING'S LORD OF THE FLIES AS AN ALLEGORY OF THE IRRATIONAL

G. Rai

William Golding is one of those writers who are seriously concerned with the basic problems of the contemporary man. *Lord of the Flies* (1954), Golding's first novel, exposes the nature of modern man and his civilization. An allegory of the irrational, it insists on man's inner strength to confront evil which lurks in him despite his civilized appearance.

Golding's critics have studied the novel as an allegory. They point out how the children's story is suggestive of man's degeneration as a result of his fear, greed and lust for power. The behaviour of the children, who cast aside their civilized manners and turn amoral, vicious, chaotic and murderous and eventiually convert the peaceful island into a virtual hell, points to the adult world hurled into a nuclear warfare. John Peter observes:

> The boy's society represents, in embryo, the society of the adult world, their impulses and convictions are those of adults incisively abridged, and the whole narrative is a powerfully ironic commentary on the nature of man, an accusation levelled at us all.[1]

To Anthony Burgess, *Lord of the Flies* is "a book about children which has some of the qualities of a dysopian fable, since it attempts to show how self-defeating are all efforts to build an idyllic and just community."[2]

Comparing the boys on the island with the College Fellows in Snow's *The Masters*, Frederick R. Karl comments:

> When the boys on the island struggle for supremacy, they re-enact a ritual of the adult world, as much as the college Fellows in Snow's *The Masters* work out the ritual of a power struggle in the larger world.[3]

For Mark Kinkead-Weekes and Ian Cregor, there is no essential difference between the island-world and the grown-up one. In both the worlds, order is overthrown and conventional morality is inadequate to check destruction and savagery. They remark:

> The children are revealing the same nature as the grown-ups, only perhaps more startlingly because of their age and their special situation. The child world is only a microcosm of the adult world.[4]

Lord of the Flies, without doubt, is an allegory, telling one thing and meaning another. But it is an allegory of the irrational. It minimises the importance of the unalloyed rationalism which characterises life today and emphasises the element of irrational in human life which is very often ignored.

The novel is critical of the atheistic and technological culture of the contemporary world which is epitomised in the character of Piggy. The allegorical representative of reason and common sense, Piggy is eager to return to the adult society and preserve the meaning of life—"We got to get out of this....Get rescued.. If we don't get home soon we'll be barmy."[5] He combines a moral sense with sharp intellect and is always keen on inventing things "I've been thinking," he said "about a clock. We could make a sundial. We could put a stick in the sand, and then—" (p. 81). It is he who invents the idea of the meeting, giving the shell a social purpose (p. 16). He disagrees about fear. For him, nothing is inexplicable and anything wrong, even in the mind, can be cured. He observes :

> 'What I mean is that I don't agree about this here fear....You'll be talking about ghosts and such things next. We know what goes on and if there's something wrong, there's some one to put it right....No. you have doctors for everything, even the inside of your mind. Life, said Piggy expansively, 'is scientific, that's what it is. In a year or two when the war's over they'll be travelling to Mars and back. I know there isn't no beast—not with claws and all that, I mean, but I know there isn't no fear, either,' (pp. 104-105).

Intoxicated by the triumphs of science, Piggy lacks spiritual awareness. His intelligence makes him totally blind to the secrets of human motivation and his asthma, which is an expression of fear and hate, always appears when he is faced with some thing uncontrollable and incomprehensible. He admits his weakness :

> 'I'm scared of him' said Piggy, 'and that's why I know him. If you're scared of some-one you hate him but you can't stop thinking about him. You kid yourself he's all right really, an' then

> when you see him again; it's, like asthma an' you can't breathe. (p. 116).

The physical deficiencies, asthma and myopia, of Piggy, who comes to stand for rational humanism, seem to express Golding's critique of the modern liberal progressive outlook which attempts to fit everything into some system and believes in the improvement of life through various welfare provisions.

The children's transition from essence to existence, which the novel graphically relates, stresses the element of evil inevitably present in human nature. Anthony Burgess rightly observes, "Neanderthal man approaches a golden dream of innocence; *homo Sapines* comes along to disrupt it built in him, part of his nature; he is led instinctively to worship of Beelzebub."[6] In the beginning, the boys have a pastoral life of friendship, adventure and happiness. Everything is contained within law and rule, the sense of the awful and forbidden is strong. They elect their leader, draw up laws, divide out functions and prerogatives. Even Jack Merridew, who develops into a tyrant and exercises authority in an irresponsible way, behaves sensibly and feels the need of observing rules. He reflects:

> 'I agree with Ralph. We've got to have rules and obey them. After all, we'er not savages. We're English; and the English are best at everything. So we've got to do the right things. (p. 55)

Jack fails to kill a pig at first "because of the enormity of the knife descending and cutting into living flesh; because of the unbearable blood" (p. 41). Similarly, Roger throws stones at Henry but he throws it to miss because "Here, invisible yet strong, was the taboo of the old life. Round the squatting child was the protection of parents and school and policemen and the law. Roger's arm was conditioned by a civilization that knew nothing of him and was in ruins" (p. 78). But restraint is only a taboo or a superstition, not anything inherent. Man's irrationality and urge for destruction are real and enduring. Before very long, the boys divide into two warring factions, the one interested in law and rescue and the other in hunting and breaking up things. Ralph and Jack begin to quarrel: "The two boys faced each other. There was the brilliant world of hunting, tactics fierce exhileration, skill; and there was the world of longing and baffled common sense" (p. 89). Jack and his followers lose all interest in rescue, renounce communal decision and turn away from the standards of civilization, which Ralph and Piggy strive to preserve. Now they are a savage group of outlaws with a costume and a ritual of their own, "pretending to be a tribe,

and putting on war-paint" (p. 183). In course of one of their dance-feasts, Jack is seen sitting amidst his tribe, "painted and garlanded....like an idol" (p. 183). Drunk with tribal excitement, they kill Simon, a frail boy subject to fainting fits, who has a real insight into the problems of their lives. Golding, in an interview with F. Kermode, calls him a "saint," even a "Christ-figure."[7] After Simon's murder, there is complete moral anarchy on the island. Jack and his followers lose all sense of restraint and become a threat to everyone outside their tribe. They murder Piggy and hunt Ralph across the island like the pigs they are habituated to kill. Even Ralph, whose sense of duty saves him, has inclination towards evil at one stage: "Ralph too was fighting to get near, to get a handful of that brown, vulnerable flesh. The desire to squeeze and hurt was over-mastering" (p. 142). In his treatment of evil, Golding comes very close to the Biblical concept of Original Sin. Lucio P. Routolo rightly observes :

> The children's metamorphosis from innocence to bestiality reflects Golding's sense of Biblical sin : like Adam and Eve, they cannot sustain innocence; experience would appear to contribute the motivation for self-destruction.[8]

But instead of hypostatizing Evil or locating it in a dimension of its own, Golding argues that Beelzebub, Lord of the Flies, is Roger and Jack and everyone. The wrong of human conduct arises because evil is a real element in human beings, independent of human environment and circumstances.

The littlun's fear of the beast further emphasises the presence of irrational element in life. Fear, like evil, is innate and has no explicable reason. Soon after their arrival the children develop an irrational suspicion about a predatory beast-"a beastie, a snake-thing"(47). Fear takes on an objective reality with the arrival of the dead airman whom the frightened children mistake for the beast : "On the mountain-top the parachute filled and moved; the figure slid, rose to its feet, spun, awayed down through a vastness of wet air and trod with ungainly feet the top of the high trees; falling, still falling it sank towards the beach and the boys rushed screaming into the darkness." (p. 189). The incomprehensible fear besets the minds of the 'biguns' who grow very anxious to know, for certain, if there is really any beast on the island. Remembering the beastie, the snake, the fire, the talk of fear, Ralph, too, is frightened and feels the need of doing something so as to dispel fear :

> 'We've got to talk about this fear and decide there's nothing in it. I'm frightened myself, sometimes; only that's nonsense: Like

> bogies. Then, when we've decided, we can start again and be careful about things like the fire.' (p. 102)

The children's fear of the beast signifies man's terror of the unknown in himself or his environment. For Jack, as for human imagination in all ages, the forest is a place to hunt in and also a place where one sometimes feels hunted: "There's nothing in it of course. Just a feeling. But you can feel as if you're not hunting, but-being hunted; as if something's behind you all the time in the jungle" (p. 67). Here we are reminded of Saul Bellow's dangling man who thinks that fear lies in man like a clould and "makes an inner climate of darkness."[9] Jack's experience as a hunter tells him that there is no fearsome animal on the island, but it also tells him why the littluns are frightened and have nightmares. It is human nature to be frightened of the world and of life when it is dark and man is by himself. But for Jack, we can put up with being frightened, "fear can't hurt you any more than a dream" (103). Simon a man of intuition whose intellect is not fully developed, very well understands "mankind's essential illness" (111). For him, the beast is not an animal, "may be it's only us" (111). He means to say that life is a sickness unto death. Man fears darkness and solitude because they rob him of the world he builds with his day light sanity and force him to live with his own interior darkness. Though Piggy, for whom there is nothing mysterious or inexplicable, refuses to admit it fear is an inevitable element in human disposition. It may stand out of the reach of human intelligence and may not be fitted into some system, yet it is a part of the basic human condition.

Ralph's faith and courage to struggle against the odds of life is no less irrational than evil and fear. He is really an existential being wrestling with nothingness and death. His confrontation with the painful truths of nothingness plagues him with anxiety and frustration. But he is always conscious of his duty and responsibility for others and insists on keeping the fire, their only hope of attracting the attention of some rescue force. He attempts to ward off terror by social community and provide the security of home against the littlun's nightmares. His desire to forget fills him with an acute feeling of anxiety, "Supposing I got like the others not caring what 'ud become of us?" (173). He is terribly anguished to see the understandable and lawful world slipping away:

> To Ralph, seated, this seemed the breaking-up of sanity. Fear, beasts, no general agreement that the fire was all important: and

> when one tried to get the thing straight the argument sheered off bringing up fresh, unpleasant matter. (p. 110)

Like Beckett's two tramps, though Ralph joins the dance of life and death—"kill the pig: cut his throat: kill the pig: Bash him in:" (142)—he is always hopeful. He repeatedly looks beyond the present—"I said before we'll be rescued sometime. We've just got to wait; that's all" (56). With the loss of his fast friend, Ralph is on his own. Alone and terrifid, he goes on trying to believe that "They're not as bad as that. It was an accident." (227). Desperate, with no time to think, and dreading always "the curtain that might waver in his brain, blacking out the sense of danger, making a simpleton of him" (241), he is still templed to hope that the others "would let him alone; perhaps even make an outlaw of him" (226). Though he still receives Simon's unreasoned prophecy, "you'll get back" (245), he is fully aware that he can no longer rely on their "common sense, their daylight sanity" (227). Moreover, he is conscious of that "indefinable connection between himself and Jack; who therefore would never let him alone; never" (226). Jack can never be free from the Ralph-in-him till Ralph is dead. Ralph's last thought of rescue, the hopeless memory of Simon's groundless faith, is replaced by "a scream of fright and anger and desperation" (p. 245). The cry of the hunters the roar of the fire, the desperate ululation advance like a "jagged fringe of menace" (p. 241). His hide-out bursts into flames and the fire flaps at his right shoulder. Then he is down, "rolling over and over in the warm sand, cronching with arm up to ward off, trying to cry for mercy" (246). Being trapped by inescapable forces and having nowhere to turn, Ralph boldly strives to preserve his solitary freedom against a world bent on his destruction and against his own compulsion to forget that his resistance alone qualifies fatal chaos. His will to survive in the jungle against the advance of Jack's army irrationally transcends both the futility of the social mechanism he is committed to preserve, and the hopelessness of his continued rebellion.

> Here—and his hands touched grass—was a place to be in for the night, not far from the tribe, so that if the horrors of the supernatural emerged one could at least mix with humans for the time being, even if it meant....A stick sharpened at both ends....They had thrown spears and missed; all but one. Perhaps they would miss next time, too (234).

Though "faced by the brute obtuseness of the ocean, the miles of division" (137), he feels 'clamped down,' 'helpless' and 'condemned' and he weeps

"for the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart, and the fall through the air of the true, wise friend called Piggy" (248), it cannot be taken as he defeat. It is rather his courageous defence and personal freedom. Through care and resolve, he attains independence and spiritual stature absorbing in himself the detached values personified in Piggy and Simon. He continues his resistance till the last possible moment when the unidentified adult on the beach fills him with hopeless fear and he proceeds, like Kierkegaard's Abraham, in fear and trembling, to resist new terrors (246). The anxiety of his isolation and the dread darkness and death, which strengthen the resolution necessary to endure 'the stick sharpened at both ends' that Jack's hunters have prepared for him, remind us of Rose, the heroine of Graham Greene's *Brighton Rock*, who gets the "sight a long way off of life going on again"[10] and walks to face "the worst horror of all."[11] the revelation that the phonograph record holds for her. Like Rose, Ralph in the present novel reveals 'the courage of despair', i. e. the courage to affirm oneself despite everything problematic and uncertain. In spite of all nihilism in modern literature, hope and faith springing from the courage of despair, constitute the distinguishing mark of the modern hero. Golding's emphasis on the inner strength which enables Ralph to assert himself in the adverse moments of his life, brings him very close to the Christian existentialists like Kierkegaard, Marcel Bubber and Paul Tillich, who emphasise 'leap of faith' resulting from man's sickness unto death and deprecates dogmatic conformity and ceremonial piety. According to Paul Tillich, for example, faith arises from man's experience of despair. It is not a place where one can live, it is without the safety of words and concepts, it is without a name, a church, a cult, a theology. Faith comprises both itself and the doubt of itself: "Living faith includes the doubt about itself, the courage to take this doubt into itself, and the risk of courage."[12] Golding's hero exemplifies faith as defined by Christian Existentialists.

This brief survey of the novel reveals Golding's dissatisfaction with the objective and conformist demands of scientific rationalism and his leaning towards the force of the irrational. Golding is critical of the modern habit of reducing the whole range of human satisfactions to averages of statistical figures and scientific formulas. The materialistic rationalism which characterises life today, is little short of sophistry. Man has an inner being which is not empirically verifiable. Golding is inclined to believe in the irrational which is inexpressible through verbal symbols and logical propositions. The

rigid disciplines, systems and routines of institutions, aiming at uniformity are inadequate to control human behaviour which eludes all rational definitions. Golding, like his protagonist of *Free Fall*, thinks that "normality is a condition only arbitrarily definable."[13] and "Our decisions are not logical but emotional. We have reason and are irrational."[14] Golding's emphasis on the triple aspects of human nature—spiritual, rational and emotional—bears a resemblance to the three gunas described in the *Bhagvadgita*-Vaikarika or Sattvika when the element of Sattva predominates, Taijasa or Rajasa when that of Rajasa predominates, and Bhutadi or Tamasa when Tama predominates.[15] An excess of any one of these elements in an individual leads to an eccentric behaviour as Simon, Piggy and Jack in whom spirit, reason or passion dominates, bear it out. Ralph comes in the end to represent spiritual and moral virtues thrust upon his inherently bestial nature by Simon, and Piggy. Through the exposure of man's innate irrationality, Golding insists on the need of establishing a proper harmony between spirit, reason and emotion. Instead of appealing to God to right the wrong of man, he stresses the need to understand "the unnameable, unfathomable and invisible darkness that sits at the centre."[16] i. e. man's awareness of the self. An expansion of this awareness can bring about an inward transformation and make human mind orderly.

G. RAI

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MOONLIGHT RHYTHM

Do not know why
I still want to sing
though the voice is choked—
the midnight
sits eye to eye
lip to lip
with the moon
putting away all worries
along with the breeze.

Do not know why
the sky still looks blue
though the night is in fog.
Do not know why
the voice cracks
and clears
and opens
into the eloquent rhythm
of the silent midnight moon.

Subhas Saha

RAJA RAO's 'COMRADE KIRILLOV'

M. K. Naik

The note of comedy which is one of the characteristic features of *The Cat and Shakespeare*, is struck also in *Comrade Kirillov* (1976), but with a difference. In place of the comic extravaganza of *The Cat and Shakespeare* we now have gentle irony exposing the intriguing inconsistencies of human nature. *Comrade Kirillov* shares another common feature with the earlier novel : it too had a first version which underwent substantial changes when the novel appeared, in book-form in 1976. A French translation (by Georges Fradier) had appeared in 1965, but the first version was probably completed during the nineteen fifties, about the same time as *The Serpent and the Rope* or perhaps even earlier. Arthur Gregor, in his introductory note to "The Cat" (1959) mentions that Raja Rao "has finished some new novels",[1] and it may be presumed that the earlier version of *Comrade Kirillov* was one of these. Internal evidence also supports this, by providing some suggestive chronological details. R. the narrator in the novel tells us, "Last year, when I returned from America.. strange, tragic news awaited me. Irene had died in childbirth."[2] The last entry in Irene's diary is on 4 January 1949 (p.119); hence she may be presumed to have died sometime during that year. After his return, the narrator takes her son Kamal to Kanyakumari and carries him on his "Shoulder" (p. 123) to the rock in the sea there. Since Kamal was born in December 1942 (p. 69), he cannot have been more than 7 or 8 at the time of this visit. Putting all this together, one can safely assign the first version of *Comrade Kirillov* to the Nineteen fifties, the revision having been done some years later.

These facts, namely the existence of a shorter earlier version and the exact chronological status of the novel, are important, because most critics of the novel, who have gone merely by the date of its actual publication in book form , have straightway regarded it as Raja Rao's latest work, evidently allowing this mistaken notion to colour their evaluation, whether laudatory or otherwise. Thus, K. K. Sharma finds *Comrade Kirillov* "an improvement upon *The Serpent and the Rope* so far as the treatment of the East-West

theme is concerned."[3] V. V. Badve finds in the novel "an insight into the 'unknown modes of being' ....profounder than in *The Serpent and the Rope*"[4], while D. S. Maini laments the "grievous decline in style, fabulation and rhetoric" in it.[5] In actual fact, *Comrade Kirillov* evidently lacks both the range and scope of *The Serpent and the Rope* and the metaphysical profundity of *The Cat and Shakespeare*, probably because it is in the nature of a spillover of the creative energies which fashioned these two major novels.

A comparison between the two versions of *Comrade Kirillov* is rewarding.[6] The first version, comprising just 85 pages of typescript, runs to only about 19,000 words and thus constitutes roughly 70% of the published version which is approximately 29,000 words long. The additions are of two kinds: the most significant of them all relate to the narrator's Sikh friend S. and his doings. In the original typescript S. remains only a name; he is simply mentioned as 'my friend' by the narrator and figures just once in the early scene where the narrator, accompanied by S. visits Kirillov, and then practically vanishes from the narrative. In the published version, S. has a more important role to play—in fact, as will be shown later, his character illustrates one of the three aspects of the central theme of the novel. None of the entries in Irene's Diary in the novel which describe the transformation in the character of S. and his tragic death (pp. 100-104; 106-100) appears in the typescript. The enhancement of the role of S is of vital thematic import. The minor additions are mostly of an explanatory nature, such as, for instance, the details about the career of the narrator on p. 77. and p. 121 and those about his relationship with Kirillov (p. 28).

The verbal changes from the typescript are decidedly an improvement on the original, some of them actually showing a creative writers critical faculty brilliantly at work. Perhaps the best example of this is the phrase describing the Indian bullock: "its bones speaking of the *Chemistry of death*" (p. 10). In the typescript this appears very colourlessly as "its bones speaking of the actuality of death" (p. 3; italics mine, in both the cases). Similarly, Kirillovs "ancient and enigmatic face" (p. 7) which, one feels, is a very apt description of the man, was curiously enough in the original a rather pointless "precocious, plucked at face" (p. 1). The last sentence in the typescript reads"....we heard the leaping adoration of the ninth moon *sea*" (p. 85); the change from 'sea' to 'ocean' in the printed text (p. 127) is euphonically a distinct improvement.

Both the name of the protagonist and the epigraph to the novel are drawn from Dostoevsky's *The Possessed*. Raja Rao's admiration for Dostoevsky comes out in his essay, "Books which have influenced me", in which *The Brothers Karmazov* is mentioned first among the books that he has "loved."[7] *Comrade Kirillov* has multiple thematic affiliations with *The Possessed*, and D. S. Maini is certainly less than fair when he says, "its a pity Raja Rao.. drags Dostoevsky into the title to lend his tale an aura of Russian Messianism.... Dostoevsky's name remains an extravagance in this lean and starved book".[8] Actually, Communism and its depredations is the central theme of *The Possessed*, and Raja Rao's novel too is concerned with one aspect of this theme , in its relation to India, Indian personality. The title of Dostoevsky's novel and the two quotations in its epirgraph indicate the central theme of an evil spell (which is how the novelist views the revolutionary ideology of his times). The first of the two quotations in the Epigraph is from Pushkin and the lines "we' ve lost the way,/Demons have bewitched our houses,/Led us in the wilds astray" clearly refer to this theme so does the second quotation, which is from the Gospel according to St. Luke (viii, 32—37) narrating the story of the Gadarene swine into whom Christ caused the devils that had possessed its victim to enter. The significance of the Biblical allusion is explained in the novel itself by Stepan Trofimovitch : "You see, that's exactly like our Russia, those devils that come out of the side of man and enter into the swine. They are all the Sores, all the foul contagions, all the impurities, all the devils great and small that have multiplied in that great invalid, our beloved Russia....And we shall cast ourselves down, possessed and raving, from the rocks into the sea, and we shall all be drowned—and a good thingh too, for that is all we are fit for. But the sick man will be healed."[9]

For the epigraph to his novel, Raja Rao has chosen the following dialogue from *The Possessed* :

Stravogine (sic ; = Stavrogin) : "Tell me, have you caught your hare? To cook your hare you must first catch it ; to believe in God you must first have God....Do you believe in God?"

.....

Shatov : "I,—I *will* believe in God."[10]

The context of this passage is that Stavrogin, the ruthless, Byronic, egotistical aristocrat and Shatov, the crude and boorish plebian who was

once his disciple are discussing their favourite theme—the destiny of Russia after the proposed revolution in which both of them believe (thought Shatov is ultimately disillusioned). Shatov begins by describing Russians as "the only 'god-bearing' people on the earth, destined to regenerate and save the world in the name of a new God, and to whom are given the keys of life and of the new world." (He is actually quoting what Stavrogin himself had said some years earlier). He, however, finds that Stavrogin, who now declares himself an atheist, considers these views extremist. Stavrogin, in turn, asks shatov, "Do you believe in god, yourself ?" and Shatov replies; "I believe in Russia....I believe that the new advent will take place in Russia;" and when Stavrogin corners him with," And in God? In God", Shatov finally affirms," "I ....*will* believe in God."

The relevance of the passage to the central theme of *Comrade Kirillov* is plain. Like Shatov, Raja Rao's protagonist believes in Russia and is convinced that the 'new advent' will take place in Russia. He has thus caught his 'hare' and this a significant element in his ambivalent make-up.

Furthermore, Raja Rao's novel has also something of the tone and temper of *The Possessed*. Dostoevsky said, "it is precisely as a caricature that the book must be read."[11] As Trving Hove points out, *The Possessed* is drenched in buffonery.....Not one character is spared by his (Dostoversky's) ridicule....Buffoonery is appropriate to *The Possessed* because the characters are mainly pretenders."[12] Though none of the three Indians in Raja Rao's novel can be called a pretender, all of them are described in a tone of banter, thus making for a persistent undercurrent of irony in the narrative, the narrator himself being subjected to it. In addition to this, not only is the name of Raja Rao's Protagonist borrowed from *The Possessed*, but some other characters in the novel have also contributed their own share of personality—traits to the making of the Indian Kirillov. Destoevsky's is an engineer, who is an intelletual....."A man who has simplified his ltfe down to one theory, but that of so overmastering and absorbing a natue that despite his poverty and loneliness, he is completely hapby".[13] He is an atheist and declares, "If there is no God, then I am God".[14] His Indian counterpart too is a man with an *idee fixe* and declares," God, is a fiction while the lazy" (p.40), though for him Communism is god, while the Russian has lost his faith in radicalism. Dostoevsky's Kirillov shares the same house as Shatov and the two have been described as "the split 'halves of an hypothetical self".[15] Raja Rao's protagonist is unlike Shatov in that he maintains his faith in communism upto the end, but the two men share one

interesting personal traits: both are shy and reserved in their personal relationships, though with different consequences. Shatov appears to be crude and gauche, while Comrade Kirillov's reserve makes him appear to be cold when his wife tells him that she is with child; she, however, later admits," I was wrongs.... He is shy—his joy is silent" (p.118). He has also in him, something of Dostoevsky's Stepan Trofimovich—a man,"lazy.... timid.... and altogether rather preposterous with his endless prattle.... but underneath there is a keen intelligence and a sort of suppressed fire."[16]

A feature of technique which *Comrade Kirillov* shares with *The Possessed* is that in both the novels the 'I' narrator can be identified with the author himself. In Raja Rao's novel, a note identifies R., the narrator as Raja Rao (the author)" (p. 116). In *The Possessed*, the narrator is called 'Mr. G-V'[17], but a clue to the fact he represents Dostoevsky himself is provided in the episode in part I, Chapter III[18], in which G-V meets Karmazinov, the self-centred and snobbish writer, who treates him in a patronizing man. ner. Critics have noted that Karmazinov is a caricature of Turgenev[19] and it is generally agreed that the entire episode reveals Dostoevsky's own personal reaction to Turgenev.

These numerous affiliations between *The Possessed* and *Comrade Kirillov* should not, however, make one hastily conclude that Raja Rao's sole aim in the novel is to offer an ironical portrait of an Indian communist on the lines of the expose of Russian radicalism in Dostoevsty's novel.

Another possible source for the narrative is suggested by the fact that Raja Rao's Kirillov appears, at least in some significant respects, to be modelled upon the noted Indian statesman V. K. Krishna Menon, who like Kirillov, was a brilliant, versatile and voluble South Indian expatriate. He too, like Raja Rao's hero came carly under the spell of Mrs. Annie Besant, and was sent abroad for education as a young man, having been earmarked for becoming a pillar of the Theosophist movement in India. Menon however, soon abandoaed Theosophy as Kirillov did and became similarity associated with the British Labour Party. Unlike Kirillov however, he never married and never became a communist, but it is well-known that Menon's enemies always branded him as a fellow-traveller. Kirillov's teetolarianism, vegetarianism and abstemious eating habits (p. 17) also recall Menon. The main thrust of Raja Rao's presentation of Kirillov, however, makes it clear that he had no intention to develop the parallel;

nevertheless, the similarities do suggest that the germ of the character was perhaps provided by Krishna Menon's calourful personality.[20]

The central theme of *Comrade Kirillov* is essentially one aspect of Raja Rao's major preoccupation in his fiction—namely the quest for roots through different ways. *Kanthapura* shows how an entire Indian village re-discovers its cultural roots through nationalism; in *The Serpent and the Rope* and *The Cat and Shakespeare* the urge for salvation leads to a discovery of spiritual roots; in *Comrade Kirillov,* the main theme is obviously the nexus between cultural roots and political ideology. The three prominent Indian characters in the narrative illustrate the different ways in which this nexus operates. Kirillov's roots in his traditional Indian ethos go deeper than he is prepared to admit; yet, his intellectual convictions force him to subscribe to Marxism; the upshot is a curious ambivalence, the contradictions of which are plain to everybody except Kirillov himself. In direct contrast with him, S begins as a Marxist and ends as a Gandhian, while R remains unchanged, the neutral observer, who is too solidly grounded in his Indianness to undergo any transformation, though he too has been exposed to the West and its new ideologies.

Kirillov, as already suggested, is a fascinating study in ambivalence. He is a bundle of opposites wrapped up in the shot silk of contrariety. A remark in Irene's Diary is an excellent summing up of his character: "P's (= Kirillov's) illogic is so astonishing" (p. 102). Another entry in the Diary provides a clue to the enigma of Kirillov's character: "There is a certain honesty of mind that is the greatest dishonesty of being" (p. 119). Both Irene and R. observe that Kirillov is childlike in certain ways ["P. can sometimes, as all childlike people, be boringly banal" (p. 105); "He was so like a child, was Kirillov, when it came to simple things" (p. 86)]. And yet the subtle ties and the complexities of his mind and thought processes are equally apparent throughout the narrative. Kirillov is indeed an excellent example of a "tangle dance of passionate contraries/Locking like lovers in a forbidden embrace".[21] The basic polarity in his case is trenchantly summed up in R's characterization of him as 'this Sadhu of Communism" (p. 72). While his intellect subscribes to Marxism, his heart obstinately continues to wear its Brahmanical sacred thread though he hates to admit the fact. The opening description of Kirillov's personal appearance itself (pp. 7-8) emphasizes this basic discordance in a symbolic way. Kirillov's is an "ancient and enigmatic face"; his pants are "too dissimilar for his

limbs, his coal (*sic*) flapping a little too fatherly on his small, rounded musculer of seating." But the most interesting item of his apparel is the 'Kirillov tie', which is described in some detail: "His necktie had such a praterplusparenthetical curve, as though much concrete philosophy had gone into its making, and it revaled a soul so ambivalent that I could not gaze on its self aware turpitudes without human compassion" (p.25). "The indrawness of his nature gave a prominent curve to his chest, which in turn gave that peculiar parabola to his necktie, as though man in his destiny had shaped his garment to his thought and had given a certain twist of psyche this particular intensity of approach from the thick neck to the narrow waist, where within the folds of the shirt, this grey-green stretch of respectable cloth found its umbilical end" (p. 30). The narrator continues: "The more I observed this grey-green stuff and the assurance, the intimacy, almost the obstinacy, of its collarly and waistward penetration, the more I felt its absurd inevitability in Kirillov's emotional life.... this, the prime presence of daily decoration, nay, of daily care and companionship, had the vital clinging passion of a pet, or of a young mistress.... Yes, it was his boon companion, his poetry, his sole possession" (p. 31). The narrator even imagines Kirillov addressing the tie as "You, you, my noble, secret friend.....my noble companion" I have none but (you)" (p. 32), and describes how after one of Kirillov's habitual harangues, 'the necktie received its pattings; it hissed and curled in ritual approval. The snake-charmer had played on his bamboo flute" (p.45). Kirillov's necktie with its 'peculiar parabola' is an excellent objective correlative of the twists and turns of his own complex mind which tries heroically to reconcile dilectical materialism with Advaita Vedanta.

Another telling detail which it is tempting to interpret spmbolically is that Kirillov uses a "round, full barrel" to sit on, instead of a chair. His explanation is that the barrel "did the service of economy and of convenience, as its roundness made rotation easier, its height made the table come nearer his bust, and besides it gave the only chair in his large, furniture lorn flat the gracious emptiness which could soothen the seating of comrades, and even be kind to a heathen like me" (pp. 7—8). Now, to an Indian, this description of Kirillov seated on a round barrel would immediately bring to mind the picture of Buddha seated on the lotus, and the ironic thrust in Marxism being preached from a modern, comical equivalent of the ancient Indian lotus throne goes home.

M. K. NAIK

Kirillov declares, "I am a communist because I understand history" (p.45) but it is actually history that has irrevocably made him an Indian of the highest caste. "Anonymous my name,.....Logic my religion, Communism my mother land" (p.71), he tells R., but this does not cancel the fact that his real name is Padmanabha Iyer and that in many essential respects he is a typical South Indian Brahmin, who has had the usual traditional upbringing of his class. It is not surprising, therefore, that, as R. tells us, "his Indianhood would break through every communist chain" (p. 91). Irene, with her woman's intuition has rightly surmised that in spite of his fervent championship of Marxism, Kirillov "is completely an Indian" (p. 112). She also notices how he is "racially arrogant. I have never known anyone speak with such superiority as he does-to any one, white or black....old civilization, etc. etc." (p. 103).

Kirillov's basic Indianness manifests itself in several ways. His intense love for India amounts virtually to veneration. "He could almost speak of India as though he were talking of a venerable old lady in a fairy tale who had nothing but goodness in her heart, and who was made of morning dew and mountain honey" (p. 53).. "He loved India with a noble, delicate, unreasoned love" (p. 86). One is therefore hardly surprised to find him telling Irene, "who does not know.. that from the airplane to the latest theories of democracy, passing through medicine and mathematics, all had one, and only one, origin—Holy India" (pp. 78—79). He no doubt qualifies this by adding "Here I am playing the game of my friend opposite" (= R., the Narrator), but unmistakably indicates that he means all this seriously by saying, "Historically, however, what I say is the truth. The Albegensian heresy, as every good scholar knows, was of Buddhist origin" (p. 79). Kirillov has an undying fascination for Sanskrit classics-especially those in verse. "To hear him recite Sanskrit verse was like listening to a Pandit from Tanjore. His sincerity, his enthusiasm, his learning, were all alike-of one sovereign make" (p. 87). He tells 'R', one thing I felt sorry for when I was in India—the neglect of our classics" (p. 75). He even playfully proposes a competition in Sanskrit verse recitation at which he challenges 'R', declaring. "For every Sanskrit verse you recite, I will recite four" (p. 75). Irene has a taste of his learning when he talks to her "at length on (the) Indian theory of the word". (p. 95).

His curious ambivalence does make Kirillov at times critical of some of the idols of modern India. Thus, he calls Gandhi "that old Puritan

humbug .... that fine, moral hypocrite" (p.101); dismisses Tagore as "our Olympian filmstar, beard insured,.. The adolescent's demi—god" (p. 107), and avers that "Jawaharlal (Nehru) never became an adult and Ravi Varma has done more harm to Indian politics than Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and the great liberals"(p. 109). But as Irene shrewdly points out, there is more of attitudinizing than attitude in all this. "I say to P, 'at heart Gandhi is your God. You tremble when you speak of him sometimes. I once saw even a tear, one long tear, it was there when you spoke of Gandhi to S.'- 'chemical reactions to remembered conditioned reflexes', he added and laughed. He knew he talked nonsense. Actually, he cannot bear any European, bourgeois, or even communist, speak against the Congress or Gandhi....Even I become an enemy....when India is not described as all virtue" (P. 101—2).

The naming of Kirillov's son perhaps symbolically suggests the hero's nexus with the ancient Indian tradition to which he rightfully belongs in spite of all his Marxist convictions. Kirillov is hoping that "they would now have a boy, and he would be an Indian. He would be proud of his heritage, for by then Communism would have purified this ancient, this glorious India of mine . If it were a boy, he would be called Stefanovitch- the first name of General Potemkin" (pp. 58-59). Actually, when the boy is born, he is called 'Kamal and not Stefanovitch because his skin was dark" (p. 69). Whatever the outcome of Kirillov's prophecy about Communism purifying his ancient land, the naming of his son after a flower which has distinct religious and spiritual associations in India unmistakably proves in Kirillov's case, the truth of Byron's "The tie that bound the first outlives the last". And the concluding scene in which the narrator takes Kamal on a pilgrimage to South India and dressing him in sacred silk with a silver waist-band and with sandal on his face 'shows' him to Kanyakumari in her temple is a clear indication of how Kirillov's blood ultimately answers the call of his motherland.

The apparent paradox of Kirillov is easily resolved when one remembers that he begins as a Theosophist and ends as a Marxist; and this means in his case, only the exchange of a more compelling (and perhaps one more useful, to a man in his situation) mystique for a lesser one, though probably he himself is not totally aware of the reasons for this transformation. Hence his Marxism does not appear to be a result of intellectual conviction as much as an act of faith; and his clever Brahminical mind with its innate capacity

for hair-splitting can rationalize its own contradictions to itself with absolute success. This explains why Kirillov with all his ambivalence is saved from being a house divided against itself.[22]

M. K. NAIK

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THE THEME OF COMMUNALISM IN INDO-ANGLIAN NOVELS

Mohan Jha

It hardly reqires emphasizing that Indo-Anglian novels deal with a large variety of our national problems, and quite a few of these that deserve special metion may broadly be identified as social, political and cultural. It would very much be within the frame of reference here to observe that Indo-Anglian novels deal with our religious problems too, but they tackle them almost always as the conflict between orthodoxy and modernity, obscrantism and liberalism, superstition and enlightenment. The problem of commnumalism, however, is a class by itself, for if on the one hand it is partlyreligious and partly political in character, on the other it is and has been a kind of social menace that tends to undermine the very integrity or identity of India as a nation. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the nature, degree and mode of attention that has been given to the problem of communalism in Indo-Anglian novels.

Communalism is popularly and indeed rightly defined as the phenomenon of antagonism between two or more than two religious communities. It can hardly be denied that communalism has to do a good deal with hostile religious pluralism, but this cannot and should not be taken as the whole truth about it. If we try to go into the problem a little more deeply, we come to realize that it arises as much out of operative religious differences as of cultural, racial, linguistic and regional tensions. Whenever and wherever one community seeks political or social dominance over other communities by way of religious, cultural, ethnic, regional or linguistic separateness and exploitation, communalism necessarily creeps in. Communalism is the very negation of the valued principles of tolerance, accommodation and co-operation; by its very nature it is a kind of political and religio-cultural reac tion that weakens the existing social order, and though at times it may be looked upon as a movement, it is, in fact, neither revolution nor reconstruction.

The problem of communalism is almost a world-wide scare now, and it keeps on manifesting itself as the conflict between the black and the white, the majority and the minority, and the privileged and the unprivileged or the underprivileged. It has, however, assumed dangerous dimensions in certain parts of the world, including India. India's case in this respect is peculiarly unenviable. A multi-racial, multi-caste, multi-lingual country that India is and has been, enormous atrocities have been perpetrated in this country in the name of religion and region, culture and convention. Unfortunately, communalism has been an age-old phenomenon in India, and in spite of full-mouthed and strong condemnation of this evil by saints and intellectuals, statesmen and writers from time to time it has erupted again and again, to our horror and agony, in various forms. It is true that communal tensions have flared up, for the most part, between the two religious monoliths, the Hindus and the Muslims, of our country, but they have also been inspired by several other factors and motivations such as caste, culture, occupation and region. The stratification of the Hindu society into various castes and subcastes, the division of the Muslim community into several groups in view of their supposed origin and occupation, the frenzied endeavour to split this country into the north and the south, the political insularity of abused leadership, the self-centredness of the privileged, the sinister designs of unfriendly foreign powers, all these, by turns or collectively, have been responsible for the outbreak of communal disturbances in our country. Our protracted struggle for political independence, with all its sufferings and sacrifices, did indeed bring about a spectacular mass upsurge in the country, resulting, if only, in a tenuous kind of national integration, but the emergence of the Muslim League on the Indian political scene, with its demand for a separate sovereign State for the Muslims, its exploitation of religious sentiment and its dubious, though convenient, play upon such slogans as 'the formidable and entrenched majority' and 'the shaky and uprooted minority', and the rise of the militant Hindu organizations, prompeted mommunal disturbances all over the country. The carnage that preceded and followed the partition of the country still haunts us, and reminds us, ironically enough of the assassination of the Father of the Nation by a Hindu. It may seem a little too clever to speak of the Hindu communalism and the Muslim communalism, the majority communalism and the minority communalism, the linguistic communalism and the cultural communalism, but in spite of its different and differing shades and forms, communalism remains essentially one and the same. Really speaking, communalism is

neither a political nor a religio--cultural problem, it is actually a human problem, a psychological problem, a problem that has to be tackled with the seriousness and probity it deserves. We may say that the opposite of communalism is not nationalism but humanism and that the opposite of nationalism is not communalism but perverse individualism. For the purpose of the present paper, however, we find ourselves contsrained to look upon communalism, in its widely accepted sense, as the hostility between the two religio-cultural communities of the Hindus and the Muslims.

(II)

It is quite natural, then, that the problem of communalism has received elaborate and meaningful treatment at the hands of several Indo-Anglian novelists. At the same time the Indian writers expressing themselves in various native languages have also given this problem their serious attention. The pioneer of modern Hindi language and literature, Bharatendu Harischandra, discusses this problem in his own way in his play, *Bharat Durdasha*, while the eminent Gandhian writer, Premchand, tells us about this evil in a moving and poignant manner in his novel, *Karmabhoomi*. In the post-independence period the problem of communalism was sought to be tackled in the new perspective of the partition of the Indian subcontinent into India and Pakistan. Bhairab Prasad Gupta in his novel *Sati Maiya Ka Chaura*, Yashpal in his book *Jhootha Sach* and Bhishma Sahani in his novel *Tamas* examine the problems arising out of the partition of the country. In fact, the partition of the Indian subcontinent, causing an exodus of refugees from either side of the frontier, gave birth to what has come to be known as Refugee literaure. Kishan Chunder's *Ghaddar* and 'Peshawari Express', Sachchidanand Hiranand Vatsyayan 'Agyey's 'Sharanarthi', Ramanand Sagar's *Aur Insan Mar Gaya*, Massoom Raza Rahi's *Topi Shukla*, *Aadha Gaon* and *Oase Ke Boond*, Hoyatullah Ansari's *Lahu Ke Phool*, Abdullah Husain's *Udas Naslen*, Kartar Singh Duggal's *Ujla Anchal*, and Qurrat-ul-Ain Haidar's *Housing Society* and *Aag Ka Darya* may be said to belong to this very category. Through all these novels and short stories the writers express their anxious concern for the problem of communalism and, either directly or indireetly, identify themselves with the cause of secular national integration.

Bengali writers too deal with this grim reality without equivocation. Starting with Bankim Chandra Chatterji's *Anandmath* we may move on to Sharat Chandra Chatterji's short story 'Mahese' and Rabindrannath Tagore's book *Kalantar*, specially to his essay 'Hindu-Muslim' therein. Manoj Basu

and Pratibha Basu, the latter particularly in her book, *Samudra Hridaya*, point out to us the magnitude and intensity of this calamity. Manoj Basu's book, *Se Aik Duhswapna Chhilo*, contains two short novels, *Manus Namak Jantu* and *Rakter Badala Rakta*, one play, *Nootan Prabhat*, and several short stories, which stand directly addressed to the problem of communalism. Similarly, Tarashankar Bandopadhyaya's *Uttarayan*, Narayan Gangopadhyaya's *Lal Mati* and Amiyabhushan Majumdar's *Gardh Shrikhanda* examine this problem rather in depth. The one Punjabi novel that deserves special mention at this point is Surinder Singh Narula's *Dil Darya* for it speaks pointedly of the bloody massacres that took place in the north-western part of India in 1947, and the two Gujarati novels that draw our attention in this regard are Chunilal Vardhaman Shah's *Kantak Chhayo Panth* and *Ankut Dhara* written jointly by Jaimal Parmar and Niranjan Varma, since they are a direct pointer to the communal riots that caused painful tremors throughout the country at the time of India's partition.

(III)

Although several Indo-Anglian novelists have tried, either directly or indirectly, to tackle the problem of communalism in their writings, it is, really speaking, the novels of Mulk Raj Anand, Khushwant Singh and Manohar Malgonkar that deserve detailed discussion here. It would, however, be extremely relevant at this point to mention Sudhin N. Ghosh's *The Vermillion Boat (1953)*, R. K. Narayan's *Waiting for the Mahatma* (1955), Ruth Prawer Jhabvala's *To whom She will* (1955), Balchandra Rajan's *The Dark Dancer* (1959), Jatindra Mohan Ganguli's *Bond of Blood* (1967) and Raj Gill's *The Rape* (1974) in which these novelists depict the horrors of the partition days and, in a way, portray the clash of cultures with a plea to forging out an agreeable solution to the problem of communalism.

Moving away from chronology it would be appropriate, first, to discuss Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* which came out in 1956 and which has a direct bearing on the problem under consideration. This novel gives us the story of an obscure, sleepy, tiny frontier village, Mano Majra, which has been a model of communal harmony for ages, in which the Sikhs and the Muslims have lived together in perfect amity as co-sharers of joy and sorrow, but which suddenly, in the wake of the partition, turns into a cauldron of communal hatred and retaliation. The author presents to us a graphic picture of the situation as it then obtained in the frontier area, or for that matter, all over the country :

> The summer of 1947 was not like other Indian summers. Even the weather had a different feel in India that year.. .....
>
> The summer before, communal riots, precipitated by reports of the proposed division of the country into a Hindu India and a Muslism Pakistan, had broken out in Calcutta, and within a few months the death roll had mounted to several thousand. Muslims said the Hindus had planned and started the Killing. According to the Hindus, the Muslims were to blame. The fact is, both sides killed. Both shot and stabbed and speared and clubbed. Both tortured. Both raped. From Calcutta, the riots spread north and east and west : to Noakhali in East Bengal where Muslims massaered Hindus ; to Bihar, where Hindus massacred muslims. Mullahs roamed the Punjab and the Frontier Province with boxes of human skulls said to be those of Muslims killed in Bihar. Hundreds of thousands of Hindus and Sikhs who had lived for centuries on the Northwest Frontier abandoned their homes and fled toward the protection of the predominantly Sikh and Hindu communities in the east. They travelled on foot, in bullock carts, crammed into lorries, clinging to the sides and roofs of trains.... The riots had become a rout. By the summer of 1947, when the creation of the new State of Pakistan was formally announced, ten million people—Muslims and Hindus and Sikhs—were in flight. By the time the monsoon broke, almost a million of them were dead, and all of northern India was in arms, in terror, or in hiding. The only remaining cases of peace were a scatter of little villages lost in the remote reaches of the frontier. One of these villages was Mano Majra.[1]

The innocent and peace-loving people of Mano Majra have nothing to do with what happens outside; in fact, they are blissfully unaware of the mad killings that take place all over the country. The Sikh priest, Bhai Meet Singh, and the Muslim priest, Imam Baksh, keep on parying to the Supreme as usual. Then, one night, the village money-lender is murdered, and there start coming to Mano Majra trains full of dead bodies and isolated groups of Sikh refugees from across the broder in the still darkness of night. All these naturally cause a flutter in the village. The Muslims of Mano Majra who have been still clinging to their homes, have to leave the village for evacuee camps, to journey, at the earliest suitable opportunity, to the newely-

formed country called Pakistan. The climate of the village is indeed heavy, but there does not seem to be any trace of bitterness in it. However, one night, when the train carrying the Muslim evacuees, including the Mano Majra Muslims, is to leave for Pakistan, some turbulent, angry Sikhs decide to kill the passengers. Curiously enough, it is a notorious Sikh criminal of the village, Juggut Singh, who sacrifices his life for the Muslims; for his Muslim mistress, Nooran, in particular:

> The leader raised his rifle to his shoulder and fired. He hit his mark and one of the man's legs came off the rope and dangled in the air. The other was still twined round the rope. He slashed away in frantic haste. The engine was only a few yards off, throwing embers high up in the sky. Somebody fired another shot. The man's body slid off the rope, but he clung to it with his hands and chin. He pulled himself up, caught the rope under his left armpit and again started hacking with his right hand. The rope had been cut in shreds. Only a thin tough strand remained. He went at it with the knife, and then with his teeth. The engine was almost on him. There was a volley of shots. The man shivered and collapsed. The rope snapped in the centre as he fell. The train went over him, and went on to Pakistan.[2]

The ending of the novel may be a little too theatrical to carry conviction, and yet the urge of an uneducated, raw Sikh youth to transcend the barriers of caste, race and religion is indeed admirable.

Manohar Malgonkar, with his flair for historical details and his pronounced commitment to a certain code of discipline in life, tackles this problem with great concern and convincingness. In his short prefatory note to *A Bend in the Ganges* Malgonkar says:

> Only the violence in this story happens to be true; it came in the wake of freedom, to become a part of India's history. What was achieved through non-violence, brought with it one of the bloodiest upheavals of history: twelve million people had to flee, leaving their homes; nearly half a million were killed; over a hundred thousand woman, young and old, were abducted, raped, mutilated.[3]

This novel traces the course of Debi-dayal's eventful life: his aristocratic parentage, his fascination for and participation in terrorist activities, his

trial, conviction and transportation to the Andamans, his strategic and expedient association with the Japanese, his return to a changed and changing India, and his tragic death in communal violence. It is indeed a pity that Debi-dayal who has seen so much of life, its joys and sorrows, pleasures and sufferings, during the short span of his life, and who, after a good deal of wandering, does really get inclined to think of building up a happy and settled future with a Muslim girl, Mumtaz, as his wife, is tortured by a swirling mob of Muslims at the Indo-Pakistan border and is finally hacked to death:

> That was the last thing he ever saw : the rising sun in the land of the five rivers on the day of their freedom. The next second his eyes were blinded by a great flash of pain that seemed to shoot up from the centre of him, as though a bomb had exploded between his loins.
>
> And the last thing he ever heard was his name being shouted by his wife with all her might.
>
> 'Debi : Debi, my darling: I shall never live without you..... I am coming.....
>
> He surrendered himself to the pain, not knowing what she was trying to tell him, but taking a childish, pathetic consolation in the fact that she wanted to be with him wherever he was now going: go with him as she had always wanted to go wherever he went.[4]

This piercing cry is an unforgettable experience ; it is indeed the cry of outraged humanity.

In *Distant Drum* which, among other things, is a positive tribute to the discipline and intergrity of the British Indian army, Malgonkar refers to the brutalities of the partition days and speaks of Kiran Garud's sharp reaction to the ugly events:

> There was something shocking about the memory, far more so than anything he had experienced in the war. For two weeks there was a reign of terror, when man's most barbarous instincts prevailed without check. Both Hindus and Muslims spent themselves in ghoulish ernormities unknown to primitive man, allegedly in retaliation to each other's doings——all in the name of religion, even in the name of God.[5]

It is natural that this mad outburst of hatred and bitterness among the Hindus and the Muslims only for their utter undoing reminds Kiran Garud necessarily of the cordial and warm relations he and his Muslim brother-officer, Abdul Jamil, have been maintaining between themselves, of the bond of friendship and affection that has kept them united amidst terrible stress and strain :

> What stood out magnificently in that holocaust was the fact that although they belonged to the two opposing communities crazed with vengeance and thirsty for blood, he and Abdul had been able to work together in the closest accord, their loyalties to each other absolutely unruptured by that incessant strain.[6]

Malgonkar looks upon communalism as something characteristically beastly, as a kind of dark and diabolical passion that threatens the very indentity of human race as a whole.

Mulk Raj Anand is outstandingly a writer with a mission, and his commitment to the cause of humanity does obviously need no re-telling. Anand's closeness to the Punjabi village life, his wide travels, his experience of this complex world, his initiation into and affirmation of Gandhian ideology, his secular, humanistic faith, his deep and searching probes into human dilemmas and predicaments in the Indian context, his crusading zeal for liberation——all these are too well-known to be recounted as an introduction to the nature of his writings. As and what we find him, Anand has always been opposed to all antiquated notions and obscurantist ideas, and naturally to communalism. The central theme of Anand's novels, M. K. Naik rightly points out, is 'the confrontation between orthodoxy and modernity'[7], and even a casual survey of his fictional writings gives us an unmistakable impression of the fact that what he wants or craves for is a free and egalitarian society, with absoluteiy no trace in it of a feeling of separation between man and man. It is, then, only natural, that while in his novel *Coolie* he makes a brief, though pointed, reference to communal tension that has been cropping from time to time in India, in his novel *Death of a Hero* : *Epitaph for Maqbool Sherwani* he launches a severe attack on communalism that alone explains and is responsible for a good deal of confusion and disorder in our country.

The story of *Death of a Hero* relates to the 1947 Pakistani invasion on Kashmir, but beneath and behind this simple story we notice the real intention of the novelist. The Pakistanis committed aggression on the soil of India

in Kashmir on the conventient plea that this particular area happens to be dominated by the Muslims. The Pakistani invasion was an aggression perpetrated in the name of religion, and what the rulers of Pakistan intended to do was to enlist the sympathy and support of their co-religionists in order to be able to annex Kashmir as also to grab or destroy everything that belonged to the infidel Hindus in general and to the infidel Hindu Maharaja in particular:

> To them [the Pakistani raiders] it was 'jehad', a holy war, in which all the defenders, and their friends, were infidels who must be destroyed.....There was something terrible about this singlemindedness, which drove people to the extremes of brutality without a stirring of their conscience.[8]

A number of Kashmiri Muslims, prominent among them being Ishaq, a school teacher, and Ahmed Shah, a lawyer, are fanatical pro-Pakistanis, but there are othere, Maqbool Sherwani, Mahmdoo, Gula, Juma, Qadri and Saleem Bux, for example, who have nothing to do with religion as an instrument of blatant militarism and who do whatever is possible within their means to disturb or harass the invaders in orders to be able to maintain the purity and sanctity of their beloved Kashmir. Maqbool Sherwani is a poet and though in a certain way and to a certain extent he may be 'a useless, unpractical fellow'[9], the one outstanding trait of his character is his anti-communal stance, his emphatic and consistent opposition to communalism. No doubt, there is very little of action in this novel, and it does not require much time to realize that Maqbool is rather a weak character, but the mere fact that he prefers death to submitting sheepishly to the Pakistani marauders is the unmistakable testimony of his love for secularism and national integration.

Mulk Raj Anand may at times appear to be unnecessarily sentimental, even theatrical, but his denunciation of and hatred for communalism and his respect for and faith in secularism need no explaining.

(IV)

What then, precisely speaking, is the nature of the treatment of the problem of communalism in Indo-Anglian novels? There are, in these novels, elaborate, moving and heart-rending descriptions of human misery flowing from communal disturbances; there are, in them, direct or indirect suggestions to wipe out all possible shades of discrimination in order to be able to

build up a new and healthy society, and there is also a plea held out, through them, to man to shed his ego based on religion, caste or community, But do these novels really take us beyond the stage where crippling traditions or enervating notions prevail upon us and overwhelm us ? It may be said with a certain amount of justification that novels in question are something in the nature of mere propaganda, that they have at best only documentary value, and that they are just a kind of journalistic writing presented to us in the garb of fiction. As such, we have to alalyze them in order to be in a position to assess their worth also as works of art.

Forsters's *A Passage to India* is indeed a political novel, for, among other things, it seeks to give us an idea of the nature of Indo-British relation as they existed, genarally speaking, in the pre-Independence days of recent Indian history, and yet it is a meaningful work of art. Graham Greene's *The Power and the Glory* is, *inter alia*, a sort of attack on political authoritarianism, for what we get in this novel is the peculiar predicament of a priest terrorized and pursued by a dictatorial set-up that can stand no religion at all, and yet it works on deeper and higher levels. Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* and *For Good of the Cause* are a record of the brutalities inflicted on innocent human beings in Communist Russia and yet they are a magnificent artistic expression of the writer's faith or conviction. Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*, Malgonkar's *A Bend in the Ganges* and Anand's *Death of a Hero* may have obvious and easily accessible topacial allusions in them, but they are real works of art, and, as such, stand definitely apart from what has come to be known as journalistic literature.

The central character in Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* is Juggut Singh, a notorious and hardened criminal of Mano Majra. Truly speaking, criminality has been his heritage : his father and grandfather also happend to be criminals, and from all that we see of him in the novel it becomes unmistakably clear to us that there does not seem to be any chance of his ever correcting himself in his lifetime. And yet, it is this very character, a law-breaker, a declared offender, who plays the role of a tragic hero in *Train to Pakistan*. As and what he has been, Juggut Singh, perhaps, finds himself as much comfortable behind the bars as when he is free ; for most of the time he speaks in the language of sheer abuse, and he is rude not only to others but also to his old and ailing mother. He, however, is in love with a Muslim girl of the village, Nooran by name, the daughter of the Muslim priest, Imam Baksh. Juggut Singh's love for her may be mere lust

or only a kind of frivolity, and it is natural that as we go through the novel we do not feel disposed to attach much importance to their clandestine love-relationship. However, in the course of time the whole scene changes, and as Juggut Singh remains locked up in the police cell, the entire Muslim population of Mano Majra, including Nooran, has to be shifted to the evacuee camp, to be sent eventually to Pakistan. The moment Juggut Singh comes back to his village and gets the scent of the ghastly conspiracy to kill all the passengers of the train carrying his mistress Nooran, he decides to rescue her. It is really heroic on his part to have saved Nooran along with the other passengers of the train for the sake of love and, what is more, at the cost of his life. Juggut Singh makes a lonely and determined choice; he transcends himself, and, as such, his act of self-sacrifice is real martyrdom, a service to humanity, and a manifestation of the essential human and humane-self that lies within him.

One of the principal figures in Monohar Malgonkar's *A Bend in the Ganges* is Debi-dayal, the only son of a very affluent father. It is really ironic that throughout the novel we find him to be something in the nature of a wandering exile. He comes back to India from the Andamans, officially still a life-convict, full of anger and an all-engulfing feeling of indignation and revenge. He does not require anykind of prompting or persuasion to get convinced that it is his ex-leader, Shafi, who has been responsible for the grievous punishment. It is obviously in a mood of revenge and retaliation that he carries Shafi's mistress, Mumtaz, away from him with a view to causing real and frofound distress to him. Debi-dayal has nothing whatsoever to do with Mumtaz; for quite sometime he has absolutely no feeling for her, and he looks upon her very much as an avoidable hanger-on. But gradually it is Mumtaz's devotion that wins his heart and promotes a tender closeness between them. Debi-dayal's feeling of revenge and hatred turns into that of love and attachment, and it is natural that he decides to accept her as his wife. Debi-dayal is a lonely character; his decision is entirely his, and he proposes to go home only if and when this Muslim girl is acceptable to his parents as his wife. It is really tragic that at a time when Debi-dayal had almost transcended his earlier self committed to revenge and hatred and violence, and was about to usher himself into the ennobling world of love and affection, he is killed mercilessly by the frenzied gang of communalists at the Indo-Pakistan border.

The hero of Mulk Raj Anand's *Death of a Hero* is Maqbool Sherwani, a Kaşhmiri by birth. His position is more difficult and delicate than that of

both Juggut Singh aad Debi-dayal. Maqbool is an Indian, a nationalist and believes ardently in secularism. It falls to his lot to resist and fight against the invading Pakistanis who look upon the Hindus as infidels and upon all Muslims opposing them as traitors. Maqbool Sherwani tries to organize an effective resistance against the invaders at Baramula in Kashmir but before he is able to do much he is captured, tortured, and finally put to death. No doubt 'he sheds tears of self-pity'[10] and is struck by the 'waves of fears'[11] in his captivity, but at the same time there is also something of a 'leopard'[12] in him. His dead body tied to a pole, says the novelist, looks like 'a scarecrow'[13], but it looks also like 'that of Yessuh Messih on the Cross'.[14] Maqbool stands for truth; he is able to transcend petty loyalties by choice and conviction; he acts up to his faith, and tries to wipe out hatred and violence through love and compassion. He knows that his return from Jammu to Baramula is a journey to death, and yet he chooses to accept and embrace death. It is only his determind choice and his commitment to his own choice that give him the necessary courage to get over the ready temptations of life.

The treatment of the theme of communalism in Indo-Anglian novels in general and in these three novels in particular has been positive and meaningful. It is only through self-education, self-realization and self-transcendence, through a determined commitment to the finer values of life that the problem of communalism and similar other evils may be tackled, contained and obliterated.

MOHAN JHA

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DIMENSIONS OF REALISM IN INDO-ENGLISH FICTION

Hari Mohan Prasad

Realism, the history of which can be pushed back to Homer, found its local habitation and a name with the nineteenth century Frenc writers, and since then it has been undergoing a metamorphosis, as it were. It is nothing new for India because its variegated use can be discerned in ancient Hindu scriptures, the *Puranas*, the *Upanishads*, the *Mahabharat* and the *Ramayana*, but it has come up with a new orietation in the recent times. It may be added that in India, as also a little earlier in Russia, and sometimes later, in several Commonwealth countries, realism swept over creative writings in full swing with the social sense as its nucleus. The novel form in India sprouted in Bengal under the influence of the Western world and the pressure of indigenous social conditions. In Hindi and also in English Fiction, the social sense was tearing its way through the maze of romance. The truth of the matter is that the art of novel in India found its cradle in realism. Before Sharat Chandra in Bengali, Premchand in Hindi and Mulk Raj Anand in English, the novel was more a victim to fancy or fantasy than a cool careful creation of a mind blessed with wisdom, or a heart made alive by passion.

Realism remains a dominant mode in Bengali, Hindi and also Tamil fiction, though gradually it has transposed into its texture more fluid devices from the Western novel of stream-of-consciousness, allegory and fable and also from Indian myths, regional folklores and the *Kissago* techniques from Feudal India. In thematic contents it encompasses the whole gamut of idealistic and Marxist socialism, psychological realism and contemporary stream of Indian Life. Indian fiction in English, like these counterparts, moulds the mores of naturalistic novel gradually, through decades, with cues taken from both the poetic modes of the West, and the philosophical epics of India. It shows a cognizance, passionately, and sometimes pitifully, of the multifoliate life in India the social awakening and protest, the utter poverty of peasants, the Independence struggle and its Protean dimensions, partition and its traumas, social and political transitions, and, above all, the mental

landscape of sensitive, suffering individuals. Symbolism and other imaginative modes made their dent but realism still retains its core, though in its latest form, it is much more supple and dynamic. Hence, Realism is both in the roots and foliage of Indian fiction, but with a difference. The foliage has more hues, the rainbow richness.

Different facets of social consciousness are configurated in different Indo-English novelists. Mulk Raj Anand is the first writer to give Indian novel in English a definite tone and a clear texture. He explodes the fairy tales afloat abroad about India of the Yogis, Sadhus and beggars, and attempts a presentation of the earthly human condition in our society. His novels are poems of suffering, portraying dispassionately the inequality, poverty and exploitation of characters who are real, individual, lovable, thwarted, sometimes grand, sometimes weak and thoroughly Indian. He anchors his art to his personal experiences, which exfoliate dramatically in fictional form. Thus in him the sense of rebellion and reform, despair and courage working in unison, create works of art that are aesthetically satisfying with profound moral beauty. His heroes are not merely meek or honourably humble like those of Premchand, or amply absurd like those of Kafka. Accepting man as the measure of everything, the dreamer of all dreams, hopping up towards Shelley's golden millenium, he sings, like Whitman, the song of himself and of all. In his novels he articulates his compassions for the victims of so many wrongs and so much misunderstandings. Championing the metaphors of social change, he took upon himself the role of artist as the conscience of the race, the guide, the mentor. His *Untouchable* is a trail-blazer as a novel of social protest though it has it counterpart in Hindi and other languages. It is the story of Bakha, the innocent sweeper. He is knocked into realising his untouchability. Disgusted at his father's acceptance of untouchability as a sacred law, he bears the cross of suffering alone. A parallel may be drawn with the Yank in Eugene O'Neill's *The Hairy Ape* and Ravi in Kamala Markandaya's *A Handful of Rice*. Bakha, Yank and Ravi all three are angry protesters, the symbols of rising proletariate, but there are subtle differences. Yank is shaken out of his belonging and his dilemma becomes existential on the metaphysical level. The story of Ravi can be made meaningful only when it is deemed as pilgrimage from the sub-human world of petty criminals to the full human world. Unlike Ravi, Bakha is human, fully human right from the beginning. Like the Yank he gets disillusioned but he does not die in despair. In O'Neill the social sense is a transient passion, in Markandaya it is a trembling one, but in Anand it becomes the ruling passion.

Anand's concern is sociological but intense. He seeks a salvation for such lonely and humble creatures from the inferno of misery not through a metaphysical explanation or esoteic blessing but through scientific rational progress. Out of these three solutions dangling before Bakha, Anand's bias seems to be for the modern sanitary system. The final note that glints is of hope. The kernel of his message remains the same through the whole corpus of his fiction, though the artist's grip grows stronger over his raw materials. The stark verisimilitude now turns into poetic realism. *Coolie* is epical in dimension, *Two Leaves and a Bud* is dramatic in concentration, the trilogy has life-size-comprehensiveness; and *Seven Summers* is autobiographical in intension, but Anand remains all along the same messiah interpreting the truth from life, registering with full force, even ferocity, the anguish of the lonely, the low, and the lost with the birth of a new hope. His characters are uniquely individual and yet symbolic of the suffering humanity. Both victims and rebels, they are more vibrant with life than those of Premchand, for they surge up, at monents like jets of energy resisting the forces that corrode them.

We have seen the fury of protest in Anand's novels. The tone of anger is now substituted by the notes of compassion and tenderness in the poetic rendering of peasent life in the novels of Bhabani Bhattacharya and Kamala Markandaya. The response of Markandaya and Bhattacharya are cognate, for they are deeply sensitive to the peasant's suffering and fully appreciative of their vitality. *Neetar in a Sieve* or *A Handful of Rice*, *So Many Hungers* or *He Who Rides a Tiger* are not mere drossiers or newsreels on the peasants life, but sensitive records in close and cogent fictional form. In the language that has the glint of a diamond, or the freshness of vernal showers Markandaya weaves the tale of Rukmani and Nathan, the symbol of a whole generation, their elemental earthy living, their joys and sufferings, and,aboue all their innocence and endurance. *So Many Hungers* reflects many-fold concern with national independence, political violence and world war but its central theme is Bengal famine, with all its harrowing consequences.

The mores of realism gave the novelists scope for camera-fidelity to portray the contemporary history of National Independeuce struggle. Significant revolutions have always been potent mines of material for fiction. The French Revolution, the American War of Independence, the October Revolution of Russia and more recently, the liberation movements in Commonwealth countries have sparked off the fire in the artists of the Several nations. Indian literatures of different languages have a plethora of novels

showing a concern with or making Indian war of freedom their central theme. The counterpart fiction in English has also exploited its preparatory history, its varied violent and non-violent messages, its protean connotations, its aftermath and above all its deep emotional impact on Indian life. *Inqulab*; *Kandan the Patriot*; *In Transit*; *Chronicles of Kedaram*; *The Sword and the Sickle*; *Kanthapura*; *Sunlight on a Broken Column*; *A Time to be Happy*; *Remember the House*; *Some Inner Fury*; and *Waiting for the Mahatma* are novels, significant for one reason or the other, that cut across myriad crusts of the struggle with varying degrees of artistic success.

In some of the novels this theme serves as a back-drop for the personal story; in some others, it becomes the central experience. In Narayan's *Waiting for the Mahatma* it deepens the consciousness of the hero Sriram and gives his life a meaning and fulfilment. In *Kanthapura* of Raja Rao, it comes up warped in the symbol and myth of Mahatma Gandhi. Though the mode is intensified, the novel remains, at its core, a realistic epic of an Indian village responding passionately to the pervasive movement of Swaraj.

The blood-blanched phenomenon of partition is the raw material of Khuswant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*. With a stance of photographic objectivity and an idiom that is racy and earthy, the novelist probes deep into the gruesome spectacle of contemporary history and asserts, through symbols and characterisation, those values of humanity that resist extinction. Juggat, the villain-hero, reminiscent of the feudal characters, is a dacoit in the early part of the novel, but by its close he has achieved something of spiritual calm, tragic splendour and the blessedness of sacrifice. He is an enlarged edition of Rahim Khan in K. Abbas' story *Sparrows*. The little sparrows transformed the whole personality of Rahim Khan from a hardened, unkind man into a compassionate creature crying for the little birds. Here also the grandeur of the novel lies in the human potency. This Sikh Badmash, Juggat, the murderer without any human feeling within him, becomes the symbol of man's dignity.

The ambit of fiction will be narrow, even stiffling, if it were concerned with a single isolated phenomenon, howsoever significant it may be. The corpus of fiction in a country must configurate its total perspective and delineate the contours of change. A comprehensive and intrinsic picture of the permanent and transitional values clashing or coalescing together is fictionalised through the comic and ironic mode in R. K. Narayan's novels. His fiction mirrors modern India rooted in ancient traditions and caught

up in the crucible of change. The corroding, sordid boons of modern materialistic civilization and the primodial ways of Indian life interact in the characters of Narayan's novels. His Malgudi is a regional world but it gains a representativeness by concentration and extends into a national range covering even a cosmic canvas. Like Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha, the imaginary country, or like Hardy's Wessex, Narayan's Malgudi expands from regionto a world of human values. Malgudi is both the matrix of the traditional and the crucible of change. The change in physical world of Malgudi is both synoptic and catalystic for it reflects and accelerates at the same time the inner change in the character. The Sarayu river, the Memphi hills the Memphi forest, the caves and temples are there not just to compose the texture of the external landscape; they are the elements of consciousness and deepen affirmative Indian vision. The typical protagonist of Narayan begins as a fallen angel and comes through the quest of truth, evolving gradually the necessary vision. Pitted against the cyclorama of Malgudi, they emerge as shells of Indian ethos, the determining macrocosm mirroring the microcosm. Quite unlike Blake, Narayan moves from experience to innocence. His characters begin, as it were, in a world of experience and gradually achieve innocence. Raju, in *The Guide* is almost metamorphosed from a rogue into a man with spiritual faith. The innocence of Narayan's character is not radical as of Adam. It is the innocence of wisdom, of the 'still point,' of the 'calm of mind, with 'all passions spent.'

A significant facet of modern Indian life is the experience of biculturalism. The experience of multicultural situation has filtered into the lives of all people who have ever had the misfortune of being colonised directly or by remote control. This clash of culture forms the matrix of a large part of the Commonwealth novel. In India also Santha Rama Rau's *Remember the House*, Balchandra Rajan's *The Dark Dancer*, Nayantara Sahgal's *A Time to be Happy*, Kamala Markandaya's *The Nowhere Man* and Raja Rao's *The Serpent and the Rope* are significant novels that render dramatically the tension of identity ensuing from biculturalism. These novels grow on the soil of autobiography. Baba Goray, Krishnan, Sanad Shivpal, Srinivas and Ramaswamy are projections of their creators and much of the writer's life has gone into their making. The conflict in their protagonists is their own dilemma. Baba Goray, Krishnan, Sanad Shivpal and Ramaswamy are characters who have had much of the West in them. In different ways, they resolve themselves from the dual claims of the West and their native self. Baba Goray learns through her experiences with Nicky, Krishnan and

Hari. The life at Chennur with its quiet and tranquillity impinges upon her consciousness and finally she plants herself into the Indian soil. Sanad. Shivpal plunges himself into the turbulent social and political life, awakens himself to Hinduism and finally finds a faith in the symbolic act of spinning. Krishnan fumbles between Cynthia and Kamala and finally discovers his real idendity in the temple.

Kamala Markandaya sees the dilemma by changing the side of the coin in *The Nowhere Man*. *Bye-Bye Blackbird* has a similar theme of the Indians staying abroad but in her the acuteness of the dilemma is lost in the welter of lyricism. Markandaya's Srinivas, on the other hand, becomes a symbole of isolation. In Raja Rao's *The Serpent and the Rope* this duality of consciousness sublimates into a vision of life. As in the novels of Richard Wright, James Baldwin, Saul Bellow and Malamud, in *The Serpent and the Rope* the staple of raw experience of biculturalism finally transcends, through the alechemy of art, into a tale of human condition. The gamut of multi-cultural and multi-religions experiences of the world gives Ramaswamy's discovery of the self and the quest for self-fulfilment, emotional sharpness and philosophical depth. The sad,uneven chronicle of his life becomes the tale of human condition, a meditation upon man's existence.

In its recent phase, Indo-English fiction, like its Western counterpart, has shifted its focus from the social phenomena to individual characters. A typical modern fictional hero is a split-personality or a tortured individual through the depiction of whose mind the novelist etches out the contours of social or national or human conditions.

The protagonist of Doestoevsky is 'possessed' Camus's is 'outsider,' Kafka's is under the 'trial,' Beckett's is 'absurd' and Bellow's is 'displaced.' These tortured individuals are synoptic of the disinheritance in the Western life. The feelings of angst, alienation, anguish and futility that have struck terrifyingly deep roots, into the Western life are now undeniable experiences in Indian, particularly in the urban world. Indian fiction has explored in recent times, the torments of individual and has articulated the zeitegist of contemporary Indian life. The changes in social conditions and human values are configurated in fiction in terms of human relationship and the inner conflicts of man.

Man-woman relationship is the unit of individual and social life and hence it has been the central theme of the novelists all over the world. The characters of Nayantara Sahgal, Anita Desai, Nergis Dalal, Sasthi Brata,

Kamala Das, Mayah Balse, and a whole group of emerging novelists of the new decade reflect the changing facets of this relationship in India. They are modern voices and their characters are utterly different from the previous characters. The women characters of Nayantara Sahgal are no longer the subdued sex, creatures not yet emerged from the chrysalis, for whom the adventure of self-expression had not yet begun. In their conjugal relationship and their relationship outside marriage, the heroines of Sahgal become solitary individuals trying to combat loneliness of living. Gauri in *Storm in Chandigarh* finds security in arranged marriage but she needs and makes a relationship with Dubey which is based on sex. What is this indicative of? Maya in *A Time to Be Happy* is dead in emotion as a marble slab, locked in the isolation of marriage. She does not represent modernity, set in contrast against tradition; she exists for a deepened awarencess of human identity. hungry for a recognition of her existence. *In This Time of Morning* Nita is a lost girl, not sure of what she wants from life. She resents the idea of arranged marriage, remains withhrawn in the presence of Vijay to whom she is engaged, and without any concrete way out for fulfilment. Uma Mitra does not find in sex a mere meeting of their bodies but a medium for vengeance. Mira seeks power through it. Ram Sharma's Gopalam in *The Stream* moves between Swarana's passionate and Joan's Platonic love. Amla in Anita Desai's *Voices in the City* has erotic love with Dharmendra. Nergis Dalal's heroines have a weakness for sex. Sasthi Brata's novels were great sensations. Maya Balse, a recent novelist, shows a frank concern with the problem of sex in *Just a Matter of Mistresses*. The novel is an enactment of the dilemma of Narayan, a man wavering among several mistresses. Sindi Oberoi in Arun Joshi's *The Foreigner* indulges in sumptuous sex in England and America.

The whole range of Indian fiction in different languages shows such complex human relationship and a bold and frank exposition of the part sex is playing in man's life today. This shows that sex has become the crux of the modern phase of human life. This is indicative of the man's chaotic mental state and the crisis of decaying values in India. This experience, however, pervades over the whole world, The recent American plays and novels take open, extensive and robust cognizance of all kinds of sex deviations. The shift from Samuel Butler and D. H. Lawrence to Zola and Joyce and Andre Gide and Henry Miller delineates the change in the perspective in the Western life. The Victorians subdued sex; Lawrence was pleading for a healthy, full-blooded response to it; Miller has fully explored

it. In India also sex was confined to kissing and embraeing in the novels of Premchand. Tagore made sex mystical at times. Kamala Markandaya's Rukmani's love for the doctor has no sex-overtones, Mira's lover is never erotic, and Sarojini is always aphysical with the Swami. The shift, however, is perceptible in her recent novel *Lolitha* in the wanton pleasures that Lolitha finds in exposing herself in rains and also in the growing awareness of her own body. The recent characters are radically different; they are anti-characters in the traditional sense. The heroines of Premchand or Tagore or Raja Rao or Kamala Markandaya had primordial strength, the wholeness of a full life. On the contrary, these modern characters are in the process of 'unbeing.' They are not the products of a tradition; they are the tissues of the broken modern life, of the unstable social and cultural milieu. In truth, this insistence on, or the openness in, or the deviations into sex is synoptic of man's condition in modern times. Man has become fully disillusioned. He has learnt from Nietzsche and Darwin, Marx and Engel, Freud and Adler. He has seen world wars, communal frenzy, mass massacre and irreparable physical sickness. He is experiencing umemployment, violence and unstability all around. All these have shaken him to his bones. He is no longer confident, no matter where he happenes to be, in the West or in India, and hence, to admil the truth, sex has become futility-syndrome in modern Indian life.

The predicament of man in contemporary India is fictionalised in more modern terms in the novels of Anita Desai, Nergis Dalal and Arun Joshi. In *Desai's Voices in a City*, Nirode is an existential Hamlet, for like him he feels shaken when he learns that his mother has become the mistress of another. His life meanders through self-torture, pride and existential agony. He is saved from cuicide by his sister Monisha who, ironically enough, herself disintegrates into madness and suicide. Monisha is another variation of Maya, the earlier heroine of Anita Desai. She is lonely and sensitive, pitted against the middle-class philistines. She feels 'whole' only when she is alone and her sensitive soul fails, like a flower, to stay on the twig against the wind of hatred. Hers is a deep cry for emotional communication. Amla seeks fulfilment through love. The death of Monisha gives her a glimpse of whet lay on the other side of this dark uncompromising margin. Sensitive like the other two, she finds disgust in life but she is able to inspire Dharma to a new creativity. Sita in *Where Shall We Go This Summer* is Desai's another symbol of isolation and boredom. She is like Maya and Monisha, sensitive and longing for emotional response. Her story moves from Bombay

to Manori, the island where Sita hopes to get relief from the tedium of life. Sita also fails to be rid of her restlessness. But she is more courageous than her predecessors. She feels stirred, though unwillingly and unexpectedly, to welcome her husband coming to the island. Ironically enough Raman, the husband, has not come to see her, or, to fetch her, as she had supposed. Sita feels betrayed by all and yet she compromises with the terms of life and returns to Bombay.

Nargis Dalal's *The Sisters* has no existential overtones but it reflects the recent ethos in the sensitiveness of Rita and her mental tensions. She suffers neglect and scorn for not being born as pretty as her twin sister. Deeply hurt, emotionally embittered, she grows lonely and insulates herself against the world. She finds an escape door in her imagination which opens on a dream world where all dimensions are blurred and edges softened and she becomes an 'embryonic creature' of her own making in her marriage with Ramesh she finds more of an insulation against the world than a union of souls or a communion between the selves. Even this 'feather quilt' is ruined by her sister Nina who visits her home after destorying her own married life, to destroy that of Rita now. Rita can endure no more and she poisons her husband. The story is pathetic but candid and convincing. Through a narrative intricately interwoven with reverie and memory devices, the mental state of Rita is dramatised. Her tensions and her reaction to the situation mirror the chaotic social values of the modern India.

Arun Joshi's novels further unravel the facets of crisis in man's life today. The central image of his novels is of a foreigner, for all his characters are archetypal strangers. His characters are different from Rajan, Krishnan or Sahgal's Sanad Shivpal's or even from Kamala Markandaya's Srinivas or Raj Rao's Ramaswamy. They are all, in one way or the other, in Jamesean dilemma of double cultures impinging upon the self. Joshi's characters are more modern beings, much less complete, much less 'authentic'. Though they are Indian in essence, they come closer to Kafka's heroes or Camus' outsiders. Sindi Oberoi's rootlessness is a consequence of the cumulative forces, his inter-racial parentage, his inter-cultural orientation and, above all, his personal experiences abroad and in India. His is not a dilemma of a lost identity, of an Indian staying abroad or coming back. His is a problem of existence, seeking fulfilment in terms of human relationship. He has never been loved, nor can be ever loved in the real sense. This deficiency in emotional complex has made his view of life myopic and a sense of insecurity and impermanence remains etched

in his mind. In his sense of unreality, insecurity and impermanence we can discern a symbol for the immediate conditions of Indian life. The story of Ratan Rathor, in his third novel, *The Apprentice*, is a severe indictment of the tyranny of a society without norms, without directions, without even perhaps purpose. His life is a journey from innocence to experience and also from self-love to self-remorse. Society wrecks him. Unable to find a job and crushed by the indifferences of the world, he takes to career making. In the process he loses his self. His remorse and restlessness make his character sensitive and convincing, but he fails to achieve tragic intensity. It is in his confession that the real virtue of his character comes up. Like the father Tyrone in Eugene O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night* and the Mariner in Coleridge's poem, he expiates through confession and this acceptance of the humble act of a shoe-shine is a mode of atonement.

The central experience of all these characters is of loss. They are lost wanderers without Moses. The experience of disinheritance from life is the reality of modern man's condition. Hence the recent Indo-English novelists, like their Commonwealth and Western counterparts, fully expose this face of reality. In their dilemma and their crisis they are contemporary Everyman. Quest has thus become the *leit motif* of the modern fiction. The novelists are in search of the true condition of man, his real identity. The artist is a pilgrim in process, a kind of Moses to man, and his art an exploration into reality. The format of fiction has become ecletic as the novelists are employing devices that they have learnt from cinematography painthing, music, folk arts, psychotherapy and other recent allied arts, but its final concern as usual has been to create a symphony of meaning out of the epiphanies of life. Despite the use of the elastic devices, myths and modern techniques, the fundamental concern for realism still remains the *raison d'etre* of Indo-English fiction.

TEXT AND SILENCE

Gurbhagat Singh

Literary theory has made considerable advance in the last decade. A major interest that has engaged theoreticians is the structure of the literary text. Roland Barthes in an article "From Work to Text" which was originally published in 1971, has said that the text is "experienced" only in an activity of production, it is a "combinatory systematic."[1] The text of Barthes is not a static work, but an active site, a "network" of relations between various disciplines and between the word and the reader-critic. The text cannot be displayed but only demonstrated as a "methodological field" for which the method also comes during the moments of experience.

Barthes has brought the text close to the dangerous field of phenomenology. The phenomenology maybe of Merleau-Ponty or of Husserl, it would accept the text as the reader's consciousness, a whole in which numerous dialectical forces meet. The critics may believe it or not, Barthes's text is also haunted by that insanely radical theatreman Artoud who holds that theatre is a "mise en scene" a dynamic production like "victims burnt at the stake, signaling through the flames."[2] The theatre to him is a ritualistic sacrifice before fire, the driving energy of life which releases the repressed forces, it is a liberating point of conflict in which a fierce dialectic rages to unleash the tensions of new meaning. To assure that the theatre is not a static text or work in the sense of Barthes, Artoud pronounce that "a theatre which subordinates the 'mise en scene'....to the text is a theatre of idiots...."[3]

What Artoud calls, so derogatively, "the text," is analogus to the "work" in Barthes, But the theatre of Artoud and the text of Barthes do not clash. They are both made before fire or in the flaming relations of their inner semiotics. When Artoud uses the expression "signaling through the flames" about the theatre and Barthes "Subversive" about the text they both mean that their objects are not inert, but dynamic sites of conflicting forces temporarily settled in a meaningful dialogue.

From the Artoudised Barthes, we can follow that the text is a site of conflicting forces brought to a hiatus in language in order to communicate a certain subversive awareness though it is not much safe to talk of a theory of the text any more. The French Marxist critic Rene Balibar has recently suggested that even the talk of the text is a bourgeois effort to establish its hegemony in the class war. By accepting the theory, she believes, we will be giving the text an a-historical status or an eternal invariant structure of Hegelian sort. We may not go to this extreme, but still we would have to accept that the text, even if it is to be granted a tentative status for its being a site or a meeting point of certain forces is rooted in history. No matter how "a-historical" or "eternal" the text appears to be, behind its appearance which gets its seeming stability from the "imaginary" work of the author, history stands in silence. By history in relation to the text, we should understand production relations, an ideology or ideologies in their relatively autonomous practices, and the subjectivized individuals weaving their ideas. This history keeps falling from the text like symptoms from the word of a schizophrenic. Lucien Goldmann has already told us that a literary work is an "advanced coherence"[4] of the collective ideology of a group that functions in a certain network of production relations. The author, in spite of his or her originality, does not get farther than doing the "imaginary" work. And we know the term "imaginary" in Lacan refers to what Marx and Sartre call "false consiousness."

Goldmann, Lacan, Marx and Sartre all, through their terms "advanced coherence," "imaginary" and "false" suggest that the author, in spite of his "originality" or the Longinian kind of "genius" much talked of in literary history, is not creating anything "revolutionary," he is actually bringing the text to a point of "intersection." The point of intersection can mean the fringes where the conflict takes place between the various signifying practices or between one stage of history and the other.

By using Lacan's "imaginary" related to psychonalysis, the neo-Marxist French critics have put the Coleridgean term "imaginative" to question. The entire Kantian German thought of the imagination down to the Marqusian "aesthetic dimension" needs a second reflection with this new development in the Marxist psychoanalystic theory.

Whether we are willing to replace "imaginative" with "imaginary" or not, we have to accept the advance made in thought that at least a major part of the imaginative is imaginary, and the sign-system that is developed in the process is an effort of the indiuidual representing

a group-culture to refine its specific world-view evolved through a determinate historical situation. Rene Girard, some time ago, in his *Desire and the Novel* tried to clarify how the "metaphysical" desire of the hero in the modern novel was born out of a degradation of the western culture and it was a further distancing from the authentic search or the search for "vertical transcendence." Girard was suggesting that the imaginative world of the problematic fiction hero was not a transcendence of his "ontological sickness" reflecting the degraded world, but only an imaginary projection of it. The presence of reality in this metaphysical desire, by using Girard's word, Goldmann has called a "mediatized" absence. In other words, the metaphysical desire or the imaginative world of the hero is shaped by the degraded reality no matter how estranged it looks.

Rene Girard's "mediatization," Lacan's "imaginary" and Althusser's "signifying" have esatablished that the text's relation with reality is not that of reflection but of signification. Behind the complex semiotic system that the text evolves, the historical reality stands in silence and like a kite flier keeps its object tied to the base. This lends a very pathetic and problematic kind of freedom to the signifying system of the text but still it makes room for the flight and also for the subjective dimension. In the conservative mimetic and reflective theories, both the flight and the subjective dimension could not be meaningfully acknowledged.

The conflicts of history with their negative effects like that of decadence or degradation and positive effects like that of unleashing the progressive praxis, are invisibly present behind the signification of the text. They have been called "unconscious" by Piere Macherey in his now classic work *A Theory of Literary Production*. A text has an "unconscious" from which symptoms keep falling through the conscious-sign-sytem, he suggests. His notion of the historical unconscious of the text has come from the Freudian Lacan who says that the word always refers to the Other, it is dialogical even when it fumbles in schizophrenia or aphasia. It means that the web-work of the subject trying to cross certain boundaries only hits the boundary walls to communicate across, but cannot speak from the other side. For that a new stage of history has to be attained. The subject alongwith its imaginary work can only have a glimpse of or a message from the other side but cannot speak from there, for which its existential site has to change, which needs lot of demolition work. So the imaginary enterprise or the signifying system of the individual as evident in the text remains a passionate seeing beyond.

GURBHAGAT SINGH

The recent Marxist psychoanalytic theory alongwith the structuralist represented by Althusserians, Lacan and Roland Barthes, has very successfully clarified the difference between the imaginary and the imaginative and thereby demystified the latter. Its work is parallel to Wittgenstein's in philosophy though whereas he was pointing towards a veiled Platonic ideal, the literary theorists under reference, look to be advocating an historical relativism.

The Marxist-Lacanian theory has done a useful job in pointing up the element of illusion and weaving in the "imaginative," but to call it an "advanced coherence" or the world-view of a group is to dispossess the "imagination" of its claims to originality. Quite significantly the notion of "advanced coherence" questions the new critical talk of "a-historicity" about the poetic imagination. If we accept this criticism, then, the new-critical claim appears to be the bourgeios world-view in a much complex form. But still the point of intersection at which the imagination takes shape brings to the fore a real problematic. Karl Jaspers would say that the point of intersection is the "boundary-situation" from which an individual pressurizes the limits, and "transcend." The liberal para-Marxists have also begun to say that a text can hit beyond the group world-view. In other words, it can rupture ideologies. Though shock, distortion, and estrangement, a "revolutionary" text creates a hiatus between the ideology and the world and de-ideologizes with a futuristic vision. The new speculatory object that the futuristic text creates is not illusory, but brought out of a scientific understanding of the historical movement. The speculatory or the futuristic imagination of this sort then is not imaginary, it is only shaped by another dimension of silence which we may call visionary or utopian. That through its specific devices, a literary text transforms the "signifier" of ideology and the "signified" of history, has been recently suggested by Terry Eagleton in his *Criticism and Ideology*. The linguistic or metaphoric structures of the text through mutual collisions and syntheses alter signifiers related to particular ideologies and thereby change the interpretation of history by putting it into the dynamics of change.

The collisions and syntheses of signs that the text creates are the work of the imagination that is partly rooted in the other side or the envisioned utopia. Whether we go the Marxist way or the idealist-mystic way, they both accept that the imagination does refer to the Other. The Marxists would say that the Other is not confined to production relations and the ideologies extended to "advanced coherences" but also refers to the vision

of the future. The idealist-mystics would say that the Other is a living totality, God or the conscious energy that speaks. Silence is the tuning in to hear Him. In the *Psalms* it is said, "Be still, and know that I am God" (Ps 46). A later *Book of Wisdom* says: "When all things were in quiet silence and night was in her swift course, Thine Almighty Word, O Lord, leaped down from heaven.[5]

The Biblical-mystical silence is an open consciousness to receive the inrush of God. The imagination of the mystical or the Biblical poet cannot be a magical emptiness or contrived content. It is listening to, become a certain consciousness. Martin Buber, the most influential Jewish philosopher of this century, says in his work *I and Thou* that you cannot conjure up Theophony; to be inspired means to enter into relation. I and Thou need no mediator. Magic desires to obtain its effects without entering into relation, and practises its tricks in void. Thus the dialogical religious imagination, in the sense of Buber, is concrete, it is not imaginary.

The speculatory imagination of the neo-Marxists and the dialogical imagination of the Buberesques mystics, are both based on concrete understanding and the dynamics of getting on to something specific though they are both inadequate in their own ways. They do save the imagination from being imaginary but still at the same time leave something undealt with.

The neo-Marxist theory has yet to grasp the historical human pushing off the limits and trying to communicate across the boundary walls which may mean first being and then moving in a trans-planetary field. The effort at communication while being in a boundary situation is speaking with *Existenz*. Here historical consciouseness finds its fulfilment in a trans-planetary and trans-historcal dimension. This imagination becomes praxis oriented and encompasses itself in the "species-specific" situation. In other words the imagination realizes and pushes towards the maximal realization of the possibilities of human beings as a species and hits the limits for further evolution. The most authentically historical imagination will always manifest in reaching to this other side. The weaving as an "advanced coherence" or bordering on the night with a cessation of spirited language as happens in Beckett and Kafka, are the manifestations of false or inauthentic consoiousness by presenting which, the imagination, despite being true, does not get to the evolutionary truth. The insubstantial imagination of Beckett and Kafka survives on formal devices, it poetizes the imaginary and takes

to literal silence and as an "alternative"; as Steiner says, to the silence of a futuristic vision which happens in Yeats and Neruda.

The Buberesque mystical imagination though is not a conjuring up, still it has no base of the *Dasein* or historical. Can the meeting take place in a silence without any awareness of the existential situation? The silence cannot be received and assimilated to significance without the situational awareness, the meeting may remain a faking or conjuring up.

Both the neo-Marxist psychonalytic theory and the Bubersque-idealist theory, with their advances and limitations, establish that the text as a site or consciousenss is made up of two silences: the historical-situational, and the historical-utopian also called "fictional" because in spite of its graspable determinants it is not limited to them. The message and structure of fiction go beyond history and humans to larger evolutionary principles of which humans as a species are a small though significant part. The evolutionary aspect of literary fiction may it be sparked off by history and the specificity of humans as a species, yet it has an autonomy of its own. For that reason it is not an "advanced coherence" of a particular group ideology. It is an avant-garde vision born out of both historical understanding and trans-human consciousness based on an advanced logic or higher mathematical principles. The homology can also be given of the *Mahashunya* of which the Buddhists speak. The fictional silence of this sort that permeates the text is communicated out of the signifier.

The signifier of the text is born from the dialectical meeting of the historical-situational and the historical-utopian or fictional silences in the signs. The dialectic radically modifies or even destroys the signified of the sign. Its bond with history is broken. The surrealistic kind of estrangment that takes place through distortions, ironic slants, and the explosion of the dialectic, does not let the signs keep their bonds with the history based ideologies. There is tremendous de-ideologization under the dialectical pressure and the devices of estrangement. As the siginfied begins to disintegrate, the burden of communication is taken over by the signifier. The literary communication then takes place through the signifier.

The signifier that is shaped by the dialectical meeting of the two silences in it is in fact loaded, but it appears as empty. Its inner dialectic only helps in suppressing the truth which remains buried like mines. The signifier keeps feigning emptiness. Jacques Derrida has interpreted this emptiness of the signifier as "differance" or "erasure." He suggests that the signifier

suppresses the meaningful world of the "diseased" subject in the Nietzschean sense. That means that the signifier of the text has neither a subject nor an object. It elides both. If the sign has a minimal reference to the Other it is only for the "sign (or signifier) to operate as such."[8] Otherwise Derrida says that the (literary) signifier is characterized by the absence of the Other. Derrida's translator Gayatari Chakarvorty interprets his sign as a play of presence and absence because he does not quite suceed in eliminating the Other. It is there in some form, though to bring out his sign, as interpreted here, he has strongly criticised the Saussurian sign that smacks of a theo-presence or St. Augustine's God.

If the Derridian sign is a play of presence and absence, then, if interpreted after him, the literary signifier cannot be empty. The minimal Otherness that it needs to operate as much makes the sign retain the meaningful world of the subject and it cannot change its status to the fully empty signifer.

In the light of Derrida's findings, we can say that the literary signifier is empty with its minimal Otherness to operate as such. The minimal here should be interpreted as the genetic and the utopian shadow of silence that colours the signifier. It specifies as well as delimits it in a particular moment of history. And this is done by dialectically energizing the surface of the signifier. Even when the signifier clowns to be homeless and goalless like a gypsy, its genesis and the ending keep falling like symptoms from its semiotic conduct or the effect. In a rather pathetic way to establish its literariness, a parasitic kind of aethetic quality, the literary signifier has to keep denying its constitutive silence so that it can mean the non-meaning, the parasitic.

The kind of literary signifier hermeneuticized here can be illustrated with the help of Yeats. The following stanza in the poem "Leda and the Swan" qualifies for this purpose:

> A shudder in the loins engenders there
> The broken well, the burning roof and tower
> And, Agamemnon dead

The poem communicates the moment of Leda's rape by the god Zeus in the form of a gigantic swan. Yeats is suggesting how a creative moment is passionate and engenders a dialectic. With the help of Freudian imagery Yeats in these lines sets consciousness or the female genitals ablaze

with energy that evoke the history of Western civilization from the days of Helen to Yeats's own when the West was still smouldering after the first world war. The way he uses the utterly phoneticized "shudder," "engendery" "burning,s' "dead," they clash with each other both in sounds and meaning "broken."transforming their immediate nouns into signs, and then the signs into signifiers as they lose their signifieds in the process. A fierce transformational dialectic is established as an evolutionary principle of humans having dimensions both historical and trans-historical. What happens at the micro-level in this stanza is also true of the poem as a whole at macro-level. The poem itself comes out as an empty signifier shaped by the silences.

This paper proposes that the literary text is shaped by two silences: the *historical-situational* which is the invisible presence of social, economic, political practices based on production relations, and the *fictional silence* suggesting the rupture of ideologies and a utopian subversion which should be interpreted both historically and trans-historically. Historically, the second silence refers to futuristic thought related to the latent evolutionary forces of the collective life of a society and trans-historically to the humans' "species-specific" evolution that crosses the boundary of the society or the situation to which the text has responded. Finally the literary text is an energized metaphorical communication or an empty signifier with a depth of disturbing silences.

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MURRAY KRIEGER AND THE SURVIVAL OF NEW CRITICISM

Sadananda Misra.

Murray Krieger is regarded as the most important critic of the Post-Newcritical era. His critical postition can be seen as a fulfilment of the unfinished theoretical task not only of the New Criticism but of the post—Kant—Coleridgean poetics in general. Krieger is the only important post—New Critical critic who keeps the issues, concerning poetry raised by the new critics and their predecessors, alive and has tried to "find a new life for it."[1] In him we find the fulfilment of New Criticism and its validity. He has, through his numerous writings, attempted to systematize and vindicate the basic principles of New Criticism and also has given great respectability to New Criticism as well has his own position in his *Theory of Criticism, A Tradition and its System* by placing them in the great tradition of Western poetics which started with Aristotle. Though Krieger's position in relation to the New Critics was an ambivalent one in his first book *The New Appologists for Poetry*, it has become absolutely clear in *Theory of Criticism*. Besides, Krieger has successfully defended the basic New Critical principles against the runaway anti-formalism of the phenomenological criticism and the stubbern anti-humanism of Structuralism. He also opposes the Structuralist stand which does not differentiate poetic discourse from other forms of discourses. Had he not done so New Criticism might have sunk under the welter of the advedtures of the so-called newer criticism and by this time as will have been forgotten. Hence in a very true sense New Criticisms survives in him and finds its ultimate validity and justfication.

The basic premises of New Criticism as one might put it are : a) a poem is an object, b) parts of a poem are organically related, c) close analysis of the text enables a critic to understand and enjoy a poem. These are strictly adhered to by Krieger in his theory and practice even though he sometimes appears to be moving for afield in the direction of existentialism and phenomenology. Krieger admitted early that he is ".... a new offshoot

of....contextualist movement"[3] and he has never lost sight of his basic contextualist position even though he has modified it constantly and in course of time has evolved a paradoxical poetics of his own. In modifying New Criticism it ought to be emphasised that he has never compromised with its basic tenets and has rather shown how New Criticism, in its basic assumptions, can "accomodate alien perspectives and yet.... thrive (s)."[3] or in other words he has tried "....to incorporate them [the aline perspective] without undoing [his own] construct, to swallow them without getting indigestion."[4] First Krieger steadfastly holds to the New Critical notion of a poem as a discernible object but he at the same time would not accept it without qualification. Though he would not "collapse the poem into the poet's consciousness" he sees a point in phenomenological critic's attack of the New Critical concept of a poem as an objects and in his characteristic way calls the poetic object an "intentional and immediate object."

Closely allied with the concept of a poem as an object is the concept of form. Krieger stubbornly opposes the antiformalism of Georges Poulet, the leader of the Geneva School, and confronts him with his demand for form in art. A major portion of his *Theory of Criticism* is devoted to the consideration of the humanistic need of form in art. The opposition to form means, according to him, the rejection of order in art and the acceptance of the essential chaos of life. His fundamental alliance with New Criticism, as can be seen, is precisely on this ground. Krieger preserves and justifies form as a fundamental human impulse and writes: Man's "capacity to create forms and to impose them on matter in a way that brings it to organic life can free him from history by allowing him to reshape it as he wills."[5] Thus, form, for him, becomes an inevitable, existential and metaphysical need of man. It might be mentioned in this context that the formalism that Krieger, like the New Critics before him, espouses is not an empty and barren formalism as it has been sometime misunderstood but it is a humanistic and vital formalism and "its forms claim to be the forms of an organic life and its living language."[6] The New Critical equation of form with meaning ("form is meaning") has been fully coroborated by Krieger. Besides, in *Theory of Criticism* Krieger strengthens the New Critical tradition by showing the ancient roots of formalism in Aristotle and Coleridge and other important critics in the Western humanistic critical tradition. Krieger has argued cogently and convincingly to show how both Aristotle (in spite of his mimetic theory) and Coleridge (in spite of his focus on consciousness) have celebrated the formative power

of the poet. By so doing Krieger has definitely broadened the New Critical tradition which he considers to be essentially humanistic in character.

As we know the aesthetics of organicism has been a major preoccupation of the New Critics. This is a legacy which the New Critics got chiefly from Coleridge. Though Coleridge's concept of a poem as a "totality, a unity in multiplicity, an organism" was the immediate source of the New Critics, especially Cleanth Brooks, the concepts of unity, coherence and even organicism are as old as Aristotle. Krieger is out and out an organicist or Contextualist. He has mercilessly criticized Ransom and Tate for not being able to meet the true contextualist requirements such as the inclusion of language as a formative factor in poetic composition and for dicotomizing the poem.[7] In contextualism, Krieger comes closest to Brooks whose multiplecity of can tensions be compared to Krieger's "Brooklyn Bridge of suspension." For Brooks, as for Krieger, metaphor is the microcosm of poetry. A whole book Kreiger: by *The window to Criticism, Shakespeare's Sonnets and Modern Poetics*,[8] is a study of the microcosmic and miraculous nature of metaphor.

Besides Coleridge as we know, Kant is the other most important theoretician who has influenced the New Critics most. Kant has profoundly influenced Ransom and Tate in the formulation of their critical theories. Kant's premise was that literature is an integral mode of knowledge which is distinct from all other modes. Literature offers complete knowledge which is not available in any other discourse. Further more, Kant's aesthetic humanism and love of the particular was a shaping force behind Ransom's criticism. As we know, Ransom was the most Kantian of all the New Critics. Krieger avowedly places himself in the Kantian tradition and in *Theory of Criticism* Kant voicelessly, mostly through Coleridge, pervades the whole book. Hence Krieger's therotical basis can be taken to be the same as those of the New Critics as far as Kant is concerned.

Though Krieger is more famous as a literary theoretician, his close analysis of texts is not at all less impressive. His earliest excursion into close reading of texts was Donne's "Valediction Forbiding Mourning" which served as the basis of his study of poetry in *The New Apologists for Poetry*.[9] For this, he was doubtlessly indebted to the insights of Cleanth Brooks. Since then, in him there never has been a dearth of practical criticism in the best New Critical tradition. His *A Window to Criticism*, is a magnificient reading of Shakespeare's sonnets and books like *The Tragic Vision and the Classic Vision* and *The Play and Place of Criticism* offer minute and insightful analyses

of poems, plays and novels. The charge that the epigones of the New Crstics have often travestied practical criticism———the most important pedagogical weapon of the New Critics——by mechanically and indiscriminately applying the method, will not at all hold good in the case of Krieger. His reading offers critical standards leading to discrimination.

Now, Krieger can be seen as a fulfilment of New Criticism in many ways. The most important limitation of New Criticism as Krieger has shown in his numerous writings, is its lack of systematic and consistent theorisation about poetry. New Criticism has often been charged, though unjustly, for fostering an "esoteric aestheticism" having no emphasis on the social function and effect of literature. In the *New Apolgists for poetry*[10] Krieger has raised many objections against Ransom and Tate for failing to develop a conistent theory of organistic poetics. Though the New Critics did not separate art from life they had no theory for demonstrating as to how an autonomous and contextually sealed poem can be related to life without any violation of the context. Krieger in *The Window to Criticism* has elaborately argued on this point and has demonstrated how literature can be related to life through the "miraculous metaphor", or in other words he has shown how a poem, even while functioning as an autonomous object (having a closed context), can have a window to the external world.[11]

New Criticism has been charged for its so called ahistorical nature as it tends to isolate a work from its historical context. The charge, of course is not defensible. As Rene Wellek has pointed out the New Critical rejection of academic scholarship was wrongly taken to be the rejection of the "historicity of poetry.', He writes: "....the New Criticism embraces a total historical scheme, believes in a phiolosophy of history and uses it as a standard of judgement.[12] Even then the New Critics as organicists appear to find no thoretical way of relating the unique closed context of a poem to its cultural context except perhaps through language. Krieger eschews this dilemma through his paradoxical model of poetics that considers a poem both as a uniqe closed context and at once culture bound. It is this unique model that does not exclude the historical context which prompted Wesley Morris to place Krieger in the company of a new historicist like Roy Harvey Pearce.[13]

One of the important limitations of New Critics, as has been pointed out by Rene wellek, is their narrow provincialism in the face of "inexhaustible wealth of world's literature." The New Critics, Wellek writes:.... "are extremely Anglocentric, even provincial. They have rarely attempted

to discuss foreign literature of if they have done so, their choice has been confined to a very few obvious texts."[14] But when one looks at Krieger one finds him giving literary theory a true international status that it deserves. In his practical criticism also he has discussed writers belonging to many European Countries (Gide, Camus, Mann, Dostoevsky are some of the examples). He has also shown acute awareness of the kind of literary theorizing going on throughout the world. Thus he has been able to eschew the so called provincialism of the New Critics.

Another distrust which many critics feel towards the New Critics is for their orthodox and conservative religious and political views. Literary Criticism and aesthetics, many justly feel, should be free from such personal ideologies. Cleanth Brook's Anglicanism and Allen Tate's Catholicism are cases in point. Agrarian ideology of Ransom and Tate's is also considered to be a narrow ideology. But Krieger is remarkably free from any such extraliterary ideology in both his theorizing and practice. He is a—political in his theorizing and his only preoccupation is with humanistic aesthetics and literary criticism. The New Critics, early in their career, pleaded earnestly for inclusion of literary criticism in the curriculum of the universities. Ransom's essays, "Criticism Inc." is an example of such pleading. The New Critics succeded in their attempt subsequently and criticism was included in the syllabbi of many American Universities. Krieger has worked tirelessly in this line and has helped to establish the School of Criticism and Theory in the university of Califiornia which is doing exemplary work in the field of literary criticism.

Lastly, Krieger's most valuable role as a defender of the basic New Critical principles lies in his very successful refutation of the romantic impulse in the phenomenological critics and their allies and the barren formalism of the structuralists and the decentering impulses of a post—structuralists like Jacques Darrida. Under his rigourous theoretical challenge the structure of thought of both these schools collapse. If he has modified the position of the New Critics he has done so in order to confront these new and revolutionary alternatives which are at present posing challenges to the New Critical tradition and the tradition of Kant—Coleridge behind it. *Theory of Criticism* one must admit, is a clear delineation of the contiunity of the New Critical tradition and a vindication of its fundamental principles. Though Krieger in his writings appears to be an embattled critic trying to defend a tradition which has become slightly *Passe* in the face of the march of newer criticisms,

his vindication is undoubtedly a vindication of poetry or literature in general. He is a tenacious survivor of an age old tradition of Western Poetics and his validity is no doubt the validity of New Criticism.

NOTES

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THE CRITICAL PREMISE OF ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY

V. Rama Murthy

Looking at the three volume *Selected Papers* brought out recently by the Princeton University Press in the Bollingen Series and the books which are already well-known, one finds it difficult to sum up in a single paper the various theories, concepts, and critical approaches implied in Coomaraswamy's writings. His erudition of the East and the West and his massive efforts at a synthesis of world cultures cannot be justly estimated without a penetrating and polyglot knowledge of art, literature, philosophy and religion found in Greek, Sanskrit and Pali languages. Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy, as his name speaks for itself, belongs to three cultures or more. He was born to a Simbhalese father and an English mother in Sri Lanka in 1877. He was brought up in England because of his father's early death. He studied geology at London University and was awarded doctorate for his discovery of thorianate. For sometime he served as Director of Minerological Survey of Ceylon but he gave up this post to become an art critic. He angered the British Government by his protests against the British policies in India and for this he had to quit Sri Lanka and seek shelter in America. Coomaraswamy's contribution to Indian revivalism is a separate saga in itself. His work is based on solid and lasting foundations like those laid by Max Mueller and Rhys Davids. While the other two interpreted Indian religious literatures, Coomaraswamy filled a great need by interpreting in a masterly way the Hindu and Buddhist art to the world.

There are many facets to Coomaraswamy's work but they need individual and lengthy studies. Here only a synoptic account of his critical stance is attempted. In the first place it may be pointed out that his grasp of poetics, dramaturgy, sciences of architecture and sculpture and literature was so total and complete that Sanskrit terms and phrases came to him naturally and spontaneously even when he spoke of things Western. It might be due to his own favourite idea of Vac--Sarasvati visiting him or his vision of an intellectual fraternity of Europe and Asia and his stupendous attempts at finding a

common base for major world cultures. He did not, however, make a direct use of traditional ideas or critical terms. Rather, he derived many of them from his studies of architecture and sculpture. Words like *sreya* (good), *preya* (attractive), *smarta* (traditional), *kritakritya* (well and truly made), *vastu* (theme), *tamas* (sluggish) and a number of other words acquire a technical connotation and give a unique quality to his writing. Without a vocabulary of this kind Coomaraswamy perhaps could not have written on Oriental art as lucidly as he did.

Secondly, Coomaraswamy looks at every thing even including literature, with an architectural eye. For instance, a line like *hiranmayeaa patrena satyasya-pihitam mukham* from Isa Upanishad has a philosophical or mystical meaning for us. Translated with the next line the mantra means: "The face of truth is covered by a golden vessel. Remove, O sun, the covering, for the law of Truth, that I may behold it." The traditional commentator explains away the mantra as a prayer made to the Sun-god, by a dying man seeking self-realisation, for the removal of the vessel that covered the face of the Truth. Questions like why the dying man prays to the Sun-god and how the Truth is covered by a vessel will plague any one who wants a thorough understanding of the mantra. Coomaraswamy in his famous interpretation of the symbolism of the architectural dome makes an incidental reference to this mantra and shocks us into a recognition of its meaning. He translates the line as: 'entrance covered over by the golden platter of truth." *mukha* means face, gateway or entrance and *patra* means vessel, platter or disc. By translating *mukha* as entrance or gateway and *patra* as platter or disc Coomaraswamy shows how the meaning of the mantra is related to the Sundoor of the Egyptian, Indian and Christian mythologies. It is also known as *kannika mandalam* in Buddhist architecture and it is the result of the ancient belief that the Univers is a home and the sun's disc acts as the door to the gateway of heaven. The Truth lies behind the door and the dead have to pass through the passage of the sun to reach Heaven. He also cites the painting "Entrance to the Celestial Paradise" of Hieronymus Bosch which seems to be an illustration of the mantra in Brihadaranyaka Upanishad: "He reaches the sun, it opens out for him like a hole in a drum."[1] But for Coomaraswamy's identification of the architectural myth in the mantra, it would have defied our understanding.

While Coomaraswamy confined himself largely to an elucidation of the principles underlying the ancient and medieval art, his ideas directly or indirectly influenced powerful band of critics and poets like T. E. Hulme,

T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound and W. B. Yeats who applied them to literature and contributed to a new canon of writing. Coomaraswamy's emphasis on *tradition*, his idea of poetic process as a kind of *contemplative activity* and the merits he found in non-representational *abstract art*, became the main tenets of the new canon. His opposition to naturalism in art seems to have led unintendedly to the birth of cubism and other geometric art. Although he viewed the modern world as a cul-de-sac, he wished very much for a continuation to the glorious heritage. He thought that the truth of the Vedic *rishis* the severe psychology and compassionate teaching of the Buddha, the clear light of Plato, and the Christian insight into God's intimacy with man would, if identified and retold, lead us "somehow back to first principles."[2] To discover those first principles, Coomaraswamy, with a rare energy and courage, made an Odyssey into hitherto neglected and forgotten areas like a pilgrim, like a historian and connoisseur.

According to what Coomaraswamy calls 'traditional theory' of art, ideas are never made but only discovered and entertained. That is, the artistic process is a kind of *discovery* and not an *individual creative activity*. The artist is "not expressing himself but that which was to be expressed."[3] The door, the arch and the circle emerged from the consciousness of a community of artists. Conmaraswamy distinguishes hieratic and folk art which are *smarta* (traditional) from academic art which is a 'class art' supported by a limited class of intellectual aristocrats. The images of the seated Buddha and the dancing Shiva Nataraja are the works that express the thoughts of a whole community of people. "It is the art of a unanimous people (jana)."[4] "The folk drawings of *alpana* are an outstanding example of 'fine art."[5]

Following the principles laid down in *Sukraniti* and *Manasara* he holds that the beautiful is not what pleases the fancy, but what is *in agreement with* the canon and that the artist should reject what has not been prescribed. He deprecates those who depend for guidance merely upon individual opinion, taste and passing fashion as *mythyapanditas*[6] (perversely educated). The artist has to execute what the people in their deepest want. To achieve this, the artist has to get immersed in tradition and traditional lore. Citing from the *Manasara* he points cut that the master architect and even his assistants (surveyors, paitners, and carpenters) were required by way of professional qualification to be acquainted both with the Vedas and with their accessory sciences (sthapatih.. vedavicchastra paragah). Architecture affects the whole society

and in it all other arts are harmonised in one great unity and as such, an architect "should be saturated with the traditional art of his race in order that he may know how to see"[7] True art corresponds to the common and collective need of the people and it bestows, in the word of Bharata, "the fourfold fruit of life—virtue, pleasure, wealth and spiritual freedom."[8]

Although the artist has to execute his work according to the established canon, his work is not altogether outside himself. He has to contemplate on the object before he sets to his work. "Since the eternal intelligible models are supersensuous and invisible, "says Coomaraswamy," it is evidently not by observation but in *Contemplation that* they must be known."[9] The artist has to look at what the *shastra* says with his mind's eye and contemplate on it. Speaking of impersonality in art T. S. *Eliot* uses the language of Coomaraswamy. *Donne*, according to Eliot, is finding an object 'which shall be adequate to his feelings' but Lancelot Andrewes is "wholly in his subject" and his emotion is purely contemplative. "It is not personal," says Eliot, "it is wholly evoked by the object of contemplation, to which it is adequate; his emotions are wholly contained an and explained by its object. But Donne's sermons are a means of self-expression."[10] In the language of Eliot the idea becomes obscure and changed but Coomaraswamy knows what he is talking about. To him *art is a kind of yoga*.[11] The mind of the artist should work like that of the yogi in his *nidhidhyasan*. Just as the yogi contemplates on the meaning of a *mahavakya* for its realization, the artist, too, should contemplate on the portrait given to him by *shastra*. Even in wordly art which is *asvargya* (not leading to heaven) the discipline of *yoga-dhyana* is needed: The portrait of a queen made for a love-sick king is given all the lineaments of a *padmini* and yet thought of as a good likeness (*susdrisa*). Even in secular art like this, the artist is expected to visualise in contemplation the form in agreement with pre-established canonical proportions.[12] The vision of beauty, as Coomaraswamy repeatedly says, is an act of pure contemplation, *not in the absence of any object of contemplation*, but in conscious identification with the *object of* contemplation."[13] Even the word *chaitya* is derived from *chitta* because it comes as part of the builder consciousness.[14]

Coomaraswamy admires art that is austere with a *hard outline*, non-*sensuous* and unsentimental (which characteristics strangely crept into Ezra Pound's Imagist Manifesto). He points out to the standing Buddhas at *Anuradhapura* and *Amaravati* as the purest and the noblest achievement of

forms, free of all irrelevant statements or striving after effect, and these are prototypes that are repeated in all subsequent Buddhist art."[16] The Sanchi art has a sensuous touch which makes it 'less precisely Buddhist.' The Gandhara sculpture is 'effiminate' with 'foppish' costume and 'listless gesture.' But the primitive Buddhas of Anuradhapura and Amaravati as associated with "the idea of mental discipline and the attainment of the highest station of self-oblivion." One might ask if only the austere and non-sensuous art is superior art, what about the full bosomed damsels of Ajanta with their music and love? What about the Khajuraho exuberance of sex? Coomaraswamy says that in the midst of the enchanting scenes in Ajanta there moves "the figure of one whose heart is set on more distant good, who feels an infinite compassion for all born beings."[17] Khajuraho sculpture involves symbolism and he explains it thus:

> The virtue (virya) of Isvara as Father of the world retains the connotation of virility, and is expressed in art by the erect limgam; the infinite fecundity of the Great Mother is boldly asserted in litanies and images that emphasize her Physical charms in no uncertain terms.....the physical ecstasy (ananda) of union is an image of the delight of the knowledge of Brahman: As a man united to a darling bride is conscious of neither within nor without, so is it when the mortal self is embraced by the all-wise Self.....In the later iconography, both Hindu and Buddhist, the two-in-one of manifested godhead is imitated in the pure ecstasy of philosophical forms enlinked, enlaced, and enamoured.[18]

Coomaraswamy shows that the Hindu-Buddhist, Islamic, and Christian art meet on common ground in their symbolic presentation and in their aversion to *sensuous naturalism*. According to him, symbolism is *a language and precise form of* thought. It is 'hieratic and metaphysical language' and not determined by 'somatic' or 'psychological' categories. Its function is in the 'analogical correspondence" of all orders and states and being or levels of reference." It is based on the idea *ydamutra tadamviha* (this world is in the image of that).[19] Plato approves of symbolic art and Coomaraswamy concurs with Plato who expects three *tasks* from an expert critic. The critic should find out what *archetype* is involved, whether it is *correctly and well made* and finally whether it is *good or not*.

Those who do not understand the symbolic character of Hindu art find the many armed, many headed gods and godesses to be grotesque. To such

people Coomaraswamy says: 'It is no criticism of fairy tale to say that in our world we meet no fairies.....and it is no criticism of beast fable to say that after all animals do not speak English or Sanskrit'[20] "Needless to observe that our arithmetical ability to count up arms, or to recognise theriomorphic elements in the artist's vocabulary, is not an aesthetic capacity. The *lakshanas* required are an integral part of the artist's problem (*karya, kartavya*) presented to him *a priori*; what we judge in him is not the problem, but the solution."[21]

Coomaraswamy finds a clear and adequate definition of art (or literature) in Viswanatha's *Sahityadarpana*, in the line *vakyam resatmakan kavyam*. He translates this statement as: Art is a statement informed by ideal beauty. As Coomaraswamy believes that Hindu art, literature and music are based on the same principles, what Viswanatha says of poetry may be taken to hold good for art as well. As the translation is inadequate Coomaraswamy further clarifies: Statement is the body, *rasa* the soul of the work; the statement and the beauty cannot be divided as separate identities. He also explains the much commented term *rasa*: It is a spiritual activity or experience not affective in kind, not dependent on subject matter or texture, whether lovely or unlovely to our taste, but arriving from a perfected self-identification with the theme, whatever it may have been. This pure and disinterested aesthetic experience, indistinguishable from knowledge of the impersonal Brhaman, impossible to be described otherwise than as an intellectual ecstasy, can be evoked only in the spectator possesing the necessary competence, an *inward criterion of truth* (*pramana*); as competent, the true critic is called *pramav*, as *enjoyer rasika*[23] Before closing this I would like to cite a powerful passage from Coomaraswamy's art criticism to demonstrate his method by example. His prose here rises to the level of sublime poetry and combines in it the culture of the three worlds. Here we find a connoisseur, a *pramatr*, a *rasika* and a *sahrdaya*-all in one:

> So far I have refrained from all aesthetic criticism and have endeavoured only to translate the central thought of the conception of Shiva's dance from plastic to verbal expression; without reference to the beauty or imperfection of individual works. But it may not be out of place to call attention to the grandeur of the conception itself as a synthesis of thought and sympathy of those rishi-artists who first conceived such a type as this, affording an image of reality, a key to complete tissue of life, a theory of nature, not merely satisfactory to a single clique or race, nor acceptable to thinkers of

one century only, but universal in its appeal to the philosopher, the lover, and the artist of all ages and all countries. How supremely great in power and grace the dancing image must appear to all those who have striven in plastic form to give expression to this intuition of life.....In the night of Brahma, Nature is inert, and cannot dance till Shiva wills it; He rises from his rapture, and dancing sends through inert matter pulsing waves of awak ening sound, and 10 matter also dances appearing as a glory around Him. Dancing, He sustains its manifold phen omena. In the fullness of time, still dancing, he destroys all forms and names by fire and gives new rest; This is poetry; but none the less science.

V. RAMA MURTHY

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16. "The Buddhist Primitives" *The Dance of Shiva* p. 60.
17. *Buddhism* p. 331.
18. "Art in Eastern Asia," *Selected Papers*, p. 24.
19. "Buddhist Art," *Selected Papers* p. 174.

20. "Indian Images with Many Arms," *The Dance of Shiva* p. 83.
21. "Art in Indian Life," footnote, *Selected Papers*, p. 88.
22. "Art of Eastern Asia, *Selected Papers*, p. 104-105.
23. Ibid.
24. *The Dance of Shiva*, pp. 77-78 *Vakyam rasatmakam kavyam*: I, for one, would translate it as: "A sentence well-written is poetry."

THE ELUSIVE TEXT AND THE QUESTION OF CONTEXT

G. S. Venugopal &
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(I)

In these days of 'deconstructive' criticism which calls in question the very notion of a stable text, it may sound presumptuous to suggest that a critic's job is not complete unless he is able to 'see the object as it is in itself'. This is a consummation devoutly to be wished, how-ever difficult it may be to realise this in practice. Rene Welek satirised the critics a long time ago by comparing them with the five blindmen of Hindustan whose partial reports could never adquately represent the elephant. As Ransom would say, "Twenty critics will enter the same poem and come out with twenty different reports."[1] Vain may it appear to try to reiterate one of the frequently misunderstood maxims of the New Critics—'the text is the thing'—and use it as a point of departure to examine the ways in which these critics read poems in relation to other critical attitudes.

Mere adherence to the text, its verbal surface, does not by itself make a critical approach any the better or any the more 'intrinsic' than other approaches to the work. This is a sobering truth brought home to us only too well by what is called 'the lemon—squeezer' type of reading a poem. The notion of the text seems to differ from critic to critic—one thing for the New Critic, quite another for the literary scholar, and an entirely different thing for the myth critic. The solution to the problem of the partial nature of crilical reports does not lie either in adopting a sort of critical sclecticisms or in looking at the text from a wider context——a context as wide as literature, or history, or language as a whole.

It is often said that the text itself is the context for the New Critic. This is true in so for as it implies that the New Critic would focus his attention chiefly on the text. Further, he would claim a uniquencess for the

text. 'Orgnic unity' is another normative term that makes its appearance frequently in the explications made by the New Critics.

'Unity' is a problem which involves one's apprehension of the relation of the parts to the whole. One of the frequently quoted authories in this area is Coleridge and his definition of the poem.

> A poem is that species of composition, which is opposed to works of science, by proposing for its *immediate* object pleasure, not truth, and from all other species (having *this* object in common with it) it is discriminated by proposing to itself such delight from the *whole*, as is compatible with a distinct gratification form each component *part*—[2]

This implies that the parts of a poem ought to cohere with the whole. A further implication that the pleasure derived from the poem is in proportion to the coherence of the parts with the whole is too well known to need repetition. It is also said that their norm suits better the form of the short poem—the lyric or the sonnet, and within this category the sort writtern by the poets of the seventeenth century. That they read these writers more often than others and that these poets provided normative examples for them cannot be gainsaid. But would it be true to maintain that this preference acted as an impediment preventing them from reading others, works objectlively ? It is these questions, among others, which are diussed in the following account of Tate's reading of Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale" and Ransom's analysis of *Lycidas*. No attempt is made here to offer a comprehensive analysis of their technique. Only a perspective is offered from which their practice could be looked at and examined in comparison with that of others.

(II)

One of the oft-repeated charges against the New Critical method is that it is "theoretically and temperamentally opposed" to romantic poetry.[3] Their notions of 'form', 'complexity', and 'unity' are said to be inadequate to deal with the sort of uniqueness found in romantic poets. The popular notion that the New Criticism can deal only with poetry of the metaphysicals is at best a half-truth. Brooks's performance in *The Well-wrought Urn* is sufficient testiomony to the flexibility and variouseness of the method. That Brooks was under some kind of an obligation to validate his method cannot be denied. That in this process he ran the fulher risk of 'monism' is also

well known. It was his friend Ransom who drew our attention to Brooks's unrelaxing attention to the individuality of the poetic object its *haecceitas*, no matter what poem he happened to be reading.

Tate offers a reading of "Ode to a Nightingale" in terms of comparison and analysis, rounded off at the end by an evolution. Starting from an examination of certain 'discrepancies' at the level of texture or the language of the poem he begins to look for possible reasons. These are sought not so much to impose as to explore meaning in terms of the various elements of the poem. Right in the beginning he refers to the pictorial mode of Keats which he finds 'inadequate' to bring about a convincing resolution of the dialectical tension of the ideal and the actual in the poem. Tate is much dissatisfied with the third stanza:

> Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
> That thou among the leaves hast never known,
> The weariness, the fever, and the fret
> Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
> Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
> Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
> Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
> And leaden—eyed despairs;
> Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
> Or new Love pine at hem beyond to-morrow:

Tate comments:

> It gives a "picture" of common reality, in which the life of man is all mutability and frustration. But here if anywhere in the poem the necessity to dramatize time, or the presence of actuality, is paramount. *Keats has no language of his own for* this realm of experience. That is the capital point. He either falls into the poetic language of the preceding age, or, if he writes spontaneously, he commits his notorious errors of taste; in either case the language is not adequate to the feeling; or, to put it "cognitively," he lacks an ordered Symbolism through which he may know the common and the ideal reality in a single imaginative act.[4]

Keats, in other words, does not have an adequate 'objective correlative' for his feeling here. Keats, unlike Dante, does not have an 'ordered symbolism' which would have enabled the young poet to bring together the ideal

and the actual. What Dante had, what Donne had, and Yeats, had, did Keats possess ? Tate seems to ask. Something has happended to the sensibility: a dissociation has set in; and hence, perhaps, this incapacity of Keats to dramatize passion in all its particularity and body.

About the dramatic structure of the poem, Tate, in the beginning, disagrees with Brooks and warren and their "excellent if somewhat confident analysis of the Nightingale ode"[5] Against their reading of 'unity' within the dramatic frame of the poem, he says:

> I am not certain of the meaning of what happens inside the frame; but at time I am not certain that it is necessary to understand it. There is no perfection in poetry. All criticism must in the end be comparative (this does not mean critical realtivity); it must constantly refer to what poetry has accomplished in order to estimate what it can accomplish, not what it ought to accomplish; we must heed Mr. Ransom's warning that perfect unity or integration in a work of art is a critical delusion.[6]

Tate's sensitive exploration of the 'imaginative dilemma' of Keats cannot be set aside as prejudicial or hostile. Agreeing with Robert Bridges that "Keats's art is primarily objective and pictorial, and whatever other qualities it has are, as it were, *added on to things as perceived*". Tate says that Keats was "a post of space whose problem was to find a way of conveying what happens in time; for it is time in which dramatic conflict takes place; and it is only by conversion into dramatic actuality that the parts of the verbal painting achieve relation and significance."[7] The ambivalence of the symbol of the nightingale, which as bird shares the mortality of the world, and as symbol purports to transcend it, has not been adequately dramtised by Keats, handicapped as he was by the pictorial technique.

Is there problem in Keats ? Or does Tate discover a problem given his preference for consistency and coherence within the terms of the tenor and the vehicle?[8] Is it a 'reading' or 'writing'? one is tempted to ask. But this is to question the entire theory the normative poetics of Tate. Although no one need ask whether he is objective, one could certainly ask how for he is right to put the reader 'in possession of facts'? Is he passing a final judgement on the kind of poetry Keats wrote?

A troubled reader of the ode, Tate finds inadequacy in the language of the third stanza which cannot successfully resolve the dualism of the ideal

and the actual. The thesis is offered but the antithesis suffers form an impoverishment of 'vehicles'. Then he finds the 'immorality' of the bird merely asserted without being validated in terms of dramatic action. Tate does not claim any superior knowledge, nor does he rewrite the poem for Keats. Confessing an unqualified admiration for one of the great poems of the language, he would show the limits of Keats's sensibility and the limitations of the pictorial mode,
He writes:

> The poem is an emblem of one limit of our experience: the impossibility of synthesizing, in the order of exprience, the antinomy of the ideal and the real, and, although that antinomy striked the human mind with a different force in dfferent ages (Donne's dualism is not Keats') it is sufficiently common to all men in all times to be understood.[9]

Let us recall for a moment Tate's own terms 'extension and 'intension'. Keats starts at the intensive and of the scale, and as romantic poet works towards the extensive end. But, according to Tate, he does not quite make it because his 'vehicle' fail him.

'Idea' we know is anathema to Tate beacuse it carries the taint of angelism. It must be transformed into 'image' by the symbolic imagination. Hence the *assertion.*

Thou was not born for death, immortal Bird: nags Tate with a difficulty which 'will not down' as he puts it. That the entire poem of Keats embodies this very difficulty in Keats' own terms appeals to Tate. For Keats is equally worried obout abstraction and is deeply attached to the particular——the body of the moment. But this nominalist attachment all but prevents the birth of the poem in words. Hence the poet has to compel himself to use words, 'abstract' moment, in order to make meaning. This ambivalence is there in Keats, and Tate, if any one, is aware of this.

In spite of these difficulties he returns to "the superior *dramatic* credibility" of the Nightingale ode and says:

> The fall of the "I" of 'ode to a Nightingale" into the trance—like meditation in the first stanza and the shocked coming to at the end *ground* the poem in imaginable action, so that the dialectcs of

the nightingale symbol do not press for resolution. So I confess a reserved agreement with Brooks and Warren.[10]

He now offers in conclusion a great range to the hints given earlier and points out the central difficulty of Keats. Dante, Shakespeare, and the seventeenth—century poets have such a sure imaginative grasp of the heavenly and the earthly, the physical and the spiritual love., that they provide a norm for all ages. In Keats, according to Tate, there is a "strong compulsion towards the realization of physical love, but he could not reconcile it with his idealization of the beloved. So we get what has been supposed to be characteristically romantic attitude—that to *die* at the greatest intensity of love is to achieve that intensity without diminution."[11]

If this is romantic attitude, then it is in Keats, more in any other romantic poet, that we get this experience realized in all its pulsating humanness. But Tate adds that this romanticism "represents a decline in insinght in imaginative and moral power." He thinks that "between Donne and yeats there was evidently a shrinkage in the range and depth of western man's experience." Adapting Elict's remark about Arnold, Tate says that Keats "did not know, because he lacked the maturity to know, the boredom, he knew a little of the horror: but he knew much of the glory, of human life."[12] If this is Tate's evaluation, would it be far-fetched to suggest that he is annotating a Yeatsian passage on Keats. Thus Yeats, the last romantic, on Keats in the poem, "Ego Dominus Tuus":

I see a School boy when I think of him,
with face and nose pressed to a sweet—shop window.
For certainly he sank into his grave
His senses and his heart unsatisfied.
And made—being poor, ailing and ignorant,
Shut out from all the luxury of the world,
The coarse—bred son of a livery stable—keeper——
Luxuriant song.

(III)

Ransom in his analysis of *Lycidas* attempts a close—reading of its metrical organization. He brings to bear on the poem his prior knowledge of the conventions of the genre. But this knowledge is always held in the background. He tries to derive meaning from the internal laws seen in the disposition of the various elements in the poem. He considers *Lycidas* as a

literary exercise and Milton as one who "mourns with a very technical piety."[13] Ransom sees the poem as "young, brilliant, insubordinate.." In this Milton "wrestles with an almost insuperable problem, and is kinsman to some tortured modern artists."[14] He considers the poem unique "for exhibiting at once the poet and the man, the technique and the personal interest, bound up tightly and contending all but equally the strain of contraries, the not quite resolvable dualism, that is art."[15]

Ransom refers to the poet and the man, each threatening to displace or suppress the other. He sees this conflict in the metre-making argument of the poem. Further, Milton seems to achieve a sense of poetic identity—by impressing his personal signature on the pastoral convention, a convention which he chooses to violate rather deliberately. Milton takes daring liberties with the *canzoni*, carrying it to "a point just this side of anarchy."

> The eleven stanzas of *Lycidas* occupy 193 lines but are grossly unequal and unlike. Such stanzas are not in strictness stanzas at all, Milton has all but scrapped the stanza in its proper sense as a formal and binding element. But there is perhaps an even more startling lapse. Within the poem are ten lines which do not rhyme at all, and which technically do not belong therefore in any stanza, nor in the poem.[16]

Another feature that Ransom refers to in relation to the structure of the poem is the 'breach in the logic of compostion' at various points.[17] The break, for example, when the monologue turns for a moment into narrative.

> But not the praise,
>
> *Phoebus* replied, and touched my trembling ears.

Even this is interpreted as a deliberate violation of logic, rule of composition, in order to be "different" and to be "John Milton."[18]

In his examination of the metrical form, Ransom does not miss the matrix from which *Lycidas* springs. In focussing attention on the metrical surface, the foreground of the poem, he raises questions relating to the special choice of modes of discourse that Milton makes and the unique voice that results from such a choice. What does Milton do with the *conzone* ? why does he 'roughen' it ? The ten unrhymed lines in the poem stand out "like bachelors at a picnic party of fast mated couples....[19] The

question is why Milton, who was quite competent to write regular and smooth verse, wrote these lines which are not in any way "lines by which he could have set special store.[20] What does one make of the allegorical intrusions? How does he preserve his poetic identty *vis-a-vis* the pastoral tradition? Ransom feels that Milton was passing through a crucial period in his career as poet.

> At this critical stage in the poet's career, when he has come to the end of the period of Minor poems, and is turning over his head the grand subjects out of which he will produce great poems, he is uneasy, sceptical, about the whole foundation of poetry as an art. He has a lordly contempt for its tedious formalities, and is determined to show what he can do with only half trying to attend to them.[21]

It would be worthwhile to complement this analysis of metre with the analysis of imagery by Brooks and Hardy. Both of them make a close—reading of *Lycidas*. Taking Dr. Johnson's celebrated dismissal as a point of departure, Brooks and Hardy offer a reading which sees a "rich synthesis" of the pagan-Christian conflict in the paradox of "pastor", at once pagan shepherd and Christain pastor.[22] They make a subtle exploration of the "water imagery" in the poem. *Lycidas* for them is not a great but flawed work, as it was for Wilson Knight when he referred to it as an "ascumulation of brilliant fragments."[23] Even the "asymmetricil bit" at the end is accounted for in terms of its effect in throwing "the whole poem back into perspective"[24] As against these explications, we can set Frye's account of *Lycidas*.

Taking the whole of literature as context, Frye puts the text of Lycidas within the total literary order to discover its meaning. For, he says:

> If we attend only to the uniqueness of Lycidas, and analyze the ambiguities and subtleties of its diction, our method, however useful in itself, soon reaches a point of no return to the poem. If we attend only to the conventional element, our method will turn a scissors - and - paste collection of allusive tags. Our method reduces the poem to a jangle of echoes of itself, the other to a jangle of echoes from other poets. It we have a unifying principle that holds these two tendencies togother from the start, neither will get out of hand.[25]

In actual practice what happens is that Frye's synoptic view tends to focus attention on the background so much that it always runs the risk of missing the trees for the wood. In seeking to discover a unifying principle by putting *Lycidas* in the hall of literary mirrors, he would in his turn produce a jangle of his own—'multiple variety in a wilderness of mirrors.' This is not to suggest that the method is irrelevent but that it too carries its own risks—risks worth taking when one is gifted with a mind like Frye's. As Hartman says, "Frye teaches us a lot about tradition, handing on, but less about what is handed on. He fails to bring together the form of Art and the form of its historical consciousness."[26]

Ransom's purpose here is not so much to offer an inclusive scholarly account of *Lycidas* as to look at its unique metrical form which is almost advertising itself demanding to be seen. But this limited objective does not limit or narrow down the scope of his inquiry. One can profitably compare Ransom's essays with another on *Lycidas*, its rhetoric of rhyme and metre by F. T. Prince.[27] One could at once sense the difference in the very feel of the prose. F. T. Prince does a very meticulous job and careful analysis but does not feel called upon to offer any radical explanation or hypothesis for the disorder found in the metres or rhymes.

(IV)

Within the framework of the New Critical therby, we see here two relatedtend encises. The approach of Tate and Ransom is that of a poet—critic examining the very genesis of the art of composition, the potentialities of various elements in the poem and what has been actualised in terms of the potential elements. They show an uncanny sense for the logic of composition and in spite of their prefrence for the well-formed work, are rarely lured by the necessity to *perceive* 'harmony' or 'unity' as value. 'Structure' for both Ransom and Tate exists in the poem always demanding to be reckoned with.

In contrast to this mode, the method of Brooks is basically that of a critic who regards the poem as finished product. a 'unity', the internal laws of which can be analysed—explicated in terms of images, meanings, and the verbal surface. Given the nature of this approach, one is less likely to encounter difficulties in reading the poem, and sometimes into the poem, values like harmony or unity. We would be doing less then justice

to Brooks if we do not hasten to qualify the statement by saying that in the hands of Brooks the instrument serves adimrably and produces excellent results. But it must be said that he is less likely to be nagged by 'doubts and uncertainties' regarding his premise than Ransom or Tate. A bit of clarification is in order here.

Tate, for example, is bothered by the concluding lines of the "ode on a Grecian Urn" like so many others before him. He would rather throw his weight on the side of Robert Bridges and Middleton Murray than concede the brilliance and illumination of the analysis of the ode by Burke or Brooks. He would rather be called an eccentric later-day Johnson than find a satisfying sense in the concluding lines. Is he being wilful ? Would a philosophical model offered by Spitner convince him of the ekphrastic mode of the ode ? Of course, we know, that he is not alone in his dissatisafaction. What must be set down here is that the dissatisfaction does not arise from a temperamental dislike of the romantic mode.

The reading of Brook is based on the mataphoric structure of meaning. The whole poem is examined in terms of an expanded metaphor. His brilliant insights into the nature of the language of poetry are inevitably related to a 'blindness' to structure, extension, or logic in the poem. The legitimacy of the 'insight' becomes all the more valuable because of this 'blindness', not in spite of it. Brooks cannot have his insight into 'paradox' and irony without suppressing the fact of 'intentionality' in a poem. Once you take into account poem as 'intentional act,' you have to account for elements other than images.

This point can be clarified further by examining *Lycidas* which can be called a long poem or one which has 'magnitude' where in the problem of the parts and the whole—their harmony or lack of it—is seen to best advantage. Here again Ransom is disturbed by a 'breach' in the logic of composition which he finds difficult to account for except in terms of the imperious individuality and insubordination of the young Milton. Again the reading of Brooks and Hardy is instructive. The Semantics of the poem is less resistant to satisfying analysis that leads to the discovery of harmony than the logic or structure of the poem with a beginning, middle, and end. Not that Brooks and Hardy are wrong but that they could not be expected to go wrong given their preoccupation with images, meanings, and connotation. The asymmetrical bits fall in line, once the pervasives drives of the presiding metaphor are charted. The longer the poem the more difficult

is for the critic to sustain the credibility of mere verbal analysis. Hence, in actual practice, one is stuck with pairs of terms like structure and texture extension and intension. It is well to remember here the balanced comment of Helon Gardner :

> The discovery of a work's centre, the source of its life on all its parts, and response to its total movement—a word I prefer to structure' for time is inseparable from our apprehension of works of literature—is to me the purpose of critical activity.[29]

In trying to reconcile the various approaches to *Lycidas* Abrams is obliged at the end to make a confession to having added his own version of the poem.[30] Does it mean that criticism is fated to be partial in its insights, blind to every thing except its own perspective when the critic enters the temporal labyrinth of the poem? The attempts at widening the context,——the 'horizon' of meanings, the intentional arc of the poem—does not ensure access to complete meaning, or 'intrinsic' meaning, or 'objective' meaning, There is no easy way of earning one's critical insight without entering into what is called the 'hermeneutic circle'. That it is 'vicious' making the text a treacherous network of shifting contexts each time you enter it, is well documented in modern criticism. Heidegger writes: "what is decisive is not to get out of the circle but to come into it in the right way.. In the circle is hidden a positive possibility of the most primordial kind of knowledge.[31]

One is encouraged by the wry hope held out by Auden in his "Labyrinth" :

> The Centre that I cannot find
> Is known to my unconscious mind ;
> I have no reason to despair
> Because I am already there.

In relation to the true act of critisim, linguistics, stylistics, and all the thousand and one aids do not make the critic's job any the less difficult or less responsible.

NOTES

1. Rancom, *Poems and Essays* (New York : Random House, 1924, rpt. 1955), pp. 150-51.
2. Coleridge, *Biographia, J.* Shawcross, editor (vol II, 2 vols. ; London : Oxford Univers Press, 1907 : rpt. 1967), p. 10.
4. Allen Tate, "A Reading of Keats", *John Keats : Odes*; G. S. Fraser, editor (Londo The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1971), p. 155.
5. Ibid., p. 157.
7. Ibid., p. 151-52.
8. We may note here that Tate is not alone in this kind of judgement. See. H.W. Garrod The close connections of thought in the Spring Odes," *John Keats : Ods*, 70-71
9. Allen Tate. "A Reading of Keats", *John Keats :Odes*, p. 158
10. Ibid., p.161.
11. Ibid., p. 164.
12. Ibid., pp. 164-65
13. Ransom, "A poem Nearly Anonymous," *Milton's Lycidas : The Tradition and the poem* C. A. Patrides, editor (New York : Holt, Reinhart and Winston, Inc., 1961), p. 67
14. Ibid., p. 64
15. Ibid., p. 66
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid., p. 79.
18. Ibid., p. 80
19. Ibid., p. 69
20. Ibid,, p. 69.
21. Ibid., p. 70
22. Cleanth Brooks and Johan Edward Hardy, "Essays in Analysis : *Milton's Lycidas*.
23. G. Willson Kinght, "The Forzen Labyrinth : An Essay on Milton, "*The Burning Oracle* (London, –1939). p. 70.
24. Brooks and Hardy, "Essays in Analysis : *Lycidas*. "*Milton's Lycidas* : *The Tradition and the poem*, p. 152.
25. Northrop Frye , "Literature as Context : Milton's *Lycidas*. "*Milton's Lycidas The Tradition and the poem*. p. 209.
26. Goffey H, Hartman, "Toward Literary History, "*Dedalus* (vol, 99 No. 2 Spring 1970), p. 361.
27. Vide F. T. Prince, " The Italian Element in *Lycidas*" *Milton*"s *Lycidas*: The *Tradition and the poem* pp. 153–166.
28. Leo Spitzer offers a close–reading of the Ode answering some of the questions raised about the concluding lines. He also shows the limtations of the semantic approach, cautioning us to beware of the 'intellectual grammar'. even as we are sensitive to the 'imagistic grammar'. Vide Leo Spitzer, "The Ode on a Greeian Urn' or Content Vs. Metagrammar, "Comparative Literature (Vol. 7, 1955). pp. 203–25.
29. Helen Gardner, *The Business of Criticism* (London : Oxford University Press, 1959), pp.23–24
30. See M. H. Abrams, "Five Types of Lycidas", *Milton's Lycidas, The Tradition and The Poem*. p. 230
31. See Paul de Man, quoting Heidegger in *Blindness and Insight* (New York : Oxford University Prees, 1971), p. 30.

WILSON KNIGHT'S THEORY OF SPATIAL INTERPRETATION

K. Natarajan,

Before considering Professor Wilson Knight's Spatial theory of Interpretation something needs to be said about his pervasive, but not sufficiently acknowledged influence on the general critical climate of his time. It might crudely be said, that for most teachers of Englsh literature, he has been a writer whom it has been good to borrow from, but imprudent to praise.[1] Somehow, Knight, though a major critical force—especially in Shakespeare studies—since the publication of *The Wheel of Fire* (1930), does not quite fit in among the various other critics and their schools. There is something unorthodox in his work. He is not "academic", to start with; and this we know, always causes problems : Indeed for nearly fifty years he has been registering his dissatisfaction with "literary criticism", which he says, "has always been my peculiar *bete noire*". In its place he has been offering something else; the results of his efforts have both dazzled and infuriated other critics. By and large they have been fascinated by his findings, but at the same time they have not always gauged their worth.

George Watson, with hasty over-simplification, concludes that "the vast school of Shakespearean criticism inspired since 1930 by G. Wilson Knight has ambititiously interpreted dramatic characters as if they are philosophiecl ideas"[2]. Wellek, with more ambitious, and narrow critical stricrures, dcalares that Knight transposes criticism "something like a total world view or even a system of philosophy". "We have all learned from Wilson Knight", Wellek states,".....but most of us have become increasingly dissatisfied with the arbitrariness of his associations, the intrusion of a crude psychoanalysis and of a strangely misused Nietzsche"[3]. In the critical equation of Howard Felperin "if G. Willson Knight is the Don quixote among modern students of romance, Northrop Frye is the Prospero"[4].

But it is encouraging to see that (the Prospero himself) Mr. Northrop Frye has recently come out with a statement acknowledging his debt to

Professor Knight: "Like most students of my generation Knight's book had much the same effect on me that Chapman's Homer had on Keats". Knight has survived fifty years of adulation and scorn. There are an impressive number of duplicate copies of *The Wheel of Fire* or *The Imperial Theme* in most collegiate Libraries. That shows despite the neglect of Knight in critical anthologies his magisterial volumes on Shakespeare have continued to help scholars and students of Shakespeare.

Knight calls his method "a new science of poetic interpretation". Interpretation, he claims, "uses the same faculty that made and constitutes the poem. Intellect and judgment though active, are never the less used in submission to the imaginative whole being inspected.[6] He does not believe in making value judgement: "the pronouncing of judgements is an unprofitable, indeed scarcely a sane, pursuit : the only responsible activity will be interpretative"[7].

It is very difficult to define precisely what Knight calls "Spatial theory of Interpretation". His interpretations seem to exhibit characteristics similar to the intuitive methods we use in chess and mathematics. Elsewhere Knight says his own theory of Spatial Interpretation was influenced by his vague understanding of Einstein's theory of Relativity and the mind-activity of an expert chess player like Mr. H. P. Parker of Cheltenham. An expert chess player while making a decision sees a whole movement simultaneously out-rolled and leading to an ideal mate. He does not think in terms of a process but rather visualizes what he names a 'pattern' spread out immediately in space and time or rather in space-time, and rejects moves that do not fit this pattern. This is an aesthetic and creative, rather than an intellectual and analytic method.

Though there is evidence to show that as early as 1926 Prof. Knight was thinking in terms of the space-time dimension in his study of Immortality as a concept in the interpretation of poetry, it is reasonable to guess Mr. Lance L. Whyte's account of modern development in physics, (which appeared in *The Listener* of July 17th, 1947) would have given a definite shape to his spatial theory of interpretation.[8] Mr. Whyte explains how the belief in rigid 'particles' with predictable motions has been replaced by concepts of form, pattern and symmetry and not by these as static categories only but rather by something which he calls the 'trans-formation of patterns'. Knight says if we put 'characters' in the place of 'particles' in

Whyte's sentence we will get a clear idea of what Mr. Knight himself was trying to achieve in the 1920's in the field of Shakespearean interpretation. But Knight adds; "Long before reading Whyte's article, I had felt a certain similarity between the methods of what I call 'poetic interpretation' and what I vaguely understood by the theory of Einstein".[9] Whyte's observations on Einstein's theory of relativity only supported Knight's claims to have shifted the emphasis from individual character study in Shakespearean criticism (as in his early essays on *Hamlet*) to a study of symbolic relationship. Knight's own early investigations, we are told, helped him to speak always in terms of 'a space—time unity'. Thus it is the space—time 'relationship' that is central and all-important for him. "Interpretation, is then, merely the free use of a faculty that responds with ease, and yet with full consciousness of the separate elements involved to this space-time fusion, or relationship, this eternity, of art, in which every point on the sequence is impregnated by the whole"[10]

Knight's interpretative method is entirely different from the New critics, method. For one thing, its main concentration is not verbal at all but "spatial". We find very often in his interpretations, the first interest is the structure, the pattern, the body of the work in question almost irrespective of the exact language used; and also "the semi-visualization, as of a space-reality, of images, symbols, stage-actions, such as Hermione's resurrection in all their visible impact and depth of meaning"[11]. But perhaps the most fruitful of Knight's qualities as a critic is the closeness of his feeling for a poet's imagery and for the verbal texture of his style.

As it has been pointed out earlier in this paper, the spatial dimension of literature is of fundamental importance to Knight. He recalls that when he want up to Oxford after the First World War, he was troubled by the apparent inability of criticism to fathom Shakespeare's essential meaning or secret. He says it is his spatial interpretation which helped him to understand Shakespeare's plays as "expanded metaphors", as "visionary wholes" "patterns of recurring images"; but the term "spatial" Knight warns us, "must not be allowed to suggest the static,' : "what I have called the fiery significances starting from the page were anything but that. The truth is they have a vertical rather than a horizontal activity".[12]

No doubt the faculty used in his 'New Interpretation' was clearly a faculty ready to see things afresh, as themselves and to the exclusion of all conventional associations. Knight says "suddenly he became aware in one

Shakespearian play after another of a new dimension of meaning with fiery significances radiating from the newly apprehended centre, or heart".[13] This was the beginning of those spatial patterns of which he has written so often.

It is interesting to notice whenever Knight speaks about the advantages of his interpretative method he becomes self-absorbed: "It was as though after being lost in a maze, one had suddenly been lifted up, getting a bird's-eye view, from which every thing was simple".[14] But Knight himself is not precise in his definition of what he Calls "the other dimension"; for he says "all works of genius only are works of genius in that they are direct or indirect revelation of this dimension, this otherness, to which we have been referring: call it what you will, 'eternity', 'the numinous', 'immortality'——it does not much matter provided that the term be vast and vague".[15]

Knight's literary analyses have led him to conclude that 'space—time' may be equated with 'eternity'; and art is its language. But we are again and again warned that it is always dangerous to regard eternity 'as static'; it has its own dynamism. His interpretation of *Kubla Khan* serves as a test case for his method and brings out the significance of his spatial approach. Knight's technique of interpreting this poem involves a visualization of the spatial substances. The 'sacred river' in the poem is read as the river of life, the dome, half way between birth and death, as symbolizing the eternal dimension'. The interpretation of *Kubla Khan* depends finally on our making a picture of it, as when one illustrates it with coloured chalks on a board; and that picture is to be interpreted in depth. Knight claims his spatial method of interpretation alone makes sense of the conclusion of the poem—it being a poem regularly respected as poetry but regarded as both fragmentary and meaningless. His method works very well with this poem and we get a map as it were of what the poem describes.

For a somewhat clear understanding of his conception of art and principles of interpretation one should refer to the section called 'Symbolic *Eternities*' in his book on Pope, *The Poetry of Pope Taureate of Peace*.[16] Here he argues that interpretation of the temporal arts, literature and music, should naturally emphasize spatial form, pattern, unifying theme or motif and other recurrences. He feels that interpretation of the spatial arts will as inevitably be engaged with the temporal, noting our gradual assimilation of a cathedral's effects; the action-pose, hinting a before and after, of sculpture. Thus;

"All art may be defined as the attempt to fuse 'space' with 'time'. Music and literature exist primarily in time, as sequences; sculpture, painting, and architecture, in space. But this is not the whole story. Each aims to transcend its limitations in space-time. Thus the temporal arts attain 'form' or 'structure', and are rich with all those meanings which I have regularly defined as 'spatial' while the spatial arts tend to suggest narrative, or at least to hold some vital significance that trembles on the brink of motion..... It is best to admit frankly that all art is necessarily inadequate, since the super-sensuous reality cannot be captured and held by our mind; but it remains a valid approximation. The greater reality is not, however to be supposed as in opposition to sense experience, but rather as some richer dimension of that experience: it exists in the eternal dimension, which contains, and surpasses, time, but it is not to be thought of as static: it exists in space-time. Space-time is eternity and art an approximation to its expression",[17]

This is the key passage for our understanding of Knight's Spatial theory of Interpretation. One does not fail to notice behind this passage the spirit of Lessing's Laocoon; later in the same section Knight comes to the rescue of his readers when he names the three theorists who are of importance to him. He mentions the name of Lessing first; then comes Nietzsche and the third is the little known French aesthetic and dramatic theorist of the last century Francois Delsarte. We shall deal with Delsarte at length as it is Delsarte who is at the centre of Knight's Spatial theory. Delsarte has three basic principles which are drawn from the study of ancient statuary. They are (i) *opposition* (ii) *Sequence*, and (iii) *Poise*. Prof. Knight discusses Pope's poetry in terms of the Delsartian trinity and says we can draw a rather useful contrast between the poetic styles of Mitlon and Pope in terms of the Delsartian trinity. As a strict disciple of Delsarte Knight shows active interest in bodies. For Lessing "objects which co-exist, or the parts of which co-exist, are termed bodies. It follows that bodies, with their visible properties, are the proper objects of painting. Objects which succeed, or the parts of which succeed to each other, are called generally actions. It follows that actions are the proper object of poetry. But all bodies do not exist only in space, but also in time".[18] (XVI 149)

So Knight too says poetry paints bodies, but only properly, through the medium of action. more crisply Lessing asserts later: "Painting paints bodies,

and suggestively, through bodies" movements, Poetry paints movements, and movements, bodies" (Additional notes, V/317)[18] Knight feels suggestively through that 'simple actions' (e. g. actions of a single figure) can only be properly expressed in poetry and hence Knight's discussion of *Poets of Action* in his book *The Burning Oracle*. Delsarte is of foremost interest to Knight because Delsarte devoted his life time to a study of ancient sculpture with a view to formulation of certain definite laws of significant human action obeying the physical-spiritual nature of man. His theories of dramatic art were developed from a close attention to Greek statuary: Knight says in those still forms he detected as a child in a womb, the laws of just action. Their very stillness like Eliot's centre which is not 'fixity' held the germ of motion".[20]

The central principle of Delsarte's system is 'opposition'. Grouped with, 'opposition' we have sequence and 'poise'. Knight goes on to quote from Senevive Stebbins' book *Delsarte System of Expression* (New York, 1902)

> "Those who will study the story of the statues....will see that everything is in perfect accord with the three fundamental principles laid down by Delsarte——*opposition, sequence and poise*. Opposition is to motion what harmony is to music; sequence is to motion what melody is to music; poise and rhythm in the combination of the two, being the time and accent of time in the act of physical expression".[21] (III, vi 421) Delsarte's attempt to split up and understand the contributory factors in a statue pose is of considerable importatce to Knight. Knight writes that 'opposition' is spatial and dramatic, presenting as it were, a miniature drama involving conflict within the static form ... Poise holds the balance between opposition and sequence space and time; from poise grace may flower. It is thus poise which by fusing the spatial and the temporal, vertical and horizontalmakes a unity.
>
> Interpretation as Knight has observed very often is a deliberate attempt to assist what is lacking to the space time expression, tending to discuss the poetic in terms of the architectural or plastic, and the visual arts in terms of time and intellect. Knight says "if as in a Greek statue or say, the *Oedipus* of Sophocles, the space-time fusion is close, there will be the less need for it, less certainly than with the *Moses* of Michelangelo or a Shakesp earian play."[22]

It will be clear that the 'poise' or 'grace' which bridges the space-time antinomy of the statue-pose holds a dynamic human statement within it.

Somehow the balance of fusion of action and repose creates the god-like man. Characteristically Knight praises Keats' 'tiptoe effects' and lightning pictures of action caught in momentary stillness. Each figure a in Keats' Grecian Urn signifies some action-pose or other for Knight.

Then a word about the influence of Nietzsche on Knight. Very often Knight writes with the Nietzschean spirit of transvaluation. It is reasonable to guess Knight's concept of 'eternity' and the other dimension' might have been suggested to him by his reading of *The Birth of Tragedy* and *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. Nietzschean distinction between the Dionysian and Apollonian is of great importance to him.

Generally Knight seems to be at home with poems which treat the two main types of symbol. They are (1) the actionpose and (2) musical buildings. What he calls action-pose is nothing but the picturization of human figures either on the edge of action or in some vital posture. That is why the poem *Kubla Khan* for him compacts once and for all the dominant impressions of romantic poetry, besides providing an exact interpretation of other musical buildings.

Knight prefers to discuss the artistry of a poet in terms of what he calls the important trinity: They are "opposition, sequence and poise". For him any treatment of the poet's achievement at formal and contentual levels should ultimately point towards the poet's peculiar excellence "to derive from the just balancing of energy and form, motion and stillness time and space ".[23] This is the high aim of all poetry. Though constructed in temporal sequence poetry shows a general striving for plasticity.

Literary technique, for Knight, is largely a technique of rendering the inward, spiritual essence, concrete; one recalls in this connection Middleton Murry's insistence on the importance of preserving, or perhaps recreating, the 'perceptual'[24] in poetic language and also Coleridge's coining of the word 'esemplastic' Let me quote at length from his important unpublished article "Space, Time and Poise":

The substances of each poetic art-form are indeed, kneaded and shaped into a single whole or body with inter relations that do not exist only, or even primarily, along the time stream of logic and story. These are the significances whose massed effects I have regularly called 'spatial' in offering interpretations of the Gospels, St. Paul's Epistles, Dante, Goethe's *Faust* and Nietzsche's *Thus Spake Zarathustra*; and the plays of Shakespeare, Coleridge, Byron and others. This 'spatial' reality—the term being used to

distinguish it from the more easily received sequences of ratiocinative thinking and narrative—is generated largely by imagistic or other semi—pictorial suggestions; it may often be felt as a colour, or blend of colours, suffusing the work in question; or may again mature from a philosophic opposition within the structure, as with *Troilus and Cressida* and Pope's *Essay on man*. We clearly have something that may be called static in distinction from the moving story and its sequences of words and events; and yet it is built from them, generated by them, while in turn over—broading and interpenetrating them, so that we end by a space—time result in the whole which is at once dynamic and static. It is precisely this awareness and use of spatial significances that characterises 'interpretation' as it has been developed in all my own literary stuties, and from which that interpertation bases its claim to be making an advance".[25]

K. NATARAJAN

CANBRIDGE 1956. In an informal conversation I was trying to persuade the late Mr. F. L. Lucas to come out on a lecture tour to India, and named Willson Knight who was planning such a tour. Lucas seemed to ignore. I continued, "Mr. Knight protests that he is understood and appreciated better in India than here in England." "O, he does great honour to his countrymen!" came Lucas's sardonic reply. The conversation warmed up and ended with Lucas's observation:" A first rate Englishman never leaves his country; the second rate go out, explore for a couple of years and return: it is only the third rate who try to stay out as long as possible."

The Editor.

NOTES

1. See L. C. Knight's back-handed comments in his preface to *Explorations*. 4th ed (London: chatto & windus, 1963), P. XI; also stanley Edgar Hyman's preface to his book *The critical Performance*, 1st ed. (Newyork 1956) P. VII.
2. George Watson, *The Literary critics* (Newyork, 1964), P. 197.
3. Rene Wellek, *Concepts of Criticism* (New Harren, 1963) P. 34 & 216.
4. Howard Felperin, Shakespearian Romance, (Princeton: Princeton Uni Press 1972) P 312.

5. *Daedalus* Vol. 102, No. 2. Spring 1973. P. 17.
6. G. Wilson Knight, *Neglected Powers* (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971) P. 21.
7. Knight, *Neglected Powers* (London : Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971) P. 104.
8. Ibid "P" 28. Also see the Prefatory Note to *The Wheel of Fire* 4th Revised and enlarged edition (London : Methuen & Co. Ltd. Rpt. 1968. P. Nil.
9. Knight, *The Wheel of Fire* P. vii
10. Ibid. "P" viii.
11. G. Wilson Knight, "The New Interpretation", *Essays in Criticism*, 3 (1953) P. 384.
12. Quoted in *Contemporary Literary Critics* Ed. Elmer (Newyork : St. James Press, 1977) P. 310.
13. *Essays in Criticism* Vol. 3 (1953) P. 382 - 383.
14. Ibid. "P" 382.
15. Ibid. "P" 386.
16. Knight, *The Poetry of Pope Laureate of Peace* Pp. 80-83.
17. Knight, *The Poetry of Pope* Copcit.
18. Quoted by Knight in his unpublished article "Space, Time and Poise". The quotation is from Lessing's laocoon translated by Sir Robert Phillimore (1874).
19. See Knight's unpublished article 'Space, Time and Poise' page 72 This article is central to our understanding of Knight's theory of Spatial Interpretation.
20. See "Space Time and Poise" unpublished article p. 81 Courtesy to Prof. Knight.
21. Quoted by Knight in 'Space Time and Poise' p. 82.
22. "Space, Time and Poise" P. 84.
23. Space, Time and Poise p. 1.
24. Middleton Murry, *The Problem of Style.*
25. Space, Time and Poise p. 2-3.

THE NOTION OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

Krishna Mohan &
Vranda Sharma

Abstract

[The concept of competence as expounded by Noam Chomsky is an idealisation, an abstraction of the ideal native speaker-hearer in a homogeneous society. The competence may be expressed as a system of rules that relates signals to semantic interpretations of these signals. Acquisition of competence in Chomskyan sense is seen as essentially independent of socio-cultural factors. It is, however, doubtful whether a speech community is truly homogeneous and the speakers-hearers community is truly homogeneous and the speakers-hearers do not possess differential knowledge of language. Our aim in this paper is, to survey the criticism of Chomsky's concept of competence and to examine the development of the concept of communicative competence and its relevance in an ELT programme.]

The concepts of 'language' and 'speaking' were originally formulated by Ferdinand de Saussure (1960) who termed these as 'langue' and 'parole' respectively. Saussure (1960: 14) points out that 'in separating language from speaking we are at the same time separating what is social from what is individual" Making the distinction clear he adds (1960: 14) "Language is not a function of the speaker. Speaking, on the contrary, is an individual act. It is wilful and intellectual." Speaking, according to him, is heterogeneous as it is many-sided touching several areas like physical, physiological and psychological whereas language is homogeneous as it is a system of signs. The only essential thing in this system of signs is the union of meanings and sound images, Noam Chomsky (1965), on the other hand, has given a psychological orientation to the concepts of 'langue' and 'parole' as he is more concerned about what it means to 'know' a language and this he clearly explains in his distinction between linguistic 'competence' and 'performance'. Linguistic competence, according to

Chomsky, is the ideal speaker-listener's knowledge of language, and performance is the actual use of language in particular situations. Linguistic theory, he says, is concerned primarily with a homogeneous speech community where factors like memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest and errors have no effect on the application of an ideal speaker-listener's knowledge in actual performance. By an ideal speaker-listener Chomsky means one who knows his language perfectly, that is, one who has complete mastery of the abstract system of its rules. With the help of these rules he is able to understand and produce well-formed sentences of his language. This comprises his linguistic competence. On the other hand, linguistic performance is the actual use of language affected by factors such as those mentioned earlier which are grammatically irrelevant.

Though Chomsky's formulation was initially appealing, it led to problems when applied to the areas of psycholinguistscs and sociolinguistics. The solution that was commonly offered was to construct an intermediate term with some of the properties of 'competence' and some of 'performance', namely, 'communicative competence' Let us now briefly discuss Chomsky's distinction of 'competence' and 'performance' and the concept of 'communicative competence' and its relevance to the teaching of English as a second language.

Chomsky makes both a weaker or neutral, and a stronger claim of linguistic competence with very different implications, as pointed out by Judith Greene (1972). In *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (*1965*) Chomsky gives a neutral interpretation to linguistic competence in the sense that it refers to the knowledge of a systems of rules. This interpretation is neutral because it does not say anything about the way in which the speakerlistener uses the system of rules in constructing wellformed sentences of his language. But in 1970, he comes out with a stronger interpretation when he claims that the rules of grammar are internalised in the mind of the speaker-listener and provide a basis for understanding and producing sentences of his language. In other words, he acquires competence which he puts to use in producing and understanding speech. Now the problem here is that although some kind of competence is used in the actual performance (use of language), it does not consist of the rules of transformational grammer as formulated in the Standard Theory of Chomsky (Munby 1978). His second interpretation of competence thus gives rise to the problem of ambiguity about the line of demarcation between competence and performance. Campbell and Wales (1970) point out that Chomsky's notion of

competence does not take into consideration one of the most important of linguistic abilities, that is, the ability to understand and produce not only utterances which are grammatical but also utterances which are appropriate to the context in which they are made. That Chomsky's formulation neglects the social aspect of language is pointed out also by Dell Hymes (1972) Leon A. Jakobovits (1970) M. A. K. Halliday (1971, 1972) and J. Habermas (1970). Hymes criticizes Chomsky's distinction of competence and performance because it does not take into consideration competency for language use, though he equates performance with language use. He is concerned only with psychological constraints as mentioned earlier and neglects social interaction. Language fulfills the communicative demands of a community and so a learner who acquires a language becomes a communicative member of a speech community. As all languages function in a context and words acquire significance from contexts, social rules which enable the speaker-listener to interpret the social meaning must also be taken into consideration. Hymes, therefore, suggests that the notion of competence must be enlarged to include contextual appropriacy because "there are rules of use without which the rules of grammer will be meaningless". Thus the restriction of the concept of competence to the perfect knowledge of an ideal speaker-listener in a homogeneous speech community independent of social interaction is inadequate to account for language as communication. Leon A. Jakobovits (1970) is also of the same view as Hymes. He points out that along with rules of syntax social context selection rules constitute an essential part of linguistic competence. J. Habermas (1970), a social theorist, preserves Chomsky's distinction of competence and performance but criticizes his notion of competence because it fails to take into account communicative aspect of language. He gives more importance to communication and deals largely with the concept of communicative competence, which he defines as "the mastery of an ideal speech situation." Thus Habermas's conception of competence is of a higher level of idealisation than that of Chomsky because he views communicative competence as comprising knowledge of the universal formal features which help the learner to communicate in particular situations. The view he holds in common with M. A. K. Halliday's (1971-72) who has examined language in its social perspective. His theory deals with language use and also takes into account language functions which are realised with speech. He rejects the distinction between competence and performance as it is of little use in sociological context. He has developed a sociosemantic

approach to language and the speaker's use of language. His approach is based on the notion of meaning potential which is the sets of options in meaning available to speaker-listener. This meaning potential, i.e., what the speaker can mean relates to behaviour potential, i.e., what the speaker can do and finally to lexico-grammatical, i.e. ,what the speaker can say. Thus Halliday's Theory is a social theory which determines behaviour options which are translated into semantic options and finally encoded as options of linguistic form, the options at each stage being organised as networks of systems. Chomsky's concept of competence is also criticized by Binod K. Sinha (1975). On similar grounds Sinha argues that Chomsky talks of acquisition of competence independent of socio-cultural factors and he takes into consideration an ideal speaker-listener in a compeletely homogeneous speech community but "is a speech community truly homogenous and do the speakers-hearers not posses differential knowledge of language? (Sinha, 1975 : 86). Thus these limitations of the concept of competence have given rise to the development of the concept of communicative competence.

At this stage it would he appropriate to examine the concept to communicative competence because nobody would seriously quarrel with the contention that in language teaching, we are more concerned with the communicative function of language. As pointed out earlier, Hymes criticize Chomsky's conception of competence and performance as it provides no place for competency for language use. He also argues that his theory fails to take into account the socio-cultural dimension of language. So Hymes recasts the notion of competence as communicative competence. According to Hymes, Applied Linguistics in relation to language teaching needs a theory that can deal with a heterogeneous speech community in which the speaker-listener has differential competence and in which the essential role of socio-cultural features is taken into account. Then this kind of theory of language users and language use includes four aspects instead of two (grammatically and acceptability) as emphaiszed by Chomsky. These four aspects of communicative competence reflect speaker-listener's grammatical, pschyolinguistic, socio-cultural and de facto knowledge and ability for use. Hymes observes that a normal member of a speech community possesses competence in each of these four aspects of the communication system. Robert L. Cooper's (1968) view of communicative competence is very much similar to Hymes but he is concerned only with the socio-linguistic and grammatical competence. According to Cooper effective commnication requires more than

linguistic competence, that is, a speaker alongwith the knowledge of producing gramatical uttarances of a language must also know how to use them appropriately. This comprises his contextual competence. Thus the speaker must have the knowledge regarding what to say, with whom, where and when. He also talks about linguistic repertoire. This means that more than one variety of language is required when a second language learner participates in different social situations. The interpretation of H. G. Widdowson (1977) is slightly different. He points out that speaker-listener's competence includes knowledge of how to recognize and use sentences to perform thetorical acts. He defines communicative competence as the knowledge of the rules of use in particular social situations. He distinguishes communicative competence from grammatical competence which comprises rules of grammar. Thus he includes both communicative and grammatical competence in a speaker's competence. Jakobovits (1970) specifies four aspects of knowledge which constitute speaker-listener's communicative competence. These four aspects are paralinguistic, kinesic, sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic. His view is wider than Cooper's and Widdowson's as he also includes paralinguistic aspect. But at the same time he differs from Hymes because he omits grammatical knowledge from communicative competence. Geoffrey Mills (1977) observes that communicative competence includes speaker-listener's capacity to understand and produce language correctly and appropriately in particular situations. According to Sinha (1975) the acquisition of communicative competence includes acquition of formal linguistic rules, sociolinguistic rules and socio-cognitive rules. He suggests that for planning a language programme for the development of communicative competence we will have to construct socially alive, realistic and relevant instructional materials. These instructional materials then will be programmed in an hierarchical manner, that is, first giving importance to the immediate needs and then to the remote ones. It will also include conversational sequences in which linguistic repertoire of the target language will form the basis. The most important to the learner in developing communicative competence is the variety of activities in which he can use the second language in unrehearsed, novel situations. This will develop in him qualities like inventiveness and resourcefulness (Savignon, 1978). According to Savignon, by developing communicative competence the learner attains an ability to function in a spontaneous transaction in a truy communicative setting. She suggests that the activities in real life situations will help the second language learner

to see for himself how well he could get along if certain situations come up. They let him measure his progress against criteria which he knows to be more real then weekly grammar quizzes or a dialogue practice. So for using the concept of communicative competence in designing a language teaching programme it is essential to coordinate instruction strategies with interaction strategies (Khubchandani, 1978) The attention of the learners should be focussed on event rather than on 'impression'. Only then the learners can accomplish communicative tasks and imbibe communicative competence. John Munby (1978) points out that communicative competence includes the ability to use linguistic forms for performing communicative acts and also to understand the communicative function of sentences and their relationship with other sentences. Thus while teaching a language we must try to impart to the learner not only grammatical competence but also communicative competence.

This concern for communicative competence by applied linguistic has given a new outlook to the teaching of English as a second language. Now it is felt that there is a need for a fresh approach to language teaching an approach which will transfer the focus of attention purely from the grammatical to the communicative properties of language and show how language system is used to express facts, processes, ideas, concepts, etc., for educational purposes and later on for the performance of professional duties in real life.

This development has led to a shift from grammatical syllabus to situational, and then what is now described as notional, functional or communicative syllabus. Scholars like Wilkins (1976), Widdowson (1977), and Munby (1978) have contributed in the area of construction of more relevant and appropriate syllabuses. There also have been significant developments in evolving techniques which will effectively impart communicative competence and not merely enable the learner to acquire proficiency in using grammatically correct language. It is being increasingly realised that language learning has not to remain only an artificially contrived classroom exercise but become a vibrant and meaningful speech activity so that it gives enough confidence for meeting the actual demands of communication in real life. These new directions in the construction of syllabuses and development of teaching techniques are of crucial importance in designing more effective programmes for teaching English as a second language.

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BOOK REVIEWS

DANTE AND SRI AUROBINDO. A Comparative Study of "*The Divine Comedy*" and "*SAVITRI*". By Prema Nanda Kumar. Affiliated East West Pvt. Ltd. 1980. pp. 160. Rs. 54.

SAVITRI UNVEILED. By Syed Mehdi Imam. Motilal Banarsidas. 1980 pp. 144. Rs. 40.

TWO FOCUSES ON SAVITRI

I

Chip of the old Dr K. R. Srivastava Iyengar block, Dr Prema Nandakumar has already made her debut in Aurobindean studies. Her doctoral thesis was on *Savitri*. Now her post-doctoral has its harvest in a comparative study of the controversial-charismatic "modern spiritual epic" and Dante's "mediaeval miracle song". "Those who have made deep study of *Savitri*," she confesses, "cannot resist the temptation to try to see it in relation to *The Divine Comedy*." Having lived with both poems she writes with empathy, enthusiasm and intelligence. Of course with regard to one she is not free from a certain partisanship, which comes through. As regards Dante the reliance on secondary sources is obvious and admitted. How far Dante has been "brought nearer to us" is an open question. (How one wishes Ananda Coomaraswamy had chosen to write on the subject.) The attempt to come to terms with the idea of great poetry must be praised. Throughout one comes across many scattered insights : for instance, Dante's minitature and sense of particulars contrasted with the comic-colossal in Sri Aurobindo and how *Savitri* "theology has yielded place to psychology". But somehow these do not fuse or become part of a continuing argument or analysis. A few of the chapters look a bit sketchy.

Remarkable by any standard, here are two masterpieces that grow upon one. Both are, differently, poets of the whole and of the Beatific Vision. But, an unavoidable question : Is the present an age of the epic ? Struggling against the current, Dr Nandakumar has no doubt that "it *is* possible, a modern 'Divine Comedy' *is* possible". She is quick to draw support from Krishana

Prems eulogy of *Savitri*. But, one suspects, his point of view was rather different. In any case, he was not comparing.

Dr Nandakumar is bent on comparing. Not that she is unaware of differences in style, background and intention between the two: "we deal with entirely different universes." The biographical parallels are not so impressive as indispensable. Yet beneath the surface one may find some sort of resemblance: of the mysteries of Love and Death, especially of "the journey of the seer through the three worlds beyond us". Both poets lived in a period of transition: the waning of the Middle Ages and the coming of the post-modern. Dr Nandakumar admits Dante's structure to be more compact, but what she says elsewhere seems slanted: "Where Dante left off Sri Aurobindo took up the challenge". Perhaps there was no challenge for Dante, no urge or need to change and transform the material, man. But then why does she say "Dante's message is for future man"? That was a task for Sri Aurobindo, poet and prophet of the future, whose work or works are "almost a gesture of defiance to the literary world of today". "But Sri Aurobindo has to go further than Dante," Maybe. But here one must be quite clear if one is dealing with the symbolic world of poetry or with a world of facts with which one happens to be involved. "Sri Aurobindo must go further than Dante," she repeats. As for the heroine: "She must win if we are to survive". The attitude, one feels, is not literary. Why not admit, though both are wisdom figures, Beatrice is not Savitri? The point is, consciously or unconsciously, she is judging Dante by Sri Aurobindo. The strategy has advantages, but there are ambiguities no less. Is it right to say that Dante's poem fails to satisfy "a century that has burst the secret of the atom"? Has the 'modernity' of *Savitri* been adequately established? Why drag in the problem of belief? How utterly right was the Mother when she called it the poem of tomorrow; Prema's commitment to the Aurobindean vision is plain but it is not free from a certain sentimentality. In *Savitri*, she says, "we follow the action with panting hearts with fear and hope, with despair and joy." Is that the way to respond to the "inner epic" of the Sthitaprajna? Dear lady, we receive but what we give.

The language is now and then marred by a fondness for the exclamation such as "Forward to the Divine!" and "The entire earth made a Paradise!" We also come acoss expressions like "a triple jet of superb poetry", "a spot of military service", "grace-as-a-girl". The concluding quotations from Longfellow and Geothe—an odd pair—were not quite needed.

Though she likes Dante and Sri Aurobindo both, there is little doubt as to whom she likes more and why. One is an acquired taste, the other has

become a part of her. This is both her strength and weakness. That apart, her skilful and sincere *pradakshina* of two classics that are enough to change one's perception, if not being, is welcome as a sign of Indian scholarship on the march—to fresh fields and pastures new. What know they of Indo-Anglian who only Indo-Anglian know ?

II

Sri Aurobindo's inner epic, "Savitri" has been for long a test case and a battleground. The protagonists are either devotees or denigrators. There are too few, in either fold—exceptions prove the rule—who will or can explicate and bring out its *poetry*. The task is not easy and calls for an impossible combination of qualities. This is where Mehdi Imam, trained in the classics and close to the Sufis, Mahatmas and the Poetry of the Invisible (the title of one of his unduly neglected books), has special advantages, one above all. No wonder he is able to suggest an aspect of the poem, the occult, that few have done and none perhaps with his expertise: the idea of the ray or rays, for instance. As presented by him, it becomes one of the keys to a poem not many can claim to make much of. Sensible enough to know that the poem's massive proportions demand condensation and a graded approach, he has reduced it into eightyfour small passages supplemented by headings, commentaries and brief notes. The intention is to present the point and substance of the poem in the briefest, that is manageable, compass, but at the same time to reveal its subterranean depths. It will prepare readers who are coming to it for the first time and give them a knowledge and background of some of the essentials.

In this connection the word 'spiritual' has often been pressed into service. But, in the best sense of the term, 'occult' would be no less relevant. The truths of life are beyond, above, within, rarely on the surface. That being so, the *Mahabharata* legend or story as such, which Sri Aurobindo keeps more or less intact, is perhaps less essential than the explorations into the Invisible but real. In reading "the text of the without from within" Sri Aurobindo has few equals. His Architecture of Humanism—call it Trans-Humainsm, if you like—outsoars almost everybody else's. The very substance of being and experience is different, different even from what most poets can admit or respond to. There is also the problem of language: deific, say some, prosaic, say others. Whatever that may be, it is a "seen" world that he is speaking of and the blind have little right to judge. Also no doubt—and Sri Aurobindo knew this—western critics and criticism will not take to it

easily. In fact sophisticated Indians, pace-setters like P. Lal and Nissim Ezekiel have reacted violently, if not honestly. The loss is theirs. The Sri Aurobindo can pack more insight, experience, and intenser awareness only the insensitive can deny. The more remarkable thing is that, however *apparently* rare and remote, these experiences seem to make for an enormous Existence-clarification, a function of great poetry now almost in desuetude. Thanks to Sri Aurobindo, we know man for the first time, as it were, in all his dimensions, level after level, in terms of energies, personalities and consciousness. It is this side of his genius that Mehdi Imam has been able to focus and it is a great service.

Helped largely by his theosophic affiliation, he has rightly located *Savitri*'s distinction. Unfortunately, the poetic element tends to be somewhat submerged in the theosophic and the Supermind is too much with us. The poem *qua* poem gets little or no attention. Maybe the necessary critical tools are wanting, may be critical tools are not enough. All the same a combination of the empathic and the critical would be ideal. A theory of poetry would not have been amiss.

Some of his asides are striking. For instance, that *Savitri* "breaks with all previous traditions of epic poetry". That in *The Divine Comedy* there is no transformation of Body, Mind and Life. That "Beatrice is not Savitri." (Mehdi Imam does not ask the reason why. And yet, one suspects, here may lie the secret of the Archetypal Mother, source of life, Liberation and Immortality). He concludes his Introduction with a teasing paradox that might be the heart of the matters: "Know then that the God of death is the God of Light. Yama is Savitri."

Why not a reasonably priced paper-back edition of this carefully abridged, annotated, handy approach to *Savitri*, arcane and amazing ?

Santiniketan

Sisirkumar Ghose

NEGLECTED GENIUS

THE VISION OF JAMES THOMSON ("B. V."). An Exploration. By Gurdit Singh. Bahri Publications, Delhi/Chandigarh. pp. 185. Rs. 55.00.

James Thomson, 'the English Leopardi', known only or mainly as the poet of "The City of Dreadful Night", is, as Dr Singh rightly insists, a neglected genius. The labour of Dobell, Salt and others has resulted in a collection of material, some of it lost in obscure journals. A due recognition of his range and variety, what Dr. Singh calls his "quest for truth and authenticity", in prose and poetry awaits exploration.

This exactly is what Dr. Singh has tried to do in a couple of sober and skilful chapters on The Milieu, The Man, The Cheerful Vein, The Sombre Vein, The Satirical Vein, The Essayist The Literary Critic, The Oriental Matrix, followed by a Summing Up. Altogether an appreciative attempt at revaluation.

Rebel and iconoclast, one of the stricken deer who series hardly stand up to a universe in ruins, bereft of the old gods, moving from agnosticism through atheism to pessimism, Thomson had a hard time of it. Dr. Singh refers to Thomson's freethinking, rational cast of mind, even though he sincerely "wanted to believe in God and the immortality of the soul": "How yearningly I gaze upon its spire!" But the pessimism, insomnia dashed with dipsomania, in which Thomson specialised, if not wallowed—he was not the only to feel rootless, see Bertrand Russell's "A Free Man's Worship"—reveals a wounded sensibility in which sentiment, self-division and self-indulgence weighed perhaps more heavily than reason. Was not the reason a mask for what was prompted not by reason ?

The family background was dismal and the early death of a sister and the beloved Matilda were shattering blows. The estrangement from Bradlaugh too must have been a wrench. Yet, as Dr. Singh tries to show, Thomson had a cheerful, even a satirical vein and was not always moping melancholy. There were love poems, may be not quite distinguished, but still there. "Oh bless! I see her through the sevenfold veil;/A mighty Seraph shining ruby-clear."

As for the satires, it is difficult to be sure of their excellence. The wound is too raw, unredeemed and the norm and the skill rather vacillating. The same obsessive quality, perhaps more, marks the poems in a "sombre vein". "The Doom of a City" had been one of his early themes, before he had launched "The City of Dreadful Night", the ultimate in his delineation of

dark vision, Dr. Singh calls it. Considering its importance in the Thomson canon, may be it should have received more attention. The modern reader may be excused if he finds it less engaging than, say, "Dover Beach" or Baudelaire's city poems. These comparisons—as well as with Hardy—Dr. Singh seems to have missed. Surely he was not the only pessimist on the scene. And to compare the poem with Eliot's "Wasteland" looks like stretching a point. It is at best a poor relation.

The chapter on Thomson's prose works presents a lot of unfamiliar material likely to be of use to future scholars. His ideas on Society ("Bumble, Bumbledom and Bumbleism") and on Mysticism are little known; the essay on "Indolence" inevitably suggests De Quincey's work. Now which is better? Dr. Singh has unearthed a good deal of Thomson's scattered literary criticism. With impressionistic gusto he had written on Burns, Blake, Shelley, Meredith, Browning and Dr. Wilkinson. Burns was no doubt a congenial figure. In Blake he discovered "the spirit of the great Elizabethan Age incarnate once more, speaking through the lips of a pure and modern youth". The indigathion of some of the Songs and the Prophetic Books was anything but modest. But in placing Browning above Tennyson came close to the modern mind. As for Shelley, he was expectedly fervid, about Meredith appreciative but not uncritical. Dr. Singh has the courage to be critical of one whom he admires, and speaks of Thomson's limitations. His *obiter dictum* that art is the grand utterance of great failures he finds a "dogmatic assertion". May be it was a veiled confession).

The chapter on "The Oriental Matrix" is a research piece, revealing Arabic, Persian and even Vedantic affiliations touched no doubt by Victorian refinement: "They who when they love must perish!" One could, however, question the high praise showered on the Lord of the Castle of Indolence that he "enjoys supreme peace and bliss like the sages of India, crowned with the glory of spiritual experience".

Dr. Singh sums up Thomson as a relentless, rationalist critic of the Victorian Age, as one who faced the spiritual problem that still plagues us, the loss of faith than which there can perhaps be no greater loss. An atheist, his was "the spirit of the highest religion, of man, as Tagore would have it". (As a student of Tagore may I, humbly protest?) He has also "affinities with Shelley". But would the affinities add up to an equation? Mention is repeatedly made, naturally, of Thomson's pessimism ("the Lauerate of pessimism"). But why was it less impressive than, say, that of Leopardi, Schopnehauer, Hardy or the Buddha? It is slightly misleading to say that he had achieved in poetry what Durer had done in painting. To compare

him with the Buddha is surely a little untenable. Except for adolescents, "The City of Dreadful Night" remains a masterpiece *manque*. Dr. Singh pleads for a place for the neglected genius "in the galaxy of English writers". In the Freemasonary of Sorrow there will always be a place for James Thomson.

Should the wind change towards a more favourable revaluation of Thomson, the credit should go to Dr. Singh's sober, sincere, sympathic study.

THE DANCER IN CHAINS STUDIES IN FICTION by Bhagwanjee Ojha, Raj Prakashan, Patna-16, 1981, pp. 160, Rs. 65.

The Dancer in Chains is a collection of seven scholarly essays on major novelists in English and American fiction beginning from Fielding (*Tom Jones*) and ending with, quite appropriately, Graham Greene's *The End of the Affair* Bhagwanjee Ojha's involvement with the 'form' and 'substance' of English fiction is not just a 'critical affair,' but shows his deep understanding and inward awareness of this complex concept and its growth through the variegated development of the structure of the English novel. I am inclined to particularly appreciate Ojha's critical enterprise because it is my belief that very few Indian critics have so far demonstrated their concern for the form of British, American or even Indo-Anglian fiction. In this particular limited context of critical indolence, Ojha's efforts, though not completely faultless, are indeed admirable.

The significance of the title 'The Dancer in Chains' is revealed in the preface: "....the artist is always in chains or never" (P. VII), Fielding, too, talks of this chain, which is an imposition of form on the creative genius of the artist. In my view, the chains could have been substituted by rhythm-producing brass anklets (*Payal*) which dancers wear round their legs before the performance begins. The implication of the 'chain' is constructive, and not negative, and does not show a sense of 'fetters'.

Ojha rightly begins with exploring the 'ambivalent' relationship between the 'substance' and the 'form' in Fielding, as he traces the novelist's concept of the 'comic-epic-poem in prose.' He also explores the meaning of the terms 'truth' and 'reality,' 'form' and 'rule' so often used by Fielding to convey his awareness of a new 'province' of creative writing. Ojha

sensitively points out how *Tom Jones* is 'at once a novel and a novel about the novel' (p. 13). However, the connection that he makes between Fielding and Henry James is open to grave doubt. Ojha's analysis of Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* includes his attempt to evaluate F. R. Leavis's view of the novel as 'a sport.' Ojha, however, seems ambivalent in his criticisms and it is difficult to determine whether he is critical of Leavis's view or writes in its defence. A spirit of similar ambivalence governs Ojha's evaluation of Arnold Kettle's views (p. 21), though, in my view, Kettle offers very perceptive judgements on *Wuthering Heights* and Dickens's *Oliver Twist*. Ojha's critical assessment of Dickens's *Bleak House* outlines its three symbolic features, but how to relate them to the novel's form (or formlessness) is not made explicit. Although the idea of Dickens's 'identity' is sensitively developed, one fails to grasp its continuing link with (in spite of Mark Spilka's perceptive study) either Kafka or Camus within the limited context and canvas of Ojha's presentation (pp. 63-64).

Ojha's comments on Henry James and James Joyce are intelligent and very sensitively presented. His analysis of the house-image in *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and explorations of the 'Artist as Hero' are illuminating. Joyce's mode of turning the novel into a problem is effectively shown. D. H. Lawrence, too, in *Sons and Lovers*, says Ojha, unconsciously portrays himself as the artist. He develops this argument convincingly to indicate that though Lawrence appears to emphasise the mother's portrait, he is equally concerned with externalising his own self as an artist. In the seventh chapter of the study, Ojha intelligently unlocks the 'tangle of love' in Graham Greene's *The End of the Affair*. However, Frank Kermode's view that the erotic undercurrent is more dominant in the novel than its apparent religiosity has been inadequately dealt with, though, it seems to me that it goes to the heart of the matter in *The End of the Affair*.

Undoubtedly, Ojha's critical study is of very significant value as it probes some of the most vital issues in the context of the quest for form in English fiction, and it is marked by continuity of theme and lucidity of expression. Coming as it does, from an Indian critic, it has in my view a special significance. It is indeed a piece of valuable literary criticism of the concept of 'form'.

V. A. Shahane

E. M. FOSTER THEORY AND PRACTICE OF HIS NOVELS by Yamuna Prasad, Classical Publishing Co., New Delhi, 1981, pp. 165, Price Rs. 60.

Dr. Yamuna Prasad attempts to explore in this incisive critical study a comparatively less investigated field of Forster criticism. James McConkey, one of the most perceptive critics of Forster, broke new ground in Forster criticism with the publication of his excellent critique, *The Novels of E. M. Forster* (Ithaca, New York, 1957), which inaugurated a new field of inquiry in the meaningful relationship between Forster's theories in *Aspects of the Novel* (1927) and his practices as reflected in his fiction. James McConkey, in my view, is one of the ablest critics of Forster primarily because his interpretations are innovative, and also are extraordinarily perceptive in analysing the subtle craft of Forster's fiction. Yamuna Prasad carries forward this mode of critical inquiry even deeper, and with a greater degree of concentration on such aspects of fiction as 'Pattern', 'Rhythm,' 'Fantasy,' and 'Prophecy' than what McConkey seems to have contemplated or intended to achieve.

The fourth chapter on 'Rhythm' (pp. 47—124) is the longest and the best part of Prasad's book. The form of fiction, in Forster, is strongly attuned to music, and reading his novels, specially *Howards End*, is like listening to music, particularly Beethoven's. *Howards End* has a structure which is akin to Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, and the growth of character and situation in the novel is projected through the impact of Beethoven on human sensibility. Yamuna Prasad's analysis aptly pursues Forster's own description and division of rhythm in fiction easy rhythm and 'difficult' rhythm. Forster himself follows into the footsteps of Wagner and Beethoven in his personal responses to music and its use as a fictional device. Yamuna Prasad outlines the five significant aspects of Forster's approach to rhythm (p. 48) stating that for Forster music "works on five levels "(p. 48). This is, of course, intelligently outlined and projected, however, it seems to me rather an over-simplification. Forster's own response to music is amateurish, which is good in many respects, because a professional accent on the content and devices of music's imperial role could have robbed his fiction of its freshness and spontaneity. I wish Yamuna Prasad had pointed out this refreshing quality, this 'saving grace' of Forster's attempted synthesis of music with fiction. F. R. Leavis has hinted at the false musicality of several of the poetic passages in Forster's *The Longest Journey*, specially of the description of Gerald locked in Agnes' arms, and the scene observed by Rickie Elliot, and articulated by his diseased imagination. T. S. Eliot has trenchantly criticised the drugging effect of music in Swinburne's poetry and the

way in which it creates a wedge between music and words. Forster adroitly avoids these pitfalls and uses the 'difficult' rhythm to great advantage, thereby giving his novels a composite musical structure. Yamuna Prasad's interpretation of this musically achieved form in Forster's fiction is very perceptive, and competently presented, though he could have explored the wider comparative context as well.

Yamuna Prasad's exploration of Forster's concepts of 'Pattern', 'Fantasy' and 'Prophecy' is extremely knowledgeable. I was most impressed by the diagram, Figure 3, showing the 'shape' of *Howards End* as an 'hour-glass' (p. 38). Similarly, the shape of *A Room with a View* has been traced (p. 23). These are indeed very innovative presentations of the 'pattern', though the wider connotations of the 'pattern' exploring the relationship between the art of fiction and the art of painting needs greater elaboration. This area, in the case of Henry James, has been sensitively explored by Professor Anderson (He was in India recently). It is also necessary to point out Forster's weaknesses as a critic, in understanding 'pattern', and his wrong-headed judgemet of Henry James. Yamuna Prasad quite understandably keeps himself clear of these rather controversial areas. He is very perceptive in outlining and analysing Forster's notions of 'Fantasy' and 'Prophecy'. However, in concluding his comments on 'Prophecy' Yamuna Prasad seems a little unfair to Christopher Isherwood whose comments on Forster's 'technique of the tea-table' are misinterpreted. In my view, Isherwood is one of the finest critics who has understood the crux of Forster's subtle technique, and to relate his remarks to 'music' or 'rhythm' in this limited context is to miss the principal point of his perceptive comment.

This excellent study is, however, marred by numerous typographical errors. A few examples such as 'leonard Bast' (p. 112), 'goblines' (p. 113), 'Harpper' (p. 160) will indicate the extent of this errata.

Apart from these technical and other weaknesses, Yamuna Prasad's study of Forster's 'Theory and Practice of Fiction' is not merely scholarly in its range and depth, but also offers refreshing criticisms and new points of view on this most absorbing aspect of Forster's art.

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JANE AUSTEN : HER CONCEPT OF SOCIAL LIFE by Sushila Singh, S. Chand and Co., New Delhi, 1981, pp. xi-152, Rs. 40/-

In the Foreword to this book Dr. T. N. Singh rightly says that in view of "an impressive array of book on Jane Austen", "any further study must justify itself by suggesting a new approach to the novelist." In the opening pages of the book the author builds up an argument that seems to justify this critical venture. Steering clear of the popular criticisms on Jane Austen, Mr. Singh carves out a path that claims novelty and is reasonably recognisable as such. The burden of this argument is that Jane Austen's refusal to admit of the stormy revolutions in her novels was deliberate and it reflects her faith in a social philosophy that would not take cognizance of anything, social, political or literary, that threatened stability. The author engages herself in strengthening her critical position in a variety of ways: citing from the text and the criticisms in support of her stand and assailing and countering the critics who do not conform to her view. Mrs. Singh does her job well. One may sense in her appraisal of Jane Austen a touch of feminine bias. But that would be there perhaps inevitably, and it does not mar the critical effect.

The book has seven chapters: Historical Background, Theme: Love and Marriage, Feminine World and Its Problems, Domestic Life, Portrayal of Classes, Technique and its Relevance to the Theme, and Conclusion.

Taking love-and-marriage as the central theme of Jane Austen's novels, the author traces this interest in almost all her works, defending the novelist's portrayal of this theme in the larger social interest. Her defence carries credibility: "The organic nature of family is always in danger from lovers who indulge their emotions in utter disregard of the socially approved code of conduct. Refusal or unwillingness to conform to the norms of behaviour with social sanction behind them poses a serious threat to the stability of social life as well" (p. 60). With the rich stock of the stories of love and marriage envisioned and portrayed in a variety of settings by the novelists from Fielding to D. H. Lawrence, the author here had immense scope for highlighting the points of comparison and contrast. But Mrs. Singh does not avail herself of this critical opportunity. Her references to Fanny Burney and the Brontes are only casual. But perhaps in a book like this primarily a Ph. D. thesis-the richness ensuing out of the multifocal concerns has to be sacrificed to the intensity of a single stance.

Consistent with her running argument of 'social stability', the writer finds Jane Austen's heroines committed to one and the same purpose: a

successful and harmonious marriage for playing "an effective role in promoting the idea of stability on the domestic plane and also on the larger plane." And the chapter on "Domestic Life" deals with the individual characters enacting their respective roles in the drama of family life: father, mother, daughter, sister, brother. The writer painstakingly classifies and evaluates them as sociological entities. Some of her observations are challenging albiet challengeable. The treatment is lucid and forceful. One wonders, however, whether Mrs. Singh's argument does not tend to reduce this great novelist to the stature of a portrayer of men and women as mere social entities. But then the book as a whole is committed to the sociological perspective and we cannot blame the critic for choosing her angle of vision. This is her privilege.

The chapter that assumes crucial importance in this study is "Technique and Its Relevance to the Theme". The author discovers a correlationship between the novelist's "organic view of social life" and the "perfection of art" she achieved eventually. The balance in form, the clarity of outline and the coherence between the different constituents of her novels are shown to have casual links with the novelist's vision of the organic unity in social life. The treatment of the problem, though on a moderate scale, is convincing enough.

The conclusion, as usually with a thesis-work, has the tone of q. e. d. In fact, Mrs. Singh underlines here the central theme of each of the chapters in this study and where she tends to say something more she is exposed to the dangers of vague generalisations. For instance, a statement like "Many traits of the modern English novel are to be found in embryo in Jane Austen's novels" (p. 142) is neither here nor there. In the absence of supporting evidences such remaks smack of an enthusiasm that characterises some of the works of this kind. But the author is cautious enough not to indulge in it too often.

Perhaps a little more careful proof-reading was needed for such a valuable volume. Besides a more rigorous editing was necessary to avoid repetitions of phrases and even clauses. And the central idea that Jane Austen had a well-defined social philosophy could have been driven home even without hammering it a little too often.

The book is a commendable critical achievement. It immensely justifies the labour and devotion that have apparently gone into its making. Mrs. Singh seems to have checked up almost everything relevant on the subject, as is evident from the Bibliography, without getting lost in the

jungle of information. Her's is a positive contribution to Jane Austen criticism and the students and the general readers alike will find it interesting and useful.

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HENRY JAMES : A STUDY IN THE AESTHETICS OF THE NOVEL by Rama Kant Ashthana, New Delhi : Associated Publishing House, 1980, vii+130 pages. Rs. 50.

This book is the first full-length study of Henry James's aesthetics of the novel. Unlike the abstract theorists who believe in formulations and the organicists who make life subordinate to form, James, Dr. Asthana points out, in the entire course of his writing, enunciated new concepts of theme, design and execution—what the author calls James's dynamics of the novel. James's cogitations on the different aspects of the novel are contained in his prefaces, literary reviews, letters, notebooks, critical essays, articles and miscellaneous papers, spreading over his entire literary career. It was Henry James, a pioneer in this field, who analysed seriously, for the first time, assumptions, facts and theories to get at the nature of the novel as a form of art. Closeley related to his creative process (which is a continuous movement and change), he gave a series of concepts. Dr. Asthana's book is a significant contribution to the proper understanding of the creative process of the great artist. The author's division of the entire study into six chapters, besides the conclusion, is judicious.

The first chapter convincingly brings out the fact that Henry James had no fixed concepts, but had a series of concepts which he continued to enunciate all through the period of creative activity. Chapter II deals with James's views on the psychologicl aprocess in which memory, consciousness and imagination function. Chapter III deals with the choice of characters and incidents and their interaction. Unlike Balzac and Flaubert, who lifted the characters bodily from life, James stressed that they should be convincing-what Dr. Asthana terms as "illusion turned reality". The next chapter brings to light James's outstanding contribution: "Characters as vessels of consciousness". Chapter v, "Form and Flow", deals with the problem of form and style. Form moves and changes with the change in the flow of

experience. Like form, style too, is dynamic. In Chapter VI, "The Fountain of Being", the author makes a very mature and sound observation: "Art makes life and life, in turn, is moulded by art", as the passion-flow of the artist finds its way through his art. James avoids romantic abandon. Further, James's approach to morality is literary and not doctrinal. In the advanced consciousness, James merges the aesthetic and the moral.

The auther has taken great pains to make the book critically authentic and compact, covering a wide range of Jame's aesthetics of the novel. With a fair measure of scholarship and objectivity, the book is a valuable piece of fiction-criticism. As objective assessment with remarkable clarity and precision, the book is a coherent and compact exposition of the subject. However, it needs improvement in more ways than one. First, the author should have illustrated Jame's concepts from his creative writings more extensively than he has done. Secondly, the weakness of Jame's aesthetics of fiction should have been highlighted in order to offer a balanced evaluation of the subject. Lastly, more attention should have been paid to make the book free from some very glaring printing errors.

Nicely brought out and moderately priced, the book, I believe, will prove valuable to the students of fiction in general, and those of James in particular. In a word, it is an important addition to the critical work on James.

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INDO-ANGLIAN POETRY : A SEARHC FOR ROOTS

A review article-on STUDIES IN INDIAN POETRY IN ENGLISH, Edited by Prof. O. P. Bhatnagar (Popular Book Centre, Amravati, Price Rs. 30.00).

An Indo--Anglian poetics such as O.P. Bhatnagar's volume under review is a symbol as well as an inevitable corollary to the attainment of maturity by Indo-Anglian poetry. Any creative effort needs the scrutiny and support of critical intelligence which in a sense is again both necessitated and vitalised by the density of the data it scrutinizes.

The anthology begins and ends with poetics : the first essay by Dr. Singh deals with the poetics of Aurobindo, and the final essay by

O.P. Bhatnagar formulales the poetics for the future, all the intervening essays being concerned with the analysis of the poetry of the present. The structure corresponds to the evolving tradition of Indian poetry and poetics from Aurobindo and also shows how poetics can lead to analysis which can again pave the path for a new poetics, which in a sense is also "old", because nothing really new can come unless it is linked with something really old.

Dr. Singh's article, an attempt at comparative aesthetics, ably tries to relate Aurobindo's poetics to its western counterpart in symbolic and archetypal criticism. Though it is refreshing to see similarities between Aurobindo's insistence on 'getting away from mind into the depths of life', and Eliot's concept of tradition and Frye's archetypes, and also between Aurobindo's concept of poetry as Ananda taking form and Poe's concept of Supernal Beauty, one feels that in one sweep Dr. Singh puts Aurbindo in the company of such formidable figures as Aristotle, Eliot, Poe, Coleridge, Abercrombie, Auden, Baudelaire and others. Not that there is nothing common to all these-but archetypal criticism must be conscious of the differences as well as the similarities, and at least some of the connections made by Dr. Singh need further validation.

Dr. Dwivedi's paper discusses the themes of Ramanujam's poetry, but it could have been more rewarding if it had explored the relation between the inner forms and the outer forms of his poetry, which it only indicates. Dr. Niranjan Mohanty's essay ably argues that Ezekiel's poems redeem the absurdity of their situations by self-analysis and also that there is a progress in Ezekiel from irony to humility. But we feel uneasy when we come across such patronising statements in an otherwise preceptive essay as "Indo-Anglian poets are awfully sincere in facing the essential realities of life". Is this not too emphatic and general to be true?

Dr. Das attempts to answer the question, what it is like to be a poet like Parthasarathy ?, in two ways: by analysing his poems, particularly his imagery, and then in relation to Parthasarathy's Tamil tradition. But does Parthasarathy really reject his Tamil past? Luckily Parthasarathy himself provides the answer in his paper which seems to be quite a good example of what a poet can say about his poems when he is detached from it. To him poetry is a way of celebrating the fact of his existence, a temporary stay against, not confusion but existence itself. He categorically says, and rightly too, that 'Home Coming' derives its sustenance from whatever he found usable in the Tamil tradition. He has found his roots in the Tamil past. The poem is a reenactment of that self-discovery through English.

The articles of Dr. Murthy, Krishnaprasad and Dr. Sharma on Lal, Pritish Nandy, and Kamala Das respectively arrive at conclusions which are surprisingly similar—all these poets seek and find a myth–the myth of Mother Teresa or that of Mirabai. Krishnaprasad's article shows how Nandi's poetry can be related to the Indian tradition right from Jayadeva's *Gita Govinda* to the ecstactic experience of Tagore. Dr. Sharma sees in Kamala Das a Mary Wollstonecraft becoming Mira.

Dr. Ujjal Dutta's study of Shiv Kumar's poetry has a consistent and courageous stand. It rightly finds the genuine Shiv Kumar in his poems of passion, like "My co–Respondent" but regrets the intrusion of sophisticated irony even in some of them as in, "Ask me not to act/Deed is my perdition", but were it not for that, it would not be Shiv Kumar at all.

Dr. Sureshanath's acticle on Bhatnagar rightly emphasizes the poet's affirmation of man and Life, particularly the common man: "Life is a large humanity/Arranged between the expression/And the Ordering". It is equally alive to the craftsmanship of his poetry which reveals its inconscious beauty to a sensitive reader both in the parts and as a whole.

Dr. Sethi's paper on "Ballad of the Earth and the Rain" also establishes the link between Indo–Anglian poets and the Indian tradition, particularly the folk poetry with special reference to Margaret Chatterji. And this discovery and acceptance of Indian roots of the Indo–Anglian poets is the major contribution of this volume.

Even Mr. Kanadey's article on problem of bilingual poets only emphasises this essentially transcultural nature of bilingual poetry, though it seems to be more negative than it should be in its referenece to the fractured psyche of the Indo–Anglian poet If the Indo-Anglian poet cannot come to terms with certain areas of Indian experience because of the medium, and this tension between the maker and medium, that experience itself can be taken as emblematic of an aspect of Indian experience. Again a pan-Indian consciousness also seems to be more natural to the Indian poet writing in English than his vernacular counterpart. More than that, he is the mediator between the Indian self and the growing frontiers of a world experience which is the gift of English to the Indian poet writing in English.

Bhatnagar's paper which is a fitting conclusion to the volume points to future, and emphasises the need for Indo–Anglian poets to shift from the poetry of reflexes to that of intellect, and that can be done by the poets by giving up poses and becoming more socially conscious. When he rightly

condemns alienation as egotistical and as a luxury which Indian poetry can easily do away with, he seems to go too far in denying myths, traditoin and even symbols to the poet. One can understand the distrust of a poet committed to life as far as more literariness is concerned–even Wordsworth claimed that poetry should constantly be reviewed in the pangs of living. But a total denial of art may impoverish poetry and we are reassured by the fact that Bhatnagar also speaks of poetry becoming visionary like Aurobindo's—but now the vision is that of human destiny. The wheel has come full cycle.

While we congratulate the editor and the publisher for all the thought that has gone into the making of this anthology, we are sad to note that there are abundant errors throughout and the binding also is rather shaky. Of course this is part of the Indian milieu of which the poetry and criticism are the products, but one looks forward to the day when the poetry or criticism rooted in Indian milieu not necessarily preserves such limitations too. Leaving these minor flaws, the book is a really worthy addition to Indo–Anglian literature as well as Indian poetics.

K. Chellappan

PERSPECTIVES ON RAJA RAO edited by Dr. K. K. Sharma, Vimal Prakashan Ghaziabad, Pp. 237; 1980; Rs. 60.

Dr. K. K. Sharma's critical anthology obviously seeks to establish Raja Rao as one of the most distinguished Indian writers of fiction. We are told by Dr. Sharma in the Preface, "Raja Rao is incontestably one of the most widely acclaimed Indian writers of fiction. By virtue of the wide range of his thought - content—philosophical, intellectual, political and social—and his command of the fictional form and language, he is doubtless one of the major novelists writing in the English language today. But curiously enough, only two full length studies have so far come out on his creative writings; one by M. K. Naik and the other by C. D. Narsimhaiah. Moreover, there is still no book which gives due consideration to all the important facets of his art and ideas. Hence the need and justification for a book such as this". From the very beginning an impression is created on our minds that the present critical anthology on Raja Rao edited by Dr. K. K. Sharma is an ambitious critical endeavour on Raja Rao's fictional

art and ideas which unmistakably illumminates our understanding and appreciation of the author.

The present volume consists of seventeen articles by scholars of India and abroad. It attempts to make a thorough appraisal of almost all the thematic and technical sides of Raja Rao's fiction. It gives a perceptive study of his vision, values and aesthetic. Raja Rao's four novels and short stories have been studied and evaluated separately. The volume brings out the chief merits and weaknesses of Raja Rao as a fictional artist.

In his brilliant Introduction, Dr. K. K. Sharma scrutinizes the worth of Raja Rao as philosophical novelist to the backbone. I personally agree with Dr. Sharma when he considers *The Serpent and the Rope* as a metaphysical tragedy, and not a metaphysical novel. Dr. Sharma has critically examined the opinions of the critics as well as the opinions of the novelist himself and seldom fails in his critical integrity in calling a spade a spade. At another place Dr. Sharma corrects the mistaken notions of Uma Parmeshwaran about *The Cat and Shakespeare*, when she finds the book as an exposition of the philosophy of *Karma*. Dr. Sharma convincingly remarks that the novel is not an exposition of the Indian *Karma yoga* philosophy, instead it makes a strong plea for the *Vishistadvait* laying all emphasis on *Bhakhti yoga*. Dr. Sharma's introductory essay on Raja Rao is the longest in the anthology consisting of forty five pages. It has been written according to international standards, and is truly perceptive and scholarly.

D. S. Maini's paper entitled "Raja Rao's vision, values and Aesthetic" is well-written and throws ample light on many darker areas of Raja Rao as a novelist. But more often than not, Maini's statements appear unconvincing. He considers Raja Rao's vision, values and aesthetic as comprising of a piece. To some, Maini's critical stance may seem to fail to observe the most complex and sophisticated genius of a novelist like Raja Rao. Again, many Indians would object to his calling Sanskrit a dead language, which is still enjoying the most prestigious position among the languages of the world. However, Maini's paper is readable on the whole. E. J. Kalinnikova's paper attempts to study Raja Rao against the background of modernism. Raja Rao, we are told in the paper, studies the past in order to understand the present. She rightly maintains in her paper that all Raja Rao's ideas are in one way or another connected with ancient Hindu philosophy. She has closely analysed *The Cat and Shakespeare* while observing its symbolic implication which helps her to reconstruct the philosophical conception of Raja Rao. P. P. Sharma's paper consider

quest for wholeness a central preoccupation of Raja Rao. He has fairly succeeded in putting Raja Rao's fictional world in perspective and pattern which has hitherto been unfamiliar and strange. O. P. Mathur's paper studies the treatment of the East-West theme in Raja Rao's *The Serpent and Rope*. Raja Rao, we are informed, raises this novel to philosophical dimesions and achieves a rare fusion of the past and present, the East and the West in terms of the Indian *Advaitvad*. The paper is mainly descriptive. Suresh Nath's paper "Gandhi and Raja Rao" presents Raja Rao as the only novelist who earnestly records of freedom struggle and essential Gandhi who led the historic struggle of Indian masses for freedom and ultimately became the most integral of the country's being.

J. B. A. Karkala, in his scholarly essay, "Myth, Matrix and Meaning in Literature and Raja Rao's novel, *Kanthapura*", studies *Kanthapura* as a profound shastra, and as a prolific *purana*. Karkala iucidly examines Raja Rao's matrix in his tale of modern India. Sadhan Kumar Ghosh in his well-written paper observes certain uniqueness in Raja Rao which is not to be found in other Indo-Anglian novelists writing today, and regards *The Serpent and The Rope* as the only Indo-Anglian novel that can be called a near classic. For perception, profundity and scholarship the essays by M. K. Naik and K. R. Srinivas Iyenger share the honours. It is a real pleasure to read their essays. Dr. S. P. Chaturvedi appropriately divides Raja Rao's career as a short-story writer into two periods the stories of the thirties where Raja Rao deals with social and political problems, and the mature stories of the later stage which reveal his vision and philosophy of life. Dr. Chaturvedi's paper is balanced, informative and thought provoking. A. N. Gupta presents an analysis and evaluation of Raja Rao's latest novel, *Comrade Kirillov*. This novel, Gupta tells us, remains essentially a spiritual biography. Ramesh Srivastava's paper, "Structure and Theme in Raja Rao's Fiction", is an endeavour to establish Raja Rao as a conscious artist who carefully works out his plots, weaves his social, political and philosophical views into a cohesive fabric and works hard for a suitable narrative technique. R. Shephard focuses his attention on some of the main characters of Rao's novels, and argues that these people are rebels, though of different kinds. Som P. Sharma's article makes a thorough probe into Raja Rao's search for the feminine. The search for the feminine in Raja Rao is primarily *tantrik* and the relationship with the feminine ultimately leads to the search of the author himself. Prof. Som P. Sharma's paper is precise, concise and marked with erudition. Harish Raizada's paper evaluates Raja Rao's works with reference to point of view, myth and symbolism. Atma Rama in his lucid

paper studies the prose-style of Raja Rao. N. C. Soni's essay attempts to measure the greatness of Raja Rao in terms of his fictional contribution.

The volume succeeds amply in helping the reader to comprehend the highly complex and original genius of Raja Rao. At its best, it achieves the lofty critical aim which can be summarised in Anatole France's phrase, "the adventures of a sensitive soul among masterpieces". On the whole, *Perspectives on Raja Rao* is a welcome addition to the Library shelf. Though all the essays are not of the same high standard as Iyengar's, Naik and K. K. Sharma's, yet the book offers sound and useful criticism of the novels and stories by Raja Rao. While the book should be useful to scholars, as some essays are commendable pieces of research, students and general readers, too, will gain much by it. The book, it is hoped, will be a specimen of the state and quality of Indian critical thinking today.

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INDO—ANGLIAN FICTION by P.P. Mehta, Prakash Book Depot Bareilly, 1979, pp. 394, Price Rs. 28.

The book under review is one with which the scholar of Indo-Anglian literature is jolly well familiar. That the book has run into second edition speaks volumes for how useful and popular it has been. Indeed, the author has taken pains to bring the book up-to-date in this second edition, considering the rich output of Indo-Anglian fiction in recent years. It is undoubtedly a very comprehensive study of the subject with utmost historical value, revealing the author's profound understanding of the subject, penetrating insight, keen critical acumen and sharp perceptivity.

The first two chapters of this book are devoted to the origin of Indo-Anglian fiction and to the various shaping influences on this genre. The third chapter deals with the variety of early novels written before 1920, and we are made familiar with such unfamiliar novelists as Miss Sorabji, S. B. Bannerjea, A. Madhaviah, T. Ramkrishna, S. K. Ghosh, K. K. Lahiri, Raj Laxmi Devi, H. Dutt, Sardar Jogendra Singh, M. M. Munshi and others who prepared the groundwork of Indo-Anglian fiction. The fourth chapter is concerned with the numerous novels written in pre-Independence period. It lists a host of novelists and their works that have been relegated to oblivion, as these novelists figure only in a book of historical character and hardly ever figure in any modern discussion or paper. The need of the

hour is that these novelists should now be separately studied to see what distance Indo-Anglian fiction has traversed from then.

The fifth chapter is quite comprehensive and deals with such novels as depict Independence struggle or are set against its backdrop. The next five chapters are considerably satisfying and treat rather exhaustively of the works of five major novelists—Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, R. K. Narayan, Manohar Malgonkar, and Kamala Markandeya.

The concluding chapter of the book treats of some such significant novelists as Khushwant Singh, Bhabani Bhattacharya, R. Prawer Jhabvala, B. Rajan, Arun Joshi, Anita Desai, Santha Rama Rau, Sudhin N. Ghose and Nayantara Sahgal as well as of a number of minor novelists. This chapter could have been much more detailed, had the author been rather more painstaking. In fact, it would have been much better, had he devoted a separate chapter to each of these significant novelists. Two appendices in the book are very revealing. Appendix I, dealing with an altogether unknown historical novel, *Lalul the Beragun*, written by Mirza Moorad Alee Beg, an Englishman who had embraced Islam, is indeed exceptionally enlightening. Appendix II is a reproduction of part of an illuminating article written by Prof. O. P. Mathur published in *New Literature Review*, No. 4 1978, Canberra, on Raja Rao's *Comrade Kirillov*. Indeed, this part of the article throws a new light on the novel.

Writing about Roman Basu in his last chapter, the author has been rather careless. The author writes that Basu has written two novels, *A Gift of Love* and *The Tamarind Tree*; whereas Basu published till 1978—the year this book has been brought up-to-date—five novels and one collection of short stories. His first two novels are *A House Full of People* and *Your Life to Live*, and not as the author writes. *A Gift of Love* and *The Tamarind Tree* are Basu's third and fourth novels followed by *Canvas and the Brush* (a collection of short stories) and *Candles and Roses*, his fifth novel.

The author has again slipped on pages 63, 67 and 68 where he writes that *Cold Rice* and *Athawar House* have been written by S. Nagarajan. In fact, these books have been written by K. Nagarajan. But surprisingly, on page 355 the author rightly mentions the name of the author of *The Chronicles of Kedaram* as K. Nagarajan. A carelessness of this sort on the part of the author does not become a serious book like this. I trust these lapses would be surely redressed in the next edition.

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A REMEDIAL COURSE IN ENGLISH FOR COLLEGES Books I, II, III by B. K. Das and A. David Delhi, Oxford University Press 1980-81.

EXERCISES IN SPOKEN ENGLISH Part III Vowels, Dept of Phonetics & Spoken English, CIEFL, Hyderabad, Delhi, Oxford University Press 1981.

A COURSE IN WRITTEN ENGLISH Regional Institute of English, Chandigarh, Oxford University Press, Delhi 1981.

IMPROVE YOUR WRITING: FROM COMPREHENSION TO EFFECTIVE WRITING by V. N. Arora & Lakshmi Chandra, Delhi O.U.P. 1981.

A TEXTBOOK OF LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGE TEACHING by V. Rama Murthy, Doaba House, Delhi 1980.

The Delhi Oxford University Press has Offered a rich harvest of ELT books this year. *A Remedial Course* .... is, as the authors claim, essentially a bridge for the weak students entering college..." The first volume was published in 1980 and the second and third have been published this year. The *Teacher's Guide* (pp viii-xix vol I) discusses the design of the course, and offers hints for using it. Even a casual reading of this *Guide* informs one of the confusion under which the authors labour to prepare three volumes. They first find fault with "most remedial courses" (without naming any!!) as concentrating only "on teaching, or rather the re-teaching of grammar". Again, they assert, most "remedial courses are little more than selective and intensive reviews of grammar". But, after *their objection* to conventional remedial courses, they highlight the distinctive feature of their course in which "a good deal of attention is, nevertheless, given to problems of grammar". Not only this, they have "chatty" examples of grammatical points supported by a large number of instances using insights from modern grammar, first in isolated sentences then in pieces of genuine communication. To sum up, they claim, they have, "tried to provide integrated and all-round language learning, rather than selective learning geared to the correction of grammatical errors."

The first Unit of Book I has *a lot of*, *many*, and *some* as grammatical items for remedial teaching. A substitution table is given and then the learners are asked "which kinds of words can be used after *a lot of*, *many*, *some*? (If you cannot explain in English, try to explain it in your mother tongue)." One wonders how much of the tall claim made in the *Teachers Guide* can be substained on the basis of such clumsy material.

Every Unit is first followed by a glossary of difficult words. Unit II Book I has... "now you have learnt the *secret* of happiness." The Glossary records "Secret: the cause for something, which is not known to many people." Is that the meaning of it ? There are 8 Units (75 pages) in Book I, 9 Units (150 pages) in Book II and 8 Units (138 pages) in Book III. There is no explanation for the extra Unit in Book II.

The course has, however, a lot of merit, in that it provides interesting reading material from modern writers, (simplified in the earlier Units), with plenty of comprehension and linguistic exercise, and can profitably be used independently by post-school learners.

Exercises in Spoken English is the work of the Dept of Phonetics and Spoken English of the CIEFL, Hyderabad. There is sufficient variety and exhaustiveness in the material chosen for practice. Pages 1-5 should be carefully read by anyone who wants to profit by this good work. The phonemic symbols of the R. P. (Gimson as well as Jones) and the GIE (General Indian English) are accompanied by key words to enable learners to learn them easily.

All the vowels have been drilled in the initial/medial/final positions according to their occurance in common English words. Where they do not occur in a particular position as/e/in the final, only the available positions in common words have been drilled. After the pratice of the vowels in isolated words, they have been given in simple interesting sentences for the internalization of the English vowel sounds by our learners. Lessons are usually in two parts: first repetition practice of words with the vowels (in isolation and in sentences), then tests (ear-training and production). At the end of the book, the ear-training and production tests are printed with stress and intonation marks. This is a great help to teachers, for quite often teachers, due to insufficient practice, are likely to make mistakes themselves.

The book is the result of the work of Professor Bansal and his team of phoneticians at the CIEFL, and serves the needs of learners and teachers of English in the same ample measure as the two earlier books in the series.

A Course in Written English has been published by the Regional Institute of English, Chadigarh. The *Introduction* describes it as a *revision course* in six sections dealing with Refrence. Linkage, Addition and Inclusion, Paragraph Construction, Organization, Punctuation. The former director of the institute suggests, in his Preface, that the book can "be used as a valualbe work of reference" though the work doesn't even have an index. In fact it is an agglomeration of exercises under the above six sections. It is not to belittle the utility of the present work but the problem with anony-

mous writings published under govt./semigovt. institutional banners is similar: a MS is prepared during one or more workshops and years pass before the work is printed. During the interrugnum, different individuals with different expertise and interests repeatedly revise it. As no individual author is going to get a bad name, no one is bothered about the quality of the book that is finally printed. A prestigeuos house like the OUP will publish any such work for they are sure of publication—subsidy-purchase of a certain substantial number of copies. The institution makes enough money in royalty and the book may or may not go through subsequent editions.

Improve Your Writing is another book typical of the recent ELT publications in India. The *Remedial Course*, reveiwed above, this work also has a professer and a former student as co-authors. It is ovbious that the research assistant collects the material (usually part of a degree programme), the professor sifts it, and a book takes shape.

Long ago, Samuel Johnson advised one interested in acquiring a good Style to give one's days and nights to the prose-pieces of Addison. The authors of the present book have, despite the trend of pseude-scholars to decry the classics, based all their evercises on marterpieces of English prose of yesterday and today.

In all ELT exercises there is an inherent defect : artificiality. But artificiality is toelrable when the result is so much variety as offered by the exercises in this book. The pattern of all the Units is uniform: first a selected original text and a gloss on difficult words, then a few comprehension questions. After that follow a few "Explanations". These are the best part of scheme of the book. These take up certain problems of composition, e.g. clarity, consistency, economy, and discuss them with reference to the text already given as well as with ample illustrations from othcr published work of American, British and Indian writers.

The content of the texts successfully keeps a balance between "scientific-technical" culture and "liberal arts" culture. There are six Units: The World of Science and Technology, The impact of Science and Technology on Society, Mass Media, Man and Nature, Science versus the Humanities, The Humanities. There are six extracts in each Unit followed by exercises. The authors have discussed mainly the *sentence* in the first Unit, the *paragraph* in Units 2-3, and *composition* in Units 4-6. The last will prove the most useful to college teachers and students.

A Textbook of Linguistic and Language Teaching by V. Rama Murthy is a testimony to the author's clear-headedness at a time when linguistics has,

if any thing, muddled out ELT-people. In 133 pages, the author has offered a lucid description of what is spread over a liberary of modern specializations in ELT.

The first chapter, General Aspects, talks of the bases of modern linguistics and contains concise description of terms that recur in that field. The second chapter has all that a learner of the ABC of phonetics needs : the R.P., the I.P.A., the description of the organs of speech, the sounds of English, segmental and supra-segmental features, stress, intonation and rhythm. The third chapter tells one of the *grammars* of today, the fourth takes up semantics. English philology, Language and Literature, Sociolinguistics, Psycholinguistics Computer linguistics and translation, and Language teaching, are the remaining chapters. There are projects for advanced students, and a select Bibliography for the interested student.

The Book is not for those who want any detailed discussion of the areas concerned. For the beginner, however, it is *the* book. As the *Foreword* points out, author's approach is "friendly, congenial and accommodating." Older faculty members, who are bored with the technicality of modern ELT books, will find it an easily enjoyable compendium. Students haunted by the shortness of time and the imminence of the exams. will find this a book of quick reference. The pages of the Contents and the short Index serve as useful guides.

LITERARY DEBATE

(Volume XX of the Journal invited comments on the articles appearing in it. The response was limited to one comprehensive letter which took cognizance of almost all the articles. Relevant portions from it were posted to the original authors with a view to getting their rejoinders. Some authors waived their right, others reacted rather violently. We are printing below only those observations which raise some literary point, and rejoinders to them in the same spirit.)

The Editor.

Pujahari's article on 'Romantic Poetry as the Poetry of Quest and Question.'

Mr. Pujahari's assumption that many readers regard Romantic poetry basically a poetry of doctrine is questionable. Misreadings about, whatever be its period, are possible; this has been amply illustrated by Richards in *Practical Criticism*. It seems, therefore, unnecessary to labour this point in detail."

Dr. R. S. Pillai. 17/4, Jawahar Street,
R. V. Puram, Nagarcoil.

"Yes misreadings in poetry are possible. But they often lead us off the track and obscure our perception of the works of Art. I. A. Richards in his *Principles of Literary Criticism* says: "Through obscure perception the poet has been regarded as a seer and artist as a priest....."

So an approach to the romantic poetry as the poetry of doctrine to my mind springs from misreading. That 'misreadings about poetry whatever be its period, are possible', does not prevent critics from making an attempt to find out the right approach to poetry. For me the real pleasure of reading Romantic poetry lies in taking it as a poetry of quest and question, not as poetry of doctrine.'

N. K. Pujahari, Anchal College, Padampur (Orissa)

Amiya Bhushan Sharma's article on Keats, 'Lamia'

"Mr. Amiya Bhushan Sharma takes a lop-sided view of Keats' La by bringing in Eliot and Yeats for comparison and contrast. The pedan intellectualism of Eliot and the complex symbolism of Yeats have little common with Keats' sensuousness and sensibility."

R. S. P

Mr. Sharma makes no reply, but we are printing another article on the subject which takes an entirely different view of the poem.

Harihar Rath's article on 'The Wisdom of Robert Frost.'

"I see a lot of confusion in the use of words.....humanness' and 'humanism'. Instead of explanation, he throws in our face some quotation or other, as for example 'the Fideistic tradition of New England Calvinism .....manifest in more than one passage in Jonathan Edwards, as well as elsewhere' (Yvor Winters). His next sentence: 'We find its presaging in the works of Donne, Dryden and Swift' is too gerenal and vague for me to understand the meaning of.....Clear thinking is definitely absent in the writing, I am sorry to say."

R. S. Pillai

"It would be an injustice to American Studies in India if I did not meet the challenge posed by my article's reader. The challenge is two-fold in the present context: one in which fault has been found in my style, and the other in which doubts have been raised against the authenticity of my research methodology.

I've carefully avoided the use of the word "humanism" because I felt that this might create the undesirable effect of focusing on Frost's sense of "human values" as a kind of byeproduct of the Humanistic Movement. It is well known that Frost did not belong to any such organised system of thought or action. Therefore, "humanness" is the correct word as it forcefully emphasizes his poetry's natural but distinctive human qualities. Let no one have the impression that Frost had ever assigned in his poetry any *systematically predominant* interest to the affairs of man or that his sense of "human values" had reflected some kind of a consciouse breaking through the mediaeval traditions of scholastic philosophy.

The next charge that I have indiscriminately piled words is hardly tenable. I wish the reader were able to understand the kind of burlesque that Frost employed in his *Masques* to help form a vision of life in so far as man's relation with God is concerned. The broad sweep of this intention

as necessitated the use of various comic modes such as irony, raillery, nockery and parody which are for Frost a remarkable basis of quizzing a different nuances and effects. Above all, there is Frost's own "whimsy" which has been perhaps transmitted to some of the characters in the *Masques* making them a little too naughty in the presence of God. Hence, it's no verbal *soixante-neuf* in which I have unwarrantedly taken pleasure to dabble because I have consciously used the words noted by the reader to signify the multifacetedness of Frost's comic vision.

Let me be clear that the particular citation under reference is in itself the best "explanation" in the context of which Frost's intense concern about man's relation with God can be rightly understood. It's not necessary, I suppose, to reiterate that in academic criticism, as Northrop Frye has rightly stated, it is good to remember that "literature is born out of literature". We all stand on the shoulders of others who have gone before, and Frost, for that matter, is no exception. I have, therefore, put Frost against the backdrop of certain theological traditions to which he must be referred back, so that understanding his *Masques* becomes easier. Is it not necessary that we should know something of New England Calvinism, and of Jonathan Edwards, the New England theologian so as to understand in proper perspective the questions of Atonement, Free Grace and Forgiveness raised by Frost ? Again I don't find any reason why a reference to Donne, Dryden and Swift would be too general and vague for any specialist reader particularly when the nature of my argument from the beginning till the reference occurs has been made absolutely clear. In fact, I have made special mention of these writers to evoke questions about justice and mercy in Christian terms which appear with a certain amount of incisiveness in their works either implicitly or explicitly See Donne's *Holy Sonnets* Dryden's *Reliqio Laici*, *The Hind and the Panther* and Swift's *The Tale of a Tub* '

Bijay Kumar Das's article on "Aspects of Modern Indian Poetry in English."

Mr. Bijay Kumar Das talks of 'nationality bias'; why not national bias ? His whole attitude to contemporary Indian poetry in English is wrong: it is not necessary to denigrate the poetry of Tagore and Naidu in order to praise Kumar and Ezekiel. The four lines quoted from Kumar's poem—Epitaph on an Indian politician are nothing but a cheap jibe. How can they be described as 'a very daring portrayal of the Indian politician'? So also Ezekiel's line—The unquiet mind, the emptiness within lacks coherent meaning. Yet it is lauded merely because the expression, emptiness within, recalls Eliot's "Hollow Men". Later in the essay Das writes: the daring portrayal of both love and sex in all its facts. 'Its facts' is clumsy

and crude. About Kamala Das's poetry he writes—Frustration in love strikes a note of melancholy. Is that all? Indecency is mistaken for strength in Kumar's lines:

> The moment of despair/has no age/no discretion.
> At fifty-two I see eucalyptus/thighs waiting to be bustled/by mere sunset.

Two lines from Ezekiel are repeated in page 45. Repetition of Eliot's lines with a slight change can by no means be called originality in Kamala Das: I am Indian, very brown born in/Malabar, I speak three languages, write in/Two, dream in one. Parthasarathy's "Scrape the bottom of your past" (Is there anything left?) is interpreted as embodying the basic quest for roots! Are the following lines quoted from Ramanujam anything but undergraduate cleverness? "the portrait of a stranger,/date unknown./Often signed in a corner/by my father." Again B. K. Das says:

"In fact, 'Savitri' has already been the subject of Ph. D. theses approved by professors Pinto, Spencer and White of Nottingham, Birmingham and Dublin; so it has apparently established itself in the canon of English literature."

On what flimsy grounds does Das arrive at this important conclusion! In the last paragraph of his essay he writes: Virginity becomes significant only when it is consummated. Is that all virginity is worth? Does its consummation lie in deflowering?

R. S. Pillai

"The first point raised by the reader (I call 'reader' because the name is not given in the rejoinder) is that'.... it is not necessary to denigrate the poetry of Tagore and Naidu in order to praise Kumar and Ezekiel.' True, but where have I done this? In the first paragraph of my article, while summing up Prof. Gokak's observation on our earlier Indo-Anglian poets and their poetry, I simply disagreed with him, because I found his claim for them untenable. But I conceded them some merits, when I said in the same paragraph: "Three poets, Tagore, Sarojini and Aurobindo are of some repute." (page 93)

I invite the reader to read Kumar's 'Epitaph on an Indian Politician' in full, not just the four lines I have quoted in my article. Politics is not our way of life. To write about politics and politicians is to run a risk. So in such a situation should we not call the portrayal of an Indian politician as given in Kumar's aforesaid poem, 'daring.'?

Thirdly, the reader says: "Ezekiel's line 'The unquiet mind the emptiness within "lacks coherent meaning" would urge him to read this line together with the line I have quoted in my article:

> "Words, looks, gestures, everything betrays
> The unquiet mind, the emptiness within."

Now, I think, one sees a coherent meaning.

Next the 'reader' asks: "Frustration in love strikes a note of melancholy (in Kamala Das's poetry). Is that all?" I would like to draw the 'reader's attention to the headline of the paragraph from which the above line is taken. The headline reads as follows:

> "Modern Indo-Anglian poets share a kind of melancholy though not without varying degrees." (p. 43—44)

To make my point clear, I said: 'She remembers an affair with a man who took her love, but could not give his (p. 44), which was followed by a quote from the poem.

In one line of the rejoinder the 'reader' says: 'Indecency is mistaken for strength in Kumar's lines.....' I would like to learn from the 'reader', and for that matter, from any one, as to when and where Kumar became indecent in his poetry. No longer do we live in an era of Queen Victoria when to speak of love in public was taboo. If Kumar is indecent in his imagery, what about D. H. Lawrance, or W. B. Yeats (in 'Leda and the Swan')' and our ancient Sanskrit poets?

Nowhere in the article I have said that Kamala Das's 'I am Indian, very brown, born in/Malabar, I speak three languages, write in/Two, dream in one,' speaks of her originality. I have quoted these lines in the following context, when I observed:

> "In fact, the pervasive presence of this conscious Indianness without any trace of romantic nostalgia or erotic quaintness sets contemporary Indo-English poetry apart from the imitative mediocrity of much of this poetry in the nineteenth century." (p. 44)

Perhaps the 'reader' has ovelooked the context.

The 'reader' again questions: 'After belittling earlier Indian poetry in English, Das concedes that '*Savitri*' has already been the subject of Ph. D. theses, approved by a number of British professors. Is not there an internal contradiction ?' I have never belittled it. In the first paragraph of my article I have only commented on Prof. Gokak's laudatory observation and put a note of disagreement. Similarly commenting on Adil Jussawala's

views on Aurobindo's *Savitri*, I have rejected his contention that the poem 'through twelve books and about 2400 lines is one vast onion of a poem. The layers gradually fall away to reveal nothing', and drawn his attention to the fact that *Savitri* has already been the subject of Ph. D. theses approved by Professors Pinto, Spencer, and White of Nottingham, Burmingham and Dublin; so it has apparantly established itself in the canon of English literature' (p. 49). So wherein does the contradiction lie?"

B. K. Das

"Keats' Waste Land : A Study of Lamia" A Reconsidertion

P. S. Kasture

(This article has reference to Amiya Bhushan Sharma's article which appeared in Vol XX ——— Editor)

I

In his article "Keats' Waste Land : A Study of Lamia" Amiya Bhushan Sharma attempts "to understand the quality of experience in *Lamia*, in the light of some of the recurrent images in Keats' work and a novel treatment of the theme of La femme fatale."[1] Quoting some parallel images from *Lamia* and *The Waste Land*, Prof. Sharma points out that *Lamia* "presents a heartless world of simulation, hypocrisy, degeneration and decay."[2] Contrary to Keats' usual association, smell is a forecast of doom in *Lamia*. At the end Prof. Sharma identifies Apollonius with Tiresias in T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* and thus claims *Lamia* to be Keats' Waste Land.

> Keats' *Lamia* is, no doubt, a picture of decay and doom as is Eliot's *The Waste Land*. But there are some fundamental differences between the two experiences. Apart from the autobiographical overtones *Lamia* pictures, in plain colours, the antagonism between emotion and reason, dream and vision of truth. On the other hand, Eliot's *The Waste Land* presents, on various levels, a much more complex problem of decaying human consciousness.

The present paper points out the basic diversity in the nature and quality of these two experiences and thereby reconsiders the claim propounded by Prof. Sharma.

II

Lamia, a serpent woman, with her enticing beauty easily succeeds in enmeshing the young man Lycius in the coil of her sex-appeal : "Put her new lips to his, and gave afresh/ The life she had so tangled in her mesh" (I, 9 294-95)[3]. She knows the feminine tricks to keep the dreamy Lycius,

in a state of forgetful bliss. Lycius also plans "to entangle, trammel up and snare" (II, 14.52) her soul in himself. Prof. Sharma rightly points out "there is no marriage of true minds."[4] Lamia, Hermes and Lycius suggest the degeneration of marital relationship. But Prof. Sharma's claim that they "are like Lil, her lover in the pub and Albert in *The Waste Land*" is debatable.

Lamia and Lycius are not bound to each other by real love. As pointed out above, Keats himself is also aware of the dubious nature of this relation. But they have an intense passion for each other. Hermes experiences "a celestial heat," a "passion new" when he searches valleys and woods for his "sweet nymph." In her change, Lamia's "elfin blood in madness ran." Her love for Lycius is a "bliss" for her. When she sees him she falls "into a swooning love for him" (I, 7.219). In turn Lycius also pines for her not coldly but "Orpheus like at an Eurydice" (I, 8.248).

In contrast to this passion, there is sterility and coldness in *The Waste Land*. The basis of the relation between Lil and ber husband Albert is not mature love but carnal attraction only. Still there is no fire of passion. Lil looks "so antique" because of child-birth. Albert is back after four years in army and wants "a good time." He will turn to other ladies if Lil fails to entertain him.

The whole affair becomes completely mechanical in the case of the female typist and her "young man carbuncular" (III, 70.231)[6]. Her amorous encounter with her lover is neither passionately anticipated nor heartily reciprocated by her. She is bored and endeavours to engage herself in "undesired" and "unreciprocated caresses." The lover completes his assault shrewdly welcoming her indifference. Her reaction highly contrasts the passionate eagerness in *Lamia*. The lovely woman in *The Waste Land* feels "well now that's done: and I'm glad it's over" (III, 70.252). Then she smooths her hair with "automatic hand" (III, 70.255).

In *Lamia* Keats contrasts the splendour of the bridal feast with Lamia's sad mood. But Prof. Sharma's juxtaposition of Lamia and the Lady of the Rocks in this context is far from being compatible.

The opening of Eliot's "A Game of Chess" visualizes the magnificent beauty of the drawing room of the woman protagonist. The chair she sits in recalls the famous description of Caleopatra in her barge proceeding to meet Antony. But the illusion has ironical overtones. Though unlawful,

the very intensity of her passion saves Cleopatra. But sexual love in the Waste Land is a languid operation of bored bodies and clayed hearts. The unawareness of the deeper spiritual meaning of this relation leads to its total collapse. Dead mind fails to attribute any meaning to life. Nothingness overpowers the whole existence. The play of light and shade in Eliot ironically signifies the external pomp in contrast to the inner hollowness of the lady. On the other hand Lamia approves of all "the fretted splendour of each nook and niche" (II, 17.137) and then fades "at self-will." Her "pale contented sort of discontent" (II, 17.135) contrasts the neurotic outburst of Belladonna. Lamia is not broken down like the Lady of the Rocks. Lamia shuts herself up in the chamber but she is "complete and ready" for the feast. She is sad only because against her wishes, only for the mad pompousness of Lycius' "foolish heart," she will have to entertain the "dreadful guests." Belladonna cannot endure the monotony of her artificial life. She does not know what to do and wants to rush madly into the society to rid herself of the encircling emptiness. But Lamia hates society because those people "would come to *spoil* her *solitude*" (Italics added) (II, 17.145).

III

The lines, "Who is the third who walks always beside you....." (V, 75.359-362), quoted by Prof. Sharma from "What The Thunder Said" about the third figure, have a reference to the crucial experience of soul in her fight against temptations. Lycius is caught between the supernatural spell of Lamia and Apollonius' light of reason. But in the bridal procession of Lycius and Lamia, the image of Persian mutes can not be identified, after Prof. Sharma, with the third figure accompanying two of such doubting Thomases journeying to Emmaus in "what the Thunder Said."

Only in the final stage Christ appears in person before these skeptics and sets their wavering at rest. Eliot's protagonists do not journey forth beyond this stage. Persian mutes (I, 12.390) in *Lamia* are attendants or slaves in an Eastern Court who are made dumb to guard their masters' secrets. The hooded vision in Eliot is invariably connected with the doubting nature of humanity and the emptiness of Christian Church in that state. But the company of Persian mutes in no way reflect the nature of their master. They only form a part of an established practice.

Therefore Persian mutes present a third figure following the first two, Lycius and Lamia, but beyond this the comparison does not apply.

P. S. KASTURE

IV

Prof. Sharma perceives the identity of the two roles - Apollonius in *Lamia* and Dog in *The Waste Land* for both are friends to men.

Apollonius is the shaping force in *Lamia*. He is Lycius' "trusty guide" and "good instructor." Lamia dreads Apollonius and impertunes Lycius not to invite him and "from him keep me hid." The old sage sees through her identity and admonishes Lycius, "Of life have I preserved thee to this day, / And shall I see thee made serpent's prey?" (II, 21.297-98). And egainst Lycius' wishes he forces the evil dream to vanish.

The question of moral conflict becomes much more involved and unnerving in Eliot, because in Eliot, both the roles of preserver and of destroyer merge in the same person. In Christian devotion dog played the fruitful role of redemption and regeneration. But this has been reversed in the waste land as new life has become problematic now. Sowing and planting does not necessarily lead to crop. The dog too like the elements of water and fire has become destructive. So the warning is given against its destructive nail: "Oh keep the Dog far hence" (I, 63.74).

Prof. Sharma further identifies Apollonius with Tiresias: "He is Tiresias, the seer who has no eyes."[7] Tiresias in *The Waste Land* is the central figure. According to Eliot's note "What Tiresias sees, in fact, is the substance of the poem."[8] Historically he is connected with the blind prophet in the classical legend of King Oedipus of Thebes.

He is bi-sexual and has a fuller experience of life. He is a part of the past as well as of the present. He is at once a prophet and a detached observer of life and also its participant. Psychologically he is the conscience of humanity. With his prophetic vision he can prick the bubbles of illusion, joys, hopes and fears. But as a fellow-sufferer he cannot separate himself from these decaying multitudes as Apollonius contrasts himself with Lamia.

> And I Tiresias have foresuffered all
> Enacted on this same divan or bed;
> I who have sat by Thebes below the wall
> And walked among the lowest of the dead.
>
> (III, 70.243-46)

V

As a result of this intermixing of black and white colours in the same personality, Eliot's protagonists, at the moments of extreme desperation, experience the uneasiness of conscience though that fails to save them.

The lady in "A Game of Chess" who represents modern decaying conscience is restless because of the awareness of the emptiness of her life. On the other hand, in *Lamia*, the forces of evil and good have separate identities. So the question of attributing a pricking conscience to Lamia does not arise. But when the forces of good come under the black shadows, they are uneasy. Lycius "muffles" his face from approaching Apollonius. When Lycius and Lamia enter Corinth, even temples experience a stormy commotion, "Temples lewd,/Mutter'd like tempest in the distance brew'd" (I, 11.352-53). When the preperation for the bridal feast is completed the haunting music moans "as fearful the whole charm might fade" (II, 16.124).

Prof. Sharma remarks that both *Lamia* and *The Waste Land* portray the murmuring of an uneasy conscience. But as pointed out above, the seat of conscience differs in these two poems.

VI

This difference between the roles of the protagonists in the two poems leads to the basic difference in these two experiences.

Keats pictures the conflict between reality and illusion. The problem of Keats' preference is debatable. He slantingly questions about the power of reason, "Do not all charms fly/At the mere touch of cold philosophy?" (II, 19.229-30). This scorching reality melts the dream of Lamia's serpentine beauty. But at the end, this triumph of reality does not prove life-giving. In his marriage robe Lycius is found with "no pulse or breath" (II, 22.310). Keats may or may not side Apollonius' ruthless disclosure of Lamia, but he surely acknowledges the potential overpowering effect of reality over illusion.

But Tiresias fails to exercise this power in the Waste Land. The Protogonist is sitting on the shores of Thames and is trying to collect his scattered meditations. His attempt to pull himself out of spiritual sterility is subtly suggested by his action of fishing, turning his back upon the "arid plain." But this initial hopeful trance is punctured immediately. The social structure is breaking down "London bridge is falling down falling down falling down" (V, 77.426). We cannot set the world in order. The individual must take initiative in his personal reconstruction. But man is destined to die, so an unnerving doubt lurks in the Protagonist's mind, "Shall I atleast set my lands in order?" (V, 77.425).

He continues his efforts to fight against his ruin and has shored three fragments from the broken civilization of the West.

> "In the fragments of literature that he calls to mind, he finds images that help him to define his own case: his city finally disintegrated; the troubadour poet Arnaut willingly submitting himself to the refining fires of purgatory: a longing to be utterly changed, like Philomela, into the swallow, the bird of spring: the disinherited Prince of Aquitaine surveying the demolished tower."[9]

In these fragments he can see some possibility of reordering his own life. But he immediately remembers Hieronymo and perceives the futility of all such attempts: "Why then I'll fit you."[10] The irony is hinted by the derogatory connotations of *fitting* the world with alien fragments. Blathazar does not agree with Hieronymo's attempts. He is afraid of confusion and consequent loss of understanding. But Hieronymo asserts "It must be so" and hopes "all was good." Hieronymo's idealism is a sheer madness from the skeptical point of view of Blathazar. In the Waste Land history repeats itself: "Hieronymo's *mad again*" (Italics added) (V, 77.431). The triple peace "Shantih, Shantih, Shantih" (V, 77.433) proves to be a *formal* ending of the Protogonist's life-story.

The dull, arid, decayed, stagnant and sapless life in the waste land completely rotten by evil definitely differs from the moral triumph of reason over illusion in Keats' *Lamia*. These experiences differ significantly and hence the conclusion. To regard *Lamia* as Keats' Waste Land, after Prof. Sharma, violates our psychic association with Eliot's *The Waste Land*. So *Lamia* cannot be considered Keats' Waste Land.

P. S. KASTURE

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LAMENT OF DEVAYANI

LEGEND : In the protracted war between gods and demons, the latter's Guru, Shukracharya, possesses the secret of reviving the dead by his Sanjivani Mantra. The gods send Kuch to acquire this secret. The demons, growing suspicious of him, burn him up four times, but each time Shukracharya revives him at the intercession of his daughter Devayani. Eventually, the demons mix his ashes in the drink of Shukracharya, but Devayani again intercedes, and while Shukracharya is reciting the Mantra, Kuch, who is inside his body, learns it. He is revived, but he can be released only by cutting up the body of Shukracharya. His mission fulfilled, Kuch abandons Devayani on the diplomatic plea that now their relationship would be incestuous.

So you have gone back to be acclaimed
a hero by the gods who may be
showering petals of the richest hue and fragrance
on one who has wrung from the adversary
the secret of reviving the dead.

Little did I guess then how your fondest dreams
and longings most intense
were not centred on me,
and when you feigned by my song to be enchained
in your ears was ringing
the paen from the empyrean :
"well done fair youth, you've assured our victory.
The asuras will now be contained, your name will
go down the corridors of eternity ;
No more shall rise the foe once felled.
Great honour to you who in thraldom could not be held
of the wily maiden, Shukra's daughter
who pined for and lusted after you."

In their celestial abodes they thus speak of you and me,
and you are pleased to concur
throwing me naked to their harashest judgement.
My quarrel, though, is not with them but with you
who played havoc with the emotions
of a maiden's innocent heart.

Why don't you stand up and confess
before the adoring crowd, boquet in hand,
that the arcaine knowledge you bring to them
You bought at a grievous price
of abasing yourself lower than the asuras,
much maligned as they are by arrogant devas?

(II)

Are those regions beyond the skies so cold
that they have frozen your speech,
immobilized the impulses of the soul,
paralyzed that discrimination which sets
right from wrong and would not let
the innocent be blamed?

Does not the memory of the days gone by
when tossed into an alien hostile world,
in me alone you found a prop, an anchor,
disturb your placid stay at home?
Even while losing your head in thunderous applause
don't you remember my ever-radiant love
which kept you-wavering, indeterminate,
sick for home-on a steady keal?

(III)

O ungrateful Kuch,
of what coarse fibre is made your soul

that it takes not any imprint from what
it has undergone ?
As many as four times did my father retrieve it—
the last most crucial, almost fatal to himself.
o insensitive one,
you and the like of you are deaf and blind
to the writhing agony of a lass
having to choose between the life
of one who gave her birth
and of another through whose touch the woman
came alive in her

(IV)

Not liking your presence in our midst
the asuras burnt you up to cinders
and mixed the ashes in the drink
my father liked to be treated to of an evening.

My two eyes swollen with crying
My body aquiver with a strange emotion
I stood petrified, tongue-tied on learning
that my father had to kill himself to let you live.

Sensing in his bones that I would die without you
he got ready for his body to be cut up for your release
from his abdomen where you were put together and
causing pain.
He whispered to you the sanjivani mantra
wherby you might reassemble his torn limbs.

(V)

You were my world and I was lost in you.
when you got held up beyond twilight in the forest
whither you had gone to bring flowers and sacrificial fuel
my eyes struggling with tears would go looking out for you
the universe on aching void until you came and caressed me.

(IV)

o beshrew me,
I never felt you looked not at but through me
to something far beyond me, up in the heavens—
the gratified looks of those who had sent you on the errand
of bringing the mysterious incantation from my father.
Your mean spirit could never rise above the purpose.
The heart of a maiden spontaneously offered
served you as a ladder to reach up to your goal.
A slave to success, you flew straight as an arrow
collecting your gains and walking away with a straight face
little caring for the hurt caused to the unsuspecting
by your cold-blooded programmed pursuit.

(VII)

o sinful one,
you used me as a mere means,
and your reason as a perverter of truth,
declaring our separation justified
invoking a high morality
that suits you best : a strategem
to dodge and keep me off.
Is this the way they have taught you up there
to juggle with the simple truths
by skill of reasoning and pomposities?
You can no more camouflage the truth
than you can a trembling flame,
The memory of what you have done to me
will torment you like an enraged ghost
never to be laid
and become a pounding on your pulse ;
till the fire that rages through my blood,
consumes your reason and does leave
the sly creature that you were
exposed to the ravages of compunction.

P. P. Sharma.

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अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय विकलांग वर्ष १९८१

विकलांगों को सहारा चाहिए

जन साधारण का ध्यान विकलांगों की ओर आकर्षित करना और उनके जीवन यापन की व्यवस्था करके समाज में उनको समानता का स्थान दिलाना विकलांग वर्ष १९८१ के प्रमुख उद्देश्य हैं।

उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार द्वारा विकलांगों के लाभार्थ पहले से ही विभिन्न योजनायें संचालित की जा रही हैं। इसके साथ ही विकलांग वर्ष को सफल और सार्थक बनाने के लिये विशेष प्रयास किये जा रहे हैं।

नेत्रहीन बालकों के लिए लखनऊ गोरखपुर तथा बांदा में तथा बालिकाओं के लिए सहारनपुर में विद्यालय संचालित। छात्र-छात्राओं को १०० रुपए प्रतिमाह छात्रवृत्ति देने की व्यवस्था।

नेत्रहीन व्यक्तियों के लिए बांदा में तथा महिलाओं के लिए गोंडा में संचालित प्रशिक्षण केन्द्र। प्रशिक्षार्थियों के भरण-पोषण पर १०० रुपए प्रतिमाह शासन द्वारा वहन करने की व्यवस्था।

मूक-बधिर विद्यालय आगरा, बरेली तथा फर्रुखाबाद में संचालित।

मूक बधिरों के लिए आगरा में व्यावसायिक प्रशिक्षण केन्द्र तथा आश्रित कर्मशाला।

शारीरिक रूप से अक्षम बालकों के लिए लखनऊ तथा प्रतापगढ़ में विद्यालय।

शारीरिक रूप से अक्षम व्यक्तियों के लिए इलाहाबाद तथा मिर्जापुर में कर्मशालाएँ संचालित। आवासीय सुविधा तथा शासन द्वारा प्रति संवासी १०० रुपए की दर से व्यय की व्यवस्था।

उन्नाव में स्थापित बहुधन्धी आश्रित कर्मशाला एवं उत्पादन केन्द्र में विकलांग व्यक्तियों को मोमबत्ती, दरी, निवाड़ निर्माण आदि व्यवसायों में प्रशिक्षण देने की सुविधा।

मानसिक रूप से अविकसित बालकों की शिक्षा एवं उनके उपचार के लिए इलाहाबाद तथा लखनऊ में विद्यालय स्थापित।

कृत्रिम अंग एवं श्रवण सहायक यंत्र के लिए शासन द्वारा अनुदान की व्यवस्था।

विकलांग कर्मचारियों तथा उनके सेवा योजकों को राज्य स्तरीय पुरस्कार देने की योजना।

सम्पूर्ण प्रदेश में विकलागों का तहसीलवार सर्वेक्षण कार्यक्रम।

आइए, हम सब विकलांगों के प्रति अपनत्व की भावना जागृत करें।

सूचना एवं जन सम्पर्क विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश द्वारा प्रसारित।

The Iowa Review

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Harlan Mathieu

ISSN 0021-065X

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David Hughes: *The Little Book*—a novella
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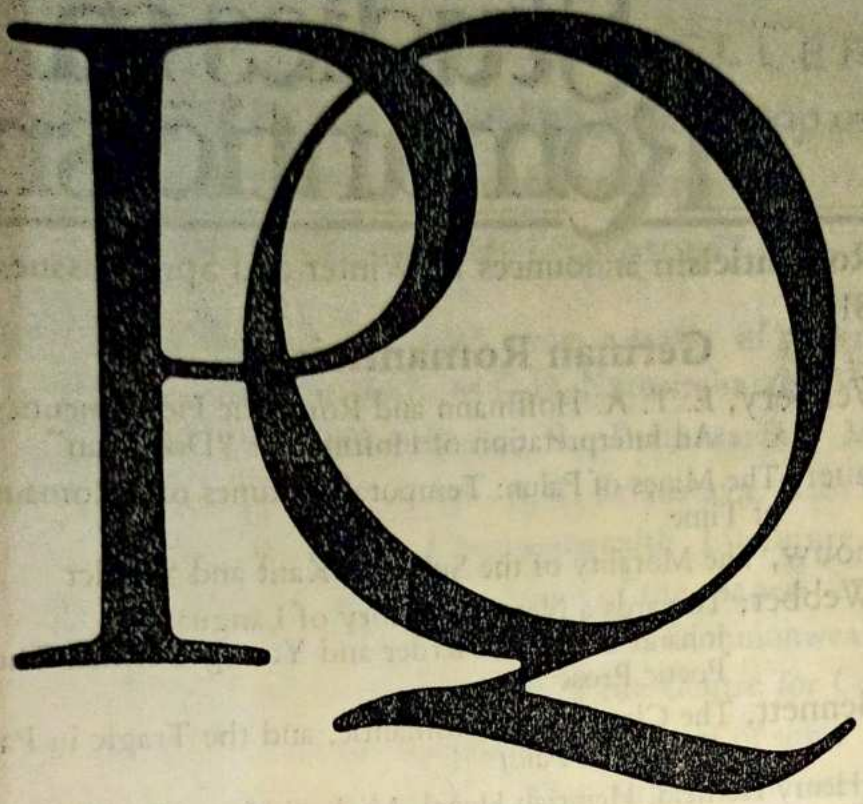

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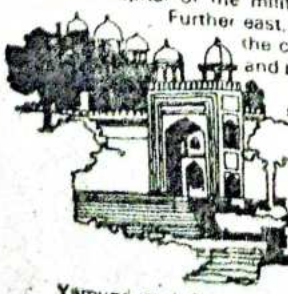

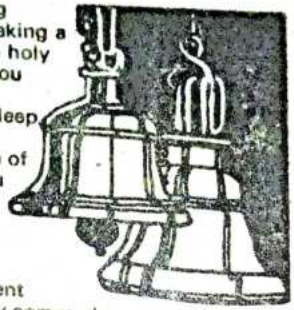

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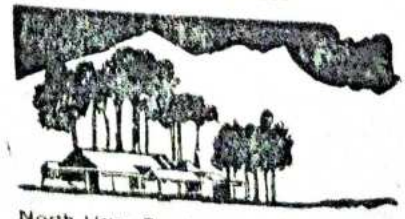

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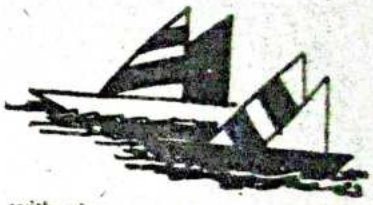

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