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The Craft of Dylan Thomas

NEETA JOSHI

Dylan Thomas was a scrupulous artist whole-heartedly devoted to his "craft or sullen art." Like Hopkins, Joyce and Yeats, Thomas was in love with words. He was gifted with a remarkable sensitivity to "the shape and shade and size and noise of the words as they hummed, strummed, jigged and galloped along." He possessed the true artist's skill of twisting "the shapes of thought/Into the stony idioms of the brain" (21) to create a symphony of cuphonious and evocative sounds. That he was a more conscientious and meticu-lous artist than many critics during his lifetime gave him credit for is indicated by the notebooks in the Lockwood Memorial Library of the State University of New York at Buffalo which show how carefully he revised and re-revised his poems. Thomas was an ingenious craftsman who juggled with words to create magical effects. He was an artist with words, an artful maker of moving rhythms and verse structures which were eminently suited to elabo-rate the subject of the poems.

The development in Thomas's poetic themes was accompa nied by a corresponding development in his craft. His early poems were characterized by a terseness, an obscurity, a dense packing of conflicting images, a "cloudy pregnancy" which constituted for many readers one of the main fascinations of his first two volumes of poetry, 18 Poems (1934) and Twenty-five Poems (1936). In his third volume of poetry, Deaths and Entrances (1946), this densely packed, somewhat taut and turgid style is replaced by a relatively lucid, vigorous yet flowing style which is reminiscent sometimes of a more diffuse Hopkins, sometimes of a more concentrated Swinburne. The taut end-stopped lines of many poems in the earlier three volumes are almost consistently replaced by smoothly flow-ing, run-on lines. In Country Sleep (1951) shows further develop-ment in Thomas's art, marked by a somewhat greater objectivity

and consequent clarity of poetic statement. This concluding vol-ume may be said to crown years of experiment in perfecting artistic techniques such as the use of alliteration, assonance, "cynhaned," the chime of consonants and resounding vowels, the use of internal rhyme, end-rhyme, and syllabic verse which incidentally also form an integral part of traditional Welsh prosody. Since one of the distinctive qualities of Thomas's poetry is its emphasis on tech-nique, his development as a poet through his five published vol-umes of poetry is marked by an increasing technical virtuosity. It is therefore illuminating to make a study of Thomas's craft by exam-ining the poems in the order in which the artist chose to publish them. The order in which the poems are arranged in Thomas's five volumes is by and large the same as that of Collected Poems

Thomas wrote the first volume entitled 18 Poems in 1933 and 1934 when he was nineteen and twenty years old. In the first poem of this volume, "I see the boys of summer," the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and last lines of each stanza have an equal number of syllables, eleven, seven, ten, eight, eight, and ten respectively. Thomas seems quite fond of using half-rhymes, and in the third stanza each line ends with the sibilant "s":

I see the summer children in their mothers Split up the brawned womb's weathers, Divide the night and day with fairy thumbs; There in the deep with quartered shades Of sun and moon they paint their dams As sunlight paints the shelling of their heads. (1)

The second line of each stanza of part I begins with a verb, the fourth and fifth lines begin with "There" and "Of" respectively, thus imparting a certain structural similarity to each of the four stanzas. Rhythmic monotony and uniformity of structure are dex-terously balanced by imperfect rhymes and contradictory images ingeniously reconciled. The poem's monotonous unchanging rhythm hints at the eternal processes of nature. The reconciliation of antithetical images of life and death, summer and winter, heat and cold, love and sterility, life and death, creation and destruction, demonstrates the poet's skill in creating pattern out of chaos, har-mony out of discord, unity out of multiplicity, a final synthesis out of thesis and antithesis. The texture of the poem is rich and concen-

trated. No line or word appears to be superfluous.

"A process in the weather of the heart" is similar in theme and structure to "the force that through the green fuse drives the flower." Both these poems develop the idea that correspondences exist between man and the natural world, between microcosm and macrocosm, through similar devices such as the use of parallel constructions, repetition with variation, oxymoron, paradox, and antithesis. The reconciliation of condensed opposites suggests the harmony that exists in nature despite apparent contraries-summer and winter, day and night, birth and death:

The force that through the green fuse drives the flower Drives my green age; that blasts the roots of trees Is my destroyer And 1 am dumb to tell the crooked rose

My youth is bent by the same wintry fever. (9)

The lyrical breath and flowing movement of the first two lines with the falling cadence of the short line in the middle of the stanza that rises again in the next two lines serves to emphasize the ebb and flow of life, the unceasing rhythm of temporal processes which link man inextricably with nature. This recurring movement is repeated in the other three stanzas with the aid of parallel constructions and verbal repetition as in "I see the boys of summer." For instance, the first lines of each stanza except the coda begin with "The." Fourth lines begin with "And." Last lines except for that of the fourth stanza begin with "How." Each stanza is in effect echoing the same thing in different words; hence the similarity of structure. The regularity of the first line of each stanza is effectively counter-pointed by the sprung or irregular rhythm of the last two lines of the coda:

And I am dumb to tell the lover's tomb How at my sheet goes the same crooked worm. (9)

By showing that the effect of flexibility can be produced within strict form, the poet hints at the variety in unity that exists in nature. In this poem, Thomas appears to have loaded every rift with ore, to have "tested every nut and bolt in its body."

Another poem which is similar in formal structure and perhaps

in subject to "The force that through the green fuse drives the flower" and "A process in the weather of the heart" is "light breaks where no sun shines." Though rhyme and dissonance in this poem is replaced by assonance, "Shines... tides light" and "globes. robes," in other respects it has much in common with the two earlier poems:

Light breaks where no sun shines; Where no sea runs, the waters of the heart Push in their tides; And broken ghosts with glow-worms in their heads, The things of light File through the flesh where no flesh decks the bones.

A candle in the thighs Warms youth and seed and burns the seeds of age; Where no seed stirs, The fruit of man unwrinkles in the stars, Bright as a fig; Where no wax is, the candle shows its hairs. (24)

All the three poems have more or less similar structural forms, the same organic wholeness, the same recurring rhythm, the repetition of verbal patterns, the use of parallel constructions and the juxtapo-sition of opposites, instead of a clear-cut narrative or detectable forward movement) The rhythms are strongly marked and the stan-zas are given firm shapes with a pattern of rhymes and half-rhymes. Repetition and firm shapes give the impression of a few primary moods and themes being locked in, perpetuated and developed. Strikingly forceful language is ingeniously contained within prede-termined shapes and forms and less markedly by a patterned count of the number of syllables per line. In all these poems, the fournal structure helps elaborate the theme. Hence an integral relationship exists between form and content.

Some of the poems in Thomas's second volume, Twenty-five Poems, were written in 1935 and 1936, but more are contemporary with those of 18 Poems and a substantial number were written earlier than even those of 18 Poems. The arrangement of this section of Collected Poems is that of Twenty-five Poems. The first poem of this collection "I, in my intricate image," which is perhaps

"the most elaborately worked out poem of his early career," is remarkable for its "intricate" craft. The rhythm with its balanced phrasing, its rising and falling cadence, its largely end-stopped lines and fixed caesuras is reminiscent of 18 Poems. As in "Before 1 knocked," which Thomas rhymed on twenty-three words ending in "er," what is striking in this poem is that seventy-two of the one hundred and eight line-endings are variants on the sounds of the liquid "1." This terminal sound occurs twenty-four times in each of the three parts, making a total of seventy-two. The second stanza of Part III reads:

Be by your one ghost pierced, his pointed ferrule, Brass and the bodiless image, on a stick of folly Star-set at Jacob's angle, Smoke hill and hopheads valley, And the five-fathomed Hamlet on his father's coral, Thrusting the tom-thumb vision up the iron mile. (38)

"To-day, this insect" is a moving collocation of sound and rhythm which suggests that the theme of this ambiguous verbal arabesque must be the art of poetry itself. The eight-line stanzas of this poem are as effective as the ottava rima of Yeats himself in developing the theme. The most memorable line of this poem, "Adam I love, my madmen's love is endless" (41) mingles liquids and nasals in a manner that recalls the techniques of Hopkins and the Welsh, "The seed-at-zero" comprises of paired stanzas, the second of each an echo of the first:

The seed-at-zero shall not storm That town of ghosts, the trodden womb With her rampart to his tapping, No good-in-hero tumble down Like a tower on the town Dumbly and divinely stumbling Over the manwaging line.

The seed-at-zero shall not storm

That town of ghosts, the manwaged womb

With her rampart to his tapping,

No god-in-hero tumble down

Like a tower on the town

Dumbly and divinely leaping Over the warbearing line. (42)

These paired stanzas serve to elucidate the theme which is that of begetting and conceiving, seed and egg. The relationship between these paired stanzas is apparently that of the male and the female. Many of the poems of Thomas's third volume "The Map of Love" were written between 1937 and 1939, and some written between 1930 and 1933 the poet extracted from his notebooks. A more flexible rhythm, a looser structure, a somewhat greater clarity and a less rich and mysterious texture than that of the preceding two volumes indicates a change of theme and subject. These poems as the title of the volume suggests deal with love, both married and Christian. In these poems Thomas is a little more prone to talk about actual people, places, and occasions and does not confine himself to generalized themes of birth and death as in the preceding two volumes. In the first poem of this volume: "Be-cause the pleasure-bird whistles," Thomas uses periphrasis in the manner of the Welsh poets of the medieval age. For instance, "the drug-white shower of nerves and food" (77) refers to snow, snow being conceived both as manna falling from heaven and as the "snow" of cocaine addicts. Similarly both "frozen wife" and "salt person" (77) are a roundabout way of alluding to Lot's wife.

"I make this in a warring absence" illustrates Thomas's con-cept of form as being organic to a particular individual poetic experience. He claimed as a poet's right the freedom that enables him to determine the form from within, which is invariably in keeping with the theme. The form of this dense coagulated poem, in which stanzas of eight and seven lines alternate, is suited to the subject which is a lover's quarrel. Though this poem is typical of this volume from the thematic point of view, what is intriguing is that terminal words agree in a single consonant: "n" in the first two stanzas, "s" in the third and fourth, "n" in the fifth, "d" in the sixth and seventh, "n" and "m" in the eighth, and s" and "r" in the last. For instance, in the first stanza all terminal words end with the nasal "n":

I make this in a warring absence when Each ancient, stone-necked minute of love's season

Harbours my anchored tongue, slips the quaystone, When, praise is blessed, her pride in mast and fountain Sailed and set dazzling by the handshaped ocean, In

that proud sailing tree with branches driven Through the last vault and vegetable groyne, And this weak house to marrow-columned heaven. (78)

This "long exhauster" took "roughly a year" to finish; a single line would occupy Thomas "for many days.".

The craft of Thomas, indebted to Hopkins and also to the Welsh poetic tradition, is evident in "How shall my animal." The discordant concord of sounds in the manner of Hopkins is heard in the lines, "Roaring, crawling, quarrel" and in "To trot with a loud mate the haybeds of a mile." (91) The jerky dissonant movement of this line conveys an impression of lusty, irrepressible vitality and uncontrollable energy. Internal rhymes in the Welsh manner occur in the second half of the poem: "drops... Lops" and "Die... Lie." (92) Other lines which suggest the influence of Welsh poetry in shaping Thomas's prosody include, "Sigh long, clay cold, lie shorn" and "Lie dry, rest robbed, my beast.". (92) In both is found an interweaving of rhyme and alliterative, assonantal, and dissonantal effects. An agreement of terminal sounds in the first and second stanzas helps in producing a euphonious effect despite their being interrogatives. "If my head hurt a hair's foot" is also remarkable not so much for what it says as for how it says it. It contains some striking lines which demonstrate most of the devices of Welsh poetry which include assonance, dissonance, a chime of consonants and symphonic vowels, alliteration and internal rhyme: "pack back the downed bone" and "Bump on a spout let the bubbles jump out." (97)

Most of the poems of Deaths and Entrances were composed during the years 1939-45. From this body of poems onwards the turgid, largely end-stopped lines of the preceding volumes are supplanted by run-on lines which compounded with fluid and flow-ing rhythms contribute towards a general loosening of structure and an increasing clarity of poetic statement. Thomas's technical virtu-osity is admirably demonstrated in the first poem of this volume "The Conversation of Prayer" which hinges metrically on a sus-tained structure of reverberating internal rhymes in keeping with the Welsh poetic tradition in which internal rhyme constitues a

standard device. This complex arrangement with its incantatory and ritualistic repetition helps to explicate the poctic theme by suggesting that the prayers of the boy and the man are destined to be reversed in time. This short poem needs

to be quoted in full for one to appreciate the intricate arrangement of rhyme. The internal rhymes have been marked:

The conversation of Prayers about to be said By the child going to bed and the man on the stairs Who climbs to his dying love in her high room, The one not caring to whom in his sleep he will move And the other full of tears that she will be dead,

Turns in the dark on the sound they know will arise Into the answering skies from the green ground, From the man on the stairs and the child by his bed. The sound about to be said in the two prayers For the sleep in a safe land and the love who dies Will be the same grief flying. Whom shall they calm? Shall the child sleep unharmed or the man be crying? The conversation of prayer about to be said Turns on the quick and the dead, and the man on the stairs To-night shall find no dying but alive and warm

In the fire of his care his love in the high room. And the child not caring to whom he climbs his prayer Shall drown in a grief as deep as his truc grave, And mark the dark eyed wave, through the eyes of sleep. Dragging him up the stairs to one who lics dead. (100)

Another striking feature of this poem is that though most of the words in this poem are monosyllables, they remain unobtrusive like the internal rhymes, and do not create a monotonous impression. In fact, Thomas still manages to produce a subtly varied effect. Each line has four stresses. In the line, "From the man / on the stairs /5/and the child / by his bed" which comprises of only monosyllables, the four feet are four anapaests. In other verses, his craft is more varied. For instance, in "Who climbs / to his dying love / in her high room" there is an iambus, an anapaest, an iambus, and a colloca-tion of an unstressed two-syllable foot with a two-stress foot. This

intricate patterning, in a way that is difficult to explain, makes the poem more poignant and infinitely more appealing. The next poem in Deaths and Entrances that not only demon-

strates Thomas's craft but also gives an insight into his concept of poetry is "In my Craft or Sullen Art." This poem with its proud and austere self-assured movement and its predominantly three stresses to a line recalls Yeats's "The Fisherman." His "craft or sullen art" entails painstaking labour by the "singing light" of Yeats's "raging moon," a symbol of imagination and inspiration, Thomas's own furor poeticus. Poetry is made up of words which have to be worked upon, they have to be "sawn" (viii) and "hacked" into a "rumpus of shapes." (viii) This requires complete dedication on the part of the artist, a "solitary mister." (111) That Thomas was not only interested in what he had to-say but also in how he said it is evident from this poem with its Yeatsian overtones:

In my craft or sullen art Exercised in the still night When only the moon rages And the lovers lie abed With all their griefs in their arms.. 1 labour by singing light Not for ambition or bread Or the strut and trade of charms On the ivory stages But for the common wages Of their most secret heart.

Not for the proud man apart From the raging moon I write On these spindrift pages Nor for the towering dead With their nightingales and psalms But for the lovers, their arms Round the griefs of the ages, Who pay no praise or wages Nor heed my craft or art. (128)

What is remarkable about this short lyric is its intricate rhyme-scheme and the ingenious interweaving pattern of rhymes which

makes this poem one coherent luminous entity. Not only is there a distinct pattern of rhyming within each stanza (abcdebdecca, abcdeecca) but also the two are interlocked by the rhyming of the first and last line of the first verse with

the corresponding lines in the last verso "art," "heart," "apart," "art" which imparts a structural unity to the whole poem. Further, the corresponding lines of each stanza (except two) are linked together' by rhyme, so that the rhymes are ornately interwoven from one verse to another in the manner of a Celtic knot. This is a characteristic feature of classic Welsh verse. A.T. Davies observes: "This concentration of the Welsh poet on ornamentation has its counterpart in the visual arts of the Celtic races the interweaving patterns of the Celtic knot found on its monuments."" The artist employs the same interweav-ing pattern with consummate skill in "Author's Prologue," a poem comprising of one hundred and two lines rhyming from the ex-tremities inward, meeting in a couplet in lines fifty-one and fifty-two. That Thomas took the pains to structure his poems in this manner is ample proof that he considered the effect, the "sound of shape" (49) produced, worth the trouble. As Thomas mentioned in a letter to his publisher, "Why I acrosticked myself like this, don't ask me." He was also heard to say, by A.T. Davies, "It may be a waste of time for the reader, but not for the poet."

The formal pattern of "Vision and Prayer" brings to mind George Herbert's "figured" poem which takes its shape from what it is about. The shape of this pattern poem is to a great extent determined by a regular syllabic count in both the diamond and wing patterns. In the diamond stanzas, an additional syllable is added to each line after the monosyllabic first line, until nine syllables are reached in the ninth line. Then syllables recede in the same order to the final monosyllable in the seventeenth line. Tho-mas retains this intriguing shape for the first six stanzas of the "Vision" section and then by taking the upper and lower halves of the pattern and reversing them, he produces an hour-glass shape for the remaining six stanzas of the "Prayer" section which recalls Herbert's "Easter Wings." Assuming that the form is related to the content, the diamond shape, which appears to describe the birth of Jesus, is probably a symbolical representation of the womb itself:

Who Are You

Who is born In the next room So loud to my own That I can hear the womb Opening and the dark run Over the ghost and the dropped son Behind the wall thin as a wren's bone? In the birth bloody room unknown To the burn and turn

of time And the heart print of man Bows no baptism But dark alone Blessing on The wild Child. (137)

What is striking is the ending of most lines with the letters "m" and "n". This symphony of "m" and "n" is sustained throughout the "Vision" section with subtle variations, and, to a lesser degree, on to the "Prayer" section. Indeed, Thomas in his intricate craft or sullen art strode on many levels.

The poems of In Country Sleep written between 1947 and 1951 further develop the poetic style as evidenced in poems like "Fern Hill" and "Poem in October" included in the preceding volume. Like these poems, the rhythm and syntax of "Over Sir John's Hill," "In the white giant's thigh," "In country sleep," and "Poem on his birthday," is smooth and fluid, the sentences though long-winded are graceful and richly symphonic. The stanzaic struc-ture is meticulous. In all these four syllabic poems the poet appears as an observer and compassionate reporter of the objective scene.

The remaining two poems of this last volume are metrically patterned to rhyme schemes, "Do not go gentle into that good night" with its Yeatsian overtones is addressed to Thomas's father. This poem is in the form of a villanelle which is made up of five or more tercets and a concluding quatrain, all on two rhymes. The first line ends the second and fourth tercets. The third line ends the third and fifth tercets while the quatrain ends with the first and third lines. The four tercets that follow the first produce a varied re-sponse each time by virtue of the new context despite the same ritualistic repetition. Thus, the second, third, fourth, and fifth ter-

cets tell how wise, good, wild, and grave men respectively meet their death, each time creating a different effect:

Though wise men at their end know dark is right, Because their words had forked no lightning they Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay, Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight, And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way, Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay, Rage, rage against the dying of the light. (116)

The texture of this poem is enriched by the use of puns and oblique meanings; "Do not go gentle into that good night." This line be-sides meaning that his father should not go gently into the good night of death also appears to mean, "Do not go, gentle one, into that good night." The father has become gentle in his illness, waiting humbly for death. Again "good night" signifies not only the dark oblivion of death but also a valedictory "Good Night!" Similarly in the lines, "Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright/ Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay," "wave" seems to suggest not only a sea-wave but also a hand waved in farewell. The pun on "grave" in the fourth sonnet is quite obvious. "Grave men near death" are not only serious-minded but also ap-proaching their grave. What is more remarkable about this poem than its use of puns is that Thomas could manage to write about a matter as personal and emotionally affecting as the death of a dear father in so traditional and constricting a form as the villanelle.

The measured, almost statuesque, beauty of this villanelle contrasts with "the boisterous ribaldry" of "Lament." This poem with its reiterated stanzaic structure, its lilting anapaests, its inter-nal rhyme and alliterative effects, its vivid sensuous and visual impressions and "gusty" (174) rhythms results in the sympathetic

identification of the reader with the poet. Thomas was first and foremost an artist with an "unbridled enjoyment of the abundance and luxuriant richness of the world" as is evident from the first stanza of "Lament":

When I was a windy boy and a bit And the black spit of the chapel fold, (Sighed the old ram rod, dying of women). I tiptoed shy in the gooseberry wood, The rude owl cried like a telltale tit, I skipped in a blush as the big girls rolled. Ninepin down on the donkey's common, And on seesaw sunday nights I wooed Whoever I would with my wicked eyes, The whole of the moon I could love and leave All the green leaved little weddings' wives In the coal black bush and let them grieve. (174)

The memorable phrase, "Brandy and ripe in my bright, bass prime," (174) a marvel of interwoven alliteration and assonance in the true Welsh manner evokes all the sensuous richness of the poet's "bright bass prime," the green and golden effulgence of his youth. The rich luxurious sound of this phrase adds to its meaning. Thomas's sense of verbal music, the intricate interplay of chiming consonants and resounding vowels, and the emotional rush of words can be traced to his Welshness. His exceptional ear for the sound of words made him distort the syntax and the natural order of words, somewhat in the manner of James Joyce. Thomas indeed possessed the romantic gift of expressing himself, as he put it, through the "sound of shape."

A detailed examination of Thomas's poems conclusively proves that Thomas was an extremely accomplished artist who had a high conception of the poet's vocation. Wholeheartedly commit-ted to his craft, he made innumerable drafts of his poems before he was finally satisfied. He used to work out a phrase at a time and never wrote a line of poetry except when he was "raptly sober."" Vernon Watkins makes an interesting observation on Thomas's craft, "He was a slow and patient craftsman, and he had become slower since the early poems. His method of composition was itself painfully slow. He used separate worksheets for individual lines,

sometimes a page or two being devoted to a single line, while the poem was gradually built up, phrase by phrase. He usually had beforehand an exact conception of the poem's length and he would decide how many lines to allot to each part of its development.""

Thomas was a consummate artist with words. In his poems, the form helped to shed light on the content which was occasionally more than a little ambiguous. Thomas perfected artistic techniques such as the use of alliteration, assonance, "cynghanedd," the use of internal rhyme and end rhyme, syllabic verse, and sprung rhythm which constitute a distinctive feature of traditional Welsh prosody:

A she bird rose and rayed like a burning bride.

A she bird dawned, and her breast with snow and scarlet downed. (121)

Thomas's sensitivity to the sound of words as well as to their meaning, the rich, dense and mysterious texture of his poems, together with a certain imaginative vigour and luxuriousness in his treatment of language can also be attributed to his Welshness.

Many of the poems in Thomas's first two volumes display a concentric rather than a clear-cut narrative movement. The struc-tural similarity is due to the frequent use of parallel constructions, repetition of verbal patterns, recurring rhythms, and a juxtaposition of contrary images and ideas. In his later poems, Thomas devel-oped the largely end-stopped, somewhat taut and turgid verse of 18 Poems and Twenty-five Poems into a flowing and fluid metre. On closer inspection, it is noticed that these later poems consist of meticulously cadenced and elaborately crafted stanzaic form.

It is abundantly clear that Thomas's development as an artist through his five published volumes of poetry is characterized by an increasing refinement of poetic technique. Thomas employed any poetic device he could think of to make his poems work and move in the directions he wanted them to. All his technical devices-even obscurity had an artistic purpose. They were meant to make the reader stop and think, to arouse more powerful emotions, and to heighten the impact of the subtly-wrought poems when their mean-ing finally struck the reader. Thomas's employment of various artistic devices and the uses to which he put them indicates that there was a method in his madness.

NOTES

1. Dylan Thomas, Collected Poems (London: J.M. Dent, 1952), p. 128. All subsequent references to this book appear in the text.

2. Dylan Thomas, "Poetic Manifesto," Early Prose Writings, ed. Walford Davies (London: J.M. Dent, 1971), p. 155.

3. G.S. Fraser, "Dylan Thomas," A Casebook on Dylan Thomas, ed. John Malcolm Brinnin (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1960), p. 50.

4. Lawrence Durrell in Dylan Thomas. The Legend and the Poet: A Collection of Biographical and Critical Essays, ed. E.W. Tedlock (London: William Heinemann, 1960), p. 36.

5. Clark Emery, The World of Dylan Thomas (London: J.M. Dent, 1971), p. 312.

6. Dylan Thomas: Letters to Vernon Watkins, ed. Vernon Wat-kins (London: J.M. Dent, 1957), p. 30.

7. Aneirin Talfan Davies, Dylan: Druid of the Broken Body, 2nd ed. (1964; rpt. Swansea: Christopher Davies, 1977), p. 90.

8. Paul Ferris, Dylan Thomas (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1977), p. 118.

9. Ibid., p. 119.

10. Rushworth M. Kidder, Dylan Thomas: The Country of the Spirit (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1973), p. 190

11. Suzanne Roussillat, Dylan Thomas: The Legend and the Poet, p. 11.

12. John Davenport, Dylan Thomas: The Legend and the Poet, p. 79.

13. Dylan Thomas: Letters to Vernon Watkins, p. 17.

Nainital

Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Pioneer Modernist

M.S. NAGARAJAN

Vivian de Sola Pinto concludes his essay on Hopkins in his Crisis in English Poetry with these words: "In many respects the last Victorian Jesuit is still in advance of his numerous imitators, who lack scholarship, the disciplined inner life and the profound under-standing of the principles of aesthetics which lie beyond his revolu-tionary experiments." This paper is a modest attempt to substanti-ate Pinto's considered value judgement of Hopkins. A defence on behalf of Hopkins is quite presumptuous, 1 well realize; but in the context of such hostility shown by Yeats, Eliot and Yvor Winters, some revaluation is called for.

The starting point for an understanding of Hopkins's poetry is simply this: he was deadly earnest in his calling as a priest and he was equally deadly earnest in his profession of poetry. It is very wrong to believe that the priest in him stifled the poet in him. There was no conflict between his two vocations as Empson would have us believe. Two of his earliest compositions "Heaven-Haven" and "The Habit of Perfection" may be cited as examples in proof of this. "Heaven-Haven," written when the poet was just twenty, gives lexpression, in the form of a nun about to take the veil, to the poet's desire for peace, after successfully overcoming the struggles in life. This desire is expressed appropriately in the images of the "green swell" and the "swing of the sea." While on the one hand there is a craving for peace, there is on the other, an acceptance of the Vstruggle in life. "The Habit of Perfection" written two years later, is an exquisite invocation of an ascetic life. This sensuous poem that dismisses the senses is full of paradoxes. Elected silence is music for the poet; being dumb is eloquence; blindness is necessary for vision; divine fasts would be tasty feasts. If these two early

poems give expression to Hopkins's strict self-enforced discipline on him by wz, of preparation for the priestly life, we have in his last poem "To R.B." the whole process of artistic creativity-the inspiration and conception rendered in a calm and beautifully ordered sonnet. "The fine delight that fathers thought," the

breath-ing of the blowpipe flame leading to years of gestation of "wearing, bearing, caring" and the rapture of inspiration resulting in "the roll, the rise, the carol, the creation" shows the poet's joy in creation, his total dedication to the profession of poetry. The controlling. central, sexual imagery is most suited to the whole process of the shaping joy of a poem. In the letters that he wrote to Bridges, Dixon and Patmore, he expresses his utmost faith in seriousness in art and earnesiness in one's own subject. He looked upon the two vocation as one and the same insofar as the final cause was concerned. If we separate one from the other, we are in danger of doing injustice to both.

We might do well to approach Hopkins's poetry based on two considerations, (i) the poems that are written about the external world, and (ii) the poems that relate to the man within. It is easy for anyone to see that almost the entire body of his poetry falls into these two classifications. One can perceive a pattern of progression when one examines the poems that apparently seem to describe the external nature. "Nature is never spent/There lives the dearest freshness deep down things" because the world is charged with the grandeur of God in spite of all that man does to the world. God is seen to be dynamically present in all his creatures. He manifests himself in infinite ways. The manifestation may "flame out" or men may have to he crushed for this purpose. Apart from the very early compositions-composed between the years 1860 and 1875 a few of which describe external nature and its beauty as a thing in itself, when Hopkins moves on to a stage of poetic growth and evolution (1876-1889), one cannot but notice the truth that external nature is not a thing in itself, a self-existing entity, but an organic part of a greater being. This distinction between the early and later Hopkins insofar as Nature poetry is concerned is central to any understanding of Hopkins. A failure to realize this results in critical blunder. The early nature poems are delightful pieces and are undoubtedly object lessons to anyone who seeks initiation into poetic craft. One can trace various echoes in the young and ener-getic Hopkins. The very first poem "Escorial"-a remarkable effort

for a boy of fifteen-bears the inescapable Byronic "Child Harold" stamp. "A Vision of the Mermaids" is full of Keatsian and Pre-Raphaelite overtones. "Barnfloor and Winepress" seems to be a reworking of George Herbert's "The Bunch of Grapes"; "See How Spring Opens" exhibits a very close relationship with Milton's "How soon hath Time"; "Nondum" has traceable echoes from Ar-nold's "Scholar-

Gipsy" and Newman's "Lead, Kindly Light" and the list can go on and on. The intention here is not certainly to present the early Hopkins in poor light. One can always see a poem in another poe poem. The The point I am trying to make is that these early poems serve only as sign-posts in the evolution of Hopkins. In the best poems of his, a few of which we shall presently take up for extended treatment, Hopkins does use nature but nature here is God's manifestation. Middleton Murry, writing in June 1919 in The Athenaeum, says that the main line of Hopkins's poetical evolution has to be traced from Shelley's "Skylark" but concludes "that the failure of his achievement was due to the starvation of experience which his vocation imposed upon him." Murry's estimate of Hopkins appeared within a year of the publication of Hopkins's poems. One is not affected so much by the hostility of Murry's (remarks as by his inability to witness the evolution of Hopkins. His understanding of Hopkins is not sufficiently backed by supporting scholarship on the poet's poetic theories. Eliot, in his After Strange Gods (1934), does not share the enthusiasm that others feel for Hopkins. For him, Hopkins was the author of "some very beautiful devotional verse," He is not a poet of our time, for his innovations "operate only within a narrow range," they lack inevitability, they are purely verbal and do not show real development of thought or feeling. For Eliot, Hopkins is not a religious poet in the sense in which he accepts Baudelaire to be one. Hopkins is just a Nature poet comparable to Meredith. He is better than Meredith for he "has the dignity of the Church behind him." What a pity, Eliot did not realize the significance Nature had for Hopkins! For Meredith, Nature was just a living force. "Man was created to praise, rever-ence and serve God our Lord" is central to the Ignatian meditation. Hopkins's firm conviction was that Nature always speaks of its creator and it is man's duty to celebrate it. Eliot's conclusion is, "But from the struggle of our time to concentrate, not to dissipate; to renew our association with traditional wisdom to reestablish a vital connection between the individual and the race; the struggle,

in a word against Liberalism: from all this Hopkins is a little apart, and in this Hopkins has very little aid to offer us." How sad, Eliot of all critics should arrive at such an estimate. Intense concentra-tion on feeling and intellectual passion and contact with traditional wisdom are the basic virtues of Hopkins's poetry. None can fail to notice this. Hopkins should be the last person Eliot should accuse of not fighting against his idea of liberalism. Hopkins lived a life of remarkable obscurity as a Jesuit in Victorian England, far removed from the mainstream of

English life and culture. At least here Eliot is a clear case of argumentative fallacy and critical myopia. The misjudgements of Murry and Eliot stem from their inability to respond to the fullness of the wholesome experience communicated by Hopkins. The vocation he followed was alien to most of his readers, even the best equipped ones.

Hopkins's life was, for the most part, uneventful; the two major events in his life were his conversion to the Catholic church in 1866 and his ordination as a Jesuit priest in 1877. Yet what we ought to realize and often do not is that he lived with all his senses in full flow. He might have become a good musician, a good painter. He had in the words of Herbert Read, "that sensibility for the quality and contour of ideas, on which the true metaphysician depends." Hopkins was one of the most gifted men of his times with strong artistic interests. He was the "star of Balliol" at Oxford, a college of highest scholastic standards and achievements. Walter Pater, an important figure in the aesthetic movement, was his tutor from whom he certainly must have learnt the importance in art of the sudden insight or illumination. While Pater was a sceptic, Hopkins was a firm believer in discovering the glory of God pre-cisely in the momentary revelations of beauty. Ruskin became the Professor of aesthetics at Oxford and it is from him that Hopkins learnt how to discipline himself by fully concentrating on the whole of the object in front of him and framing it for a total view. Looking at a tree involves not just looking at the branches and Icaves but also at the water, the rocks and the clouds. This was a great training for Hopkins in the visual perception of the natural phenomenon so much talked about by the imagists of our time. If his aesthetic training taught him how to respond to individual beauty and use words with visual precision, his religious training as a convert taught him that nature does reflect God but even more it is fused all the time with God's redemptive presence. The Jesuit

training deepened his Ruskinian training to use the precise deline-ation of the external facets of nature for his personal vision of nature as sacramental. Hopkins's "beauty" transcends the self-suf-ficient aestheticism and Pre-Raphaelitism in that he sees natural beauty as a manifestation of divine beauty and that too as the concrete beauty of Christ. Hopkins's insights of this divine incarna-tion in natural objects found clear authentication in the doctrine of Duns

Scotus, the 14th century Franciscan philosopher whom Hopkins immortalizes in his "Duns Scotus' Oxford." He says of him in the poem:

Who of all men most sways my spirit to peace; Of reality the rarest-veined unraveller.

As distinct from St. Thomas Aquinas who held that "matter" individuates while "form" is generic, Scotus maintained that each individual has a distinctive "form." Every individual has a haec-ceitas or thisness, as well as a generic quidditas or whatness. Influenced by Scotus's thought, Hopkins coined "inscape" refer-ring to the principle of physical distinctiveness in a natural or artistic object. Hopkins himself inadequately defined the term in one of his letters to Bridges as "design" or "pattern." W.H. Gar-dener explains the term as "the name for that 'individually-distinc-tive form (made up of various sense-data) which constitutes the rich and revealing 'one-ness' of the natural objects" and instress as the impulse "which acts on the senses and, through them, actualizes the inscape in the mind of the beholder."

Instress is the energy by which "all things are upheld." Hopkins wrote in his journal, "All the world is full of inscape." He believed that inscape is the soul of art. He saw nature revealing a world blazing with energy and colour and pattern because he saw God's presence everywhere. How to communicate this energy and beauty of inscape in language? The medium of language is such that it calls attention to itself; it has to it the function of logical expression. Hopkins believed with Pater that poetry constantly aspires to the condition of music. He once defined poetry as "speech framed to be heard for its own sake and interest even over and above the interest of meaning." He inscaped his poetic vision in language with minute care for pattern and technical details and that is why his poetry is so odd to readers. His belief was that English

rhetoric was inadequate to convey his inscape. And so he took recourse to various innovative measures, chief of which is the much-maligned "Sprung Rhythm."

We ought to realize that Hopkins was breaking down all barri-ers of language and thought in his attempt to subordinate poetical considerations to reach out to higher levels of music where matter and manner, form and substance are

indivisibly one. Given a longer lease of life, he would have won loftier heights of invention in this discovery.

And so we move on to those poems of the middle period which are among the best the poet wrote. Roy Fuller once made a happy discovery that the letters in Gerard Manley Hopkins could be rear-ranged into an anagram "Nearly Hard Poems' King." To continue with my discussion, the following poems very robustly stand for Hopkins's use of nature (including man) not as an end in itself but as a means to a higher end of meditation: "God's Grandeur," "The Windhover," "Pied Beauty," "The Bugler's First Conmmunion," "Felix Randal," "As Kingfishers Catch Fire."

It is impossible not to be shaken by "The Windhover," the best that Hopkins ever wrote. This mysteriously powerful sonnet is destined to become the most widely sought after poem by critics and writers alike. Around 150 interpretations are on record exercis-ing the greatest of minds. Geoffrey Hartman's "The Dialectic of Sense Perception" is the best for the fresh insights it can give into the poem. For sheer range of experience and multiplicity of inte-grated perception, this sonnet is no equal. The best period of Hopkins's poetic creation was the three stable, happy years he spent in St. Beuno's and during these years he wrote the poems that bear the reflection of animal life, "Hurrahing in Harvest," "The Sea and Skylark," "The Caged Skylark," etc. The most successful of the whole lot is "The Windhover" where he recaptures the "in-stress" of a particular moment. The orthodox, conventional reading of the poem shows the poet admiring the achievement and mastery of the bird and contrasting it with his own inactivity in life. The subjective reflection in the sestet shows him a wider possibility open to the human (being nobler than the animal). This can be achieved not by mastery but by service, by the renunciation of natural powers in obedience to the higher ideal of service "To Christ Our Lord." This is not to be taken as a sub-title or address but as a dedication, to the acceptance of the poet's total surrender

and subjugation to his loving will. Such a reading may be very quiet-if not bamboozling and flabbergasting-but its strength lies in the poem's dependence on "Spiritual Exercises." The unending crux relating to "buckle" and the capitalization of AND can be resolved accordingly.

That leads me on to a consideration of a few sonnets of desolation which go by the name of terrible sonnets. There is no agreed list of these "dark" sonnets. Like Shakespeare's sonnets, there are conjectures with regard to the dates and the chronology. Hopkins's spiritual agony reflected in these sonnets. These were composed during one of his severest bouts of depression. Out of a sense of doom and sterility and estrangement from God, he com-posed them and they are justly held to be the most powerful ac-counts of spiritual suffering and endurance ever expressed in the English language. In them Hopkins gives urgent and compelling expression to feelings of waste, pain, hopelessness and abandon-ment by God The best six among these are, "No worst, there is None," "Carrion Comfort," "To Seem the Stranger," "I Wake and Feel, the Fell of Dark," "Patience, Hard Thing," and "My Own Heart." A positive approach to these sonnets would be to treat them not as outpourings governed by self-pity and whining but to find in them the true voice of a responsible theologian who would say, responsible "Thou art indeed Just, my Lord."

Leavis concluded his essay on Hopkins with this prophetic sentence: "He is likely to prove, for our time and the future, the only influential poet of the Victorian age, and he seems to me the greatest." And so, what of his influence? Right from the Georgians through Auden, and the poets of his generations through Dylan Thomas and the Sitwells through E.E. Cummings to the contempo-rary poets writing in English, one cannot but notice the ubiquitous presence of Hopkins in one form or the other. Herbert Read clinches the issue fair and square when he says, "It is a question of an impregnating breath, breathed into the ear of every poet open to the rhythms of contemporary life, the music of our existence, and the tragedy of our fate. Hopkins is among the living poets of our time, and no influence whatever is so potent for the future of English poetry." Whether by accident as Eliot believes, or on account of the excessive tumidity on the part of Robert Bridges, Hopkins's poetry was launched into the world in 1918, twenty seven years after the poet's death. But the time they were ushered in was

"modern" in poetic temper. One must remember that Yeats's ma-ture works were in wide currency, Eliot and Pound had established their poetic presence. Since then Hopkins's poetry has always re-mained a mighty force to reckon with. "Language that quickens as well as communicates, that sensitizes as it reveals;

this at the service of a scrupulous mind and spirit constitutes a poetry of inalienable importance," says Lees in his final assessment of Hopkins.

If the Cambridge critics Richards, Empson and Leavis discov-ered Hopkins and introduced him to the world, the Kenyon critics with their Kenyon Symposium of 1944 established and consoli-dated his prime position as a major "modern" poet His status is secure now, not because of his followers and critics but because of the inherent quality of his poetry in which we see the intense perceptions of a great mind sensitive to the resources of the English language. Charlatanism cannot prevail in poetry. Beyond all this, Hopkins is great for his sanctity and as Robert Lowell rightly points out, "For Hopkins life was a continuous substantial progress to-wards perfection. He believed this, he lived this, this is what he wrote.".

NOTES

1. Vivian de Salo Pinto, Crisis in Modern Poetry: 1880-1940 (Hutchinson University Library: London, 1951), p. 71.

2. T.S. Eliot, The Poets and their Critics, ed. James Reeves (London: Hutchinson, 1969), p.92.

3. Herbert Read, "The Poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins," Eng-lish Critical Essays: Twentieth Century. (London: OUP, 1954), p. 351.

4. Gerard Manley Hopkins, The Journals of Gerard Manley Hopkins, ed. Humphrey House and Graham Storey (Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 289.

5. F.R. Leavis, New Bearings in English Poetry (London: Pen-guin, 1932), p. 143.

6. Herbert Read, p. 394.

7. F.N. Lees, "Gerard Manley Hopkins," The New Pelican Guide to English Literature, ed. Boris Ford (London: Penguin,

1982), VI, p. 383.

8. Robert Lowell, "Hopkins' Sanctity," Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Critical Symposium by the Kenyon Critics (Burns and Oates: London, 1975).

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Gerard Manley Hopkins and John Milton:

Two Kindred Souls in Poetry

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Gerard Manley Hopkins, a divine and savant, bewilders us with his awesome originality of expression when we venture to step into his solemn world of poetry. He considered his role as a poet subservi-ent to his duty as a Jesuit priest, and his poems, therefore, appear as his offerings to God. Yet, his poems were not carelessly composed. They were the products of an artist greatly conscious of the lofti-ness of the poetic art. Hopkins avoided simple, commonplace ex-pressions that might satisfy a poet like Wordsworth, for instance, and made constant experiments in language, metre and rhythm. He wrote to his friend, Robert Bridges, on August 14, 1879: "For it seems to me that the poetical language of an age should be the current language heightened" and he found that "this is Shakespeare's and Milton's practice," In fact, Milton also held the same view about the poetic language. J.B. Leishman has pointed out this feature of Milton when he says: "One of the greatest differences between Milton and other seventeenth-century poets is that his language is more heightened and more consciously height-

ened." It is not surprising, however, to find echoes and imitations of a great number of poets that went before him in the poems of Hopkins. Thus, for example, Charles Williams in his introduction to the second edition of Hopkins's poems compares Hopkins with Milton. Miss E.E. Phare opines that Hopkins has some affinity with Wordsworth and is also very close to Keats. Middleton Murry in Aspects of Literature holds that Hopkins is most like Shelley. T.S. Eliot thinks that Hopkins should be compared to George Meredith. According to B. Ifor Evans, Hopkins has much in com-mon with the Metaphysical poets, especially Crashaw and

Vaughan. Indeed, in his religious fervour expressing itself through extravagance of images, Hopkins reminds us of Crashaw. P. Hen-derson discovered a curious likeness between Hopkins and Walt Whitman. J.G. Fletcher finds a similarity between Hopkins and Patmore, W.B. Stanford discerns Hopkins's great likeness

to the Greek dramatist Aeschylus." W.H. Gardner observes: "From six-teen to twenty-two he [Hopkins] essayed with skill the styles of many poets, from Milton and George Herbert to Byron, Keats, Tennyson, Arnold, Swinburne, and Christina Rossetti."" Referring to The Escorial, a poem composed by Hopkins when he was a boy not yet sixteen, Bernard Bergonzi remarks: "Spenser may well have been mediated to Hopkins by Keats, and it is certainly Keats who provided the dominant influence on the poem." Instances of such attempts to relate Hopkins to many of his predecessors and contem-poraries may be multiplied. But, it is in Milton, especially, that Hopkins found his kindred spirit, and this he acknowledged, on different occasions, to his friend Robert Bridges. In a letter to Bridges written on February 15, 1879, he stated: "No doubt my poetry errs on the side of oddness. I hope in time to have a more balanced and Miltonic style."" Again, on August 14, 1879 while sending the manuscript of his sonnet Andromeda to Bridges, he wrote: "Lastly I enclose a sonnet on which I invite minute criti-cism. I endeavoured in it at a more Miltonic plainness and severity than I have anywhere else.""

Both Milton and Hopkins were of a deep religious tempera-ment. But so far as the religious communities they belonged to are concerned, they were poles asunder. Milton was a Puritan while Hopkins was a Jesuit priest of a Roman Catholic order founded by Ignatius Loyola in 1533. Yet Hopkins found in Milton a kindred soul.

In fact, both in their devotion to God and as experimenters of verse techniques Hopkins and Milton were allied souls. Besides, both of them were great classical scholars. A number of Latin poems composed by both bear testimony to their profound classical scholarship. That both of them were stirred by deep religious feel-ings is evidenced from the fact that Milton's earliest extant verses in English, composed when he was only fifteen, consist of para-phrases of psalms 114 and 136, and his last major work, Samson Agonistes, too, has a Biblical theme, and the poems of Hopkins betray nothing but the poet's deep religious fervour. Milton was a

true child of his age in that he was steeped in Puritanism which was a dominant influence in the early seventeenth century. He never intended to compose trivial amorous poems fashionable in the seventeenth century. He desired to compose

serious devotional verses and not to dally with sensuous love for women. This will be evident from the fact that one of the earliest poems which he wrote was On the Morning of Christ's Nativity (1629). This poem reveals his profoundly devout nature. Then, in Comus (published 1637), we notice a deepening note of seriousness. Throughout the work we discern the Platonic doctrine of the relationship between the soul and the body. Thus, the Elder Brother in Comus says:

Of the converse with heav'nly habitants Begin to cast a beam on the outward shape, The unpolluted temple of the mind, And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence, Till all be made immortal. (lines 459-63)

Comus is self-indulgence against which Milton fought inwardly. In Lycidas (composed 1637), there is sounded a sterner note of austere indignation and fierce warning against the corruptions which had crept into the church. Moreover, Milton remained aloof from the love-entanglements of the courts. He revealed his intention to de-vote himself to serious and religious poetry. He completely submit-ted to the will of God. His firm religious faith is indicated by the belief that Christ would raise the drowned Lycidas to Heaven. His last three works, Paradise Lost (1665-74), Paradise Regained (1671) and Samson Agonistes (1671) are bright examples of his deep devotion to his religious creed. Milton had a sort of moral intractableness which led him to sacrifice every practical and senti-mental consideration to a high ideal of purity and truth, in private and public life. In his poetry the moral ardour is present from the very beginning. His conception of the poetic art was to a very great extent coloured by his Puritanic outlook. It was in 1642 that he wrote: "These abilities [poetical abilities], wheresoever they be found, are the inspired guilt of God rarely bestow'd.""

This devotional tendency of Milton was quite congenial to Hopkins's outlook on poetry. Indeed, Hopkins was the first really great religious poet in English since Milton. Religiosity was in his veins and this he displayed even when he studied at school. It was

his firm conviction that man was created to serve and praise the Almighty. Hopkins continued to write poetry until the end of his life, though the output was very small. From 1875 onward, his writing was exclusively religious and the ecstatic enjoyment of nature found in the sonnets of his early maturity was a

sacramental experience. Nature was considered a manifestation of the beauty of God, a call to His praise. Hopkins saw the evils of the industrial system as man's falling-off from God, his rejection of the grace won for him by Christ.

If we have a close look at Milton's early poem, On the Morn-ing of Christ's Nativity (1629), and Hopkins's first poem after his ordination, The Wreck of the Deutschland (1875), we will at once notice some striking similarities between the two poems.

The Wreck of the Deutschland was occasioned by the work of a German ship called the Deutschland near the mouth of the river Thames. Among the deceased, there were five Franciscan nuns who were exiled from Germany and had been travelling in that ship. But the poem is neither primarily about the wreck of the ship nor about the death of those five Franciscan nuns. The incident only provided the poet with an opportunity for the explication of his religious beliefs. It is essentially a religious poem and demands the reader's knowledge of the significance of Christ for Man. It is also an assertion of God's place in this world. God is the source of life and vitality to human beings. He shows Himself to man in both His beautiful and terrifying aspects. What struck Hopkins in the inci-dent of the shipwreck was not the death of five religious souls, but the cry of the chief sister, "O Christ, Christ, come quickly," as reported in a newspaper. Hence the first eleven stanzas of the poem contain a beautifully lyrical expression of Hopkins's knowledge and love of God. And as God's infinite mercy is revealed through his son, Christ, Hopkins turned to him for refuge. The poet realized that the sufferings of human beings were linked with the sufferings and death of Christ. The nun, who called Christ fervently and died, appeared to the poet as another manifestation of Christ. She was reunited with Christ and had thus been suitably rewarded for her suffering and the spirit of endurance displayed by her. Hopkins concluded his poem with the hope that the nun would restore Christ to the souls of the English people. Milton in his poem On the Morning of Christ's Nativity had asserted a faith similar to that of Hopkins. He spoke of Christ:

That on the bitter cross

Must redeem our loss, So both himself and us to glorify. (Stanza 16)

Just as in The Tyger Blake suggested God as the creator of something terrible like the tiger as well as the creator of a meek animal like the lamb, so also in Hopkins's conception God has both violent and mild aspects. And these two aspects have been artisti-cally represented in The Wreck of the Deutschland with the help of fire images and images of mild, subdued light. Thus, in the second stanza, Hopkins spoke of his spiritual agony as "laced with fire of stress." In the next stanza, he represented God's wrath by flames of fire: "To flash from the flame to the flame." Again, in stanza ten, God was likened to a blacksmith: "With an anvil-ding/ And with fire in him forge thy will." Hopkins addressed Christ in the 34th stanza saying, "Now burn, new born to the world," and the five nuns that died in shipwreck "breathe in his all-fire glances." (stanza 23)

The mild and kind aspect of God has been represented by images of softer light as in "moth-soft Milky Way" (stanza 26) or the soft light of the setting sun "dappled-with-damson west." (stanza 5) In the final stanza, he invoked Christ to "be a crimson-cresseted cast." (stanza 35) Milton also used similar images in his poem, On the Morning of Christ's Nativity. He described "the son of heaven's eternal King" as "That glorious form, that light un-sufferable/And that far-becoming blaze of majesty." (stanza 2, lines 8-9) In the seventh stanza, Milton used a similar image of flaming light to describe Jesus: "As his [the sun's] inferior flame/The new-enlightened world no more should need:/He saw a greater Sun appear/Then his bright throne." (lines 81-84) Again, when "The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the deep," (stanza 16, line 156) "the red fire and smould'ring clouds" (stanza 17, line 159) will outbreak. "The rays of Bethlehem" will blind the "dusky eye" of Osiris. (stanza 25, line 223) In the same poem, Milton also presented the mild aspect of Christ, the son of God. Christ is surrounded by "A globe of circular light/That with long beams the shamefaced Night arrayed." (stanza ii, lines 110-11) And the glorious "Babe" will be laid to rest "when the sun in bed/Curtained with cloudy red/Pillows his chin upon an orient wave."

(stanza 26, lines 229-31)

One cannot also fail to notice the imagery of water used in Milton's Lycidas and Hopkins's The Wreck of the Deutschland, in some form or other. In Milton's

poem we come across this water image in expressions like, "watery bier," (line 12) "level brine," (line 98) "gushing brooks," (line 137), "Sounding seas" (line 154) and "wat'ry floor." (line 167) And in Hopkins's poem we hear of the "sway of the sea." (stanza 1) In stanza 4, we get "I steady as a water in a well, to a poise, to a pane." In stanza 6, he writes, "hearts are flushed by and melt/But it rides time like riding a river." In the 19th stanza, the water image again appears in the lines, "And the inboard seas run swirling and hawing;/ The rash smart sloggering brick." Even in the last stanza this water image recurs: "Dame, at our door/Drowned, and among our shoals." (stanza 35) Strikingly enough, we find this water image also in Milton's On the Morning of Christ's Nativity: "The winds with wonder whist/Smoothly the waters kissed/Whispering new joys to the mild ocean." (stanza 5, lines 64-66)

Not only in respect of images, but in respect of technical beauty as well, Milton's On the Morning of Christ's Nativity and Hopkins's The Wreck of the Deutschland come closer to each other. Milton's poem is as fit to be read for its music as Hopkins's poem. The music is especially created by the peculiar rhyming and stanza form. The "hymns" in Milton's poem and the poem of Hopkins are both composed in stanzas of eight lines each. In both, the lines in a stanza are of uneven length. In Milton, the rhyme scheme of the "hymn" stanzas is aabccbdd. In Hopkins, it is ababcbca. The Mil-tonic stanza produces its melody by three rhyming couplets sepa-rated from one another by two lines having the same rhyme. Hopkins's poem has a more intricate rhyme scheme, but it seems to be more unified as the first and the last lines of the stanza having the same rhyme put the stanza in a limiting frame, as it were. The faster and the slower movements of the lines in Hopkins's poem, which make the poem more lyrical and at the same time reflective, are to be found in Milton's poem also. Milton has shown his excellence in the use of feminine, rhyme in ing in the third, tenth, nineteenth and twenty-seventh stanzas. In Hopkins's poem also, we notice such feminine rhymes at regular intervals in stanzas 5 (asun-der: thunder), 12 (guessing: blessing), 19 (calling: hawling) and 26 (checking: hearing).

The Wreck of the Deutschland presents a powerful picture of the real and active sea, which has no parallel even in the descrip-tion of the sea in Beowulf or The Seafarer or in any other poem describing the raving sea. This will be evident if we look at the following lines:

And the sea flint-flake, black-backed in the regular blow, Sitting Eastnorth east, in cursed quarter, the wind; Wiry and white-fiery and whirlwind-swivelled snow Spins to the widow-making unchilding unfathering deeps.

(stanza 13)

And by this presentation of the terrors of the sea, Hopkins tried to make us realize that even in such a hopeless situation Christ comes as a succour. The poet's firm faith in this is revealed in the lines:

but thou art above, thou Orion of light; Thy unchancelling poising palms were weighing the worth, Thou martyr-master: in thy sight

Storm flakes were scroll-leaved flowers, lily showers-sweet heaven was astrow in them.

(stanza 21)

Milton's Lycidas, too, is apparently about the death of Edward King, Milton's friend, drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish seas. Yet, like the wreck in Hopkins's The Wreck of the Deutschland, this incident also was just an occasion to allow Mil-ton to dilate on the questions of life, death and resurrection. Lycidas is dead, but he is not lost for ever.

So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high, Through the dear might of him that walked the waves,... In the best kingdoms meek of joy and love.

(lines 172-77)

The nun in Hopkins's poem likewise was lifted to eternity as she received her Lord:

Well, she has thee for the pain, for the Patience. (stanza 31)

Hopkins was a great technician of verse. And in this, according to his own admission, he was indebted to Milton. He wrote to R.W. Dixon on October 5, 1878:

I should add that Milton is the great standard in the use of counterpoint.. Paradise Lost and Regained, in the last more freely, it being an advance in his art, he employs counterpoint more or less everywhere, markedly now and then; but the choruses of Samson Agonistes are in my judg-ment counterpointed throughout; that is, each line (or nearly so) has two different coexisting scansions. But when you reach that point the secondary or "mounted rhythm," which is necessarily a sprung rhythm, overpowers the original or con-ventional one and then this becomes superfluous and may be got rid of; but taking that last step you reach simple sprung rhythm. Milton must have known this but had reasons for not taking it."

Hopkins's most important technical metrical innovation was the sprung rhythm which he first used in The Wreck of the Deutsch-land. It was based on the irregular verse of Milton's Samson Ag-onistes, according to Hopkins's own assertion. Hopkins wrote to Bridges on August 21, 1877: "The choruses in Samson Agonistes are intermediate between counterpointed and sprung rhythm. In reality they are sprung."" The basic principle of this attempt to break away from strictly conventional pattern was that in a line each foot should contain one stress and possibly, though not neces-sarily, followed by a number of unstressed syllables. In the opinion of Hopkins, a line scanned solely by stress might be regarded as running on springs. Hence the epithet "sprung" was used. In this kind of rhythm the length of the line does not matter if the requisite stresses are present. Such a system of versification gives both liberty and concentration. Milton had made experiments with what might be called "counterpoint rhythm" created by bringing together accents by the process of reversing feet. In the traditional rhythm of English verse, the rhythm is marked by regular repetitions of a rigid basic until like iambic, trochaic, anapaestic, dactylic, etc. When a variation from the basic rhythmic pattern occurs in more than one foot in this traditional rhythm, we may have counterpoint rhythm. Thus, the basic rhythm in Milton's Paradise Regained is

iambic, but in the following line we have counterpoint rhythm:

Home to/ his Mo-/ thers house/ pri-vate/ re-turn'd

(Book IV, line 639)

The first and the fourth feet in this line are trochaic. Hopkins discerned the presence of sprung rhythm even in Shakespeare.

Thus, in the first line of Orlando's verses read by Celia in As You Like It, he found an attempt at using sprung rhythm:

Why should/this/de-sert/be?"

(Act III, scene 4, line 124)

Here "this," according to Hopkins, is a monosyllabic stressed foot from which we spring to the next stressed foot in "de-sert." He held that in most editions of Shakespeare the editors repaired the line by making it, "Why should/this a/de-sert/be?" But even then in the same poem the line, "Will I/Ro-sa-/lind/write" (line 136) again shows Shakespeare's use of sprung rhythm. Hopkins believed that Shakespeare intentionally had this monosyllabic foot in the line. He, thus strengthened by the examples of Shakespeare and Milton and also of the choruses in Greek plays, started experimenting with these abrupt rhythms as early as 1865. Thus, in Daphne, a poem composed in iambic measure, we find the line, "His cap/shall be/shin-/ing fur." (Stanza 4) In Lines for a Picture of St. Dorothea composed about this time, there occur such lines as: "I am/so/light and/fair" (stanza 1)"But they/came/from the/south," (stanza 3) This is, however, not the exact sprung rhythm whose essence lies in having the rhythm based on a number of stressed syllables each of which may be followed by anything from none to three or more unstressed syllables forming a foot. Thus, in the following line of The Wreck of the Deutschland, there are twenty-one syllables form-ing five feet with five accented syllables in it:

Fing-er of a/ten-der of, O of a/ fea-ther-y/de, de-li-ca-cy, the/breast of the

(stanza 31)

In the opposite extreme we may have a six-feet line with only nine syllables in the following line of the same poem:

the sour/seythe/cringe/ and the blear/share/come.

(stanza 11)

Hopkins had a particular fondness for compound epithets and for evocative coinages. Thus, he used such compound adjectives coupled with alliteration and internal rhyme as "dappled-with-damson west," (The Wreck of the Deutshland) "sodden-with-its-sorrowing heart," (ibid.) "dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon," (The Wind-hover) "rash-fresh re-winded new-skeined score," (The Sea and the Skylark) "Silk-sack clouds," (Hurrahing in Harvest) "darksome devouring eyes." (Carrion Comfort) And for this, he found his inspiration in Milton who used "dappled dawn doth rise," (L'Alle-gro, 1.44) "The winds with wonder whist," (On the Morning of Christ's Nativity, stanza 5, 1.64) "sable-stoled sorcerers," (ibid., stanza 24, 1.220) "smooth-shaven green," (Il Penseroso, 1.66) "wide-watered shore," (ibid., 1.75) etc.

In the liberties that Hopkins took with English syntax, he comes closer to Milton. Milton did not always maintain the strict grammatical arrangement of words as will be seen from a random sampling from his verses:

Him the Almighty Power Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky (Paradise Lost, Book I, 11.44-45)

For we to him indeed all praises owe, (Paradise Lost, Book IV, 1.444)

But I

God's counsel have not kept,

(Samson Agonistes, 11.496-97)

But now again she makes address to speak. And then in haste her bow'r she leaves.

(Samson Agonistes, 1.731)

(L'Allegro, 1.87)

Hopkins very often used this device. A few examples are given below:

Down in dim woods the diamond delves!

(The Starlight Night, 1.4)

With not her either beauty's equal or Her injury's,

(Andromeda, 11.2-3)

I'll not play hypocrite To own my heart: (Peace, 11.3-4)

[Here, 'own my heart' means 'my own heart'.]

And the azurous hung hills are his world-wielding shoulder

Majestic-

(Hurrahing in Harvest, 11.9-10)

Bernard Bergonzi thinks: "Here, indeed, is an evident link between Hopkins and Milton." This violation of the strict rules of syntax helps the poet to combine clarity and suggestiveness in the expres-sion. And here alliteration comes as a very useful tool. Thus,

Him the Almighty Power

Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky

means the Almighty Power hurled him (Satan) headlong from the ethereal sky flaming. Milton here brings "hurled" and "headlong," two allitcrative words, together. And although logically "head-long" is related to "him," for, he was headlong as he was hurled, the violation of syntax and the presence of alliteration suggest that the hurling was "headlong," as it were. A similar effect is produced in the following lines from L'Allegro:

To hear the lark begin his flight, And singing startle the dull night. (lines 41-42)

Hopkins adopted this device of Milton in many of his poems. Thus, in his sonnet, "I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day" when Hopkins says, "And more must, in yet longer light's delay," (line 4) he connects "longer" with "light," although logically it is related to "delay," as it is "delay" which is longer. Similarly in the line, "With darksome devouring eyes my bruised bones?" (Carrion Com-fort, line 7) "darksome" and "devouring" are brought together although "devouring" is logically associated with "bruised bones." This bringing together, of words and expressions not directly con-nected with each other, creates a suggestiveness which lends a peculiar charm to the idea expressed.

Milton followed the Petrarchan or Italian rhyme scheme in his sonnets although he did not maintain any caesura between the octave and the sestet. The idea continues without any break from the beginning till the end of the sonnet. Hopkins accepted this Miltonic practice and to show that his sonnet was a continuous composition of fourteen lines, he often had a line run on into the next and sometimes even broke a word into two and, leaving the first half at the end of a line, took the other half to the beginning of the line following. Thus, in the following lines from The Wind-hover.

I caught this morning's minion, king

dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-drawn Falcon, in his rid-ing

the word "kingdom" has been broken into two and distributed between the two lines. Hopkins did not only give a Miltonic torrent to his verse but also lent a simplicity and naturalness to his expres-sion by bringing his rhythm nearest to prose. He attained this effect by the use of sprung rhythm by means of which he could maintain the pentameter verse even with a greater number of syllables than the conventional ten. This is evident from the second line of the extract from The Windhover already cited. Hopkins wrote to Bridges on August 21, 1877 about this effect produced by his novel metrical device: "Why do I employ sprung rhythm at all? Because it is the nearest to the rhythm of prose, that is the native and natural rhythm of speech."

Hopkins is undoubtedly an original poet. Yet, several poets of the past have had their contribution to making a poet of him. And in this contribution, Milton's share seems to be very great. This is evident not only from the many Miltonic devices found in Hopkins but also from the words of appreciation and respect for the great epic poet Hopkins has expressed, on several occasions, to his friends. Christopher Ricks has not erred, therefore, when he ob-served, "Milton is in many ways not so different a poet from Hopkins as some believe,"

NOTES

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17. Ibid., p. 86.

18. William Shakespeare, As You Like It (Philadelphia, U.S.A.: J. B. Lippincott, 1890), p. 147.

19. See Hopkins's letter to Robert Bridges written on August 21, 1877 (C.C. Abbott, p. 45) and also his letter to R.W. Dixon written on October 5, 1878 (The Correspondence of Gerard Manley Hopkins and Richard Watson Dixon. C.C. Abbott,

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20. Bernard Bergonzi, p. 171.

21. C.C. Abbott, p. 46.

22. Christopher Ricks, Milton's Grand Style (London: OUP, 1963), p. 84.

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Coleridge's Expanded Metaphor: A Study of Evil in His Poetry

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The idea about evil occupies a central position in the literatures of all ages. The Christian idea of human ills and lapses fashions the treatment of evil in Medieval literature. Evil assumes a new role in Renaissance literature in the context of its philosophy of Ego and Fortune. The image of evil in Romantic literature has both socio-logical and metaphysical dimensions. Furthermore, critics have unearthed a relationship between romanticism and metaphysics. The Romantic poets, conscious of the functions of the senses, are always drawn to the mysterious nature of the soul, alternately dominated by good and bad feelings. Similarly, the Romantics substitute for the mechanism of cause and effect a system of absolute truth possessing divine poetic intuitions. Their attempt to re-place Deism by Pantheism and Mysticism is also prompted by their desire to turn away from the horrid burden of reality, and it is again the ugly nature of reality which impels them to seek solace in the arms of metaphysics. In this way, the study of evil in Romantic literature is closely related to the study of metaphysics. All the major poets of the Romantic age, particularly Coleridge, are, in some ways, preoccupied with thoughts about evil.

In Romantic literature, evil is studied in three major aspects: social, personal and moral. The age was beset with socio-economic problems coming from the scars of the Anglo-French war. In many of his writings, Coleridge voices his resentment against the sad state of affairs in his country. Afflicted also by personal problems, his care-worn mind finds its panacea in the realm of supernatural-ism and metaphysics. His famous poem France: An Ode records his disillusionment with the French Revolution which inspired him previously. Coleridge's interest in the broader activities of the

outside world being over, he increasingly leans on the healing touch of nature and metaphysics to cure him of his morbid preoccu-pations with personal agony and frustration.

Coleridge's treatment of evil is tinged with both the afflic tions of his personal life and metaphysical problems. It is no won-der that Coleridge should articulate his anguished cry over his personal sufferings in an age when lyric poems are mainly songs of personal emotions. For example, the experience of his personal life moulds Keats's worry over the decay, death and sufferings of human human beings in "Ode to the Nightingale." At a particular period of his life, Coleridge's sufferings and poor health became unbearable for him on account of his chronic dependence on drugs. Likewise, Coleridge's treatment of evil is also indebted to his reading of philosophical works. His early slavery to Hartley and the conse-quent mental sufferings can be found Coleridge's constant preoccu-pations with evil, worrying him, saddening his soul and finding outlet in his poems,

Barth points out that Coleridge traces the origin of all evils in the conflict between individual will and absolute reason. He is unwilling to regard anything as absolute evil, since everything comes from God. Again and again, Coleridge depicts pain and suffering supposed to perform the divinely-ordained task of chas-tening man for his moral evil and bring him back to the path of virtue. Coleridge depicts evil in all its horrid images but his image of evil is always brightened by the promise of redemption. In a letter written to Mrs. S.T. Coleridge on April 8 1799, he writes, "can cold and darkness come from the sun? Where the sun is not there is cold and darkness-But the living God is everywhere, and works everywhere and where is there room for Death." The loving nature of God and evil as part of the divine scheme express-ing itself through pain and sufferings with the ultimate promise of redemption are the recurring themes in Coleridge's poetry. It has, hetorically speaking, functioned as an expanded metaphor in his poems.

In fact, evil and an awareness about it crossed Coleridge's mind even when he was a child. In a letter written to his friend Thomas Poole on 16 October 1797, Coleridge recalls a childhood incident leaving a permanent mark on his mind. One day the boy Coleridge, engaged in a fight with Frank, ran with a knife towards him. At the intervention of his mother, the boy ran out of the house

in fear. In remorse, he spent the night in the meadows by the river-side. Weary and exhausted, the boy fell asleep on the grass and failed to give any reply to the searching-party because of rheumatic pain. He was ultimately restored to his parents but the rheumatic attacks created a sense of gullt in his mind leaving a permanent scar. Moreover, this sense of guilt has something to do with the story of Cain which engulfed his imagination.

Coleridge's personality was plagued by self-doubts and self-indulgence. Even in his married life, Coleridge was crossed by personal problems. After he had married Sarah Fricker, he was burdened with the task of earning a living for his wife and baby. He mainly depended on journalism and poetry-writing to ward off the financial crisis plaguing his married life. On many occasions, he was plagued by anxiety and personal depression. These incidents show how Coleridge's personal life was made gloomy by physical Jand moral evil. Some of his poems mark the bearing of these incidents.

In his early poems, those written prior to 1795, the awareness about evil is discernible in poems like Disappointment and Mon-ody on the Death of Chatterton. Written under the influence of the eighteenth-century manner, his early poems are pessimistic in char-acter, deserving little attention. Pain is one of them. Awareness about physical and mental disorder colours his poems from Dejec-tion: An Ode to The Pains by Sleep. The poet's agony caused by the betrayal of treacherous friends is poignantly recorded in To the Rev. George Coleridge.

In fact, throughout his life, Coleridge was engrossed with the houghts about evil and good. He thinks that positive good lies in the capacity for acknowledging the moral law which may be re-garded as the law of spirit, another name for the divine will. Evil originates from the revolt of human will against the divine will. This supreme will asserts itself in every sphere of life. Coleridge feels its all-pervading influence even when he was a boy. In a letter to Thomas Poole on October 9, 1797, he writes:

My mother relates a story of me.... During my fever I asked why Lady Northcote (our neighbour) did not come and see me. My mother said, she was afraid of catching the fever-1 was piqued and answered Ah-Mamma! The four angles round my bed an't afraid of catching it. I suppose, you

know the old prayer-

Four angels round me spread, Two at my foot and two at my bed (head)-

This prayer I said mightily and most firmly believed thi truth of it. Frequently have I, half-awake and half-asleep, my body diseased and fevered by my imagination, seen armies o ugly things bursting in upon me, and those four angels keep ing them off. In my next I shall carry on my life to my Father's Death.

This faith in the power of God in transforming evil through suffer-ing is a recurring image in Coleridge's poetry.

Lastly, his reading of philosophical works influenced, in some ways, his outlook on evil. Coleridge was an avid reader of psychol-ogy and metaphysics. As he recounts it in the Biographia Literaria, the philosophy of Associationism, increasingly frustrated him.

From his early passion for the philosophy of Associationism, he gradually turned to the works of Plotirtus and Gemistus Pletho, the Neo-Platonic writers. Sometimes he even relaxed in the world of George Fox and Jacob Boehme, the seventeenth-century mystics. These philosophers significantly shaped his outlook on evil. Coleridge, the pantisocrat, feels that evil is the product of civiliza-tion, and he more and more comes to discern the sources of moral evil in the submission to the senses. It dawns upon the poet that only by the exercise of the moral will can man overcome the snares of evil.

Christabel, though offering no moral thesis, is more than a fairy tale. The poem is about the pious lady Christabel's momen-tary surrender to the evil lady Geraldine whom she rescues from danger and gives shelter in her father's castle. Interpreted allegori-cally, the poem presents the eternal struggle between good and evil, represented by the powers of darkness and light. Geraldine, masquerading as wronged virtue, casts her evil-spell over Chris-tabel and succeeds in bewitching her mind and body for a period, however brief it may be. "A star hath set, a star hath risen/O Geraldine! Since arms of thine/Have been the lovely lady's prison./O Geraldine/One hour was thine." The force of light completely wanes here. The moral order is restored only when the hermitess-

like Christabel is assured of a sweet vision through the miraculous act of pray prayer.

But this she knows, in joys and woes, That saints will aid if men will call: For the blue sky bends over all! (329-31)

John Beer finely comments, "In this poem, innocence is sym-bolized by the dove, experience by the serpent. .. Throughout this poem, evil is represented in this way: it is the veiling and hiding of good." The weird night sky looks mysterious in its full moon, the one red leaf, hanging loosely on the topmost branch of the tree, is also invested with horror. The atmosphere of horror is furthered by the moaning of the mastiff and also by the sudden flaring up of the brands. These natural images are interlaced in the poem with the life-giving images of wine restoring lost energy, and shield and horse standing for security and protection. Christabel's sufferings partly come from the disintegration of her will. Coleridge has always observed that whoever opposes the moral law is evil. Ger-aldine acts as the agent of evil force in her attempt to deflower Christabel. Thus in Christabel, the poet, almost allegorically, shows the operation of evil on human minds and its ultimate defeat by the powers of light. The dove-like Christabel passes from her innocence to a knowledge of evil. Her innocence finally incorpo-rates within it the knowledge of the serpent.

Coleridge's most famous poem The Ancient Mariner restates this theme in a different way. The mariner tells the horrid tale of a ship held up in ice-land when an albatross arrives to eat at the sailor's hand. For no specific reason, the mariner kills the albatross which brings in terrible consequences:

About, about in reel and rout The death-fires danced at night, The water, like a witch's oils, Burnt green, and blue and white/(127-30)

The crew fell dead due to thirst. On his return home from this ghastly adventure, the mariner retells this tale periodically, as if, to lessen his agony and remorse. The central act of the poem is the killing of an albatross, an act of sin almost wantonly performed. A

crime like this brings in terrible consequences like Adam's eating of the apple. Coleridge dwells on the theme of the revolt of will in this poem also. As he

disobeys the laws of nature, the mariner is punished in the form of a journey through wilderness. Only God's grace saves him finally. The biblical images and symbols employed by the poet in the poem only heighten the conflict between the forces of light and darkness. The mariner acts against the divine will by killing the albatross, and, in paralyzed will, is made to Jendure sufferings. The poem is a profound study in death, stagna-tion and redemption.

Coleridge's other poems also deal with the theme of evil and darkness. His Dejection: An Ode is full of joylessness and has something to do with frustrated love. Evil and guilt spread their snares in Kubla Khan also which is about the loss and regaining of paradise. Symbolically, it touches upon the themes of decay and its ultimate defeat by constructive forces.

Coleridge does not give any major importance to sexual suf-ferings though criminal lust and its consequent sufferings are some of the major themes in Romantic poetry and drama. In The Cenci, Shelley describes the criminal lust of a father for his daughter. Coleridge hints upon the topic in Christabel by the description of Geraldine's undressing. However, the poems of Coleridge are con-cerned mainly with the sorrow and suffering coming out of frus-trated love.

(L.G. Salingar has explained that Coleridge's favourite images are mainly images of illumination moonlight suffusing the sky or the sun dispersing the mists of ignorance. Images of motion-rise and fall of the tides, the movement of the foam or the flight of birds suggest his interest in the spontaneous motion of being or particles of matter. Other than these images of motion and illumination, Coleridge also employs the images of animal-movements which suggest the flow of life. The "blue, glossy green" and "velvet black" snakes in the Mariner move creating a flash of golden fire. The grief in Dejection is "dark and drear." Moreover, Coleridge's images of the "crescent moon" and "starless lake of blue" suggest evil but they are always accompanied by the syrabols of the living forces of nature which are the agents of life.

It emerges from what we have discussed that Coleridge de-picts suffering only as a process in the way of attaining goodness Mand redemption. Never does evil appear in his poems as the ulti-

mate destiny of man. The mariner is saved through God's grace, Christabel is never allowed to be lost in sin. In his poems, sin and evil are finally redeemed by the forces of light. Coleridge sees evil as an integral part of life, as something

inherent in the nature of man, Its torturous journey to the world of light and knowledge absorbs the poet's interest and attention. His concept of evil is thus enlivened by the Christian idea of redemption.

NOTES

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Ernest Dowson as a Precursor of Modern Poetry

AVINASH DESHMUKH

Ernest Dowson closed the 19th century literally by his tragic early death on 23rd February, 1900. With his death a unique and un-precedented period of English poetry known as English "Deca-dence" also came to a close. Ernest Dowson as a

member of Rhymers's club was associated with a group of poets such as Lionel Johnson, John Davidson, Arthur Symons, Aubrey Beardsley, Francis Johnson and others. This group of poets is labelled by the critics as "Decadents." The label may well suit the purpose of literary classification to survey under a broad outline of the poetry of the 1890s. Such grouping, however, has inadvertently led many a critic and reader to view all the poets of this group with a bias of "decadence" though it may be generally admitted that the prevail-ing spirit of the period is essentially one of decadence. One point, However, is obvious that such type of general evaluation of poetry Vis likely to ignore unconsciously indivi individual poets with significant qualities characteristic of their own. Such a characteristic quality is traceable in Ernest Dowson if one attempts an unbiased critical reading of his poetry. Discovery of such a characteristic quality in a poet has a special significance particularly when he becomes a precursor of the future course of poetry.

The object of my paper then is to make a critical appraisal of Dowson's poetry and make an attempt to show that not only was he a decadent with a difference but also that he casts the greatest influence on modern poetry which emerged after the beginning of the 20th century of which T.S Eliot, Ezra Pound and W.B. Yeats were the founding fathers.

Ernest Dowson was a bridge between the Victorian ideals of poetry and the modern movement. Yeats says, "The revolt against

Victorianism meant to the young poet a revolt against irrelevant descriptions of nature, the scientific and moral discursiveness of In Memoriam." When he should have been broken-hearted, said Ver-laine, "he had many reminiscences"

the political eloquence of Swinburne, the psychological curiosity of Browning and the poetic diction of everybody. Poets said to one another over their black coffee: "We must purify poetry of all that is not poetry." The act of composition in Victorian poetry did not take place as a result of pressures within the minds of individual poets but had its origin in more general impressions and aims. The resources and the potential of romanticism that Wordsworth and others discovered had been exhausted by the time the Victorians came to the scene. Some of its romanticism had gone and a kind of monotony set in. A kind of vacuum was created in the poetic field perhaps vaguely foreseen by Matthew Arnold in one of his poems-"Wandering between two worlds, one dead/ the other powerless to be born." This was the legacy left for Dowson and his colleagues in the 1890s. Art and literature came heavily under the influence of John Ruskin, Walter Pater, Whistler, Oscar Wilde, Arthur Symons and the Pre-Raphaelites. Added to this was the symbolist influence widespread among the poets of the fin-de-siecle Europe, Arthur Symons's A Symbolist Movement in Literature introduced T.S. Eliot to French Poetry. It is interesting to note that Symons was Dowson's contem-porary who accepted its new creed of Art for Art's sake. This association points to the fact that the elements of modernity and specially the symbolist element had its English roots here in the decadent poetry of the 1890s.

The question then is: what is decadence? It is a term ostensi-bly in reference to the periods and works whose qualities are held to mark a "falling away" (de-cadre) from previously recognized conditions or standards of excellence. In modern poetry it has been identified with works related to the French Symbolist Decadent Movement of the 1890s whose influence in England encouraged the native tendencies already nurtured by the ideas of Walter Pater, Rossetti and Swinburne.

In a limited sense, decadence is exemplified in the tastes and habits of some fictional characters such as Wilde's Dorian Gray. The most memorable passage on Decadence is in the apostrophe of Mallarme's Herodiade to her mirror, Verlaine's Verses and Dow-son's famous Cynara. Decadence in this sense was in great part a

mannerism of the sort prevalent in the England of the 1890s with its brilliant and superficial fin-de-siecle aesthetic pose. But decadence has come to be used by hostile critics in a larger sense than this.

A basic characteristic of decadence has been a failure to recognize objective or timeless values that transcend and give form and direction to individual existence and effort. In these terms the decadent poet is seen living in a state of Heraclitic or Bergsonian flux with the values confined within narrowly egocentric limits and unlikely to satisfy the desires. Here the poet tends to be concerned not with the fruit of experience but experience itself and with private sensations. Dowson's poems are likely to reveal a number of characteristics which are a search for novelty, interest in the unnatural, excessive self-analysis, feverish Hedonism with poetic interest in corruption and morbidity, erotic sensibility, aestheticism with stress on art for art's sake, scorn for contemporary society over emphasis on form rather than content resulting at times in loss of artistic unity and obscurity.

Here I am attempting to absolve Dowson from the label of a decadent poet in toto by emphasizing the fact that though as a child of his age he displayed most of the decadent qualities, he was a decadent with a difference. Ennui was his birthright and not the "mask" as was the case with his contemporaries.

Although there is little latitude and variety in Dowson's po-etry it lends itself to useful classification. Allowing for a frequent overlapping of theme and mood, the reader finds poems which deal with nature and with love, some devotional poetry, a few occa-sional poems addressed to particular friends in connection with special events and a considerable number of poems which reveal a recurring if not an abiding life-weariness.

It is in Dowson's use of nature imagery and in his exploration of sensory and emotional response to autumnal hues that much of the decadent spirit is found. Nature is generally employed in order to establish the emotional background and set the mood rather than to disclose an attitude towards nature or to express a philosophy. In his poem "To Nature," he says "Thou unclean harpy, odorous of despair/l offer up no praises on the shrine of thy wild beauty; thou are not divine,/ Nor reverent at all thy tranquil air." It is true that he sees the autumual rather than the spring time hues of nature. Even in the sonnet "My lady April" he sees the showers as tears, and "Autumn and withered leaves and vanity/ And winter bringing end

in barrenness." The tone of these poems, however, is more the reflection of quality in the poet's nature than the projection of well considered conviction.

Dowson was a love poet in a distinctive if not an entirely unique way. The recurrent theme grows out of the poignancy of unrequited love and especially the love that fails in fulfilment because it seeks an abiding virginal innocence. He never wanted Adelaide, 12-year girl he fell in love with, to grow old and laments: "What a terrible, lamentable thing growth is!" But it is in Cynara we find the best poetic expression,

All night upon mine heart I felt her warm heart beat, Night long within mine arms in love sleep she lay; Surely the kisses of her bright red mouth were sweet; But I was desolate and sick of an old passion When I awoke and found the down was gray;

I have been faithful to thee Cynara in my fashion.

These poems are not merely the examples of the application of the principles of the decadent aesthetic but grew out of heightened emotional experience integrated into flawless artistic achieve-lments. The trade of writing this kind of poetry is a dangerous one. Without valid experience or without proper objectification of expe-rience this kind or poetry can descend to the level of Arthur Symons's Bianca poems. The distinctive quality and merit of Dow-son's love poetry can be traced to the fact that the life and personal-ity of the poet and the decadent spirit were mutually congerial.

The range of Dowson's devotional poetry is very limited and, except "Extreme Unction" which he dedicated to Johnson, none of it can be termed peculiarly catholic. Some of the "occasional" poems are tasteful prettily turned eulogies which are scarcely char-acteristic of the poet's themes or manner.

It is on the basis of his life-weariness poems that Dowson can be distinguished from other decadents. Many of the English decad-ents of the 90s toyed with the theme of ennui-for example Arthur Symons's "In Satiety" which proved to be disastrous as it was at best the French importation which did not transplant well to the banks of the Thames. Dowson, however, had ennui as part of his brithright. As the years passed, with their accumulation of misfor-Munes, he experienced an ever-increasing sense of weariness. To

him it was not a pose or a deliberately cultivated temporary condi-tion out of which a poem might emerge. "The empty longing for a fpew wish" was a real and frequently recurrent state of mind, which found expression not only in the

excellent translations of Verlaine, but in such poems as "To one in Bedlam" and "Spleen" in Verses and "Dregs" and "A Last Ward" in Decorations. The existential attitude in these poems is purely a modern trait. He says:

Labour and longing and despair the long day brings; Patient till evening men watch the sun go west;

Deferred, expected night at last brings sleep and rest.

Sufficient for the day are the day's evil things;

Before we turn to Dowson's modernity, it will be worthwhile to consider the factors that linked Dowson with the decadent move-ment of 1890s. The prime misrepresenter of Dowson's days at Oxford is Arthur Symons who both knew and admired the poet greatly and whose obituary essay includes falsification of facts, like the statement, "At Oxford, I believe, his favourite form of intoxication was hashish." Symons believed that what would ac-cord with his image of Dowson as the "Modern decadent" was his curious affectation of the sordid. Such reports are entirely inaccu-rate. Robert Sherard and Arthur Moore who knew Dowson inti-mately reported that these stories about the poet's addiction to drugs are unaltered rumours which had their origin in a few harm-less undergraduate experiments.

The "Dowson Legend" fortunately has done the poet a slight disservice. It is a sad commentary on human nature that some poets have at times gained a part of their audience on account of the evil attributed to their lines and lives. Dowson is no exception. There is no doubt, however, that his reader, no matter what the ultimate source of their interest in his poetry has been, have found a con-summate artistry that makes any biographical reference secondary.

Only when you put his work in contrast to the work of other decadent poets and give him an unbiased critical attention, you can see a lot of potentiality and promise in him who could write lines like

In a perfumed dream-land set betwixt the bounds of life and death,

Here will I lie while the clouds fly by and delve on hole, where my heart

May sleep deep down with the grouse above and red, red earth beneath.

The other poets of the decadence, such as Arthur Symons and Oscar Wilde, produced craftsmanlike verse which is sometimes exquisite, but they did not leave work stamped with the author's lifestyle. Though the verse of Dowson is not confessional in literal and continuous manner of D.H. Lawrence, the quintessence of the age and of the age to come is invariably present in his poems.

A comparison with other decadents will not be out of place here. Johnson's poetry lacks Dowson's spontaneity of rhythm.

Though Johnson has a fine ear, music is made with a scholar's care Never is it that trembling of the strings which enchants the reader of some of the best of Dowson's lyric. Though Davidson had a strong imagination, colloquial note and urban imagery, his work is flawed and imperfect. It was Arthur Symons, who claborated the metropolitan cartography in his poem em but somehow his London doesn't seem to be real as it was largely a townscape of selected comers, choice spots and romantic vistas or prospects, for the most part imbued with a special atmosphere, Temple, the Embankment, Kensington Gardens etc. and where either the women were ac-tresses, ballet-girls or whores and where surprisingly the men didn't exist at all. Their tendency was to strike a pose which prevented them from being faithful to the complexities of real experience.

They were extremely skilful craftsmen but men of limited vision. It was Dowson who broadened the spectrum of poetic material in a way that anticipates Eliot and which shows the influence of French poetry. Dowson's Cynara is an attempt to convey a novelistic complexity of the erotic life. The diction is strained almost to the breaking point. As Bergonzi puts it, "the poerg's achievement is that it can take the strain." There is a remarkable verbal energy that underlies the seemingly debilitated surface of the poem and by his virtuoso manipulation of rhythm "O Benediction perfect and com-plete" when shall men cease to suffer and desire,

It is true that the bulk of his poetry is primarily decadent as it was written on order to make both ends meet but some of his poems Stand out in their own right and in these poems particularly we find very prominently the distinctive elements of modernity. The roots

of rootlessness we find in Dowson's poetry. For instance in these lings from "Cynara": "Betwixt her lips and mine there fell thy shadow" or again "Thy breath was shed upon my soul." One can detect a new sensibility characteristic of most

modern poetry. One can very conveniently detect the echoes of the falling shadows in Eliot's "The Hollow Men."

Between the idea

and the reality Between the motion and the act falls the shadow.

and again one can see a depth of meaning, in these lines from another of his poem "Extreme Unction": "Upon the eyes, the lips, the feet on all passage of sense" and a line in the same stanza is in the typical idiom of Eliot: "The feet that lately ran so fast to meet desire are smoothly sealed." The sense of the past and the haunting music of the line in "Breton Cemetery": "And dear dead people with pale hands/Beckon hands/Beckon me to their lands" is very much akin to modern poetry.

The objective attitude in his poem "Beyond" and in "Ad Domnulam juam," his elaborate and selective diction preferring sound to sense, for example, from "My Lady April": "Traces of tears her languid lashes were." These random lines should suffice to speak for the poet's claims to be forerunner of modernity.

T.S. Eliot has recorded how, when he was a young tyro at Harvard, it was "Only the poets of the 90s... who at that period of history seemed to have anything to offer to me as a beginner." He continues: "I got the idea that one could write poetry in an English such as one would speak oneself. A colloquial idiom. There was a spoken rhythm in some of their poems."

(Dowson's influence on posterity was two-fold; first and more influential a cult of passion, langour and despaif, expressed not so much in any distinctive technique as present, generally, in a mood or theme, and secondly a vogue for speech approximating as closely as possible to music an aspect of "pure poetry," of which Edith Sitwell's early pieces are attractive and amusing examples)

The former element is best manifested in Richard Middleton's posthumous Poems and Songs published in 1912:

Now in this sombre and regretful place

Grey when the sun has crimson'd all the west with Sorrow like a mask upon my face.

I lay my dreams to rest.

Though Aldous Huxley condemns Dowson's poetry as poetry of resignation but in his "Carpe Nostem" published as late as 1931, he had echoed the combination of hedonism and pessimism so classi-cally declared by Dowson:

There is no future, there is no more past,

No No roots nor fruits, but momentary flowers

Lie still only lie still and night will last, silent and dark, not

for a space of hours, But Everlastingly. Let me forget

All but your perfume, every night but this,

The shame, the fruitless weeping, the regret.

From the time of Laurence Hope (Adela Florence Nicholson) to John Galsworthy, the feeling-tone of Dowson's poems has been well reproduced in English verse, "Pale hands I loved beside the Shalimar" being a sort of popularization of Dowson's more esoteric passion.

As Eliot remarked of Milton, Dowson was also a poet who worked mainly through "the auditory imagination." Dowson's four translations from Verlaine contained in Decorations came as near to distilling the spirit of those "Ramanes Sans Paroles" as any Englishman with the possible exception of Symons had done. The same economy of diction is found in many of Dowson's own pieces, leading Rupert Brooke in 1906 to speak with approval of Dowson's verse as coming "as near to faint music as spleen can come." The close approximation of any later poet to the Dowson of, say, "A Requiem," "Beat a Solitudo," or "A Valediction" is Richard Middleton with a handful of poems: His "The Happy Cruise" offers something of Dowson's rare felicity.

The girls are flushed with wine and singing in the shade And wanton words invade,

their delicate mouths that pine Through kissing of the Vine And every golden maid Lives, though she be betrayed The stars, the stars that shine.

These distinctive elements in his poetry point to the tantalizing possibilities of his being considered not only a decadent with a difference but a precursor of modern poetry. Moreover, the form and technique are also very modern. The best example is his cele-brated Cynara in which he has experimented in form and technique. And as I said earlier, Dowson's poetry was a kind of bridge be-ween Victorian ideals and modern poetic values without which the journey of modern poetry would not have been all that smooth. So it is very hard to imagine W.B. Yeats reflecting his passionate and moral contemplation in "Easter 1916" without learning his trade with the "Companion of the Cheshire Cheese."

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Warud

With Some Recent Chicapa Poets

NILA DAS

I am Chicana

A blistering Indian sun Waiting to be sacrificed.

A pale catholic virgin, Waiting to be baptized.

I am Chicana

Waiting for the return Of La Malinche to negate her guilt, and cleanse her flesh.

in redemption of all her forsaken daugh-ters.

"Chicana Evolution" Sylvia Alicia Gonzales

To listen to a voice like this, rising from the heart of America yet un-American, having a vitality of its own yet groping for a defini-tion, perhaps a fierce negative definition, is certainly to find one self confronted with American poetry of quite a different tune. ✓

In order to be with the recent Chicana poets, one needs reca-pitulating who the Chicanas/Chicanos are. Let us begin with a brief preamble.

Descendants of Aztec mothers and Spanish conquistadore fa-thers, inheritors of the dichotomy between conditions of power and powerlessness, the Chicanos are a heterogeneous bilingual commu-nity of Mexican-Americans, who can fully identify themselves neither with Mexico, nor with the United States, nor even with their original Indian heritage. Chicano (from Mexicano, phonetically

pronounced as Mechicano) had mostly remained a derogatory term in the socio-political Anglo-American vocabulary, until in the 1960s the militant Mexican-Americans in the Delano strike and the Civil Rights movement turned the negative image into a banner of group membership and political-cultural protest-mechanism.

So far as the Chicanas, specially the educated middle class and the working class are concerned, the protest has been even louder and tends to be multidimensional. Racial discrimination in the larger American society and sexual discrimination in their own have placed the Chicanas in double ambivalence. So, while in the socio-political-ethnic front they ally themselves with their men, in demanding equal rights for women, they are compelled to struggle against them.

A distinct Chicana movement for women's liberation began in the 1970s, but was soon overcast by a third ambivalence. Segre-gated from and sharply reacting to the overbearing Anglo-Ameri-can "racist" feminism, many of the Chicana vendidas or feministas no longer knew if the Chicana should define herself in terms of individualism, "a concept of the Anglo society," or in terms of collectivist commitment involving continuity, in keeping with the Chicana family and cultural tradition. For the third or fourth gen-eration Chicanas, more Americanized and further removed from their origin as they are, the choice between tradition and cultural tradition and modernity has not been an easy either/or choice.

Much of the recent Chicana poetry has sprung out of a sense of paradox, conflict, self-questioning and a desperate urge for a unique Chicana identity, racial, sexual as well as artistic. Mostly written by Chicanas with Anglo-American higher education, the poems are usually composed in binary patterns, with the combination of Eng-lish and Spanish utterances, stylistic structures and linguistic forms. More of a poetic collage, Chicana poetry still takes the readers Into the very depth of the recent Chicana psyche, where the personal "I" has to encounter the "other" and also to encounter itself in terms of the "other."

Not that the poems are always and necessarily subjective, some Chicana poets overtly attune themselves with the value and power conflict and seek a "new" voice in the given racial terms. Marcela Christine Lucero-Trujillo's "No More Cookies, Please," for instance, catches the typical political tone:

You invited me token minority. Over cookies and tea. and said, "sisterhood is powerful" I said, "Bullshit and all motherful" Sce? only the rich are free-'free to dictate the right of their to be

and our not to be

in this, quote, land of liberty.

A good many poets, however, feel that activist ethnicity is not really an answer, but a self-exhaustive exercise. As Ines Hernandez Tover says in "Para Teresa," it is a

game of deadly defiance Arrogance, refusal to submit. The game in which the winner takes nothing Asks for nothing.

The alternative is not assimilation with but resistance to the domi-nant culture from within it and on its own terms ("My contest was to prove. /that we were not only equal but superior to them"). For some poets the ethnic identity itself is an unwelcome appendage and needs another kind of encounter. As Lorna Dee Cervantes' Chicana says in "Refugee Ship,"

Mama raised me with no language

I am orphan to my spanish name. I stare at my reflection in the mirror brown skin, black hair I feel I am a captive abroad the refugee ship

a ship that will never dock.

For a poet like Judy Lucero, Chicana identity is more than a racial concern. It is a marginal existential awareness, an everlasting Sisyphian/obligation though without the Sisyphian lucidity:

It's me and it's not

I hear and I don't

These illusions belong to me.

"I Speak in an Illusion".

Some of the best recent Chicana poetry however springs from the clash, confusion or fusion of the poet's racial, sexual, existen-tial and/or artistic identities. Let us read two poems of this sort. Our first poem is Alma Villanueva's "Mother, May I," an autobio-graphical narrative poem. Mostly a self-quest through memory, the poem begins with a flashback of Alma's childhood and adoles-cence, her initiation to the mainstream culture in the familiar for-mula of language rejection, educational inequity, cultural isolation and her equally unpleasant initiation to the male world. An adoles-cent rape victim, at one phase Alma had waged a tomboyish war against her female identity itself ("It was then that I decided to become a boy.")

Her early isolation from the household (she had been sent to an orphanage as the national economic downturn of the late 1970s hit the family) and the death of her grandmother who had rooted her to the Chicana heritage, had made Alma catatonic. Or has it been the birth of her poetic self she could not recognize?

there is
a place
inside
me they
cannot enter that is where

I'm hiding.

Alma's marriage to an Anglo-American hardly makes her open up to the outer world or to cross-cultural relationships. She fails to be a psychic helpmate to her husband when he returns from the Viet-nam war, a victim to post-war trauma. Alma has had no sense of identification with the American cause in Vietnam ("their armies, their guns, their prisons, their death"). A sea of silence and isola-tion grows within her,

and then began the years

of silence and a loneliness grew that I couldn't name. an emptiness grew that no thing could fill. I think 1 hungered for myself.

The least introspective or self-evaluative, Alma allows herself to be caught in the very rhetoric of the "I" claiming individual voice and visibility:

1 am here. (do

you hear me?) hear

me, hear me.

I am here.

The announcement, however loud, does not bring her a sense of self-identity. That awareness dawns on her later, in a rather un-thought-of moment, when during a chance retreat to a countryside, she has a visionary experience,

The light

blinded me... then I really saw and
I was no longer afraid.
I did not weep.

I did not laugh.

I was not old.

I was not young.

"I am here"

I said

Her self-consciousness expanded beyond spatio-temporal limita-tions, Alma feels a relatedness with all that there is. Her tone softens. Not the assertion of the "I" but the realization of its presence is of importance. It is Alma's moment of self-creation.

But the poem does not end on the visionary heights. Rather the

vision fades as Alma attempts to sexualize her transcendental iden-tity,

I have grown back little mother, with my child's heart beating with my woman's womb birthing. the story connects grandmothers, mothers, daughters, the woman the thread of this story.

Woman as the creator and the preserver are old images. For Alma to fall back upon them is not really to awaken into the mythical female consciousness, which calls for a penetration into the contin-uum through acquired memories, values and emotional substratum. At the core of her being, Alma is hardly incorporated with them, a reason why the connections sound like homilies.

The poem trails off in self-dalliance which in itself is its own critique:

A bloom on the bush a mixed bloom. colors gone and.... You must not pluck it. You must recognize a magic rose when you see it.

Caught between the artistic identity which opens her up and the sexual and racial identity which closes her in, Villanueva's Chi-cana remains suspended in ambiguity.

In "Chicana Evolution," our second poem, Sylvia Alicia Gonzales records a different experience and realization. On her own poetry Gonzales writes, "my poetry seeks not to be defined as

now I find pride in not to be defined. A definition will come when we no longer need a voice." In "Chicana Evolution" she traces the Chicana identity through non-definition. The poem is divided into three parts. Part I: "Genesis and the Original Sin" begins with the confession of the love-hate relationship the poet has with her racial identity (her original sin?):

I am Chicana Something inside revolts. By pronouncing this statement, Do I give authenticity to the trivia Which makes this statement me?

She feels that the genesis of her poetic self is only a self-invitation to an ever-increasing alienation from the larger cultural climate ("last night I had visions/of New York and greenwich village/where artists gather/My friends tell me I waste energies/on bohemian fantasies"). She rather too easily identifies with the distorted mod-emist self-image,

I see-yesterday's heroine climb a lonely staircase. Where Van Gogh has sliced off an ear. I am Chicana Not far from the reality of nakedness and slashed faces.

Part II: "In Search of the Messiahs of Nativism" takes the poet back through the Chicana history and heritage, the dark myths and memories of double colonization, exploitation, violation, sin, shame, torture. She awakens to a broader negative definition of her Chicana identity:

1 turn to you, my sisters of the flesh. Buenos Aires, Caracas, Bogota.. victims of the rape.

The agony of a blasted existence synchronizes the present with the

mythical past. The poet's personal "I" merges with the "other" as she feels herself "A blistering Indian sun/Waiting to be sacrificed/A pale Catholic virgin/waiting to be baptised." In her vision Mal-inche, the mythical Chicana negative epitome of violated woman-hood and betrayal, appears as the new redeemer. Her Chicana mind waits for "the return of La Malinche."

The entire Part III is written in Spanish. In English translation the subtitle reads: "Rebirth According to the New Testament." The whole section celebrates the rebirth of the Chicana psyche in non-definition:

I am the Chicana the abandoned sister.

"I am not from here, nor there, I am timeless, yet have no future.

To be happy is my quest for identity."

To be able to come to terms with one's non-identity is a way of reaching to oneself and also reaching beyond oneself. It is a way of being happy if happiness means fulfilment in larger identification. Negativity, at its crux, leads to affirmation if and when the mind is prepared for it. The last lines of the poem speak of affirmation and synthesis:

I am the Chicana

I am the earth, the water and the fire,

natural elements I have the natu Lhave

to give birth to the world.

When the personal "I" ceases to exist, all is "me." The Chicana poetic self becomes one with the creative continuum:

I am the Chicana I am your mother And you, my daughter. You and me are we.

I am the Chicana

Melinche, both mother and daughter,

And even bastard child. But above all, I AM WOMAN.

The capitalization of "I AM WOMAN" is not a mere gender defini-tion, but the culmination of a widening relatedpess that has finally blossomed into a sense of creativity. Being a woman is to imbibe the creative cycle or principle. To be a Chicana is to be a woman in this larger sense.

These random samplings of the contemporary Chicana poetry indicate that for most of the recent Chicana poets, being Chicana is a dialectical experience. It begins in negativity, isolation, protest and completes, if and when, in a sense of relatedness, The related-ness could be ethnic, existential and/or aesthetic. One salient fea-ture of the Chicana poetry seems to be that rooted in the core ethnic and cultural traits as it is, it also tries to open up to the broader reaches of human experience and realization, a wider vision of the society, of womanhood and to a spectrum of art where myth and modernity may join hands. The outcome is not always convincing, but the effort is of value.

NOTES

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The Myth of the Noble Savage in Melville's Typee

A.A. MUTALIK-DESAI

The hospitality of the wild Arab, the courage of the North American Indian, and the faithful friend-ships of some of the Polynesian nations, far sur-pass anything of a similar kind among the polished communities of Europe.

Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore

Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and oar;

Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

However attracted Melville might have been to the Edenic metaphors which animated his contem-poraries, however hungry he might have been to define a genuine innocence as a possibility for the American self-conception, Typee tests the idea of paradise and finds it wanting.

Herman Melville's and his companion Richard Tobias Greene's adventurous journey to the South Seas, their desertion of the whal-ing ship Acushnet and their brief encounter with a cannibal tribe (in 1841-42) provided the former the immediate incentive for his romance Typee (1846). Ever since its publication, opinion has varied on whether this narrative can claim the authenticity of a document or it is the account of an inner voyage-a symbolic

projection of the Melvillian dichotomy between the ways of civili-zation on the one hand and the simple, primitive forms of life on the other. In the United States, critics have described the work in such diverse terms as: "the first modern novel of the South Seas..

[a picture of] the pre-Edenite community of love and friendship and joy which civilization had remembered, yearned for and could never achieve," "In Typee, Melville had made clear his belief that natural man in many ways is superior to his civilized fellows. It s a glimpse of "the golden age with its simple life of innocence and genial emotions." "In Typee Melville begins his opposition [to the then prevalent literary and philosophic ethos] by taking exception to the romantic concept of primitive nature and primitive man."" "It professes to give nothing but what the author actually saw and heard; it must therefore be judged not as a ro-mance or a poem, but as a book of travels, as a statement of facts." In England too, where Melville was relatively better received, Typee was read not as fiction, but as ethnology, whereas sull others thought that Typee and Omoo (1847), a similar tale, were both "Impertinent inventions, defying disbelief." Thus, a wide and differing range of opinions.

There is Melville himself on record claiming, with reference to Typee, that it was "his anxious desire to speak the unvarnished truth" (458) and proceeded to provide the reader, in the manner of a historian or chronicler, with a map of the Marquesan Islands, Be-sides, the narrative is replete with detailed, at least seemingly matter-of-fact, observations on a host of subjects: the flora and fauna, the many faces of nature in its primeval state (awesome and bounteous, perilous and peaceful, mysterious and soothing), female manners and customs among the Typee; tribal warfare; cloth-mak-ing; religion and superstitious taboos; the ceremony of marriage and the funeral rites; native medicine and native music and dance; a natural history of the valley, and so on. In fact, Melville's near continuous commentary on such varied matters is enough to give the impression that in Typee he has attempted a kind of amateur vade-mecum! On the other hand, however, Melville's own stay on the island was far too brief; and there is certainly no evidence of any idyllic affair with a nubile, olive-coloured Fayaway or of the presence of an ever obedient and ever watchful man-servant Kory-Kory. Melville's and his friend Greene's presence among the Typee was too fleeting to have yielded enough experience or even pro-

vided them with opportunities for observation. So, instead, it would be nearer the truth to consider the work as an imaginative and symbolic portrayal of a distant and glamorous island: Melville's version of the Lotos Land and of the Lotos Eaters!

As a narrative, Typee is mainly an account of the two white Americans's desperate escape from their ship, their stay with a certain cannibal tribe and their eventual, no less desperate, escape from the tribal island and return to their ship. An attempt will now be made to place this rather cryptic reading and summation in the larger symbolic meaning and the narrative pattern.

The American, Tommo (as the natives give a Polynesian twist to his name) alias Herman Melville and Toby alias Richard Tobias Greene are cast not as two visitors from Western civilization, plain and simple, but rather as two disenchanted with the life they have seen and lived in the West. They are in fact on a search for Elysian fields and Elysian bliss among the primitive having failed to find any such among the sophisticated back home! They have had their fill of decadence, corruption and agonizing and mindless restraints. Therefore, these adventurers wish to embrace the life on this is-land, a veritable earthly paradise marked by gaiety, freedom from social and cultural shackles and where everything is repose, dreamy indolence, calm and eternally timeless. On board the ship they had pined for something green, fresh and fragrant: "Oh! for a refreshing glimpse of one blade of grass for a snuff at the fragrance of a handful of the loamy earth! Is there nothing fresh around us? Is there no green thing to be seen?" (465-66)

Then, suddenly, they jump off at the sight of land untouched by Western civilization:

The Marquesas! What strange visions of outlandish things does the very name spirit up! Naked houris groves of cocoa-nuts coral reefs... sunny valleys planted with bread-fruit trees carved canoes dancing on the flashing blue wa-ters. (467)

... deep glens, waterfalls, and waving groves, hidden here and there by projecting rocky headlands, every moment open-ing to the view some new and startling scene of beauty. (476)

If this is the prospect, Tommo and Toby are not likely to be

deterred by the captain's harrangue; they would go ashore, as they do, even if "every pebble on the beach was a live coal, and every stick a grid iron, and the cannibals stood ready to broil." (506) This is but a natural response when the ship itself was seen as an apotheosis of all that was stultifying, deadening and perverse in a supposedly civilized community, and the ship's master as arbitrary, capricious, tyrannical and violent and one who has caused unendur-able hardship and privation: "We had left both law and equity on the other side of the Cape." (487) And, so they land to be quickly surrounded by the most delicate

blue, the thin drapery of pale clouds, the long, measured, dirge-like swell of the Pacific, the foliage, the glistening sun, cliffs and precipices, silent cascades and the verdure and the abandoned voluptuousness. Thus their welcome to the island: the blessed and enchanted island they had dreamed about for so long!

On arrival, their worst fears are not realized! They are not captured by cannibals. On the contrary, they are relieved to dis-cover that they have landed among the most hospitably kind primi-tives. Unlike the life on the ship or at home with its "hundred evils in reserve" and its "thousand self-inflicted discomforts," (619) here on the island, this pre-lapsarian paradise, there are no worries to cloud one brow, no pleasures beyond one's reach: here is Eve-like Fayaway who desires only love and not the fruit of Knowledge. Melville's observation is detailed and instructive:

One peculiarity that fixed my admiration was the perpetual hilarity reigning through the whole extent of the vale. There seemed to be no cares, griefs, troubles or vexations, in all Typee. The hours tripped along as gaily as the laughing couples down a country dance. There were none of those invitations that the ingenuity of civilized man had created to mar his own felicity. There were no foreclosures of mort-gages, no protested notes, no bills payable, no debts of honour in Typee: no unreasonable tailors and shoemakers, perversely bent on being paid; no duns... no poor relations.. no destitute widows with their children starving .. or to sum it up in one word no Money! "That root of all evil" was not to be found in the valley. (621)

Later the same impression is repeatedly emphasized. In words

ringing with echoes from the Corinthians, Melville notes that here among the Typee, their children play together all day long, they do not quarrel, there is "no contention, among them." Their young women are free from envy and affectation. Their young men show "the least sign of strife or contention among them" and their warri-ors "maintained a tranquil dignity of demeanour." (622) And the source of their happiness? "the mere buoyant sense of a healthful physical existence" (623) a la Rousseau.

Thus the theme of civilized decadence vs. primitive, innocent, paradisal bliss is developed. Typee, a "vast basin of soft-lotus-warm civilization"" is free from weaknesses and ailments which fester human life everywhere: no illness, no grievances, no domes-tic strife, no jealousies, no conflicts, no fanaticism even on the score of religion, their warfare is a mere sport, their passions are harmlessly channelled, and so forth. According to the author, these are but the results of "the uninterrupted healthfulness of their natural mode of life." (691) Any alien intrusion is, therefore, to be eschewed-lest it might corrode and destroy what is most precious to them, namely, a serenity bestowed upon them by the elements. For the same reason, Melville is critical of the Christian missionar-ies and their attempts at proselytization: "Let the savages be civi-lized, but civilize them with benefits, and not with evil; and let heathenism be destroyed, but not by destroying the heathen." (709) Melville is not the less impressed by the Typce women: their artless vivacity and unconcealed natural grace would compare fa-vourably with that of their counterparts in the civilized world: "It would be the Venus de' Medici placed beside a milliner's doll." (666) Thus the highly romanticized and idolized picture is com-plete.

Yet, despite all the solicitous hospitality of the islanders, despite all the uninterrupted rapture, the undemanding, slumberous and languid content and the never-ending calm of life, Tommo is restless; his wounded leg does not heal despite every native cure tried upon it. After the initial euphoria he increasingly feels that he is but a captive in the sylvan world of Typee. Once the newness of the experience wears off, he thinks of nothing but escaping from his captivity! Fayaway's love, Marheyo's benevolent care, Kory-Kory's faithful service, the island's charm and the medicinal "arva" will not bind him to Typec. It soon becomes apparent in the narra-tive that Melville's alter ego prefers civilization with its aches and

agues. As Charles J. Haberstroh, Jr. argues in a recent book, be-tween Tommo and the Typees there is a large, inescapable cultural gulf: "by rejecting the tattooing, he [Tommo] rejects any final attempt at assimilation."" What Typees have most to offer (namely: enough sleep, "moce-moce," enough food, "ki-ki" and young fe-males, "whihenee") fail in the ultimate scale, of things to persuade Tommo to stay on. Is paradise to be passed over? Are mankind's dreams of an ideal or perfect order utterly unrealistic or unrealiz-able? Is the advancing of civilization and the search for a private or collective Elysium incompatible? Or, as

R.W.B. Lewis argues is a state of "continual happiness"" unendurable? Must mankind con-front a spate of cares, griefs and troubles all the time?

Deep down within the consciousness of Tommo, there resides a civilized being who is unable to make home in the primitive, if also idyllic, world of the South Seas. To quote Lewis again: Tommo is not so worried about the Typee cannibalism; the danger is much greater, namely, that "of permanently arrested development."" As another critic has put it, "The Eden-dweller buys his happiness and sanity at the price of a reduction of human potentiality to acquiescent materialism."" Or, much more definitively, as D.H. Lawrence thundered once, shouldn't one conclude that "There is no paradise?""

To analyze this debate from another perspective, the sheltered island-life is divorced from actuality and the flux and pulse of life. It represents the supremacy, complete and relentless, of the body over the human mind and the human spirit. Man regresses to the life of an animal, surviving for exciting and satisfying the body. It is the refusal to grow, to change and to be in tune with human existence. Try as one might, it is vain to disassociate oneself from the forces that bind one to reality. An escape into the slumbering South Seas is an attempt to turn backwards in the scales of civiliza-tion and the march of time.

Civilized life in Melville's view can indeed be callous, brutal, sick and sterile: but the ideal of the noble savage hardly offers a solution. To continue to believe in the myth of the noble savage is to indulge in an unaffordable, indefensible escapism. "The primi-tive does not offer true peace," says Milton R. Stern, "for vegetable serenity annihilates the touch and enduring aspirations which have led man to try to enlarge his destiny, to widen the possibility of triumph over the inescapable limitations of physical being."" So,

Tommo and Toby who had their own reasons to run away from the ship must return to it; if anything, they have discovered more compelling reasons to do so. The scum and squalor on board the ship must be sought as a refuge from the dreamlike but inconse-quential life on Typee. Besides, on the subject of pursuit of happi-ness and the avoidance of suffering, one must consider Ishmalean wisdom: "That mortal man who hath more joy than sorrow in him, that mortal man cannot be true.""

Herman Melville the man and the artist is stamped with an unmistakable degree of ambivalence. There is in him a social and political ambivalence which makes him suspicious of society, order and hierarchy. As it is said, he kept on "jumping off!" Even more than Henry David Thoreau, who stepped out from his hut near Walden, Melville went as far as the South Seas to examine Western civilization and Western man critically. But once the soul-search-ing was over, Thoreau went back to Concord and Melville to the United States and to the mainstream of life. But even as he made peace with life, Melville's uncertain reconciliation continued. His ambivalence towards the claim of optimism and pessimism in gen-eral remained, likewise. In a letter written in 1885, he thought he was "neither pessimist nor optimist," though leaning towards pessi-mism as "a counterpoise to the exorbitant hopefulness, juvenile and shallow, that makes such a bluster in these days."

Melville's thesis, then, departing somewhat from D.H. Law-rence, is not that an earthly paradise is totally impossible. He is rather pleading that for man, the homo sapien and a member of a civilized order, it is unattainable because it is incompatible with the very nature of his existence. Man must be content with this world and no more! his existe

Finally, if only as a coda, there is Aldous Huxley's caveat emptor. Quoting the words of a nineteenth-century mystic and visionary, Nicholas Berdiaff, Huxley records his apprehension that utopias only of a certain sort may be realizable, utopias, that is to say, of the order of Brave New World (1932) where the Typeean wonder drug or all purpose panacea, "Arva," is replaced by Soma. From that world too, John Savage (!), the protagonist, must flee to preserve his sanity, individuality and his human, civilized self!

NOTES

1. Herman Melville, "Typee," Selected Writings of Herman Mel-ville (New York: Modern Library, 1952), p. 717.
2. Alfred Tennyson, "Song of the Lotos-Eaters," The New Ox-ford Book of English Verse, 1250-1900, ed. Helen Gardner (New York: OUP, 1972), p. 641.
3. Rowland A. Sherrill, The Prophetic Melville (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1979), p. 8.

4. Maxwell Geismar, ed., Billy Budd and Typee (New York: Washington Square Press, 1962), p. xiv.
5. Robert E. Spiller, The Cycle of American Literature (New York: New American Library, 1959), pp. 81-82.
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7. Milton R. Stern, ed., Typee and Billy Budd (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1958), p. xiv
8. C.R. Anderson, "Contemporary American Opinion of Typee and Omoo," American Literature, IX, March, 1937, p. 8.
9. Ibid., p. 3.
10. Tennyson's poem was published in 1832.

11. D.H. Lawrence, Studies in Classic American Literature (New York: Viking Press, 1964), p. 133.

12. "Indeed, the fundamental tension of Typee consists in Tommo's oscillation between his yearning for paradisal inno-cence and his concommitant realization of the necessity for

full experience." Sherrill, p. 9. 13. Melville and Male Identity (Teaneck: Fairleigh Dickinson Univ. Press, 1980), p. 40.
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15. Ibid., p. 136.
16. Stern, p. xvi.
17. Ibid., pp. 133-36.
18. Ibid., p. xv.
19. Herman Melville, Moby Dick (New York: International Col-lectors' Library, 1972), p. 375.
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Karma Yoga and Conrad's Theory of Action in Heart of Darkness

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Solitude, as a state of existence, provides peace and an atmosphere fit for meditation. But if the mind is not properly trained and thoughts are not appropriately channelized, the same state of soli-tude may have a corrupting influence on man, leading to moral decay and ultimate death. It is in this perspective that one has to read and comprehend the moral predicament of Kurtz and, through him, that of Marlow in Heart of Darkness. Marlow terms this state as wilderness, darkness or isolation; but he has the moral stability to

understand and withstand its evil influence. As an escape he plunges into action. It is through action that one can hope to be saved.

The Indian view of life is very much akin to this. Hindu thought does not recommend solitude as an escape from temptation and sufferings of life. It is a maturer stage suitable for introversion, introspection and realization of higher self. But if the mind is obsessed with evil, it is better to be in a fair than in woods. That is why the Gita emphasizes action, not for its material utility or pragmatic values, but for peace, purity and moral prosperity, that is, for its own sake, or as the Gita puts it, "Nishkama Karma." The word "karma" is derived from Sanskrit "Kri," that is, to do: all action is "Karma." Technically, this word also means the effects of action. In connection with metaphysics, it sometimes means the effects of which our past actions were the causes. In Karma Yoga we have simply to do with the word "Karma" as meaning work or action.

Solitude and action: these are the two stages of life repre-sented by Kurtz and Marlow in Heart of Darkness, Kurtz falls an easy victim to this wilderness, to the evil powers of darkness.

Marlow too feels the temptation, but has the strength to resist its impact on him. He confesses:

I had turned to the wilderness really, not to Mr. Kurtz, who, I was ready to admit, was as good as buried. And for a moment it seemed to me as if I also were buried in a vast grave full of unspeakable secrets, 1 felt an intolerable weight oppressing my breast, the smell of the damp earth, the unseen presence of victorious corruption, the darkness of an impenetrable night.

Marlow is even inclined to sympathize with Kurtz and "remains faithful to the nightmare of his choice." Away from the civilizing influence of society, Kurtz finds himself suddenly too lonely to be able to govern his natural wild instincts and, as an alternative, chooses to govern the natives, perhaps as an outlet. This is the same Kurtz who had come to these woods "equipped with moral ideas of some sort" suffering from the darkness of his own designs to end up in the woods of self-realization when he pronounces his final judgement his last words upon his own life on earth, "the hor-ror! the horror!" He had lived his life of desires and temptations and had surrendered only "during that supreme moment of com-plete knowledge." Marlow understands him well when he says:

but his soul was mad. Being alone in the wilderness, it had looked within itself, and, by heavens, I tell you, it had gone mad. I had for my sins, I suppose to go through the ordeal of looking into it myself. (145)

Marlow too had felt the tearing of powers of darkness within him and suffered the pangs of disintegration; that is how he could identify himself with Kurtz and visualize his plight. The only difference was that Kurtz's realization of his "karma" was too late and Marlow's was just in time to help him emerge victorious, though not unscathed, out of the snaring situations. The difference between the plight of the two is not of the quality but of the degree, not of the action but of the consequences. Kurtz dies as a man, who had become "hollow at the core" and Marlow continues to live to dream the nightmare till the end and show his loyalty to Kurtz. Marlow has his own judgement to pass upon life-"Droll thing life

is that mysterious arrangement of merciless logic for futile pur-pose." (150)

According to Sankhya philosophy, nature is composed of three forces called, "satva," "rajas," and "tamas." These as manifested in the physical world, are what we may call equilibrium, activity and inertness. "Tamas" is typified as darkness or inactivity; "rajas" is activity, expressed as attraction or repulsion; and "satva" is equi-librium of the two. Kurtz is a positive embodiment of "tamas" till he dies. Throughout, he struggles against the forces of darkness with a lone moment of revelation towards the end "that supreme moment of complete

knowledge" which is a saving grace for his soul. Marlow embodies "rajas" at first and is able to rise to the level of "satva" later on. Adam Gillon observes that Marlow has:

glanced over the edge of the precipice, and fully knows the meaning of Kurtz's stare on his death bed. He himself has withdrawn from the abyss not without some hesitation.

It is Marlow's destiny to continue to dream the nightmare till the end and show his loyalty to Kurtz. The principle of Karma Yoga, as Swami Vivekananda puts it, makes it "our duty to encourage every-one in his struggle to live up to his own highest ideal, and strive at the same time to make the ideal as near as possible to truth." After Kurtz's death, Marlow supports his "intended" in her ideal of Kurtz, down to twisting the truth for her sake. He tells her that the last word that Kurtz uttered was her name.

Futility of life and efforts for material progress as the cause of all restlessness and corruption is another point of comparison be-tween Conrad's thought and Indian philosophy. Ivory in Heart of Darkness, as silver in Nostromo, symbolize materialism and conse-quent moral decay. "There is no peace in the development of material interests," says Dr. Monygham to Mrs. Gould in Nos-tromo, and we see Kurtz's demoralized state when he cries exas-peratedly, "My intended, my ivory, my station, my river, my..." His conceit-created hallucinations make him imagine himself being received and applauded in Europe by kings and emperors. Silver has the same demoralizing not only corrupting influence on Nostromo. The peace lies only in "karma." Conrad says in Nos-tromo:

Action is consolatory. It is the enemy of thought.... Only in the conduct of our action do we find the cause of mastery over fates. (348)

Marlow wants rivets "to get on with the work, to stop the hole" of unrealities and keep his grip firm over the substantialitics of life, "over the redeeming facts of life," to evade "the God-forsaken wilderness." He says:

I do not like work-no man does but I like what is in work, the chance to find yourself. Your own reality for yourself, not for others, what no other man can ever know. (83-85, emphasis mine)

According to "Karma Yoga," by work alone men may get where Buddha got largely by meditation or Christ by prayer. Buddha was a working "Jnani"; Christ was a "Bhakta." But freedom of the soul is the goal of all Yogas. One has to work like a master, not a slave. Work, but let not the action of thought produce a deep impression on the mind. Kurtz became the slave of his own actions and Marlow could master them. Marlow's "Karma" was done with Buddhistic detachment; Kurtz's soul got attached to his actions and hence his disillusionment. Turning from consolatory impact of action to dis-concerting effects of solitude one can feel the distinction. Marlow philosophizes:

Solitude from mere outward condition of existence becomes very swiftly a state of soul in which the affectations of irony and scepticism have no place. It takes possession of the mind, and drives forth the thought into exile of utter unbelief. (409)

Kurtz's physical position, before he dies, is precisely the spiritual position in which Decoud in Nostromo is tortured into suicide. Adam Gillon perceives it aptly: "Conrad's lonely heroes are an affirmation of human solidarity. Man's isolation proves that no person with a conscience can live by himself." It is one's devotion to "karma," the commitment to action, that gives a man a feeling of fulfilment and a sense of salvation. The man who has even a basic sensibility, cannot deceive either God or man because there is no bluffing his own self.

NOTES

1. Joseph Conrad, Heart of Darkness (London: J.M. Dent, 1968), p. 138.

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3. Swami Vivekananda, Karma Yoga (Calcutta: Advaita Ashram, 1966), p. 25.

4. Joseph Conrad, Nostromo p. 430. (Penguin Modern Classics, 1963),

5. Adam Gillon, p. 118

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Menace from Within: Edward Bond's The Pope's Wedding and Saved

B. CHANDRIKA

Edward Bond, perhaps one of the most controversial contemporary playwrights, has called his work "The Rational Theatre." Speaking against the Theatre of the Absurd, he has said, "Life becomes meaningless when you stop acting on the things that concern you most." In his plays, he concerns himself with the evils and diseases of the present-day society and dramatizes them with a shockingly realistic accuracy. The cruelty and violence that are typical of Bond's plays have attracted more reproof than admiration, mainly because people have failed to see his moral commitment. A closer scrutiny will reveal the fact that Bond presents only in miniature the diseased situation in which the modern world is placed. The stoning of an innocent baby to death on stage is "a negligible atrocity" compared to the "strategic bombing of German towns." The morbid

violence in Bond's plays points to the necessity of having to do away with the institutional violence that causes it. The directness with which he looks at man's inherent cruelty may be embarrassing, but he does it deliberately to draw attention to the menace that lurks within. Each of his plays deals with "the evil that results from the mindless dispensation of a corrupt morality," as a result of which menace is bred but suppressed within the human mind. It swells up within the mind and bursts out in acts of violence and cruelty at unexpected moments. This paper attempts to exam-ine the theme of menace in the two early plays of Edward Bond,

The Pope's Wedding and Saved. It does not seem incorrect to include these two plays under the common title "The Comedy of Menace," a term applied by Irwing Wardle to the early plays of Harold Pinter. In Pinter's plays from The Room to The Homecoming, menace belongs to the world out-

side "the room"; and among the many interpretations given to the motif of the room, the one that seems relevant here is that of the peaceful haven, however artificial that peace might be. In these plays, menace, looming large, enters the peaceful haven and shat-ters the security inside. For instance, in The Birthday Party, Gold-berg and McCann, the two outsiders, enter Petey's boarding house, the secure refuge of Stanley, and shatter his peace. The blind negro in The Room is the menace from outside who enters to wreck Rose's security. In The Caretaker, it is the tramp's entry that threatens the placid life of the two brothers. The matchseller of A Slight Ache, the foreign-returned Teddy and Ruth of The Home-coming etc. are all outsiders, and their entry into the room is identified with the entry of the menace to bring to ruin the peace and security

inside. But in Bond, there are no such artificial havens waiting to be shattered by the menace. Here the menace pervades the very atmosphere; physical and emotional security, good will, peace etc. are the rare things to find. As John Holloway remarks, "Over and over, Bond sees organized society as gigantic legalized brutality sustained throughout history and resisted only by the simple, bedrock, minimal affirmation of human goodness.". Hence it can safely be said that Bond's plays are about goodness trying to penetrate into an atmosphere corroded with lust, violence and men-ace. It is such an atmosphere that is dramatized in The Pope's Wedding and Saved; characters like Scopey or Len are not wholly good; they are Bond's minimal affirmation of human goodness. Even in them, the menace works from within.

Bond, like Blake, seems to believe that man is perverted by societal pressures like environment, government, religion, etc. Everywhere Bond could only see faces "set in patterns of alarm, coldness or threat," people moving in a jerky and awkward fashion, and he perceived these expressions to be "signs of moral disease" that we are "taught to admire." It is such people sick with the moral disease that make their appearance in The Pope's Wedding and Saved. The Pope's Wedding, Bond's first play to be produced, is centred on Scopey's unspoken quest and is peopled with charac-ters taken from the lowest strata of society. Saved, about Len who clutches at the straws of personal relationships in his efforts to save himself, is also peopled with characters from the lower class. The common bond between the characters of these two plays is the fact that they are all stunted, inarticulate and dehumanized people.

Being socially moralized, they behave in the way their environ-ments expect them to behave. Pete and Fred in Saved are branded criminals and so they have to act accordingly. Violence and cruelty thus become the individual's response to the behaviour pattern society thrusts on him.

The young, working class people in The Pope's Wedding are trapped in a world of poverty, superstition and jsolation, and from their trapped stances they look at the life of the affluent aliens. The capitalistic society sees to it that they do not escape from their shackled positions, and that the moments of relaxation are kept as far away as possible. Bullright, the feudal employer, has filled their days and nights with bleakness. Significantly Bond does not make him appear in the

play; he is all the more conspicuous because of his absence. He could be any capitalist who tries to curb even the small pleasures of the workers. In the play, Bullright prevents Bill from playing cricket in the local cricket derby by keeping him in the farm to look after a sick animal. Scopey plays in Bill's stead and they win the match. The gang, drugged with the joy of having won the match in spite of Bullright, want to spend their energy on hurting someone. They could not hurt Bullright, they could hurt only someone weaker than themselves. Having tasted the energy of rebellion they find it impossible to discriminate, and go for the helpless. They attack the shack of Alen, the lone hermit. It is their way of interacting with society that ill-treats them; the pent-up menace, suddenly released, gushes downward.

In Saved also, more or less a similar picture emerges. The atmosphere is work-heavy and stifled. In the earlier play, at least sex was a way of minimizing the tensions. But here even that is reduced to the level of a mere hunt. The man's sexual desire is mixed with fear and dislike of women. Finally life is far from being a way of relaxation: here the husband and wife go on for years without speaking a word to each other; here children are pests rather than pets. Pete boasts of having deliberately killed a child with his lorry. Pam drugs her child with aspirin so that it will not disturb her in case her lover comes at night. All through the play she refers to her child as "it," and has no qualms to turn up the -volume of the TV set to drown its cries. The lives of these people are filled with tension and frustration; they have no way of relaxing it, and the menace surges within. Even their jokes are hollow and stale.

The pent-up menace within is unleashed when the hooligans find the baby in the pram abandoned in the park. The baby, drugged with aspirin, does not respond and this encourages them to hurt it further and further. First they push the pram about in fun and then they push it against one another violently to attack. The menace comes out as unconsciously and spontaneously as in Golding's Lord of the Flies. The hooligans pull the hair of the baby, pinch it, spit on it, hit it and rub its face in its own excrement. They enjoy themselves, for "yer don't get a chance like this every day." Fred, supposedly the baby's father, pelts the first stone, and soon the baby is toned to death. Essentially a Marxist, Bond believed that the educational system, morality and religion of a capitalist society will only make the common man cynical and apathetic.

In an interview given to Alen Brien (Sunday Times of 3rd March 1968), Bond had recollected his childhood days when he had been frightened to think that God was love, for God had "killed his son for us and hung him up and tortured him and washed us in his blood.". This religious fear in Bond's young mind has later made him an atheist who looked upon religion as a bondage. In the two plays under discussion, two Christian ritual murders are dramatized by Bond in a symbolic manner: the slaughter of the Innocents in Saved and the crucifixion of the scapegoat in The Pope's Wedding.

Alen, the scapegoat is terrorized by Scopey into singing a hymn and Alen chooses "Little babe nailed to the tree" and sings a parody of the Christian hymn. Bond might have been infuriated by the materialistic attitude of the Church folk, who, instead of offering spiritual help and guidance to the common man, often strove for material power and glory. In The Fool set in 19th Century Eng-land, a priest is stripped and robbed on the stage by the starving common people. Bond could see the Church in the 20th Century as only a decaying building of bourgeois society. He could make Jesus Christ come down from the cross to poison the communion wine of the South African Prime Minister (Black Mass) or crucify a pig on Christ's Cross (Passion). All these are his angry protests at the religious institutions that do not do anything to lessen the menace operating within the individuals and society.

This attitude to religion is revealed in the provocative titles of the plays under study-The Pope's Wedding and Saved. In the first, the wedding, as Richard Scharine observes, "is ultimately that of the Innocent to the Innocent, the moment of murder in which

Scopey and Alen become one." Scopey gives up his job, friends and family in order to reach out to Alen, to find a fulfilling rela-tionship, perhaps as a way out of the menace. His attempts become frustrated, destructive and finally he kills the old man, puts on his coat and tries to communicate with the corpse. The philosophical yearning to understand the incomprehensible is a spiritual quest, and the futility of it is denoted in making Alen stupid and empty. In Saved, who is actually saved? The babe stoned to death, or Len who was as foolish as Scopey to try to search for a fulfilling relationship? And that leads us to the speculative problem of whether man is really saved or not. Bond's fundamental objection to religion is that it takes responsibility away from human beings. Religion might shift the responsibility for the menace from within to without; but Bond would

like man to take moral responsibility for his own actions. The menace is within and man has to help himself out.

NOTES

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3. Richard Scharine, The Plays of Edward Bond (London: Asso-ciated University Press, 1976), p. 27.

4. John Holloway, "The Literary Scene," The Present: The New Pelican Guide to English Literature (Harmondsworth: Pen-guin, 1983), Vol. 8, p. 118. Emphasis mine.

5. Edward Bond, quoted in Oleg Kerensky, The New British Drama: Fourteen Playwrights Since Osborne and Pinter (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1977), p. 23.

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Pinter's Dramatic Dialogue

PRADIP LAHIRI

Pinter sits under the canopy of the Theatre of the Absurd, close to Beckett. His plays are concerned with the under-surface reality dramatizing the essential existential absurdity of human situation. His attention to precise details of life at various niches makes up for absence of the deceptive naturalism of realistic drama. Modern man, caught between the existentialist agony and the painful inabil-ity to communicate, is dramatically exposed by Pinter.

It is Pinter's language, his occasional patterning of spare dia-logue against bleak settings, that performs the most crucial role. In an interview Pinter said, in connection with his stage dialogue, that the conversations in his plays try to establish the reality that "People fall back on anything they can lay their hands

on verbally to keep away from the danger of knowing, and of being known." He exposes the threat behind the evasive exchanges in our daily life, and the tension existing between homo sapiens who consider themselves known to each other. The playwright justifies himself with bold assertions: "a character on the stage who can present no convincing argument or information as to his past experience, his present behaviour or his aspirations, nor give a comprehensive analysis of his motives is as legitimate and as worthy of attention as one who, alarmingly, can do all those things." Hollis has accepted the importance of "the playwright's relationship to and utilization of language." Alrene Sykes agrees that "the aspect of Pinter's plays which has probably been most seriously discussed is, not surprisingly, their language." Isolated on the stage, Pinter's dia-logue underlines the gross absurdity of life rendered rather comi-cally, yet with an undertone of sadness multiplied by the Existen-tial sub-conscious menace denoting the acute stages of man's utter inability to communicate. The audience is led into a new and more perceptive awareness of how, in what way, things happen and

conversations are made: language inheres the universal poetic id-iom profoundly communicative of the cosmic human condition. It is in this context that Esslin calls The Birthday Party "a complex poetic image.""

A step ahead of the Chekhovian use of the inconsequential in casual conversation, Pinter walks on a newly found path whereon dark comedy is extracted out of repetition, confusion, discontinu-ity, hesitation and out of the human habit of frequently remaining inattentive to what someone else is speaking, even when they are talking face to face. Pinter probes man's communicative predica-ment in the universe with Kafkaesque and Beckettian

Existential insight; but, as Styan rightly observes, his "extraordinary talent for suggestive obliquity in his dialogue is distinctively his own."

In the absurd theatre we enter the underexplored Existentialist terrain of man's deeply buried self where there's no light of a Tagore's spiritual repletion, Dante's divine calm, Browning's ro-bust optimism or even the dim twilight of an Arnold's resignation. We enter a stream of conscious void tearing across Eliot's "unre-deemable" (Four Quartets: Burnt Norton 1, 5) time, beyond any rational analysis; it is a void where the characters of either sex are helplessly, hopelessly "caught in the form of limitation/ Between unbeing and being" (Burnt Norton V, 167-68) in the infinity of nihilism.

Pinter's dramatic language rests on two separate pedestals that of apparent understanding, and of esoteric revela-tion. Right from The Birthday Party (1958) all the way to One for the Road (1984) the plays, full-length ones as well as the One-Acters, have shown special use of language, the most uncommon way of handling dialogue in extending the dimension of theatre language in a post-Beckettian world-order. It is shown that our verbal utterances refuse to communicate our real feelings, felt in the spine and bones, and that "we communicate only too well, in our silence, in what is unsaid, and that what takes place in contin-ual evasion.... Communication is too alarming.... To disclose to others the poverty within us is too fearsome a possibility." Pinter shows that words tend to slip away from communicating; not that they fail in doing so, but rather that they avoid doing so to all intents and purposes. Words connect themselves with the deepest core of human perception. Pinter tries to bring home the fact that the more acute the feeling, the less articulate becomes its expres-

sion. Besides, Pinter presents the murky situation when modern man deep down in his heart is fearful to allow others to peep into his deeply buried self. Therefore, in Pinter, "words are not bridges: they are harbs to protect the wired enclosure of the self."

His characters play word-games; words are spoken one too many but nothing gets communicated. Characters build word-trenches to crawl into, lest they get vulnerable by revealing them-selves, by coming out into the open. No question gets a direct answer, as in The Dumb Waiter:

Ben: Go and light it.

Gus: Light what?

Ben: The Kettle.

Gus: You mean the gas.

Or, as it is shown in One for the Road:
Gila: I met him.
Nicolas: When?
Gila: When I was eighteen.
Nicolas: Why?
Gila: He was in the room.
Nicolas: Room?
(pause)
Gila: The same room.
Nicolas: As what?
Gila: As I was.
Nicolas: As I was?
Gila: (screaming) As I was.
(pause)
Nicolas: Room? What room?
Gila: A room?
Nicolas: What room?

The audience through this exchange of words gets informed about the psychological tension: nevertheless communication gets im-paired and choked at the feeling response level. Even when they remember their past they falter: as Ellen in Silence narrates:
I remember. But I'm never sure that what I remember is of to-

day or of yesterday or of a long time ago. And then often it is only half things I remember, half things, beginnings of things.

Words, as such, move on a highly slippery ground and inore often than not go down head over heels.

A Pinter play establishes a very strong centrality of language in respect pect of the problems of identity, illusory reality or menace with an amalgamation of the diversified raw-materials of life. Wider linguistic content in which Pinter plays have their germina-tion contribute significantly to their structure as well as texture: the playwright being endowed with an intuitive new leap of insight into the meaninglessness of life. All the various components of his language divulging

several layers of meaning move almost unfail-ingly to a visible point of convergence.

Pinter is an experimenter, like Strindberg in drama and Joyce in fiction. What is significant in Pinter is that right from his first play The Room (1957) working steadily onwards, he remains preoccupied with his unique techniquo a perfect synthesis of form, content, presentation and vistas of potent dramatic articula-tion. ✓

As a consummate theatre craftsman, having a chequered ca-reer in acting in Sir Donald Wolfit's and Anew McMaster's repertory and directing his own and other's plays along with providing script for films and radio and TV plays, Pinter took pains to confer upon language a complete autonomy, and create a verbal vision of life which cuts the entire cross-section of both time and space. Like his illustrious counterparts Ibsen, O'Neill, Strindberg, Kafka, Beckett and Albee, Pinter too has recognized the obligation not to formulate comprehensible answers to the great riddle of life, but to provide expressive metaphors for them. A Pinter play, from this standpoint, is as much a contemporary as a cosmic document of Thuman composition.

Playwrights directly concerned with the immediate perceptive impact of communication, such as Pinter is, felt the crying need for a kind of unique language detected by Antonian Artaud as standing "halfway between gesture and thought""

Pinter, as a neo-realist, is not prepared for any consideration to modify his very immediate perception of reality, of the basic human situation he confronts on a given moment. As an artist he is truthful to the hilt searching continuously for a faithful and accu-

rate presentation of the world of reality he has experienced. The dramatist exposes man's twentieth century existential zeit-geist in not confining his or her words to one and only comfortably inter-pretable meaning by any familiar terms. Speaking of his convic-tion, he says: "life is much more mysterious than plays make it out to be. And it is this mystery which fascinates me: what happens between words, what happens when no words are spoken." Pinter exemplifies that we play hide-and-seek with words, and they in turn do the same with us, like the blind man's bluff symbolically shown in The Birthday Party. Despite Pinter's stubborn refusal to be perched on the symbolic shelf, Styan has correctly diagnosed that his dramatic treatment of reality is certainly "symbolist." Pinter's

plays contain metaphysical tension over the awareness of the mirthless joke destiny has played upon man's meaningless life compelling him to find something to be engaged at, to do, to act inevitably so as to substantiate that he exists for the moment till annihilated into infinity, into nothingness or non-being. No desper-ate wait or yearning causes Godot's appearance. Godot, vanished from the scene, has taken with him for ever all ideal purpose and 'meaningfulness of life. The valley of life is green never more.

In a Pinter play phantasy over language is woven round the inexactitude of what has been expressed, the meaning thereby is caught in an ambiguity. Even in the recent play One for the Road, where Pinter, for the first time in his dramatic career, has gone political on the stage, it is revealed that from the state of verbal primacy, man's communicative urge is leading him to post-linguis-tic forms, and even to strange partial silence which leaves behind an unmistakable echo.

Pinter has explored what words do not clearly define, observ-ing that "you and 1, the characters which grow on a page, most of the time we're inexpressive, giving little away, unreliable, elusive, evasive, obstructive, unwilling. But it is out of these attributes that a language arises. A language where under what is said, another thing is being said." This is where a language within a language creates a third language, and without an idea of this outer language a Pinter play can hardly be approached. Pinter refers to a special audible silence which occurs when "a torrent of language is being employed. this speech is speaking of a language locked beneath it."" This is where we find Pinter's greatest strength as a dramatist; this is where Pinter's seal is securely affixed on the post

anti-rationalist, anti-realist, anarchic dadaist and surrealist literary movement. Each and every word Pinter's characters speak bears an unmistakable stamp of the inevitable presence of this other lan-guage cabined, cribbed, confined underneath the spoken word, bound in psychological doubts and fears. Russell-Brown, in this context, aptly comments that "words run ahead or lag behind the houghts of his characters: they surprise, digress, tantalize and, occasionally, seem to clinch the dramatic conflict.""

Pinter's lingual lens focuses accurately where "the speech we hear is an indication of that we don't hear." The smokescreen around our verbalization does have its own implication. Pinter's words which are gradually getting shorter in his later plays carry weighty suggestions, uneasy insinuations and complex

indirect connotations, as we find at the end of Act 1 of The Birthday Party, where, as Dukore points out "the visual combines with non-verbal sound to create meaning." The third language of a pregnant impli-cation becomes manifest when at the peak of Act Il lights go out and the audience only listen to the hurry-scurry on the stago-jostlings, grunts and whimpers with their chilling implica-tion. After a while McCann's flash light pins a stage corner show-ing a spread-eagled Lulu on the table with Stanley meaningfully bending over her. Pinter uses no discursive conventional language

but dexterously grafts the visual with the verbal. We may cite the following non-sequitur from The Room to exemplify the process of eliciting the third language:

Rose: When did she die then, your sister?

Mr. Kidd: Yes, that's right, it was after she died that I must have stopped counting.

Here, the reply defies the question and thereby creates an absurdity of its own by rousing a deliberate off-the-track route. This estab-lishes an interesting source of excitement of Pinter's dialogue in pursuing the idea of what is meant by the language and what is betrayed.

Mick says in The Caretaker pulling away the threadbare carpet of foolish self-imposed social hierarchy from under Davies's feet: "I can take nothing you say at face value. Every word you speak is open to any number of different interpretations. Most of what you say is lies." This refers to our uneasiness about words, we

cannot trust them wholeheartedly; when we have shot the word out willy nilly, for we cannot but use them, we feel uneasy lest weasels appear from underneath the cocktail cabinet.

Another example of linguistic manoeuvre may be cited from The Dwarfs. Through mocking repetitions, Pinter establishes a dis-turbing absurd human situation. The following conversation be-tween Len and Mark. Len questions positively, Mark slips away from them in a comic way:

Len: Do you believe in God?
Mark: What?
Len: Do you believe in God?
Mark: Who?
Len: God.
Mark: God?
Len: Do you believe in God?

Mark: Do I believe in God?
Len: Yes.
Mark: Would you say that again?

The effect of this dialogue at the third lingual angle may be summed up by contrasting linguistic patterning with the absurdity of the phantasmagoric human condition. The third language suggests a lurking menace in human subconscious as regards uncertainty, vagueness and absence of a permanent safety in an Existentialist world exposing human trauma in the universe. It is at this cross-road where, as Dukore aptly observes, "non-realism mixes with realism.""

Whitehead believed that "the notion that thought can be per-fectly or even adequately expressed in verbal symbols is idiotic."" Pinter's use of dialogue refers us continually to the same concep-tion Lion that our verbalization of an idea is basically steeped in inaccu-racy.

Almost all Pinter plays have a strong sub-textual undercur-rent. From such directors as Peter Hall we know that actors per-forming in Pinter's dramas get through a special know-how as to how to put precise theatrical expression to the sub-textual lan-guage. For, under the apparently focused words and surface mean-ings, there looms large the territory of where another thing is being said. The character must probe beneath-the-surface reality to reach

at the inner stream of images, horizontally, vertically and diago-nally. The point may be brought home by what Konstantin Sergeiv-itch Alexeyev (1865-1938), popularly known as Stanislavsky, ob-served in this regard: "the spoken word, the text of a play, is not valuable in and of itself, but is made so by the inner content of the sub-text and what is contained in it.. Without it the words have no excuse for being presented on the stage."" Stanislavsky after his long career as actor, producer and teacher advocated intensive psychological study of the characters of a play (cf. An Actor Pre-pares, 1926). Pinter's third language precisely works at this sub-merged level of human consciousness.

NOTES

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10. Comment on his script for the film "Accident," Sight & Sound, Autumn 1966. Modern Drama in Theory and Practice, 2, p. 134.
11. Ibid., p. 135.

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The Balinese Ritual Dance Drama and Waiting for Godot: A Comparative Study

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The structure and teethnique of Waiting for Godot may appear by no means unconventional; in fact it is a new combination of a number of ancient traditions of art and drama. The avant-garde artists have been producing works of art which are mythic and ritualistic and are characterized by the term anti-theatre. The bor-rowing of ritual forms distinguishes the avant-garde from social or politically committed drama. Both kinds of theatre may repudiate existing social conditions; but since the aim of politically commit-ted drama is to promote a future programme, it uses logical struc-tures as in the plays of Brecht and Bernard Shaw. The avant-garde has much in common with the aesthetics of "pure-form" and the conscious element of nonsense of the plays of Mickiewicz. It has been described by lonesco as drama "that cannot serve any other kind of truth but its own" and, therefore, has the sole function of revealing "the fundamental laws of [dramatic] construction." The expressionistic director Jessner observes, "Just as there is a pure (absolute) music and a pure (absolute) painting, we must have pure theatre."

Though the avant-garde rules out any commitment, it empha-sizes spiritual revolution and stylistic exploration. It establishes a communion between actors and spectators comparable to the mass-enthusiasm evoked by tribal rituals which look like artistic cults of irrationality and inarticulacy. Both the avant-garde and tribal ritu-als lead to an interior focus on the psyche and are divesting the theatre of scenic progress. The avant-garde appears to embody an alien value scale such as we find in primitive African sculpture and Balinese dance drama. It may also be identified with the most frequently used ritual of the "rites of passage" analyzed by anthro-

pologists like Van Gennep as early as 1908. The basic pattern here is the separation of participants from their previous environment. The essence of a rite of passage is that it requires physical and emotional involvement of the participants in a present action and seeks to change their nature by irrational, often disturbing means:

In philosophical terms, initiation is equivalent to a basic change in existential condition; the novice emerges from his ordeal endowed with a totally different being from that which he possessed before initiation; he has become another?

This atavism is a symptom of the avant-garde repudiation of soci-ety, social organizations, artistic conventions, aesthetic values and materialistic ideals. The exaltation of the unconscious and emo-tional side of human nature, the exploration of irrationality and dream states, the borrowing of archaic dramatic

models are in-tended to provide an antidote to a civilization that emphasizes the rational and intellectual. From another angle primitivism of the avant-garde could be seen simply as escapism and the value put on the subconscious as a retreat from reality. So the avant-garde repre-sents the amorphous complexity of post-industrial society. Its multiplicity of dynamic but unstable movements and apparent frag-mentation focuses on philosophic abstractions, like the view of society itself as fragmented.

The concept of a ceremonial action changing one's existential nature may seem unrealistic, but in certain primitive cultures there are still rituals in a form of theatre which induce a change in the participants. The best documented example is the Balinese dance drama, and it was no coincidence that this was the model Artaud chose for his Theatre Alfred Jarry after seeing a single performance by a Balinese troupe in 1931. Though we have no record of the details of that performance, it corresponds to Mead's path-breaking anthropological film Trance and Dance in Bali, shot only six years later. It epitomizes, in a mythic and ritualistic form, many of the qualities that the expressionists and surrealists had been working towards. The film records the dramatized re-enaction of a myth. It symbolizes a quintessential spiritual conflict. Like all early dra-matic forms, the Balinese model is closely linked with religion. The type of performance documented by the film is given in temple precincts on a religious festival. It is preceded by the ceremonial

purification of the dancers and ends with exorcism. Masked actors are a hieratically stylized dragon representing the protective deity and the principle of life itself, and a grotesque human witch repre-senting chaos and death. The clash of these two symbolic super-natural beings is the centre of the drama. These are the only charac-ters with prescribed speeches. The warriors and maidens in the spectacle sing choruses and perform dances. They are unmasked and wear traditional folk dresses. They stand for the human popula-tion. In course of time the original sacred play dramatizing the issues at stake is reduced to a thematic prologue, whereas the choruses and dances of warriors and maidens have been elaborated until these form the theatrical action. At the point of climax, the dancers enter a state of trance and turn their swords, with which they had unsuccessfully attempted to attack the witch, against their own breasts. In proving their flesh impregnable to the razor-sharp sword they establish

dominance of spirit over body. Although they are unable to kill death itself in the symbol of the witch, their souls are invulnerable.

Artaud describes all the elements of the Balinese performance he witnessed as "calculated":

Nothing is left to chance or personal initiative... everything is thus regulated and impersonal; not a movement of the muscles, not the rolling of any eye but seem to belong to a kind of reflective mathematics which controls everything and by means of which everything happens.

But Artaud was wrong in attributing all this to "the absolute pre-ponderance of the director (metteur en scene) whose creative power eliminates words."" The postures and formalized hand attitudes found in the dancing figures embody various emotions such as those of despair and anger. They are not consciously adopted forms; instead they are prescribed by immemorial, archaic and mythical traditions which can still be seen in twelfth-century Hindu-Java-nese religious monuments. All these stylized movements of the dance and the hypnotic monotone musical accompaniment with its strongly stressed rhythms are designed to induce trance. The se-quence of movements may be repeated in different permutations according to the need of the dancers entering into mass self-hypno-sis. This delirium is of a contagious nature. Once one dancer

achieves it, others succumb almost immediately. Margaret Mead's film records the instance of an elderly woman in the audience who, in spite of her earlier unwillingness to participate, is irresistibly led into the trance state. According to Artaud this type of communica-tive delirium expresses "the automatism of the liberated uncon-scious." It is in no way pretended.

In the Balinese performance there is something of the ceremo-nial quality of a religious rite and of exorcism:

The thoughts it aims at, the spiritual states it seeks to create the mystic solutions it proposes are aroused and attained without delay or circumlocution. All of which seems to be an exorcism to make our demons FLOW.

The dancers become possessed by the spirit they impersonate and hence need to be liberated from their roles. They return to their "right minds" with the aid of a priest who burns incense under their nose. This is a common element in much primitive drama in which the actor reverts to his everyday face after its headdress or mask is removed by a member of the audience.

The psychological effectiveness of this type of Balinese per-formance makes it a natural model for the avant-garde. The Bali-nese dance drama represents a purely interior struggle of a soul preyed upon by ghosts and phantoms from beyond. The dramatic themes of the avant-garde are concerned with highly subjective states of discontinuities memory, reminiscence, anxiety, fear and nostalgia. In Waiting for Godot, Samuel Beckett has reflected the vision of anxiety-ridden modern man drifting towards chaos in an industrial and technological society. This condition of modern man has been represented in the form of dreamlike sequences and juxta-position of unrelated images. The play is constructed in a new fashion, relying for its effect on omitting or annihilating traditional elements of drama such as plot and characterization. The play has neither a beginning nor an end. The play has no sequence of events, and hence no plot. The tensions of the normal play are constructed around the interaction of the characters and the ignorance of the audience about what is going to happen next. But Waiting for Godot does not tell a story, it deals with no conflict and it has no suspense. The characters of the play are unrecognizable, and they babble incoherently like the characters of the Balinese ritual dance

drama. In Waiting for Godot, there are many passages where it hardly matters who says which line. The play presents two tramps in a waste place, fruitlessly and all but hopelessly waiting for an unidentified person Godot, who may or may not exist and with whom they sometimes think they may have an appointment. The play is "absurd" in the sense that it is apparently irrational, mean-ingless and illogical. The play has unrelated and unsequential dia-logues and action. It explores a static situation as Estragon re-marks: "Nothing happens, nobody comes, nobody goes, it's aw-ful!"

The spectacle of the Balinese theatre has a little of the theatre in it. It draws upon dance, song and pantomime fused together in a perspective of hallucination and fear. It eliminates the author and all creation comes from the actors having been possessed with a secret psychic impulse. In this connection Antonin Artaud aptly remarks:

It is very remarkable that the first of the little plays which compose this spectacle, in which we are shown a father's remonstrances to his tradition-flouting daughter, begins with an entrance of phantoms; the male and female characters who will develop a dramatic but familiar subject appear to us first in their spectral aspect and are seen in that hallucinatory perspective appropriate to every theatrical character, before the situations in this kind of symbolic sketch are allowed to develop. Here indeed situations are only a pretext. The drama does not develop as a conflict of feelings but as a conflict of spiritual states, themselves ossified and transformed into gestures-diagrams. In a word, the Balinese have realized, with the utmost rigor, the idea of pure theatre.

The themes of the Balinese dance drama are vague and abstract.

They are given life by the artifices of the stage and the use of gestures and voice. In fact what sustains the Balinese dance drama are "these gestures, the angular and abruptly abandoned attitudes, these syncopated modulations formed at the back of the throat, these musical phrases that break off short.. these sounds of hollow drums, these robot squeaking, these dance animated mani-kins." In this drama "the sense of a new physical language, based upon signs and no longer upon words, is liberated. These actors

with their geometric robes seem to be animated hieroglyphes."" These spiritual signs of the Balinese dance drama strike us intui-tively and make useless any translation into logical discursive language.

In Waiting for Godot, there is an air of improvisation about writing. Beckett manages to give the impression of having written the play without himself knowing how he was going to get on.

Although it is not a play in the conventional sense, it is very much a play in the literal sense of the word "play." The Balinese dance drama has a vocabulary of gesture and mime for every circum-stance of life, whereas the most important technique used by Beck-ett in Waiting for Godot is analogous to that of the music-hall or the circus tricks of protracted delay. The Balinese dance drama uses the language of mechanically rolling eyes, pouting lips, mus-cular spasms,

horizontally moving heads that seem to glide from one shoulder to the other as if on rollers, whereas in Waiting for Godot no question can be answered without a maximum of interlo-cution, incomprehension and argument. In Waiting for Godot, you never go straight to a point if you can evade it or start a long discussion about a short cut. Vladimir and Estragon ask Pozzo why Lucky doesn't put down the bags. Pozzo is delighted at having a question to answer. But it takes five pages of digression, repetition, incomprehension, cross-purpose dialogue and farcical preparations like spraying his throat before he actually answers it. Having noth-ing to do Vladimir and Estragon play games like children. They play a game of being Pozzo and Lucky, they play at being very polite to each other, at making it up, and they stagger about on one leg and try to look like trees. There is a great deal of vaudeville business and crude physical humour in the play. The bowler hats that all four characters wear belong to the tradition of Chaplin, Laurel and Hardy. Vladimir has comic disability that makes him rush off to pee in the wings, Estragon loses his trousers, and Lucky drops and picks up his luggage elaborately. Another important trick which gives the play an air of improvisation is the way Beckett uses interruption. There are enormous number of events in the play, but almost everything in the play gets interrupted-Lucky's big speech, Estragon's story about the Englishman in the brothel, and Vladimir interrupts his own song about dogs digging a dog's tomb.

The Balinese spectacle contains little dialogue in an archaic tongue that apparently neither the performers, nor the audience nor

even the priests understood. It thus becomes like an incantation, independent of speech, and expressive of emotional states. These aspects of the Balinese performance have an influential concept in the avant-garde theatre. Like the Balinese dance drama it intends to strip away the constraints of civilization by evoking in the audience the images of violence and cruelty. Beckett in Waiting for Godot attempts to reproduce the effects of ritual theatre. In the play Lucky's thinking is of a schizophrenic nature. Lucky represents the spiritual sides of a man and has taught Pozzo all the higher values of life: "Beauty, grace, and truth." (33) There is a thin thread of sense that seems to underlie in Lucky's famous demonstration of thinking:

Given the existence of a personal God... outside time without extension who from the heights of divine apathia divine athambia divine aphasia loves us dearly with some exceptions for reasons unknown and suffers with those who for reasons unknown are plunged in torment. (42-43)

Lucky's long schitsophranic utterances are symbolic of the idea that thousands of years of knowledge, instead of making us modest, make us forget the feebleness of our resources when it comes to unraveling of the mysteries of the universe. The play's brisk rhythm depends not only on the frequent interruptions, but also on short-ness of the speeches. The average length of the speeches in Waiting for Godot must be less than in any other play that has ever been written. Both the Balinese dance drama and the avant-garde induce mystical hallucination, spiritual transcendence, and hence may be said to be cathartic in their effect.

NOTES

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Jacques Derrida's "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences":

A Note

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Derrida's essay "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences" was presented at a symposium on Structuralism at the John Hopkins University. Throughout the 1970s, it remained an influential piece of critical writing in America. In this essay, he takes a circle as a metaphor for structure which defines its organi-zation and shape in terms of its relation to its centre. According to Derrida, "The whole history of the concept of structure must be thought of as a series of substitutions of center for center successively, and in a regulated fashion, the center receives differ-ent forms or names. The history of metaphysics, like the history of the West, is the history of these metaphors and metonymies. Its matrix is the determination of being as presence in all the senses of this word. It would be possible to show that all the names related to

fundamentals, to principles or to the center have always designated the constant of a presence."

Derrida believes that a text does not have a fixity of meaning, on the other hand, it has potentials for meaning and it admits of several interpretations (certainly more than one), into what Derrida has called a "free play" of meaning.

Derrida borrows a set of binary distinctions from Saussurean linguistics (such as nature/culture, raw/cooked etc.) to contest the claims of Western metaphysics. Language, Derrida believes, is a system of signs and the relation between language and reality is taken as the relation between a set of signifiers and a corresponding set of signified. As Rajeev Patke rightly puts it:

A signifier, within language, refers and corresponds to a signified outside a language. But the two-signifier and signified are not the same, they are separated by a differ-ence which the humanistic tradition tries to forget. Thus for instance, God and the word "God" are different in that the word is an arbitrary set of sounds or signs which refers and defers to the concept which it signifies, the concept of deity, which is contained within the word "God," but prior to the word itself, and in a sense independent of it.

Derrida in this essay contests the claim of western metaphysics with reference to speech and writing. Logos, in western Metaphys-ics, is the divine will or the word of God. Derrida comments on the metaphysical background of the spoken word and the written word in the following way:

God's understanding is the other name for logos as self-presence. The logos can be infinite and self present, it can be produced as auto-affection, only through voice: an order of the signifier by which the subject takes from itself to itself, does not borrow outside of itself the signifier that it emits and that affects it at the same time. Such is at least the experience of the voice.

Thus to Derrida the traditional concepts of speech and writing are "Logocentric." Apart from "Logocentrism," Derrida introduces another term "graphocentrism." S. Ravindran rightly points out that "a grapheme, according to traditional concept, is a pure signifier, which means that a unit of writing has no relevance other than simply representing a voice. Therefore, graphocentrism can mean the shift in importance from speech to writing. It is a reversal of the traditional concept of the superiority of speech or the spoken word over the writing or the written word. There are critics who observe that Derrida is effecting a shift from logocentrism to graphocen-trism,"

Derrida groups metaphysics, linguistics and structuralism into one category. Because all these three disciplines have taken writing as secondary, as something that exists only to represent the voice that it embodies, the voice that reveals the meaning. Derrida calls this concept of writing the "vulgar concept." He makes an attempt

as it were to liberate language and criticism from the totalizing and totalitarian influence of metaphysics.

The new concept of writing proposed by Derrida has three complex words: "difference," "trace" and "archewriting." Differ-ence has two aspects: differing and deferring. Deferring is the one not being the other. It is spatial. Deferring is something being delayed or postponed. It is temporal. Each sign according to Der-rida performs two functions: differing and deferring. Thus the struc-ture of the sign is conditioned by differing and deferring, not by the signifier and the signified. S. Ravindran rightly suggests: "the structure of the sign is difference which means that a sign is something that is not like another sign and something that is not the sign. For example, we distinguish the word "three" both in speech and writing. They differ from each other and reveal the identity. In fact, every

sign differs from every other sign. This difference is one of the two forces of each sign. The other force of the sign is its power of deferment, the capacity to postpone. Therefore, a sign is something that is not there. For example, the word "rose" in a poem begins to reveal meaning only when we realize that it is not the flower which we see in reality. It has to be something else, what it is has to be discovered. Therefore, half of the sign is what it is not and the other half is what is not there. These two forces inhabit each sign. It follows that the sign has to disappear to give meaning. That means, each sign is half adequate and half inadequate, be-cause it does not convey the idea perfectly, but it has to be used under necessity since no more adequate sign is available. No sign is fully adequate. And therefore every sign is written "under erasure," "sous rapture," a term that Derrida coins to express "the inade

quacy of the sign."" While accepting Saussure's basic tenets of language, Derrida reinterprets them in order to evolve his own concept of decon-struction in language. For instance, he has put "difference" in place of Saussure's "difference," which means French sense of "defer-ment" together with Saussure's meaning of "difference." Derrida goes beyond Saussure in his emphasis on deferment which implies that the present is constantly postponed and the ultimate remains unsaid. The nature of language which conveys meaning through differences between linguistic signs and where the sign present is marked by the traces of the signs absent precludes the possibility of saying anything with finality.

Derrida groups literature and other allied disciplines like psy-chology, philosophy, politics, linguistics etc. under one head called "human sciences." He has dissolved the distinction between phi-losophy in the wider sense including the philosophy of language and literature. Writing because of the free play of differences and the use of tropes is always marked by deconstruction. Decon-struction implies that the writer himself unbuilds whatever he builds. It views poetic structure as temporal resulting in free play of signifiers.

Deconstruction attempts to demolish the myth of language by exposing the metaphysical foundation of our understanding of lan-guage. Commenting on Derrida's concept of writing, Gayatri Spivak states that it is "something that carries within itself the trace of perennial alterity; the structure of the psyche, the structure of the sign. To this structure, Derrida gives the name writing."

Further claborating the concept of writing Spivak writes: "Writing then is the name of the structure always already inhabited by the trace. This is a broader concept than the empirical concept of writing, which denotes an empirical system of notation on the material substance.""

According to B. Das and J.M. Mohanty, in his essay, "Struc-ture, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human-Sciences," Derrida points out that "as there is no origin or centre outside, the discourse for establishing boundaries for the play of linguistic signifiers, each sign in itself is not the thing or presence that offers itself to interpretation but the interpretation of other signs; a centre diminishes the structurality of the structure by positing an objective reality."

Derrida believes that literature is only a free play of signifiers without a centre. He argues that "far from presenting any meaning words carry with them a certain absence or indeterminacy of mean-ing." Derrida has established that the Western text has made lan-guage subservient to the presence of God, the logos, phone, and subjectivity. His theory of deconstruction aims at liberating lan-guage from the traditional western concept of text along with ways of dealing with it. It is in this regard that Derrida proposes "dis-semination as an alternative to the polysemy of interpretation. In the words of Derrida:

There are thus two interpretations of interpretation, of struc-

ture, of sign, of free play. The one seeks to decipher, dreams of deciphering a truth or an origin which is free from free play and from the order of the sign, and lives like an exile the necessity of interpretation. The other, which is no longer turned towards the origin, affirms free play and tries to pass beyond man and humanism, the name man being the name of that being who throughout the history of metaphysics or of ontotheology in other words, through the history of all his history has dreamed of full presence, the reassuring founda-tion, the origin and the end of the game."

Thus according to Derrida, in spite of the "difference" (differ-ence + deference) that the author makes between one word and another, he can never express his meaning accurately and exactly. He must always mean more than and something different from that he indicates through writing (scripture). The critic should take

the words of the poet or writer not as outward, visible garb of his meaning but merely as "trace" or indicator of his meaning. Every word used by an author is to be taken as under erasure. Thus the critic taking his cue from the "trace," must go out on a quest of a closer approximation to the actual meaning intended by the author. Thus criticism becomes an endless pursuit and the critic becomes a co-creator who takes the text over from the author. The theory of deconstruction takes off well but it does not land us anywhere. Therein lies both the strength and weakness of this theory, and Derrida's essay proves this point

NOTES

1. Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of Human Sciences," ed. B. Das and J.M. Mohanty, Literary Criticism: A Reading (Calcutta: O.U.P., 1985), pp. 394-95.

2. Rajeev Patke, "Deconstruction and American Poetry: Wil-liams and Stevens," Journal of Literary Criticism, Vol. 1, No

2, 1984. p. 67.

3. Of Grammatology, p. 13.

4. Sankaran Ravindran, "Jacques Derrida and the Theory of Deconstruction," The Indian Journal of English Studies, Vol.

XX, 1980, p. 162.

5. Ibid., p. 164.

6. Gayatri Spivak, Preface to Of Grammatology by Jacques Derrida (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1974), p. xxxix.

7. Loc. cit.

8. Das and Mohanly, p. xxxvi

9. Ibid., p. 411.

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A Critique of the Monistic Approach in Criticism and R.S. Crane's Pluralism

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The history of literary criticism is a long history of actions and reactions, isms and counter-isms. The currency of a theory very often loses its poignancy as a newer one makes its appearance. Impressionism, for example, recedes gradually at the advent of humanism and historical criticism. Marxist criticism, immediately after its appearance, received enormous attention from critics and was widely cultivated during the thirties. But its earlier stand did not remain unchanged. In the hands of the later critics like Jameson, Althuser and Eagleton it was greatly modified; its scope broadened to accommodate new approaches. Side by side another critical movement, namely New Criticism, made its appearance with a special emphasis on the text as the primary object of interest. It is of course true that the birth of a new theory or idea in literary criticism is never whimsical or out of the track. The limitations of the past ideas on the one hand and the literary position-the de-mand of the literary works of a certain period on the other are two of the major stimuli behind the birth of a new critical theory, whatever it

may be. Not only that, a new theory may also be the result of some new knowledge, which modifies our experience of life and literature. As our knowledge about life and society broad-ens, the existing outlook and attitude undergo significant changes. It is then that a new theory often emerges to meet the needs of the changed situation, caused by the new revelations in the field of knowledge. Psycho-analytical criticism, for example, developed into a system when the psycho-analytical theories of Freud and Jung made the critics aware of the role of the sub-conscious in any creative endeavour. The literary artists also tonsciously exploited their newly acquired knowledge of psychology in their works. The

sub-conscious is thus artistically exploited in literary works as a result of which the existing critical theories become, to some extent at least, inadequate to properly evaluate this new element, and this inadequacy of the previous theories led to the growth of psycho-analytical criticism.

The reasons why there are so many critical methods in the realm of literary criticism are quite obvious now. It is also true that one can hardly deny the necessity of a new method to judge and evaluate the newer elements in literature better. There is adequate justification, in fact, for different critical approaches to a literary work. But the problem arises when any particular critical school claims to have the only and possibly the best method, in superses-sion of all the previous ones considered as incomplete and inade-quate. This monistic tendency is harmful because, as it will be presently seen, it leads to some gross mistakes found to be present in almost all the current approaches.

The critics of the 19th century were so much pre-occupied with the extra-textual factors like the question of morality that they could pay only a little attention to the aesthetic elements in a literary work. The humanists of the twentieth century were also accused of the same limitations. An extreme pre-occupation with the ethical elements in literature restricted their critical evaluation; and in consequence they failed to create a positive line of criticism. Paul Elmer More, for example, fostered the view that before evalu-ating a piece of literary work the critic must be convinced that the work in question is ethically right. Such a pre-occupation easily makes the critic prejudiced in regard to many other elements in a work and an objective judgement can hardly be expected from such a prejudiced critic.

The question of objectivity is equally suspected in case of the Impressionists also. They were tempted to explain a literary work on the basis of the effects it had on them. The text to the impres-sionistic critic was some sort of a stimulus that created various responses in the human minds. This process of stimulus and re-sponse, however, is purely subjective. Naturally it tended to be-come more creative than critical. The text to these critics is the starting point as well as the point of departure because the text just triggers off the critic's imagination and he gives us his impressions without assigning any scientific or objective reasons for having those impressions. He does not care to locate in the text the rational

sources of his impressions. Thus there remains a great possibility of exaggeration and personal enthusiasm in it and the intellectual sides of criticism-the examination of the interior structure and principles of organization in a literary work, and the evaluation of the artistic process are more or less neglected.

The Marxist critics, out of their extreme partiality to the theory of socio-economico-political goal of writing, popularized the view that the social, economic and political values of a literary work must be established first because the artist as an individual is restricted and influenced by those factors of his contemporary life. The real cause of the artistic creation also, according to the Marxist critics, can be found in the socio-economico-political factors of that period. Thus the mistake they make is to reduce the scope of criticism and to keep aside the acsthetic criterion of judging a literary work as a literary work and not as a social document. They fail to realize that the creative mind, though not free from the socio-political influences of its immediate environment, is never engaged in a direct presentation of those factors. If it happened to be so, then

journalism could also be literature because it represents the socio-political situations of a period; and the age-old works of literature could not please us because the socio-economic situ-ations, in which they were written, no longer exist today. What all these various groups of literary critics actually fail to notice out of an extreme fascination for their own theories is that poetic or aesthetic practice includes more than one principle, object and idea. Therefore any method which aims at a single aspect, as most of the available theories do, is sure to be inadequate and incom-plete, though not necessarily wrong.

New Criticism, which has of course made a remarkable great contribution to literary criticism, ultimately falls a victim to the monistic shortcomings. The origin of this critical movement can be traced back to its reaction to Impressionism, Marxist Criticism, New Humanism and even nineteenth century Moralism, all of which were extra-textual criticism in the sense that their primary interest was on the elements other than the aesthetic ones. They did not pay sufficient attention to the texts. And it is primarily as a reaction to this neglect of the text that New Criticism made it the object of the greatest importance in any type of evaluation. New Criticism has resurrected the text by advocating close reading free from precon-ceptions and theoretical speculations. One may here ask whether it

is possible for a critic to approach a work of art with a mind, like a clean slate, free from all pre-conceptions. But that is a different question. Our point is that the greatest contribution of the New Critics is to emphasize the importance of the text. The New Critics, however, do not stop here, but go to the extreme. They consider the literary text to be an autonomous, self-contained and organic ob-ject, having no extra-textual loyalty. Thus in their critical approach a good many aspects-biographical, historical, sociological and others are simply kept aside, drastically reducing the scope of criticism in process. They are concerned chiefly with the artistic and structural aspects of a literary work. But these aspects alone are not enough to evaluate a work like Shakespeare's Henry IV or Dickens's A Tale of Two Cities.

The New Critics are chiefly critics of poetry. But even in that field their theory is incomplete. Cleanthi Brooks, for example, con-centrates his attention on the pervasive function of paradox. He declares it to be at the centre of all poems. He is of course sensible in his arguments regarding the critical analysis of a poem. He rightly thinks that a poem is a united whole and that the paraphras-ing method of analysis leaves hidden the unparaphrasable elements in a poem. But

his implication that a single criterion that is the criterion of paradox-is sufficient to judge all types of poetry is hardly acceptable. There are poems the nineteenth century ro-mantic poems of Wordsworth and others, for example which can-not be satisfactorily judged by this single criterion. That is why R.S. Crane reacted so forcefully in his review of Brooks's The Well-Wrought Urn. And even Ransom, who was himself one of the great New Critics, criticized Brooks's view that poetry was the language of paradox. Simple, sensuous and passionate poems are actually there which do not depend on paradox for their poetic appeal. Most of the Elizabethan lyrics may exemplify this. Ransom feels that paradox as a principle of poetry is a very weak basis and he prescribes, instead of closer attention to structure, giving the superior place to the poetry of things and the inferior to the poetry of ideas. But Ransom here does the same prescriptive, fallacy of monistic approach by denouncing the "paradox" theory of Brooks and prescribing his own method. He fails to realize that the theory of paradox must be helpful in some cases, and therefore it cannot be rejected as a totally wrong or useless one. He also remains blind to the limitations of his distinction between the poetry of things and

the poetry of ideas. For every poem must necessarily contain ideas, at least from the poet's point of view. And the "poetry of ideas," if any poem can be called thus, is never idea alone; objects in some form or other must remain to give a body to the idea. In other words, Ransom fails to understand that the concrete and the ab-stract in poetry are not mutually exclusive.

Again Ransom calls New Criticism a specifically literary criti-cism and he maintains that the "business of the literary critic is exclusively with an aesthetic criticism." This view of Ransom is obviously a protest against the Marxist negligence of the aesthetic values. But here he commits the same mistake, like the Marxist critics, of reducing the scope of criticism. A critic is surely not a moralist or a historian or a sociologist, but why should a critic be disallowed the consideration of the social, historical or other as-pects of a literary work? This tendency leads to the contention that the New Critics's view of art was limited as John Fekete has pointed out. He writes, "Art must be seen as a moment of the historical practice of the social formation, intimately involved, within the categories of the totalization of praxis, with the essen-tials of human development at a concrete moment in space and time; and Ransom and the New

Critics failed to locate art in these terms." The New Critics only emphasized an empiricist close read-ing of the text but failed to see that it can hardly attain success without, in the language of Frye, "a sense of the archetypal shape of literature as a whole." In their judgement of a work of art, the New Critics lose the help of the analogies of different literary genres. They approach the various genres like poetry, drama and novel with the same set of criteria, ignoring the fact that every individual branch of literature as a unique mode of discourse pos-sesses certain peculiarities of its own. Such a monistic approach is bound to be partial, and therefore incomplete.

Critical Monism is actually a less effective and less fruitful pursuit because it takes under its consideration only one or two aspects of literature. It never allows a critic to look beyond its limited premises, even when the text may have other aspects to be considered. That is why a change in critical approach becomes gradually surfacing towards the second half of the 1940s. A. Wal-ton Litz has carefully marked this change: "The general trend of literary criticism since 1945 has been from consensus to diversity, from the dominance of formalistic criticism to a bewildering vari-

ety of criticisms which seek to move 'beyond' or 'against' formal-ism." This changing attitude was clear in the writings of the Chicago group of critics, headed by R.S. Crane, upon whom the designation of "Pluralistic Critic" has been given, although, it must be noted, he never accepted the term "pluralism" in its present mistaken sense of a theory of live and let live.

Crane was quite conscious of the limitations of reductionism in critical theorizing, and he carefully avoided any rash conclusion about the proper form of criticism as Frye has done." Crane admits that each of the various critical approaches to literature has its own technique and aim, and therefore each one is important from its own standpoint if responsibly done. This idea of Crane may act as an answer to the question of why so many apparently opposing ideas and dogmas are there. The monistic dogmas, however, are not actually opposing in the sense that if one is right the other is wrong. They are in fact narrow; they leave a great many aspects of a literary work unexplored because those aspects do not come under their aims and techniques, and as a result of it they lack the quality of being complete and comprehensive. Their critical insights only become partial. And here the pluralistic attitude, that tries to "seek out. such partial

insights into the truth about the subject as they may appear to afford and find a means of reconciling these with one another within the confines of a new and more comprehensive critical scheme," may help to compensate the limitations of criti-cal Monism.

The differences in critical opinions are largely due to the differences in critical "frameworks" in which something is dis-cussed. Crane suggests that "literary criticism is not and never has been a single discipline, to which successive writers have made partial and never wholly satisfactory contributions, but rather a collection of distinct and more or less incommensurable "frame-works" or "languages," within any one of which a question like that of poetic structure necessarily takes on a different meaning and receives a different kind of answer from the meaning it has and the kind of answer it is properly given in any of the rival critical languages in which it is discussed."" In realizing this truth about *criticism, Crane was possibly influenced by the concept of the "multiplicity of language" as established by Sapir." Sapir nurtured the view that certain forms of the language predetermine certain modes of observation and interpretation. Critical opinions also

differ as the forms of the language do. In support of this, Crane has mentioned the critical war between Bradley and L.C. Knights. It is no war at all. The same subject-matter may be approached differ-ently leading to two different results. Two critics, for example, working with the same subject, namely "tragedy" or Macbeth or "Shakespearean tragedy," may focus the reader's attention on two different aspects by the semantic and logical constitutions of their discourse. This shows that there are many critical subject-matters hidden under the various familiar names for literary entities. All of these subjects have their basis in a mysteriously abstract thing like human mind; their character is always changing and relative, quite different from the invariant natural phenomena.

It is therefore clear that the monistic tendency to establish a particular method as the only profitable and right one is less sen-sible. But the opposite of this, that is often mistakenly called Pluralism-a forceful yoking of all the available dogmas-is equally misleading. A literary piece may not be fit for all the theories available so far. So any approach to a literary work with a host of critical dogmas may create an insensible jumble but no clear critical opinion. It is on this point that Crane emphasizes. He, of course, does not exclude dogmas from the scope of

literary criticism. He rather admits the necessity of some sort of dogma or "a set of first principle;" in his own words, to start with. These "principles" will be used not to exclude any of the already existing opinions, but to solve the particular critical problems which they can. The critic is free to use any principle which may seem useful to solve his problems. Hence the difference in approach. In this new approach the critic must not work to show the applicability or correctness of his own method; he will work to judge and evaluate the literary piece properly and in this task he may take the help of as many principles as he thinks useful. It will help the critic to evaluate any type of work, changing his principles as the text will require, and to show the various aspects of a literary work success-fully. This method would lead the critic to a more comprehensive criticism.

Thus Crane's theory of criticism, popularly known as Plural-ism, is not in war with any of the existing critical theories. He is not in any opposition group of critics. He accepts the positive qualities of all the theories including New Criticism, and offers a new approach to make criticism free from its monistic fetters. One more

point to mention here is that Crane offers us no theory in the sense the previous critics did. He only offers us the proper technique with which a work of literature may be approached for better under-standing, enjoyment and evaluation.

NOTES

1. C.I. Glicksberg, American Literary Criticism 1900-1950, In-troduction, p. 6.

2. "He (Paul Elmer More) was scholarly and high-minded, con-scientious, thorough, and eloquent, but his moral prepossess-sions held his sensibility in check and seriously inhibited his native powers of aesthetic judgement. Before he could accept and approve of a work it had to satisfy his conception of what was ethically right, and if it lacked this saving element, what-ever other virtues it might possess, he felt justified in rejecting it." Ibid., Introduction, p. 40.

3. J.P. Pritchard, Criticism in America, pp. 231-32.

4. R.S. Crane, "Cleanth Brooks: or the Bankruptcy of Critical Monism," Modern Philology, Vol. XLV, 1948.

5. J.P. Pritchard, p. 246.
6. J.C. Ransom, The New Criticism (Norfolk, Conn. 1941), p. 216.

7. Criticism as Pure Speculation, "The Intent of the Critic," ed. Donald A. Stauffer (Princeton, 1941), pp. 101-2.

8. John Fekete, The Critical Twilight.
9. N. Frye, Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays (Princeton, 1957), p. 342.

10. A. Walton Litz, "Literary Criticism," Harvard Guide to Con-temporary American Writing, ed. Daniel Hoffman, p. 51.

11. R.S. Crane, The Language of Criticism and the Structure of Poetry (University of Toronto Press, 1953), Introduction, p. viii.

12. Ibid., p. 9.
13. Ibid., p. 13.
14. Edward Sapir, "Language" in The Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, IX (1933), pp. 155-68.
N.S.A. Mahavidyalaya, Suisa
Book Reviews

Om P. Juneja and Chandra Mohan, ed. Ambivalence, New Delhi, 1990, 304 pp.

A comprehensive volume of studies in Canadian Literature, Ambivalence is the product of commendable efforts of Om. P. Juneja and Chandra Mohan. The book, with an impressive and tastefully designed jacket, contains twenty two articles which are divided into three sections: Perspectives has seven essays which deal with the major literary and cultural aspects of paramount significance; Responses attempts to bring Canada and India together in the sense that either expression is Indian and Canadian imagination handles it or vice-versa; Analyses offers essays on the individual novelists and poets.

Very effective exposition of the book reveals that Canadian literature grows out of an entirely different kind of existential and geographical conditions and cultural maturity, hence it has to be understood and appreciated only in its own matrix. If the literature of the nineteenth century reflected what Northrop Frye termed "Garrison mentality, the contemporary literature has fully shed off its colonial impact and has adopted a new set of "Strategies of Ambivalence" to borrow George Grant's expression. The "foreword" by Margaret Atwood and "Introduction" by the editors clearly define the word "Ambivalence" and thus enhance the aptness of the title and contents of the book.

E.D. Blodgett's "In Search of a Canadian Literature," which is the opening essay of the collection, specifies problems and offers the suggestions to comprehend as to what is Canadian about Canadian literature? He feels that there is a

"deliberate Canadian cultivation of cultural ambiguity (11) that grows out of the "conflict of ideologies." (16) The process of discovery of that which is truly Canadian lies in naming, "unnaming and renaming." (19) Patricia Morley's "Canadian Art, which makes a shift of vision from literature to landscape, introduces us to an "inexhaustible volume of facts" (26) about time and space that characterize its landscape. It finds a lucid exposition in G.D.

Roberts, A. Lampman and D.C. Scott's poetry and F.P. Grove, M. Callaghan, Ethel Wilson's novels, to name a few writers. Rosemary Sullivan, "An original explorer" of "The Forest and the Trees" states that "one way of looking at Canadian Literature is to see it as an ongoing dialogue with the wilderness." (39) Corroborating Atwood's vision, she considers "nature as the fact of itself," which makes us fact too. It is our place. We are in it." (47)

Robert R. Wilson's essay goes beyond the National Frontiers to discuss the influence of International movements on postmodernism in Canadian literature. He especially deals with Robert Kroetsch's works in detail, who claims in Alibi (1983) that "a favourite postmodern motif: the collection" recurs most frequently, it "indicates the arbitrariness of human systems." (58) Dick Harrison offers a very insightful study in "The Search for an Authentic Voice in Canadian Literature" that, unlike American tradition, "Canadian cultural tradition based as it is not on separation and beginnings but on continuity, inheritance and culture." (65) Its literature and identity grows out of "a bilingual, multi-cultural, pluralistic society," (71) as the works of Robert Kroetsch, Philip Grove, Sinclair Ross and Margaret Laurence confirm. Nonetheless, the Canadian creative writer faces the same "universal problem of making an old culture communicate the uniqueness of present experience." (78) If Dennis Duffy focuses on Robertson David's famous novel Fifth Buriness to reveal the evolution in Canadian society with its changing value patterns, Chandra Mohan concentrates on the perennial

problem of Canadian 'identity'. He makes an elaborate survey of the novels of Sara Deannetta Duncan's The Imperialist and The Burnt Offering, and Ruby Wiebe's The Temptation of Big Beer, which is a powerful exposition of the theme of "native rights and individual identity," (104) and "the history and heritage of the red man." (108) Besides, he takes up Margaret Laurence's The Stone Angel to illustrate the notion of "a new sense of personal identity" (108) and Margaret Atwood's Surfacing where the novelist boldly draws a distinction between America and Canada--a country that is a "Victim of the sickness of a colonialism." (111) Hence its identity tends to be more complex in nature and is only vaguely realized.

With O.P. Juneja's "India is Canadian Imagination," the book enters into another phase. India is viewed as "a Post-modernistic reality," by writers like Elise Aylen, Jennette Tumer Hospital and Frank Davey who in Abbotsford Guide adds new dimensions to the Indian reality and thus releases the imagination from the stereotyped images associated with this country. Two essays "The story of Elise Aylen" by R.L. McDougall and "Elise Aylen's The Night of the Lord convey about the life of the author, who is yet to be fully recognized, and her novel which is as S. Ramaswamy stated "a spiritual autobiography of a Canadian in search of the 'eternal India." (150) Next two pieces: "Escape as Evolution in Lady Oracle and Where Shall We Go This Summer?" by S.Singh and "Space as Ordered Absence" by E.V. Ramakrishnan compare and contrast the socio-cultural conditions and its impact on various characters.

The last section "Analyses" presents three articles on the poets and six on the novelists and one general note. Frank Davey's article on Eli Mandel's poetry shows how this Jewish poet is "out of place in religious, Jewish culture, out of place as a western Canadian in Toronto" as a poet in a culture largely oblivious to literature." (183) Davey affirms that Mandel's genius and his gain cannot be underrated for long as he has succeeded in handling his themes and language effectively. If Dorothy Livesay is considered to be a source to understand the intellectual and cultural history of Canada, Al Purdy, who could not be lured into "canon formation" is "the major, durable and entirely human poet" as Shyamel

Bagchee candidly analyzed in "Vitalism in Al Purdy." Bagchee's very impressive approach to the idea brings out the essential meaning of Purdy's poetry.

Other three articles on Atwood, Davies and Kroetsch, the authors discussed earlier in many articles included in the volume, by Coomi S. Vevaina, B.F. Macdonald and M.F. Salat respectively confirm that these established writers have wide, unexplored further ranges. Roshan Shahani's "Cracks in the Canadian Mosaic" is a sensitive study of Joy Kogawa's Obasan. He shows how Kagawa has made "the silence of stone" and how "word is made flesh." (275) Jaidev's analysis of Surfacing establishes the point that only Atwood could expound how an "arrogant and all arrogating culture interferes with the arbitrarily marginalized ones and damages the soul." (277) He is so excited by

Atwood's novel that he questions whether any Indian could write such a powerful text? Sumana Sen-Bagchee's article on Marian Engel's Bear asserts that the novel is "a two-fold assault on the patriarchal tradition, of its usurpation by the female and its transformation by the feminine imagination of Engel." (290-91) Her piece has strong undertones of modern feminist approach.

Briefly, the book achieves its aim and acquaints the reader with Canada's socio-cultural axis and imaginative axis fully, but one factor cannot be overlooked: many writers appear repeatedly while many deserving ones remain unheard of. The clamour of those unheard voices calls for another volume, perhaps.

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Manorama Trikha

Susan Cheever, Home Before Dark: A Biographical Memoir of John Cheever by his Daughter. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1984.

Susan Cheever's Home Before Dark (1984) is a moving but detached account of her father John Cheever's personal and literary life--his struggle, the moments of his elusive happiness, and finally his established reputation as a master of fiction. Susan, who is herself a writer with three novels to her credit, maintains an artistic objectivity in her memoirs while remaining a part of the world she is

talking about. She seems to be writing not merely about her father but constructively almost, a Cheever "Chronicle", though rather different from her father's The Wapshot Chronicle.

The book is based mainly on the Wapshot-like "journal" maintained by John Cheever, the correspondence with his personal and literary friends, talks with his friends and members of his family, and finally Susan Cheever's memory which "had layers of reality and fantasy, and unravelling them became a way of discovering who my father really was."

It was a practice in the Cheever family to maintain a kind of journal. John Cheever's father kept one and so did John himself. He maintains that writing the journal made his life "seem less chaotic, less depressing. more sympathetic." This applies to the origin of Susan Cheever's book too. When the family found out that Cheever was likely to die soon of

cancer, Susan started writing a kind of daily diary, but eventually found that she was "writing less and less about the present and more and more about the past."

John Cheever was born on May 27, 1912, at Quincy, Massachusetts. He was apparently an ordinary person except that he was a writer--a writer by choice--against all odds. We are told that Cheever had always been a story teller right from his childhood. He was always telling some of these stories again and again in order to get them right, as it were. His stories were mainly about his family, friends, suburban life, guilt, innocence, obsession and addictions. Susan Cheever recounts some of these concerns in Home Before Dark and relates them with his life and works.

One of the foremost concerns of John Cheever was his family. This is also reflected in his writings rather prominently. Home Before Dark also emphasizes Susan's experience "of our life as a family." But it is ironical that Cheever could never actualize the family harmony he always desired. Susan tells us that her father was unexpectedly conceived by his parents who no longer cared for each other. Later Cheever's father tried to force his mother to have an abortion-a fact he could never forget. His childhood days were of "angry fights and terrible silences between parents and nobody seemed to notice him.

This atmosphere affected Cheever so much that till the end of his life he "never quite escaped the chill of that empty house, and all the symbols of exile."

Another lasting impression on Cheever was his mother. She, after the financial liquidation of his father, opened a gift shop to support the family. This hurt the ego of his father to whom "his wife's competence was an emasculation, a perversion of the Yankee male ethic that had been his mainstay and his anchor." Though there was nothing wrong in a weman supporting a family in the times of need, Cheever's father, a typical New Englander, took it as an insult to his self respect. A curious outcome of the episode was that the young John Cheever could not forgive his mother either. Perhaps he held some notions about the male dominance and female dependency. Later he presented a rather critical portrait of his mother as Sarah Wapshot in his first novel The Wapshot Chronicle, which was deliberately delayed for the publication until his mother's death. Susan states categorically what one finds in

Cheever's fiction--his strong dislike of objects connected with a gift shop. Later when Cheever had become an alcoholic, his psychiatrist tried to connect "his urge to drink before noon" with the obsession with mother's running a gift shop.

The family environment being such, Cheever left home at an early age and moved to Boxford with his elder brother Fred. The brothers adored each other, but when Cheever found that there was an "ungainly closeness between them, he left for New York to seek his fortune.

After Cheever left, Fred married Cheever's girl friend Iris Gladwin.

Cheever again experienced a deep sense of rejection. In his writings, this incident turns into situations about fratricide. In "Goodbye, My Brother" the narrator hits his brother with a log when the latter comes home, and in Falconer the protagonist is convicted of fratricide. Susan wonders about "the murderous anger of the younger unwanted brother towards the successful older one."

In 1941, Cheever married Mary Winternitz, daughter of the dean of Yale Medical School. He always complimented himself on the survival of his marriage to Mary though he claimed that both of them contemplated divorce almost every week. But we are told that Cheever was "often denied love by his wife and "he was forced to turn elsewhere." Susan quotes from one of the entries in her father's journal which says that "there is some connection between my need for drink and need for love." Mary, like the bitchy Marcia of Falconer, was full of complaints and constantly accusing Cheever of restricting her freedom. Being creatively ambitious (which obviously hurt Cheever's Yankee ego) she wrote "tough lyrical poems," later collected in The Need for Chocolate. Like Farragut in

Falconer, Cheever's "loneliness was so sharp that it sometimes felt like intestinal flu."

Travelling through a landscape of utter desolation, it was natural for Cheever to seek security. Susan recalls that harmonious moments in the family gave Cheever a sense of security. He liked his people "all together, under one roof, joking and smiling and having fun, and he was willing to suppress a great deal to achieve this. But happiness was rare. Susan finds echoes of Cheever's loneliness recorded in his journal. At one place, Cheever is said to have feared "perhaps my sense of home will never be established"; at a later stage he moans: "I want to go home and I have no home." (At the end of Cheever's story "The

Swimmer," the narrator "looking in at the windows, saw that the place was empty.")

Outside the immediate family circle, their branch of the Cheevers was isolated. The respectable Cheevers or the rich Cheevers used to be referred to as the "other Cheevers." Susan discovers that the trouble began with grandfather Cheever who wrote to Dr. David Cheever, a famous Boston physician, about his intention to donate his body for anatomical research. The doctor was shocked to learn that a Cheever could forego the thought of a Christian burial. Susan has another story about his grandfather Cheever--his having a girl in every port and "his reputation was too much for the Cheever image. Whatever the reasons, this Cheever was banished from Boston for ever to the socially inferior village of the south shore. Susan relates this with her father's sense of being an exile. She maintains that he had always remained "the homeless boy, the outsider."

From personal life to the literary, Susan delineates her father's struggle as a writer in some detail. She states: "his typewriter was about all he had except a past he was determined to escape, a future that looks like an even chance, and a couple of friends who thought he could write.

Cheever's first short story appeared in New Republic in 1930 when he was barely seventeen. It was based on his own expulsion from prep.

school, the Thayer Academy. Later he developed into a master of subtle stories, mainly about the suburban life. Though primarily known for his short stories, Susan seems to consider her father's stories as stepping stones to his career as a novelist. Susan tells us that Cheever was a frequent visitor to Yaddo Writers' Colony, a refuge then for intellectuals, in Saratago Springs. At the age of forty,

Cheever looked back on the novel he had attempted for almost twenty years. When he showed the draft of his novel to Malcolm Cowley, the latter found that it was too obviously based on Hemingway's "Cross Country Snow" and wrote to Cheever: "It would have been the equivalent of Jackson Pollock's attempt to copy this Sistine Chapel." Cheever simply threw the novel away without caring to retain even a word of it. Later his first novel The Wapshot Chronicle (1957) was a big success winning him the National Book Award. Soon after this, he was elected to the national Institute of Arts and Letters. His second novel The Wapshot Scandal (1964) won him the William Dean Howells Medal. Then there was no

looking back. Bullet Park (1969), Falconer (1978) and Oh! What a Paradise It Was (1982) were awaited by eager readers. Cheever's share of recognition included almost all the major literary awards of America. His stories had been adapted for the stage, the films, and the television. He was on the cover of Time and Newsweek. Cheever visited Russia under the cultural exchange programme. He was received by President Johnson at the White House. Later he was Writer-in-residence at the University of Iowa and Boston University.

Susan Cheever recounts some of the events in her father's life as reflected in his fiction. Big Dudley, a family friend who thrilled them "by showing how he could vault the living room sofa without spilling a drip of his drink was the inspiration for Cheever's famous short story "O Youth and Beauty!"; Johnny Hake of "the House breaker of Shady Hill" fame is Cheever himself; family journals provided models for Leander Wapshot in The Wapshot Chronicle, Cheever's own escape from an air catastrophe in 1959 is fictionalized in his much talked about story "The Country Husband"; "The Angel of the Bridge" is a story about Cheever's own fear of bridges which forced him to leave in 1951.

Susan finds in her father a man full of contradictions. He despised homosexual love and thought it was self-destructive, yet he himself could not help succumbing to it. For the homosexual instinct in him,, he sometimes blamed Mary's denial of love; sometimes viewed his love for other men as his love for his brother Fred; at other moments, he attributed this to his loneliness and at times he blamed his parents for their extremely rigid views on sex. Apart from these factors, Susan mentions that Cheever appreciated Henri Troyat's biography of Tolstoy in which the author mentions in passing that Tolstoy loved men as well as women. One wonders whether Cheever found some kind of consolation in "these dark matters." Susan adds that "sexual freedom of the 1960s made matter worse."

When The Wapshot Chronicle was published, Susan, then 13, was forbidden to read the novel because there were references to Coverly Wapshot's disturbing attraction for other men. However, as her father's biographer, Susan is noncritical and does not hesitate to write about his homosexual exploits. We are told that Cheever made advances to Dennis Coates (while he was writing his dissertation on Cheever's novels) who rejected the offer politely. Cheever is said to

have many encounters but his affair with a man called Rip was "as sweet and satisfying a source of love as love could be for him. He also saw himself in Rip." Susan relates that, later, his anxiety about this relationship increased and he "wondered if the seizures were some kind of punishment for his enjoyment of another man's love.

Susan Cheever does not leave out the lighter side of his father's life. In her very readable style, she offers a couple of hilarious anecdotes. In one of these, Cheever, in an effort to communicate in Italian with his Italian maids ends up by saying "do not undress in the kitchen, you egg." In another incident, one of his prisoner-students at Sing- Sing, when Cheever was teaching them on the power of literature, raised his hand in a discussion to say "Oh, what a cool mother fucker was that Machiavelli."

Home Before Dark is an important book for the Cheever scholar and the ordinary reader. There are more than forty photographs including the one of the shabby rented room at Hudson Street where Cheever struggled with pen and poverty in his formative years. The importance of this book is enhanced by the fact that it contains copious quotations from Cheever's journals which are not accessible to the general public. Susan's scheme of presentation in the book is not strictly chronological. It is the narrative of a nostalgic person who shifts back and forth in vignettes, as it were. The narrative style is most of the time easy going, though occasionally tending to documentation.

Susan's book is different from, say, Gregory Hemingway's Papa: A Personal Memoir (1976) in which the focus is on the father-son relationship oscillating between the two extremes of love and hatred.

The Hemingway book (authored by a medical man) is a portrait written with an overdose of affection. Susan Cheever's book, on the other hand, gives a candid yet moving account of the way Cheever lived. At one place Susan says: "accuracy is irrelevant here as it is in many of father's stories about life." Whatever the blend of fact and fiction, Cheever's daughter has presented an authentic account of her father.

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Vijay K. Sharma

V.V.N. Rajendra Prasad, The Self, the Family and Society in Five Indian Novelists: Rajan, Raja Rao, Narayan, Arun Joshi, Anita Desai. New Delhi: Prestige Books, 1990,172 pp. Rs. 130.

The first thing that strikes one about V.V.N. Rajendra Prasad's critical study of the Indo-English fictional milicu is its refreshing and rewarding use of the critical idiom which gives the work its compressive quality. In the first chapter devoted to a review of the growth of the Indian novel in English, the author examines the problematic of the sociology of the Indian novel in English. Rightly observing that the Marxian dialectic does not adequately illuminate the struggle and tensions of the Hindu society, Rajendra Prasad offers an assessment of the Indian novel in English in terms of the conventions of Anglo-American realism as applied to Indian fictional texts., The explication of the theme-self, family and society is done with the Leavisian norm as laid down in "Sociology and Literature" kept strongly in mind. This makes the author arrive at a perspective on the novelists under review based on an explication of the verbal texture of the novels as revealed through an analysis of the dialectic of passages which in embryonic form unfold the thematic complexes of the novels.

A critical evaluation of the images of the Dark Dancer and the Dance in Rajan's The Dark Dancer leads the author to conclude that the novel, in the manner of a modernist text, employs poetic or symbolic language to communicate the creative tension between the opposites. Rajan's novels, as the author rightly shows, reveal the idea of the inviolability of the self having its roots in the native milieu.

If, in the study of Rajan, the author explores the idea of the ambivalent self arriving at a unity within the family and society, Raja Rao's novels offer the

ground work for an imperial manifestation of the self finding its identity in the transcendental and thus achieving an inclusive vision of itself, the family, and the society. The chapter on Raja Rao, as Rajendra Prasad has framed it, is in certain ways central to an understanding of the entire corpus of Indian Writing in English that aims at a narratological integration of the transcendental and sociological realities. Raja Rao's reflections on time and eternity, illusion and reality are brilliantly analyzed by means of a recourse to an elaboration and explication of his "rhetoric of fiction." Of particular

use are the discussions of the implications, in terms of creative configurations, of the cat and Shakespeare and of the serpent and rope which focus, unlike several such attempts, not in a supravening of a metaphysical meaning but on how that meaning is part of the compulsive verbal organization of the novels under study fusing narratology and ontology.

Centred round the family, Narayan's novels, as the author observes, in their ironic probings of the Indian middle-class life shed light on the comedy of the self. Arun Joshi undertakes an exploration of the self in terms largely of the images of the labyrinth and its analogues, and in the unfolding of this theme is revealed the social texture. The process of discovering the self, as Arun Joshi considers it, is a therapeutic exercise.

Coming to Anita Desai, the author deals with the images of the wounded self dramatized in terms of the woman's world. The account of Anita Desai's fictions stresses the value for the self of a search for an emotional centre within, a search accentuated by familial disharmony.

Rajendra Prasad's study covers a broad spectrum of achievement and possibilities in the Indo-English fictional milieu. In spite of its vast canvas, the study is concise and the evaluation keeps itself within the confines of art, thereby implicitly approving the idea that what moulds a writer's experience is the depth and range of his sensibility rather than his philosophy, if any. Where again Rajendra Prasad scores is in his ability to project larger themes, to hold out perspectives that "Challenge the narrowness of the beaten-track concerns, and push the average Indian student and teacher down uncharted avenues. For example, the Borgesian interpretation of the juxtaposed images of the void and the labyrinth in a discussion of Arun Joshi's The Apprentice or the Jamesian vision via Percy Lubbock in estimating the range and scope of a mode of

narration. Five Indian Novelists is elegantly printed and is an indispensable study for an an understanding of the contemporary Indian novel in English.

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LJES Bibliography 1990

A Select List of Indian Contributions to English Studies

The Chief Editor wishes to thank the following persons and institutions for their cooperation in the compiling of the bibliography. It is regretted that many scholars, when they send the list of their publications, do not give full bibliographical details such as data, issue number and page numbers.

L.S. Ramaiah, CIEFL, Hyderabad

Vimala Rama Rao, Bangalore University

Sarojini Shintri, Karnatak University, Dharwar

-G.K. Das, University of Delhi

Ganeshwar Mishra, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar

S. Ramaswamy, Bangalore University

R:S, Pathak, DHSG Viswavidyalaya, Sagar

C.R. Visweswara Rao, S.K. University, Anantapur

Sreenidhi Iyengar, ASRC

Leela Sarma, ASRC

-Anjana Desai, South Gujarat University, Surat

K. Chellappan, Bharathi Dasan University, Tiruchirapalli

C.K. Seshadri, M.S. University of Baroda

Ramesh K. Srivastava, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar

P. Marudanayagam, Pondicherry University

Prashant K. Sinha, University of Poona, Pune
A.V.V. Narasimha Swamy, Andhra University, Waltair
Jancy James, University of Kerala, Trivandrum
B. Chandrika, All Saints College, Trivandrum
Abbreviations

CQ	Commonwealth Quarterly
CR	Commonwealth Review
DUJES	Dibrugarh University Journal of English Studies
IJAL	Indian Journal of Applied Linguistics
IJES	Indian Journal of English Studies
JEFL	Journal of English and Foreign Languages
JHE	Journal of Higher Education
JIWE	Journal of Indian Writing in English
LC	Literary Criterion
LHY	Literary Half-Yearly
PJES	Punjab Journal of English Studies
PPCIEF	Post-Colonial Preoccupations in Canadian and Indian English Fiction
PURB	Punjab University Research Bulletin
RJES	Rajasthan Journal of English Studies

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