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Contents

Humanism of Evelyn Waugh and Graham Greene

J.C. JHA

Although Evelyn Waugh and Graham Greene have been generally known as Catholic novelists, it is their humanism which is the essen-tial ingredient of their novels. As a matter of fact, even their conver-sion to Catholicism was the result of their profound concern with human predicament and destiny. Rootlessness, loneliness, hopeless-ness, alienation, moral depravity, dominance of evil over good, a sense of doom-all these characteristics of the modern life are the common concerns of both Evelyn Waugh and Graham Greene in al-most all of their novels. In this paper an attempt has been made to analyze Waugh's A Handful of Dust, The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold, Come-/The Sword of Honour and Greene's The Quiet American, The Come-dians, The Human Factor, Monsignor Quixote from this point of view.

In his autobiography, A Little Learning, Waugh states: "To have been born into a world of beauty, to die amid ugliness, is the com-mon fate of all us exiles."[1] He further states that his diary was "full of pagan gloom and the consideration of suicide."[2] In The Lost Child-hood Greene talks of "perfect evil walking the world where perfect good can never walk again."[3] In his autobiography, A Sort of Life, he, too, admits that he always suffered from a sense of recurrent despair, failure and suicide.

The title of A Handful of Dust has been taken from T.S. Eliot's The Waste Land "I will show you fear in a handful of dust." This fear Jis both the fear of life and a nameless ultimate fear, a horror of the completely negative. It is the story of a civilized man's helplessness among savages, his terrible and most agonizing realization of death in life. The 'fear' that Eliot speaks of in The Waste Land is implicit in A Handful of Dust, for underneath the surface humour, there lurks the Jterror that man, when uprooted from his social and cultural heritage and given complete freedom, like Tony Last's wife Brenda, will re-vert to the most primitive kind of savagery. Like T.S. Eliot, Evelyn

Waugh expresses his profound and deeply-felt despair with the mod. ern world. He also suggests that Tony's Brazilian torments are no inore primitive and brutal than those of the civilized world repre-sented by Brenda and Mrs. Beaver. Tony's utter despair and disillu sionment have been expressed in these words:

For a month he had lived in a world suddenly bereft of order; it was as though the whole reasonable and decent constitution of things, the sum of all he had experienced or learned to expect, were an inconspicuous, inconsiderable object mislaid some-where on the dressing table; no outrageous circumstance in which he found himself, no new, mad thing brought to his no-tice, could add a jot to the all-encompassing chaos that 4 shrieked about his cars.

Of this book Waugh said that it was "humanist and contained all 1 had to say about humanism." All he had to say about humanism was that it was utterly helpless in the face of modern savagery. Decency, humanity and loyalty have failed, civilized life has degenerated into "all-encompassing chaos." Man is doomed to live in a state of men-tal, emotional and spiritual torture like Tony Last condemned to death in life in the Brazilian jungle.

In his post-war satires, Scott-King's Modem Europe, The Loved One and Love among the Ruins, Evelyn Waugh continues to reflect his growing alarm and despair at the deepening crisis of the modern age. In the future society he sees above all the danger of the annihila tion of a man's individuality and identity and the reduction of his hu-manity to the level of soulless automatism, which is far more inhuman and barbaric than the torture and terror suffered by Tony Last in A Handful of Dust. Despite all the anarchic and destructive individual ism of these satirical works, the aim of Waugh is to defend human personality and human values rejecting all attempts to enslave and crush humanism by a so-called progressive and scientific civilization of the future.

In his autobiographical novel, The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinjola. Waugh again portrays the ordeal of an innocent man. Pinfold was paralyzed with horror and rage. Like Tony Last, he, too, was struck with real fear as he felt that he was on the verge of madness. He prayed: "O let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven." This ex-presses the utter helplessness of an individual in this schizophrenic

world.

Guy Crouchback, the hero of Waugh's war-trilogy, The Sword of Honour, is the culmination of his exploration of the predicament of the victim figure in the modern age, which he had done in the charac terization of Tony Last and Gilbert Pinfold. He, thirty-five years old, is a lonely member of an old English Catholic family. At the outbreak of the last war he had been living an isolated life in Italy, deserted by his wife, Virginia, who had three husbands. The announcement of the Russian-German alliance fired his national sentiments and he joins the war as a soldier. "Eight years of shame and loneliness were ended. For eight years Guy, already set apart from his fellows by his own deep wound, that unstaunched, internal draining away of life and love, has been deprived of the loyalties which should have sus-tained him. But now, splendidly everything had become clear. The enemy, at last, was plain in view, huge and hateful, all disguise cast off. It was the Modern Age in arms. Whatever the outcome there was a place for him in that battle.

Guy Crouchback goes to participate in the war with the enthusi-asm and zeal of a crusader. But soon he is disillusioned and his en-thusiasm is completely dissipated. "Now that hallucination was dissolved, like the whales and turtles on the voyage from Crete, and he was back after less than two years' pilgrimage in a Holy Land of illusion in the old ambiguous world, where priests were spies and gal-lant friends proved traitors and his country was led blundering into dishonour." A sense of doom and futility overwhelmed him just like Tony Last in the Brazilian jungle. But amidst all the confusion, anar-chy and depravity of the war and the world outside he remembered what his father had written to him: "Quantitative judgements don't apply." This gave him from the very beginning an unmistakable con-viction in the triumph of the ultimate good. "In the recesses of Guy's conscience there lay the belief that somewhere, somehow, something would be required of him that he must be attentive to the summons when it came. They also serve who only stood and waited. Onc day he would get the chance to do some small service which only he could perform, for which he had been created. Even he must have his function in the divine plan. He did not expect a heroic destiny. Quan-titative judgements did not apply All that mattered was to recognize the chance when it was offered."

Thus, The Sword of Honour, finally establishes that in his last work Evelyn Waugh succeeds in overcoming his snobbery, nostalgia for

the past, class prejudices, narrow mindedness and religious dogma-tism and produces an amazingly harmonious synthesis between satire and humanism, a task he had taken up in A Handful of Dust. It is fi nally the sense of humility, charity and bumanity that gives peace and tranquillity to the agonized and empty soul of Guy Crouchback and brings the pilgrimage of his life, embodying the spiritual journey of all men in this bizarre and barren world of ours, to a satisfying end. Similarly all of Graham Greene's novels, from his first, The Man Within to the latest, The Tenth Man, express his tragi-comic aware-ness in this world of unmitigated loneliness, spiritual emptiness, alienation, absurdity and futility. Like Evelyn Waugh he, too, comes to the final realization that it is only through pity and charity that hu manity can be saved and humanism redeemed. But, whereas Waugh's growth towards secularism and humanism is subdued and jindirect, that of Greene is radical and direct. In the case of Waugh this is obvious in his post-war satires and the war-trilogy, and in Greene this is evident in his non-Catholic later novels, particularly in The Quiet American, The Comedians, The Human Factor and Monsi-gior Quixote. In these novels he got over his preoccupation with sin, evil, divine grace, redemption and dealt with human situations and predicaments in a more secular manner reflecting his moral and emotional commitment to humanism.

The Quiet American is an indictment of the American involvement in the Vietnamese war which results in the killings of innocent men, women and children. The British journalist, Fowler, who is the mouthpiece of the novelist, is quite obvious in his sympathy for the under-dog and the sufferer, opposes and rather betrays his friend Pyle, who symbolizes American intervention in Vietnam. He, al-though professes not to be involved personally, cannot remain aloof and non-involved to the pain and suffering of the innocent people of Vietnam. He takes their sides and is responsible for the death of Pyle. He becomes emotionally and politically involved, which betrays Greene's commitment to humanism: "We all get involved in a mo-ment of emotion and then we cannot get out. War and Love - they have always been compared."

From Vietnam Greene moves to Latin America in The Comedians where the poor and the exploited fight against dictatorship of Papa Doc supported by the American Government. Brown, the narrator of the novel and the spokesman of the novelist, resembles Fowler. Though British in origin, he has a hotel in Haiti and becomes in-

volved in the sordid political drama there. More than Brown, it is Dr. Magiot, the negro communist, who is deeply involved in the situation there and dies for the cause of freedom. His faith and commitment to a cause, particularly for the down-trodden and the exploited, his martyr's death for his ideals, is highly admired by Brown and he quotes from the last letter of Doctor Magiot before his death:

Do you remember that evening when Mrs. Smith accused me of being a Marxist? Accused is too strong a word. She is a kind woman who hates injustice. Yet I have grown to dislike the word "Marxist." It is used so often to describe only a particular economic plan. I believe of course in that economic plan-in certain cases and in certain times, here in Haiti, in Cuba, in Vietnam, in India. But communism, my friend, is more than Marxism, just as Catholicism-remember I was born a Catholic too-is more than the Roman Curia. There is a mystique as well as a politique. We are humanists, you and 1.10

The Human Factor is a political thriller which probes the innermost workings of the human psyche. It centres on a double agent Maurice Castle, a member of the British Secret Service and also working as a Soviet spy. He is forced to become a double agent because of the human factor that he loves Sarah, who has to flee from South Africa to Russia. More than the story of a double spy it deals with human solitude and predicament. It is the irony of human situation, a hope-less hope, that is more dominant. Loneliness plagues all major char-acters of not only this novel, but from Andrews of his first novel, The Man Within to the latest one, The Tenth Man. Castle is attracted to-wards communism because of its "human face" and he flees to Rus-sia because he wants "Peace of Mind." He tells Sarah:

When people talk about Prague and Budapest and how you can't find a human face in communism I stay silent. Because I've seen-once-human face I say to myself that if it hadn't been for Carson, Sam would have been born in a prison and you would probably have died in one. One kind of Commu-nism-or Communist-saved you and Sam. I don't have any trust in Marx or Lenin any more than I have in Saint Paul, but haven't I the right to be grateful?11

After talking to Sarah about his reason for being sympathetic to com munism Castle allowed himself to be borne on towards that interior of the dark continent where "he hoped that he might find a perma nent home, in a city where he could be accepted as a citizen, as a citi zen without any pledge of faith, not the city of God or Marx, but the city called Peace of Mind. 12

In Monsignor Quixote Greene presents the tale of unbreakable friendship between a Catholic priest, Father Quixote, and a former Communist Mayor, Sancho Panza. The priest is shot dead by the po-lice while he tries to save the life of the Communist Mayor, who es capes to Portugal. His intense humanism makes Greene dream of deepening friendship and a profounder understanding, of a reconcil iation even between Catholics and Communists. Like Father Quixote Greene, too, "believed that human love was the same kinds as the love of God."13 It is this eternal search for "hopeless hope" or some "alternative faith" that dominates the human situation in the novels of Greene. Like Fowler in The Quiet American, Greene wants to re main uninvolved in this human condition, but finally he has to be in-volved like Castle in The Human Factor or like Father Quixote in Monsignor Quixote for the sake of the under-dog, the exploited and lastly for humanity.

What really comes out of a study of the novels, autobiographies and other works of Evelyn Waugh and Graham Greene is the conclu-sion that both loved life passionately, Despite the fact that both of them suffered from boredom, loneliness, melancholia and death-wish, yet their works, if taken in totality, give the convincing under-standing that they were great humanists and that humanism was at the very core of their life and work. Perhaps, that was the reason why they remained life-long friends. In his autobiography, Ways of Es-cape, Greene asks this question-"what indeed had made us friends?" and replies: "He [Evelyn Waugh] wrote to me in October 11952, 'I am just completing my forty-ninth year. You are just begin-ning yours. It is the grand climacteric which sets the course of the rest of one's life, I am told. It has been a year of lost friends for me. Not by death but by wear and tear. Our friendship started rather late. Pray God it lasts.'" It did. And Greene further adds: "When I come to die, I shall wish he were beside me, for he would give me no easy comfort.14

NOTES

1. Evelyn Waugh, A Little Learning (London, 1964), p. 33,

2. Ibid., p. 143.

3. Graham Greene, The Lost Childhood (London, 1951), p. 17.

4. Evelyn Waugh, A Handful of Dust (1955), pp. 137-38,

5. Evelyn Waugh, "Fanfare," Life, April 8, 1946, p. 60.

6. Evelyn Waugh, The Sword of Honour (London, 1964), pp. 14-15.

7. Ibid., pp. 531-32.

8. Ibid., pp. 603-04.

9. Graham Greene, The Quiet American (1955), p. 150.

10. Graham Greene, The Comedians (1965), p. 286.

11. Graham Greene, The Human Factor (1978), p. 107.

12. Ibid.

13. Graham Greene, Monsignor Quixote (1983), p. 140.

14. Graham Greene, Ways of Escape (1981), p. 202.

Magadh University Bodh-Gaya

Time in Patrick White's The Tree of Man

The theme of time and quest for meaning in life has a unique place in modern literature, particularly because the universe is a fragmented, multifarious and intransigent one for modern man. The question of impending mortality distinguishes human time from cosmic time. Man, poignantly aware that all his achievements have only a tempo-ral significance, searches for a higher reality and fulfilment in life.

White's protagonists are preoccupied with the meaning and self and fulfilment in an incoherent and transient world. The uncertain-ties in a transposed culture make the world even more intransigent. All White's novels can be firmly placed in quest literature since his protagonists journey through the inner world of exploration. The Tree of Man in particular is a significant example.

The novel deals with the lives of Parkers since their early youth till the evening of their lives. They clear a piece of bush and struggle with calamities of nature while settling and on the emotional side face vicissitudes in bringing up children who finally choose their own paths. The metaphor of a journcy is a dominating one in The Tree of Man and Stan's journey can be described as a journey through time.

John Colmer remarks:

In The Tree of Man Stan Parker's journey is through time; in Voss the hero's journey is through space. In both the novels the temporal and spatial voyages are in essence spiritual ones.

Unlike in Voss where a hero of grand proportions fights against time and gets fulfilment after recognition of his finite status, Stan, the or-dinary man acquiesces to time only searching blunderingly for the glimpse of higher reality. At the death of his father, for whom he has only a vague affection, Stan feels, for the first time, conflicting emo-tions, which later become a life-time vocation. "Then, more than at any time, the nostalgia for permanence and the fiend of motion

fought inside the boy, right there at the moment when his life was ending and beginning." The quest for permanence and fight against flux or fiend of mo-tion involve search for abiding things and values. Stan's vague fears and doubts in early life take a spiritual shape later. When he settles in the bush along with his wife, his routine farm work and what he builds on the land become symbols of permanence. But this is soon belied. Soon, the unbridled nature at its wildest, the gale, flood, bush fire demonstrates the destructive aspects of time and generates exis-tential questions in Amy and Stan. Probably what the sun-downer travelling to Wullunya prophesied has come true. "Because the Al-mighty 'asn'ts and you 'are not been' it over the 'ead, kicked down-stairs, spat at in the eye. See?" (40)

The destructive element of time is an aspect of the Old Testament God conceived by Stan's father. The father Ned is a blacksmith with crude ways and he gets drunk often. His God is "a fiery God," "a gusty God" and a terrible God who explains the much-unexplained destruction in the world and in nature. In contrast the mother Parker's God is a gentle one, with pale blue eyes, a compassionate God of formal religion who is not convincing enough for Stan.

The Parkers face the uncertainties inherent in the human situation in the early years of marriage and later their vague fears increase when they come across intimations of impermanence of every form of life through disaster after disaster. Amy tries to possess things and persons to ward off an awareness of flux. First of such possessions is a nut-meg greater given at her wedding. She needs concrete proof to believe, and her house and surroundings and the sensuality of the conjugal life constitute the reality she believes in.

Or else there was lightening in the sky that warned her of her transitoriness. The sad Christ was an old man with a beard, who spat death from full cheeks. But the mercy of God was a full kiss in the mouth. She was filled with the love of God and would take it for granted, in its absence she would remember again she was no frail. (33)

Unlike Amy, Stan does not try to build moral defences against the consciousness of mutability and accepts flux in the corporeal world. When he is in a rescue boat he observes that flood waters are great levellers like death and drag indiscriminately sheep, bleating cattle

and an old woman praying to God.

Human cognition itself is geared to the habitual perception of time and space. Stan is temporarily freed from the conventional per-ception of time and in the imagistic and impressionistic passages Stan's deep impression of the dissolving of familiar shapes and of the world influx is recorded brilliantly by White.

He remembered things he had never told, and forgotten. He remembered the face of his mother before her burial, when the skull disclosed what the eyes had always hidden, some fear that solidity of things around her was not assured. But in the dis-solved world of flowing water, under the drifting trees, it was obvious that solidity is not. (73)

As they roved, fragments of still, safe lives that are lived in houses flowed past. There was a chair with no one in it, there was a piece of bitten cheese, and letters grown spidery, and a hassock in the blackberry caves, a hat with a drowned feather, a baby's chamber pot, a Bible open at Ezekiel. All these things came and went. It was the boat that was stationary. (73-74)

The intimations of mortality terrify Amy but they lead to a special kind of subjective perception which is opposed to the naturalistic view of time and space. He also finds his own self beset by "fiend of motion" on his way back from Wullunya. In contrast, for Amy the flood is menacing and she finds only dead things: "There were dead things. There was almost the face that floated beneath the willows." (153)

Different paths and aspirations of the Parkers in their middle age are suggested by the incessant interplay of images of light and dark-ness. The images of light are associated with storm and lightening and reveal Stan's desire for illumination, and those of darkness Amy's fears and her suspicion of whatever she cannot possess pas-sionately.

The next of disasters is a great bush fire and has a staggering ef-fect on everyone concerned. The Armstrongs of Glastonbury realize their edifice Glastonbury is no safeguard against the ultimate de-struction, the men fighting fire find their mighty effort is ineffectual, and Madeleine reconsiders her whole life spent so far in "parties and jewels and mahogany and candle light." (167)

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Stan rescues Madeleine, the fiancé of young Armstrong from fire. His romantic longings and passion are aroused in the fire and his in-tense poetic experience is free from the burden of temporality. "They were not living. They had entered a phase of pain and contained con-sciousness." (180)

Amy's romantic dream inspired by the flaming figure of Made-leine and the luxurious life of Armstrongs is purged off when she looks at the retching Madeleine on the floor after coming out of the fire. Stan is open both to the elements of grotesque and sublime that impinge on human consciousness. But Amy wants to retain the occa-sional experience of timeless movements and wants to unravel the mystery in the nature and human beings. She resents Stan's inner and personal experiences which he cannot communicate to her.

Though Stan accepts the destructive aspect of time in nature and is also conscious of the regenerative aspect he has yet to accept the evil and the potential for destruction within man. Though Stan is not convinced about the meaning of war, which is only a symbolic erup-tion of evil, he passively accepts his role in it. Engaged in the mean-ingless destructive activity he becomes sceptical about the efficacy of human intervention.

His stock of prayers, even his chunks of improvisation, no longer fitted circumstance. (199)

It is taken out of my hands. I am weak, Amy. (200)

In the despair the present is without efficacy and the future without hope for Stan. A sort of vague torpor overtakes him when he returns from war. He is unable to fit into routine life of family and farm again.

As the years pass, Stan's son Ray takes to delinquent ways be-cause time does not give him an opportunity to glorify himself. Stan's attempts to share his longings with his son and help him change his course of life prove futile. Thelma, the daughter is on the path of progressive materialism. For her life is something that can be neatly arranged and so is time. She looked at her watch "to assure herself by significant movements that events did follow a sequence." (338) When she reads a poem about the tree of man which suggests the creative and destructive aspects of time, she is agitated because she cannot seek the protection in any material thing from the conscious-ness of mutability

"Through him the gale of life blew high..."

"The tree of man never quiet..."

"The gale, it plies the rapling double It blows so hard, 'twill soon be gone."

Thelma leads a sterile, non-spiritual life. Amy's failure to find happi-ness by possessing things and people in their entirety, her sense of void and worthlessness expresses itself in adultery and is an attempt to make the present valuable by living in sensations. Stan comes to know of Amy's adultery and drives off to city in a berserk state. He has accepted the twin aspects of God, the benign quality and terror, the double aspect of time as a creator and destroyer when the ab-stract aspects of terror-the floods, fire and war-affect him but not so at personal level. In his drunken wanderings in the city, he experi-ences purposeless hellish time, the time without grace or hope stretched to eternity. The potential destruction within him comes to the fore and he finds himself about to strangle a street-walker on the beach. From the hellish purposeless time, he returns to the twilight world of human relations when he listens to the music played by the daughter of his old farm-hand at a pub. "The deathless voice was singing, wordlessly. A faint silveriness of sea air and waves sluiced the counter. All acts past and present stood transfixed in that light." (328) Stan is cured of the demon in him by his trip to hell. He comes face to face with evil in himself and equates his experience on the beach with Amy's adultery and Ray's violence. Stan also becomes free at this time from the ritualistic God of conventional religion. His carlier attempt to reconcile the God of church and his own inner longings takes a new form here.

The fourth section of the novel is characterized by a series of deaths as well as series of returns and re-unions. The Parkers' rela tionship at this stage is based on kindliness, tolerance and habit There is a decline in energy for Parkers and a slackness in move ments. The play Hamlet arouses different memories of guilt and devi ations of each other in Stan and Amy. Stan comes in direct contact with the personal meaning of death, when he identifies with Hamlet in the grave scene: "This is the light in which a man becomes aware that he will die." (405)

Intense awareness of mortality and mutability of the organic world

and rejection of ritualistic God create an intense longing and empti-ness in Stan. His fall and narrow escape from death bring in the mo ment of epiphany: "Then this agreeable life, which had been empty for many years, began to fill. It is not natural that emptiness shall pre-vail, it will fill eventually, whether with water, or children, or dust or spirit." (407)

Ray is killed and there are a series of deaths of Bub, O'Dowd and others in the last section. These generate questions in Amy but she drowns them in the memories of her sensual life in youth and posses-sions. Stan has at last in Ray's son a person who can share his spiri-tual longings.

Stan sits in the garden in his last moments and rejects strongly the Parson's effort to teach him the ways of God in cliche-cluttered lan-guage. He is certain that the young man has no idea of the knowledge he himself has been struggling to get all his life. He has become aware of "the large, triumphal scheme" of which he himself is a part. The understanding for which he has been patiently waiting becomes his and at this stage exquisite passages of peace and beauty depict nature:

a loosing and dissolving of shapes, on the other, a looming of mineral, splendours" (477)

"I believe in this leaf, he laughed, stabbing at it with his stick." (477)

It is clear that the twin aspects of life, to apprehend which Stan strug-gled all his life, become clear to him. The sickening and evil aspects of life within himself and the flaws in human relations and the unex-plained and unmitigated evil within humanity besides the disasters created by the untamed forces of nature are only complements to goodness, peace and beauty. The fierce God of Old Testament is only another side of the gentle God of his mother. Time the de-stroyer, is also time the creator and re-generator. Stan, who becomes sceptical in his middle age about God of conventional religion, be-comes convinced about oneness of all before his physical self dis-solves.

Amy too is redeemed to a certain extent because she finds the lost nut-meg greater which has become a symbol of wholeness for her. She also has hope in her grandson who shares Stan's subtler longings and is also close to her.

The prologue provides continuity at different levels. At narrative level it provides a circularity and brings back the first scene where Stan starts work in the bush breaking its silence. Here the wilderness overtakes the house again, the silence pervades, Ray's son explores the mystery of nature among the trees. Secondly the boy is given Stan's intuitive search for truth and also the creative power to ex press his longings which Stan always lacked and strived for. He can communicate his inner feelings to others.

At the symbolic level the tree is used as an adequate symbol of the opposing forces of destruction and creation in time and nature. The trees are solid yet seem to dissolve in the gale. The trees are up-rooted, pulled down or burnt in the storms, floods and bush fire. Soon the landscape restores itself and glazes with new shoots of grass. The last chapter ends with

so that in the end there are the trees. The boy walking through them with his head drooping as he increased in stature. Putting out shoots of green thought. So that in the end, there was no end. (480)

In the last image, the green shoots, a symbol of beginning of a new cycle, represent the boy's creativity and ensure a kind of continuity for Stan's life-time search.

NOTES

1. John Cohner, Patrick White (London: Methuen, 1984), p. 34.

2. Patrick White, The Tree of Man (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1955), p. 14.

Andhra University

Visakhapatnam

Interior Monologue in Katherine Mansfield's Stories

Katherine Mansfield's aim is to create a new kind of fiction in a new kind of prose. She makes a departure from the earlier practice of au-thorial observation and reporting. She makes a break with the me-chanical progression of events. She discovers her new method of prose in "Prelude." Here the story just "unfolds and opens." The reader is brought into the character and the event. The stories are organic in structure with a life of their own. The reader gets into the action or the recesses of the character depending on the situation in the story. Ian. Gordan sums up her technique in his introduction to his collection of stories:

for Katherine, to be the spectacle required only her own power of sympathetic recall. To induce her reader to be the spectacle was a different matter. It required an originality of technique and a use of prose that is her major contribution to the craft of fiction. It is done at different levels. At one end of the scale, en-tire passages are interior monologues, the events seen or felt from the point of view of one or the other of characters. The reader is placed "inside" the character. 1

Interior monologue has been a part of modern fiction. Katherine Mansfield makes a creative use of it, as a literary device in her short stories. She uses it in her own way. Her interior monologues are not mechanical additions to the structure of the story. The reader never becomes conscious of the device as he reads the story. The use of in-terior monologue by earlier writers is summed up by A.C. Chatterji:

To Joyce interior monologue was a means of bringing his read-ers closer to the characters, of telling them more about their psychic lives than they could learn merely from an account of

their outward behaviour. To Mrs. Woolf, on the other hand, it was a means of telling the readers less about their characters, of dissociating their ego from concrete situations in life and converting it into a vehicle of poetic memory. She tried to turn it into a poetic expression or reverie. Dorothy Richardson, like Marcel Proust in France, placed the reader in the mind of a single character and plodded endlessly through twelve te-dious volumes to give him a rendering of the heroine's mind from adolescence to middle life. Joyce's attempts to find verbal equivalents for the minor thought processes led to a medley of pastiche, quotation, extravaganza and literary a usion, the net result of which was a hewildering obscurity.

Katherine Mansfield makes an organic use of interior monologue. She does not use it as a technical feat. She makes it an unperceptible part of the story. The reader never becomes conscious of the transi-tion from the narrative to the interior monologue. Her special contri-bution lies in the indirect presentation of inner consciousness. "Her interior monologue is indirect, stylized, filtered through third person, past tense, syntactically conventional narration. The technique.seems to have been taken directly from the psychological sketch."3

In "The Tiredness of Rosabel" Rosabel's hunger is followed in an interior monologue, which presents visually the kind of "hot strong and filling" food she desires to have- "Roast duck and green peas, chestnut stuffing, pudding with brandy sauce." As she looks out of the window:

the street was blurred and misty, but light striking on the planes turned their dullness to opal and silver, and the jeweller's shops seen through this, were fairy palaces. Her fect were horribly wet, and she knew the bottom of her skirt and petticoat would be coated with black greasy mud. There was a sickening smell of warm humanity, it seemed to be oozing out of everybody in the bus - and everybody has the same expression, sitting so still, staring in front of them. How many times she has read these advertisements - "Sapolio Saves time, Saves Labour"-"Heinz's Tomato Sauce" - and the inane annoying dialogue be tween doctor and judge concerning the superlative merits of "Lamplough's Pyretic Saline." She glanced at the book which the girl read so earnestly, mouthing the words in a way that

Rosabel detested, licking her first finger and thumb each time that she turned each page. She could not see very clearly, it was something about a hot voluptuous night, a band playing, and a girl with lovely, white shoulders. Oh, heavens! Rosabel stirred suddenly and unfastened the two top buttons of her coat. She felt almost stifled. Through her half closed cyes the whole row of people on the opposite seat seemed to resolve into one fatuous staring face. (524-25)

The passage contains a number of details directly or indirectly con-nected with the course of action in the story. Some details are just mentioned, some are related to her physical and psychological dispo-sition. Some tell about her awareness. Some reveal her attitude. Some awkward situations seem to be part of her profession. When taken out of the context all the details are disparate. But in the spe-cial craft of Katherine Mansfield they form the mental and physical sequence of Rosabel on her typical Voyage to her nest. The method makes a selective use of stream of consciousness diffused with the narrative progress of the story. Thus Katherine Mansfield develops the action, reveals the character and the immediate context with least effort. The shift of focus is almost imperceptible. The reader is made to become Rosabel and also some body observing Rosabel. This kind of subjective, objective observation offered to the reader is the mark of Katherine Mansfield's technique. The narrative progress and the psychic exploration is inextricably blended. The details range from the casual. As a result the representation of life in Katherine Mansfield's stories becomes an overview of life as a whole.

In "Prelude" the technique of interior monologue is used not around a single character. It is given to all characters. The narrator dissolves into the characters. The story sets out to show what all the members of the family think and feel, and how they behave. "Prelude's" peculiar contribution lies in the shifting of the narrative focus from the inner thoughts of one character to those of others. The characters and the actions are revealed as in the omniscient point of view. But the reader is brought into the actions and charac ters by means of interior monologue.

"Late at Night" is a monologue of Virginia in response to the reply she receives from the man to whom she sent a pair of socks. It Jakes stock of her merits as a woman and her demerits as an aging woman. It suits her well to contemplate on the situation in which Vir-

ginia is placed.

In "Pictures" there is a repetition of the imaginative projection of Miss Ada's wishfulfilment found in "The Tiredness of Rosabel":

"No, it's because I don't have a good hot dinner in the eve-nings."

A pageant of Good Hot Dinners passed across the ceiling, each of them accompanied by a bottle of Nourishing Stout..

"Even if I were to get up now," she thought "and have a sensible substantial break-fast...." A pagcant of Sensible Sub-stantial Breakfasts followed the dinners across the ceiling, shepherded by an enormous, white, uncut ham. Miss Moss shuddered and disappeared under the bed clothes. Suddenly in bounced the landlady. (119)

Here interior monologue is dramatized by the appearance of the im agined food items. The interior drama is immediately followed by the actual drama in the story. The dramatic clement is presented in the interior monologue for a greater appeal to the reader. The mono-logue turns out to be more visual. It is a development over the mo-notonous narrative monologues. We can call the technique interior dramatic monologue or interior drama.

In most of Katherine Mansfield's stories the interior monologue is indirect. But in "Je ne parle pas Francais" it is direct. The whole story is presented in the first-person male point of view.

In "The Man without a Temperament," interior monologue devel-ops into a full-fledged drama of Robert's past. It occurs in separate instalments in the progress of the story. The monologue appears as set pieces in the narration of his slavery to his invalid wife. These monologues offer a sort of relief to the husband from the endless at-tendance on his sick wife.

"Miss Brill" is entirely a story that occurs in the mind of Miss Brill. It is a drama of Miss Brill's mental projection. The external drama is seen only when the young people point out to Miss as an unnecessary intervention.

In "The Stranger" the interior monologues are interspersed be tween the interactions of husband and wife. In "The Daughters of the Late Colonel" Josephine's interior monologue takes the shape of a visual projection:

"But," cried Josephine, flouncing on her pillow and staring across the dark at Constantia, "father's head," and suddenly for one awful moment, she nearly giggled. Not, of course, that she felt in the least like giggling. It must have been habit. Years ago, when they had stayed awake at night, talking, their beds had simply heaved. And now the porter's head, disappearing, popped out like a candle, under father's hat.. The giggle mounted, mounted; she clenched her hands; she fought it down; she frowned fiercely at the dark and said "Remember," terribly sternly. (262)

This is in reaction to Constantia's suggestion that their father's cap can be given to the porter. Josephine recalls the porter in their father's cap and finally decides to postpone the issue.

In "Life of Ma Parker" also the long interior monologue is inter-spersed with the dialogue and visual projections about her past. There is almost a re-enaction of the past. This ultimately aggravates the grief of Ma Parker. "Her First Ball" is completely done in the form of a monologue.

In "Taking the Veil" the interior monologue reaches the stage of a soliloquy. "The Fly" has interior monologue and physical action sym-bolizing the mental ongoings of the Boss. The physical action be-comes a para-symbol of the mental agony experienced by the boss. In Katherine Mansfield's last story "The Canary" interior monologue takes the shape of a diary confessional.

In her zeal to attain the ultimate in expression Katherine Mans-field has experimented with all her devices. The interior monologue also changes according to her fictional needs. When it appears mo-notonous she suddenly makes it dramatic or follows it with physical action. It undergoes an evolution acquiring the additional im-provements and changes. It changes with her art and artistic ends. The surprising thing is her experiments do not become disgusting. We can say they helped her at every stage.

Thus, in the hands of Katherine Mansfield the interior monologue gets into the fabric of the main story. It not only comments on the ac-tion in progress, but also advances the action of the story proper. It meets the dual needs of narration and reflection.

NOTES

1. Undiscovered Country, ed. Ian A. Gordon (London: Longman, 1974), p. XX.

2. The Art of Katherine Mansfield (New Delhi: S. Chand, 1980), p. 333.

3. Clare Hanson and Andrew Gurr, Katherine Mansfield (London: Macmillan, 1981), p. 29.

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Anantapur

While discussing the literary landscape in Indo-English fiction, Meenakshi Mukherjee makes the observation that "conflict" in Indo-English fiction resolves itself neatly into two issues: "duty to the fam-ily and personal fulfilment. The fulfilment of oneself, however desirable a goal according to the individualistic ideas of Western so-ciety, has always been alien to Indian tradition especially when it is achieved at the cost of duty to the family. Sexual love and per-sonal happiness, these two prime concerns of the Western novelist, do not have such central importance in the Indian context. The clas-sic ideal of the god-like hero and the patient heroine extol the virtues of the extinction of the ego.... One might argue that classical ideals no longer obtain in the Indian context. But in actual literary practice, numerous characters are found to adhere to classic prototypes-es-pecially the women of fiction who persistently re-enact the suffering, sacrificing role of Sita or Savitri." This paper, while looking at the image of the woman in Indo-English fiction, states that the status of the woman in fiction has not changed much. But traces of such a change in the image though cosmetic, are perceptible. This paper ex-amines two novels by two women novelists, written at two very differ-ent points of time: Cry the Peacock by Anita Desai (1963) and Socialite Evenings by Shobha De (1989). Between 1963 when Anita Desar's novel was published and 1989 when Penguin published Shobha De's book, there have been several novels which deal with the image of the Indian woman. But there is hardly any remarkable change in the portrait of the woman. This paper will also make a passing mention to some of the other women characters in fiction

seen during this period. Whatever part an individual in society may play, traditional im-ages focus on their domestic and sexual roles. A sensitive woman, Maya, in Desai's Cry, the Peacock cannot come to terms with her pre-

dicament. Her hypersensitive nature can only lead to a recognition of marital discord and a kind of self-destructive death-wish. Anita Desai "depicts with great sensitivity the dissolution of the feminine sensibility under the stress of marriage that finally destroys her being."[2] Maya is alive through all her senses and lives each moment of her life intensely. Her husband Gautama is an intellectual, remote, detached and completely incapable of understanding his wife's hy. persensitivity. When she is grieved at the death of her pet dog Toto, all he does is to present her with a cat along with his philosophy of detachment. Maya says:

And now, seeing me bereaved, secing tears on my face and my pet gone, "You need a cup of tea," he said. Yes, I cried, Yes, it is his hardness-no, no, not hardness, but the distance he coldly keeps from me. His coldness, his coldness and incessant talk of cups of tea and philosophy in order not to hear me talk and talking reveal myself. It is that my loneliness in this house, 3

Maya, once expresses a wish to "go south-to Travancore and all those places" (42) to see the Kathakali dances. But Gautama was only amused. She continues:

"It must be such a-marvellous sight, so-violent, and- bizarre," I groped for words painfully. The vision was excruciating in its vividness to me, and here was one who did not even glimpse it, no matter what I said. (42-43)

To which Gautama replies in a manner which underlines his person-ality:

If that is your only reason for wanting to go all that way south, I suggest you wait till a Kathakali troupe comes to give a perfor mance in Delhi, as it is bound to sometime - perhaps in winter.

It will be less expensive. (43)

His unwillingness to understand her and his lack of warmth make her realize her enmeshmant in an inescapable net of married life.

Maya looks for a saviour to cling to. Everyone fails her. Her father taught her acceptance. But even her father is not her anchor any

more. Arjuna her brother runs away from home. Her friends Leila and Pom also prove inadequate for Maya. So she lapses into her hal-lucinatory world to fight

the reality of the albino's prophecy. Unable to communicate her anxieties to her husband, she loses her sanity and murders her husband. "Maya may lose her sanity; however she realises that marital harmony and compatibility are only Maya, an illusion.4

If, to Maya, marriage has been a stress, and Gautama is to blame by and large, a fair share of the blame goes to Maya's parents-in-law. In their house, she felt like "one of those outsiders necessary though not necessarily loved." (48) When the whole family sat for dinner, they either discussed politics or one of Gautama's cases.

They left me out of it with a naturalness I had to accept for they knew I would not understand a matter so involved, and I knew it myself. They spoke to me, the synocete, only when it had to do with babies, meals, shopping, marriages, for I was their toy, their indulgence, not to be taken seriously. (48-49)

Her relations did not understand or share her sensitivity to life. Maya laments, "there was not one among them to whom I could cry, 'Look, look-there is a moon in the sky!" (51) Thus her resolution never to go there again only emphasizes her loneliness and her alienation from the family.

Hindu life in the joint family implicitly equates mental health with domesticity and any deviation from the cult of traditional woman-hood is judged to be a violation of this morality of mental health. This theme recurs in two other novels of Desai besides Cry, the Pea-cock. Monisha in Voices in the City (1965) is another character who reacts against her servile existence in the confines of traditional Hindu family and seeks relief from the claustrophobic atmosphere through suicide.

From freelance writer to editor of film glossies to novelist, Shobha De's first novel Socialite Evenings (1989) may not be anywhere in the class of Cry, the Peacock. Yet, the paperback and the huge reader-ship it has, mean that the paperback has come to stay and thus be-comes an important focus for any study of comtemporary culture. The novel is in keeping with certain trends in Indo-English fiction in general. Strangely, it shows some similarities to Anita Desai's Cry, the Peacock. Here is one more novel by a woman writer, about neurotic

women though the neurosis is of a different kind. It talks of a woman trying to rebel against the context in which she was born and brought up. It depicts man-woman relationships in a westernized Indian so-cial milieu and the value system which is sharply at variance with the traditions of Indian social set-up. In both the novels, men are hard to find and both the women are childless.

Karuna, born in a traditional Maharashtrian Brahmin family, is an intransigent girl at school rebelling against the values of a traditional Indian home. She longs to get out of her middle-class environment, Her chief worry before she goes to college is "How could I go in my 'sensible' pleated skirts and 'modest' blouses when all others would be dressed in clinging sweaters and tight skirts? She meets Anjali, a high society socialite who introduces Karuna to "the high life." Karuna takes to modelling. The father laments "Once parents allow girls to slip out of their control then everything goes wrong." (34) She marries as she says, "Pushed into it by an acceptable male who wouldn't take no for an answer." (58) Her parents are pleased with the marriage since the son-in-law is affluent. Within a year, affluence pales and her marriage grows stale. The husband (This is how he is described throughout the novel-husband to be, husband, and ex-husband. He is nameless and thereby hangs a tale) is a businessman. Initially, in their married life, he discusses his business with her but soon excludes her. Her "crusty old mother-in-law," however, "was very active as a far from sleeping partner in the firm."

I was studiously excluded from the cosy mother-and-son aprés dinner business chats. "Why don't you relax in your room? You'll be bored listening to all this..." she'd say sweetly but firmly. (63)

This is Maya and Gautama once again. The reasons are the same. The marriage is equally humdrum

They [husbands] were not evil men, but what they did to our lives went beyond evil. We were reduced to being marginal people. Everything that mattered to us was trivialised. The message was "You don't reallly count, except in the context of my priorities." (69)

She still does not get out of marriage, "because for all my little rebel.

lions, I was a well-trained Indian wife." (94) So she goes about life an indifferent boarder, going through the motions of housekeeping and playing wife. Maya felt stifled and she found release in insanity and murder. Karuna initially depends on books and crosswords. "The other man in her life was a hard cover," as she says. Like her friends Anjali and Ritu and other women of her ilk, she has an extra-marital affair. Her husband comes to know of it through his mother who has been overhearing phone calls and reading letters addressed to Karuna. He almost accepts her. But on hearing she is pregnant, he divorces her and decides to marry again. However, as it turns out, during her abortion it is a case of fibroids and she couldn't ever have had children.

Anjali helps her pick up the loose threads of her life and Karuna stays in a paying-guest accommodation. Later she moves in with her parents, takes to theatre, has a couple of affairs but once bitten, she is twice shy. She never commits herself to matrimony again. She re-jects her ex-husband who wants her back after having become disillu-sioned with Winnie, his mistress. Karuna's mother tells her:

A woman cannot live alone. It is not safe. We [the parents] are here to-day. But who knows about tomorrow? A woman needs a man's protection. Society can be very cruel. (275)

Maya, despite the incompatibility, accepted this idea somehow. Her rebellion was turned inward and led her to desperation. Karuna de-spite her Indian 'womanness' stands up to say:

But Mother, why does security rest with a man? I feel confident now that I can look after myself. (276)

Karuna's independence gets highlighted by two sharp contrasts in Anjali and Ritu, her two friends. Anjali is divorced but she can't live without a man. She marries Kumar who is a homosexual. But she ac-cepts the deal, "A porsche, emeralds... the choice to pick my own bedmate but discreetly." (126) She finds compensation in some pseudo-bhakti and a god-man who smuggles drugs and gold.

Ritu seems to be a sensible woman. Her strategy with regard to men as she herself outlines is:

to make them feel you've done them a favour by marrying

them. The other trick is to make them feel insecure. La them think you'll walk out on them if they don't toe the line (86)

Despite all this, she who appears to have beaten the system, gets ou of marriage and into bed with another man Gul and becomes a pro curess. Gul calls her filthy names in Hindi and attacks her violent during one of the parties and Ritu tries suicide and fails. But the way she comes out of the phase is significant. She goes back to her hus band. The mali of her household gets her involved in gardening Planting seeds and saplings and watching them grow becomes a ther apeutic experience. "The original Earth Mother finally had come to roost." (231)

There are several other novels where the image of woman has been portrayed on almost similar lines. A few instances should suf-fice. As early as 1954, Kamala Markandaya created Rükmani, a pativrata whose life revolves round her husband. She condones his extra-marital affairs, but hides the fact of going to Kenny, a British doctor, to conceive sons, lest he doubt her fidelity. While he dies, she survives the ordeal.

Isn't this proof enough for us to believe that she is the earth mother, the silent-suffering woman who by negating her own personality can and must survive.

Closer to the period in question, is Bharati Mukherjee's Wife (1976).

There is Dimple, a "good wife, a docile wife conquering the hus-band-enemy by withholding affection and other tactics of domestic passive resistance." She is willing to do whatever Amit wants her to. She is the ideal contented wife. But Amit by his overbearing bellavi our pushes her to rebellion. He does not understand romantic fanta-sies. The television, therefore, becomes her sole companion. This is Karuna with her "hard cover" book and crosswords. Towards the end, she even voices her discontentment:

"You just aren't supportive, if you know what I mean."

"You're nuts." Amit retorted." (208)

This is Maya, who was also labelled "neurotic" by Gautama. Shree in Raji Narasimhan's Forever Free (1979) divorces her jeal

ous husband, She has two other relationships. Rao thinks of her as a vessel of passion and Wally the Britisher thinks of her as Goddess Lakshmi. Neither takes

her for the woman she is. She has a purifica-tory bath and returns home to her mother. Isn't this what Karuna too does in Socialite Evenings?

There are women and women in Indo-English fiction. While Rukmani and pativrata are not on the wane, the woman in Indo-En-glish fiction of recent years is not oblivious to her situation. She ei-ther consciously accepts it or rebels against it. But in cither case, she remains the loser. Shantha Krishnaswamy comments: "She achieves self awareness by defining herself against social matrices. When the societal pressure points, being inexorable, give excruciating pain, there is a mental breakdown or collapse which allows an escape by self-delusion. This delusion is a temporary phase in as much as her high intelligence and acumen drive her onwards to full confrontation with reality and face the consequences.' s." Conscious acceptance means a willing suppression of identity or an erasure of identity. She either loses sanity like Maya or she practises self-deception on a grand scale like Anjali. Rebellion too gets her nowhere. Monisha rebels and ends up a murderess. So does Dimple. Another kind of rebellion is the divorce. The woman to be accepted as an individual, goes through a divorce. Karuna and Anjali in Socialite Evenings and Shree in Forever Free are cases in point. However, divorce and rebel-lion are hardly solutions, "She is too imbued with the permanence of marriage to be completely happy."10 Anjali cannot think of being all by herself and turns to another marriage. Thus one finds that Indo-English fiction in its treatment of women exhibits what can be called the Rapunzel Syndrome. In the fairy tale Rapunzel by Brothers Grimm, there is Rapunzel the beautiful girl with golden hair, the wicked witch who imprisons her, there is the tower where she is imprisoned and the rescuer, a handsome Prince.

The clements are only too obvious in the treatment of the Indian woman. Maya, Monisha, Dimple, Karuna-each plays Rapunzel, the witch being their parents, parents-in-law or husbands and the tower being the attitudes of society, social mores, the rigid traditional framework into which the woman is cast. In the original fairy tale the Rescuer is a solution. In the Rapunzel Syndrome, the Rescuer is not of much help. In the fairy tale he ends up in the tower cheated by the witch and in his effort to escape, he falls upon thorns and becomes blind. That is how the Rescuer in Indo-English fiction stays. It is only

in the fairy tale that he meets Rapunzel in the desert, gets back his vi sion and they live happily ever after. The traditional Indian woman has been subtly indoctrinated to ac.

cept her position in life and not to exercise her free will. She is taught the necessity of a stable marriage and family-family as security, as a source of emotional strength. Saru in Shashi Deshpande's The Dark Holds No Terrors (1980) in spite of sexual abuse by her doctor hus-band does not get out of marriage. She "could do nothing....can never do anything but endure." Simrit, who puts up with a divorce in Nayantara Sahgal's The Day in Shadow (1976), can face life with optimism only with the help of a man like Raj. Anjali and Ritu both opt for security in Socialite Evenings, each in her own way.

In the midst of such prototypes, Karuna in Socialite Evenings and Shree in Forever Free refuse to conform to the patterns of male-ori-ented and male-approved social behaviour. They are rebels who, faced with a choice between their conviction and conformity, have the courage of conviction to say No to conformity.

By defining women through their private emotional experiences alone, fiction in a sense perpetuates a lie. Women do not live off their relationships. They still have contact with the material world, with people and things outside their own intimate feelings. Surely the novel should credit women with more forms of experience than their personal or sexual entaglements. Thus new alternative images, in-stead of narrowing, try to expand women's consciousness of them-selves. Karuna might be the beginning. Isn't it matter enough to rejoice?

NOTES

1. Meenakshi Mukherjec, The Twice Bom Fiction (New Delhi Arnold-Heinemann, 1971), pp. 28-29

2. R.S. Sharma, Anita Desai (New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann, 1981), p. 47.

3. Anita Desai, Cry, The Peacock (1963, rpt. New Delhi: Orient Books, 1980), p. 9.

4. Alladi Uma, Woman and Her Family (New Delhi: Sterling, 1989), p. 25.

5. Shobha De, Socialite Evenings (New Delhi: Penguin, 1989), p 18.

6. Alladi Uma, p. 19.

7. Ibid., p. 25.

8. Bharati Mukherjee, Wife (New Delhi: Sterling, 1976), p. 208.

9. Shantha Krishnaswamy, Glimpses of Women in India (New Delhi: Ashish, 1983), p. 241.

10. Alladi Uma, p. 9.

11. Shashi Deshpande, The Dark Holds No Terrors (New Delhi: Vikas, 1980), p. 182.

1.1.T., Madras

Gunas as Determinants of Character: A Study of R.K. Narayan's The Guide

RAMA NAIR

Modern literary criticism seeks to analyze the text in terms of seman-tic, syntactic and emotive levels of meaning. The meaning of a text can rarely be fully explicated in terms of a socio-linguistic or a psy-cholinguistic approach. The meaning often depends on what is not directly stated by the author. Critical theories which have influenced the Indian mind in recent times have their origin in Western analyti-cal thought. This is ironic because India has its own remarkable his-tory of ancient literary criticism which can be successfully applied to its own modern writing in English. The aim of this paper is to high-light one such theory-the theory of 'gunas' to seek an Indian ori-entation in the analysis of character portrayal in The Guide.

The Guide "raises overwhelming questions such as the relation be-tween appearance and reality, the man and the mask, and ends and means, thereby highlighting the essential ambiguities of the human condition." The novel is structured around the 'adventures' of Raju, the tourist guide, who is transformed into a saint and a martyr. The story is far from simplistic. The transformation is brought about by a highly complex process because Raju, throughout, is playing one role or the other. We never really get to know the 'real' Raju as he has no single focus. The turning point in Raju's life is his encounter with Rosie. He gets entangled with her, and plays the role of her deliv erer. His possessive instinct and greed turn him into a criminal. In jail, he plays the role of a self-appointed 'guide' to his fellow-prison-ers. His final role, that of a fake spiritual guide to the credulous vil-lagers is partly thrust on him due to his original roguish tendencies. The culminating irony of the novel lies in the metamorphosis of the fake sadhu into a 'Mahatma' who opportunely dies on the last day of

the fast to deliver the villagers from the rigours of drought. Raju, like the archetypal crocodile in the novel, is a symbol of hy-pocrisy till the moment of his martyrdom. His death 'redeems' him,

just as the death of the crocodile in the drought enriches the villagers who discover a vast treasure trove in its split stomach.

Raju, thus, offers a fascinating subject for character analysis. Raju's character is as intricate as it is ambiguous. Are there any fac-tors which determine the

spiritual evolution of Raju? Can the reader, irrespective of the author's intention, discover certain elements in the narrative which determine the role played by Raju at different peri-ods? Raju is ultimately caught in the web of self-deception he himself had woven but the climactic revelation at the end belies his own de-ception. Raju dies not as a deceiver but as a man redeemed and glo-rified by his last and only act of pure selflessness. As Raju tells Velan: "I am not a saint, Velan, I am just an ordinary human being like anyone else." 2

C.D. Narasimhaiah observes, "It is in the struggle of the ordinary man to realize the full potentialities, not of his greatness, but of 'not so great-that which lies within the reach of many, but goes to waste except in men like Raju-that Narayan's gifts are best employed."[3] Raju's evolution through the three significant stages of his life-as the railway guide, as Rosie's lover and as the Swami - merit a closer analysis.

The concept of gunas as postulated by the Samkhya philosophy of Hindu thought can offer a possible mode of analysis in determining the factors that mould an individual character. In Hindu philosophy, the human spirit is regarded as an integral whole. It is the spiritual essence that matters; man's actions determine his ultimate spiritual nature. In many this potential for self-realization is never achieved. The concept of gunas can be used as a critical tool to understand the underlying structures which determine a man's consciousness.

We are, here, concerned with the metaphysical interpretation of the term as gunas have also been defined as 'literary qualities' or 'constituent excellences' expressed in figurative language which can intensify the suggestion of feelings, moods and emotions in a literary work. Patanjali's Yogasutras have defined the concept of gunas in meta-physical terms. It states that,

The object of experience is composed of three gunas-the principles of illumination (sattwa), activity (rajas) and inertia (tamas). From these, the whole Universe has evolved together with the instruments of knowledge-such as the mind, senses

etc., and the objects perceived such as the physical elements The Universe exists in order that the experiencer may experi ence it and thus become liberated.

Patanjali believed that the Cosmos consists of two forces-the Pra. kriti (the elemental undifferentiated stuff of mind and matter), and Punisha (or Atman). Prakriti is the Reality as is evident to our human senses and so is distorted and illusory. Prakriti is composed of three) forces, sattwa, rajas and tamas known collectively as the three gunas. In the process of evolution,

sattwa is the essence of the form which has to be realized, tamas is the inherent obstacle to its realization, and rajas is the power by which that obstacle is removed and the essential form made manifest.5

Sattwa, or equilibrium expresses sses itself in calmness, purity and tran-quillity, rajas or activity, in desire, power and energy, tamas or iner-tia, in dullness, laziness and weakness.

More than often, these gunas are in conflict with each other. One or the other dominates, and the character of the individual is deter-mined by the predominant guna. In fact the human mind can be lik-ened to the battlefield of Kurukshetra where a continuous war is waged against the forces of evil, so that Purusha or the Atman which resides in all can be realized.

Character portrayal in The Guide can be interpreted in terms of these gunas. Gunas can presuppose the question of basic predisposi-tions called Samskaras and fate (Karma). Samskaras is, in fact, our character at any given moment. Samskaras can be modified by the in-troduction of different kinds of thought waves into the mind. Rosie, on discovering Raju's treachery has only this to say, "I felt all along that you were not doing the right things. This is Karma." (193) In Hindu thought, a mental or physical act is called Karma. Karma is the sum-total of a man's past actions, in this and previous lives, which determine his present life. Liberation can be achieved only through spiritual self-realization.

In Hindu philosophy names of individuals do not matter. Actions determine one's individuality and character. The names of the cen tral characters in The Guide are not individualistic. They are vague, impersonal. The reader is never told either Raju's, or Marco's real

name. Nalini becomes Rosie after her rise to success as a dancer under Raju's tutelage.

The concept of gunas determines the beginning and the ending of the novel. Raju is the product of a decadent culture. His childhood was spent on a railway

platform, where, initially, he looked after his father's shop selling "bigger bunches of bananas, stacks of Mempu oranges, huge troughs of fried stuff and colourful peppermints and sweets" together with "packets of cigarettes." (37) He disliked school, and as he later says, "all this business of expansion in our family helped me achieve a very desirable end-the dropping off of my school unobtrusively." (38) The railway platform is itself a symbol of rootlessness and restlessness. Raju, himself, is rootless. The guna that predominates is tamasic. He later came to be called Railway Raju, the tourist guide of Malgudi, through no particular effort on his part.

He would have probably continued with his inert and stagnant ex-istence as his father's shopkeeper had it not been for the fact that "It is written on the brow of some that they shall not be left alone." (49) Raju continues, "I am one such, I think. Although I never looked for acquaintances, they some-how came looking for me." (49) Raju's natural felicity with words and his ability to involve himself with the affairs of others soon had him thinking of himself as "a part-time shopkeeper and a full time tourist guide." (53) The question of his preferences was secondary. Had Raju remained as Railway Raju, content with his mundane existence, then his character would not have evolved beyond the tamasic state.

However, Raju's mood and character undergo a tremendous change with the advent of Rosic, the 'snake woman' in his life. He is as fascinated and mesmerised by her beauty as she is by the dancing cobra that Raju took her to see the first time. A man can cultivate any one of the gunas by his actions and thoughts and way of living. There is now a metamorphosis in Raju. He becomes dynamic, vital, alert. His love for Rosie, his determination to help her realize her full potential as a dancer away from her husband's restricting influence give a new perspective to his vision. Rajas is the guna that dominates in this phase of his life. There is passion and aggressive activity in each of his actions. Unless this energy is channelised in the right di-rection, it can become self-destructive.

In Raju's case, love degenerates into lust and deception. Rosie's success meant more wealth for Raju. He becomes arrogant, pomp-

ous and conceited. But, at the same time, he is extremely clever in his dealings with Rosie, always keeping her well within his control. Greed overcomes him and he becomes possessive, selfish and jeal-ous. Jealous of Rosie's continued attachment to her husband he cun-ningly hides the book on The Cultural History

of South India written by Marco. When Rosie discovers it, the chasm between them widens. The climax is reached when Raju forges Marco's signature to appro-priate the box of jewellery. Marco, in his magnanimity, had wished to return to Rosie. Such acts produce appropriate results. His Karma bears fruit in his conviction on charges of forgery. There is an Indian saying: "The bee came to suck the honey, but his feet got stuck in it." Raju mistakes his fool's paradise for reality. Driven by desire, lust and ego, he is trapped in the web of maya. Attachment to wealth, fame, status, and the anxiety which accompanies it, prevent Raju from realizing his sattwic state.

The third phase of Raju's life is again complex. Released from prison, he realizes that he has nowhere to go. Circumstances compel him to unwillingly accept the role of a sadhu, a fake one at that. Raju has to achieve maturity the hard way. Raju's purificatory ritual has yet to begin. One would have thought that Raju would have become an embittered recluse after his bitter experience. But, when the novel opens Raju is still in good spirits, sitting on a slab of stone as if it were a throne, patronizingly welcoming the 'intrusion' of Velan, the gullible villager.

M.K. Naik observes, "perhaps the finest stoke of the irony of fate is that Raju, a man of the world, is worsted by three men who are all innocent. Marco, the unworldly scholar who exposes his forgery, Velan the simple rustic who refuses to be shocked by his revelations and compels him to continue to play the saint up to the bitter end; and last but not least the village moron who twists his message to the villagers, forcing Raju to the fasi-unto-death." The enforced fasting though brought about unwittingly, solves Raju's dilemma. The physi cal body is the grossest manifestation of man's consciousness. Spiri tual discipline is needed to mortify the desires of the flesh. Raju's attempts in this direction are not voluntary. It begins with a vindictive resolution to chase away all thought of food. He says "for the next ten days I shall eradicate all thoughts of tongue and stomach from my mind." (213) This resolution gives him a peculiar strength. He rein forces it by counselling himself thus: "If by avoiding food I should help the trees bloom and the grass grow, why not do it thoroughly?"

(213) The realization of such spiritual strength within himself brings to Raju's restless mind a strange state of calm and tranquillity. Self-seeking desires give way to the illuminating revelation that "for the first time in his life he was making an earnest effort, for the first time he was learning the thrill of full application, outside money and love; for the first time he was doing a thing in which he was

not personally interested." (213) When asked by the American interviewer as to whether he had always been a Yogi, Raju's answer is "Yes; more or less." (219) In the last days of his existence, he truly becomes a Yogi. As a man's mind becomes purified, he gradually loses his sense of identification with his body. He becomes indifferent to his physical surroundings. Raju, now, becomes increasingly dominated by sattwa, the quality of inner purity and spiritual illumination. When asked to break his fast to save his life, Raju's whispered reply is, "Help me to my feet." (221) Supported on either side by Velan and another devo-tee, Raju goes down the steps of the river, finally reaching his basin of water. He steps into it, shuts his eyes and turning towards the mountains mutters his prayer. When the morning sun brightens the landscape, Raju opens his eyes, looks about and says, "Velan, it's raining in the hills, I can feel it coming up under my feet, up mv legs" (221) and collapses. The ending is deliberately ambiguous.

The isolated episodes of Raju's life are isolated no longer. Each experience is instrumental in helping him arrive at the inner essence of things. Raju, now achieves a state of unified consciousness, a state which cannot be realized when "Life, which can promise much when under the control of a moral order or is deferential to a higher view of the universe, goes to pieces because of a man's hubris, his inordin-ate self-esteem, his love of the limelight."" Raju's spiritual triumph is a reaffirmation of the sattwic potential that is innate in every individ-ual. The same critical framework can be applied to Rosie's character also.

The theory of gunas implies that perfection is implicit in every in-dividual. But it gets deflected by wrong samskaras. The gunas can be purified by re-channelising the energies. Narayan has more than once stressed his concern with human character. He declares, "My main concern is with human character-a central character from whose point of view the world is seen and who tries to get over a dif-ficult situation or succumbs to it or fights it in his own setting." This paper has attempted to analyze one such character.

NOTES

1. M.K. Naik, The Ironic Vision: A Study of the Fiction of R.K. Narayan (New Delhi: Sterling, 1983), p. 54.

2. R.K. Narayan, The Guide (Mysore: Indian Thought Publications, Rpt. 1985), p. 99.

3. C.D. Narasimhaiah, The Swan and the Eagle (Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1969), p. 149.

4. Patanjali's Yogasutras, trans. Swami Prabhavananda (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1953), p. 81.

5. Ibid., p. 16.

6. M.K. Naik, p. 59

7. C.D. Narasimhaiah, p. 150.

8. M.K. Naik, p. 2.

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Vikram Seth's From Heaven Lake: Travels Vikra through Sinkiang and Tibet as a Romantico-Literary Travelogue

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Non-fictional prose in Indian Writing in English on the whole is a ne-glected area. Travel literature happens to be one of the least ex-plored and most neglected

areas of literature. This is an attempt to focus attention on one of the significant travelogues of modern times. Vikram Seth, a student of Economics at Stanford University, Califor-nia, now lives in Delhi. He created a sensation in America with the publication of his verse novel of six hundred sonnets The Golden Gate whose chief merit is that, it is a novel in verse. However, Seth makes an art of travelling in From Heaven Lake: Travels through Sinkiang and Tibet, and expands one's awareness into realization of how "the soul of a journey is liberty, perfect liberty, to think, feel do just as one pleases." This 'unusual' and 'unexpected' book, a recre-ation of his particular adventure, fetched him the 1983 Thomas Cook travel book award.

Seth's travel book compels a perfect understanding of a footloose conscience with its romantic attitude to travelling. When the officer in Germu asks him about the purpose of his travelling, Seth says: "I'm just travelling." Curiosity is the first incentive of Seth's explora-tions through Sinkiang and Tibet in From Heaven Lake. Most travel-lers have a specifically delimited purpose. Seth is different. He is driven by no specific consideration. He travels just for the romance of it. He tells us: "I have always wanted to go to Tibet, yet I know that this is largely due to the glamour surrounding the unknown. My pur pose is not to travel in Tibet, but merely to pass through it while 'coming home' as I write to my parents 'by a more interesting route." (33)

Seth's moral self-determination to take the land route in his col ourful get up of "blue clothes, blue cap, small orange backpack, one

large black bag, two small black bags" for "this was a hitchhiking journey" and that in spite of the easy availability of modern facilities for travelling lets us know of not only his strong desire for novelty and adventure, but also of his desire for wandering being an intimate personal need and that is the reason why he travels by the interesting route, though he faces many trials and tribulations. Seth even bursts forth into a romantic lamentation: "I feel sympathetic towards Mr. Ho (a

foreign officer in Lhasa) who has been disturbed by an im poverished and importunate Waibin (meaning himself) with no place to stay, nowhere to go and who hasn't even reported to the police yet." (113)

Though he travelled for the romance of it, Seth feels "to learn about another culture is to enrich one's life, to understand one's country better, to feel more at home in the world and indirectly to add to that reservoir of individual goodwill that may, generations from now, temper the cynical use of national powe: " (120) Travel discovers for him the understanding that conflicts are "the fault of governments," and hence according to him, "One's attitudes towards a place are only partly determined by the greatness of its history or the magnificence of its scenery," and further tells, "when I think of China, I think first of my friends and only then of Quin Shi Huang's tomb." (36)

From Heaven Lake introduces the reader to Seth's remarkable ability to evoke the texture of Chinese and Tibetan experiences. He does not tolerate repetition of either metaphor, or subject, or device, and the reader is impressed by his linguistic and metaphorical den-sity.

Seth's travelogue is brilliantly written throughout. The pleasant part of travelling is that even ordinary matters often acquire, either by their novelty or unexpectedness, the appearance of an adventure and that is why Seth writes in his oasis interlude at Nanhu:

As I pass through a corridor of sunflowers on the way back to the house, I encounter a dog who tries to kick me and a goat who tries to bite me. At the house, the mother is breast-feeding the insatiable baby. Her six-year old niece looks on and laughs. From defiant curiosity and dread of me she has progressed to friendly mimicry. She is called Xie Xie, and has small plaits. Together we watch three boys unload carloads of sand by the wall outside the house. They then drive the donkey-carts on

with cries of 'Kirrik! Kirrik!, (71)

Even a tractor that "occasionally pauses on the upper road," a girl who comes down to the edge of the lake "to fill a couple of buckets of water on a shoulder pole," a woman who "brings a buffalo down to the lake," three or four naked children "who play in the shallows" (69) intrigue him, raise his curiosity and give him pleasure. It is this poetic appreciation which is the result of an impartial

perception of beauty in what is ordinary but natural that grants aesthetic pleasure. Its evocative meaning suggests that beauty is what is natural, and "beauty is pleasure objectified" or at least "a promise of pleasure. "2 Again, in his appreciation of a mother nursing her baby, Seth facili-tates the idea that "it is the perfection of natural function that pleases a healthy taste"[3]; and consequently yields a better under-standing of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance with their Madonna and the Child.

For the felicity of picturesqueness too, the reader feels grateful to Vikram Seth. Much of the orphic quality of the book is derived from his talent at presenting picturesqueness poetically. This winsome quality is one of the dominant features of the book. The picturesque ekes out the romance of an aesthetic piligrimage. His entry into Nepal is heralded by a picturesquely poetic scene. On the landscape becoming increasingly familiar, he enthrals the senses by a delightful scene of colour which is so reminiscent of scenes in India for him. He writes about "terraced fields of rice, banana trees, flame of the for-est, Champa... a piece of indigo-coloured paper fluttering by the side of the path.... Two women in bright saris walk through the em-erald fields and shops that are full of "brilliantly coloured cloth and bangles." (172)

Seth's incessantly active and inquisitive mind accounts for many a lively passage. He writes with active energy about "an atmosphere of febrile confusion" at Pashupatinath. It also includes a comment on the superstitious beliefs of the Nepalese: "A small shrine half pro-trudes from the stone platform on the river bank. When it emerges fully, the goddess inside will escape, and the evil period of the Kaliyug will end on earth." (174)

The trials and tribulations of Seth give From Heaven Lake a novel-istic quality. The truck journey on the treacherous terrains, made even more treacherous by the "mark dly monsoonal" weather, the trucks every now and then "incapable as dinosaurs" lying sunk in the

earth made soft by the heavy downpour of rain, hailstorms, the wind penetrating him to the bone, feet moist in the shoes, cramped and cold feeling, only biscuits and raisins for breakfast, lunch and dinnts, tea that is oily and greasy and more like soup and soup itself "alive with odious globe of porkfats with bits of skin and hair still on them, (94) added to this, problems with his exit visa, the time limit which made him anxious to reach Lhasa and Sui, the truck driver's frequen stops

which make Seth restless with anxiety, etc. point to his Robin-son Crusoe-like endurance and determination which suggests a unity that is both geographical and spiritual. Seth's pleasant visions and hallucinations of nostalgic yearning for escape into the romantic land of the "wooded paths, with acorns and chestnuts strewn across the ground, the layers of leaf-mould, the sun-light spraying through the branches of the wutang trees" (19) make his travel book romantically attractive and he seems more and more like a novelistic hero.

Incidents narrated by Seth are not only interesting and entertain ing but also informative and illuminating. They possess a quasi-per. ceptual and quasi-inferential quality. The enticing ingenuity and the confidence with which he tries to impress Akbar, the young foreign officer who endorses travel passes in Turfan, serves as an excellent example. Equally informative and entertaining is the incident relating to the old shopkeeper of Urumgi who, on learning that Seth was "Yindu. Hindustan," wants to sell the cap Seth was buying for his journey to Tibet at half the original price, and when the author re-fuses the extra yen returned to him, the old shopkeeper rips open the cap, as if in a huff, to the consternation and amazement of Seth, but learns from the boy Hussain that it was to make the stitching firmer. Episodes with human appeal give the sense of man's comic-tragic dignity like the one about the colour photograph of Seth's family.. The photograph brings about a sudden change in the attitude of the policeman of Germu, who had in the name of Guiding shi guiding, got the author out of bed as early as 3.15 in the morning. The change is so remarkable that not only does the policeman not compel the au-thor to fill the registration forms but he even says: "No need to come to the police station. We'll send the forms along," (79) and when Seth, taken aback by this sudden change, thanks him, he gracefully acknowledges and wishes the author good sleep and good journey. And episodes which reflect the mutability of fortune like the one about the Tibetan Norbu and his family who, because of the Chinese

Revolution and for no fault of theirs suffer for thirteen years untold miseries that caused the death of their mother, increase the sensitive appeal of the travel book and indicate Seth's talent in applying the resources of his artist's intelligence.

Strange religious rites and customs are presented, and Seth with the visual actuality that good writing always possesses, creates a mor-bidly picturesque

scene of the ceremony of funeral rites he witnesses near the Sera monastery. The unfamiliar scene adds to the romantic clement in the book.

The strange custom of "human corpses lying on the rock, stripped and held in place by the head, while the lower torso, beginning from the legs, is hacked or cut up," and of men "clad in white" working with "impressive speed, severing, chopping and mincing the meat mashed and mixed with barley meal before being fed to the eagles" and "of a monk who stands there in his maroon and yellow robes, and blesses the meal" (149) etc. make the entire ceremony romanti-cally mysterious. Enthralled by the waterfalls of Nilamu, "bright silver in the noon light," the author gets into the mood for poetry and philosophy. His meditation on water is one of the most evocative passages in the book. The passage discovers for the reader, Seth's interest in philos-ophy, as his analytical sketch of a flute player reveals his interest in art. His interest in painting, architecture, sculpture, literature, his-tory, etc. of subjects allowed for treatment in a travelogue.

Lengthy descriptions of scenes of nature and other aspects of human and natural environment enrich the narrative and also define the elastic scope of the travel book. His lengthy explicatory analysis of the Cultural Revolution and its impact on the people of China and Tibet which reveals not only a sense of chronology but also a sense of cultural change in regard to the past and the present, accounts of army camps, and descriptive account of yaks in Southern Quinghal, together explain Seth's talent for creating serious as well as light situ-ations. A smart sense of homour and intelligent wit contribute to the fas-cinating appeal of From Heaven Lake. An experience at the Shuang Men Lou Hotel in Nanjing provokes humour that is irresistible. Seth tells how because of his "hair cut" and Chinese "spectacles" the guard at the gate challenges him with: "Stop comrade" and fires at him a volley of questions: "Didn't you hear me? What unit are you from? You can't go there" etc., and when the guard comes closer,

Seth says, "he looks abashed, but I am pleased with my loss of hair and gain of spectacles, I do not now appear emphatically un-Chine If I need to stress my foreignness," he adds, "I will fiddle with the knobs on my digital watch." (34)

From Heaven Lake provides enjoyment of dramatic depiction.. dramatic in the sense of defining characters through the way they speak and are spoken to.

Seth's travelogue contains matry pleasan dialogues. Dialogues and conversations increase the clarity and inter-est of From Heaven Lake. In Seth's book much of the spirit of life in China and Tibet is known through conversations with the Chinese and Tibetan people he meets on his hitch willing routes. These peo-ple add to the novel-like and dramatic quality of the travelogue, since they are people the author is able to spend time with, so that by the time he leaves them, he knows them, and since he knows them the reader too knows them the better for it. Just as they grow upon Vikram Seth on acquaintance, they grow upon the reader too. Be sides, the novel-like and dramatic quality, dialogues and conversa tions all contribute towards emphasizing the informality of form in travel book.

From Heaven Lake is full of acute observations and minute de scriptions, pointing to the writer's mind that is constantly at work, being guided in the journey by a keen alertness, and that in spite of what the author says about his journey:

As I sit in my seat sipping tomato juice and adjusting my watch to New Delhi time, the whole of the last two months takes on a dreamy quality. I can more easily see myself standing outside the police station at Turfan than travelling through Anduo or Shigatse. Even having been to Tibet, it still strikes me as 'some where I would like to travel to, a place I feel I still know next to nothing about.

Almost to reassure myself that this journey did take place, I recite an incantation of names: Turfan, Urumqi, Luyuan, Dunhuang, Magu, Lhasa, Shigatse, Nilamu, Zhangmu, Lamasangu, Kathamandu. But alongside, these names are oth ers-Quizha, Sui, Norbu-that mean even more to me. (177) But then, this rumination is typical of a romantic temperament. Seth is rather like a hero of a romance, a pleasant picaro like Don Quixote. Like the hero of a romance, he embarks on a quest; only his

quest is for "a more interesting route" to New Delhi, which ends on his reaching his home in Delhi with a "gunny bag" of luggage over his shoulder.

NOTES

1. Vikram Seth, From Heaven Lake: Travels through Sinkiang and Tibet (London: Abascus, 1987).

2. Will Durant, The Pleasures of Philosophy (New York, 1981), p. 157.

3. Ibid., p. 202.

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The Fictional Technique of Khushwant Singhe

A Case Study of Delhi

MOHAN JHA

Here is a writer, Khushwant Singh, who is a journalist, an editor, a columnist writing on diverse topics, supposedly with malice to toe and all which, in effect, means with malice to none; who is a histo rian, and if not a historian in the regular sense of the term, at least a person interested in Indian history and the history of the Sikhs, whe writes stories and novels, and is a creative artist in his own right; sho has been a diplomat, an M.P., a globe-trotter enjoying the delicacies of life with great relish and gusto; who is seemingly sex-obsessed and while tickling our senses hurts our sensibility, the Indian sensibilty, who, perhaps by dint of his legal acumen, takes every possible oppor tunity to generate controversies and debates; who proclaims to the world that he does not care a damn for his readers, Indian or foreign, for ostensible reasons, and who almost dutifully observes that he writes only when he finds something compelling to write about. I took Shah Jehan over twenty years to get the Taj Mahal built, so says Khushwant Singh, and this monument is an architectural glory, a marvel, one of the seven wonders of the world. And here is this Indo English writer who has taken more than twenty years to complete writing Delhi in impeccable English, used almost effortlessly, which could be any Englishman's envy. How do we look at it? And what 25-sessment of Khushwant Singh's fictional technique do we make, par-ticularly in relation to the novel in question?

The blurb of the book announces Delhi to be a novel. We feel ca rious about the use of this epithet, and summon our courage to think if this laboriously-written book could be mistaken for an "entertain ment," and if we could apply the much-discussed, though possibly available, currency of "entertainment" and "novel" to this book as we do in the case of Greene's fictional writings. As we complete reading Delhi - indeed a highly readable book- from cover to cover,

several questions come surging in our mind which we have first to ar-ticulate properly and then to see how we could meet them satisfacto-rily. Is Delhi a guidebook for the tourists in Delhi? or, is it in a certain way a treatise on Sufism? or, is it an album of sex-exploits? or, is it a re-hash of the medieval and contemporary history of Delhi? or else, is it a plea for the resurrection of Delhi's secular character, to all intents and purposes, of the character of Indian polity itself, for Delhi, if it is not the life of the world as Mirza Ghalib says, is at least the

soul of India. Mr. Singh, however, assures us that he has nothing to do with propaganda, that he is never conscious of the purpose be-hind his writings in an utilitarian sense, and that once "you are con-scious of a purpose of writing, then you are only becoming a propagandist. What Khushwant Singh says should have given us a mental relief, an escape from the welter of questions crowding in on us to induce us to accept Delhi as only a novel, a work of art, and as nothing else; however, here is Meer telling us: "I had two loves in my life, Begum Qamarunnissa and Delhi. One destroyed me, the other was destroyed for me." (232) Delhi is Delhi; it has its own history, but even with her guiles and deceptions, Qamarunnissa, in Meer's eyes, is all poetry and beauty and dream. Leaving aside the "destruc-tion" part of Meer's outburst, we may say that Khushwant Singh too has two loves in his life, Delhi and art. Delhi, for him, is not merely a place on the map of India, just a physical entity with its long and chequered history, more than anything else, it is his obsession, his passion, his "emotional involvement," and, as he says, what he has tried to do through his book is "to share with other people the emo-tions [this city] arouses in [him]." Could we then look upon Delhi as a blend of history and myth, of fact and fiction? or, putting it differ-ently, as a historical novel?

II

There is absolutely no difficulty in accepting Delhi as a history of sorts, and we should have no hesitation in agreeing with Khushwant Singh when he says that he had "to pick and choose episodes which tell the story [of Delhi] from 1008 A.D. upto the assassination of Mrs. Indira Gandhi and the riots that followed which I decided would be the cut-off point." The events and situations described in the book are real; so are the characters we encounter in it, and, justifiably enough, Khushwant Singh portrays Delhi in all its vividness, its birds

and animals, its flowers and fruits, its green fields and drab, billy tracts, its tombs and mausoleums, its minarets and towers and mons ments, the dirt and squalor of Old Delhi alongwith the glamour and splendour of New Delhi with the construction of which his family has been closely associated. So, Delhi is not a guidebook for tourists. Now is it a treatise on Sufism for the reason that whatever in it is said about Nizamuddin Auliya and Ameer Khusrau, or about the ecstatic, rapturous celebration of divine love, "our umbrella against the burn-ing

sun of Muslim bigotry and the downpour of Hindu contempt" (62) is presented in a historical context. Delhi is only a history of sorts, partly because so many other things belonging to the period in question are left out, but chiefly because the points of view some of the important historical figures, Aurangzebe and Nadir Shah for er ample, come out with in self-defence impart biographical twists to history. Delhi is partly biographical and partly autobiographical, even so, by virtue of the deep and sustained researches the writer has made into history, it impresses us as a highly informative book. All the same, Delhi is a piece of literature, a novel and in all fairness, we have to consider it as such.

III

(Delhi is a novel of remembrance, remembrance of things past, dis tant or recent, of nostalgia, of varying moods and emotional configu rations, and the use of first-person narrative-"I" in the case of lesser mortals like Musaddi Lal, Meer, Alice Aldwell or Ayesha, Ram Rakha, and the author in a certain guise, "we" in the case of Kings and emperors such as Aurangzebe, Nadir Shah and Bahadur Shah Zafar, has its own appropriateness. This novel could have been a montage piece, or an exercise in stream-of-consciousness tech-nique, which it is not, for the reason that though it moves through time and space, the chronological account of select events and epi sodes and the systematic, almost routine change-over from the past to the present and vice-versa give it a linear form. It is episodic all right, but the episodes in the book are presented through characters with the result that the dominance of characters over the story tur turns it into a character-oriented novel. It is this very nature of the novel that explains the use of first-person narrative in it. And howsoever thin the line of demarcation may be in this case between history and literature, between fact and fiction, the sudden transitions in this

novel from sex to death, from levity to seriousness, from opulence to privation, and the parallelisms effected, either wittingly or unwit-tingly, between Bhagmati and Delhi, between the profane and the di-vine, inject into it a kind of complexity worth-exploring. We do not know, though, what one whole chapter on flatulence is doing in this novel. It is true that almost all the chapters in Delhi captioned "Bhagmati" have been cast in a lighter mould; the chapter on flatu lence is also an interlude, intended perhaps for comic relief from the deadening

turn of events, and still we have our own reservations as to the propriety of this chapter. Khushwant Singh's Delhi is spared the flatness of run-along-the-lines novels not merely because in the inter-action between the story and the character it is the latter that gains a distinctive edge over the former but also because of the symbolism that goes into the making of this novel Is Bhagmati a symbol? And if so, what is she there for? Bhagmati is a hijra, neither male nor female, and yet Bhagmati is a woman, a harlot, the "worst-dressed," the "plainest-looking." the "coarsest" (28) whore in Delhi. The "I" of the first chapter and of the "Bhagmati" chapters, obviously a Sikh, perhaps the author himself in a certain guise, says: "I return to Delhi as 1 return to my mistress Bhagmati when I have had my fill of whoring in foreign lands. Delhi and Bhagmati have a lot in common. Having been long misused by rough people they have learnt to conceal their seductive charms under a mask of repulsive ugliness. It is only to their lovers, among whom I count myself, that they reveal their true selves." (1) And later it is the very same "I" who sulkily blurts out: "I am beginning to tire of Bhagmati as I am of Delhi," (315) and goes on to state: "once you are in their clutches there is no escape." (316) We may naturally infer that Bhagmati symbolizes Delhi, and this view is confirmed by the author himself when he says: "The hijra stands for a symbol of sterility. It can never conceive and I thought this was a wonderful symbol for a city in which so much has happened like a sexual inter-course that repeats itself. With Delhi too, with all that has happened to it in the way of violence, in the way of change of dynasties, it has still not produced anything as great as one would have expected of it Both Bhagmati and Delhi, it is true, have been raped and plun-dered and pillaged; both have, perhaps, been temptresses, ensnaring people in their charms, but to say that, like a hijra, Delhi has been sterile and that it "has not produced anything as great as one would have expected of it" is to bark up the wrong tree. Delhi has all

through been in a state of flux; from the days of the Kurus and Pandavas, when it was known as Hastinapur and Indraprastha, to which stray references are made in the novel, it has gone on chang ing; it has been a witness to the rise and fall of several kingdoms and dynasties, to the emergence of people and institutions of great dis tinction, and its growth from a small hamlet into a cosmopolitan city is a tribute to its capacity for change, to its power of absorbing and assimilating different and differing strands of culture. No, Delhi is not sterile, and to this extent Bhagmati as a symbol for Delhi is mis conceived. Nevertheless, she is a symbol. It would not be beside the point at this place to refer to the

symbolical implications of "bees" and "locusts," the clusters and hordes of which have been described as attacking people and the flora and fauna, and which do point to the pillaging and plundering of Delhi from time to time, particularly from the time when Ghazni, Gori and Taimur ransacked it to the 1984 riots following the assassination of Mrs. Gandhi, which took a heavy toll of Sikh lives represented by the killing of Budh Singh in Delhi.

What should we do with "mango" as a symbol in the novel? New myths or new reconstructs of old myths entail new rituals and sym-bols, and it is not without reason that one full chapter is devoted to mangoes and to the pleasure of eating ripe mangoes. The "mango" is a sex symbol in the novel. "Bhagmati's great passion other than me (as I like to think)," we read, "is mangoes." (347) The mango is a symbol for sex not merely in view of its physical features but also, and perhaps chiefly, in terms of its syrupy juice, its succulence and its sweetness. In fact, there is an overdose of sex in the novel. It is true, as Khushwant Singh says, that "sex is an integral part of life" and What in the novel under consideration sex may be viewed as a symbol for "violence against Delhi, "10 but he does not realize that sex, being an integral part of life, cannot be equated with violence, for violence is not and cannot be the usual tenor of life. These two-sex and vio lence-may be intermittent and sporadic in nature, and that is why, to talk, in and out of season, only of the "variations of sex," (30) to get enmeshed in it as an obsession and a fetish, to speak of aphrodisi acs for arousing sexual desires, and to be so glib and chatty as not to spare Mahatma Gandhi (373) and his close associate, Dr. Sushila Nayyar, (364) even as a gesture of protest or ironic reversal, is not merely to be irresponsible and caddish but also to betray oneself as a poor and helpless victim of some deep-seated psychopathological

derangement.

The linear movement of the story in Delhi is somewhat mitigated by its character-oriented close-up of events, its symbolism, and by the parallelisms and sudden transitions that we encounter in it. However, the story moves on; time flies; most of the characters drift back into the recesses of history; Budh Singh dies, or is eliminated, and Bhagmati and her "1" get old. It is difficult to say if the novel opens out or closes at this point, but in any case it would not really be pru-dent to ignore the socio-cultural aspect of this work. Howsoever much

Khushwant Singh may insist that the episodes described in his book have "no social relevance to the problems of today, none what-soever, "the truth is that his commitment to the cause of secularism comes out, not palpably, but through hints and suggestions. "If any-one asked me," says Musaddi Lal, "whether we were Hindus or Mus-salmans, we would reply we were both." (62) And this is what the cunning, vile, treacherous fellow, one-eyed Rajab Ali, speaks to Hod-son Sahib:

"That Sahib is a Buddhist pillar on top of the palace of Firoze Shah," he says. I ask what can a Buddhist pillar be doing on top of a Mussalman King's palace? We pass very high walls of an ancient fort. The one-eyed chap says: "This sir, is the Purana Qila-the old fort-said to have been first built by the Aryans and was known as Indraprastha. Inside there is a mosque of Sher Shah Suri and the library of Emperor Humayun. Who is to tell the Sahib that there cannot be a mosque inside a Hindu fort!" (302)

This socio-cultural stance of the book, even if muffled, takes us nec-essarily to a study of Nihal Singh's character.

This erstwhile policeman from Punjab, Nihal Singh, now orderly to Hodson Sahib, is an ignoramus; however, he has a lifetime, all-consuming wish to visit Delhi and see things there for himself. Being a Sikh, he hates Muslims, for Aurangzebe had killed one of the Sikh Gurus, and he is somewhat rattled with the British, for, more often than not, they misbehave with the Indians. And yet, despite all in-ducements and bitternesses, he remains so very loyal to his British masters. All the same, when a Britisher kills a dancing peacock, he weeps and hurls abuses at the peacock-killing Britishers he has been fighting for. (281) And, likewise, though he is all lewd desires for the

captive Muslim prostitute jehadin Anwar Bibi, the prayers that the offers without fear and with exemplary devotion even in the face of imminent physical assault and near-certain death, knock him out d his madness; he touches her feet, seeks her forgiveness, and escorts her to safety at great risk to himself. (283-87) These two incidents may seem melodramatic; they are melodramatic, but this self-tran-scendence, this discovery or recovery of one's real self, is something peculiar to some of Khushwant Singh's character, and reminds us of Juggut Singh's case in Train to Pakistan.

IV

(Khushwant Singh says that he was inspired to write this novel on the history of Delhi or on his emotional involvement with the city of Delhi by his reading of the Yugoslav novelist Ivo Andric's Nobel Prize-winning novel, The Bridge on the Drina. Though at the mo ment it is difficult for me to compare Delhi with this Yugoslav novel, it may be compared with such classics as War and Peace, All Quiet on the Western Front, Bridge on the River Kwai, or How Green Was My Valley, or with Manohar Malgonkar's The Princes and A Bend in the Ganges, Chaman Nahal's The Crown and the Loincloth and Azadi, Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children, and Khushwant Singh's Train to Pakistan and I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale. However, with all this overdose of sex[13] and bits of melodrama, snatches of journalistic writing perhaps, in the novel, it is the strategy of identifying himself with and distancing himself from his characters and situations that enables Khushwant Singh to impart due credibility to his fictional technique, as and what we find it, in his historical novel, Delhi.

NOTES

1. "I have never given a damn for the Indian reader. In fact, I have never given a damn for any reader." K. Singh, Sunday Magazine: The Hindustan Times, January 14, 1990, p. 1.

2. R.K. Dhawan, Three Contemporary Novelists (New Delhi, 1985), p. 35.

3. Khushwant Singh, Delhi (New Delhi, 1989). See Dedication.

4. The Hindustan Times, January 14, 1990, p. 2.

5. Ibid., p. 1.

6. Ibid., p. 2.

7. Ibid., p. 1.

8. Ibid., p. 2.

9. Ibid., p. 1.

10. Loc. cit.

11. Ibid., p. 2.

12. Ibid., p. 1.

13. "I have no inhibitions in writing as explicitly as I can about [sex]. I am a dirty old man. I will remain a dirty old man and I will write as a dirty old man." Ibid., pp. 1-2.

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Man-Woman Relationship in Nayantara Sahgal's Storm in Chandigarh

G. RAI

Born in a family of freedom fighters, which had politics in its very blood and with a knowledge of politics and political figures in India, Nayantara Sahgal is indeed qualified to write political novels of high quality. An important political event forms the background for each of her novels. Her novels portray and interpret contemporary politi cal realities and explicate in artistic terms, the sombre mood

and widespread disillusionment of the post-independence generation. Her political concern has received adequate treatment though it has not been fully transmuted into art as some critics have pointed out. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar observes, "Mrs. Sahgal's feeling for politics and her command over English are rather more impressive than her art as a novelist. There is too much contriving, and the principal characters are hardly convincing; and there are satirical patches that stand out as though they have been lifted from Mrs. Sahgal's journal-ism."[1] To M.K. Naik, her novels lack a "commanding centre as the fictional story of middle class characters fails to coalesce with the po-litical plot. In her novels Mrs. Nayantara Sahgal has raised some basic problems pertaining to personal relationship and her portrayal of politics is just a part of her humanistic concern because it reveals her deep insight into human psycho

Man-woman relationship is the unit of individual and social life and hence it has been the central theme of the novelists all over the world. They have exposed the part sex is playing in man's life today. Insistence on or deviations into sex is a sign of man's chaotic mental state and the crisis of decaying values. The characters of Nayantara Sahgal, like those of Anita Desai, Nergis Dalal, Kamala Das and Sasthi Brata, reflect the changing facets of man-woman relationship in India. The women characters of Sahgal are no sex "a figure of humility, neck bent, eyes downcast." longer the subdued gal relationship and their relationship outside marriage the heroines " In their conju-

of Sahgal are solitary individuals striving for self-assertion. This paper aims at analyzing Sahgal's portrayal of complex human rela-tionship in her Storm in Chandigarh. Storm in Chandigarh (1969) is one of the best political novels writ-ten by an Indian in English. It deals with the partition of East Punjab on linguistic lines just when the state had recovered from the trauma of the 1947 partition. Beside the political background which is very well projected, there is also a human background which has not re-ceived adequate treatment. Vishal's

marriage had been a failure. A widower, he is deriving satisfaction in a liaison with Gauri, a Bengali businessman's wife who finds security in arranged marriage but she needs and establishes a relationship with Dubey which is based on sex. Vishal develops a deeper attachment to Saroj, wife of Inder who has an affair with Mara, wife of Jit - Inder and Jit being both in busi-ness. Jit and Mara however find each other in the end and Saroj es-capes to Delhi.

The fictional situation of young hearts broken up by compulsions of marriage and call of new love suggests that marriage is not just sexual relationship, it means companionship on equal terms. The cause of disturbance in the relations between man and woman partly lies in man's own inherent debility to indulge in adultery and partly in the unnatural position of the husband or the wife in the family. There is something at the very core of human dreams and longings that is fatal to fulfilment through marriage. The partners of a marriage are conscious of the security that family provides. However adultery is indulged in not just for fun but because it is a bypass in the pilgrim-age of life into which it is not at all unusual to stray. They are also un-happy because of male or female dominance in the family. They are either so timid or so tyrannical towards one another. Vishal Dubey rightly observes in the novel - "but then we all beat our wives, or our husbands, in one way or another." (187) Gauri thanks God for the security she finds in arranged marriage: "Thank God it didn't hap-pen to me. There's only one safety in India for some time to come, and that is to marry in your own state into a background you thor-oughly understand." (160) And without any inhibition she runs after passion.

Vishal's own marriage with Leela had turned out to be a vanishing search for communication. They were bound in life-long marriage and continued the adventure of being man and woman in the confu-sion of living. "She was dedicated to the cult of conformity, to ob-

serving forms that his most intense pleas had not been able to pen trate. The whole mindless mess going on down the ages with never a shaft of new light on it. Men and women contorted inte moulds, battered into sameness, the divine spiritual spark guttered out. Somewhere under the sun there must be another way to live, with relentless honesty, where the only cruelty would be pretence," (214) Throughout their lives they remained strangers to each other and there were times when living with her "he felt through a wringer." (188) He is

possessed by a deep sense of guilt for living with her without love. "He had been horror-struck at her needless death." (217)

Saroj and Inder present a picture of typical traditional Indian family in which womanhood is captured in the possessive spirit of the husband. Their relationship is purely mechanical and superficial without any feeling of affection and tenderness. "This, the touch without sexual significance, the caress of affection, was different. It cost him an effort to make it." (53) Inder thinks that women are in-herently weak, "A thousand years from now a woman will still want and need a master, the man who will own and command her-and that's the man she'll respect." (102) He is filled with pride to think of "Saroj, clinging, dependent, responding to the unpredictable law of his emotions and living in obedience to it." (138) His treatment of his wife and children is extremely indecent. He treats them as if they were non-living objects. Mara is charging him of his inhuman treat-ment of his family: "You accept an invitation to a picnic, then you just dump Saroj and the children here like sacks of potatoes and go off without so much as a word. When you turn up again you haven't even the decency to apologise for coming late." (137) Inder is terribly disturbed by the memory of his wife's pre-marital affair with another man: "The past rose in dreadful images to taunt his manhood. Jeal ousy had caugh! him unprepared he was maddened by it." (96) The adulterous affair he develops with Mara reminds him of his in-completeness, "without a word spoken she had made him aware he was isolated, that the distance between him and any other person was an infinity he might never span without help." (61) His wife Saroj on the other hand is an old-fashioned woman who tries to adapt herself to the needs of her husband, stoops and shrinks in "supplication to the man, her husband" who stands between her and light. Her mar riage is a miserable failure because she cannot "tear away the blinds between herself and Inder" (92) and establish living relationship be-

tween them. Saroj is appalled by the enormous waste of life: "she saw the human substance between them dwindling until in old age they would just be two people who had happened to live under the same roof, no real bond between them, only the accumulation of a lifetime's living habits." (222) Her acquaintance with Vishal illuminates her predicament and she resolves to seek freedom and independence: "It made her feel life need not just be got through. It could be taken into one's own hands and understood, even changed." (226)

Eventually she is forced to go away from her husband: "The drama of exits and re-entrances was not for her. People like her did not leave their homes. It dawned on her with a stab of pain that she could leave now because this was not home. She had tried to build a home, grasping what material she could find, laughter, a phase of nearness, patches of understanding. But it had not been enough. There were great heartbreaking gaps through which the cold came in and the emptiness yawned." (237).

Mara and Jit stand in sharp contrast to Saroj and Inder. Mara is a westernized woman with "an air of independence and forthrightness about her." (58) She is not one of those who believe in total subjuga-tion to family who go on producing children till adequate number of boys are had, eating the left-overs on the table, remaining all their life, a mere shadow hovering about the kitchen or puja room. Jit ap-propriately describes his wife in these words: "Mara was fine and in-telligent. She was conscious of all that she did. She had pride. She would never be an object for anybody's use. And he loved her." (133) Jit is always in a state of readiness to dance to her tune: "Jit made gin and lime, took it to his wife, and lit her cigarette, surrounding her in those few gestures with a charming attentiveness." (60) They are full of hatred for old ideas: "Old, useless, impossible ideas going on and on: We carry them around like dead wood on our backs. It's all ours all right, but some of it is rotten. We'll die if we go on like this. Some-times I think we're already dead." (138) In spite of all his sincere ef-forts Mara fails to have emotional satisfaction with Jit. She is torn between marriage and passion: "She wanted all the worlds she could lay hands on and the best of each-the softness of Jit and the hard-ness of Inder... Yet that more-than-one life was an ache and a strain to live, a perpetual seeking beyond her own safe domestic frontiers." (55) The tension is caused by an ugly clash of tempera-ments: "It was something, he decided, to do with the chemistry of their two characters, an insoluble difference, nothing that could be

sorted out, even with patience. In fact, patience seemed the w ingredient for it. She needed at times to be pried loose from her attitudes, shaken into yielding, but he lacked the coarser grain behaviour that could have accomplished it." (105)

The ideal relationship between a man and a woman is exemplified by Vishal Dubey-Saroj relationship in the novel. Vishal accepts the significance of righteousness and reason:

But life, Dubey told her, was bigger than any system. Life could remould or break the system that lacked righteousness and rea son. It was life's precious obligation to rebel, and humanity's right to be free, to choose from the best light it could see, not necessarily the long-accepted light. (191)

Loving a woman other than one with whom one is legally married, is by and large an impossible situation, but it is a situation most satisfy ing to Vishal: "He wondered what there was in this impossible situa tion to be happy about a woman, not his, for whose well-being he was racked. But he knew his joy was for the fact that he had come home, and that a lifetime's longing could now be concentrated on loving Saroj." (222)

The analysis of the fictional situation of the novel shows that healthy growth of natural relationship is Sahgal's main concern here. She feels that the general consciousness today is ridden by conven tion and neurosis, both of which are the enemies of love. The way out of this dilemma is transformation in both men and the concepts brought about by freedom and love. There is very little distinction between love and freedom. Freedom is knowing and understanding and respecting things quite other than ourselves. "But there's a yearning for freedom in everything that lives. The way plants grow to wards the sun. No power on earth can prevent that happening. And in people, since time began, sooner or later, in one way or another, the yearning bursts out and spills over. We haven't begun to realize that yet. Freedom is just an isolated political achievement for us. It hasn't become a habit of mind or a way of life. We are still bound by meaningless doctrines and we show no mercy to those who don't conform." (225) Love is a function of freedom i.e., once one is free to know, understand and respect things other than oneself, one can love that otherness. Love is an unselfish desire to fuse oneself with the person loved. Love grows out of sex and transcends it without how-

ever abolishing it in the process, Pointless sex is shocking: "We don't indulge in pointless conversations with people, yet we go in for point-reason. That is shocking." (224) Fever of passions cannot conceive of close and powerful relationships that grow out of comradeship. Sahgal has emphasized the need of understanding the individual exis tence of others through the exercise of love and freedom. In her treatment of man-woman relations, Sahgal sounds

remarkably Lawrentian. Love in Lawrence is not to be interpreted in a romantic or Christian sense. It is a relationship between two fulfilled individu-als who remain individuals. The lovers form a union without the loss of their individuality.

An earnest champion of individual freedom, Sahgal has vehe-meatly criticized everything that constricts this freedom and ob-structs the natural flow of love. She is hostile to the rigid marriage bond which is likely to weaken the love of the partners for each other. True marriage is a relation based on mutual trust and recogni-tion between two separate single human beings. All other considera-tions like those of social position, money or power are extraneous, they rather hinder and kill the essential relation. If the partners of a marriage do not enjoy mutual love, trust and understanding there is no point in their staying together as husband and wife, Sahgal has stressed the need of achieving living relationship between a man and a woman through love and human interaction. She is one of those novelists who believe in the worth and dignity of man and the po-tency of love to heal and redeem.

NOTES

1. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar, Indian Writing in English (New Delhi: Sterling, 1985), p. 474.

2. M.K. Naik, Dimensions of Indian English Literature (New Delhi: Sterling, 1984), p. 129.

3. Nayantara Sahgal, Storm in Chandigarh (Delhi: Hind, 1969), p. 189.

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Complex Racial Image in Jhabvala's Heat and Dust

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In Jhabvala's Heat and Dust we are presented an image of Inda which is controversial in its credibility. Though the novel has beca acclaimed by the Western Press as conforming brilliantly to the trad tion of Jhabvala's ironic

portrayal, it is difficult to decide whether its over-all portrayal of the Indian situtation is authentic.

This is because India again seems to evoke contradictory sponses in Jhabvala. Though the narrator comes to a changed India-for post-independent India has definitely and demonstrabiy changed in its complexion - her experience of the Indian reality seems to be conditioned by and interpreted in terms of the earlier experi ences of Olivia whose story the narrator wants to reconstruct.

Therefore, Heat and Dust must be regarded as the most recen variation of Jhabvala's fictional perspective which is rooted in a dichotomus impulse of undoubted fascination for and yet unmistak able repulsion from the Indian situation. This difference of opinion or split is perceptible in the way in which the narrator tries to recon cile her exasperation with Indian customs with scarcely disguised fr cade of civilization and politeness. For instance, while she is keenly interested in knowing the details of the Nawab's life and the palace, she does not see anything sanctified in the offerings made to Han man-the rock sugar and flowers and then given to her.

I was given some bits of rock sugar and a few flower petals which I did not of course like to throw away so that I was still clutching them on the bus back to Satipur. When I thought Inder Lal was not looking, I respectfully tipped them out of the side of the bus, but they have left the palm of my hand sticky and with a lingering smell of sweetness and decay that is still there as I write.1

Though the incident is trivial it is indicative of the implicit sensibility. A similar dichotomy is perceptible in the description of the sexual voracity of Chid. The erections seem to the narrator to be reminis cent "of Lord Shiva whose huge member is worshipped by devout Hindu women." (65) While this description is, to say the least, part of the Western psyche's pathetic incapacity to transcend the anthropo-logical obsession in evaluating the origin and nature of the religious impulse, it is also symptomatic of the usual, but indefensible, correla-tion of sex and spirituality. The narrator, for instance, feels that

at such times it seems to me that his sex is engendered by his spiritual practices, by all that chanting of mantras he does sit-ting beads in hand on the floor of my room. (65)

This could be either the narrator's-and by implication the average Westerner's-ignorance of the relevant implications or a deliberate distortion by Jhabvala of the fact that sex in the relevant rituals of Hinduismas in Tantric rituals-is largely symbolic, a fact which is often slurred over by the Westerner. Therefore, the narrator contin-ues to hug a number of illusions about India-illusions which fiction-ally recreated tend to attest to Jhabvala's continuing ignorance about the Indian reality. This is typical of the way in which, to use Jhabvala's own words, "things get mixed up in India." (65) But one should say that things seem to get mixed up not in India but in the narrator's-and by implication-the author's sensibility.

It is against this background of distortion unrelieved by any irony-as in the earlier novels-that one has to place Heat and Dust. And the impression that India is a confusing milieu is created by the very opening entry of the diary kept by the narrator in which she is gently rebuked by her companion for being lax:

Woke up in the middle of the night. Groped for my watch which I had put on top of my suitcase under the bed: it wasn't there. Oh no! Not already! A voice from the next bed: "Here it is, my dear and just be more careful in future please." (3)

In these lines we get an inkling of the way in which the average as-sumptions of the Westerner in regard to the Indian reality are re-garded as not without foundation. In short, the narrator already starts with certain basic preconceptions which are more or less con-

firmed at least theoretically in the beginning-by the cellmate sights in India, she tells the narrator, are so revolting that you can live without strong religious faith:

I've seen some terrible sights in India. I've lived through Hindu-Muslim riot, and a small-pox epidemic, and several fun ines, and I think I may rightly say I've seen everything that you can see on this carth. And through it all I've learned this thing: You can't live in India without Christ Jesus.... Bec

you see, dear, nothing human means anything here. (5-6)

This rather categorical preview of what the Indian reality is seems t function as a controlling aesthetic centre. For the narrator's exper ences, in her attempt to reconstruct Olivia's life, of the Indian sit tion ought to either confirm or controvert this sweeping generalization in which India is summed up as the purgatory of souls lost in Hell-either native ones who are naturally lost or the foreig ers who come in quest of Indian spirituality and end up by "delousing" themselves by monkeys in a state of utter destitution. (6)

The rest of the narrative may therefore be regarded as, in a sense, the narrator's quest in terms of the validity of this assertion made by the messmate. In short, even the piecing together of the threads of Olivia's story by the narrator is, in a sense, a reappraisal of the Indian situation in terms of the basic formulation offered in regard to it ear-lier.

Initially, this impression is reinforced when the narrator meets the English people in Satipur. The group obstensibly in search of spiri tual fulfilment:

'Why did you come?' I asked her.

"To find peace.' She laughed grimly. (21)

What brought this group to India is, more or less, the same reason that brings other English and European women: the quest for this spirit. Chidananda, particularly, is portrayed as being influenced by this desire. But as portrayed by Jhabvala, the initial attraction had something deceptive about it due to the fact that, Jhabvala seems to imply, in a clean English or European setting, the mellifluous voice of a serene Swami accompanied with the strains of "exotic" music, has a hypnotic effect. The result is, if Jhabvala's analysis is to be be-

lieved, most people are tempted to make a piligrimage to go to India. While this logic is defensible, one has also to note that the correla

tion by most Westerners between Indian spirituality and a clean civic society is untenable and naive. For this is a generalization which is not sustained by the actual context. Just as there is an alarmingly ad-vancing rate of crime and violence in the West, in spite of its appar ently mature social structure, similarly, one can contend that the few bogus sadhus whom the Westerners come across do not represent the real saints who continue to exist in their own privacy. Moreover, to think that the spiritual dimension of India is a geographical entity to be found more effective in the Indian milieu itself is an assumption which

testifies not so much to Indian charlatanism in regard to the spirit as to the naivete of most Western people.

If this is kept in mind, the cynical remark that "all I found was dysentery" is ironically brilliant but does scant justice to the Indian situation. A similar attitude should be regarded as the vantage point to judge the long passage in which the English couple was mistreated by Indians. While this is an exaggeration of the situation, it also shows on the one hand Jhabvala's increasing repugnance to the In-dian reality and on the other, the foolishness of the facile assumption which most Westerners make that since Indian philosophy empha-sizes the spirit, all Indians must be saints. One can as well assume that since the English believe in justice, they would continue to oper-ate in India on the basis of this principle.

In these terms, one can state that the major fallacy in the novel is Jhabvala's confusion between the India represented in the Western setting by the representative Swami's and the reality of Indian life which is as good or bad as anywhere else. In short, Heat and Dust fails to separate art from life.

Therefore, one of the ways in which Heat and Dust can be ana-lyzed is to judge whether the two images it presents-of the twenties and of the present-reinforce or contradict each other. There is, for instance, Mrs. Saunders's outburst against Indian servants:

the servants were really devils and that they could drive anyone crazy; that it was not stupidity on their part-on the contrary, they were clever enough when it suited their purposes-but it was all done deliberately to torment their masters. She gave ex-amples of thieving, drinking and other bad habits. (28)

If this passage is juxtaposed with the one in which the newly arrived narrator is warned by thieves (already quoted) Jhabvala seems to imply that India hasn't changed much,

This confusing reality is, one can legitimately expect, bound to have its impact on personal relations. Douglas, for instance, blames the Indian heat and dust for the increasing tension building up be tween Olivia and himself. Analyzing the reasons for the muted bu unmistakable hostility slowly building up, Douglas says:

"Why are we quarrelling?" He considered her question for s moment and then came up with his reasoned reply: "Became the climate is making you irritable.

That's only natural, it hap pens to all of us. And of course it's much worse for you having to stay home all day with nothing to do." (40)

But one has also to note, though it is not overtly stated, that part of Olivia's irritability is rooted in her gradual realization of the gre ciousness and innate grandeur which the Nawab represents for her submerged but felt sense of romantic wonder (her preference for flowers and her melancholic obsession with death evident in the im pact graveyards have on her sensibility symbolize her inchoate but felt romantic yearning, for only a romantic will be obsessed with im permanance evident in the fact of death). Harry testifies to the innate nobility-though tinged with possessiveness - of the Nawab:

I do want to do everything I can to make him-happier. Good ness knows, I try. Not only because I like him very much but be-cause he's been fantastically kind to me. You can have no idea of his generosity. He wants his friends to have everything. Everything he can give them. It's his nature, If you don't want to take, he's terribly hurt. But how can one take so much? I makes one feel.... After all, I'm here because I like him.... But all he knows is giving. (35)

If this is kept in mind one can find an interesting thematic parallel if in the Twenties India beckoned to English people like Olivia with its romantic image of exotic and gracious Nawabs whose way of life based on an old-world charm and courtesy had a special attraction, contemporary India seems to beckon with its spiritual image. It short, the basic polarities of the Indian image offered in the novel os

cillate between the exotic romantic one and the spiritual, mystical one, the one represented by Olivia's past and the other by the narrator's present.

One has also to note in this context that the Indian characters fig-uring in the novel are presented skilfully, though there is always a tendency in Jhabvala to mix her little grain of truth with a lot of illus-ory stuff-illusory since her personal dislikes about the Indian reality come in the way of a truthful portrayal. Inder Lal, for instance, is presented with great insight. The narrator is able to understand him in a way which shows that she has enormous insight into the Indian sensibility.

Inder Lal is a strange but credible picture of an average Indian: docile and fearful of authority, stifled by conservative familial ties and yet there is also in his character an unmistakable craving for the freedom and plenitude of the West. While he realizes his incapacity to communicate with his wife, he is at the same time eager to unbur-den himself without any inhibition to the narrator. This dichotomy between the conservative superficial appearance and a real craving for permissiveness is rightly detected by the narrator when she says: When I first saw him, he seemed to me a typical Indian clerk, meck and bowed down with many cares. But now I see that he is not meek and bowed at all-or only outwardly-that really inside himself he is alive and yearning for all sorts of things be-yond his reach. It shows mainly in his eyes which are beauti-ful full of melancholy and liquid with longing. (50-51)

From this one can state that there is only a thin layer of conservatism in the Indian; deep-down he also craves for affluence and the good things of life which go with it. This is obviously part of Jhabvala's ironic strategy to offer a corrective to the usual image of spiritual India.

If Inder Lal is an example of a typical Indian male poised uneasily between the two poles of conservatism and affluence, his wife also is a characateristic specimen of Indian women: shy and bashful and weak, frightened almost out of her wits in the presence of a West-erner. For instance, as the narrator records, at her approach she runs "to hide in the bathroom and... stay locked up there till I go away again." (51) Maybe, it is this repression and fear that account for her inexplicable wailing in the night. It is also probably a subtle hint that

the backward place of the Indian mind-both male and female-sa remains unexplored.

From this point of view, the attitude of Indian women towards tee needs to be viewed. For instance, while the English community has a general contempt for the custom, it is Olivia who has reser tions about the English interference in what, according to het, is par of the country's culture:

It's part of their religion, isn't it? I thought one wasn't supported to meddle with that.. And quite apart from religion, it their culture and who are we to interfere with anyone's culture

especially an ancient one like theirs. (58)

In effect, the incident of the suttee must be regarded as a subtle de vice to probe the nature of the several characaters. For instance, in odd that Douglas who both in the official and personal capacity hat nothing but contempt for this custom is unable to see eye to eye in this regard with his own wife. For Olivia it is not only not horrible, but also is an index of undoubted, indestructible affection:

"in theory it is really, isn't it, a noble idea. In theory," she say "Not want to be alive any more if he wasn't."

In short, this conservation is a subtle hint that it is their dichotomou perspectives on the Indian situation that make Olivia drift apart from her husband. While she is slightly afraid to spell out her view to her husband, it is highly suggestive that she has the strength of her con victions and she declares unambiguously:

"Oh I could!" cried Olivia,... "I'd want to. I mean, I jus wouldn't want to go on living. I'd be grateful for such a custom." (60)

While in the context, one can legitimately take this as an articulation of the unbreakable link of affection that binds Douglas and Olivia to gether, in retrospect it becomes clear that Olivia's elopement with the Nawab is the result of the same courage of conviction.

Similar is the affection Harry has for the Nawab. And when Harry asks her not to come often - or at least make Douglas aware that she had been coming here- Olivia's reasoning sounds a defensive way of

bypassing the fact that she was gradually becoming obsessed with the Nawab. Even her reaction to the 'scandalous reports' about the Nawab-that he was fattening himself on looting his subjects-is, in keeping with her basic stance, ambivalent and when the Nawab says "I hope you don't believe this of me, Olivia," she cries out "of course not," with rather suspicious, melodramatic alacrity.

One can also connect the fact of Olivia not getting pregnant with the psychological block-her affection for Douglas is merely con-scious but deep down her, affection is reserved only for the Nawab, a fact which she tries desperately to bypass-though Olivia feels that the reason was her dread of infanticide in the Indian situation.

In effect, it is obvious that Olivia's romantic image-opulent and splenderous of the Nawab gets slightly tarnished when she hears the scandalous reports and it

is in keeping with her romanticism that she refuses to even contemplate whether there could be any truth in the allegation.

If up to this point we find a gradual change seeping into Olivia's ideas about India, on the level of the present also we find the narra-tor also undergoing a slow but definite change in the values which the Western psyche holds as sacrosanct: the ideals of social equality, civic responsibility etc. This is clear from the way in which the narra-tor ultimately reconciles herself at least initially to the "dispens-ability" of the old woman whom she finds dying. (110-15) However, the way in which Maji runs with alacrity after her, shows that the In-dian situation is too complex to be dismissed with tags of either heartlessness or cruelty. Even as the present is complex, so the past becomes confusing by the subtle change that steals over Olivia: her ambivalence towards Douglas increases and the qualities she found admirable in the past now seem to her despicable: She had always loved him for these qualities for the im-perturbability his English solidness and strength; his manliness. But now suddenly she thought: what manliness? He can't even get me pregnant. (116)

This feeling is sought to be bypassed by Olivia by hugging to her breast the illusion that everything would be fine if only she becomes pregnant. While Douglas blames the heat for her irritability, it is ob-vious that Olivia's real problem is to face her conflicting emotions squarely, her admiration for the qualities of manliness and decency

in Douglas and her sneaking but definite realization that Douglas is too much the "correct man" to satisfy her passionate nature. For this passionate intensity she finds an "objective correlative," so to speak-in the Nawab. She constantly tries to fight down the instinc tive attraction she feels for the Nawaban affection which makes the effect of even the intense Indian heat immaterial: she sees not in the direction in which Douglas had left, but the other way, towards Khatm, towards the palace. It did not make any difference as everything was under the same pall of dust. But i was true what she had told Douglas: she felt fine entirely un-troubled by the heat or the murky atmosphere. It was as if there were a little spring welling up inside her that kept her fresh and gay. (118)

This draws attention to a fact which though repeatedly emphasized in Jhabvala, has not often been commented upon by critics. This is possibly because most

critics are taken in by the pervasive ironic pos-ture apparent in Jhabvala's fiction. In fact, in spite of the irony, one is aware that certain English people do succeed in trying to forge meaningful links with the Indian situation. Olivia, for instance, does not feel the impact of Indian heat because of her love for the Nawab.

The way in which Olivia keeps her cool. Therefore, Jhabvala seems to imply that where there is a binding link of affection- even the apparently maddening Indian reality becomes manageable.

This perspective is borne out by the fact that even the narrator-in the present is accepted as part of the Indian reality-and she herself accepts the Indian reality as symbolized by the tender scene in which the narrator and Inder Lal make love. (126-27) In short, there are the heat and dust in India but the only way to contain them is through love.

The same condition marks the relation between the Nawab and Olivia. For instance, when he asks her "will you go back to Satipur and say yes, the Nawab is a bad person, now I have seen with my own eyes that he meets with outlaws, dacoits-he is hand in glove with them," Olivia is unequivocal in her reply:"Do you really believe I'd do that," she said with such sincer-ity-indeed, indignation - that he was satisfied with her. He re spectfully touched her arm with his finger-tips. (135)

Inder Lal, similarly, overcomes all his inhibitions and the narrator is to a certain extent reluctantly drawn into the orbit of his "affection and playfulness" and these seem to her so transparently sincere that she is reminded "of all those stories that are told of the child Krishna." (140) On the parallel thematic level we have Olivia who breaks the news of pregnancy to the Nawab and not to Douglas, just as the narrator, conversely, refrains from telling it to Inder Lal be-cause she doesn't "want to spoil anything." (141)

But the entire situation has to be explicated from a more complex angle than what is obvious. The news of the imminent baby-birth, for instance, is a complex rhythm which keeps functioning on different levels. In the beginning we are sure that both the Nawab and Olivia think of it as a tangible demonstration of their love. But as the Nawab is more and more sucked into the maelstrom of political

difficulties, we realize that his love for Olivia ceases to be the passionate convic-tion of a romantic nature, but becomes a mode of scoring over the English whom the Nawab hates. Therefore, what was initially a ges-ture of love gets caught in racial and political forces of hatred and loses its original, impulse of sanctifying love. As Harry reports the news:

Wait till my son is born, he said, they'll laugh from the other side of their mouths.

and

He said when this baby was born, Douglas and all were going to have the shock of their lives. (161)

It is this peculiar turn of events which smothers and tarnishes the original impulse of love which, one can legitimately argue, accounts for Olivia's decision to have an abortion-metaphorically an unnatu-ral but fitting end to an initially natural but progressively distorted impulse of love.

Heat and Dust, therefore, marks an advance in Jhabvala's presen-tation of the Indian image.

NOTE

1. Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, Heat and Dust (London: John Murray, 1975), pp. 13-14.

The Importance of Jorge Luis Borges

ASD PILLAI

It is by now a truism to aver that most contemporary literature - be it American, British or Indo-English-will be incomprehensible with-out an understanding of the work of Jorge Luis Borges, the Argentin-ian writer, whose influence on the postwar writer in English the world over has been considerable. For it is Borges's work, barring perhaps that of Nabokov's, that has been chiefly responsible for fo-cusing or re-focusing the reader's attention on the fictionality of fic-tions, the epistemological questions attendant upon the making of fictións as well as making sense of them and the ontological status of all fictions. In other words, the subject matter of Borges's work is the human mind itself as the maker of fictions, fictions understood both as works of imagination and constructs of the mind. He is therefore rightly described as the writer of metaphysical fiction.

The curious point, however, is that while remaining philosophical, his fictions profoundly affect the reader and leave behind a deep im-pact, an effect which is not usually associated with philosophical fic-tion marked by abstraction and remoteness. Borges's is, on the other hand, characterised by a rare blend of fantasy and fact (or quasi-fact), metaphysics and realism, remoteness and immediacy. As one reader put it:

From strange depths in the stories we are suddenly brought back to the surface and do not know quite what it is we have read. It may be a dream or a game or a fantasy, but then why did it move us so much?[1]

The burden of this paper is to account for the lasting appeal of Borgesian fictions lest they be passed by as sheer 'lexical playfields' or dry philosophical tract, as they sometimes are likely to be. For my purposes I shall take up for consideration three of his short stories: The Garden of Forking Paths,' 'Deutsches Requiem' and 'The Lot-

tery in Babylon,' leaving aside the oft-discussed "Tlon, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius' and 'Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote. The deep impact on the reader caused by these fictions is trace. able, I think, to the fact that each of them is constructed on a solid base of realism and to the fact that their themes are modern man's anguish of time, space, contingency and destiny. The story line in The Garden of Forking Paths' is about how a

Chinese agent of the Germain Reich by name Yu Tsun in Staffordshire, England is obliged to murder the learned British Si. nologist, Stephen Albert. His problem was how to communicate to Hitler, through the uproar of the war, the secret name of the French city (called Albert), where the new British antillery was located and which the Germans must attack. He found no other means to do so than to kill a man of that name. The irony is that it is an Englishman that unravels to Yu Tsun, a former professor, the mystery surround-ing the great work of his illustrious ancestor, Ts'ui Pên. Now Ts'ui Pên set out to make a book and a labyrinth. His people took these to be two separate things. Abandoning his incomplete manuscript as chaotic-wherein the hero dies in the third chapter and

is alive in the fourth-they search for the garden of forking paths in the outside world, not realising that the book is the labyrinth. The theme of the book is: Time. Time forks perpetually towards various possible fu-tures. In one of them, Albert has become the enemy and Yu Tsun has had to kill him. In another, they might be friends and collaborators for the cause of knowledge. In yet another, Albert might kill Yu Tsun. The garden of forking paths was then the image of the universe as the author conceived it.

The narrative is thus a sombre philosophical meditation on the universe as a labyrinth, a Borgesian image of the possible prolifera-tion of varying realities in time as well as in space. It is at the same time a vivid and moving tale, for it points to the fact that military ex-pediency requires even artists to be dispensed with as fodder for its cannon. The Chinese wants to prove to Hitler that a yellow man could be as loyal as any other and hence the homicide. But he rue-fully concludes that Hitler will not know his own weariness and con-trition at what he had done.

There is an interesting link between this story and the other: 'Deutsches Requiem.' In both the narrator is a German or pro-Ger-man who commits a crime for the Nazi cause, not without compunc tions of conscience, however weak. Both willingly embrace

retribution: death by gallows. In 'Deutsches Requiem' the narrator is one Otto Dietrich zur Linde, also of illustrious lineage, who was offi-cer at the concentration camp at Tarnowitz, By his own confession he was responsible for driving the Jewish poet, David Jeusalem mad, who subsequently commits suicide. 'No one,' says Otto, 'can exist, no one can taste a glass of water or break a piece of bread, without justi-fication. (Labyrinths 175) He then offers his justification for the German genocide. He argues that the role played by the Nazis dur-ing the two World Wars was ultimately for the good of mankind as a whole. The world was dying of Judaism and from the faith of Jesus. The Germans taught it violence and the faith of the sword. The Ger-mans helped violence reign in the world in place of servile Christian timidity. That sword, true, is now slaying the Nazis who are conse-quently like the wizard who fashioned a labyrinth and was then doomed to wander in it to the end of his days. But then many will have to be destroyed to construct a new order. Was the Nazi phe-nomenon then a divine decree?

One perceives the narrative gradually taking a philosophical turn. Was it human choice, Otto wonders, or destiny that caused him to be hit by bullets, removed from the battlefront and be put in charge of the prison camp? If according to theology, man cannot exist even a single moment without God's help, was his participation in the geno-cide God's will? Perhaps Otto deliberately sought to mutilate the Jews impelled by his firm belief that to die once for a religion (Naz-ism) is easier than to live it through. It would follow then:

Everything which can happen to a man, from the instant of his birth until his death, has been preordained by him. Thus, every negligence is deliberate, every chance encounter an appoint-ment. every death a suicide. There is no more skilful conso-lation than the idea that we have chosen our own misfortunes; this individual teleology reveals a secret order and prodigiously confounds us with the divinity. (Labyrinths, 175)

The vexing question of Human Will versus Destiny rears its head.

Borges's preoccupation with the theme of chance finds one of its best expressions in the story 'The Lottery in Babylon.' The manner in which Borges, from an 'innocuous' story of the lottery in Babylon, builds up a brilliant philosophical tract on the role of chance in life is simply marvellous. The crucial point here is the experimental exten-

sion of the theme of chance, which is fundamental to lottery, to life, an extension which is made to cover the very act of narration. The narrator in his own words comes 'from a dizzy land where the lottery is the basis of reality.' (Labyrinths, 55) That was how he had been at one time proconsul, at another, a slave. To begin with, the lottery in Babylon had a normal enough character. People bought stakes with copper coins; at the drawing, the winners received silver coins. To make it thrilling, a reform was introduced: a few unfavour-able tickets were interpolated in the list of winning numbers. With the result that one in thirty winners won a sum but also had to pay a fine. People often failed to pay the fine. The Company imprisoned the defaulters. Curiously people preferred imprisonment and even enjoyed it. The Company therefore introduced imprisonment in lieu of fine and increased the unlucky numbers. The rich indulged in it -the poor felt left out and rebelled. Subsequently the lottery ceased to be a commercial sale of chances and became a part of Babylonian life: Once in sixty nights, every free Babylonian took part in the draw, which determined

his destiny until the next. A winner could cause the imprisonment of his enemy or have the company of a woman. A loser might merit mutilation or infamy or death.

The Babylonians now argued: if the lottery is an infusion of chance in the order of the world, it is logical that chance intervene in all stages of drawing and not in one alone. Result: a first draw de-crees the death of a man. A second draw held to execute the decree, proposes nine executors. Four of these initiate a third draw which fixes the executioner; two of them can replace the death decree with a pleasant one etc. In reality the number of drawings is infinite. No decision is final, all branch into others.' (Labyrinths, 59) Today Babylonian life is saturated with chance. But then every scribe by chance introduces an error in his work. The narrator him self might, by chance, have falsified some details about the Company. Its history is corrupted with fiction. There is a chance that the Company never existed. The reality of it is immaterial for Babylon itself is a thing of chance. Borges's narratives are indeed offered to us as pieces of arcane erudition. But this erudition, as Tony Tanner has remarked, is con-ducted in such remote areas of knowledge that it is difficult to tell where erudition ends and invention begins. What is more, the numer-ous footnotes that punctuate his stories, even those marked 'Editor's Note' are Borges's own and form an integral part of his work as he

conceived it. Consequently the reliability of his text is undermined. Borges's point is that the dividing line between fiction and reality is not easily drawn. Again, Borges conveys his sense that 'reality' is a plural affair and the conventional ways in which we classify and order reality are as much 'fictions' as his stories. While his stories repeat-edly point to the amazing power of the human mind to invent, to make fictions, they invariably underscore the dangers immanent therein. The danger is that man may accept one of his invented systems as the definitively 'real' and go mad-as did the Germans with that of Nazism, as do the Babylonians with interpolation of chance into their daily life. Hence Borges's urge to deconstruct, to fore-ground the fictitiousness of fiction. Thus in 'Deutsches Requiem' a footnote notes that the authenticity of the Jewish poet cannot be traced to any documentary evidence. The same deconstruction in-forms the story of the lottery in Babylon as well. At the end of every Borgesian story we encounter an enigmatic narrator who has appar-ently invented what he has been describing.

Borges's fictions are tales of the fantastic but they are never con-tent with fantasy in the sense of facile wish-fulfilment. They are al-ways concerned with processes of striving which lead to discovery and insight. The insight they provide is ironic, pathetic: a melancholy sense of the inevitable limits of all human aspirations.

Borges wrote only short narratives-stories, parables, essays-both out of lofty laziness and out of concern for perfection. But his consummate skill in achieving the most powerful effects with a strict economy of words has perhaps never been parallelled in contempo-rary writing. Hence the importance of Borges for comprehension of such contemporary writers of metafiction as John Barth, Thomas Pynchon and at home, Saros Cowasjee and KM Trishanku, to men-tion a select few.

NOTES

1. Tony Tanner, City of Words: American Fiction 1950-1970 (1971; London: Cape, 1979), p. 40.

2. Jorge Luis Borges, Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Other Writings, Translated and edited by D.A. Yates and J.E. Irby (Great Britain: Penguin, 1964, 1979).

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Man and Nature in Robert Frost: The Bond of Freedom

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It is a truism that both by temperament and tradition. Poets tend to cast nature in the image of their perferences by reading their own feelings into external phenomena. This element of projection is much less pronounced in Frost than in the Romantics. Like all human re-sponses to outer stimuli, the poet's reaction to nature is partly indi-vidual and partly communal. Without any roots in collective experience, a poet's emotions can hardly affect his readers. Like his American predecessors, Frost perceives the two faces of nature, its beauty and terror. But whereas the earlier poets of nature often dis-play an exuberance of emotion in moods ranging between exultation and despair, Frost keeps to the middle path of circumspection. He neither idolizes nor denigrates nature. What stand out in Frost's po-etry are the complementary roles of man and nature.

We can broadly classify Frost's nature poems into several mood-groups in accordance with nature's varying images in the poet's mind, as benign, impassive, malevolent, and a compound of good and evil. In portraying the benign and malevolent aspects of nature, Frost reacts with a modicum of emotion. In his presentation of the neutral character of nature he is cool and unruffled. In depicting nature as beneficial on balance, Frost is judicious and philosophical These di-verse moods do not have any clear chronological pattern nor are they always mutually exclusive.

The present paper deals with the benign aspect of nature in Frost's poetry. Where nature is benevolent in Frost, it is inconspicu-ously so. Frost does not invest nature with sentience in the Wordsworthian sense of a plastic power. In Frost's perception of na-ture as benign, action performs the key role, stimulating body as well as mind. Frost absorbs nature's kindly influence while working out-doors. His mind is not just a receptacle for nature's pouring balm, but something that keeps the same rhythm through total physical in-

volvement. Mowing records the rapport that arises between the mower and his surroundings. The moving scythe is an instrument for creating a sense of togetherness with nature. The language of action underlies man-nature relationship:

It was no dream of the gift of idle hours, Or easy gold at the hand of fay or elf:

Anything more than the truth would have seemed too weak To the earnest love that laid the swale in rows, Now without feeble-pointed spikes of flowers (Pale orchises), and scared a bright green snake.

The mower does not yearn for the bliss of indolence or the thrill of enchantment. For him anything 'more than the truth' would be a travesty of it. His love of labour makes the exertion a labour of love.

The Tuft of Flowers centres on the unconscious sharing of a love for flowers between two complete strangers. The narrator in the poem who comes to turn

the grass after the mower has left reflects that man must remain at heart alone "whether they work together or apart." He suddenly sees a roving butterfly settle upon a tuft of flow-ers, "a leaping tongue of bloom" spared by the mower's scythe. This sets him thinking on a new line:

The mower in the dew had loved them thus, By leaving them to flourish, not for us, Nor yet to draw one thought of ours to him, But from sheer morning gladness at the brim.

The speaker feels a sense of kinship with the unknown mower through their common tenderness for nature. In the ensuing commu-nion between man and man, nature acts as a vivid and vital link:

"Men work together," I told him from the heart, "Whether they work together or apart."

The basis of human relationship here is an imaginative rendering of reality, not a mystical version of it. There is nothing esoteric or far-fetched about the truth that dawns upon the speaker. It is simple yet illuminating.

In Frost's poetry, nature is mostly congenial to conjugal love. The

wood through which the lovers walk in Going for Water in search of the hidden brook has the ambience of fairyland. Their trek becomes a journey of love performed in innocent ardour and playful freedom, Solitude holds them together through a sense of kinship that exists between man and nature.

Two Look at Two centres on the realization of a sense of fellow. feeling between a human couple and an animal pair. Carried away by their impulse and unmindful of the hazard of the journey, the two lovers are going up a mountain path when they are halted by a tum. bled wall with barbed-wire fencing. The woods beyond are inviting but inaccessible, so the couple feels their impulse thwarted. ("This is all," they sighed). Just then a doc appears looking fearlessly at them ("She saw them in their field, they her in hers"). The lovers, arm in arm, ("still, like an up-ended boulder split in two,") seem to her quite safe, and she passes by. In a situation that appeared a moment ago to be one of thwarted impulse, the doe's presence seems to be a bonus from nature ("7his, then, is all"). But wonders do not cease. A buck appears in place of the doc, a vigorous ("lusty nostril") animal unlike the dreamy ("clouded eyes") doc, who feels puzzled at the stillness of the

lovers. He sniffs, almost inviting them to touch him; then, as the spell breaks at a motion of the hand, he passes by. Al-though the spell of communion ends, a sense of discovery and sympa thy remains. The lovers' hearts are warmed by the realization that nature reduplicates and reciprocates human love. "This must be all," comes as the crowning satisfaction after the limitedness of the earlier experience ("This is all," This, then, is all").

Just as nature moulds human life in various ways, so does man leave his creative imprint on it adding to its beauty and appeal. In the poem Never Again Would Birds' Song be the Same, the ripples of Eve's call or laughter are carried aloft to the birds in the garden and the warmth of human love enters into their music. The lover (i.c. Adam) proudly believes:

That the birds there in all the garden round From having heard the daylong voice of Eve Had added to their own an oversound

Her tone of meaning but without the words.

The woman's 'soft eloquence' has wrought a profound change in the quality of the birds' song. Man can also handle the elements cre

atively.
Man also sometimes provides the healing touch to nature by sym-pathy and care. In The Runaway and The Exposed Nest the subject is human benevolence rather than nature's benignity. Such a feeling presupposes a kinship between man and the varied forms of life in nature. In The Runaway, the poet and his companion express a ten-der concern for a colt left out in the cold and deplore the owner's in-difference. The Exposed Nest deals with the couple's efforts to restore for young birds a ground nest which has been exposed by a heedless mower. The woman treats with motherly care the young brood which is as yet unable to face "too much world at once."
In contrast with this ameliorative role of man there are moments in which Frost considers human interference in nature profane and disruptive. He wishes nature to flourish undisturbed by human en-croachments. Unharvested presents the idea that nature's bounteous yield should not be wholly consumed by man's greed. The Last Mow-ing, like The Tuft of Flowers, dwells lovingly on the beauty of flowers. Here Frost looks forward to the prospect of flowers blossoming abundantly, free from the twin danger of cultivation and fallowness:

The place for the moment is ours

For you, O tumultuous flowers,
To go to waste and go wild in,
All shapes and colors of flowers,
I needn't call you by name.

To an individual seeker of truth, nature seems to offer two affir-mative possibilities. First, by working in the midst of nature, man can establish strong ties with his surroundings. Secondly and alterna-tively, he can withdraw from society into nature and try to grasp life's essence by contemplating its beauty and mystery. Into My Own links the poet's retreat into the forest with the discovery of his real self. A Lone Striker sets down a sensitive worker's preference for the forest's superior charms over the mindless grind in the factory:

He knew a path that wanted walking;
A thought that wanted further thinking;
A love that wanted re-renewing.
The worker is not a dawdling escapist, but rather a 'pursuitisi,[1] a

word Frost once used about himself. He finds in nature enough scope for significant human action:

Nor was this just a way of talking To save him the expense of doing.

With him it boded action, deed.

In Birches and After Apple Picking, action and contemplation go hand in hand creating a new poetic perspective. Both are poems of aspira tion and reality. They reveal a bond of harmony between man and nature in terms of action. Nature is viewed not as a disjunctive entity, but as one intermingled with human personality.

Birches does not end as an 'escape' poem, but as a 'retreat' poem through which the poet reaffirms his love for nature and man. In one of his letters Frost clarifies his idea of 'retreating' as a source for spiritual replenishment: "We retreat, we don't escape. That's a word I loathe. But retreat is a sort of characteristic word to me, that you retreat for strength... You don't escape, you withdraw with God. With sleep." The birches are for Frost the window to a larger truth, combining

sublimity and down-to-earthness. They serve as a means of ascension toward a higher ideal and at the same time mark a path of return to earthly reality.

While in Birches, achievement and satisfaction run parallel throughout the poem, fulfilment is counterbalanced by fatigue in After Apple Picking. The latter is an unusually compressed poem, every rift of which, as they say, is loaded with ore. Beneath the appar-ent artlessness of the poem, one can apprehend the almost seamless joining of fact and fantasy, of language and thought, of the literal and the figurative. The poem's structure, in keeping with its theme, does not follow a linear temporal progression; there is a shuttling back and forth between the present and the past and the future, creating a sense of timeless experience.

In After Apple Picking, the act of labour itself does not constitute the sweetest dream. Whereas in Mowing the farmer celebrates the very moment of activity, in After Apple Picking, he tries hard to con centrate on what occurs in the wake of the brisk harvesting opera tion. Physical exertion in Frost's poetry generally penetrates both the body and the mind, but here an excess of it induces utmost fatigue, The farmer is too exhausted to think about the prospects of material gain.

There is no doubt that the initial moment of contemplation is the climactic point in the farmer's life. The year-long labour and care has yielded an abundant apple harvest which ought to be gratifying to an average orchard grower. But in this poem the farmer is also a poet and the apple harvest takes on radial extensions of meaning. The speaker is as much at home in the realm of imagination as in the do-main of reality. In his thoughts the two blend and dissolve into each other.

A brief comparison with Birches should be illuminating at this point. An idyllic atmosphere pervades Birches. After Apple Picking is in many ways an anti-idyll. In Birches the boy's tree-climbing involves a high degree of skill and assurance. There is an element of risk too, but it is offset by the sense of release and exhilaration:

He always kept his poise
To the top branches, climbing carefully
With the same pains you use to fill a cup
Up to the brim, and even above the brim.

In After Apple Picking the farmer's hectic job calls for patience rather than skill and lacks a sense of elation:

There were ten thousand thousand fruit to touch, Cherish in hand, lift down, and not let fall.

The repetition of the word 'thousand' underlines the futility of trying to count them all.

The dream is significant precisely because it does not mark a clear rupture with reality. To dream does not amount to a shutting off of consciousness; rather it means entering an extended state of con-sciousness in a different form.

The reference to the woodchuck in the last verse of the poem is rather intriguing. What would the farmer have-a long untroubled sleep that the woodchuck enjoys in winter, or the shorter human sleep that is not without its agonies? Or is the speaker looking for-ward to sleep of a third kind, the tempting end of life's tribulations? While Frost generally resists sleep as a state bordering on oblivion and death, is he welcoming here a release from the mortal coils of pleasure and pain? It seems that the farmer is looking forward to a long period of idleness and rest like the woodchuck's hibernation,

but he is worried that he is going to get only ordinary human sleep. If he had really wanted "just some human sleep," he would have pre-sented a charming picture of his dream, keeping out all unpleasant sensations.

Although the farmer's posture on the nature of sleep that awaits him is mystifying, this, far from weakening the poem, enhances its ap-peal. Throughout the poem, the telescoping of the palpable and the contemplative, the continual shifting of the speaker's time-scale, the hypnotizing rhythm all combine to make it one of Frost's interest-ing creations.

NOTES

1. Quoted in Lawrance Thompson, Robert Frost: The Years of Triumph, 1915-1938 (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), p. 442.

2. Quoted in David A. Sohn and Richard H. Tyre, eds., Frost: The Poet and His Poetry (New York: Bantam Books, 1969).

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Elements of Bhakti and Mysticism in the Works of Rabindranath Tagore and Saint Thyagaraja

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Comparative Literature as a discipline has gained an academic status all over the world. Comparing two authors of different times and dif-ferent linguistic backgrounds throws light on the cultural and social realities of the periods during which they lived and wrote. Parallel studies between any two great writers whose works transcend the ge-ographical, national and linguistic limitations, are rewarding and in-teresting. Though separated by time and distance these thinkers exhibit many similarities in their approach to life and art. The final evaluation of a piece of literature or philosophy is possible only as a result of comparison. All great minds have thought and felt alike and certain fundamental ideas are common among them. To quote Rene Wellek, "Literature is one as art and humanity are one."

Saint Thyagaraja and Rabindranath Tagore were separated by a time span of more than hundred years. Thyagaraja lived during the late 18th and the early 19th centuries while Tagore came about a hundred years later during the late 19th and the early 20th centuries. Though separated by time and distance these two shared many reli-gious, philosophical, social and cultural ideas. Thyagaraja inherited all the South Indian Brahminical Agrahara traditions and followed the

daily religious rituals of an orthodox Hindu. Tagore on the other hand was a Bengali North Indian who was exposed in his younger days to all kinds of reformatory movements such as the Brahmo Samaj. While there are superficial differences between these two spiritual giants, they are basically the products of the ancient Hindu Sampradaya, and the culture which has come down to us from the times of the Vedas, Upanishads and Puranas. They are the finest examples of our spiritual heritage and religious and cultural unity. A comparative study between them can focus attention on their religion and spiritualism, their eminence as music composers, their mystical experience and their reformatory and revolutionary ideals.

Thyagaraja belonged to a family of Telugu Brahmins domiciled in the Kaveri delta. He lived in Tiruvayyaru, a small hamlet in those days, on the banks of the river Kaveri which was a centre for schol.

ars, musicians, poets and philosophers, well-versed in the Vedas, Sastras and Puranas. He was the product of South Indian Agraharam culture and lived the life of a mendicant, shunning the royal patron-age which was liberally offered to him. He is essentially a composer of Carnatic music, but at the same time his compositions can be treated as the outpourings of a great poet and a philosopher. He combines in himself all the aspects of a musician, a poet and a philos opher. Valmiki wrote his Ramayana in 24,000 slokas. In the same way, Thyagaraja wanted to write 24,000 songs in praise of Rama, his chosen deity and produce a Thyagaraja Ramayana but only about six hundred of his compositions have survived the ravages of time. His music and philosophy have their roots in the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Puranas. That is why his compositions have been termed as Thyagopanishad.

Tagore was also brought up in a similar background. He was born

in a family, gifted for music and arts. Under the influence of his great father, Maharshi Devendranath, he became a votary of the revolu-tionary social movement, the Brahmo Samaj. In his younger days he was profoundly influenced by the Bengal version of the Ramayana and Sanskrit religious poetry. He was drawn towards Caitanya, Kabir and Tukaram as deeply as he was towards the Bengal Vaishnavas. The Upanishads were like a reservoir which inspired and enabled his thoughts and ideals. The three early influences on him were Sanskrit literature, religious-love poetry of the Vaishnavas and the Western literature. Tagore was a poet, playwright, novelist, musician and art-ist, thinker, nationalist, social reformer, educationist and above all the prophet of a new age. He is primarily a bard who comes before us as a singer, singing in praise of God. His poems and songs number well over three thousand and many of his poems lend themselves to be sung. All of them bear the quality of exquisite poetry.

Both Thyagaraja and Tagore were great music composers. While Thyagaraja stood like a colossus in the tradition of Carnatic music, Tagore revolutionized the Bengal music. Thyagaraja's songs are sung all over the world wherever Carnatic music is appreciated. The Rabindra Sangeet has its votaries in all parts of the world. Many tunes that they have sung, in both systems, are original. Both of them are in the direct lineage of Valmiki and Kalidasa and among the
Rabindra Nath Tagore and Saint Thyagaraja

87 world's greatest devotional lyricists, comparable to Bach and Bee-thoven. The divine music of these two artists has elevated to an inter-national stature, the languages of their composition, i.c. Telugu and Bengali.

For both Thyagaraja and Tagore, music is a means of realizing the Infinite. Tagore said, "God loves me when I sing." The central theme which imparts continuity of thought in all the songs of both the poets, is Bhakti or love of God, accompanied by an intense yearning for His grace. Swami Vikekananda defines Bhakti as "real genuine search after the Lord, a search beginning, continuing and ending in love." He quotes Narada who said that "Bhakti is intense love to God and it is greater than Karma and the other yogas, because these are in-tended for an object in view, while Bhakti is its own fruition, its own means and its own end." He says that one great advantage of Bhakti is that it is the easiest and most natural way to reach the great divine end. Thyagaraja inherited from his great predecessors the Bhakti and Bhajana traditions. Similarly Tagore assimilated the path of Bhakti which he learnt from the great seers like Caitanya, Kabir and Tukaram. His great poems The Gitanjali, The Gitali and The Gitimalya reveal the deep expression of a devotee. They record the poet's life in which the quest for God is the dominant theme. He says:

Ever in my life I sought thee with my songs I was they who led me from door to door and with them have I felt about me, searching and touching my world.

It was my songs that taught me all the lessons I ever learnt; they showered me secret paths, they brought before my sight many a star in the horizon of my heart.

(Gitanjali, CI)

Thyagaraja expresses a similar feeling that music without devotion is useless. He sings 'Sangita gnanamu Bhaktivina sanmargamu galade manasa?'-Knowledge of music, bereft of devotion, is valueless and cannot secure salvation. The music practised by Bhaktas like Bhringi, Natesa, Anjaneya, Agastya, Matanga and Narada can alone secure it.

The first and foremost thing for a Bhakta is to choose a personal God who is the God of love, the impersonal and personal in one. The

personal God worshipped by the Bhakta is not different from Brah man or Iswara who is the highest manifestation of the Absolute real ity. Tagore, the poet of Gitanjali and Naibedya is essentially the poet of devotion who surrenders himself to God. He addresses his God in various titles and identifies himself with his personal God i.e. Saguna Brahman. He tries to establish a synthesis of Saguna the personal and Nirguna the impersonal. He says:

The song that I came to sing remains unsung to this day. I have spent my days in stringing and in unstringing my instrument.

I have not seen his face, nor have I listened to his voice; only I have heard his gentle foot - steps from the road before any house

I live in the hope of meeting with Him; but this meeting is not yet.

(Gitanjali, XIII)

Thyagaraja chose Rama as his personal God or Ishtadevata and reasons for this are many. His father Rama Brahmam and Rama Brahmam's class-mate, Upanishad Brahmam, were Rama-devotees. In his song, "Rama ni

samanamevaru," Thyagaraja calls Rama, the treasure of his family. He repeatedly says that Rama means Paya Brahmam who transcends all the physical limitations. His Rama is more than the mythological hero of The Ramayana. He says 'Ramayani brahmamunaku peru' in his song "Telisi Rama Chintanato" - "Chant the Lord's name with understanding, stopping the wanderings of the mind at least for a minute and realising the true significance of the form of the great Redeemer."

By constant repetition of Rama Nama, the Bhakta attains the Su preme Bliss. Similarly, Tagore believed in a personal God and culti-vated a personal relationship with Him. He affirms that his God is endowed with many attributes and is full of grace and mercy. He sings:

Now it is time to sit quiet, face to face with thee, and to sing dedication of

life in this silent and overflowing leisure

(Gitanjali, V)

Thyagaraja sings in a similar vein in his song, "Smarne Sukham":

For one born as man, the chanting of the holy Rama name, is itself happiness. Does not the constant hearing of Rama nama transform the Nama itself into a glorious form filling the heart with love divine?

Tagore does not seek any wealth or social status. He believes that, while he engages himself in worldly activities, the practice of devo-tion is of utmost importance. He says:

That I want thee, only thee, let my heart repeat without end. All desires that distract me, day and night, are false and empty to the core.

(Gitanjali, XXXVII)

For Thyagaraja Rama Bhakti is samrajyam, a kingdom. He sings:

The sight of those great souls who have been blessed with the kingdom of Rama Bhakti, itself confers supreme Brahma-nandam. This bliss does not admit of any description in words; it can only be realised by self-experience.

For all yogas, a spirit of renunciation is necessary. Swami Vikekananda asserts that of all renunciations, the most natural is that of the Bhakti yoga. It does not say "Give up." It only says, "Love, love the Highest" and and everything low naturally falls off from him. The Bhakta's renunciation, says Swamiji, is that Vairagya or non-attach-ment for all things that are not God which results from Anuraga or great attachment to God. Thyagaraja practised this ideal throughout his life. When King Saraboji invited him to his court in Tanjore, he declined the royal patronage and returned all the wealth sent to him. This is clear from his song:

"Nidhi Chala Sukhama" O Manasa! Tell me truly which con-duces greatly to happiness-wealth or the sight of Rama? Which is more delicious, milk, butter and curd, or the nectar of the worship and contemplation of Rama? Which gives more

happiness-flattery of men who are full of petty egoism or the singing of the Lord's name?

Thyagaraja practised the vow of voluntary poverty and lived by Uncha-Vrithi i.e, going round the houses every morning, singing and receiving a handful of rice. This is the life of a religious mendicant. With this collection of rice everyday, it seems, that he maintained not only his family, but also his disciples. Tagore was against this kind of renunciation and condemned asceticism. He says:

Deliverance is not for me in renunciation.

I feel the embrace of freedom in a thousand bonds of delight No, I will never shut the doors of my senses. The delights

of sights and hearing and touch will bear thy delight.

Yes, all my illusions will burn into illumination of joy, and all my desires ripen into fruits of love. (Gitanjali, LXXIII)

Thus, Tagore did not believe in the suppression of senses but in the sublimation of them. Though Thyagaraja and Tagore differed in the methods of their approach, Bhakti or devotion for the Almighty is the central theme in both the

poets. Thyagaraja's aversion to mate-rial gains results from his attachment to God. He makes it clear in his song "Durmarga-chara."

When I firmly believe that you are my wealth, you constitute my material needs, you are my very God, how can I bring myself to flatter wicked people wallowing in the mire of life?

What is wanted of a Bhakta is an intense love directed towards God. Due to the absence of the Divine presence, the devotee un dergoes Viraha, the misery and agony of separation which is the sweetest of pains. Both Tagore and Thyagaraja exhibit this Viraha in a number of songs. Tagore says that he cannot live even a short time away from the presence of God:

Away from the sight of thy face my heart knows no rest nor re-spite, and my work becomes an endless toil in a shoreless sea of toil.

(Gitanjali, V)

In the same way, Thyagaraja expresses the agony of separation. In

his song "Nivada negana," he asks: "Since I am your own, can I bear even a moment's separation from you?" When the idols which had been thrown into the River Kaveri by his angry brother were later re-covered, he embraces them in a rapture and sings 'Nanu Palima Nadachi vachithivo.'

Oh Lord of my Life. Have you come walking all the way to bless me, knowing fully the secret longing of my heart, that to have a vision of your lotus-eyed face is the sole purpose of my life?

Tagore and Thyagaraja can be considered as classicists as well as Romanticists. Tagore is a classicist in the sense that he had a great faith in our scriptures and was essentially the product of Indian clas-sical scholarship. As a writer of lyrics and nature poetry and of human passions and emotions, he reveals himself as a romantic poet. He affirms that the path of reason enables us to know God, but it is the path of emotion that makes us feel his presence. In this way both his intellect and emotion played an equally prominent part. As a non-conformist and a man of piety, he did not rigidly subscribe to the views of any particular conventional religion. As the follower of Brahmo Samaj, he condemned all superstition and meaningless ritu-alism in Hindu society. He prays vehemently:

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit; Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action

. Into that heaven of freedom, my father, let my country awake.

Thyagaraja's classicism lies in the fact that he followed all the te-nets laid down in our scriptures. At the same time, he attacked reli-gious hypocrisy, blind superstition, greed and worldly behaviour of his contemporaries. With satire and sarcasm he denounced many un-desirable religious practices and held radical views with reference to many aspects of Bhakti. Though he believed in rituals, he never exag-gerated their importance. He discounted the value of long pilgrim-ages to distant places. For him Bhakti is more important. He answers his critics in his song, "Theliyaleru Rama Bhaktimargmulu":

Selfish people who wander about with the sole purpose of earning money in the guise of pious men, bathing early in the morning painting their bodies with ashes and counting the beads, can never understand the path of true devotion.

Tagore expresses the same idea in the following lines:

Leave this chanting and singing and telling of beads! Whom lost thou worship in this lonely dark corner of a temple with doors all shut? Open thine eyes and see, thy God is not before thee!

Come out of thy meditations and leave aside thy flowers and incense!

Meet him and stand by him in toil and in sweat of thy brow.

(Gitanjali, XI)

Thyagaraja similarly condemned the observance of elaborate for malities and blind rituals. He sings: "Manasu Swadhimamaina ghanuniki, mari manthra trantramulelara?" "If the mind is brought under control, where is the need for mantra, tantra or tapas?" In an other song, he says: "Dhyaname Varamaina

gangasnanamu." "Dhy-ana or meditation of the Lord is itself the most potent Ganga-snanam." Any number of plunges in the water will not remove the stain of deceit and treachery. Such Dhyana should be done with a mind free from longing for other's wealth and desire for lust. In his song "Nadachi, Nadachi" he observes that if bathing, fasting and closing one's eyes constitute all that is to be done, surely there are birds and animals who will get the first place in Heaven. In all these songs his reformatory zeal and his gift for humour and sarcasm are evident. In his song, debunking astrology he says: "what is the power of planets? Rama's kindness is the real strength."

Thus in his attack on superstition, vulgarity and hypocrisy, Thy agaraja exercises to a large extent, his rational faculty. To him the discipline of one's mental faculty is more important than all the ritu-als. He sings "Manasu nilpa saktilekapote, madura ghanta virula pujemijeyunu?"

If one does not have the power to control his mind, what is the use of ringing the bell and conducting puja? If one is a hypo-crite, of what use is it to bathe in the Kaveri or the Ganga?

Thyagaraja and Tagore narrate in their songs their various moods, their yearning for contact with God, their sore trials and disappoint-ments as a result of frustration, their constant adoration and ultimate union which resulted in their rapture and ecstasy. Both the poets are mystics who, by their intense sadhana, realized the truth and experi-enced the presence of the supreme Infinity. Mysticism has been de fined as the relationship between the human soul and the universal soul. Its aim is to make the human soul seek union with God. A mys-tic is one who seeks direct experience with the Divine. Love of God turns a devotee into a mystic. He yearns for God and is not satisfied till he achieves a complete union with the Supreme. So the aim of Bhakti Yoga is to attain this mystic experience. A mystic can, accord-ing to William Blake:

See a world in a grain of sand,

And a heaven in a wild flower,

Hold Infinity in the palm of his hand,

And Eternity in an hour.

Tagore went through an intense sadhana or practice and finally reached the mystic heights. This is evident in many of his lyrics. He says:

Have you not heard his silent steps?
He comes, comes, ever comes,
Every moment and every age, every day, every night,
he comes, comes, ever comes.

Many a song have I sung in many a mood of mind, but all their notes have always proclaimed,
'He comes, comes, ever comes.'

(Gitanjali, XLV)

When he realizes that God is approaching and that in a few mo-ments he would achieve the purpose of his life, he feels an inexpress-ible ecstasy:
In many a morning and eve thy

footsteps have been heard and thy messenger has come within my heart and called me in secret

(Gitanjali, XLVI)

At last, when I woke up from my slumber and opened my eyes, I saw thee standing by me, flooding my sleep with thy smile. How I had feared that the path was long and wearisome, and the struggle to reach thee was hard!

(Gitanjali, XLVIII)

Finally the joy of union released a flood of ecstasy and the poet goes into rapture and cries:

Thus it is that thy joy in me is so full. That it is that thou hast come down to me O thou lord of all heavens, where would be thy love if I were not?

(Gitanjali, LVI)

Light, my light, the world filling light, the eye-kissing light heart-sweetening light.

(Gitanjali, LVIII)

Tagore in his Religion of Man describes the vision which over-whelmed him and made him "see into the life of things." Similarly Thyagaraja describes in a number of songs how he was thrilled and tears rolled down his cheeks when he saw the vision of Rama in His glory. In his song "Giripai Nelakouna" he observes:

Unerringly I have seen Sri Rama who is installed on the hill with his attendants vying with each other in fanning him with flowers, fans and otherwise serving him and who promised to give me salvation after five days. My body was thrilled and tears of joy rolled down my cheeks and I merely mumbled, not being able to give expression to my thought.

Tagore's message to mankind is the message of love, harmony, peace, universal brotherhood and spiritual unity. The final message of these two seers is universal and is applicable to all times and to all places. Thyagaraja emphasized that Rama is the only refuge to es

cape from human predicament and that man has no other alterna tive. "Vundedi Ramudokadu ooraka chedipoku manasa." Tagore sang:

Make me bend my head, O Lord, And touch the dust of your feet, Dissolve my pride, my vanity, In a flood of tears

Thyagaraja sings:

"Tattvameruga tarama" -Is it possible to realise the truth?

Is it possible to realise the great truth that Rama is the meaning of the great affirmation "That thou Art?"

This recalls the Upanishad "Tat Tuam Asi" or "So Aham" (I am He) "So aham anadi chalu" and "So aham Sukham." This is the greatest bliss which he realized towards the end of his life. The end of all yoga is Jeevanmukti and a realization of the identity of "You and I." Both Thyagaraja and Tagore achieved this and became Jeevanmuktas.

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A Note on Nissim Ezekiel's Poetry

L.S.R. KRISHNA SASTRY

One of the important names in modern Indian poetry in English, Nissim Ezekiel is perhaps the most widely known among our poets, whose work reveals a consistent commitment to the craft, authentic ity of articulation and sincerity of purpose. Born in December 1924 in Bombay, he is the author of seven collections of poems and has edited An Emerson Reader, A Martin Luther King Reader, Indian Writers in Conference and Writing in India. He was Professor of En-glish in Mithibai College of Arts, Bombay, and Visiting Professor at the University of Leeds and at a number of American universities and colleges.

Ezekiel went to England for higher studies and spent his im pressionable years there. Understandably enough, he was influenced by the major poets of the thirties like Yeats, Eliot and Auden. His attitude of seriousness towards his craft is a result of this influence.

To Ezekiel goes the credit of having ushered in a new trend in the post-independence period, which changed the course of Indian po-etry in English in theme and technique. He is also responsible for giving an urban turn to it, which was earlier, by and large, bucolic. These changes have proved so crucial that he has come to be consid-ered not merely a major poet but a major influence on other practis ing poets. As editor of Quest, guest editor of The Illustrated Weekly of India and editor of Poetry India and Tre Indian P.E.N., he has im-pressed on younger poets the seriousness of creative writing.

As Adil Jussawala points out, Ezekiel is perhaps the first Indian poet to show to the Indian readers that craftsmanship is as much im-portant as subject matter. In fact, Ezekiel's poetic career reveals a continuing experiment with the technique of writing. He has also been preoccupied with the discovery of the filiations between poetry and life, making poetry his life, and life, in its everyday ordinariness and familiar lineaments, the source of his poetic strength and inspira tion. There is, in his poetic work, a rich variety in terms of theme and

form.

Being a Jew, Ezekiel considers himself "a natural outsider." He says, "Circumstances and decisions relate me to India." In an oft-quoted poem, "Background, Casually," he says:

The Indian landscape sears my eyes.

I have become a part of it

To be observed by foreigners. They say that I am singular,

Their letters overstate the case.

In another poem, "City Song," he says:

I don't wish to go higher.

I want to return

as soon as I can to be of the city, to feel its hot breath.

I have to belong Even the terrace is distant enough

I decide to go down.

In this context, one cannot but refer to one of the happiest lines of the poet, which comes at the end of one of his well known poems, "Enterprise":

Home is where we have to gather grace.
As a critic rightly points out, the acknowledgment of a home in the last two volumes adds a whole new dimension to Ezekiel's poetry. In a number of poems in the volume, The Unfinished Man, he ex-presses his affinity with the kindred clamour of the city. He says that he cannot "shun his native place."
The early volumes, A Time to Change, Sixty Poems and The Third, deal with the theme of love and sex. Pilgrimage, religious and secu-lar, is a recurring idea. From the third volume, the poet realizes the holiness of love, which enables him to take a positive view of woman. That is why there is justification in the comment that the poet's pil-grimage is one from sex to superconsciousness. Further, though there are good pieces like "What Frightens Me" and "Double Horror" in

the earlier volumes, it is only in the poems of The Third that the poet's art gains in force and reaches perfection.

Even like Eliot in some of his shorter poems and The Waste Land, the poet is concerned, in The Unfinished Man, with the predicamen of present-day life. It is the redemption of the modern man, the city dweller, who is caught in the clamour and marsh of the city, that emerges as the poet's abiding concern. "A Morning Walk" describes the poet trying to come to terms with the maddening city of Bombay, It could of course be any Indian city, for that matter:

Barbaric city sick with slums

Deprived of seasons, blessed with rains, Its hawkers, beggars, iron-lunged, Processions led by frantic drums. A million purgatorial lanes, And child-like masses, many-tongued, Whose wages are in words and crumbs.

Is there, then, no way out of this enveloping insanity, folly and futil ity? Eliot's recipe is "humility prayer, observance, discipline, thought and action"-in that order; Ezekiel's is "Prayer and poetry, poetry and prayer." And hence the cry:

God grant me privacy God grant me certainty In kinship with the sky, Air, earth, fire, sea-And the fresh inward eye.

Perhaps the best example of Ezekiel's creativity is "Poet, Lover, Birdwatcher" from the collection, The Exact Name, a poem in which one finds a superb control

of the poetic line, a radiant suggestiveness which blends three sets of images into a unified utterance of unusual power and beauty.

To force the pace and never to be still Is not the way of those who study birds Or women. The best poets wait for words.

The hunt is not an exercise of will But patient love relaxing on a hill

A Note on Nissim Ezekiel's Poetry

To note the movement of a timid wing; Until the one who knows that she is loved No longer waits but risks surrendering-In this the poet finds his moral proved, Who never spoke before his spirit moved.

For tightness of structure and depth of meaning there are few other poems in Indian English poetry to be compared with this poem, the theme of which is the poetic process itself and the perception of the inward eye of the gifted poet, which can glance from earth to heaven, and come up with a fresh ordering of human experience

And there is "The Night of the Scorpion," a widely anthologized poem, in which irony is evocatively absorbed into the structure of the poem:

My mother only said

Thank God the scorpion picked on me and spared my children.

Ezekiel's "Very Indian Poems in Indian English" are an interest-ing group, in which is seen the poet's keen observation of the speech habits and mannerisms of Indians speaking the English language.

Here is an example:

I am standing for peace and non-violence Why world is fighting fighting Why all people of world Are not following Mahatma Gandhi, I am simply not

understanding. Ancient Indian wisdom is 100% correct. I should say even 200% correct. But modern generation is neglecting-Too much going for fashion and foreign thing.

Hymns in Darkness, which came out in 1976, contains poems which are in the nature of ironic comments on common sayings and naked truths:

The darkness has its secrets which light does not know.

"Poster poems," which are included in this collection, present certain maxims from an ironic point of view. There is throughout an epi grammatic and conversational vein.

Crocodile tears are unknown to crocodiles.

The conversational technique is perfected in Latter-Day Psalms, which was published in 1982. The book brought for Ezekiel the Sahitya Akademi award in 1983. Here the poet is seen talking di rectly to God, as to a friend. There is a tone of rational humanism, and irony and humour, which are characteristic of the poet, come off tellingly in quite a few pieces.

One finds, on a total view, that Ezekiel is a poet who has displayed a singular flair for experimentation in technique, and in his choice of themes, there is rich variety. His seven volumes, A Time to Change, Sixty Poems, The Third, The Unfinished Man, The Exact Name, Hymns in Darkness and Latter-day Psalms, amply testify to the growth of the poet from ironic, detached observation to vision and prophecy. His best poems stand out and promise to stand the test of time. He also tried his hand at drama, and his three plays, Nalini, Marriage Poem and Tre Sleepwalkers are an impressive segment of his achievement.

Ezekiel is also that exceptional poet, who reads out his poems el-fectively at conferences and seminars and on the TV., is prompt and kind to curious correspondents and inquisitive interviewers and re-searchers, and has a word of cheer and encouragement to budding poets, to most of whom he is a kind of a father-figure.

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Comic Norms in Jonson and Congreve

PRALAY KUMAR DEB

I

Jonson and Congreve, writing within a century of each other, uphold the norms of critical comedy. In spite of the variations they record in their modes of critical appraisal they do not mince matters in empha-sizing the didactic function of comic drama. Jonson is obviously more dogmatic in his moral protestations than Congreve, but Congreve, however much he is aligned to the Restoration carnival of insouciant wit, does not lag behind in using his art to shore up the foundations of the established order. In other words, in both theory and practice, Jonson and Congreve espouse the ideal of moral conservatism and propose to unmask the various specimens of pretension and hypoc-risy for the delighted edification of the spectator or the reader.

II

The comic norms formulated by Jonson and Congreve demonstr-ate their reverential involvement with some of the greatest writers of the classical epochs. Jonson was thoroughly acquainted with the works of most of the ancient authorities who propounded the theo-ries of comedy. He was perfectly aware not only of Aristotle's brief but profound remarks on comedy in the Poetics, which appeared With the valuable commentaries of Robortellus and Madius in 1548 and 1550, but also of the critical observations made by Cicero, Quin-tilian, Diomedes and Donatus, which influenced the analyses and ar-guments of Erasmus and Melanchthon, outstanding humanists of the early Renaissance. He was also deeply soaked as much in Horace as in the critics of the Italian Renaissance-Cinthio, Minturno, Trissino, Scaliger and Castelvetro among others-

who would never cease canvassing their precepts and doctrines. Early in his dramatic career Jonson declares that his comedy should 'sport with human fol-

lies, not with crimes.'

In Every Man out of His Humour Asper gives vent to his satirical intent in comedy, thus implying that the role of the comic dramatist is that of a reformer of men and manners:

I'll strip the ragged follies of the time,

Naked, as at their birth:... and with a whip of steele, Print wounding lashes in their yron ribs.

(The First Grex, 17-20)

The indignant determination and fierce assertiveness of the moral censor are în keeping with Jonson's harsh doctrine of comic laughter, As Jonson says in his Epistle Dedicatory to Volpone, the function of the comic poet is to instruct and amend the licentious spirits or to stir up 'gentle affections' that may enrich the basic patterns of hu manism in their moral curriculum. Indeed, it has been his study to 'stand off from them' and to labour:

for their instruction, and amendment, to reduce not onely the ancient formes, but manners of the scene, the easinesse, the propriety, the innocence, and last the doctrine, which is the principall end of poesie, to informe men, in the best reason of liuing. (105-9)

Nevertheless, while explicating the corrective mission of the comic poet, or while vindicating his role as a propagator of moral principles in human life, Jonson does not forget the importance of the pleasure giving power of comedy. He evinces a

keen interest in the Horatian dictum and does not ignore either of its pillars, utile and dulci, as is evident in the following extract from one of his many extra-dramatic addresses to the audience:

The ends of all, who for the Scene doe write, Are, or should be, to profit, and delight.

(Epicoene, Prologue II, 1-2)

It should, however, be noticed that despite his aversion to comic laughter and his absorption in the classical theory of delightful teach ing, Jonson has often proved happily unsuccessful in recking 'his ow rede.' He does not pull any punches about his butts of satire and yel

his comedies, especially the great ones, gush forth in a spree of up-roarious hilarity. Even Volpone, with its terror-slanted, unnatural at-mosphere enveloping the deformed household of the Venetian magnifico, with its grim and stunning blasphemy that makes an old father disinherit his legitimate son, a jealous husband prostitute his virtuous wife and a respected lawyer debase his noble profession, ap-pears entertaining in the ultimate analysis. S. Schoenbaum[3] expresses the view that 'Volpone is rich in mirth provoking comic invention and detail' and refers not only to 'the serviceable humour of defness' in Corbaccio, or 'the abrupt volte face' of Corvino, or the frolicsome underplot of the Would-be couple, 'she with her voluble vanity, he with his onions and red herrings, but also to the amazing transforma-tions of Volpone, from the decrepit invalid to the mountebank drug-vendor, from the impotent wretch to the libidinous emperor of the bedchamber. Indeed, Jonson has pushed back the frontiers of the possibilities of comic laughter; it co-exists with sundry forms of per-version, with the ruthless and the shocking inhuman experience. 'After black comedy we should no longer be surprised that audiences can find amusement in Volpone.4

Like Jonson, Congreve too has placed on record his objectives and preferences as a writer of comedy. It is true that his mode of the-orizing is not as elaborate and explanative as that of Jonson, but he is unambiguous in his promulgation of comic norms which indicate his objectives and preferences as a writer of comedy. It is true that his mode of theorizing is not as elaborate and explanative as that of Jon-son, but he is unambiguous in his promulgation of comic norms which indicate his commitment to the classical tradition.

In the Epistle Dedicatory of The Double-Dealer he says: 'It is the Business of a Comick Poet to paint the Vices and Follies of Human-kind.' (Dobrée, 116) That Congreve is aware of the ostensible aim of satire which is to expose vice or folly by subtle mockery or direct con-demnation for the rectitude of morals is abundantly clear in the same Dedication: 'I design'd the Moral first and to that Moral 1 invented the Fable.' (Dobrée, 114) Congreve does not acknowledge any possi-ble derivation from an 'original,' either English or French, but Maskwell in the play certainly descends from Moliere's Tartuffe, the covert rascality ensconced in the studied glamour of ascetic preten-

sions, though reduced in stature and toned down in the magnificenc of sacredness; and well might he say, like his continental forbear, that the duty of comedy is 'to correct men's errors in the course of amus ing them,' to 'attack the vices of the age by depicting them in ridicu lous guise, 6

... little of it Way of the World was prepar'd for that general Taste which seems now to be predominant in the Pallats of our Audi ence. (Dobrée, 336) But in the Epistle Dedicatory of the play he reg isters not merely his intellectual fastidiousness but also his interest in affording mirth and diversion to the sensible and appreciative mem bers of the audience. He observes:

Those Characters which are meant to be ridicul'd in most of our Comedies, are of Fools so gross, that in my humble Opin-ion, they shou'd rather disturb than divert the well-natur'd and reflecting Part of an Audience; they are rather Objects of Charity than Contempt; and instead of moving our Mirth, they ought very often to excite our Compassion. (Dobrée, 336-37)

It is this reflection which makes him design the characters of 'af-fected Wit,' and the kind of laughter that he wants to arouse by pre-senting them on the stage is not raucous or scurrilous, but delicate and refined and sophisticated, much in the fashion of Dryden whose name has, however, not been mentioned in the Dedication.

Jonson has left us in no doubt about his formidable mastery of classical learning with which his comedies are often larded; Con-greve too has a classical temper, a sensitivity to the classical pattern, and an awareness of the most venerated

authorities of classical pre cept and example. Congreve himself has revealed his preference for the classical tradition in comedy and commended Terence for the purity of his Stile, the Delicacy of his Turns, and the Justness of his Characters,' while designating him 'the most correct Writer in the World.' (Dobrée, 337)

IV

If Terence fascinates Congreve, it is Aristophanes with whom Jon son shares a community of spirit. Like Scalinger, Jonson prefers Ar istophanes and Plautus to Terence, but in spite of Eleanor Patience Lumley's study of The Influence of Plautus on the Comedies of Jonson

(New York, 1901) we should like to maintain that between the tart Greek and the extravagant Roman Jonson chooses the former chiefly because of his satirical-cum-ethical predilections. What we wish to submit is that Jonson and Congreve are, in some

sense, the intellectual and spiritual descendants of Aristophanes and Terence respectively and that the difference between them is compa-rable to the kind of difference which exists between their classical predecessors. And this we submit in spite of the fact that Aristopha-nes is more imaginative and less moralistic than Jonson, while Con-greve is more deliberative and less revolutionary than Terence. Think of the decisive steps Terence took in separating the prologue from the play to make it a vehicle for the articulation of serious views on dramatic methods as well as in introducing double plots and subtle ambiguities in the structural pattern of Menandrean comedy! Jonson and Congreve may be bracketed together in a single perspective of comic view, but they also suggest points of variation. Both are criti-cal; didactic, self-conscious, interested in social realism, governed by rationality, endowed with the resources of intellect, capable of pre-scribing the norms of civilizing ethics for the decadent world of false-hood, but where Jonson is harsh and fierce in his resolution, Congreve is mild and gentle. There is, indeed, a difference between the two in the degree of intensity. It is only in The Double-Dealer that Congreve goes out of his way and shoots his shafts of ridicule at the embodiments of despicable hypocrisy and arrant mischievousness with a venom that recalls the Jonson of Volpone. Jonson has cer-tainly exerted tremendous influence on Congreve, especially on his art of characterization, but the mantle of the angry moralist is ac-cepted in a spirit that bespeaks a kind of graceful dereliction. Con-greve is hardly at odds with the hedonistic culture of the Restoration period.

NOTES

1. All quotations from Jonson are from Ben Jonson, ed. C.H. Herford and Percy and Evelyn Simpson, 11 Volumes (Oxford, 1925-52).

2. Horace says in the Ars Poetica: 'Poets aim at giving either profit and delight, or at combining the giving of pleasure with some useful precepts for life. And a few lines later: The man who has

managed to blend profit with delight wins everyone's approbation, for he gives his reader pleasure at the same time as he instructs him.' See Classical Literary Criticism, trans, and ed. T.S. Dorsch (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1965), pp. 90, 91.

3. "The Humorous Jonson' in The Elizabethan Theatre IV, ed. George Hibbard (Canada, 1974), p. 15.

4. Ibid., 18.

5. Unless otherwise specified, references to Congreve are to Comedies by William Congreve, ed. Bonamy Dobrée (London, 1925, reprinted 1959), henceforth referred to as Dobrée.

6. Moliere, The Misanthrope and Other Plays, trans. and ed. John Wood (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1959), p. 104.

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Natasamrat and King Lear

P.V. PANDE

Shri V.V. Shirwadkar-Kusumagraj-is the most celebrated name in the modern Marathi literature. Beginning his literary career as poet under the penname "Kusumagraj," he has so far published seven col-lections of his poems. Although he is widely known as a great poet, Shirwadkar also has very successfully written eleven plays in Marathi, all of which have been successfully staged and well received by the discerning audience of the Marathi stage. Shirwadkar has been the recipient of Sahitya Akademi Award and last year he was awarded the covetous Jnanpeeth Award for the year 1989.

Out of the 11 plays that Shirwadkar has written, six are transfor-mations of English plays. All of these transformations in Marathi were staged and appreciated by the Marathi audiences all over India. These include 3 of Shakespeare's great tragedies-Macbeth, Othello, and King Lear. Shirwadkar himself has said about his attraction to-wards Shakespeare's drama and particularly for his great tragedies, and ever since he began to write poetry in Marathi, this attraction grew into a sort of obsession. He tried to translate some of the great soliloquies in Marathi verse and then turned his attention to bring the essence of Shakespeare's poetic and dramatic might before the Marathi audiences. He felt that the earlier translations or transfor-mations of Shakespeare's tragedies which were received extremely well by Marathi theatre-going public were mainly popular due to some of the greatest stage actors of Marathi theatre and not because of the texts that were staged. Moreover, Marathi theatre, due to its total dependence for both form and texture on the classical Sanskrit poetics, did not have the conception of "tragedy" and as such every play written or transformed was essentially a happy-ending one, thereby doing a great injustice to the tragedies of Shakespeare. Not that, no attempt was ever made to render faithfully the famous trage-dies into Marathi, but, somehow, the efforts, voluminous though they had been, have remained too short to do any justice to the Bard.

Shakespeare has taken the Marathi speaking people by storm way back in the 1840's, when he was first introduced to them as a result of the then newly started Bombay University. The University education had produced a new generation of scholars, who after studying the Shakespearean drama, tried to bring them before the Marathi audi ences and as a result a spate of Shakespeare's translations, beginning from Madhav Shastri Kolhatkar's rendering of Othello into Marathi in 1867 to the present day, has overwhelmed the Marathi stage.

Shirwadkar's first transformation of a Shakespearcan play was that of Macbeth. He has mentioned the circumstances in which he had undertaken this task. He says that though Shakespeare's dramas like Hamlet, Othello, and Taming of the Shrew were very popular amongst the audiences and the great thespians like Ganpatrao Joshi and Nanasaheb Phatak were extremely successful and effective in presenting their roles of Hamlet and Othello on the Marathi stage, Shakespeare has still not been projected before the audiences in the proper perspective, as it should be. The limitations of the stagecraft, the text and the stage traditions of Marathi theatre, all of these fac-tors were more or less responsible for this.

Shirwadkar felt it would be proper to bring Macbeth once again before the Marathi audience and he transformed the great tragedy of Macbeth in his inimitable poetic style as Rajmukut in 1954, and its first stage performance was extremely well received. In 1961, Shirwadkar brought Othello on the Marathi stage and it also became an instant success, due once again to the extremely beautiful poetic rendering of the Bard's dialogues into Marathi. After the success of the two great Shakespearean tragedies on Marathi stage, Nanasaheb Phatak, himself a great performer of Hamlet and Othello on the Marathi stage, suggested Shirwadkar to write a play based on King. Lear, so that he could fulfil his life long

ambition of performing Lear on Marathi stage and as a result of this, Shirwadkar tried to bring King Lear on Marathi stage; at first he thought of transforming it into Marathi keeping the plot and characters of the original play intact, but only rendering the dialogue in Marathi and giving the characters local Marathi names; but then he was suddenly seized by the idea of writing a new play, making the great thespian himself as the protago-nist, but keeping the essential structure and the story of King Lear as it is. And Natasamrat came to be written and produced on the stage in 1971; and since then has taken Marathi audiences by storm all over India.

It was only natural that Natasamrat should attract the critical at-tention due to it and as a result many reviews and critiques of Natasamrat appeared in newspapers and magazines, touching all the aspects of the play including the stagecraft. Whether the play should be considered an independent creation of Shirwadkar or it should be treated as a transformation of Shakespeare's King Lear, became a staple food of the Marathi dramatic criticism. Obviously both the sides had put forward strong arguments for and against each other. Prof. Madhav Manohar, the most influential critic of Marathi 4 drama, maintains that Natasamrat is a transformation, albeit a very good one, compact, eminently stageworthy, highly poetic, but as a "tragedy" it is an utter failure vis-a-vis the original King Lear.

Another critic, Shri D.V. Deshpande very strongly maintains that Natasamrat is an independent, original play of Shirwadkar and he questions those who point out the debt to Shakespeare. Shirwadkar himself has acknowledged, counterarguing that Shakespeare himself had taken almost all his themes from various sources and never con-ceded that they were based on those several sources and all his plays are considered his original, the world over, so why shouldn't Natasamrat be considered as an original play of Shirwadkar? Both these claims are worthy of consideration. But without going into the controversy or without taking any side, it can still be maintained that Natasamrat is undoubtedly a great popular play and examine its simi-larity and differences with Shakespeare's King Lear. The present paper proposes to do just that.

While writing this play, Shirwadkar's idea was to portray and pres-ent the character of a great thespian, who himself has presented Shakespeare's almost all the heroes very successfully on the Marathi stage, as the central figure and therefore chose the title of his play: Natasamrat - "The Emperor among the thespians." It is quite obvi-ous that the thespian who occupies the central stage,

Appa Belwalkar, in the play is drawn on the lines of Shakespeare's King Lear. Lear is a proud, uncompromising, monarch ruling over his in-numerable subjects in the most autocratic way. Shirwadkar's Appa Belwalkar is also a proud egoist, who has won the laurels, the highest honour as the 'Natasamrat' and rules over the hearts of his audiences through his superlative performances of Shakespeare's heroes on the Marathi stage. Both decide to give away whatever they possessed to their offsprings. Lear has three daughters, whereas Belwalkar has one son, one daughter and a wife. Both suffer tragic end as a conse-

queence of their actions of surrendering all their possessions to their respective offsprings, who force them out of their homes and leave them to meet their ends, ultimately, in a destitute state. But the simi larity between Lear and Appa Belwalkar is limited to this much. Be-cause Appa Belwalkar, is essentially a common, lower middle class man, achieving the position of the Natasamrat by sheer dint of deter-mination and hard work and after going through innumerable hard-ships of life, frustrations of daily life, poverty, indignity and privation. Lear is a monarch, born in the line of kings, enjoying unquestionable

authority over whomsover he rules, and as such demanding every thing he wants, even the protestation of love from his own daughters, and when he fails to get the flattering proclamation of love from his most loved and liked daughter, Cordelia, he goes into an uncontrol-lable rage and deprives her of her legitimate share of his kingdom which he had carlier decided to give to all the three daughters in equal parts. Belwalkar does not do any of these things. He willingly parts with his entire life's income, received as a 'purse' in his honour, dividing it equally among his two offsprings. He is a loving father, and enjoys the reciprocal love from both of his children. The son, Nandu, is a promising young man working as a junior executive in a city firm, with great prospects of enhancement in his own career. His wife Sharda is a charming lady, equally loving and lovable. The daughter, Nalu, the apple of her father's eye, is also equally loving daughter and is married to a promising young engineer. Both of them do not exepect anything from their father except his love, and when immediately after the celebrations held in his honour are over, he an-nounces his intention of giving both of them equal share of his purse, which both of them politely turn down. Kaveri, his wife, his compan-ion through the thick and thin of his life, also tries to indicate to him that it would be rash and foolish to give away everything to the chil-dren at this stage. But Belwalkar overrules every protest and objec tion and, pronouncing his unquestionable faith in the essential goodness of his own children, forces them to accept the money. He also gives his wife, Kaveri, a gold necklace and also keeps with him-self his old house at his native village Morwadi,

and after giving away the money to his children he also declares his intention to live with them alternately. In fact, both his children insist that he should live with them, and he decides to stay with his son. Lear's daughter, Goneril, does not tolerate her father's ordering her servants and his whimsical demands and forces him to go to Regan, but also takes

care to warn her about his impending visit to her house as well as of-fers her suggestions as to how he should be treated, which Regan readily agrees to. In the case of Belwalkar nothing of this sort hap-pens. He has stayed with his son for twelve long years and must have lived his usual way of life. His old egoistic nature refuses to accept that anything has changed in his life and consequently does not rec-ognize the change in the life style of his son and his daughter-in-law. The son has now become a top executive, enjoying a lot of social prestige and enjoys a position which demands higher standards of life. Sharda, his wife, is now basking in the sunshine of her husband's prosperity and dignity, and no wonder, considers the loud speaking, and rustic, abusive way of Belwalkar's speaking very irritating. Their daughter Thami, is very much attached to her grandfather, who in order to please her recites all his great stage speeches in his loud, stage voice, which are now jarring to the ears of his daughter-in-law. The last straw on the proverbial camel's back is provided by the en-counter between the old man and his daughter-in-law, resulting in the ban on his grand-daughter's meeting with him. The son and the daughter-in-law are forced to chide him for his rustic behaviour in their 'highclass, civilized' house, thereby giving a subtle hint to him that he has become an anachronism in their lives. The old man and his wife take this hint and decide to leave the house, in the fond hope that there is one more offspring of theirs, who would not treat them as their first one has treated. Without informing the son, Belwalkar and his wife decide to leave the house, and while going away bestows his blessing not only on the grand-daughter, but on his son and daughter-in-law also. Unlike Lear, they willingly leave the house of

their offspring. In the house of his daughter Belwalkar once again resumes his usual way of life, dirtying the drawing hall, purchasing and eating outside eatables and throwing the wrappings in the hall. The daugh-ter and her husband tolerate all these things in silence. They even provide medical treatment to the ailing wife of Belwalkar, and gener-ally try their utmost to keep them in comfort. Here also, his daughter is found to be placed in an embarrassing situation, she neither likes the way Belwalkar lives in her house, nor does she want to say so. Here, again, the spark of discontent is turned into a sizable fire, when the boss

of his son-in-law, Mr. Kalwankar, and his wife visit him to consult him about their proposed staging of Hamlet, and while discussing pass some uncharitable remarks about the venerable

actor, Ganpatrao Joshi and his style of acting. Belwalkar has been lis tening to Kalwankar's diatribe against the old methods of the earlier actors and the stagecraft quite silently, tolerating everything even though loathing every second of it, but when the Kalwankars train their guns of abuse on the one person whom Belwalkar revers more than God, he cannot restrict his indignation and orders them out of the house, at the same moment, his daughter and the son-in-law ar-rive.

Kalwankars leave the house in a huff and the daughter silently re-sents the behaviour of her father and decides to relegate him to the outhouse. The final estrangement between Nalu and her father comes when she finds the purse of her husband stolen and im-mediately suspects her father, and the unobtrusive search of the be-longings of her father and mother reveals a lot of currency notes, which Kaveri has kept in her trunk after selling off her necklace, but Nalu takes the money to be that of her husband and accuses her fa-ther of the theft. Belwalkar once again flares up into an uncontrolla-ble rage and abuses his daughter and decides to leave her house. Kaveri tries to pacify him, but to no avail, and then collapses with a coronary and dies. And Belwalkar, now completely lonely and es tranged from all whom he called his own, leaves the house once again. Here do we find the parallel between Lear and Belwalkar, both raging with uncontrollable anger and anguish of being spurned off by their own offsprings, become hysterical and wander off, into the wilderness, almost possessed by a madness.

Though Shirwadkar's Natasamrat is fashioned after King Lear, he does succeed in making his end as tragic as Shakespeare docs. But the basic difference between Lear and Belwalkar is obvious. Lear seems to us a simple thoughtless, inconsiderate and ignorant old man. He is obstinate but a proud and extra-ordinary person, unmind-ful of the qualities of others around him. He could not recognize the ulterior motives of his two elder daughters and accepted their verbal and verbose pronouncements of love at their face-value and re-warded them with his kingdom but refused to accept the truthful but unflattering love of his otherwise beloved daughter, Cordelia, and deprived her of her rightful

share; not only that, but even refused to give her away to King of France in marriage. When he realized the real natures of all his daughters, the treacherous and scheming mechinations of Goneril and Regan and selfless and loving Cordelia's sacrificing her own life for the sake of her father-he be

came accutely aware of his folly; and repentent, broken-hearted he dies. His end makes us sad and our hearts are filled with pity for his lot.

In the case of Belwalkar, we can see that both his offsprings are brought to the brink of their tolerance and due to the whimsical and uncompromising nature of their father are forced to chide him. They do nothing which could be termed as ungrateful and cruel; on the contrary both of them are extremely concerned and worried about his well-being and go out to search him. Even the death of his wife Kaveri does not mellow him down, on the contrary it triggers off a maddening rage inside him and in a fit he leaves the house for the second time. In this fit of madness, he does not show the courage to face the ravages of the world and the fate, that Lear shows. Instead we see him lamenting and shouting, asking for a shelter, an easy chair, but claims himself to be a 'storm'. If we compare Lear's out-burst when he is deprived of his entourage of one hundred knights by both his daughters (II, iv, 266-85), wherein he cries out,

You Heavens, give me that patience, patience I need! touch me with noble anger, And let not women's weapons, water drops, Stain my cheeks. I will have such revenges on you both That all the world shall-. The terrors of the earth. You think I'll weep;

No, I'll not weep. (99)

With the lamenting of this Natasamrat, begging for a shelter (Act III, sc. ii, 64-65) we come to know the basic difference between the two, Lear is still the proud potent king even in the face of all the depriva-tions, whereas Belwalkar looks like a cringing, impotent old man. Belwalkar is only a projected "King of Kings among the actors," but Lear is a real king.

Moreover, there is nothing in the Natasamrat, which could be termed as Evil; as is there in King Lear. And hence we do not con-ceive of any tragic feeling at the end of this Natasamrat. His end is his own creation, whereas Lear's end is

contrived by the mechinations of evil characters like Edmund, Goneril, Regan and to some extent Cornwall. This coupled with the horror of innocent

Cordelia's death by hanging and Lear's broken-hearted utterances at the unfortunate death of Cordelia move our hearts and make us feel sorry for him. Nothing of this kind happens in the case of Shirwadkar's Belwalkar.

The sub-plot of King Lear, which enhances the poignancy of the tragedy, is completely absent from Natasamrat. But it also lends it a compactness, and a shapeliness. On the top of this is the highly po-etic language of Shirwadkar's dialogues. The rendering of Shakespeare's soliloquies in the most beautifully poetic Marathi is the greatest plus point of this play. No doubt, the Marathi audiences all over, have thronged in multitudes to appreciate it.

NOTES

1. V.V. Shirwadkar, "Shodh Shakespeare Cha" (Suparna Prakashan, Pune, 1983), pp. 4, 5.

2. Ibid., pp. 8, 9.

3. V.V. Shirwadkar, Natasamrat (Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1971), Acknowledgements.

4. Madhav Manohar, "Marathi Comedy-Tragedy" (Vasant Book Stall, Bombay, 1989).

5. D.V. Deshpande, "Mala Disleli Natake" (Raviraj Prakashan, Pune, 1989), pp. 129-56.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Sylvia Plath, Pashupati Jha. New Delhi: Creative Publishers, 1991. Pages 151. Rs. 150.

Myth vs Reality in Sylvia Plath

Suicide by a writer creates ripples among the readers. And when that writer happens to be a woman and when that woman is young and the wife of a major contemporary writer, her death arouses all kinds of curiosity. When Sylvia Plath died young at thirty, a few days after the publication of the autobiograhical and only novel The Bell Jar in 1963, her work and her life became subjects of close scrutiny for crit-ics. She has been variously called a "White Goddess, a bitch God-dess, a temptress, an extremist poet par excellence, an outright confessional exhibitionist, a vitriolic and vengeful feminist, a Cassandra, an Electra, a Medea, an Emily Dickinson and a Virginia Woolf," moans Pashupati Jha, the Plath scholar.

In his Ph.D. thesis on Sylvia Plath, Jha highlights the lack of qual ity and subjective nature of the Plath criticism-the "tragic and terri-ble misinterpretation of her work." The dependence of critics on biographical material to interpret Plath's writings has been the norm. But this has been a problem with writers who belong to what is called the Confessional School. Critics have often discussed Plath's "blood hot and personal" aspect of her writings giving birth to various myths and cults about her self and her works. Scholarly criticism is required to "separate the myth from reality, the cult from the creative artist, and explain the real virtue of her work by bringing into focus how even intimate personal details are transformed into impersonal art by sheer intensity and craftsmanship, and how individual traumas and travails are transmuted into a pattern of universal suffering by the poet" And Jha does precisely this in his analysis of Plath's writings.

In the "Introduction" to Sylvia Plath, Jha traces a comprehensive picture of prominent criticism of Plath's work, both in books and journal commentaries. Among the earliest critics of Plath is Dom Moraes who in his 1960 article calls Plath's The Colossus "one of the best first books for a long time." Jha assesses

the full-length book criticism by Charles Newman, Melander Ingrid, Eileen Aird, Nancy Hunter Steiner (a roommate of Plath at Smith during the second

term after her mental breakdown), David Holbrook, Edward Butscher, Judith Kroll, Lynn Salop, Gary Lane, Mary Lynn Broc, Caroline King Bernard, Margret D. Uroff, Jon Rosenblatt, Lynda K. Bundtzen and scores of journal commentaries by scholars like A.R. Jones, Peter Davison, James E. Hoyle, S. Zollman, Barbara Hardy, and D.S. Maini. Jha claims that "none of the critics have given full critical scrutiny to the dominant emotion of fear in Plath which is the single most dominant emotion in her work." Jha's thesis examines the motif of fear in Plath's writings even as emanating from her personal life:

The only thing to love is Fear itself.

Love of Fear is the beginning of wisdom.

The only thing to love is Fear itself.

May Fear and Fear and Fear be everywhere.

It is irony of fate that these lines written in mock-seriousness should become an inseparable part of the poetry and personality of Sylvia Plath"the all American dream girl" with a brilliant mind and a del-icate poetic sensibility, "almost Keatsian flash of poetic flurry." A Fulbright Scholar at Cambridge, wife of Ted Hughes, "her equal in poetry and passion" Plath seemed to be playing a twentieth century Elizabeth Berret Browning. But the dream-world was short-lived in the wake of the shattering knowledge of Ted Hughes' infidelity.

Jha enumerates various kinds of desertion and treachery which gave birth to fear in Plath's mind. The first desertion came when her mother was gone to hospital for three weeks for the birth of a second child. Plath writes in her journal: "Her desertion punched a smoul-dering hole in my sky. How could she so loving and faithful, so easily leave me?" The birth of a brother created a "sibling complex." She writes:

I hated babies. I who for two and a half years had been the cen-tre of a tender universe felt the axis wrench and a polar chill immobilize my bones. I would be a moth. Babies! bystander, a museum mam-

But Plath was her father's daughter. She continued to get his atten-tion, but his untimely death when she was barely nine created a vac uum in the child's psyche. The absence of a "colossus" father is

evident in the very canvas of her existence. In marriage too, she seems to have tried to regain the father-figure "whom she could both love and intellectually stand in awe of." Poverty and economic inse-curity only increased the sense of fear in Plath. It was made worse by her "formidable ambitions" in academics. At college she was unable to cope with "that dreadful social pressure" of dating. But then she met Goliath of a man in Ted Hughes - a matching mind, a substitute father. She "perceived a blood-tie between literary and biological activities":

I will write until I begin to speak of my deep self, and then have children and speak still deeper. The life of the creative mind first, then the creative body. For the latter is nothing to me without the first and the first thrives on the rich earth roots of the latter.

But that was not to be. When she did not conceive in the first Three years of her marriage, a spectre of sterility loomed large. This fear was soon replaced by another when she finally conceived--that of giving birth to a deformed baby, since during 1960-61 there had been a crop of such babies. These unfounded fears were soon re-placed by Plath's "premonition that she would lose her husband to some more attractive woman. In her Letters Home, she writes:

I fight all woman for my men. My men. I am a woman, and there is no loyalty, even between mother and daughter. Both fight for bed of mind and body

The fear turned out to be a nightmarish reality when Plath and Ted Hughes separated in October 1962. This proved too much for Plath. She was given treatment for her emotional set-back. She developed fear of doctors, hospitals and Electro-Convulsive-Therapy. The shock treatment made her fear for her creative power. There were other fears too-of rootlessness (the typical American malady), lack of belonging to history and of "events like caterwauling cry of war." In desperation, she echoed Yeats: "My world falls apart, the centre/cannot hold"

In this backdrop of fear in her life, Jha analyzes Plath's poetry which, ironically she thought, was "a new way of being happy." His analysis of some of her poems like "Bitter Strawberries," "Temper of

Time," "Goatsucker," "The Snowman on the Moor," and "Dream with Clam-Diggers" places Plath in the tradition of American Gothicism of Poe, Melville, Hawthorne, Lowell, and Oates. The gloom and darkness in these poems are viewed as the Gothic horror and a "gruesome sense of cosmic oppression." In the early poems, fulfilment of love and life is not even relevant. Life is nothing but sham. Later, "love portends danger" in Plath's poetry, instead of providing any relief from fear. Fear of death becomes a prominent theme in poems like "Blue Moles," "Mushrooms," and "Mussel Hunter at Rock Harbour." In "All the Dead Dears," "Man in Black," and "Daddy" there are several references to the absent fa-ther.

Jha claims that Plath's response to fear is in the forms of regres. sion and aggression. He analyzes Plath's poems written between 1959 and 1961 as "an acute and manifest withdrawal into self due to over-whelming fears." He traces three influences on Plath's writings of this period of Paul Radin's African Folktales and Sculpture (1952), Theodore Roethke's poems, and her husband Ted Hughes. The sense of indifferent and hostile Nature in some of Plath's poems is compared with the same in Emily Bronte's Wuthering Heights. In her last poetic phase (1962-63), Plath's poetry passes from fear to fury. It becomes the poetry of aggression. Jha writes: "Sivvy becomes now Sylvia the Sorceress and her poetic self rises from fear to fight, from a dutiful daughter and doll like wife to 'a vengeful Diana or Kali or Istar.' From a curled foetus in a protective womb, she asks for the challenging role of a female Faust, giving her soul to devil." There is "an aggressive attack on husband, and the institution of marriage, and also on mother and women in general," and then "Plath turns to her greatest tormentor-her father." In one poem, she kills not only her dead father but also his living counterpart, her husband:

If I've killed one man, I've killed two-The vampire who said he was you And drank my blood for a year, Seven years, if you want to know. Daddy, you can lie back now.

And finally, there is a sigh of relief: "Daddy, Daddy, you bastard, I'm through."

Plath is said to have desired to be a Jew to have a deeper sense of

belonging to history. She uses the Nazi metaphor, in her poems, which has been objected to by critics like Calvin Bendient; but A.E. Dyson and George Steiner find enough justification for Plath's use of this metaphor, Jha's analysis shows how Plath has used the Nazi met-aphor to denounce not only the demonic father-figure but also man in general.

The Bell Jar, the only novel by Plath was published a few days be-fore her death under the pseudonym of Victoria Lucas. Being auto-biographical, the novel reflects Plath's own fears of confinement in a jar-an image persistently used in her poetry. Esther Greenwood, the protagonist of the novel is the prototype of Plath herself. The jar around her is a stifling enclosure trying to suffocate her with the poi soned air inside her body. Sex-maniacs, the city life, her own home-town, love and even failure in writing a novel - all have stifling effect on Esther. The grip of the jar is ever tightening and she is driven to suicide, but fails even in this attempt. Eventually what helps Esther is, ironically, a massive haemorrhage because "blood is her 'answer' to entering a new world of freedom from the bell jar- an essential ritualistic sacrifice." Jha finds the novel only an extension of Plath's poetry in terms of the theme of fear.

Jha observes that the label of "feminist" cannot be applied to Plath, as many critics have done. Despite her many feminist themes, Plath "does not have any consistent feminist stance, nor does she use her feminine material to a feministic mission." It is only incidental that she denounces the dominance of father, of husband and the in-stitution of marriage. On the other hand, she may invite criticism of the feminist libbers because of "her unflinching interest in wanting to bear children." Jha claims "For Plath, biological creativity is supple-mentary to artistic creativity. Her sense vulnerability, her concern for children, her fear for barrenness and widowhood, seem to make her more a writer with a unique 'feminine' sensibility than a feminist."

Jha establishes that Plath is a major voice in American poetry, and not a mere confessional poet, or what Irving Howe said "an interest-ing minor poet." Jha

contends that the "narrowness of theme is com-pensated by an extraordinary intensity of feeling mated to a high degree of poetic awareness." ✓

Jha's book is a scholarly study of Plath's work. He quotes copi-ously from The Journals of Sylvia Plath and Letters Home: Correspon-dence 1950-1963 to make his study authentic and convincing. He relates the autobiographical aspect of Plath's work with 'the fearful

symmetry' of her creation which lends "a tragic dignity to her po etry." Despite the book being a scholarly work, it is written in a clear and lucid style. The readability of the book is an added pleasure one seldom finds in research material. With an aesthetic get up and type set, Jha's Sylvia Plath is a valuable contribution to the Plath criticism and is useful for the scholar and the ordinary reader alike.

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T.S. Eliot: Encounters with Reality, Sati Chatterjee. Calcutta: Papyrus, 1990. Pages 261. Rs. 200/-

An Encounter with the Poet's Philosophic Self

T.S. Eliot is one of the most widely discussed writers in the present century and so Sati Chatterjee's apology in the preface for writing "a new book on this much-explored subject" may be well-taken by the reader till s/he enters the text. For, then s/he is to find that this is a new-new book and that the focus is on a comparatively less explored facet of Eliot's personality. Sati Chatterjee's fresh evaluation of Eliot may shed new light on the poet even for those who have made scho-lastic assessment of his works.

What is so fresh about this book is the way in which Chatterjee re veals the formation of the inner self of the poet which is reflected in his poems composed with the deliberate aim of impersonality. It is-with due apologies to Browning-like presenting the other side of the moon. One must certainly appreciate the intense labour that has gone into the making of this book.

Chatterjee traces the evolution of the self of the poet from his an-cestor, Andrew Eliot, who had migrated from East Coker to Salem in the 17th century, whose unchristian household moulded the unitarian ethos of Thomas Stearns Eliot, Young Eliot was dissatisfied with the Harvard culture and later his dilemma was that of being trapped be-tween the Jamesian Pragmatism (supported by Santayana) and the Hegelian New Idealism. Chatterjee gives a vivid picture of the spiri tual convulsions in the poet's soul which attracted him to F.H. Brad-ley on whom he wrote his doctoral dissertation. Bradley's influence

on Eliot's poems may have been traced by other critics of Eliot as well, but the influence of Josiah Royce-whose close familiarity with ancient Sanskrit texts might have inspired Eliot to turn to Indian phi-losophy-on Eliot's life and poetry is perhaps still a virgin field. Chatterjee offers a perceptive analysis of the relationship between the two, how Royce's ideas reached the hidden recesses of Eliot's consciousness, sometimes even without Eliot's being aware of it. The intellectual-poetic psyche of Eliot is made up of many such

formative influences-cither consciously imbibed-say like that of Ezra Pound's or Henri Bergson's-or unconsciously assimilated like Royce's. Chatterjee proceeds to examine the major works of Eliot in this cosmic light. Her inference in the concluding chapter is also noteworthy that Eliot preferred the saint's way. She raises the "pertinent" question whether the Saint's way necessarily demands withdrawal and quite pertinently answers her question by quoting from Eliot's letter to Bonamy Dobree in which he affirms that love of God cannot be approached through the love of created beings. This "inner division" in Eliot is best exemplified in his plays which are vonly touched upon by Chatterjee. The Negative Way to salvation may be dramatized in The Cocktail Party (Celia) and The Confidential Clerk (Colby), but the "positive" ending of The Elder Statesman in which the protagonist sinks his miseries in the silent love of the fam-ily points to the equal prominence given to the Affirmative Way to Christian love. And The Elder Statesman being the final drama of the poet, this prominence really demands due attention. The Socratic analogy that Sati Chatterjee quotes is quite apt here-that of love as a human charioteer reining a pair of horses that move in contrary di-rections. To prevent the collapse of the chariot, the charioteer has to struggle hard and that is what Eliot does in his plays. The characters strúggle hard to find themselves and select their ways to salvation, not sure whether the road not taken is the better ong. One wishes Chatterjee had paid a little more attention to the plays of Eliot too, analyzing them especially in relation to the

Roycean idea of unifica-tion as a three-tier gradation which might help to p to "place" the charac ters.

The lack of a bibliography at the end is, perhaps, a drawback in a book like this. But the copious notes and references, not to mention the explanatory foot notes, will be found useful by the readers. The book definitely gives a new perception into the poet's mind and art. Sati Chatterjee's observation that a reader of Eliot's dissertation is

struck by the writer's "intellectual equipment...capacity for hard thinking as well. and the quality of sensitivity" holds true of her own work

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A Select List of Indian Contributions to English Studies

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Abbreviations

CQ	Commonwealth Quarterly
CR	Commonwealth Review
DUJES	Dibrugarh University Journal of English Studies
IJAS	Indian Journal of American Studies
ILR	Indian Literary Review
JCL	Journal of Comparative Literature
JEFL	Journal of English and Foreign Languages
JIE	Journal of Indian Education

JIWE	Journal of Indian Writing in English
JKU	Journal of Karnataka University
JL	Journal of Literature
KJES	Kakatiya Journal of English Studies
LC	Literary Criterion
MJCLL	Meerut Journal of Comparative Literature and Language
PURB	Pubjab University Research Bulletin
VQ	Viswabharati Quarterly
124	The Indian Journal of English Studies

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