ISSN 0971- 605X

POINTS OF VIEW

VOLUME II NUMBER 1 SUMMER 1995

Editor
K.K. Sharma

POINTS OF VIEW

EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor
K.K. Sharma
Former Professor of English
University of Allahabad
Allahabad, India

Assistant Editors
S.C. Dwivedi
Reader in English
University of Allahabad
Kajali Sharma
T.S.E. College
University of Bombay

Advisory Editors
S. Viswanathan, *University of Hyderabad*
D.D. Sharma, *University of Lucknow*
G.K. Das, *University of Delhi*
K.S. Misra, *Aligarh Muslim University*
Meenakshi Mukherjee, *J.N.U., Delhi*
Bhagwat S. Goyal, *Meerut University*
R.S. Pathak, *H.S. Gour University, Sagar*
M.K. Choudhury, *Banaras Hindu University*
S.S. Deo, H.N.B. *Garhwal University*
M.L. Raina, *Panjab University, Chandigarh*
G.S. Balarama Gupta, *Gulbarga University*
Gurdit Singh, *Punjabi University, Patiala*

Points of View is a biannual Journal devoted to scholarly and authoritative opinion on broad cultural issues focussing on the centrality of human concerns as evidenced in literature, art, cinema, etc. It provides a special forum for the perspectives on 'New Literatures in English', including translations. Also, it carries detailed and careful notes, and reviews of outstanding new books. The Summer issue is a general number concerned with various authors and subjects, while the Winter issue is a special number dealing with an individual writer or a specific theme.

Manuscripts are welcome. They should conform to the *MLA Style Sheet* in all matters of form. Unused or unsolicited manuscript can be returned if accompanied by a stamped and addressed envelope.

Annual Subscription rates are

India Individuals Rs. 80.00 Institutions Rs. 200.00
(by M.O.) (Collection Charges for outstation cheques Rs. 20.00)

Overseas Individuals £ 9.00, $ 14.00 Institutions £ 11.00, $ 19.00
(Additional Charge for supplying copies by airmail £ 3.00, $ 5.00)

All editorial and business correspondence should be addressed to

The Editor
Points of View
KH/127, New Kavi Nagar
Ghaziabad—201 002 U.P., INDIA
Telephone : (0575) 718687

POINTS OF VIEW

Volume II Number 1 Summer 1995

CONTENTS

ARTICLES

S. Viswanathan	*Mucedorus* and Shakespeare--And His Company	1
Bhagwat S. Goyal	A Postmodern Perspective on Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*	12
Subhas C. Saha	Poe's Poem "The Raven" : An Epitome of His Romanticism	21
K.K. Sharma	Sri Aurobindo's Poetics	29
A.N. Dwivedi	Art as an Expression of Idea : Marianne Moore	43
Harish Raizada	The Stream of Consciousness Technique in Anand's Short Stories	52
B. Krishnamurthy	Narayan the Novelist: His Vision and Art	63
B.D. Sharma	Gandhiism in the Crucible in *Kanthapura*	74
M. Adhikari	Defying Patriarchy : *Mrs. Dalloway, Beloved* and *Clear Light of Day*	84
Tapati Lahiri	Amrinder's *Lajo* and Taslima Nasrin's *Lajja* as Political Novels	94

NOTES

P. Borgohain	The "Divine Comedy" of Oliver Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*	102
M.S. Nagarajan	The Picnic and the Excursion : Vikram Seth and D.H. Lawrence	109

BOOK REVIEWS

O.P. Govil	*World Poetry : 1994* Ed. Dr. Krishna Srinivas	115
Kajali Sharma	*Modern Indian English Fiction* by O.P. Mathur	119
Asha Viswas	*Princely Life in Indian English Writing* by Surender Singh	122

CONTRIBUTORS

S. Viswanathan is Professor of English at the University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad.

Bhagwat S. Goyal is Principal at S.D. Postgraduate College, Ghaziabad.

Subhas Chandra Saha is Professor and Head, Department of English, Assam University, Silchar.

K.K. Sharma is Former Professor of English, University of Allahabad, Allahabad.

A.N. Dwivedi is Professor of English at the University of Allahabad, Allahabad.

Harish Raizada is Former Professor of English, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh.

B. Krishnamurthy is Reader in English, S.S.S. Institute of Higher Learning, Prasanthinilayam (A.P.).

B.D. Sharma is Professor and Head, Department of English, Kumaon University, Nainital.

M. Adhikari is Reader in the Department of English, Rani Durgavati Vishwavidyalaya, Jabalpur.

Tapati Lahiri teaches at Arya Mahila Degree College, B.H.U., Varanasi.

Pradipta Borgohain teaches in the Department of English, University of Gauhati, Guwahati.

M.S. Nagarajan is Professor and Head, Department of English, University of Madras, Madras.

O.P. Govil is Former Professor of English, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh.

Kajali Sharma teaches at T.S.E. College, University of Bombay.

Asha Viswas is Reader in the Department of English, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi.

MUCEDORUS AND SHAKESPEARE -- AND HIS COMPANY

S. Viswanathan

It has come to be increasingly recognised that Shakespeare did not dwell apart like a star from his playwright and theatre colleagues and predecessors; considerable attention has now been accorded to the probable and possible interactive, reactive and intertextual relationships between the Shakespeare plays and plays by other dramatists of the period.[1] For longer than this, old scholarly traditions have traced the influence of Shakespeare's predecessors and earlier dramatic modes on him, as also his influence on his contemporaries and immediate successors. More recent trends in this have been to identify the impact of his immediate predecessors in the theatre like Marlowe and Kyd, Lyle and Greene, and Peele, as providing a stimulus to him to go and do perceptibly otherwise rather than acting as models for imitation. In this area Shakespeare's possible response to the anonymous play *Mucedorus* which could arguably be regarded as the 'most popular Elizabethan play'[2] still awaits anything like sustained consideration. True, in incidental references in critical and editorial commentary, Shakespeare's likely reminiscences of *Mucedorus* have been pointed out.[3] But certain aspects of Shakespeare's relationship to the play, and some important implications of the use by way of revival of this play in 1610 by Shakespeare's company with additions put in by them, would seem to deserve attention.

The play which originated in the popular London theatre circa 1590 not only held the stage for long but turned out to be the Elizabethan-Jacobean play to go through the largest number of quarto printings startings with the first 1598 quarto for the better part of the seventeenth-century with *The Spanish Tragedy* making only a second in this respect. For all its look of a gallimaufry or hodge-podge in typical Elizabethan fashion and for all its appearance of a naive 'tragical-comical-historical-pastoral' of a play, in the Polonian taxonomy, the extravaganza-like play in its uneven course of quality presents also evidence of sophistication and skill in places. Shakespeare mocked plays of this sort in the plays-within-plays in his early drama, *Love's Labour's Lost* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the Induction frame in *The Taming of the Shrew*. Yet in

his final phase of tragicomic romances Shakespeare would seem to have remembered features of *Mucedorus* and incorporated these in his characteristically individual and masterly manner in the series *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*. What is more among the scenes added to the play (the new Prologue, scenes I, II, XIII and the concluding section of XVIII) when the play was mounted in the King James I's banqueting hall on Shrove Sunday in 1610, evidently on royal command, there is one scene, Scene XIII, which carries a striking conflation of echoes and of, iterations and approximations to Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. The reminiscences are verbal, situational and scenic, thus raising strong possibility of Shakespeare's hand being traced in this particular scene among the four added scenes which were all written by the playwrights of the King's Men.[4]

Furthermore, the Epilogue scene in the play featuring Comedy and Envy and serving as the induction frame at the play's close, which was an addition by the King's Men's playwrights and which ends with an enacted tribute to King James I as the prime spectator in the audience, makes certain highly revealing topical references to the boy companies, especially to the Children of the Chapel, who had recently been restrained from playing, for their compulsive habit of thinly coded satirical attacks in their plays on the king and the court. The nature of this topical reference in the Epilogue of *Mucedorus* might offer further insight than that which we have about the relation and interaction between Shakespeare's men and the Chapel boys, the public playhouse and the private playhouse, especially at a time when the boys had practically ceased playing and Shakespeare's company had started using the Chapel boys' venue, the Blackfriars' indoor playhouse, as their winter theatre. Also, by the time Shakespeare's company expanded and revived *Mucedorus*, the dramatic self-consciousness and 'multiconsciousness' inherent in the original play had perhaps come to acquire further dimensions in the self-conscious artistry and theatricality of Jacobean as distinct from Elizabethan drama. Besides, the tragicomic generic cast of *Mucedorus*, old hat as the play was, would acquire a new relevance in the vogue for tragicomedy circa 1610. In addition, the crude comments of the 'natural' clown Mouse in the play on class, rank, status and name including those on the king might take on certain originally unanticipated sociopolitical and sociological resonances in the Jacobean context.

There is near-synchrony in the Shakespeare's men's revision and revival of the old play which was mounted by them in very early 1610, and in Shakespeare's full launching of himself into the phase of tragicomedy, but for the considerably exceptional case of the earlier play *Pericles*, and his writing of *Cymbeline* which is to be assigned to late 1609 and early 1610. If the chronologically prior *Pericles* is a romance and tragicomedy, it is more the former than the later, and it is in *Cymbeline* that Shakespeare introduces in tragicomic romance an extensive pastoral component, the element of prince or princess adopting the guise of shepherd, life in the woods and dangerous encounters, motifs which are common to *Mucedorus* and *Cymbeline*. The kind of structural looseness which seems to mark *Cymbeline* may well have to do with Shakespeare deliberately adopting and working out differently the limp structural movement of the old play. The scene-by-scene, frame-by-frame rather than the sequential kind of progression which *Cymbeline* has may be an experimental taking over of the *trompe l'oeil*-like scene-for-scene, moment-for-the-moment opportunism and near-sensationalism of *Mucedorus* and certain plays of the early 1590s like Marlowe's, although such a relative disregard of sequence is also a feature of Jacobean dramaturgy such as Beaumont and Fletcher's and others'. The basic source of the framework of action of *Cymbeline* is Holinshed, and the wager plot may owe itself to a story or stories in Boccacio's *Decameron* with other motifs in the play coming from several romances including Greek ones in translation. But the central action of the princess Imogen's experiences in the woods near Milford Haven together with the princes Guiderius' and Arviragus's resembles in its cast the experiences of Amadine and Mucedorus in disguise in the woods in *Mucedorus*.

The killings in *Mucedorus*, of the bear, Tremelio, and Bremo the wild man, all three committed by the hero Mucedorus, are a bold introduction of deaths, not only the dangers, into a comedy and tragicomedy. If Shakespeare found sanction in the old play for his introduction of deaths (he had done it in oblique fashion at the end of *Love's Labour's Lost* very early in his career) in *Cymbeline* and *The Winter's Tale* immediately after, Shakespeare goes about it in a different way in his plays. But for the behind-the-scene dispatching of the bear by Mucedorus in his play, the other two killings take place luridly onstage. The killing of Tremelio by Mucedorus takes place with such an abrupt suddenness that it produces an effect of near-

comic shock, for once making the customary uncomprehending bewilderment and befuddlement of the 'natural' clown, Mouse, an onstage witness, not unjustified. Mucedorus's braining of Bremo the wild man is represented on the stage with more than the violent sensationalism of the braining of Bajazet by himself in his cage in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*. Whereas Shakespeare would make the actual killing of Cloten occur as reported offstage action, as he does with the death of Mamilius, the reported 'death' of Hermione, and the dining of the bear on Antigonus in *The Winter's Tale*. At the same time, the theatrical play with Cloten's head in *Cymbeline* (IV. ii) is not dissimilar to the display in *Mucedorus* of the bear's head as a trophy by Mucedorus after he encounters and kills the animal and thus rescues Amadine to win her love, and also subsequently in the play. It is, of course, the use of a stock item of stage property, the severed head (Henslowe's property inventory mentions quite a few heads), of which Shakespeare makes striking use in *Measure for Measure* and *Macbeth*. In *Cymbeline* the theatricality of Guiderius's display of Cloten's head (IV. ii. 113-123)[5] which he later calls 'clotpoll' (IV. ii. 184), suggesting that it is a wooden artifact of a stage property, is followed by Imogen-Fidele mistaken for dead and laid by the side of Cloten's headless trunk which is dressed in Posthumus's clothes waking up from her stupor, and in the half-confusion of her awakening taking the headless man by her side to be Posthumus alive, and starting on a foot-to-head Petrarchan blazoning in reverse, to discover as though by slow degree that it is a dead man, and blaming the killing on Pisanio and Cloten (IV. ii. 306-332). The germ of the confusion of Imogen the rendering of which is a master-stroke of self-conscious theatricality of Shakespeare's could have been suggested by the confused manner in which the clown Mouse only half-realises that Tremelio is dead and the uncomprehending way he deals with the dead body (Scene VI). Also, the romance motif of the true prince with his worth and valour and his royal culture and qualities of noble nurture showing even in the circumstances of a state of nature occurs both in *Mucedorus* and in *Cymbeline*. The old play in its conception and portrayal of Bremo the wild man, while drawing on the literary and cultural type of the wild man figure, and also perhaps on instances in Spenser's *Faerie Queene* of similar figures, also raises, though it does not quite broach, the question of the relationship between nature and nurture, nature and art, a question which Shakespeare brings forward and discusses in *Cymbeline*,

The Winter's Tale and *The Tempest.*

The figuring of bear in *Mucedorus* has often been seen as an analogue to Shakespeare's strange use in *The Winter's Tale* of this sole animal character to have an onstage participation in the course of the regular action of a play in the whole canon.[6] The bear in *Winter's Tale* kills instead of getting killed as in *Mucedorus*. The deliberate, theatricalist play with the bear which Shakespeare refines upon and exploits to a greater degree is already there in germ in *Mucedorus*. The bear makes its appearance very early in that play. The clown Mouse carrying a bottle of hay on his head enters expressing his dread of the bear only to be surprised by it from behind. He makes his exit dropping the protective buffer of the hay bundle. In the very next scene, (Scene III) the bear reenters pursuing Amadine and Segasto who have to take flight from the animal. Mouse's comment here in particular and his comments on the bear eleswhere in general are revealing.

> *Mouse* : ... ... A bear, Nay, sure it cannot be a bear, but some devil in a bear's doublet, for a bear could never have had that agility to have frighted me.
>
> (Scene II, 11. 2-4)
>
> See his comments in (Scene IV, II. 34-60)

The utterance is a theatricality 'multiconscious' calling attention to the fact that the bear part was enacted by a human actor. Two factors about the remark of Mouse are worth noting. First, the lines figure in Scene II an addition by Shakespeare's company to the play, and are in the vein of the selfconscious theatricality of Jacobean drama. Second, there is evidence that for the Whitehall performance of the play on the Shrove-Sunday night of 1610 a live bear (evidently tame) was pressed into service. Such occasions must have been exceptional. In *The Winter's Tale*, whether in the Globe performances, or the Blackfriar ones, a human actor would have made do for the bear. The piquant theatricalism of Antigonus' 'exit pursued by a bear', and of the elaborate account of the slaying and eating of Antigonus by the bear given by the clownish younger shepherd to the father shepherd in *The Winter's Tale* (III. iii. 86-105) would seem to be in a way Shakespeare's development of hints from *Mucedorus* with its clown's response to and remarks on the bear. The account which Shakespeare puts into the mouth of the clown with its description of the destruction and consumption of the ship by the sea-storm and of Antigonus by the bear running tandem also exploits the traditional

tropical and imagistic association between storms and wild animals.

More particularly, the introduction of a live bear in place of a man 'in a bear's doublet' in the court performance of *Mucedorus* came at a point of time, in the year 1610, when the kind of 'illusionism' that the masque stage then beginning to flourish in the court and in noble households had introduced started to interact in some fashion with the patchy realism of the Elizabethan theatre with its 'impure art'. The live bear in the *Mucedorus* performance is a precursor of, say, the live rabbits in the Henry Irving *Midsummer Night's Dreams* of the late nineteenth century. Perhaps around 1610, the traditional 'multiconsciousness' of the English dramatic tradition which had in the Jacobean era acquired further extension and new demensions of theatrical self-consciousness was also tending to give room to a confusion, however slight it might be, between dramatic illusion and reality. Symptoms of such a shift in theatrical 'multiconsciousness' would seem to be captured in such a play as Beaumont's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (circa 1607). Shakespeare who makes excellent capital of the illusion of reality and the reality of illusion in baroque fashion, especially in *The Winter's Tale*, would seem deliberately to have brought in the bear into the play and to have the role deliberately assigned to a human actor playing the animal character. Could he have anticipated what risks (in several senses) illusionism could lead to in what happened a few years later in 1613 when cannons were fired for real in the performance, perhaps the first, of his *King Henry VIII*, the fire accident in which the Globe theatre burned down?

Bremo the instance of the wild man character-type figuring in *Mucedorus* must have been one of the factors going to make Shakespeare's Caliban the complexity of whose genesis and function is getting to be more and more expatiated on in interpretative comment. In at least a place or two in the play, Bremo's sensitiveness of perception suggesting something of a poetic sensibility is in evidence (Scene XI. 11. 37-54; Scene XV. 11. 23-55). This side to Bremo as a character, and the relationship he attempts to forge with the heroine Amadine in the play after taking her prisoner serve as forerunners of the sensitiveness of perception and of poetic apprehension which Shakespeare endows Caliban with and Caliban's ambitions of a relationship with Miranda. Moreover, the question of the nature-nurture binary which is no more than vaguely implicit in *Mucedorus* is given the poetic-dramatic role of a 'necessary question

of the play' in *The Tempest*.

Certain lines and passages in *Mucedorus*, originally introduced mainly or merely as dramatic repartee and stichomythia-like exchange or just clowning, would in the context of Jacobean sociological and sociopolitical development resound with significances of new questions and debates about class and status and also kingship. In Scene VI, when Mouse asks Segasto what occupation he is, Segasto replies

> No occupation; I live upon my lands

which elicits the reply from the clown

> Your lands? Away, you are no master for me. Why, do you think that I am so mad to go seek my living in the lands amongst the stones, briers, and bushes, and tear my holiday apparel? Not I, by your leave.

And Segasto assures the clown that he would serve him staying in the court, not in his lands. The words acquire the tone of a double satirical reference to living off the fat of the land and at the same time to the problems of making a living out of the lands in the Jacobean context of farmers' problems, the enclosures and the polarity between the court and the country arising in the Jacobean age and growing to greater proportions in the course of the century. Mouse in the next few lines asks

> What's that same king, a man or woman?

Segasto replies

> A man as thou art.

There is another similar exchange in Scene IX.

> *Mouse* : What should shepherds do amongst us? Have we not lords enough on us in the court?
>
> *Mucedorus* : Why, shepherds are men, and kings are no more.

Such utterances, though in the generalised vein of the sentiment 'A man is a man for all that,' suggest a particular trend of questioning the status and inherent authority of the king, a trend which had started making itself felt in the early Stuart era and finally led to the rebellion and regicide in a few decades. One might wonder how King James I with his strong views on the monarch's supreme authority sitting in the audience of the play in Whitehall in 1610 would have

taken the lines. Or could they have been tactfully cut?

It is in Scene XIII of *Mucedorus*, one of the additions made by Shakespeare's company to the play for the court performance, that there are indications of Shakespeare's hand or finger. The Scene begins thus :

Sound music

Enter the King of Valencia, Anselmo
Roderigo, Lord Borachus, with others.

King of Valencia : Enough of music, it but adds to torment;
Delights to vex'ed spirits are as dates
Set to a sickly man, which rather cloy than comfort.
Let me entreat you to entreat no more.

Rod : Let your strings sleep; have done these,
Let the music cease.

The scene starts to the sound of music, with the king in a state of melancholy over the separation of his son Mucedorus much like Duke Orsino at the start of *Twelfth Night* in his luxuriance in love melancholy. And the music is ordered closed, as by Orsino in *Twelfth Night*, only to be ordered to resume at the end of the short scene by Valencia

Valencia : ... ...
Music, speak loudly now, the season's apt,
For former dolors are in pleasure wrapped.

And Valencia is made to use the term 'surfeit', the term used by Shakespeare for Orsino in his opening speech of the play (1.2).

Anselmo : The prince, your son, is safe.

Valencia : Oh, where, Anselmo? Surfeit me with that.

Also, Valencia's 'let me entreat you to entreat no more' echoes Orsino's 'Give me now leave to leave thee' in *Twelfth Night* (II. iv. 73). However, it is the collocation in the *Mucedorus* scene in question

Anselmo : Whether report gilded a worthless trunk
Or Amadine deserved her high extolment

(11. 34-35)

which is more strongly reminiscent of a corresponding one of an

equally highly individual stamp in *Twelfth Night*. (11. iv. 405-406)

Antonio : ... ...
Virtue is beauty, but the beauteous evil
Are empty trunks o'er flourished by the devil.

The use of the metaphor of the 'worthless trunk' 'gilded' or the 'empty trunk' 'o'er flourished' is unusual, though the sentiment of a Platonic appearance-reality contrast or the idealist Platonic equation between inner and outer (which would seem to be the ideal of an inveterate platonist that Shakespeare makes Antonio to be) may be a great commonplace. Editors of *Twelfth Night* have so far failed to note and cite this parallel in *Mucedorus* to Antonio's somewhat intriguing expression. All this would point to the possibility that Shakespeare it could be who wrote this scene among the additional scenes in *Mucedorus* supplied by his company.

The Epilogue in *Mucedorus*, one among the additions put in by Shakespeare's company, whichever of their dramatists might have composed it, consists of a 'flyting' between the figures of Comedy and Envy, with Envy making a bid to get the better of Comedy by way of satire overrunning comedy, and with comedy putting Envy in its place and humbling it through a vindication of comedy sans satire, and, finally with Envy falling down and quaking in submission and joining comedy in the kneeling obeisance it offers to the Presence, the monarch King James I. A crucial part of the exchange between Comedy and Envy is a pregnantly topical-theatrical reference to the boy company of the Children of the Chapel and their troubles with the authorities and the court over the satirical allusions to the monarch and the court figures in their plays.

Envy : This scrambling raven, with his needy beard,
Will I whet on to write a comedy
Wherein shall be composed dark sentences,
Pleasing to factious brains;
... ...
Then I myself, quicker than lightning,
Will fly to a puissant magistrate,
... ...
... ... rehearse those galls
With some additions,
So lately vented in your theatre.
He, upon this, cannot but make complaint
To your great danger, or at least restraint.

Comedy : Ha, ha, ha! I laugh to hear thy folly;

> This is a trap for boys, not men, nor such,
> Especially desertful in their doings,
> Whose staid discretion rules their purposes.
> I and my faction do eschew those vices.
>
> (Epilogue, 11. 38-56)

The playwright who put in these lines for the performance by Shakespeare's company as almost meant for the ear of the ruling monarch and the court was trying to show how the adult company of the King's Men, though now playing in the private playhouse of the Blackfriars as well as in the public Globe playhouse, would never commit the indiscretions of repeated indulgence in satirical attacks for which the playwrights of the Chapel Children had to face arrest and prosecution in instances following year after year with regularity since 1604. The 'new university wits' or the 'new intellectuals' among playwrights, the ones who wrote for the Children of the Chapel such as Marston, Chapman, Ben Jonson, and John Day provoked the wrath of the authorities in successive years with the result that by about 1608 the company disbanded. By the end of 1608 or the beginning of 1609 the Blackfriars indoor playhouse where they were playing came to be taken over for the King's Men's use. The lines quoted are the adult company of the King's Men's boast that they have always kept themselves on the right side of the law and of the court's, and the King's favour. The topical vaunt has another significance too. The adult public playhouses' fear and dismay over the rivalry and the real challenge offered by the beginning of the century by the two boy companies, the Children of St. Paul's and the Children of the Chapel, expressed, for example, in the reference to 'the principal public audience ... turn(ing) to private plays and to the humour of children' in the First Quarto of *Hamlet* and to the 'little eyases' carrying the day in the Folio *Hamlet*, gave place in a few years' time to the public playhouses responding to the challenge by themselves absorbing the modes and techniques of the relatively 'coterie' private playhouse dramaturgy, and with plays like *The Malcontent* an original boy company play being taken over for performance by them. But this near-collaborative give-and-take relationship could by the closing years of the first decade of the seventeenth century lead to a confident stance on the part of the public theatre ensuing from its total absorption of the once competing private theatre into itself as it were and from the circumstance of the real rival private boy companies having had to close down. The passage in the *Mucedorus* epilogue, added as it was in and around

1610 thus offers crucial evidence about the concluding phase of the theatrical history of what Alfred Harbage not very accurately called the 'rival traditions' of the public and private theatres or what was by earlier scholars called the 'war of the theatres'.

An attention to the implications of what Shakespeare and his company did to a hardy perennial of an ace popular Elizabethan play in his time like *Mucedorus* offers some such opportunities for an understanding of certain modes of procedure and of some workings of mind of the playwright in interaction with the theatrical traditions and environment he operated in.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1]M.C. Bradbrook, 'Shakespeare and his Contemporaries. Other Poets and Playwrights,' J.F. Andrews ed. *William Shakespeare : His World, His Work, His Influence, Vol. II. His Work* (New York : Charles Scribner's Sons, 1985), 331-342, provides a conspectus of the mutual impact of Shakespeare, and his immediate predecessors and contemporaries.

[2]G.F. Reynolds, '*Mucedorus*, Most Popular Elizabethan Play?', J.W. Bennett, *et al.*, eds. *Studies in the English Renaissance Drama* (New York : Columbia University Press, 1959), 248-268.

[3]In the new Arden editions of *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*, for instance; Patricia Russell, 'Romantic Narrative Plays : 1570-1584', *The Elizabethan Theatre : Stratford-on Avon Studies No. 9*, eds. J.R. Brown and B. Harris (London : Edward Arnold, 1966), 127-129 and A.R. Braunmuller and M. Hattaway, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1990), 65, 67 and 216-217, among other instances.

[4]Citations from *Mucedorus* are from the text of the play in R.A. Fraser and N. Rabkin, eds. *Drama of the English Renaissance I. The Tudor Period* (New York : Macmillan Publishing Company, 1976), 463-480.

[5]Citations from Shakespeare are keyed to the old Oxford *Shakespeare : Complete Works*, ed. W.J. Craig (1974 edition).

[6]There are the horses and the dogs invoked verbally in the dialogue in the plays and their presence must have been suggested aurally through offstage noises. Besides Launce's dog in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and the cock-crowing in *Hamlet*, there is the rehearsal attempt of Snug and Bottom to get the part of the lion in 'Pyramus and Thisbe' in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Snug's playing of the part in the play-within-the-play at the end.

THE SUBVERSIVE POTENTIAL OF RADICAL RHETORIC AND THE TELEOLOGICAL TERRAIN OF THEOLOGICAL TERRORISM: A POSTMODERN PERSPECTIVE ON MARLOWE'S *DR. FAUSTUS*

Bhagwat S. Goyal

Christopher Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* is a problematic text/play within which are inscribed both the anti-establishment radical rhetoric charged with subversive energies and the totalizing discourse of 'form' functioning within the parameters of a theocentric universe invoking and breeding theological terrorism by decentering man,the newly emerged centre of meaning. In an illuminating commentary touching on this aspect of form-content dichotomy Jonathan Dollimore writes: "One problem in particular has exercised critics of *Dr. Faustus*: its structure, inherited from the morality form, apparently negates what the play experientially affirms - the heroic aspiration of 'Renaissance man.' Behind this discrepancy some have discerned a tension between, on the one hand, the moral and theological imperatives of a severe Christian orthodoxy and, on the other, an affirmation of Faustus as 'the epitome of Renaissance aspiration ...all the divine discontent, the unwearied and unsatisfied striving after knowledge that marked the age in which Marlowe wrote.' " (Roma Gill, ed. *Dr. Faustus*, p.xix)[1]

If we look at Marlowe's age and work from a postmodern perspective, we discover that even for Marlowe the Faustian dream inscribed on the 'waxen wings' of a metadiscourse has turned into a nightmare. As Seyla Benhabib says about postmodern art: "The dream of an infinitely striving self, unfolding its powers in the process of conquering externality, is one from which we have awakened. Postmodernist architecture (to take one example of postmodern culture) whatever other sources it borrows its inspiration from,is undoubtedly the message of the end of this Faustian dream,which had accompanied the self-understanding of the moderns from the beginning."[2] Elaborating upon her thesis, she writes further :"The end of the Faustian dream has brought with it a conceptual and semiotic shift in many domains of culture. This shift is not characterized by a moral or political critique of the Faustian aspects

of modernity ,but by the questioning of the very conceptual framework that made the Faustian dream possible in the first place."[3] Referring to the stand taken by Lyotard on this issue in his influential and seminal work, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, she writes: "For Lyotard as well the demise of the Faustian ideal signifies the end of the 'grand narrative' of the moderns and of the epistemology of representation on which it has been based. 'I will use the term modern to designate any science that legitimates itself with reference to a metadiscourse of this kind,making an explicit appeal to some grand narrative,' writes Lyotard, 'such as the dialectics of Spirit, the hermeneutics of meaning, the emancipation of the rational or working subject, or the creation of wealth' ".[4]

The postmodern vision thus may have no room for a grand metaplay/narrative like that of the myth of Faustus. Yet the functional premise ("knowledge is power") that spurs the Faustian dream appears to retain its ambiguous legitimacy even in the postmodern age : "Not only is knowledge power, but power generates access to knowledge, thus preparing for itself a self-perpetuating basis of legitimacy."[5] For Marlowe's Faustus , however , knowledge is just an alluring 'form' devoid of the divinity and supremacy attributed to it. The shimmering dream of power dreamt by Dr. Faustus itself had turned into a nightmare as he failed to win social legitimacy for his endeavour to practice magic as a means of acquiring power over the elements of nature. The terror induced by theological propaganda was such that man's dreams of an anthropocentric universe were turned into ashes as theocentric discourses continued to dominate all other discourses . Faustus, though mirroring the ever -rising aspirations of the Renaissance man, portrays the tragedy of man as he is entrapped in the vice like grip of theological terrorism . In spite of the subversive potential of the radical rhetoric that constantly shapes the thought and speeches of Faustus and his meta /lesser self Mephostophilis, the teleological terrain is sought to function as a source of legitimacy for theological terrorism.

The concept of the postmodern has several features that can be applied to an understanding of *Dr. Faustus*. The play's "Prologue" provides an indication of the possibilities of its postmodern readings. It begins with the inscription of certain uncertain yet declarative negatives within the text of the "Prologue-as - Chorus" as an indication of the principle of exclusion , i.e., the presence of absence or the

narration of what lies outside the sphere of the play's enactment : "Not marching," "Nor sporting", "Nor in the pomp of proud audacious deeds."[6] The "heavenly verse "of the poet intends to steer clear of the metanarratives of heroic deeds of physical adventure as well as of physical indulgence. It also proposes to avoid the grand narratives of political subversion, involving the courts of kings "where state is overturned." Instead, the actors find themselves forced to stage a different kind of performance : "we must now perform / The form of Faustus' fortunes, good or bad." (p.4) In other words, the self-reflexive nature of the players' predicament underscores the hegemonistic totalisation of the authorial control. The author's authority to decide and dictate the limits within which the actions of the players are to be performed is indisputably stressed. What is even more clear is that it is the 'form' that is intended to appease the socio-political censors operating within the religio-cultural system of dominant beliefs and practices. The players will only carry out or enact the stage presentation of the 'form of Faustus' fortunes' about the ethical hermeneutics of which they are totally non-committal and non-judgemental. There is nothing intrinsically good or bad in a mere 'form'. The alliterative force inhering in the 'form of Faustus' fortunes' is a reiteration of the primacy or even legitimacy of form over subversive substance. Highly explosive subversive substance may break up all forms, but the hegemony of form is meant to divest subversive substance of its destructive potential. The playwright uses his authorial authority to foreground the power of form to form people's ideas, to delude, to detract and to mesmerise them.

The players enacting the play address themselves to the "patient judgements" of 'Gentles'. The 'Gentles' are obviously the opinion-makers of the age, who may have been known for making hasty or incorrect judgements. Since the players enacting the play have no personal stake in the 'form of Faustus' fortunes', but are apprehensive of the social censors who may charge them with participating in a subversive enactment , they appeal to the patient judgements of the 'Gentles'. A patient judgement would go by the merits of the enacted performance as a mere form - a paradigm of socially approved shows.

As the Chorus encapsulates the career of Faustus since his birth, it describes how Faustus successfully broke the shackles and limitations imposed on him by his heredity. Having been born "of parents

base of stock" Faustus reached a stage when he was glutted with "learning's golden gifts." The base metal was transformed into the noble gold as Faustus transcended the genetic barriers . He made a 'profit' out of divinity to be "graced with doctor's name." His quest for excellence led him to excel " In th' heavenly matters of theology ." (p.5) But his satanic ambition and Icarian flight to use knowledge as an instrument of power and freedom made him a victim of the conspiracy of 'heavens' which could not bear the sight of man "with waxen wings" mounting above his reach. The man whose sweet delight once lay in scholarly disputes has now fallen to a "devilish exercise" as "Nothing so sweet as magic is to him." (ibid.)

The fate of Faustus is also linked to the postmodernist view of binary oppositions. "A 'utopian' postmodernism involves a movement of culture and texts beyond oppressive binary categories", says E. Ann Kaplan.[7] Postmodern thinking "transcends the very binarisms of western philosophical, metaphysical and literary traditions."[8] In Marlow''s classic *Dr. Faustus,* the oppressive binary categories like God and Satan, Heaven and Hell, Good and Evil, and Salvation and Damnation etc. virtually lose their oppostionalities. God, with his wrath, is no better than a terrorising Devil , while what is considered heavenly easily slides into something that is infernal. The borderline between heaven and hell ceases to exist as they both occupy common space in the geography of the mind . While the Good Angel warns Faustus not to abandon scriptures and seeks to terrorise Faustus with "G'od's heavy wrath", the Bad Angel promises him power on earth as "Jove is in the sky." If good is ensured only by the recognition of "God's heavy wrath", what kind of good is constituted by it? What is evil in man having the same power on earth as Jove has in the sky? Does God's power lie only in the powerlessness of man? Isn't Devil a better ally of man in his aspiration to achieve power , pleasure and immortality?

The most oppressive binary category which Marlowe seeks to transcend and even obliterate in *Dr. Faustus* is the one indicating heaven-hell divide. When Faustus gleefully asserts that he "confounds hell in Elysium" (I,iii,59), he not only equates the Christian hell with a pagan heaven, but also brings his connotations of 'heavenly' to a new stage in the continuously evolving strategy of the 'form' of heaven to confer its blessings on a diversity of ideas and things. The poet's godly status as a Muse gives him a right to vaunt

"heavenly verse" (Prologue, line 6), mapping out the contours of a logocentric universe. The "matters of theology" (Prologue, line 19) are also considered as "heavenly", for they subscribe to the theocentric rhetoric of theology. Then a necrocentric dimension is opened when Faustus says: "And necromantic books are heavenly." (I,i,49) Here "heavenly" acquires the halo which is what it cherishes and gets associated with a skill that is normally attributed to hell. Similarly, when Faustus chants words to conjure the devil successfully,he says: "I see there's virtue in my heavenly words!" (I, iii, 27) The words are heavenly because they are potent enough to invoke the spirits of hell. When the Bad Angel asks Faustus to think "of honour and of wealth" (II,i,21), it is in contrast to the Good Angel's promise of "heavenly things". Thus "heavenly" things are those that are opposed to man's acquiring 'honour' and 'wealth' which, by implication, are man's roads to hell. When Mephostophilis defines hell and tells Faustus: "All places shall be hell that is not heaven" (II,i,126), Faustus replies, "I think hell's a fable." (II, i, 127) The antithetical binarism of hell and heaven is sought to be underplayed by Faustus because he thinks that hell too is a form, a fable, a fictive construction of the human mind.

Such, however, are the subtle underpinnings of theological terrorism that Faustus is virtually driven to admit the 'reality' of mythical heavens: "When I behold the heavens then I repent." (II, ii, 1) However, Mephostophilis is quick to contradict his own earlier stand on heaven to assure Faustus:

> But think'st thou heaven is such . glorious thing?
> I tell thee Faustus, it is not half so fair
> As thou, or any man that breathes on earth.
>
> (II, ii, 5-7)

Here Mephostophilis cleverly exploits the secular-humanistic rhetoric of the Renaissance. But the ambiguous nature of this rhetoric becomes manifest when we juxtapose it with his earlier utterance:

> Think'st thou that I, who saw the face of God,
> And tasted the eternal joys of heaven,
> Am not tormented with ten thousand hells,
> In being deprived of everlasting bliss?
>
> (I, iii, 77-80)

A stage comes in the life of Faustus when the word 'heaven' acquires an altogether different connotation. This occurs when he conjures up the beautiful vision of Helen of Troy and says ecstatically:

> "Here will I dwell, for heaven is in these lips."
>
> (V,i,101)

Heaven here becomes an erotocentric form of human imagination. Thus the logocentric essence of the word 'heaven' constantly shifts and tends to get decentred to a degree that its binary opposition with 'hell' virtually breaks down.

Two other characteristics of postmodernism have been highlighted by Fredric Jameson.[9] One is that postmodernism involves effacement of the old distinction between high culture and mass culture, and the other is the use of pastiche in preference to parody. The juxtaposition of the serious with the comic scenes in *Dr. Faustus* encompasses both these features of postmodernism. The high culture of *Dr. Faustus*, with his soaring aspirations and neo-humanist incertitudes finds expression in words like the following:

> O what a world of profit and delight,
> Of power, of honour, of omnipotence,
> Is promised to the studious artisan!
>
> (I, i, 52-54)

and

> What, is great Mephostophilis so passionate
> For being deprived of the joys of heaven?
> Learn thou of Faustus manly fortitude,
> And scorn those joys thou never shalt possess.
>
> (I, iii, 83-86)

But the so-called comic scenes of the play, like those covered by Act I, scene ii, Act I, scene iv, Act II, scene iii, Act III scene iii, Act IV, scene i, Act IV, scene iii, Act IV, scenes iv, v, vi and vii, provide glimpses of mass culture, virtually obliterating the distinction between the high culture and mass culture. This obliteration or effacement is achieved not only through the thematic intermingling of the two but also through the simultaneous linking presence and delinking absence of Dr. Faustus in them. Even when Faustus is not corporeally present, the shadow of his mythic self looms large over them. Similarly, even when he is present, the elements of mass culture seek to put those of high culture in a proper perspective. For instance, in Act IV, scene iii, the false head of Faustus is cut off by Benvolio, who says;

> "Hell take his soul, his body thus must fall." (line 39)

Then in a pastiche like parody pre-figuring the celebrated address of Faustus to the Helen of Troy in Act V, scene i, Fredrick says:

Was this that stern aspect ,that awful frown,
Made the grim monarch of infernal spirits,
Tremble and quake at his commanding charms?

(IV, iii, 46-48)

The high culture of tragedy and the mass culture of parody-cum-pastiche are so closely intertwined in *Dr. Faustus* that they tend to efface the distinction between them. This can be illustrated again with the example of *Dr. Faustus*' central act of selling his soul to the devil and its echo in a parallel scene from mass culture. In Act I,scene iii (lines 91-93) Faustus tells Mephostophilis:

Say he surrenders up to him his soul,
So he will spare him four and twenty years,
Letting him live in all voluptuousness,

In the next scene of the same Act, Wagner says about the Clown:

The villain is bare and out of service, and so hungry that I know he would give his soul to the devil, for a shoulder of mutton, though it were blood-raw.

(I, iv, 6-9)

But the Clown wants to strike a better bargain: "Not so neither! I had need to have it well roasted, and good sauce to it, if I pay so dear, I can tell you." (I, iv, 10-11) Selling one's soul, whether for 24 years of voluptuousness or for a shoulder of mutton to quench one's hunger for a day, is more or less a commercial bargain that reflects the cultural logic of the nascent capitalism of the sixteenth century.

Underscoring yet another feature of postmodernism, Fredric Jameson calls it 'the end of individualism.'[10] Discarding the conception of a unique self and private identity, it holds that "not only is the bourgeois individual subject a thing of the past, it is also a myth; it never really existed in the first place; there have never been autonomous subjects of that type. Rather, this construct is merely a philosophical and cultural mystification which sought to persuade people that they 'had' individual subjects and possessed this unique personal identity."[11] If we apply this to Dr. Faustus,we realize that there is some truth in the description of his tragedy as that of the Renaissance individualism. But what is the extent to which Faustus could be regarded as a unique individual? Since the play is just an enactment of the "form of Faustus' fortunes", Faustus remains a mere form, a mythical construct, an image of 'philosophical and cultural mystification,' From a postmodern perspective Faustus' status as an autonomous subject appears very doubtful. Even as an intellectual en-

deavouring to transcend the limits of human knowledge and power on the threshold of a new age, he is plagued with intellectual and moral uncertainties. Both his human identity and intellectual autonomy become suspect when, lost in the maze of intellectual pursuits, he is unable to 'settle' his studies. Though he asks himself to begin "To sound the depth of that thou wilt profess" (I, i, 2) he remains wedded to a shallow conception of knowledge which is just a matter of appearance and can be achieved by simply being "a divine in show" (I,i,3). Faustus dreams of using knowledge to conquer man's mortality and overcome his vulnerabilities. That's why he constantly asks: "Affords this art no greater miracle?" (I, i, 9) But if the available forms and avenues of knowledge are inadequate to confer immortality on man or achieve other such miracles, they are to be bidden good bye:

> Couldst thou make men to live eternally,
> Or, being dead, raise them to life again,
> Then this profession were to be esteemed.
> Physic farewell!
>
> (I ,i, 24-27)

The mind of Faustus, however, is riven with contradictions. Though he likes to "heap up gold" as a physician, he dismisses the study of law as fitting "a mercenary drudge" aiming at "nothing but external trash/ Too servile and illiberal for me" (I, i, 36-37) The 'divine in show' then thinks that 'divinity is best', but the divinity tells him-

> ...we must sin, and so consequently die.
> Ay, we must die an everlasting death.
>
> (I, i, 44-45)

Divinity is thus a negation of his desire for immortality. But what is denied by Theology is sought by Faustus in magic:

> These metaphysics of magicians,
> And necromantic books are heavenly;
>
> x x x
>
> O what a world of profit and delight,
> Of power, of honour, of omnipotence,
> Is promised to the studious artisan!
>
> (I,i,48-54)

Faustus appears to be in search of a potent alternative to the traditional academic learning, which can unravel the secrets of nature as well as enable him to wield power over man and nature. But his priorities are - profit, delight, power, honour and omnipotence -

in that order. He, therefore, begins to think of himself as a new Satan, ready to dislodge the theological God from his seat of authority:

"A sound magician is a mighty god." (I,i,61)

And Cornelius assures him:

The miracles that magic will perform
Will make thee vow to study nothing else.

(I, i, 135-36)

When Faustus conjures and an ugly-looking devil appears he orders him to change his shape:

Thou art too ugly to attend on me:
Go and return an old Franciscan friar,
That holy shape becomes a devil best.

(I, iii, 243-46)

The question of shape or form becomes all too important here, as Faustus,being a lover of beautiful shapes, cannot tolerate ugly forms. The form should be beautiful even if it hides the greatest ugliness. He is also able to see through the deception of forms, when he observes that the devil loves to assume a holy shape or the holy shape suits the devil best. Thus the holy garbs of friars are mere 'forms' of holiness, whereas in actuality they carry a devilish substance.

REFERENCES

[1]Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and His Contemporaries,* Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1984, p 109.

[2]"Epistemologies of Postmodernism: A Rejoinder to Jean-Francois Lytord" in *Feminism/Postmodernism,* ed. Linda J. Nicholson, New York : Routledge 1990, p. 107.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid., p. 108.

[5]Ibid., p. 109.

[6]All references to the text of *Dr. Faustus* are taken from the edition edited by Roma Gill, London: Ernest Benn Ltd, 1965. These are subsequently given in the parentheses.

[7]E. Ann Kaplan, "Introduction", *in Postmodernism and its Discontents, ed. E. Ann Kaplan,* London : Verso, 1988, p. 4 .

[8]Ibid., p. 5 .

[9]Fredric Jameson, "Postmodernism and Consumer Society", in E. Ann Kaplan, *op.cit.,* pp. 13-29 .

[10]Ibid., p. 17.

[11]Ibid.

POE'S POEM "THE RAVEN" : AN EPITOME OF HIS ROMANTICISM

Subhas Chandra Saha

To write of Edgar Allan Poe (1809-49) as a great American poet of the first half of the nineteenth century is not my primary purpose in this paper. His greatness as a poet has been acknowledge by the great poets of the Continent like Baudelaire and Mallarme and by those of the British Isles like D.H. Lawrence and W.B. Yeats. Whatever might be the view of his detractors, that Poe is the greatest of all the American poets who had published poems before the publication of *Leaves of Grass* in 1855 is now an internationally accepted literary fact.

While Poe wrote his poems in America, the waves of Ramanticism were sweeping through the British and Continental literatures. Though Poe absorbed the influence of Romanticism, he contributed to the making of modern literature through his stories, poems and criticism. In addition, that Poe is a great poet is indicated by the fact that however wretched a life he might have lived, in his literary creation he was able to transmute his personal sufferings into perfectly moulded symbols that embody the angst and ecstasy of the whole human race. This ability to transform personal emotion into objects of art that represent human emotions and perceptions of universal nature points to the level of excellence of Poe's poetic genius and craftsmanship. It is because of this that Baudelaire and Mallarme were moved to accord him the honour of a great poet.

In this article I will analyse Poe's poem, "The Raven" (1845), to highlight his manner of evoking an atmosphere and that of moulding a symbol which epitomizes the core of Romanticism. However, the richness of the poem stems from the consistency with which Poe sustains the Romantic image. I will not refer to Poe's personal life to account for the centrality of the Romantic metaphor and symbol in the poem but try to indicate how Poe as a verbal artist succeeds in maintaining the continuity of romance. A way of life, an attitude towards life, and a psychic stance are given a verbal embodiment with great accuracy that arouses in the reader an immediate response and orientation. This speaks of Poe's remarkable capability as a great verbal artist.

Poe gives the poem the semblance of a tale, distancing it from

the present, thus reflecting a romantic aura of strangeness and enchantment on the mode of narration. The first part of the first line-- "Once upon a midnight dreary" -- infuses into the tale the element of mystery by locating the tale in the midnight. Magic verse tales had their action begun at an advanced period of night; for example, Coleridge's "Christabel" or Keats's "The Eve of St. Agnes." The midnight is specified specially as "dreary", that is, gloomy. Often "dreary" is the perspective of the Romantic mind; for example, in Keats's "La Belle Dame Sans Merci", the Knight-at-arms wanders on the side of the withered lake. The dreaminess of the midnight conforms with the pallor and woe of the "I" of the poem, the protagonist who also assumes the role of the poet-narrator. The protagonist-cum-narrator is pondering as one who is "weak and weary". The weakness of the woe-begone protagonist is reminiscent of Keats's Knight-at-arms. Thus the three adjectives "dreary", "weak" and "weary" interpenetrate one another to evoke a combined effect of weariness and pallor that are often the ingredients of the Romantic mind; for example, we may refer to Shelley's poem, "The Indian Serenade" :

> Oh lift me from the grass !
> I die ! I faint ! I fail !
> Let thy love in kisses rain
> On my lips and eyelids pale.
> My cheek is cold and white, alas !

The protagonist was deeply meditating upon the lore which is now "forgotten", that is, relegated to oblivion. Retrieving tales from the past was a mental habit of the Romantic poets of the British Isles. The protagonist points out that the tales were "quaint" and "curious". The strange tales retrieved from the oblivion are being deeply contemplated by the protagonist. The working of the protagonist's inner mind is thus revealed. He has a romantic character. Hence it may be supposed that the protagonist's sensibility and imagination may have been moulded by the quaint and curious tales of the past. The alliteration and assonance produce a musical effect that subliminally guides the reader from one set of words to another. Thus the impress of Poe's romanticism is subtly interfused not only into the verse pattern of the poem, but also into the psychic consciousness of the reader. Poe takes the reader alongwith him into his world of romance by the hypnotic effect of the musical rhythm of his verse.

The protagonist "nodded, nearly napping": this creates the mood

of dream in a half-asleep, half-awake state of mind. This is reminiscent of Coleridge's vision in "Kubla Khan". The protagonist is awakened from the semi-awake state into an inner awareness: this inner awareness appears to the Romantic protagonist with an alarming insistence: "tapping" becomes "rapping" which is followed by another "rapping." The gentle rapping becomes seductive, and the protagonist is seduced into the dreamscape. This is reminiscent of Coleridge's protagonist in "Kubla Khan" gradually being led into the dream-world after being fed on honey-dew and drunk on the milk of Paradise.

The word "visitor" echoes the word "vision." So by implication and inference, the protagonist-cum-poet hints at the appearance and emergence of a vision in the inner world of the poet's mind. Thus the first stanza, consisting of six lines, sets the romantic framework for the presentation of a vision which would reflect the sorrow and pallor of the poet's psyche at certain irrevocable and irredeemable facts of life. Tears at the heart of things are paradox which puzzled the Romantic poets, as Shelley pointed out in "To a Skylark": "Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thoughts."

In the second stanza, the protagonist states that he is recording the incident from his memory : this distancing in time endows the incident with a romantic aura : "Ah, distinctly I remember ...." To the Romantic poet a vision is distinctly visible, and it is as important and perceptible as reality. Thus the adverb "distinctly" used with the verb "remember" is significant. The vision is a lived experience to the protagonist-cum-narrator as visions were to the pre-Romantic poet Blake. The vision takes place in bleak December, the mid-month of winter. The dreary midnight of the bleak December provides the setting for the event which shifts from the level of the actual to the level of the vision. The vision is given the verisimilitude of actuality by the protagonist's poetic art. That the poet is able to perpetuate the vision through a set of images evoked through a collocation of words that produce an aural harmony leading the reader to reconstitute the images in his/her mental perspective with reflex reactions in sensations and intellect betokens the success of the poet's verbal art,

The ember in the fireplace is dying individually, and casting its ghostly reflection on the floor. The theme of death is thus subtly adumbrated, and the element of horror is infused by the word

"ghost." The rich tapestry of images with their associated evocations in the poem reminds us of Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale" which also harps on death, sorrow and mutability of life. The word "eagerly" in the next line indicates the feverish enthusiasm on the part of the protagonist. The excessive youthful enthusiasm is a characteristic of the Romantic poets; I may refer to passages in Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind" or "To a Skylark" for illustration. The word "vainly" in the same third line of the stanza points to the sense of frustration and despair in the protagonist, thus paving the way for his Romantic obsession with sorrow and ennui. The word "sorrow" is repeated in the next line. This sorrow is over the loss of someone who was "the rare and radiant maiden" like the Knight's sorrow over the loss of the Lady in the Meads who was a faery's child in Keats's "La Belle Dame Sans Merci."

The keynote of the poem is struck in the last line of the second stanza : "Nameless here for evermore". The Romantic poet's sense of loss and desertion over the extinction of the angelic vision never comes to an end. This is expressed through a paradoxical antinomy-- a linguistic structure which is strikingly effective: "less ... more." The perpetual loss is bemoaned for ever. The Romantic poet's sense of loss is perpetual and unalterable; for example, Wordsworth laments in "Ode on Intimations of Immortality":

It is not now as it hath been of yore; -
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The thing which I have seen I now can see no more.

At the beginning of the third stanza, the poet applies to a small material of household, furnishing the adjectives that endow the materials with a living quality which again is modified by their romantic implications: "silken, sad, uncertain." The poet turns these adjectives into living attributes by using a verbal substantive alongwith them, namely, "rustling." The curtain assumes a lurid connotation when another adjective "purple" is immediately placed beside it. Instead of blanketing all the curtains together, the poet pays and draws our attention to "each" curtain, thus piling up the associational attributes into a climactic and irrevocable perception.

The protagonist is "thrilled" by such rustling of such curtains; not only "thrilled" but "filled with fantastic terrors never felt before." The terrors ensue from the fantasy, and this experience is unique as it was "never felt before." The uniqueness of a Romantic

experience is thus stressed. And the protagonist is agitated: "the beating of my heart." In order to bring himself back to the level of reality, the protagonist tells himself that it must be only a visitor. The conflict between the reality and the fantasy, and the psychic tension resulting therefrom is captured in these early stanzas. The protagonist wavers before he transports himself completely to the realm of fantasy. A comparable experience is narrated by Keats in "Ode to a Nightingale":

> Away ! away ! for I will fly to thee,
> Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
> But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
> Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:

It is also to be noted that the final line of each stanza echoes and hammers upon the fact of negation by using either the word "nothing" or "never." Shakespearean use of the verbal syndrome -- "nothing, no never"-- in *King Lear* as a key word-pattern in the play is a similar instance of the use of verbal repetition for projecting a vision of life. The Romantic poet's perception of nullity, originating from his apprehension of the unbridgeable gap between the reality and the fantasy, is echoed throughout Poe's poem.

The fourth stanza is the stanza recording the shift from the reality and the known to the fantasy and the unknown. This shifting is, however, only mental, partly conscious, partly unconscious, through the operation of imagination. Hence, the shifting stage is delicately handled by the poet; he places the suggestive words at discrete distances to produce the cumulative effect of a smooth transition; for example, "napping", "gently", "faintly", "tapping", and "scarcely was sure." Though a romantic uncertainty is being presented, the mode of narration is in the firm grip of the poet. Thus the embodiment of an emotion with its romantic nuances in an image presented through an action complete with conversation is finely and effectively achieved by Poe. In this poem Poe is able to project a "set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion" (T.S. Eliot, "Hamlet and His Problems"). Here the particular emotion is the poet's emotion regarding Beauty and Evil with their multiple associations in the Romantic context.

The fifth stanza plunges the protagonist into the mystique of the fantasy, the unknown. The protagonist stood peering "deep into the darkness": and he stood "wondering, fearing, doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before." The uniqueness of the

protagonist's vision is stressed; the Romantic poets laid stress on the individual's imagination. The vision arises from the internal realm of the poet's mind, and so it comes through a whisper. The target of the poet is unrealizable, but it haunts his romantic imagination perpetually. Poe gives the vision a name "Lenore". The concept of Lenore and the horror associated with Beauty are reminiscent of Shelley's lines on Medusa:

> It lieth, gazing on the midnight sky,
> Upon the cloudy mountain-peak supine;
> Below, far lands are seen tremblingly,
> Its horror and its beauty are divine.
> Upon its lips and eyelids seems to lie
> Loveliness like a shadow, from which shine,
> Fiery and lurid, struggling underneath,
> The agonies of anguish and death.

The sixth stanza can also be analysed to show how the poet uses certain words to build up the Romantic ethos in the poem. But for lack of space I skip the analysis of the words that conjure the atmosphere. However, while analysing the earlier stanzas, I have given hints about Poe's excellent mastery over the verbal art of evocation. Then classical and Biblical allusions are interpolated by Poe in several stanzas of the poem. They connect the poem to the past. Infatuation with the past is a Romantic quality that pervades the theme and style of this poem.

In the eighth stanza the Raven is presented as a demon minus any redeeming feature. The only word spoken by the Raven and subsequently repeated with unwavering persistence and grim finality is the word "Nevermore". The Raven may be construed as the symbol of tragedy:

> "Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said,
> "art sure no craven,
> Ghastly, grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly
> shore -
> Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore!"
> Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

The use of the archaic word "quoth" lends the poem a gothic flavour.

Poe's romanticism is steeped in despair and horror. In the tenth stanza the protagonist depicts the situation of his utter desolation :

> "Other friends have flown before -
> On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my Hopes have flown
> before."

But the demon of the Raven will never leave him once he has arrived on the rim of the protagonist's psyche. Horror and despair become the only companions of the protagonist-cum-poet.

In the eleventh stanza the poet tries to give a plausible explanation of the symbolic phenomenon which is presented as fantasy. Thus the poet's switch from the reality to the fantasy and back to the reality lend an artistic tension to both the formal and thematic textures of the poem. In the twelfth stanza Poe characterises the Raven as "this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt and ominous bird of yore" who croaks "Nevermore". The disappearance of the Ideal Beauty is a recurrent Romantic theme found in the poetry of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley and Keats.

The poet's lament over the disappearance of the Ideal Beauty becomes intense and breaks into a lyric cry when the symbolic texture is disrupted, for a moment, by the personal note in the thirteenth stanza:

> But whose velvet-violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o'er,
> *She* shall press, ah, never more !

The evocation of the paradise in the fourteenth stanza casts a spell on the protagonist-poet's mind and he wishes to forget the sorrow of desertion, but he finds no position in either Paradise or Purgatory :

> Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this lost Lenore !
> Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

The poet's final prayer for a sense of fulfilment in the imagined world is negated and rejected:

> By that Raven that bends above us --by that God we both adore-
> Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aiden,
> It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore -
> Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name "Lenore."
> Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

The poet's ultimate obsession is his loneliness like the Knight-at-arms in Keats's "La Belle Dame Sans Merci". The poet finally implores -- "Leave my loneliness unbroken." But absolute loneliness remains a mirage for the Romantic poet. In reply to the poet, the Raven quoths, "Nevermore."

The Romantic agony of unfulfilled desire, a desire that was once limitless, stretching to the height of the sky, finds a poignant unredeemed expression in the final stanza of the poem:

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting , *still* is sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,
And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor;
Shall be lifted - nevermore !

For lack of space I cannot explore further into the thematic and formal texture of the poem, nor can I compare Poe's achievement in this poem with that of the other poets in the poems of a similar nature, nor can I elaborate upon the progress made by Poe through this poem in the development of the art of American poetry. However, through this brief article I have tried to underscore only one of the manifold possibilities of interpretation of Poe's poem "The Raven" which is surely a classic in American poetry of the first half of the nineteenth century.

POETRY AS "THE *MANTRA* OF THE REAL" : THE ESSENCE OF SRI AUROBINDO'S POETICS

K.K. Sharma

Sri Aurobindo's unique genius is fundamentally original, perhaps more original than that of any other Western or Eastern creative writer or thinker of the present century. A very outstanding seer and a great creative writer evenly balanced in him, he, soaked in great literatures, arts and thoughts, both Western and Asian, old and new,is not only a propounder and practitioner of great philosophy, but is also one of the most distinguished theorists and practitioners of literature, giving new dimensions and directions to poetics with a view to making it suitable for the future men of letters. Essentially a seer, a *rishi* in the old Vedic tradition, haunted by visions, he has enriched the human mind with his captivating and compelling vision of aesthetics, which by its virtue of being cosmic and profound is much ahead of his times, and hence will influence the future authors, though it might not have exerted much impact on his contemporaries and immediate successors.

Though a seer and a poet throughout his life, he began as a creative writer and remained so very actively till the end of his life. In fact, his dedication tc *Yoga* did not interrupt, or interfere with, his literary activities which went on ceaselessly till he breathed his last. In this respect, there is a definite resemblance between Sri Sankaracharya and him. Obviously, his poetics is primarily founded on his deeply felt intuitive experiences. His view of art and poetry is embodied in the book, *The Future Poetry,* in his letters, and in the prefaces to the various works he has bequeathed to us.

In short, Sri Aurobindo's poetics is the natural corollary of his strikingly original creative mind plus variegated influences that his receptive mind felt from time to time in India as well as abroad. Thus on his aesthetic vision can be perceived the impact of Homer, Aristophanes, Dante, Goethe, French poets, Shakespeare, the *Upanishads,* the *Gita,* the *Ramayana,* the *Mahabharta,* Kalidasa, Bhavbhuti, Bhartrihari, Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Bankimchandra Chatterjee, Rabindranath Tagore, Ramkrishna Paramhansa, Vivekanand, the Indian aesthetic tradition, the Greeco-Latin and French traditions, and, above all, the Indian spiritual tradition and his own spiritual and intellectual experiences.

In the present paper of modest length, an attempt has been made to explain and examine only some of the basic aspects of Sri Aurobindo's poetics, for it is impossible even to touch all the facets of his aesthetics, enunciated so comprehensively by him in *The Future Poetry*, letters and other expository writings. In fact, a full-length study is needed to do full justice to the subject. Besides, to discuss every aspect of it in a paper such as this will mean a lot of repetition of what has already been written on the subject by some very leading scholars like V.K. Gokak, K.R.S. Iyengar, Sisirkumar Ghose, Rameshwar Gupta, K.D. Sethna, S.K. Prasad, Prema Nandkumar, H.R.Justa, Som P. Ranchan and others.

II

Sri Aurobindo opines that any attempt to define poetry scientifically is a sheer wastage of energy as it is almost impossible to define it because it is something elusive and unfathomable. Apropos of this he writes:

> Not that we need spend a vain effort in labouring to define anything so profound, elusive and indefinable as the breath of poetic creation; to take the myriad-stringed harp of Saraswati to pieces for the purpose of scientific analysis must always be a narrow and rather barren amusement.[1]

Obviously, he does not endorse the definition of poetry as given by Wordsworth, Coleridge, Arnold or T.S. Eliot. Nevertheless, he assigns poetry a very high position, and calls it "the *mantra* of the Real."[2] What he means by it is that poetry must transcend the earth to encompass higher spiritual regions inhabited by Divine Truth, Divine Beauty and Divine Delight. He uses the Sanskrit word "Mantra" because he belives that there is no word in English which can be its equivalent, as it connotes both incantation and magic. The concept of poetry as "the *mantra* of the Real" is based on what the Vedic poets have stated in this connection. Speaking of it, Sri Aurobindo remarks:

> What the Vedic poets meant by the Mantra was an inspired and revealed seeing and visioned thinking, attended by a realisation, to use the ponderous but necessary modern word, of some inmost truth of God and self and man and Nature and cosmos and life and thing and thought and experience and deed.[3]

The *mantra* of the Real, according to Sri Aurobindo, is the very essence or true nature of poetry. *Mantra,* in his view, is the product of "overmind", and not of human mind or imagination, howsoever brilliant and powerful it may be. The creator of the *Mantra* is able to

reach and reveal the very soul of things, their innermost reality. Thus poetry is the power of employing words to enchant the reader, that is, to overflow the human mind with vitality, awareness of things and their true relationships with one another, and not with simple delight. Inevitably, poetry as the *mantra* of the Real is the revelation of the innermost truth and rhythm. In his *magnum opus, Savitri,* he poetically expresses his view in the following words:

> As when the mantra sinks in Yogi's ear,
> Its message enters stirring the blind brain
> And keeps in the dim ignorant cells its sound;
> The hearer understands a form of words
> And, musing on the index thought it holds,
> He strives to read it with the labouring mind,
> But finds bright hints, not the embodied truth:
> Then, falling silent in himself to know
> He meets the deeper listening of his soul:
> The Word repeats itself in rhythmic strains:
> Thought, vision, feeling, sense, the body's self
> Are seized unalterably and endures
> An ecstasy and an immortal change;
> He feels a Wideness and becomes a Power,
> All knowledge rushes on him like a sea:
> Transmuted by the white spiritual ray
> He walks in naked heavens of joy and calm,
> Sees the God-face and hears transcendent speech:[4]

III

Sri Aurobindo gives a very serious consideration to the poetic inspiration, i.e. the originating sources of poetry. He talks of the numerous sources of poetry, such as the superconscient source, word-vision, conscious vision and imagery, the state of *svapna samadhi,* any plane of consciousness of the poetic personality, simple dreams, etc. He writes in this connection:

> Poetry does come from these sources or even from the superconscient sometimes; but it does not come usually through the form of dreams; it comes either through word-vision or through conscious vision and imagery whether in a fully waking or an inward-drawn state: the latter may go so far as to be a state of Samadhi--*svapna samadhi....* No poetry can be written without access to some source of inspiration. Mere recording of dreams or images or even visions could never be sufficient, unless it is a poetic inspiration that records them with the right use of words and rhythm bringing out their poetic substance.[5]

In fact, the source of poetic inspiration, in Sri Aurobindo's view, may be anywhere: the physical plane, the higher and lower vital, the plane of dynamic vision, the dynamic intelligence, the psychic and illu-

mined mind, the overmind, etc.

Though Sri Aurobindo does not discard any of the originating sources of poetry [6], yet he considers our superconscient source above ordinary mental states as the most patent and potent form of poetic inspiration for composing great poetry. Explaining the term "poetic inspiration" and the most significant form of it, he asserts:

> What we mean by inspiration is that the impetus to poetic creation and the utterance comes to us from our superconscient sources above the ordinary mentality so that what is written seems not to be fabrication of the brain mind, but something more sovereign breathed or poured from above.[7]

Sri Aurobindo thinks that the superconscient or overhead regions are four: the higher mind, the illumined mind, the intuitive mind and the overmind.

This brings us close to Sri Aurobindo's unflinching belief that the poetic inspiration is Divine. That is to say, the poet receives an irresistible inspiration to write poetry from above, from the Everlasting. Like Shelley, he thinks that poetry is a Divine, mysterious act of creation, beyond and above the comprehension and consciousness of man. The Eternal works through the poet, and great poetry thus composed is not entirely the creation of the poet's mind. He exemplifies this from his own poetic activities in the following words:

> ...I receive from above my head and receive changes and corrections from above without any initiation by myself or labour of the brain. Even if I change a hundred times, the mind does not work at that, it only receives.[8]

Being a Yogi, Sri Aurobindo considers poetry as the creation of mainly "*Svapna samadhi*", or the trans-state of mind. The creative artist is not merely imaginative or mental; rather, he is more concerned with the soul, his inner psychic being in relation to the hidden and concealed realities. The modern common reader regards poetry as man's indulgence in imagination and intellect, while in the olden times a poet was essentially a seer, possessed with vision of truths which he would reveal to people. To quote Sri Aurobindo's own words:

> To us poetry is a revel of intellect and fancy, imagination, a plaything and caterer for our amusement, our entertainer, the nautch girl of the mind. But to the men of old the poet was a seer, a revealer of hidden truths, imagination no dancing courtesan, but a priestess in God's house commissioned not to spin fractions but to image hidden and difficult and hidden truths: even the metaphor and simile in the Vedic style is used with a serious purpose and expected to convey a reality,

> not suggest a pleasing artifice of thought. The image was to these seers a relative symbol of the unrevealed and it was used because it would hint luminously to the mind what the precise intellectual word, apt only for logical or practical thought or to express the physical and the superficial, cannot at all hope to manifest.[9]

Inevitably, the poet is essentially a spiritual being who, during his poetic activity, transcends the barriers of the physical or the mental world. Naturally, this kind of poetry of soul can be apprehended and enjoyed only through soul. That is, the reader of the poetry of this kind will have to be spiritually awakened and transformed, and his critical sensibility is to be 'truly spiritualised.' Here, it is to be mentioned that Sri Aurobindo uses the word "soul" in a very wide sense, meaning by it "Jivataman", "the psychic being", "the spark of soul", etc. A poet of soul is the creator of spiritual joy "*Ananda*", and not mere sensuous, intellectual or imaginative delight.

True to his belief and theory, Sri Aurobindo as a poet gets poetic inspiration mainly from above his head. He would make himself receptive and would submit himself completely to the Divine Power. This does not mean that poetry is merely a creation of the Divine Power, and that man makes no contribution to it. As a matter of fact, poetry is the result of the perfect collaboration between the divine powers and the human activity. The vital mind passively receives and records what is given to it by the divine powers. If the vital mind and emotions work actively and initiate the poetic composition, the result is the creation of inferior kind of poetry. Hence Sri Aurobindo's stress on the poet's reception of the unhampered inspiration for the composition of great poetry:

> There would be no difficulty if the inspiration came through without obstruction or interference in a pure transcript--- that is what happens in a poet's highest or freest moments when he writes not at all out of his own external human mind but by inspiration, as the mouthpiece of the Gods.[10]

Furthermore, Sri Aurobindo holds that the poet not only receives raw material of poetry straight from the Everlasting above, but also gets a kind of dictates, *adesh*, from Him to give it a proper poetic shape and to revise and rewrite it so as to make it a true poetic work. Patently, even the craftsmanship or conscientiousness required of a poet is nothing but an aspect of the poetic inspiration, a kind of divine suggestion given by the Infinite, which a true poet must accept and act upon it accordingly. About this, Sri Aurobindo avers:

> As for *Adesh*, people speak of *Adesh* without making the necessary distinction, but these distinctions have to be made. The Divine speaks to us in many ways and it is not always imperative *Adesh* that comes. When it does, it is clear and irresistible, the mind has to obey and there is no question possible, even if what comes is contrary to the preconceived ideas of the mental intelligence. But more often what is said is an intimation or even less, as mere indication, which the mind may not follow because it is not impressed with its imperative necessity. It is something offered but not imposed, perhaps something not even offered but only suggested from the Truth above.[11]

It is a well-known fact that Sri Aurobindo worked very hard on his poetical masterpiece, *Savitri*, for decades. He rewrote and revised it several times. But even in these acts of deliberate craftsmanship, he mostly depended on inspiration, and not on the mere hard-working of his brain. He admits that all the alterations and improvements made in the first draft of the poem were in consonance with the suggestions he received from the Truth above. Commenting on his revisions of *Savitri* he remarks:

> No, I do not work at the poem once a week; I have other things to do. Once a month perhaps, I look at the new form of the first book and make such changes as inspiration points out to me--- so that nothing shall fall below the minimum height which I have fixed for it.[12]

Thus, his conscious poetic efforts were less important than the poetic inspiration; as a matter of fact, the former only worked in accordance with the latter. The following lines from the epic, *Savitri*, further illustrate the point by expressing his specific belief in the utmost value of divine inspiration for the initiation and accomplishment of the poetic work:

> Oft inspiration with her lightning feet,
> A sudden messenger from the all-seeing tops,
> Traversed the soundless corridors of his mind
> Bringing her rhythmic sense of hidden things.
> A music spoke transcending mortal speech.
> As if from a golden phial of the All-Bliss,
> A joy of light, a joy of sudden sight,
> A rapture of the thrilled undying Word
> Poured into his heart as into an empty cup,
> A repetition of God's first delight
> Creating in a young and virgin Time.
> In a brief moment caught, a little space,
> All-Knowledge packed into great wordless thoughts
> Lodged in the expectant stillness of his depths
> A crystal of the ultimate Absolute,
> A portion of the inexpressible Truth
> Revealed by silence to the silent soul.

The intense creatrix in his stillness wrought
Her power fallen speechless grew more intimate;
She looked upon the seen and the unforeseen,
Unguessed domains she made her native field.
All-Vision gathered into a single ray,
As when the eyes stare at an invisible point
Till through the intensity of one luminous spot
An apocalypse of a world of images
Enters into the kingdom of the seer.[13]

IV

Poetry, according to Sri Aurobindo, aims at achieving the harmony of five perennial powers --- Truth, Beauty, Joy, Life and Spirit--- labelled by him as the five suns of poetry. He repeatedly emphasizes that *mantra* was the highest creation of the Vedic and Upanishadic poets. Further, he points out that the *mantra* was the primary concern not only of the ancient Indian poets, but will also be of the modern and future poets, despite the drastic changes that have taken place in the modern age of intellect and reason marked by new science and technology, new philosophy and religion. The reason is that notwithstanding the tremendous progress in the domain of science and psychology, the modern mind has not shaken off the innate belief in the imperceptible self and spirit.

Sri Aurobindo accentuates the truth that a change in the outlook of man invariably leads to a change in poetry. He hopes that in future man will drift fast towards spiritualism, though it does not imply that all future poets will be seers and all poetry will be essentially spiritual. He believes that a change of this kind will give birth to poet-seers who will be mainly preoccupied with "that universal beauty which is seen by the inner eye, heard by the inner ear."[14] While philosophy indulges in abstractions and religion emphasizes asceticism and otherworldliness, poetry unites the concrete and the abstract, the life and the spirit. The truth with which poetry is concerned is absolutely different from the truth of philosophy or of science or of religion. As a matter of fact, poetry deals with the truth which is self-expression of the eternal truth "so distinct that it appears to give quite another face of things and reveal quite another side of experience."[15]

However, the poet may be wedded to a system of philosophy or religious creed. No wonder in ancient times poetry and philosophy

were almost inalienable. Thus the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads* are, in essence, philosophical poetry. This leads Sri Aurobindo to infer that the primary concern of poetry is not to depict the essence of baser realities of life, but to transcend the physical,baser world so as to attain the higher, spiritual one. About the poet-seer writing this kind of poetry, he states:

> The poet-seer sees differently, thinks in another way, voices himself in quite another manner than the philosopher or the prophet. The prophet announces the Truth as the word of God or his command, he is the giver of the message; the poet shows us Truth in its power of beauty, in its symbol or image, or reveals it to us in the workings of Nature or in the workings of life, and when he has done that, his whole work is done; he need not be its explicit spokesman. The philosopher's business is to discriminate Truth and put its parts and aspects into intellectual relation with each other; the poet's is to seize and embody aspects of Truth in their living relations, or rather,--- for that is too philosophical a language,--- to see her features and excited by the vision create in the beauty of her image.[16]

Inevitably, the truth with which poetry is concerned is something very sublime, profound and vast. Even the sordid realities of life are transformed into great truths by a seer-poet.

Poetry, in Sri Aurobindo's opinion, synthesises, and lives in the harmonious relationship of, vision of truth, passion for beauty and quest for joy -- the first is the enlightening power of the poet's activity, while the other two are its moving power. But the power that sustains the poetic creation and makes it vital and great is the breath of life. Naturally, Sri Aurobindo attaches utmost importance to life in poetry. To quote his own words:

> A poetry which is all thought and no life or a thought which does not constantly keep in touch with and refresh itself from the fountains of life, even if it is something more than a strong, elegant or cultured philosophising or moralising in skilled verse, even if it has vision and intellectual beauty, suffers always by lack of fire and body, wants perfection of grasp and does not take full hold on the inner being to seize and uplift as well as sweeten and illumine, as poetry should do and all great poetic writing does. The function of the poet even when he is most absorbed in thinking, is still to bring out not merely the truth and interest, but the beauty and power of the thought, its life and emotion, and not only to do that, not only to make the thought a beautiful and living thing, but to make it one thing with life.[17]

Sri Aurobindo imparts the word "life" a special meaning. It does not stand for the physical life only, the life of feelings and passions; it connotes the inner life which is infinite, and it is this which is the real strength of poetry. Poetry, in his view, should not be confined merely to the sensuous, intellectual and imaginative aspects of life;

on the contrary, it must pulsate with inner, spiritual life because only then it becomes the rhythmic voice of life. The poet is gifted with the power to see and comprehend the innermost, unfathomable depths of life, and hence his voice -- poetry -- is the revelation of our total finite life as well as the greater infinite life. In fact, this kind of poetry, in Sri Aurobindo's words, "will be the voice and rhythmic utterance of our greater, our total, our infinite existence, and will give us the strong and infinite sense, the spiritual and vital joy, the exalting power of a greater breath of life."[18]

Sri Aurobindo has thought very seriously and minutely about truth, beauty and joy in poetry. So far as truth is concerned, the poet must deal with the realities of life, both the external and the internal, the sensuous and the spiritual, the finite and the infinite. About beauty and joy, his observations are, again, unique, marked by remarkable originality. He holds that the two are only the two sides of the Ideal. It is only for the convenience of the reader that he has discussed these two as two different entities. Usually, the poet describes beauty in physical form, appealing to the physical senses and gratifying the physical desires. But the poet is also concerned with the beauty of ideas, resulting in spiritual beauty which is the incarnation of the Divine. About this Sri Aurobindo asserts: "Beauty is the special divine Manifestation in the physical as Truth is in the mind, Love in the heart, Power in the vital. Supramental beauty is the highest divine beauty manifesting in Matter."[19]

Sri Aurobindo believes that love and beauty are the source of joy, *Ananda,* as light and knowledge are of consciousness. God can be found only in the highest joy, and this is the reason why the spiritual joy makes life beautiful, wonderful and resplendent to man. No wonder poetry, which is inspired and governed by spirituality, can exert a healthy impact on the life of the reader. Spiritual joy or *ananda* is the highest form of human vision. *Ananda* -- fathomless, indivisible joy-- has love and beauty as its two most important ingredients. The highest delight, the spiritual joy, which makes life lovable and beautiful, is attainable only through the realisation of, and close contact with, God. Poetry, in Sri Aurobindo's opinion, should aim at empodying this spiritual delight, for only then it will exercise a wholesome influence over the life of man. The poet discovers within himself, or in the world around him, a profoundly spiritual vision which clothes everything in celestial joy -- *ananda.*

The reason of this is not far to seek. The Vedic religion, according to which spirit is the foremost and ultimate reality, explains it convincingly. *Brahma* is omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent, and is the ultimate reality. Life emanates from *Brahma*, or the spirit, and ultimately merges into it. Thus man is only an ingredient of *Brahma*, God, or the Spirit. Inevitably, the spirit in him drives him towards Him. This accounts for Sri Aurobindo's preoccupation with the poetry of Spirit, about which he states:

> This can only come if the mind of the race takes actually the step over which it is now hesitating and passes from the satisfaction of the liberated intellect which has been its preoccupation for the last two centuries to the pursuit of the realisation of the larger self, from the scrutiny of the things that explain to the experience of the things that reveal, the truths of the spirit.[20]

V

A very basic feature of Sri Aurobindo's poetics is the fusion of the spirit and the material world. To him, the transcendent and the aesthetic are absolutely inseparable from each other. The Matter and the Spirit are wedded to each other; the body and the soul are one, having no independent entities of their own. No doubt, art in all its forms is fundamentally concerned with the perception of beauty; but it also invariably embodies ideals beyond the mere grasp of beauty. Thus, great poetry, according to Sri Aurobindo, is the Energy of the Transcendent; it is " the rhythmic voice of life ... one of the inner and not one of the surface voices."[21] In fact, it presents inner beauty, an assessment of inner life. Obviously, the poet is not different from the spiritualist, though the two seem to be two entirely different beings. The spirit and the material world become one unified whole in great poetry, despite the fact that to an artist the world is real, while to the spiritualist the spirit is real and the world is illusion. Apparently, to Sri Aurobindo, the transcendent and the aesthetic are inalienable. No wonder he asserts that art is spiritual, having its basis in sensuous reality. What he professes he has realised in his own life as is evident from his record of one of his unique epiphanies, moments of spiritual revelations:

> Since I set foot on the Indain soil on the Appollo Bunder in Bombay, I began to have spiritual experiences, but these were not divorced from this world but had an inner and infinite bearing on it, such as a feeling of the infinite pervading material space and the Immanent inhabiting material objects and bodies. At the same time I found myself entering supra-physical world and planes with influences and an effect from them upon the material plane.[22]

Apparently, Sri Aurobindo's approach is strikingly different from Surrealism, Dadaism and Symbolism which do not attach due significance to the reality of the material world.

Sri Aurobindo holds that to gain strength in poetic art, as in any other sphere of work, power or *Shakti* is needed. Just as in Hindu philosophy, *Shakti* is inalienable from Shiva, likewise force is inseparable from being. The artist, who needs power continually, can acquire it through profound *Sadhana*, dedication. Thus, he believes in the Indian concept of literature as *Sadhana*, the importance of which has also been accepted and stressed by some of the modern Indian English authors like Tagore and Raja Rao. Sri Aurobindo not only talked of *Sadhana*, but also practised it in his life. His intense *Yoga, Sadhana* infused him with immense power enabling him to attain supra-mental consciousness in his life on the earth. Through *Sadhana*, he grasped his true self, and combined the various parts of his self to see the Divine in others. According to him, in *Yoga* work is as invaluable as *Bhakti* or meditation, for work done with utmost sincerity and spirit of renunciation transports man's consciousness close to the Divine. Thus, his concept of *Purna Yoga* is the unification of knowledge, work, devotion and meditation, stemming from man's deep urge for the Divine.

To the common man, who is not able to grasp poetry, it is "nothing more than an aesthetic pleasure of the imagination, the intellect and the ear, a sort of elevated pastime."[23] It is true that everyone expects pleasure from poetry, but the delight that poetry affords us cannot be comprehended through intelligence, imagination or senses because they are only its instruments; the poetic delight is the creation of the soul and hence it can be understood only through the soul. Apropos of this Sri Aurobindo states:

> Therefore poetry has not really done its work, at least its highest work, until it has raised the pleasure of the instrument and transmuted it into the deeper delight of the soul. A divine Ananda, a delight interpretative, creative, revealing, formative, -- one might almost say, an inverse reflection of the joy which the Universal Soul has felt in its great release of energy when it rang out into the rhythmic forms of the universe the spiritual truth, the large interpretative idea, the life, the power, the emotion of things packed into its original creative vision -- such spiritual joy is that which the soul of the poet feels and which, when he can conquer the human difficulties of his task, he succeeds in pouring also into all those who are prepared to receive it. And this delight is not merely a godlike pastime; it is a great formative and illuminative power.[24]

Obviously, Sri Aurobindo is of the view that despite faulty poetic technique, a gifted soul is capable of creating great poetry which may captivate human mind for centuries. Technique, according to him, is not as invaluable for poetry as for any other art. The reasons are two: first, the instrument of poetry -- the rhythmic word -- is more full of immaterial and subtle elements than that of any other art-form; secondly, the instrument of poetry, being the most suggestive, supple and complex of all the instruments of art-forms, has immense possibilities in various directions. The rhythmic word, with its sense and sound, has a soul value, a spiritual power which is absolutely inalienable from it and which is something beyond the mere mechanical construction. This is the reason why the poet, of all artists, is least concerned with the technique of his art. In fact, at the height of creation, he forgets all about the technical side of the poetic creation, and his sound-movement and style emanate naturally from his soul. Hence, he considers poetry as the highest human speech-form. Inevitably, Sri Aurobindo infers:

> So poetry arrives at the indication of infinite meanings beyond the finite intellectual meaning the word carries. It expresses not only the life-soul of man as did the primitive word, not only the ideas of his intelligence for which speech now usually serves, but the experience, the vision, ideas, as we may say, of the higher and wider soul in him. Making them real to our life-soul as well as present to our intellect, it opens to us by the word the doors of the Spirit.[25]

VI

The foregoing discussion of some of the basic aspects of Sri Aurobindo's poetics leads us to draw a few inferences. In the first place, he has thought about poetry more seriously and deeply than any other modern thinker. Even the great mystic poets of the world, of both the West and the East, such as Blake, Wordsworth, W.B.Yeats, Whitman, Emerson, Kabir, Tagore, Jai Shankar Prasad, Mahadevi Verma and others, could not grasp the unfathomable mystic depth of poetry, and could not reach the superconscient sources of poetry. His concept of the superconscient is strikingly original and profound. Secondly, he reveals a new facet of the poetic imagination, that is, the psychic inspiration. He points out that the psyche illumines and fires the deeper heart, which, in its turn, imparts light to the mind, the vital and the physical body. This makes the mind see the true vision intuitively and distinguish it from the wrong, thus leading man to have the right impulse and intuitive feelings. The psyche rarely leaves its imprint on the poetic compo-

sition; it simply enables the poet to have spiritual realisation. The poetry of the higher kind issues from the fusion of the psychic powers and the powers of the illumined mind. This interpretation of the poetic process is highly psychological and intellectual, besides being spiritual. Thirdly, he rightly stresses the marriage between philosophy and aesthetics, material and spiritual, and spirit and life for the creation of great poetry.

Notwithstanding these and many more conspicuous merits, Sri Aurobindo's theory of poetry suffers from some glaring weaknesses. In the first place, he has made poetry very difficult and complex, thus making it lose much of its natural simplicity and charm which mark even the highest spiritual poetry of the ancient times -- the *Vedas,* the *Upanishads,* the psalms, etc. Secondly, he has delimited the scope of poetry and much of its abiding appeal to the common man by making it highly spiritual and intellectual. Thirdly, his theory of poetry is based on the old Indian tradition of spiritual poetry -- poetry as "the *Mantra* of the Real"--, and there is not much newness in it, except this that it is a fresh and very profound interpretation of the basic existing facts. Lastly, it is difficult to agree with him that all future poetry will be essentially spiritual and the product of the superconscient, the higher state of mind.

To conclude, Sri Aurobindo's philosophy of poetry focusses on the perception and delineation of the supreme beauty and truth of the Infinite in all its shapes and forms. This kind of vision of poetry emanates from the sublimity of his deeply haunting mystical experiences. His theory of poetry is characterised by a remarkably broad outlook, sound judgment and profound grasp of the subject. It certainly opens up new horizons in the domain of poetry-criticism, as it has its bedrock his philosophy and spiritual insight, particularly his concept of *Sadhana* and his view of the seven levels of consciousness -- physical, vital, mental (lower and higher), illumined mental, intuitive mental, overmind and supermind. He points to the new progressive direction which modern poetic art should take so as to enable man to have, to quote his own words, "the bright moons of the future." Let us hope that what C.R.Das has remarked about him in general may come true of his poetics also: "Long after he is dead and gone, his words will be echoed and re-echoed, not only in India, but across distant seas and lands."[26]

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1]Sri Aurobindo, *The Future Poetry and Letters on Poetry, Literature and Art* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1972),p.9.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid.,p.199.

[4]Sri Aurobindo, *Savitri,* Book Four, Canto Three (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1973), p. 375.

[5]*The Future Poetry and Letters on Poetry, Literature and Art,* pp.448-49.

[6]Speaking of other sources of poetic inspiration, besides the Divine one, Sri Aurobindo affirms that poetry "may come through from some plane and the poet excited to creation may build around them constructing his material or getting it from any source he can tap. There are many possibilities of this nature. There is also the possibility of an inspiration not from above, but from somewhere within on the ordinary levels, some inner mind, emotional, vital etc. which the mind practised in poetical technique works out according to its habitual faculty.

(*The Future Poetry and Letters on Poetry, Literature and Art,* p. 293).

[7]Ibid.,pp.236-37.

[8]"Sri Aurobindo's Letters on *Savitri*", *Savitri,* p.728.

[9]*Letters of Sri Aurobindo* (Bombay: Sri Aurobindo Circle, 1947),p.392.

[10]*The Future Poetry and Letters on Poetry, Literature and Art,* p.291.

[11]*Letters of Sri Aurobindo,* p.54-5.

[12]"Sri Aurobindo's Letters on *Savitri*", *Savitri,* p.727.

[13]*Savitri,* Book One, Canto Three, pp.38-9.

[14]*The Future Poetry and Letters on Poetry, Literature and Art,* pp.494-95.

[15]Ibid.,p.212.

[16]Ibid.,pp.31-2.

[17]Ibid.,p224.

[18]Ibid.,p.234.

[19]Ibid.,p.491.

[20]Ibid.,p.249.

[21]Ibid.,p.225.

[22]Quoted by Manoj Das in *Sri Aurobindo* (Delhi: Sahitya Akademi,1982),p.16.

[23]*The Future Poetry and Letters on Poetry, Literature and Art,*p.9.

[24]Ibid.,p.10.

[25]Ibid.,p.13.

[26]Quoted by Manoj Das in *Sri Aurobindo in the First Decade of the Present Century* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram,1972), p.64.

ART AS AN EXPRESSION OF IDEA : MARIANNE MOORE

A.N. Dwivedi

I

At the close of her *Collected Poems* (1951; eighth printing 1957), Marianne Moore thought it worthwhile to offer flashes of her critical insight in the shape of Notes on the pattern of T.S. Eliot's Notes appended to *The Waste Land* (October 1922). This analogy leads us to an apt comparison between the two great American poets of the War period. Like Eliot, Miss Moore was also a poet of ideas, and not one of musicality or passion so much. Her "hybrid method of composition"[1] (Moore 1957:152), her allusive technique, and her argumentative and prosaic statements tend to confirm that she is closer to Eliot in her mode of utterance than to the subjective and suffusive poets of the Confessional school. The noted critic Louis Untermeyer, in his book *American Poetry Since 1900*, also supports this viewpoint when he brackets Moore with Eliot as 'the Cerebral-ists' amongst the native American poets.

Miss Moore is a typical child of the War period -- the period which has exposed the dark moods and evil designs of petty, power-hungry politicians rolling in hatred, intrigue and arrogance and goaded by their Faust-like ambitions, and which has completely destabilized and dehumanized the contemporary world. The worship of the Mammon has added to its misery and restlessness, and Wordsworth bewailed that 'The world is too much with us'. But Miss Moore is not lost in the murky ways of the world or its muddy and mundane materialism. She is also not an upholder of 'art for art's sake', nor a social propagandist. She is rather a poet who is sincerely concerned with the nobility and seriousness of her task. At times she may be interested in the world of animals, plants and insects (like Ted Hughes) as 'the raw material of poetry' (to use her own words), but she is perceptive enough to turn them into symbols to highlight their wider meanings and make them bear pointed human relevance. According to Elizabeth Jennings, Miss Moore mainly deals with "the question of nobility, courage and restraint."[2] (Jennings 1965:103). And she makes it amply clear when she writes thus in her long poem,

"The Hero":

> ... He's not out
> seeing a sight but the rock
> crystal thing to see -- the startling El Greco
> brimming with inner light -- that
> covets nothing that it has let go. This then
> you may know
> as the hero.
>
> (Moore 1957:16).

At first inspection, Moore's poetic world seems to be cluttered with *bric-a-brac*, creating the imression of a junk shop through which certain exotic animals wander undisturbedly, but on a closer inspection it appears that they all form an integral part of her moral world packed with noble ideas.

II

At this juncture, it is appropriate to take stock of Miss Moore's peotry *vis-a-vis* our topic of discussion. On reading a poem like "The Steeple-Jack", we may think that it is all for a place standing high above the town as well as for a place plainly imaginary, but it steers itself clear of the chaotic collection of objects and comes to represent "an idea of order"[3] (Gray 1976:192), which finally provides the poet with her own special refuge. The poetess observes here that

> The hero, the student,
> the steeple-jack, each in his way,
> is at home. (p.14).

She moves ahead and writes:

> It scarcely could be dangerous to be living
> in a town like this, of simple people
> who have a steeple-jack placing danger-signs
> by the church
> when he is gilding the solid --
> pointed star, which on a steeple
> stands for hope. (*Idem.*)

To the poetess, the gilded 'steeple' here becomes a symbol of hope and regeneration. She does not say, as the noted Indian English author Sasthi Brata did in his novel *My God Died Young* (1976), that her God is no more alive, nor does she violate the sanctity of the Church or the Bible by passing vile remarks against the Holy Trinity, as the well-known American poetess Anne Sexton did in *The Book of Folly* (1972). In this way, Miss Moore strikes the note of

'spiritual poise', as another famous poet Charles Tomlinson has nicely put it.

Miss Moore is actually a moralist who allows intellect, emotion and imagination to play equal parts in the making of a poem; she looks at her *objective d'art* (animals and plants, scenes and events, persons and places, etc.) with a loving observation and microscopic care, but does not simply stop there. She rather looks beyond them to their further significance in the context of the larger world. Her eyes are often set not so much on the physiognomy of objects, persons or places described as on what they come to signify or represent. She is not interested in imagery for the sake of imagery, as some Moderns are, but for its capacity to unfurl a panorama of 'burning and fierce life', as Jennings remarks. In other words, she is keenly interested in the intensities of life which reveal her strong moral vision. Two examples are being given below to substantiate the statement:

> I remember a swan under the willows in Oxford,
> with flamingo-coloured, maple -
> leaflike feet. It reconnoitred like a battle-
> ship. Disbelief and conscious fastidiousness were
> the staple
> ingredients in its
> disinclination to move.
>
> ("Critics and Connoisseurs," p. 42)

and :

> No brittle but
> Intense-- the spectrum, that
> Spectacular and nimble animal the fish,
> Whose scales turn aside the sun's sword
> with their polish.
>
> ("An Egyptian Pulled Glass
> Bottle in the Shape of a Fish", p.90).

Evidently, here Art has been made subservient to Life, and Miss Moore's world of beasts, which W.H. Auden in his work *The Dyer's Hand and Other Essays* (1962) compares with that of D.H. Lawrence, represents certain well-marked 'emblems'. In the opinion of W.H. Auden, the devil-fish, so frightening to look at because of the unusual care that she takes of her eggs, becomes an emblem of charity. Similarly, in the poem "The Jerboa", the jerboa-rat becomes an emblem of freedom as contrasted with the false freedom of the conqueror-tyrant. Miss Moore is sometimes direct in the expression of her morals and sometimes she is indirect and oblique. Even "The

Jerboa" is shrouded in mystery as regards its subject-matter, as pointed out by T.S. Eliot in his "Introduction" to the 1935 volume of *Selected Poems*, but it appears that the poem is a symbol of 'happiness' and 'rest' in the midst of "the boundless sand" (p. 20) where it feels no scarcity of food or shelter.

Some of the outstanding poems of Miss Moore where Art becomes an expression of Idea are: "The Frigate Pelican", "A Grave", "Those Various Scalpels", "To Military Progress", and "What Are Years?" These poems embody one or the other idea in an unequivocal manner. The first-named poem wants us to fulfil our needs and accept the limitations of our nature. In this popular 'animal' poem, Miss Moore offers us an example of a creature that does exactly that. The poetess once announced that 'We must have the courage of our peculiarities'. The frigate pelican may exist apart from human concerns, but in the very act of doing this it seems to provide us with what John Crowe Ransom called 'an exemplum of rightness and beauty'. The bird is, thus, like the cultured good man in cultivating these said virtues, and seems to assert -- "If I do well I am blessed / whether any bless me or not, and if I do / ill I am cursed" (p. 32).

The poem "A Grave" pinpoints the idea of the ocean as a grave, as a challenge to human ambition, and as a symbol of the unconscious -- those hidden parts of the mind which are explored cautiously by man and at immense risk to himself. The ocean is a natural fierce force of destruction; it deprives human beings of will and consciousness. And in utter ignorance they act as follows:

> men lower nets, unconscious of the fact that
> they are desecrating a grave,
> and row quickly away -- the blades of the oars
> moving together like the feet of water-spiders
> as if there were no such thing as death
>
> (p. 56).

Like the ocean, the malignant forces of life and the subliminal processes of the mind are also prone to desecration and destructiveness.

In "Those Various Scalpels", the poetess seems to disapprove of the shining scissors meant for physical dissection and scientific experiments. She remarks that "these things are rich / instruments with which to experiment" (p. 58). But she does not accord her sanction to their functional roles, and hastens to question:

But
why dissect destiny with instruments which
are more highly specialized than the tissues of
destiny itself ?

(p. 58).

Miss Moore tacitly suggests here that they are hardly suited for 'dissecting destiny', for destiny lies in the hands of Gods (as Eliot also expressed in his popular play, *Murder in the Cathedral,* 1935)--somewhere beyond the reach of mankind.

In a similar attitude, Miss Moore disapproves of the mad rush of modern man towards accumulation of arms and ammunition for purposes of War endangering international peace and order. The poem, "To Military Progress", actually becomes a symbol of blood-shed and butchery, and in great dismay the poetess exclaims:

They cry for the lost
Head
And seek their prize
Till the evening's sky's
Red. (p. 90).

The prize of a war is the killing of hundreds of thousands of simple and innocent people.

One of the most interesting poems of Miss Moore is "Marriage", which brings out the contrastive viewpoints of man and woman about this social institution. From the very beginning, the sensitive poetess does not relish it, and she terms it as an "enterprise / out of respect" for society which needs "public promises / of one's intention / to fulfil a private obligation" (p. 69). She weaves the web of this poem with the Christian mythology of Adam and Eve, and when a sort of understanding between the two is reached, the Devil appears on the scene with his dazzling apple and causes distrust and disunion. The dialogue that follows between man and woman is highly interesting and absorbing :

The man says :

'What monarch should not blush
to have a wife
with hair like a shaving-brush ?'

(p. 75)

and a little onwards again :

'a wife is a coffin,'
that severe object

with the plessing geometry
stipulating space not people,
refusing to be buried
and uniquely disappointing . . . .

(p. 75).

As a pert reply to this, the woman retorts :

'Men are monopolists
of "stars, garters, buttons
and other shining baubles" --
unfit to be guardians
of another person's happiness'.

(p. 75).

This verbal duel continues till the very close of the poem, and eventually the essence of the matter is squeezed in :

"Liberty and union
now and forever . . . ."

(p. 78).

This is certainly a piece of welcome advice of a perceptive woman to humanity at large in the present-day situation when men and women having grown self-conscious and salaried or having indulged in small tit-bits are locked in undue mistrusts and quarrels. Any deviation from this sagacious advice is bound to result in ruined marriages and disordered domestic life. Wasn't it Godwin who said that marriage as a law was 'the worst of all laws . . . a very trivial object indeed.'

The poem "What Are Years?" (1941) is also thought-provoking, and Miss Moore wants to know here the very purpose and direction of life. Quite pertinently, she asks : what is life ? And she herself comes up with the same answer as offered in earlier poems, though she never perhaps stated it so directly. It is courage, says she, which can give meaning to life -- "the courage to accept our limitations, and to work within them for fulfilment and joy" (Gray 1976 : 198). Courage inspires one to dare and do, whereas the want of it stirs one to ask the helpless question : "Do I dare / Disturb the universe" ("The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock", in T.S. Eliot's *Collected Poems*, 5th impr., 1970, p. 14). The last two lines of "What Are Years?" encapsulate the paradox of life, and bring out the idea that only in accepting our humanity and morality do we find a way of giving our lives some permanent meaning:

This is mortality
this is eternity. (p. 99).

When 'mortality' is joined with 'eternity' -- it is the same as 'the dissection of timeless with time' (Eliot) -- the real salvation is attained, and the 'salvation' has been the avowed objective of all sages and seers.

Besides these poems, we have fascinating and weighty ideas scattered throughout Miss Moore's poetry. Thus, in "Four Quartz Crystal Clocks", we find "punctuality / is not a crime" (p. 117); in "The Paper Nautilus", we have "love is the only fortress / strong enough to trust to" (p. 123); in "Nevertheless", we get "What is there / like fortitude" (p. 128); in "Elephants", we come across the lines "Who rides on a tiger can never dismount; asleep on an elephant, that is repose" (p. 131); in "In Distrust of Merits", we witness such statements as "there is hate's crown beneath which all is / death, there's love's without which none / is king" (p. 135); and again "O small dust of the earth / that walks so arrogantly, trust begets power and faith is / an affectionate thing" (p. 136); in "Efforts of Affection", we encounter these line : "Unsheared sprays of elephant-ears / Do not make a selfish end look like a noble one" and "love can make one / bestial or make a beast a man" (p. 146); and in "Armour's Undermining Modesty", we discover "Once, self-determination / made an axe of a stone / and hacked things out with hairy paws. The consequence -- / our mis-set / alphabet" and "Even gifted scholars lose their way / through faulty etymology" (p. 149). In the last-named poem, Moore makes a strong plea for modesty, and desires of the steely and heroic men not to undermine the "innocence and altitude" of the fairer sex.

III

Miss Moore has not left us in the dark with regard to her views of Art or Poetry, and in several of her poems she has thrown light on it, nothing to speak of her casual references to or occasional attractions for certain artistic designs and portraitures to be witnessed in such poems as "Nine Nectarines", "Pedantic Literalist", "To Stagecraft Embalmed", "When I Buy Pictures", "Novices", "An Egyptian Pulled Glass Bottle in the Shape of a Fish", "To the Peacock of France", and "A Carriage from Sweden". The poems where Moore makes explicit statements about her views of Art or Poetry are : "Poetry", "Critics and Connoisseurs", "Picking and Choosing", "People's Surroundings", and "To a Snail". The first poem mentioned here is concerned with the question of 'genuineness' in

poetry; the second with that of discipline; the third with that of 'sticks' (standards or measurements), which critics and artists often apply; the fourth with that of 'natural promptness'; and the fifth with that of 'compression' in style. Even in poems like "No Swan So Fine" and "An Octopus", the poetess is directly or indirectly concerned with the related questions of Art, and she underlines the importance of accuracy, fact-finding, and 'neatness of finish' in an artistic work. Evidently, she does not like 'dishonesty' and 'half-heartedness' in the practice of Art, and one may look up "Peter" (p. 51) in this connection.

IV

A noble-natured poet of the calibre and stature of Marianne Moore could hardly choose to be anything else than a propagator of good and weighty ideas wherever she found them, and as such she was inclined to make her art a vehicle of her thought. In doing so, she at once fell in the line of Emily Dickinson before her and Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot after her. Elizabeth Jennings very well supports this theory in her quoted article. But Louis Untermeyer does not dispense justice to her because of the predominance of "a cool and continually critical mind", "a witticism of a strange *genre*", "eccentricities of design", and "the refusal of the material to adapt itself to the form"[4] (Untermeyer 1942 : 363-365), and he calls her poetry "a poetry without passion", though he concedes that "Hers is no loose structure of fortunate or faltering phrases; the form of her expression is as clenched as her thought" (*Ibid. : 367*). The predominance of critical faculty in Moore with which Untermeyer is so much upset is nothing but a gift of the contemporary age. In fact, no great poet of our age can escape it, since this is no time for the skylark and the robin and the nightingale. It is to her credit that she has exquisitely combined Art and Idea in her work, and in doing so she unquestionably performs a rare feat, -- the feat advocated and commended by Eliot in his critical essays, particularly in his "Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca", where he observes thus:

> The poet who 'thinks' is merely the poet who can express the emotional equivalent of thought. But he is not necessarily interested in the thought itself. We talk as if thought was precise and emotion was vague. In reality there is precise emotion and there is vague emotion. To express precise emotion requires as great intellectual power as to express precise thought.[5]
>
> (Eliot 1951 : 135).

Miss Moore precisely practises this dictum of Eliot in her creative

writing, for that is how she can make us realise that "Poetry is for the intelligent"[6]. (Winters 1975 : 161).

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] Moore, Marianne. 1957. "A Note on the Notes". *Collected Poems*. New York, The Macmillan Co.

---All the texual quotations are taken from this source.

[2] Jennings, Elizabeth. 1965. "Idea and Expression in Emily Dickinson, Marianne Moore and Ezra Pound". *American Poetry* (Stratford-Upon-Avon Studies 7). London, Edward Arnold Publishers Ltd.

[3] Gray, Richard. 1976. Editor. *American Poetry of the Twentieth Century*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

[4] Untermeyer, Louis. 1942. *American Poetry Since 1900*. New York, Henry Holt & Co.

[5] Eliot, T.S. 1951 (first published 1932). *Selected Essays*. London, Faber & Faber.

[6] Winters, Yvor. 1975. "Thought and Emotion in Poetry". *Twentieth Century Poetry : Critical Essays and Documents*. Editors : Graham Martin and P.N. Furbank. Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, The Open University Press.

THE STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS TECHNIQUE IN MULK RAJ ANAND'S SHORT STORIES

Harish Raizada

Mulk Raj Anand has a special liking for his short stories because he can make them a suitable vehicle for the communication of the intensity of lyrical appeal and the sharpness of social criticism. In a letter to Saros Cowasjee, he writes : "I have a hunch that, in the short stories, I have been able to say more than in the novels."[1] From the point of view of form also, his short stories are more satisfying than his novels. While in his novels the ideological content often takes precedence over the form, in his short stories his narrative art is at once more experimental and varied and less tramelled by polemics. This is so because of the greater variety of words and tones which demand their own formal designs and also because of the economy of the form itself.

Anand's emphasis on new psychology in his fiction has led him to take interest in the stream of consciousness technique used by James Joyce, Proust, Virginia Woolf and other modern writers. He finds it to be the appropriate technique to project the shattered world of the modern machine age in which man incessantly strives to achieve integration amidst the tensions and pulls of too much technology. The technique is valuable for recording the various levels of the consciousness of the people and the drama of the soul. This technique can also enable the novelist to reproduce "the disturbed, restless and paranoiac stream of consciousness of the people of our time", not in the form of raw material as Joyce has done, but in such a manner "as to suggest value judgements about the characters."[2] While using this technique in his fiction, Anand has thus adapted it to the needs of Indian writer and his subject matter. He observes in this context:

> When I began to write novles about India, though I took Joyce's 'stream of consciousness' as my method, I had to apply it to a different situation, revealed to me by my upbringing in a province of the British Empire.... In my own country, where the position of man had not emerged beyond the speck in the dust of Maya, to the potential humanness of the individual which democracy invited against the long suppression of feudalism, orthodoxy and institutionalized religion, I felt that the novel should not press the "inner monologue" beyond a certain point, so that humanness may remain a variable factor in the situation. *Finnegan's Wake*,

> the anti-novel novelists and the abstractionists concentrated on style and construction so emphatically as to sterilize creation. I, therefore, felt around for a synthesis of technique between the West and the inner consciousness analysed by Sri Aurobindo, hoping that Man, forsaken by the gods and by other men and women, broken, decimated by the Machine - Money - War civilization, could be seen at least in profile, in the enchanted mirror, in order to illumine his awareness against materiality, dead 'materliness' and suppression by society, and shown in his confrontation of fate.[3]

Anand has made use of the adapted form of the consciousness technique with its emphasis on interior monologue in his short stories also in order to realize his objective of projecting a vivid picture of his characters and laying their souls— beset by the tensions and concerns of the machine age— bare before readers. He is of the view that this technique can be used more effectively in a short story than in a novel. In a letter to Saros Cowasjee, he writes:

> In the novel form even when you get the insights, the structure often conceals them. Whereas in the short story, the feeling or the mood comes through, in a concentrated moment of awareness. Also, it is possible to peel the onion on character's personality, in a single layer or two, suggesting much more than when you peel the onion in all the layers.[4]

The story, "On the Border", in *The Barber's Trade Union,* is an uninterrupted interior monologue of Karima, a Pathan village woman whose husband has been thrown in the jail by the Angrezi Sarkar because of his involvement in the freedom struggle as the disciple of the Frontier Gandhi, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan. While wandering about the hilly region on the outskirts of her village to collect animal dung for fuel, she reminisces:

> He said the most outrageous things : 'Karima, the daughter of Abdul Rehman, whose cheeks are the envy of pomegranate and the rose, you are most seductive.' And when she had been carrying Ismat, and her belly had been a quivering warm little thing, soft to the touch, especially after she has poured several cans of cold water on herself at the well in the mosque and lain down for a siesta in the afternoon, and felt her unborn child kicking inside her and complained of it to Shamus, he had said, 'Karima, daughter of Abdul Rehman, whose cheeks are the envy of the pomegranate and the rose, your child is jumping to get out. And I am sure that he will outdo his father in mischief and daring since he is so restless while he is yet the size of my seed in the ripe pear of your womb ....' He was a fool.[5]

Karima's reveries about her husband are suddenly broken as her village is bombed by the British aeroplanes. Her mind is overpowered by the deep concern for the safety of her child whom she had left alone in her cottage. In her anxiety to save her child, she runs frantically towards her village. She jumps over ditches and skips

over the desert of stones and bounders, crying : 'My child ! oh, my child ! oh, save my child !'[6] To her great horror she finds the whole village burning in mouldering fire. Undaunted by the fire all around her, she dives inside her burning cottage and gropes towards the child. As she emerges with difficulty out of her burning cottage, she finds her way blocked by fire all around. She then falls down and alternately beats her fists against her brow and waves at the steel birds in the air, shouting : 'Sons of Eblis ! Devils ! ....'[7] The tragedy of Karima and the deep agony of her inner self are unfolded by the author very movingly.

"Lullaby" (*The Barber's Trade Union and Other Stories*) reveals the state of mind of a young working woman Phalini as she sits singing a lullaby while rocking her little one-year-old child Suraj Mukhi in her lap and recalling sweet memories of her lover:

> She tried to think of him now, as he had looked when he first came down from the Northern hills.
>
> The wild, wispish boy with large brown eyes which had flashed when he talked to her husband, Kirodhar, but which were so shy when he looked at her. Suraj Mukhi's eyes were like his. Also Suraj Mukhi's limbs smelt like his. But he would never know that he was the father of the child. Why, he was a child himself. He had come like lightning and gone like thunder of the Northern hills.
>
> Where had he gone, she wondered. Had he only come to give her the pang of parting ? Where had he gone ? It was now summer again and he was here last summer. For days she had scanned the horizon of the sky above the city, towards the north in the direction where he had gone. But he didn't seem to be anywhere in the large breathless space. Only Suraj Mukhi lay in her arms. And the sun, after which she had named the child, stood high. And the tears rolled down her sealded face to her chin, across her cheeks, before she realized that she was weeping .... Oh, where was he, the gay child, her lover, her baby, so simple, so stubborn, so strong ?
>
> 'And I shall grow old and grief not Kirodhar, shall be my Lord ....'[8]

Rapt in her interior monologue, Phalini does not realize that the flower of her love has withered away. The child dies in her lap.

"The Thief" (*The Tractor and the Corn Goddess and Other Stories*) also projects the reveries of Ganesh as they flow like a stream in his subconscious. The sight of the bare breasts and the swaying of the buttocks of a beggar woman arouse in him varying feelings of pity, disgust and sensual lust. The most overpowering feelings in his subconscious are, however, of sensuality:

> As he stood there one day, he felt he could not bear it. He could see the woman's breasts undraped, where her sari had slipped off as she crouched by the statue and

washed the grit out of her child's eyes. And he felt the rustling of a strange song in his ears, the loam song of dizzy desire mounting to the crescendo of a titanic choir. And the flow of a passionate warmth spread from his loins upwards to his eyes, making them more heavy-lidded and soporific than they had been when he had just awakened.

For long moments he tried to check his instinct to look deeper, to caress the amplitude of her haunches, an instinct which was driving him crazy. But he could feel her presence inflaming his body like a slow forest fire, which comes creeping up from the roots like smoke but becomes a wild red blaze suddenly in one crucial moment.

And as he was choked with desire, his neck twitched like that of a snake, in the burning forest, and his vision was clouded altogether. Breathing heavily, hot, suffocated, he lifted his elbows from the wooden railings on which they rested and tried to steady himself.[9]

The story, "Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts", is in the nature of a dirge, a lyrical lament, of a dying young man lost in the reveries of his frustrated life. A young consumptive, Nur, looks back at life with mixed feelings of regret, rage, and anguish. The images of the past recur in his mind, as his life slowly withers away. He thinks of his birthtime, of his mother's aching caress, of the brutalities of his father, of his school and college days, of his running after jobs, and more often, of his present hopeless state. The events are focussed within the compass of a single day-- the early dawn to the afternoon. There is, however, no perceptible progression in action. The hero is rooted to his sickbed all the time. The window opens and closes as he wishes; it is the only opening for him to view the sky and the teeming world of nature. The only human contact he has is with his brutal father, worried grandmother, his friend Gama, his submissive wife Iqbal, mother-in-law and the doctor who visits him. Thus on the surface, there is hardly any movement. Nur wakens in the morning in a broken gasping state, and he dies in the afternoon. But there is a rich, synergetic movement in his mind, composed of memory and desire, which brings the action to its rounded completion. The stream of consciousness flows like a river, the author records the direction and flow. The techniques of *monologue interieur* and memory digression are successfully used to enforce the plot structure and to reveal the implication of the momentous theme.

The story "Boots" records the reveries of the widow Gobindi, whose husband dies in the war and whose house is going to be auctioned by creditors. She is in hurry to leave her house before the creditors arrive and harass her. As she ties her personal belongings in a bundle, she reminisces about her husband and his artillery boots:

> Her eyes fell on the boots which she had carefully put on one side. They were too big to be packed into the bundle and too sacred to be left behind -- those boots of the Lord and master which she had put by the mandala where her brass idols stood, those boots which more than the gods had connected her to Jai Singh and which had thus became the incarnation of the Supreme God in her queer universe.
>
> . . . .
>
> The whole of Gobindi's life hung by the shoe laces of those artillery boots which Jai Singh had left behind in a fit of absent-mindedness on his embarkation leave. And she assembled them together and laid them on the top of the bundle so that they dangled on each side. Then she got up to see how the land lay and what chance there was of her getting away.[10]

As she peeps out of her door, her heart begins to beat with fear and she gasps for breath. She has felt similar fear when her husband met her secretly to avoid being seen by his mother:

> He had been equally shy before his mother's glare, but he used to steal back in the afternoons when the old woman was having her siesta and smiling, silent but light-hearted, he would take her in his arms and lay her down in the verandah.... When the old woman had died he was already away fighting in the war, and they had never been able to give themselves to each other in the fullness of passion. Secret like the scent of roses which he had brought her from Amritsar, was his love for her, but it lashed her body like a forest fire.... Secret like the failing breath of her body, was her love for him, but it had wrapped his soul so that he overstayed every leave. Secret were the scars he had on her soul in parting....
>
> 'Where have you gone, O my Exile!'[11]

She looks out of the door and draws back, for she sees her cantankerous neighbour, the old weaver woman, Phuphi sitting on the threshold of her house, craning her neck into the lane.

The story "Birth" is in the form of the interior monologue of Parvati, the wife of a labourer, who, though in a state of advance pregnancy, walks behind her old father-in-law to reach the place where her husband has gone to work. She feels worried about the pains and stirrings in her belly:

> She had felt the child stirring in her belly. Perhaps it was turning over to take another, more comfortable position as he had seemed to be doing all night. And she had put her hand on her belly even so tenderly, as though to reassure the babe. And she had smiled the slightest wisp of a smile to think of what Ramu had done during the night and throughout the middle months of her pregnancy whenever she told him the baby was stirring in her : he had put his ears on her stomach and listened and, then playfully tapping with his fingers, he would intone a crazy, humorous sing song :
>
> Patience, son, patience,
>
> You must learn to be patient,

You must learn to cultivate the

long-breasted sense of your ancestors ....[12]

"A Dark Night" (*Reflections on the Golden Bed and Other Stories*) unfolds in the form of interior monologue the apprehension of Mukundi whose husband does not return from his afternoon stroll till midnight while the whole town is convulsed with Hindu-Muslim riots and frightening cries of 'Allah Ho Akbar!' 'Har Har Mahadev!' and 'Sat Sri Akal!':

Deep dark night.

Like a tunnel, it seemed to her, the blackness, suffocating her, almost as the smoky blackness contrasts one's throat when a train passes through the dark passages cut into the mountains. Only this tunnel was long and never ending....

For she had been waiting since the previous evening for the man of her house with a meal ready and the child put to bed. And, as the twilight matured through the appointed hour, when her husband used to come back from his afternoon stroll on the Mall, into the hours when he had not arrived and the hours when hope of his return dimmed, beyond midnight into the hours of her tense vigil into the gloom of despair rent by eerie, frightening roars, shouts, cries and whispers, her resistence had gradually weakened and her nerves were nearly broken....[13]

Mulk Raj Anand also employs the technique of interior monologue in the stories, "Death of a Lady" and "Old Bapu" (*The Power of Darkness and Other Stories*), to describe the character of Lady Bhandari, an aviricious woman and Old Bapu, a poor untouchable labourer respectively. In "Death of a Lady", though Lady Bhandari, the central character, is at the point of death, yet all she can think of is her buried treasure. In the narrative she alternates between reverie and hallucination. As her pet dog Pluto comes near her, she tries to pat him. Suddenly she breaks down as the dog appears to her to be the messenger of the god of death:

'Hey Ishwar, Rabba ... not yet! I pray to you ... Sukhi Sandi ... what a thought! Ja, Ja, Ja -- go from here, ... Dog ... Dure, dure kutia! ... you and your master Yama, who have come to fetch me!...[14]

Lady Bhandari then thinks of her money and her relatives who have their eye on it. The stream of her reveries suddenly flows in the direction of the punishment that awaits her in the hell:

The dark gutter of the netherworlds was full of blood. And the snakes and scorpions of punishment were floating alongside her. And, though the blackness of the horizon, towards which she was being borne along, she could see the doots, maces in hand, all waiting to drag her to the court of Yama, for the trial, the final reckoning.... And she wanted to say, 'but you have already tried Ganpat for his

> deeds, for giving bribes to the white sahibs and for evading taxes.... I was just his wife. And only protected his money, against all those eyes. I would have donated a temple as big as Birla Mandir, If there had been time but....all those servants of mine were the thieves, not I.... Spare me, I pray to you on my bended knees....[15]

In "Old Bapu", the poor untouchable labourer who is ironically called Old Bapu after Mahatma Gandhi, muses over his wretched condition as an untouchable:

> 'I am not old', he said to himself in the silent colloquy of his soul with his body. 'The boys call me "Old Bapu" because I am older than them.... The caste Hindu urchins have no respect for the untouchable elders anyhow. And their fathers want to throw everyone of us into the garbage pit to use as manure for better harvests.... But I do not want to die.... Hay Ishwar !'[16]

"The Tamarind Tree" (*Lajwanti and Other Stories*) is in the form of uninterrupted reveries of pregnant rural woman Roopa who feels an irresistible longing for the taste of the sharp, sweet tamarind fruit which she sees every day hanging on the branches of the shady tree in aunt Kisaro's courtyard :

> The warm spring air swept the head apron aside with a strong whiff, like that of the first wave of a dust storm. And, again, she found her eyes uplifted to the ripe rich fruit of the tamarind tree.
>
> The branches of the tree swayed a little. The young mother-to-be also moved on her haunches towards the earthen pitcher, as though the rhythm of work was the same as the swaying of the tree, with the uprush of energy in its waving branches.
>
> The craving for the tamarind in her mouth was renewed.
>
> 'But you have just eaten the midday meal, mad one !' She told herself. You are not hungry— it is true mother-in-law gives you just enough and no more, but you are not hungry....'[17]

Sometimes Roopa's reveries digress to the thought of her husband who often steals back home when his father and mother are not there, and hugs or bites her lips. Sometimes she is reminded of her childhood days when she climbed the tamarind tree to pluck its ripe furits:

> She felt that she was a child again, the way she was longing for the tamarind and talking to herself. Only she could not now venture out into the courtyard of aunt Kesaro, as she had broken all bounds as a girl, jumped, capered, ran and climbed trees. Oh, for the innocence of girlhood and its abandon ![18]

"Lajwanti" deals with the musings of the rural woman Lajwanti who tries to run away form the house of her father-in-law to her parental home to escape being molested by her lascivious and ugly looking brother-in-law Jaswant. At places her interior monologue

turns into a dramatic monologue as she tries to talk to Maina bird whom she always carries with her in a cage:

> There was a moment of weakening as the Maina became utterly still; and, without looking to see, she felt that the bird might have fainted with the heat and died.
>
> And in the panic of this premonition, she felt the chords of guilt choke her dry throat: She might have borne the humiliation. She might have given in to Jaswant. She could have closed her eyes. Her husband Balwant was away at College. Her benevolent father-in-law would not have known. And the mother-in-law, who wanted son's son, more than anything else, would not have worried, even if she had come to know, because she favoured Jaswant, who looked on the land and not Balwant who wanted to be a clerk.
>
> 'Take to me Maina.... Don't go away from me.... If you go I too will be finished....'
>
> As the bird did not even flutter, her heart seemed to sink, and the sweat just poured down her body.
>
> 'Maybe. I am being superstitious', she said to herself. 'I should have done a magic ceremony on the crossroads of Hauz Khas to ensure my safe arrival in Pataudi. And, then god would have kept my enemies dispersed....[19]

The title story, "Between Tears and Laughter", is in the form of the reveries of the young village woman, Savitri, who muses over her life in her husband's house:

> Suddenly, the illumination had come to her that the witch with the turned feet was no other than this tormenting mother-in-law with her torrent of words becoming fangs. And this recognition, though dimly apprehended under the blanket of fear through which she dared not put one image against the other had calmed her, as though a weight had been lifted off her chest. Was it an echo-augury that the old woman would pass away soon and become a witch ? To be sure, the mother-in-law's evil nature had consumed her from within and her *Karma* had put a boil on her breast and she had died the death of an evil woman who had shrieked with pain for a whole dark moon period before yielding up her lost breath. But why did the good father-in-law have to go so quickly after ? Was his cowardice in the face of his wife also an uncommitted evil deed ? And now, how could her own lord have left her and the two children and just gone away ? Did he inherit the weakenss of his father, the refusal to do something to bring bread from somewhere for her and the children even if the harvest had dried up with the drought? She had worshipped him as her god, in the way in which her mother had enjoined that she should. She had lain there and accepted the pain. And this happened almost every night because he said he could not sleep and only after going into her could he exhaust himself enough to have real rest. She had flushed red as he told her this when she had complained of the pain. Oh, but she could have borne this, and the going without food once a day, so that he should have enough in his stomach to work in the field with, and so that the children could eat-- but why did he have to go away ! And where, where, oh where was she to look for him ?[20]

Through these reveries the different characters unfold their inner life and reveal the tensions which cause disharmony and discord in their life. These interior monologues assume the form of a kind of soul drama to illuminate the characters in a telling moment, often as a kind of epiphany. Anand's realism does not give us a banal photography of life but a vision that is fuller and sharper. He recaptures a direct impression of character's sensation or consciousness floating down the flux of time and renders it in concrete terms in a particular moment. This new realistic technique of turning inward as different from rendering mere objective reality reveals the characters in their essential nature. It also helps in their portrayal as having conflicts in their hearts and minds like the real people, with all the unreasonableness of the human heart and temperament emanating from the unconscious.

The interior monologues do not reveal the nature and temperament and inner life of the central characters only but also of others associated with them, give rise to different sensations and tensions in their life. Karima's reveries in "On the Border" throw light on the jovial and light-hearted nature of her husband Shamus who loves her deeply. "Lullaby" shows us how Phalini's simple, stubborn and handsome lover from hills appears to her. From Nur's interior monologue in "Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts", we learn about his cruel-hearted confectioner father, affectionate and anxious grandmother, humble and docile wife Iqbal, orthodox and hypocrite religious priests, indifferent teachers, greedy doctors, sympathetic and sincere friend Gama and young Azad, a man of rare literary talents, who goes mad because of his indifferent and hostile environment. Gobindi's reveries in "Boots" do not only acquaint us with her deep love for her dead husband, but also with her cantankerous and mean-minded neighbour, old weaver woman, Phuphi and her hard-hearted and suspicious mother-in-law. Parvati's musings in "Birth" throw light on her frolicsome and gay-natured husband. "Death of a Lady", besides revealing extreme cupidity of Lady Bhandari, throws light on her corrupt and sycophant husband and greedy relatives. From Lajwanti's reveries in the story entitled after her we learn about her lecherous brother-in-law, unscrupulous and cruel mother-in-law and gentle father-in-law. Savitri's interior monologue in "Between Tears and Laughter" also reveals the domineering nature of her shrewish mother-in-law, sensual and lazy husband and gentle father-in-law.

Anand's world view of humanism with its emphasis on love and sympathy for the poor, suffering and exploited human beings is integrated in the pattern of each of these stories and finds expression through the reveries of central characters. These stories expose the brutal suppression of the native subjects by the imperialist British rulers ("On the Border"); callous, greedy, mean and sensual nature of the bourgeoisie ("Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts", "The Thief", "Boots", "Death of a Lady"); hatred of the upper caste Hindus for untouchables ("Old Bapu"); religious fanaticism and communal conflict ("A Dark Night"); and the pitiable position of women in Indian families ("Boots" and "Between Tears and Laughter"). Anand adds new dimensions to the stream of consciousness technique by making interior monologue of the protagonists a vehicle of value-based judgements.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1]Saros Cowasjee, *Author to Critic : The Letters of Mulk Raj Anand to Saros Cowasjee* (Calcutta : Writers Workshop Publication, 1973), p. 106.

[2]Mulk Raj Anand, "The Story of My Experiments with a White Lie", *Indian Literature*, Vol.X, No.3 (July-September, 1967), p. 7.

[3]Quoted by M.K. Naik, *Mulk Raj Anand* (New Delhi : Arnold Heinemann, 1973), pp. 153-54.

[4]Saros Cowasjee, pp. 106-07.

[5]Mulk Raj Anand, *The Barber's Trade Union and Other Stories* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1944), p. 39.

[6]Ibid., p. 44.

[7]Ibid., p. 47.

[8]Ibid., pp. 120-21.

[9]Mulk Raj Anand, *The Tractor and the Corn Goddess and Other Stories* (Bombay : Thacker & Company Limited, 1947), p. 33.

[10]Ibid., pp. 111-12.

[11]Ibid., pp. 112-13.

[12]Ibid., p. 156.

[13]Mulk Raj Anand, *Reflections on the Golden Bed and Other Stories* (Bombay : Current Book House, n.d.), p. 11.

[14]Ibid., pp. 81-2.

[15]Ibid., p. 84.

[16]Ibid., p. 100.

[17]Mulk Raj Anand, *Lajwanti and Other Stories* (Bombay : Jaico Publishing House, 1966), pp. 1-2.

[18]Ibid., p. 2.

[19]Ibid., p. 84-5.

[20]Mulk Raj Anand, *Between Tears and Laughter* (New Delhi : Sterling Publishers Private Limited, 1991), pp. 35-6.

NARAYAN THE NOVELIST : HIS VISION AND ART

B.Krishnamurthy

Narayan's predilection for the comic is a commonplace of Narayan criticism, though there is no definitive statement regarding the elements that go into the making of the comedy peculiar to him. The present undertaking attempts to identify some of these elements. The basic idea of comedy can be described as the perception of incongruity in human nature. Almost always it hints at the fundamental human inconsistency between the ideal and the reality. It also depicts every variety of clash between contrasting ideas and temperaments. The particular value of comedy is that it is both comprehensive and precise in its response to life.

In an interview, Narayan reveals himself a comic writer. He says, "I am interested in and would like to portray people with small eccentricities."[1] To detect eccentricity, you must have a centre, that is to say a consistent, if not consciously worked out, standard of character and conduct. To quote Potts:

> It is the main concern of the comic writer to discriminate between what is normal and abnormal in human behaviour.... He needs not merely a strong feeling for normality, but also a clear notion of it.[2]

The question is what Narayan's norm is.

I

Hailing from a cultured Indian family Narayan has, as it were in his bones, the Indian view of life. Living in close proximity to their customs and creeds, he recognizes a sense of purpose and beauty in them, though overdone they may lose the essential values they symbolise. As Narayan puts it:

> From childhood an Indian is brought up on the notion that austerity and a contented life is good and also a certain other-worldliness is inculcated through the tales a grandmother narrates, the discourse at the temple hall, and through moral books.[3]

But modern Indian life also bears a severe impact of the Western civilization, which is essentially 'pragmatic'. What Narayan says about the American character may with slight modification

be considered his view of Western life. He writes:

> The American has a robust indifference to eternity. "Visit the church on a Sunday and listen to the sermon if you like but don't bother about the future," he seems to say. Also, "dead yesterday and unborn tomorrow, why fret about them if today be sweet ?"-- He seems to echo Omar Khyyam's philosophy. He works hard and earnestly, and acquires wealth, and enjoys life. He has no time to worry about the after-life.[4]

Exposed to both the cultures, Nayaran does not reject either. He keeps his mind open to evolve an ideal view of life that would be a synthesis of values of different cultures. To quote him, "America and India differ basically, though it would be wonderful if they could complement each other's values."[5] The Malgudi ambience, with Ellamman Street, Kabir Street, Abu Lane and Lawley Extension-- the very names evocative of different religions and cultures but all sounding absolutely familiar--well symbolises Narayan's vision. In characters like Srinivas in *Mr. Sampath,* Gandhiji in *Waiting for the Mahatma* and the Master in *A Tiger for Malgudi,* Narayan affords the readers some normal characters to serve as a kind of yard-stick. Values dear to Narayan can be deduced from the thoughts, words and deeds of these characters that do not contradict his avowal on different occasions.

So what is abnormal or eccentric to Narayan is not the conventional as opposed to the modern, or the East as opposed to the West, but the exclusiveness of either, or imperfect blend of them as realised in Indian life. This basic outlook on life is brought to bear on all the facts that come under his observation. The aim of the present writing is not to make Narayan a serious writer through and through. There is enough innocent fun in his writing. The point is that where he attempts a serious interpretation of life, he is found to be more comprehensive than what he has hitherto been thought of as capable.

II

Narayan's vision having thus been fixed, it remains to study how it gets expressed in the comic plots of his novels. In this context it may be averred that Narayan has very little to do with farce. Improbable characters and impossible situations provoking boisterous fun form exceptions rather than the rule with him.

The confusions created by the madman as a messenger from the God of Death in *The Financial Expert*, Granny's death and revival in *Waiting for the Mahatma*, Raja's straying into the school in *A Tiger for Malgudi* and the reaction of women when they heard Dr. Rann's lecture on Futurology, a forecast of a cataclysm in 3000 A.D. in *Talkative Man* may be cited as instances of typically farcical situations.

Equally minimal is the comedy of wit in the writings of Narayan. Sharp exchanges are few and far between. He is no satirist either. He professedly declares that he is not interested in improving the society. Asked as to whom specifically he writes for, Narayan observes:

> Primarily for myself or I would have no peace of mind. And I write about what interests me, human beings and human relationships; improving the society is not my aim.... I never think up specific problems and then write a story about-them. I write the story. May be some people like problems more than a story.[6]

Speaking in Hawaii at 1973 Humanities Conference devoted to sociological aspects of the novel, Narayan predictably negated the basic assumption of the conference. He declared the novel to be "the least satisfactory form for dealing with social ills."[7] "I can't like anything that's deliberate," he told Ved Mehta in an interview.

A work of art is classified as satirical by virtue of its practical purpose, rather than its quality of thought and feeling. John Peck and Martin Coyle indicate the subtle difference between satire and comedy proper. They write:

> Satire is obviously a form of comic writing, but the distinction between satire and comedy is that, whereas the satirist wishes to correct conduct, comedy takes the view that all human conduct is absurd and self-interested.[9]

Narayan is essentially a comic writer. This observation does not preclude a great deal of incidental satire in his writing. The corruption and red-tapism of government offices, teachers dressed in their petty authority and the seeming seriousness of the film world are repeatedly brought to ridicule in his novels.

III

Humour and irony are the chief comic tools of Narayan. Humour is characterised by an undercurrent of sympathy. Nar-

ayan began his career as a novelist with a series of humorous characters. *Swami and Friends* is full of single-dimensional characters among the teachers and the taught. The fire-eyed Vedanayagam, the fanatic Ebenezer and the kindly Pillai were Swami's teachers. Among the boys, Swami was attached to the mighty Somu, the good-for-nothing Mani, the Europeanised Rajam, the intelligent Sankar of whom Narayan writes:

> His face was radiant with intelligence, though his nose was almost always damp, and though he came to the class with his hair braided and with flowers on it.[10]

Then Samuel is known as the Pea on account of his size. Thus Narayan captures them with a striking detail or two. There is an outspoken drunkard, Kailas, in *The Bachelor of Arts* and a regular bully among the jail-birds figuring in *Waiting for the Mahatma.*

Such totally odd and uncommon characters become rarer and rarer as Narayan proceeds with his writing over the years. The heroes of Narayan are non-heroes, no doubt, but their abnormality is not obviously on the surface to be identified easily. They become comic only when read with reference to what constitutes Narayan's norm. It has been shown that he is of an open mind to arrive at a set of values of East and West. Studied in the light of this norm, Swami becomes comic in his eagerness to ape Europeanised Rajam, Margayya in his exclusive quest for money and Daisy in her propagation of sex as an end in itself. The other protagonists ranging from Chandran in *The Bachelor of Arts,* Savitri in *The Dark Room,* Krishnan in *The English Teacher,* Sriram in *Waiting for the Mahatma,* Raju in *The Guide,* Jagan and Mali in *The Vendor of Sweets* and Raman and Daisy in *The Painter of Signs* are rendered comic by the inherent contradiction in the characters themselves, as regards what they are, what they think they are and what others think they are, or they want others to think they are.

Narayan creates humorous situations through the theme of disguise in *The Bachelor of Arts* and *The Guide*, where the heroes parade as *Sanyasis.* But a comic situation usually arises in Narayan's work not out of mistaken identity, or disguise, but out of the "discrepant awareness," to borrow a term from Bertrand Evans' *Shakespeare's Comedies* (Oxford,1980), in any particular situation. In *Talkative Man,* the title character was instrumental in saving Girija from a public scandal, and an eventual desertion

in some far-off place and all the frustration and tragedy that befell everywoman, who was captivated by Rann's charms. Girija's grandfather knows nothing about the averted crisis. He talks in his own confident way to his benefactor:

> "Do you know Baby has not been well.... That outing with her classmates seems to have upset her somehow, eating all sorts of things...young people... she came back sooner than I expected. I called Dr. Krishna and he gave her some medicine..." "Oh, she'll be all right," I said with forced cheer. "Must fulfil some vow at our family temple in the village and then she'll be all right. There has been a lapse on our part..." he said. "Possible, surely go ahead..." I said suppressing the advice, "Also propitiate Dr. Lazarus, that'd also help...."[11]

The reader with a greater awareness sees in perspective the characters with their conflicting outlooks on life and levels of awareness, and enjoys the resultant comedy of the situation.

IV

Narayan's comedy is worked out mainly with reference to his mode of narration, which is that of a sophisticated ironist. Every variety of irony can be traced in him. An artist using irony as his instrument says something in order to have it rejected as false. In the commonest variety of verbal irony, the basic techniques are hyperbole and under-statement. Narayan's irony, however, is of a more sustained and integral kind. It is through such sustained irony that he works out his vision. In a number of novels, it takes the form of *eironic naif.* Speaking of the use of this ironic persona, an invented narator who is smug, self-confident or foolish, Peck and Coyle clarify:

> The irony is at the expense of the narrator, who is used to express all manner of foolish social ideas and prejudices. The touch of excess in the narrator's manner signals to us that his views are suspect; the detached author and reader both look down on his folly and that of the society he speaks for.[12]

Distinguishing the different kinds of heroes in fiction, Northrop Frye writes, "If inferior in power of intelligence to ourselves, so that we have the sense of looking down on a scene of bondage, frustration, or absurdity, the hero belongs to the ironic mode." (*Anatomy of Criticism,* 1957, p. 34)

From the earliest of his career Narayan goes about evolving a naive point of view. There are a number of short stories of Narayan under the caption "Talkative man stories". A recent novel by him bears the title *Talkative Man* and it is told from the

point of view of the title character. However, Narayan often preserves himself as the narrator. The events in a narrative are seen from the perspective of a character or a range of characters, resulting in what Gerard Genette calls "focalization". The apparently combined narrator and focalizer will produce a more coherent unitary world view than those which are clearly split or multiple. This split or multiplicity between narrator and focalizer results in a significant extension of Bakhtin's theory of the novel. According to Bakhtin, in novel as a discourse, there is a plurality of positions which are not obviously unified. A Narayan novel usually is a more dialogic or open text, which does not seek to impose a single world view or ideology.

This process begins with his very first novel *Swami and Friends*. Swaminathan is not an idealised or individualised character. He serves his creator as a focalizer. He is a boy of about ten, not yet well-versed in general experience of the world. Therefore, he can record his experiences with all the freshness of the experiencing. Swaminathan serves as a lens by means of which the author offers us sharp vision of an otherwise unknowable reality regarding the religious fanaticism, education, politics and cricket enthusiasm that Narayan experienced or bore witness to in actual life. The conversation between Swaminathan and his father during the vacation provides a striking instance of how Narayan's comedy works:

> "When the school is closed, when there is no examination even then should I read?" "What a question! You must read." Swaminathan viwed this question as a gross breach of promise : "But, father, you said before the exams, that I needn't read after they were over."[13]

He quoted the instance of Rajam as a standard. "Even Rajam does not read."[14] Narayan writes, "As he uttered the last sentence, he tried to believe it."[15] Obviously, he uttered a lie. But the irony of the situation is that even Rajam "complained bitterly of a home tutor who came and pestered him for two hours a day thrice a week."[16]

In *The Bachelor of Arts*, Chandran's emotional problems and excitements regarding his love to Malathi sound real mainly because it is focalized through his feeling. The irony of Narayan dogs him throughout. Chandran's Orsino-like switching affec-

tions over to another lady is self-revealing. Narayan writes:

> For the rest of the journey the music of the word "Susila" rang in his ears, Susila, Susila, Susila. Her name, music, figure, face, and everything about her was divine. Susila, Susila--Malathi, not a spot beside Susila: it was a tongue-twister; he wondered why people like that name.[17]

In *The Dark Room*, Savitri, who is not wholly reliable, is exploited as the focalizer. It is the bonafides of Savitri as a focalizer that help Narayan to distance his strong feelings towards the place of women in the orthodox milieu of indian society, and save the work from being a feminist tract. It is the limitations of her character that help him to keep the novel within the framework of comedy. In *The English Teacher*, the narrator and the focalizer get unified in the figure of Krishnan. As a young man with a poetic turn of mind, he subjects his own profession of teaching to serious assessment, though as a teacher he behaves as any other teacher in his circumstances would.

In *The Guide*, Narayan reveals great technical virtuosity in handling the theme. He introduces the double point of view--Raju himself telling his past life with unsparing self-criticism and Narayan telling his present with irony to start with, and later without, masking the spiritual advancement in the hero--and delicately shuffles the past and present throughout the narration to fix the stages of Raju's growing awareness, till at a point they become merged into an austere objective narration devoid of irony. Even in novels like *The Vendor of Sweets* and *The Painter of Signs*, the experiences are focalized through Jagan, who takes pride on his being a traditionalist and Gandhian and Raman who passes for a rationalist.

The other major mode of irony that Narayan puts to good use is the burlesque pattern of Cervantes' *Don Quixote*. The humour in Cervantes arises from the contrast between the matter-of-fact philosophy of Sancho Panza and the romantic spirit of Don Quixote, and in two subordinate contrasts within the dominant one, between Quixote's nobility of mind and his absurdity of behaviour, and between Sancho's cynical peasant selfishness and his irrational loyalty to his master. Cervantes, thus, has converted burlesque into a form of dialectics, where, to quote Muecke, "Irony is directed against the prosaic vulgarity of out-

ward life as well as against a hero left behind by history and unable to comprehend the new form social life was taking."[18]

Mr. Sampath is the first major novel of Narayan in which he introduced a pair of deliberately contrasted characters--Sampath and Srinivas--to weld the events together. Srinivas has Quixote like nobility of mind, without his absurdity of behaviour, and Sampath shares Sancho's cynical selfishness and a similar irrational loyalty to Srinivas; he is only more dynamic than his counterpart. It is the essential contrast between Srinivas the idealist of limited abilities, and the efficient but amoral Sampath, that forms the main shaping strategy of Narayan in the major sections of the novel. Every encounter of Srinivas with other characters is only a variation of this essential contrast. Narayan masks his own spiritual quest through life and work in the portrayal of Srinivas, vividly contrasting the material outlook of a majority of his contemporaries in other characters. In filming of the "Burning of Kama", the basic spiritual message of self-control intrudes into the action of the novel, and is worked out with reference to the varied responses of Srinivas, Sampath, Ravi, his father and the film magnates.

The Financial Expert, tracing the rise and fall of Margayya, easily suggests Jonsonian comedy of the gullers and the gulled. And to this fop in the race for money the unscrupulous Dr. Pal serves as the wit, and thus the comedy is worked out with reference to this variation of Sampath-Srinivas like axis. In *Waiting for the Mahatma* Narayan's character axis is the ideal and the reality. Narayan has drawn the picture of Gandhi without a touch of sentimentality or pretentiousness; also without irony. The racial spiritual wisdom of India is concentrated in the figure of Gandhi. Narayan's understanding of Gandhi and what he stood for is the norm from which other characters and situations in the novel get assessed and rendered comic.

The Guide, his masterpiece on which Narayan has bestowed his maximum technical expertise, also preserves the device of Sampath-Srinivas axis. Velan is a typical Sampath figure, with his cynical peasant selfishness and irrational loyalty to his master, without, however, the intelligence of his prototype. As for Raju his mainstay is absurdity of behaviour by assuming roles far

beyond him, with the nobility of mind that comes to the fore only at the end. *The Man-Eater of Malgudi* is yet another novel where the shaping strategy is Sampath-Srinivas axis. Vasu is a typical Sampath figure, only with an added destructive frenzy. Nataraj is no spiritual quester of Srinivas's stature. He is an average man, who in his business management more resembles Sampath. He recognizes the susceptibilities to the failings of the human flesh in himself and with difficulty controls them. This explains his admiration for and identity with Vasu, even as he is frightened by his demoniac disposition. Vasu by profession is against all animal life and indulges in indiscriminate destruction. It is his callousness to life that brings him in conflict with the life-saving aspirations of timid Nataraj and his friends.

In *The Vendor of Sweets* Narayan dramatises the East-West polarisation with father-son axis. Jagan, the title character, professes his allegiance to the Indian tradition and the Gandhian ideals. But he by no means is Narayan's representation of 'the spiritual wisdom of India.' He gropes along uncertainly torn between the twin interests-- money and his son. Mali, his son, is an idle Americanised youth, who has assimilated some of the very ordinary elements of the Western way of life like sartorial equipment, meat, wine and free sex. The interactions of Jagan and Mali are the staple of the novel's development, and they comment ironically one on the other, refusing to allow any single attitude to the East or the West to go unchallenged. The inherent irony, involved in this polarisation between Orient blind faith and Western iconoclastic rationalism, does not insist on a choice between them, but the necessity of arriving at a proper synthesis of the truly valuable in both the cultures. The implications of a better understanding and synthesis are apparent from the way Jagan and Grace react to each other.

The axis is that of a pair of lovers in *The Painter of Signs*. In this novel Narayan brings together a man and a woman with their views decidedly against marriage. Raman is a self-styled rationalist eager to establish that man-woman relationship is not indispensable; and Daisy is a zealot of the new creed of family planning, propagating the pursuit of sex as an end in itself. They feel the need for each other, but the commitment of one of them stands in the way of their fully coming together. The comedy

stems from the thematic debate between vitality and control, between social and personal necessities.

V

Narayan's statement regarding his own reading reveals his exposure to the English comic tradition. He writes:

> We read and enjoyed the best of English prose, poetry and drama... Chaucer, and Ben Jonson, Pope and Dryden, Boswell and Goldsmith, and a hundred others became almost our next-door neighbours.

Narayan disciplined himself on some of these great comic writers. The influence of Dickens and Mark Twain and also of Shakespeare seems to be the most pervasive. *Swami and Friends* is obviously patterned on *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn.*

The Bachelor of Arts is an early experiment of Narayan in the line of Shakespearean Comedy, where youthful love is presented at once romantically and humorously. He brought this pattern to greater perfection in novels like *Waiting for the Mahatma* and *The Painter of Signs.* In his other major novels, too, Narayan seems to be following the burlesque pattern of Mark Twain, who in turn drew inspiration from Cervantes, and working out every imaginable variation upon it. Narayan's major novels like *Mr. Sampath, The Financial Expert, The Guide, The Man-Eater of Malgudi* and *The Vendor of Sweets* have this character axis of Sampath-Srinivas, Dr. Pal-Margayya, Raju-Velan, Vasu-Nataraj and Jagan-Mali.

Having no political or social axe to grind, Narayan travels easily from the mundane to the spiritual layers of human existence. At one time he looks at the higher from the lower, the other time he reverses the process, or he revels with the interactions of the intermediary levels, of course, not without the value judgements involved in the process. He owns that "If a story is in tune with the truth of life, as I perceive it, then it will automatically be significant."[20] What emerges from the present study is a view of Narayan as a comic genius of high order with grains of soul making in it. The study is one more item in the enormous and swiftly growing body of evidence that Narayan is a deliberate

artist, far from his own claim of 'just a story-teller'. It also answers the criticism that his comic genius hampers him from achieving pattern and significance by establishing that his comic plot is in itself the pattern and its significance.

REFERENCES

[1]R.K. Narayan, "Why Take Life too Seriously? : An Interview with P. Bhogaraju", *Indian Express*, 6.4. 1979.

[2]L.J. Potts, *Comedy* (London : Hutchinson University Library, 1963), p. 46.

[3]R.K. Narayan, "My America", *Writer's Nightmare.*

[4]Ibid.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Sunil Sethi, "R.K. Narayan : Only the Story Matters," *India Today*, Feb. 15, 1982, p. 61.

[7]Margaret Berry, "R.K.Narayan : Lila and Literature," *The Journal of Indian Writing in English*, IV, 2(1976), 2.

[8]Ved Mehta, "The Train had Just Arrived at Malgudi Station," *John is Easy to Please* (New York, 1971), p. 149.

[9]John Peck and Martin Coyle, *Literary Terms and Criticism* (London : Macmillan Publishers, 1984), p. 144.

[10]Narayan, *Swami and Friends* (Mysore : Indian thought Pub.,1971), p. 9.

[11]Narayan, *Talkative Man* (Mysore : Indian Thought Pub., 1986), p.79.

[12]Peck and Coyle, *Literary Terms*, p. 135.

[13]Narayan, *Swami and Friends,* p. 83.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Ibid.

[17]Narayan, *The Bachelor of Arts* (Mysore : Indian Thought Pub., 1980), p. 162.

[18]Muecke, *Irony and the Ironic* (London : Methuen, 1982), p. 95.

[19]Narayan, "English in India : The Process of Transmutation," *Aspects of Indian Writing in English* (New Delhi : Macmillan, 1979), p. 20.

[20]Sunil Sethi, "Only the Story Matters," p. 61.

GANDHIISM IN THE CRUCIBLE IN RAJA RAO'S *KANTHAPURA*

B. D. Sharma

In Raja Rao's novel, *Kanthapura,* in which we have a glimpse of the Indian struggle for independence in a rural part of India because in it Raja Rao narrates how the inhabitants of a south Indian village fight the British under the leadership of Moorthy, a local Gandhian leader, one can also see what form Gandhiism takes in action, what its strengths and weaknesses are, and whether or not this is the best course of action available to the victims of injustice and oppression.

In this novel Raja Rao does not show Indians attaining independence through Gandhian struggle, but keeps himself confined to a brief period around Gandhi's Dandi March ending with his truce with the then British Viceroy of India. The beginning of the Dandi March has been reported by Moorthy to his followers in these words: "'... they go with the Mahatma to the Dandi beach to manufacture salt;'"[1] and the truce has been reported by the narrator towards the end of the novel (p.256). The fact signifies that Gandhiism has not been shown here as an effectual weapon in the hands of the oppressed to fight the oppressor. Rather, it has been shown to be a form of struggle that makes the fighter absolutely helpless and defenceless, with the result that the oppressor has a free hand to subject him to any torture. Thus in this novel Moorthy's Gandhian mode of fighting leaves his followers unprotected in face of their adversaries' assaults. Here is an account of one such 'fight' between the Gandhian fighters and the British police: "... old Ramanna and Dore came forward and said, 'we too are Gandhi's men, beat us as much as you like, and the policemen beat them till they were flat on the floor, mud in their mouths and mist in their eyes, and as the dawn was rising over the Kenchamma Hill, faces could be seen, and men became silent.... And the policemen twisted their arms and beat them on their knuckles, and spat into their mouths...." (p.122). Obviously, it is difficult to hold brief for a philosophy which makes its followers undergo such a humiliating experience.

This is not the only humiliating experience that Raja Rao portrays; there are many more. For instance, Moorthy himself undergoes such an experience: "... as Moorthy forces himself up, Bade Khan swings round and - bang - his lathi has hit Moorthy and his

hands are on Moorthy's tuft, ..." (p.85). Gandhi's women followers undergo the humiliating experience of being beaten, being spat on, being trampled on, getting gutter water forced into their mouths and being raped. The following account given by a woman brings the facts to light:

> With the rain came the shower of lathi blows, with the rain splashing on our hair came the bang-bang of the lathis, and we began to cry and to scream, and the policeman began to beat the coolies forwards, ... and the Police go to the toddy booth and come out with pots and pots and pots in their hands, and they dip the pots in the side gutters and potfuls and potfuls of water are thrown at us, and they open our mouths and they pour it in and they lift up our saris and throw it at unnameable places, ... and with more beating and more beating and more beating we fall back one by one against the earth .... (pp. 197-200).

On reading the accounts given above one naturally likes to ask whether it is wise for Moorthy to send women volunteers to 'fight' the police, and whether it is wise for these women, acting in accordance with the Gandhian principles, to remain Gandhian even in such situations.

Getting beaten is not the only atrocity the Gandhian fighters undergo in Kanthapura; they even lose their lives for no gain. Chandrayya is one of the persons who loses his life as this is what the narrator suggests when she says: " '... they gave him a pair of fetters again and a solitary cell, and we never saw him again' " (p.205). No doubt, it is a proof of the bravery of these people that they go on 'fighting' inspite of all atrocities and do not surrender, but one would like to know whether it is wise to expose oneself to humiliation and death for no gain.

True, a victim of atrocities is often able to win some people's sympathies and some of the sympathizers sometimes also come to the help of the victim, but to expose oneself to the oppressor's atrocities with the hope that sympathizers will come to one's help involves the violation of the principle of self-reliance, and one's becoming unjust at least to oneself. Since no adversary, when challenged, is going to remain passive, one should either not expose oneself to an avoidable danger or defend oneself with all one's might. But the Gandhian Moorthy does not permit his followers even to raise their fingers in protest. That is why though the spirit behind Moorthy's 'fighting' even when he has no means to defend himself is admirable, the wisdom behind it deserves to be doubted.

In most cases it is the fear of retaliation that restrains one from assaulting another and if one is sure that there will be no retaliation, one becomes fearlessly ruthless. This is so with Bade Khan, the policeman in *Kanthapura*. Range Gowda's fear " '... when Bade Khan sees us, he will fall on us' " (p.155) is a proof of the fact that one single policeman is able to terrorize the whole village because he fears no retaliation from the followers of Gandhi. No doubt, physical fight is not the best way to fight and that intellectual fight is certainly better, but it is also one's duty to protect one's body as without a body a soul can do nothing. And the Gandhian Moorthy does not suggest to his followers as to what intellectual or spiritual measures they are expected to take in order to protect themselves from harm at their adversaries' hand. Moreover, Moorthy's fight is not purely spiritual or intellectual, because when he is trying to force his entry into the premises of the Skeffington Tea Estate his fight is obviously physical.

Moorthy, like Gandhi, does not make any distinction between offensive violence and defensive violence. However, a distinction between the two does exist. If Puttamma had killed the policeman who had raped her or as soon as she had realized he intended to do that, her action would have been heroic. Or if Seetharam had killed the Coffee Estate owner asking him to 'sell' him his daughter before the owner had murdered him, he would have done something laudable. But the violence of the coffee Estate owner in order to force people to surrender their wives and daughters to him is the violence that deserves severe punishment. Moorthy is right when he tells Range Gowda " '... had you reasoned it out with Puttayya, may be you would have come to an agreement, and your canal water would go to your fields, and his canal water to his fields' "(p.99). But Moorthy does not reason the issue out with the British; he tries to enter the Skeffington Coffee Estate physically, makes women picket toddy shops and makes the farmers refuse to pay taxes. When the defiance is that serious, measures to defend oneself too have to be taken.

The end to which the agitators in *Kanthapura* come, namely, all of them lose their lands and have to go for shelter elsewhere as is evident from the narrator's report: "There was only Range Gowda that ever went back to Kanthapura ... the Corner-House was all but fallen, except for the byre, and Rangamma's house was tileless over

the veranda, and Nanjamma's house doorless and roofless and the hearth stones in every corner. 'All said in a knot', he concluded, 'there's neither man nor mosquito in Kanthapura, for the men from Bombay have built houses on the Bebbur Mound,..." (pp. 258-59), signifies that the agitation, led by Moorthy in accordance with the principles and tactics of Gandhi, has not only failed to deliver the goods but also has caused the agitators a lot of loss. Raja Rao also shows that several persons had their doubts about the efficacy of the Gandhian way; Range Gowda had told Moorthy: " 'Learned master, at this rate I should have to go and bow down to every pariah and butcher and, ... let my son-in-law go fooling with Concubine Siddi's daughter Mohini who's just come of age. No, learned master, that is not just ' " (p.100); and Sadhu Narain had told Moorthy: " ' ... *this* is not just. Defend one must against evil; if not, where is renouncement, continence, austerity, and the control of breath ? ' " (p.124). There is narrated an incident that makes it evident that even Moorthy's followers lose faith in the Gandhian methods of fighting: " ' Since the arrest of Moorthy they are all afraid. They say, ' We are not all going to sit behind the cage-bars like kraaled elephants,' and when I say, ' What does that matter, we are for the Mahatma,' they say, 'Yes, yes, learned sir, but our lands will go uncultivated, and there will be neither child nor woman to pull the weeds or direct the canal water ' " (p.154).

Raja Rao makes even Moorthy realize that the movement under his leadership on the Gandhian lines has failed. The fact comes to light when we read Moorthy's letter in which he writes to Ratna: " ' Since I am out of prison, I met this Satyagrahi and that and we discussed many a problem, and they all say the Mahatma is a noble person, a saint, but the English will know how to cheat him, and he will let himself be cheated ' " (p.257). As he and the other Gandhians know it for certain that the Englishmen know how to cheat Gandhi, and Gandhi will let himself be cheated, it is obvious that in their view there is no question of Gandhi's attaining success.

This signifies Raja Rao's believing that Moorthy's agitation on the Gandhian lines has ended in, to use a mild expression, nothing, though people's losing their land of Kanthapura signifies that it has caused, as has been pointed out, financial loss too. The same meaning lies embodied in the narrator's words: " '... the Mahatma has made a truce with the Viceroy and the peasants will pay back the revenues, the young men will not boycott the toddy shops, and

everything, they say, will be as before. No sister, no nothing can ever be the same again. You will say we have lost this, you will say we have lost that ' " (p.256). The truce that has been made is complete surrender because all that the government wanted is accepted by Gandhi and not even a single demand of Gandhi has been accepted, and the narrator in the passage quoted above rightly stresses the fact of the people's losses.

If Moorthy had the correct idea of the repressive measures the government was going to adopt, he would not have started the insurgence in the way he does. Even C.D. Narasimhaiah, who is all praise for Gandhi and Moorthy: " It was Gandhi's greatness that he produced hundreds of little Gandhis throughout the country. And cornerhouse Moorthy, *our Moorthy*, as the villagers called him, was one of them. He was in college when he felt the impact of Gandhi, and he walked out of it, a Gandhi man," (p.x) has to acknowledge: "But is there any fulfilment at all in the novel ? Thanks to police atrocities the entire village is desolate: ..." (p.xv). Even the narrator says: " 'Mad we were, daughters, mad to follow Moorthy' " (p.230).

If one analyses the insurgence and tries to arrive at the reasons why it fails, one finds that it fails chiefly because the sheet anchor of the leader is the hope that his adversaries' hearts will change. The fact that Moorthy and his followers want the British rulers' hearts to change comes to light when we read their statements like the following one: " 'Monsters, monsters, yes, they may be, but we are out to convert them, the Mahatma says we should convert them, and we shall convert them. Our will and our love will convert them' " (p.229). Gautama Buddha succeeded in converting Angulimal into a votary of non-violence, but that does not mean that anybody can convert a monster into a human being simply by exposing oneself to the monster's assaults. The British police, as shown by Raja Rao, are too monstrous and devilish to feel any pricks of conscience in subjecting women to humiliations. The foundation of Moorthy's hope is the belief that gods reward one for one's virtues, as he tells Range Gowda: " 'Every enemy you create is like pulling out a lantana bush in your back yard. The more you pull out, the wider you spread the seeds, the thicker becomes the lantana growth. But every friend you create is like a jasmine hedge. You plant it, and it is there and bears flowers and you offer them to the gods, and the gods give them back to you ...' " (p.99). But it is mad to advise the coolies of the coffee Estate to befriend the second British owner who is making

their wives and daughters victims of his lust. And it is cowardice to ask these coolies not to do anything against such a man as in doing that they will be creating an enemy.

The chief qualification of a king or a political leader is that he is able to conquer his enemies and is not conquered by them as it has been said in the *Atharva Veda* that "The crown be given to one who can bring prosperity, who can conquer his enemies, whom enemies cannot conquer, one who commands a dominating position among kings, who deserves to be the head of the assembly, whose traits, actions and temperament are praise-worthy, who commands respect, who deserves to be approached even for shelter and before whom people bow down."[2] It is on this ground that Moorthy, the Gandhian leader in the novel, fails to be qualified enough to be a political leader.

The anti-British movement in *Kanthapura* has been crushed for three more reasons: first, the agitators have nothing to defend themselves, with the result that they are unable to face the police repression; secondly, the police people have no sympathy with them and try to suppress the movement with a heavy hand; and thirdly, all Indians are not united. The fact that the agitators have nothing to defend themselves is quite obvious, for they are non-violent in accordance with the teachings of Gandhi. The fact that the government resorts to repressive measures and tries to suppress the movement with a heavy hand is evidenced by the way the policemen mercilessly beat even women, spit in people's mouths and even rape women, the descriptions of which are interspersed in the whole novel. The truth that all Indians are not united is evident from the fact that the police-people who beat the agitators are all Indians and when the government snatches the land from the villagers, people from Bombay come to take it on the conditions the government lays down (p.259). No doubt, Gandhi would not have been able to do anything to remove the second factor, and he did do something to remove the third factor, but he should have done much to remove the first weakness and should have said that it was not only one's right but also one's duty to defend oneself.

The Gandhian path of non-violent resistance gives his followers no way, nay not even a right, to protect themselves, as this path expects them to remain non-violent "in thought, word and deed" and not to raise even a finger in protest even when they are beaten or

trampled upon or even killed.[3] One may be curious to know as to why Gandhi took this stand. Perhaps he expected truth-force to help the satyagrahis, as he wrote: "Satyagraha is literally holding on to Truth and it means, therefore, Truth-force. Truth is soul or spirit. It is, therefore, known as soul force."[4] In the words of Prakash Sarangi, "The aim of Satyagraha is not to crush or defeat the person in authority or break his will. It is not even to harm or embarrass him. The Satyagrahi loves the opponent as a human being and aims at rousing him to a sense of equity by an appeal to the best in him, i.e., at converting him. Conversion implies that the opponent realizes his mistake, repents and provides a peaceful adjustment of differences."[5] Similar are the views of Moorthy, the Gandhian protagonist of *Kanthapura,* when he says: " 'I shall love even my enemies. The Mahatma says we should love even our enemies ....' " (p.89) and argues: " '... if Truth needs a defence, God Himself would need one, for as the Mahatma says, Truth is God, and I want no soul to come between me and Truth' " (p.124), and even his followers regard him as their Mahatma (p.106).

Two more answers have been given by Prakash Sarangi: one, that non-violence was Gandhi's creed and that it would have been a violation of his own creed if he had permitted his followers to resort to violence; and, second, that he had faith in the British administration of justice.[6] So far as the first of these views is concerned it stands rejected in the light of the piece of information that Prakash Sarangi supplies in his second statement here that Gandhi "recruited Indian soldiers during the first World War"[7], and the soldiers are recruited for violence rather than for non-violence. That leaves one with only one answer to the question in hand, namely, that he had faith in the British administrators of justice. However, in Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* the British administrators of justice have been shown to be unjust in their ways as evidenced by the fact that when the British owner of the Coffee Estate kills a Brahmin clerk for not agreeing to let his daughter become a victim of the British Estate owner's lust, the court instead of punishing him forgives him (p.81), with the result that the British Estate owner continues making the wives and daughters of the non-Brahmin coolies victims of his lust (pp.80-81). Raja Rao articulates people's distrust in the British administration of justice in the following piece of conversation between Ranganna and Moorthy: "... Ranganna said, 'Judges are not for Truth, but for Law, and the English are not for the brown skin but for the white, and the

Government is not with the people but with the police'. And Moorthy listened to all this and said, 'If that is so, it will have to change' " (p.123). So if Gandhi had faith in the British administration of justice, he was, as Raja Rao's version makes clear, mistaking hot sand to be a pool of water.

Raja Rao seems to believe that Gandhi's faith in God and His not letting evil flourish led him not to do anything to protect himself and his followers. The fact comes to light when we read the following speech of Moorthy: " '... let there be peace and love and order. As long as there is a God in Heaven and purity in our hearts evil cannot touch us. We hide nothing. We hurt none' " (p.120). Moorthy lays two conditions for one to remain unharmed by evil: there should be God in Heaven, and there should be purity in the man's heart. So far as the first condition is concerned, man can do nothing about it because if God is there in Heaven, there is nothing for a man to do, and if He is not there, a man cannot make Him to be there. However, it is taken for granted that He is very much there. But the second condition gives rise to a problem: there is no objective way to find out whether or not there is purity in one's heart. But one thing is certain that many of the persons who were killed are believed to have been pure at heart. They include Jesus, Socrates, Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King in the West, and Lord Krishna, Maharshi Dayanand and Mahatma Gandhi in the East. Often it is seen that a man who is pure at heart becomes a victim of violence at the hands of one indulging in misdeeds. That is the reason why it becomes essential for one-- even if this one is pure at heart-- to defend oneself.

Gandhi's thrust is on having faith in the enemy. Moorthy quotes him as having said: " 'Have faith in your enemy, he says, have faith in him and convert him' " (p.257). If one has faith in the enemy, there is no need for one to resist. Secondly, the question as to how to protect oneself from the enemy before he has been converted into a friend remains unanswered. Moreover, Raja Rao's Gandhi makes no distinction between gentle enemies and the devilish enemies and wants all of them to be loved. If this logic is adhered to, Puttanna is expected to love even the policeman who has violated her. But it would be mad to expect her to do so. Gandhi seems to be a non-dualist looking for divinity in every human being. But all human beings are not alike and some of them are so vicious that only mad people can talk of loving them. Lord Krishna does make a distinction between the persons on the right path and those given to vices when

he says: "I incarnate myself from time to time to protect the righteous, to crush the vicious and to re-establish righteousness."[8]

The Gandhian approach would have stood vindicated only if the members of the ruling British community had come to side with Moorthy in his fight. The coolies' coming to Kanthapura or the shopkeepers' closing their toddy shops is no justification of the theory that non-violent resistance enables one to win the opponents' heart. In the novel it is Gandhi who has to accept all the conditions of the white rulers and make a truce with the Viceroy that "... the peasants will pay back the revenues, the young man will not boycott the toddy shops, and everything ... will be as before" (p.256). If everything has to be as before, Puttanna has lost her chastity for nothing.

The struggle which keeps the women strugglers like Puttanna hand-tied even when they are being violated cannot be regarded as the right form of struggle because even if such a struggle bears the desired fruit--though it is very unlikely -- the price that has been paid for it is too high for any compensation. No doubt, there may be persons for whom this price is not very heavy; but the arguments of such people can give no consolation at all to a woman like Puttanna who has been subjected to the humiliation of the kind and believes " 'I have sinned' "(p.223) and breaks into sobs.

Another question that crops up is whether one can convert one's enemies into one's friends by letting them beat, spit at and rape. And the answer is "Certainly not". One beats, spits at and rapes a person whom one believes to be much inferior, and one develops friendly relations with one whom one regards as one's equal. That is why the concept of the conversion of an enemy into a friend is based on a figment of imagination. By letting our enemy make us weak we are going to get nothing at all. We can get rid of an enemy only by rising against him with all our might -- physical, intellectual and spiritual. Raja Rao's Bade Khan can never have friendly relations with Moorthy and his followers; for him everyone of them is beneath contempt, just as for Winston Churchill Gandhi was when he called the latter 'a half-naked faqir'.

All this makes it evident that *Kanthapura* is an embodiment of Raja Rao's recoil from Gandhiism. But there arises another question, namely 'which political philosophy does Raja Rao posit his belief in ?' In order to know the answer we shall have to turn to Moorthy's

letter to Ratna in which he writes: " 'Ratna, things must change. The youths here say they will change it. Jawaharlal will change it. ... he says in swaraj there shall be neither the rich nor the poor. And he calls himself an 'equal-distributionist', and I am with him and his men' " (pp.257-58). Raja Rao's making Moorthy posit his faith in the political philosophy standing for equal distribution of wealth signifies his positing his own faith in socialism, for this political philosophy regards equal distribution of wealth as its goal. The fact is reinforced by his following words: " '... I have come to realize bit by bit, and bit by bit, when I was in prison, that as long as there will be iron gates and barbed wires round the Skeffington Coffee Estate, and city cars that can roll up the Bebbur Mound, and gas-lights and coolie cars, there will always be pariahs and poverty' " (p.257), since they embody the view that the solution of the problem of poverty lies in the abolition of private property, which is again a goal of socialism.

However, in this novel Raja Rao does not go into the details of socialism and does not think over the questions whether it is just to distribute money equally among all irrespective of their merits and whether it is fair to deprive each and everybody of his private property. Nor does he directly take up the question whether the victims of the colonial rule should try to attain independence through the path adopted by socialists. But the implication of Moorthy's preferring socialism to Gandhiism is that Raja Rao likes the victims of colonial oppression to adopt the path of socialists.

REFERENCES

[1]Raja Rao, *Kanthapura* (Madras: Oxford University Press, 1989), p.169. All the subsequent quotations from the novel refer to this edition.

[2]*Atharvaveda,* Ka6, Anu.10, va.98, man.1.

[3]Gandhi defined Satyagraha as the "Vindication of truth, not by infliction of suffering on the opponent but on one's own self" (M.K. Gandhi, *Speeches and Writings* [Madras: G.A. Natesan, 1933], p.501).

[4]M.K. Gandhi, *Young India,* 23 March, 1921.

[5]"Gandhi and Rawls on Civil Disobedience", *Indian Journal of American Studies* xix, 1 and 2 (Winter and Summer, 1989), p.75-6.

[6]Ibid., pp.74-6.

[7]Ibid.,p.74.

[8]*The Gita,* iv , 8.

DEFYING PATRIARCHY : FEMALE PROTAGONISTS IN VIRGINIA WOOLF'S *MRS. DALLOWAY*, TONI MORRISON'S *BELOVED* AND ANITA DESAI'S *CLEAR LIGHT OF DAY*

M. Adhikari

Women since centuries have been entombed by patriarchy. Fortunately, now, the marginal memory, the core of feminine expression has emerged from the bedrooms, kitchens and attics, slowly but surely, to defy the politics of colonization, suppression, subjugation, coercion, sexism and racism practised to silence woman's genuine speech. Gender based politics manipulated by males have assigned to women five roles : grandmother, mother, wife, sister and daughter. All pose obstacles in the path of selfhood. Womanhood in all its variety is equated with selflessness, powerlessness, chastity, docility, virtuosity, etc., that are quite antagonistic to me-ness, autonomy and self-definition. Sita, Savitri, Ceres, Penelope, Demeter, all are circumscribed by their exemplary physical and mental beauty.

"Women's shared experience as women" (Pratt 167) or "the imaginative continuum" (Showalter 1977 : 11), though envisions woman as physically and emotionally mutilated, yet often she emerges as a courageous fighter and a vanquisher of odds. Unfortunately, "in existential terms our desire for responsible selfhood, for the achievement of authenticity through individual choice, comes up against the assumption that a woman aspiring for selfhood is by definition selfish, deviating from norms of subservience to the dominant gender" (Pratt 6). In *Frankesnstein* (1817) by Mary Wollstonecraf Shelly, Elizabeth the major female character is portrayed as a beautiful girl, devoted to others, selfless, dutiful, modest, obedient, unassertive and silent (29-30), the prototype of ideal womanhood. In contrast, Celie in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* (1982), despite her shortcomings, asserts: "I'm pore, I'm black, I may be ugly... but I'm here" (214). The change in hundred years is remarkable. The woman of today is not only articulate but also aware of her identity and potentiality. The woman hero of Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* (1899), Edna Pontellier, realizing that her identity is equally jeopardized by her husband Leonce and the "green lover" (Pratt 140) Robert, consciously drifts into the sea, "the sensuous enfolding the body in its soft, close embrace" (113), a common

denouement of a woman's story (compare *The Bell Jar* and *Voices in the City)* inside "the enclosure in patriarchy" (Pratt 38). Fortunately, with recent changes in moral imagination and perception with regard to women, we meet Sethe of *Beloved*, Clarissa of *Mrs. Dalloway* and Bim of *Clear Light of Day* who not only defy the limiting norms of patriarchy in different ways and define themselves, but also deconstruct Patricia Meyer Spacks'conclusion: "Female rebellion may be perfectly justified but there is no good universe next door.... So they marry in defeat or go mad... the inevitability of failure....Pain is human condition, but more particularly these books announce the female condition" (Spacks 200). This paper scrutinizes the different means and methods of Clarissa's, Sethe's and Bim's defiance of patriarchy, in three different cultural milieux. Their self-definition and individual development ultimately "transcends gender" in Jungian terminology.

Virginia Woolf in *A Room of One's Own* emphasizes that a woman should not only have her own room, but must also have its lock and key to achieve authenticity. She is one of the earliest amongst the women writers to stress that we think through our mothers and the daughter carries on the mother's point of view. These ideologies, invariably braided in the narrative, implicity or explicitly, probe into feminine consciousness. A woman writer's celebration of the feminine presence and influence, her portrayal of female conditions of victory and defeat in the presence or absence of masculine power, is a unique female tradition. Woman's discourse in such conditions, "ambiguously hegemonic," attempts to "demaximize" (miller 341) woman. The woman hero's triumph or defeat, despite a valiant struggle, is a mode of defying patriarchy. A woman's story, inevitably silenced by the androcentric culture, narrated from a woman's point of view by women writers in itself is a defiance of male power.

Clarissa, Sethe and Bim, suggestively and not ironically, have names that place them above mediocrity. Clear-headed and perceptive Clarissa is not a mere reflection of her husband like Mrs. Ramsay *(To the Lighthouse)* who is denied a self-identifying name; Sethe named after an Egyptian god Seth, half man and half falcon, often connected with the purification ritual, is self-aware; Bimla or Bim implying clarity and purity is the other name of goddess *Saraswati*. The founding and nurturing of individuality by these three protagonists, carried out differently through a scaling of the matrimonial

enclosure, reject the time-honoured archetype of womanhood made current by Oedipal traditions that demand perennial self-sacrifice to care exclusively for mate, children and family. The realization rising from individual consciousness and then becoming a collective chorus negates the idea of such sacrifice as means of spiritual well-being and fulfilment; it is considered to be a positively self-destructive proposition. The successful or unsuccessful search for autonomy and the awakening of the self form the focal themes of *Mrs. Dalloway, Beloved* and *Clear Light of Day*. The protagonists dare to alter the circumscribing perspectives.

Manu stipulates, "Women never deserve freedom" (*Manusmriti* ed. Shastri IX, 3) and yet as a wife should advise like a minister, be a slave, have the appearance of Laxmi, pardon like mother Earth, and in bed be the celestial prostitute Rambha (*Subhashitaratnabhandagara* ed. Acharya 357). In short, she should be an eternal giver. Sara Ellis in *The Daughters of England : Their Position in Society, Character and Responsibilities* (1842) endorses the above view when she asserts and prescribes that women, despite their higher "attainments" and "talents", must be "inferior" to their husbands (24-25). Gerda Learner rightly posits that men punish women by "ridicule, exclusion or ostracism", if they attempt to "interpret their own roles" (12-13). In the light of the above discussed norms, let us analyse the roles of Clarissa, Sethe and Bim.

Self-aware Clarissa marries Richard Dalloway because "in marriage a little licence, a little independence there must be between people living together day in day out in the same house; which Richard gave her and she gave him....But with Peter everything had to be shared; everything gone into" (Woolf 1925:10). A desire for licence and independence, the signifier of autonomy and selfhood, is the cause of rejecting Peter who would have engulfed and destroyed her "otherness". Richard was chosen and not thrust on her (compare Edna's condition in *The Awakening*). Despite role expectations, Clarissa enjoys a nun-like seclusion in her attic room with a narrow bed, symbolic of virginal solitude. A "virginity preserved through childbirth" clings to Clarissa "like a sheet" (ibidem:46). She remains spiritually undesecrated and emotionally detached: "She sliced like a knife through everything; at the same time was outside looking on" (ibidem:6). Since Peter cannot fathom the mystery of Clarissa's spiritual virginity, he condemns her as being "cold as an icicle. That was the devilish part of her--this coldness, this woodenness...an

impenetrability" (ibidem:91). She lacks the generosity and effusiveness that Mrs. Ramsay displays even at the cost of her own soul. Peter's demand for self-abnegating love and "togetherness" could have crushed Clarissa's individuality. As a wife, she rejects the role of a sexual entertainer and thus fails Richard at some crucial points of their married life first at Clievenden and then at Constantinople "and again and again" (ibidem:46). Clarissa's coldness may be calculated, deliberate to protect her psychological liberty. Her self-autonomy is indicated by the free flow of her inner thoughts and her creative activities like arranging flowers, planning parties and mending dresses. For her the male power is impotent. Septimus Smith has to die to escape from authoritarian forces, but Clarissa lives on. Matrimony, normally a negative institution in woman's life, is harmless for Clarissa as she has overcome the "dependence syndrome" (Dhawan 20). She is neither self-alienated nor subjugated by misogynistic prejudices. Patriarchy fails to rape her liberty to make a choice. By rejecting Peter and accepting Richard, she establishes her supremacy.

Sethe as a wife rises above the debasing impact of marriage. Though she is a slave by birth, yet she is not forced to copulate with anyone, like an animal, under the tyranny of racism, a symbol of masculine power. She was not "moved around like checkers" (Morrison 1991:29) as Baby Suggs was to please "whoever owned them" (ibidem:257). She enjoys the privilege of selecting her husband Halle. "His care suggested a family relationship rather than a man's laying claim" (ibidem:32). Her marriage with Halle is successful till circumstances permit; but when he fails to protect her against the milk-thieves, she implicitly rejects him : "There is also my husband squatting by the churn. Smearing the butter as well as its clabber all over his face because the milk they took is on his mind....And if he was that broken then, then he is also and certainly dead now" (ibidem:86). Sethe refuses to change places with the mad woman in the attic. She remains whole, unfragmented, while her husband turns insane, figuratively dead and may be really dead. This is a reversal of the archetypal situation where man failing to face contradictions of life becomes mad. Despite the imprint of the choke-cherry tree on her back, a symbol of tyrannical white male power, Sethe lives to deliver her daughter Denver with the help of Amy, a sister, and creates life anew. Her interrogation, rebellion and protest, apparently silent, are not passive; her flight to freedom, despite the

absence of the husband, is a vindication of the self and an open challenge to the authority of norm-makers. Because of her inherent strength and wholeness, she refrains from complaining like Paul D: "Mister was allowed to be and stay what he was. But I wasn't.... " (ibidem:89); later Sethe aggressively registers her protest and wrests her rights from the dictatorial powers. In the novel, she ignores her oppressors, severs all relationships with her husband, and discards Paul D for daring judge her with a comment : "you got two feet, Sethe, not four" (ibidem:202), the banal male attitude. She deconstructs the attempt to "inferiorize" her, and exudes feminine power inherited from her matrilinear culture. She not only obliterates the memory of the biological father but also dwarfs the masculine power by refusing to surrender before it. Her non-dependence on religion confirms her autonomy. She had "claimed herself. Freeing yourself was one thing; claiming ownership of that freed self was another" (ibidem:116). Sethe "grows up" and not "grows down" (Pratt 14). She, like Clarissa, cannot be silenced.

Iola (*Iola Leroy*), made beautiful physically and emotinally, emerges as an exemplary woman idealised but trapped in male hegemony. Bim in *Clear Light of Day* never attempts to attain sainthood; her inner life sometime petty, sometime noble, is imaginatively portrayed by Anita Desai. Through role reversal, and not through self-warping, she takes on the task of race upliftment. Her "social quest", and not "spiritual quest" (Christ:317), enables her to refute masculine power. If she is "brisk, practical, agile, firm, dominating and patronizing on the one hand," she is also "abstract, sullen, stubborn, introspective, irritable and shadowy" (Asnani 98). Bim refuses to define herself through her husband (as women happily do), and does not consider marriage to be either the beginning or the end of her story. Her desire for self-sufficiency becomes evident in her childhood when she decides to become a Florence Nightingale or Joan of Arc; her resolution, "I shall earn my own living and look after Mira *Masi* and Baba and--and be independent" (Desai 140), reveals her ambitions. It is symbolically uncovered through her preference for trousers (ibidem:131), reminiscent of Celie's fondness for pants in *The Color Purple*. Independence normally denied to women cannot be denied to Bim. Her biological father, a shadowy figure, is only a remote bread-winner (ibidem:65); Raja the weak brother selfishly escapes the family burden; Baba the youngest brother is an imbecile; and Dr. Biswas, Bim's one time suitor with "spinsterish

nerves" (ibidem:83), disappears sensing Bim's disapproval. The inter-relation between Bim and other male characters is not even combative as they are non-entities. Reduction of male power is a typical method employed by women novelists to illustrate female power.

It is believed that intellectualized women jeopardize their feminity and become "masculinized" (Deutch 280). Bim falsifies the traditional ideology. Tara, her sister, knows "although she was the pretty sister... it was Bim who was attractive" (Desai 36). Norms of beauty conceived by men neither give additional advantage to Tara nor disadvantage to Bim as it does to Pecola in *The Bluest Eye*. In fact, Tara's self-sacrifice for familial needs has been "an enormous strain...it had drained her too much strength" (Desai 18). Denied self-definition, she stands dwarfed before Bim who had defeated the patriarchal forces firstly by refusing to accept the chain of matrimony, secondly by taking up the family burden normally assigned to men, and finally by achieving autonomy and wholeness that transcends gender politics. Married Clarissa, unmarried Bim and quasi-married Sethe interpret the female conduct formula and refuse to "accept the dreadful proposition to give up one's life for one's family and one's mate and therefore lose oneself in the process" (Shange in an interview to Tate 162).

As a girl or a woman, none of these female characters have to resort to "silence, euphemism and circumlocution" (Showalter 255). "Sethe had done what she claimed" (Morrison 1991:202), and it was true of the other two also. Clarissa and Bim have no recollection of being snubbed to silence. In their childhood, they had remained entirely free from the marginalizing forces of society. Sethe, though circumscribed by slavehood (political male power), is never crushed by the Garners. Her movement around the farm is unrestricted. If Clarissa and Bim are emancipated throughout their lives, Sethe attains that enviable state after her disassociation from Sweet Home plantation. Although they do not articulate Sula's sentiments categorically "I don't want to make somebody else, I want to make myself" (Morrison 1993:121), yet they do ratify their independence. Woman's story, basically "the trajectories of sexual arousal and release" (DuPlessis 15), is ruptured and the sexual angle is underplayed in the life-story of these protagonists in question. Antinormative Sethe and Bim move to "a new space or new cosmosis" (Pratt 113) from the periphery of patriarchal enclosure. Clarissa, involved

with man-woman partnership, stays inside the matrimonial order, but remains true to her identity. Eventually, Bim turns into an "old maid" (Pratt 119) stereotype with a very few detrimental characteristics; she is more akin to Rosamond (*The Millstone*), in full control of her destiny and privacy. "There was nothing left in the way of a barrier or a shadow, only the clear light pouring down the sun" (Desai 172). Similar epiphany is experienced by Clarissa which is summed up through her radiant presence: "For there she was" (Woolf 296). Like Bim and Clarissa, Sethe too attains inner tranquility and emotional self-sufficiency, not granted to women by men, as Paul D reminds her, "You your best thing Sethe. You are" (Morrison 1991:296). If she accepts Paul D finally, it is not to repeat her subjugation but to enforce her autonomy.

Women's life in duality as members of a general culture and partakers of women's culture is strained to its breaking point when as Demeter and Mother Earth archetypes, she is expected to deny selfhood completely. Motherhood, a unique female experience, entirely conditioned and controlled by male authority, is interpreted through religion, myth, science, politics and economics at variance with woman's perception of such problems (Rich 49). Clarissa's role as a mother, seemingly traditional in essence, is not the strangled voice of a tired woman. Illuminated by the rewarding moments of love in relation to Sally Seton, she refuses to interfere with her daughter's "falling in love" with Miss Kilman which, according to Clarissa, "proves she has a heart" (Wolf 204). This non-interference ultimately leads to better mother-daughter understanding and we have intimations that Elizabeth as a doctor or a farmer or a member of Parliament would develop into a whole woman and say confidently, "This is what I have made of it" (Woolf 64). Clarissa neither has to nurture her daughter through her tears nor abnegate herself to the depth of Mrs. Ramsay in *To the Lightouse* and feel, "she was nothing but a sponge sopped full of emotion (I,vi,51). In Sethe and Eva *(Sula)*, Morrison concretizes the pre-classical myth of "The Lady of the Wild Things" who could nurture as well as destroy life like Goddess *Kali*. Later, woman is deprived of this prerogative by the patriarchal power. Sethe by killing Beloved tries to "outhurt the hurter" (Morrison 1991:288) and keeps her away from "what I know is terrible" (ibidem:202). The muted anger of a mother in *Sula* is voiced in *Beloved*. In this novel, we witness a role reversal through Denver, the youngest daughter of Sethe who takes on the duty to

protect her mother from Beloved (ibidem:298). It implies that the mother-daughter role is interchangeable. This pattern of nurturing and destroying, though not very common, is an instance of rebellion against the accepted norms and a return to pre-Oedipal traditions.

Bim, never desirous of becoming a biological mother, fulfils the role without self-degradation, subjugation and self-destruction. Through her self-sought spinsterhood, she disobeys the commands of society and yet not a single voice is raised against her decision. Her realisation, "Whoever diminished them, diminished her" (Desai 165), clears the fog of misunderstanding and the novel closes with a picture of Bim's emotional well being: "Swaying slightly too with the melody that swelled about them..." (ibidem : 179). Bim shall never be a pathetic figure like Mira *Masi*. Her strange and symbolic motherhood fulfills her in many ways and is a means of *Atmanam Vidhi*. The metaphor of awakening, linked with her inner and outer world, establishes a balance between the abnegating motherhood of Mira *Masi* and the selfish maternal role of her mother.

Friendship between women or the celebrated sisterhood in Black literature, the opprobrium for womanhood, has been either censured or ironically treated for being antisocial and in conflict with patriarchal values. But today these novels confirm that "friendship between women generates a unique energy and strength essential to the woman who tries to survive in the male world" (Pratt 98). The bonding experience between women in *Mrs. Dalloway* and *Beloved* is regenerative. Clarissa-Sally and Sethi-Beloved-Denver relationships are not only intensely sensuous, but also an open celebration of the so-called forbidden association. Clarissa reflects about Sally, "But nothing is so strange when one is in love," "and what was this except being in love?" (Woolf 1925:51). Sethe - Beloved - Denver relationship is symptomatic of mother-daughter affection and also an exemplar of love between two women: "Sethe was licked, tasted, eaten by Beloved's eyes" (Morrison 1991:71). Beloved's touch was "no heavier than a feather but loaded nevertheless with desire...." (ibidem : 72). Parallel descriptions are to be found in *The Color Purple* to etch Celie-Shug intimacy. No such deep emotions are felt by Bim for Tara. Bim's excessively possessive attitude towards Raja, unnatural in essence, is rejected by him. A woman, the eternal giver, cannot claim to be a possessor. Raja's departure leaves Bim desolate, vindictive and half-dead. She begins to live afresh when she is re-

bonded emotionally with Raja. Thus, these three protagonists, through coded and salacious messages, communicate the need of certain socially unacceptable but reinvigorating affiliations. Despite the labyrinths of sexual politics, Clarissa, Sethe and Bim create new spaces for themselves and rise above the embattled guilty psyche of women, a creation of masculine manipulation.

All these novels have war as a backdrop that tacitly represents tyrannical authority and the dictatorial power of man, that ushers in cultural devastation and disintegration at all levels. Despite this pernicious impact, Clarissa and Sethe create in different ways; Sethe and Bim rejuvenate themselves, overcome the dangerous aftermath and nullify the evil powers of man. The forces of creation triumph over the mechanics of destruction. Here, again, the masculine control is curtailed. Interestingly enough, the proclamation of the self through celibacy, literal and metaphoric, by these cultural deviants is not punished by social boycott. Their "quest theme", a variant of the "Grail theme", re-establishes the sovereignty of the female self. Our women heroes, despite the differences of age, culture and circumstances, the natural victims of patrilinear norms, not only defy the dominating power, but also transcend gender politics.

WORKS CITED

Asnani, Shyam. "The Indian English Novel with a Unique Vision : A Study of *Clear Light of Day*," *New Dimensions of Indian English Novel.* New Delhi : Doaba House, 1987.

Chopin, Kate. *The Awakening*. New York : Norton, 1976.

Christ, Carol P. "Margaret Atwood : The Surfacing of Woman's Spiritual Quest and Vision," *Signs 2*, No. 2 (Winter 1976).

Desai, Anita. *Clear Light of Day*. London : Penguin Books, 1980.

Deutch, Helen. *The Psychology of Women : a Psychological Interpretation.* New York : Bantam, 1975.

Dhawan, R.K. "Feminism in Indian English Fiction," *Indian Women Novelists.* Set I. Vol. I. New Delhi : Prestige, 1991.

Du Plessis, Rachel. *Writing Beyond the Ending Narrative: Narrative Strategies of Twentieth Century Women Writers.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965.

Ellis, Sara. *The Daughters of England: Their Position in Society, Character and Responsibilities.* New York, 1842.

Miller, Nancy K. "Plots and Possibilities in Women's fiction," *Showalter*, 1985, 339-357.

Morrison, Toni. *Beloved*. New York : A Signet Book, 1991.

______. *Sula*. New York : A Signet Press, 1993.

Narayana Ram, Acharya (Ed.). *Subhashitaratnabhandagara*. Bombay : Nirnava Sagar Press, 1957.

Pratt, Annis. *The Archetypal Patterns in Women's Fiction*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981.

Shelly, Mary Wollstonecraft. *Frankenstein*. New York : Collier Books, ng.

Showalter, Elaine. *A Literature of Their Own: British Novelists from Bronte to Lessing*. Princeton, NJ : Princeton University Press, 1977.

Learner, Gerda. "The Creation of Patriarchy", *Black Women in White America : A Documentary History*. New York : Random House, 1972.

Rich, Adrienne. *Of Woman Born*. New York : Bantam, 1976.

Showalter, Elaine. *The New Feminist Criticism*. New York : Pantheon Books, 1985.

Shastri, Acharya Jagdishlal (Ed.). *Manusmriti*. Delhi : Motilal Banarsidas, 1983.

Shange, Ntózake. Interview. *Black Women Writers at Work* (Ed.). New York : Continuum, 1983.

Spacks, Patricia Meyer. *The Female Imagination*. New York : Avon, 1975.

Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple*. New York : Pocket Books, 1982.

Woolf, Virginia. *Mrs. Dalloway*. New York : Harcourt, Brace, 1925.

______. *To the Lighthouse*. New York : Harcourt, Brace, 1927.

AMRINDER'S *LAJO* AND TASLIMA NASRIN'S *LAJJA* AS POLITICAL NOVELS : A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Tapati Lahiri

Though the two novels, Amrinder's *Lajo* (1990) and Taslima Nasrin's *Lajja* (1993) are written by authors belonging to two different religions, countries, and socio-political ambience, there is a striking resemblance between the two works of fiction. Both reflect almost the same picture of political complexities that grow out of the communal discriminations in the two countries, India and Bangladesh. In both the novels we notice that the starting point is the same -- the major political issue of the 1980s spilling over the early 90s. The 1980s formed a historically striking period as it saw the two principal events of political importance that shook the last decade of the 20th century. In this paper an attempt has been made to investigate how the distinctive similarities of religious fanaticim in *Lajo* coincide with those of the Bangladeshi novel, *Lajja*. *Lajo* is centred around the time of the 1984 riot following the assassination of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, India's Prime Minister, by the Sikh security guards. Taslima's *Lajja* records, on the other hand, the fatal event related to the Babri structure-demolition on 6th December, 1992 at Ayodhya. In both the cases, the disgraceful incidents brought about revolutionary changes not only in the minds of the writers but also had their impact upon the people at all levels.

Of all the contemporary Indian novelists of the 1980s writing in English, Amrinder may be called a leading figure in respect of both her "sensitive handling of a foreign medium", and her boldness in attacking the Indian secularism and her portrayal of the Indian political scenario. Being keenly aware of the enormous socio-political injustice and 'man's inhumanity to man', she shows in her *Lajo* how politics in its malpractices can shatter hope, and can bewilder and puzzle the people, particularly a sect of people, creating a social crisis which they are unable to understand or solve. And it is this deeper awareness and experience that have forced Amrinder to write *Lajo*. In "Author's Note", she records:

> I too started my story around the time of 1984 riots and went on to narrate the repercussions this event had on the lives of thousands of Indians. A sect of people were left bewildered and confused because they were ostracised by the majority for no other reason but for an accident of birth in a particular community.[1]

Similarly, Taslima Nasrin felt compelled to write *Lajja*. To quote her own words :

> I detest fundamentalism and communalism. This is the reason I write Lajja soon after the demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya on 6th December 1992.... All of us who love Bangladesh should feel ashamed that such a terrible thing could happen in our beautiful country. The riots that took place in 1992 in Bangladesh are the responsibility of us all, and we are all to blame.[2]

Thus the defeated social conscience of the two novelists gets involved in their writings to represent the main stream of contemporary political maladies. Politics is, therefore, the chief compelling force in their novels; it is the focal theme round which their fictional world revolves.

Amrinder's comparison with another revolutionary write. Taslima Nasrin seems essential as there are very striking similarities between them. One characteristic common in them is that both are women and physicians. Taslima Nasrin practised as a government doctor for a few years while Amrinder was a Gynaecologist in the prestigious All India Institute of Medical Sciences in New Delhi. Besides their professions, they are close enough to writing fictions. *Lajo* is Amrinder's first novel published in 1990 with a selection of poems in Hindi entitled *Jungle Ke Phool.* In addition to *Lajja* published in 1993, Taslima also wrote a number of other works of fiction, poems and essays. Academically both are meritorious and recipients of various prestigious awards. If Amrinder was the recipient of the President's Silver Medal for getting the first rank in order of merit among women candidates, Taslima was also the recipient of the Anand Puroskar Calcutta in 1992, and the Natosabha Puraskar Dhaka in 1992. Recently in 1994 she also received the Tucholsky prize from Swedish Cultural Minister Birgit Frigeto.

It will not be an exaggeration to say that Taslima Nasrin has made an important place for herself among the novelists of the present century in which the political novel is a significant force. *Lajja,* originally written in Bengali and translated into English by Tultul Gupta, is her political novel in which she records vividly the political events, the facts and statistics of Bangladesh during the period. This novel presents a new kind of writing which Irving Howe calls "fictional journalism both informative and informed with insight."[3] *Lajja* is, therefore, a documentary novel because the events which constitute the novel's framework are political. It is just

a sequential presentation of actual historical events taken from the sources of information which include *Ekota, Azker Kagoz, Bhorer Kagoz, Glani* and other Bangladeshi newspapers. The novel shows Taslima's interest less in inventing plot and situations than in presenting her attitude towards contemporary political events. To quote her words, "*Lajja* is a document of our collective defeat."[4] Unlike other novels, the plot of *Lajja* gradually develops in a revivification of the past which reproduces an important page from the political period from 1947 to 1992 without any attempt to hide the factual incidents in Bangladesh.

Taslima's *Lajja* is woven round the story of the Dutta family consisting of four members, father (Sudhamay), mother (Kiranmoyee) and their two children (Suranjan and Maya). They live in Bangladesh from the beginning and claim it as their own motherland with its evergreen forests, foliage and flowers and rivers. But the demolition of the Babri structure in India causes the Dutta family great anxiety, and the novel begins from this point of tense excitement. The young girl Maya, hardly twenty year old, becomes so much horrified that she implores her brother Suranjan to seek a temporary hiding place to save them from impending danger. But Suranjan is not ready to go to any Muslim friend for shelter as he is at the time in a rebellious mood and is lost in reviewing incidents both political and social. The action of the novel in this way moves on through the flashback of those days when Sudhamoy actively took part in social and political movements for the sake of his Bangladesh. Suranjan also participated in several movements for the benefit of the country. They had at that time no communal feelings. But in the wake of the Babri structure's destruction the conditions in Bangladesh rapidly worsen. Utterly helpless and frustrated by the politically vitiated conditions, the Dutta family ultimately decides to leave for India and this Sudhamoy has scarcely dreamt of. So far as the plot is concerned, it is not of central importance in itself, for its purpose is to unmask the political events and situations.

Lajo and *Lajja* deal with the same political theme, although the treatment is different. The story of *Lajo* is developed in fourteen chapters. The last part of Chapter IV directly deals with Operation Blue Star on 4th June, 1984 leading to the political murder of Mrs. Indira Gandhi on 31st October, 1984. According to the Sikhs,

> ...it was Indira Gandhi who had betrayed their trust in her by attacking and mutilating the sacred Golden Temple. Well, Operation Blue Star was avenged and the assassins were martyrs in the eyes of the fanatics ![5]

The riots are usually the aftermath of such fanaticism: ".... Fear clutches the hearts of every Sikh household in the country."[6] It occupies a central position in the structural designing of the novel. The scene of the riot shows yet another striking point of similarity between this novel and *Lajja.* Sudhamoy asserts:

> 'Riots are not like floods that you can simply be rescued and given some muri (baked rice) to survive on temporarily. Nor are they like fires that can be quenched to bring about relief. When a riot is in progress, human beings keep humanity in check.... They are simply a perversion of humanity'.[7]

Torn by grief, Sudhamoy again wails over his misfortunes:

> He was a citizen of this country. He had participated in the language rebellion, fought to drive away the Pakistanis and bring about independence, this country still could not guarantee him protection.[8]

Truly speaking, *Lajja* reminds us not only of one incident around the year 1992 but of several incidents of the past. On every occasion the Hindus are being persecuted by the Muslim fundamentalists.

After the riots, in the usual manner the camp-followers and caretakers flock together in the field to shed crocodile tears and to extend their hands to those who are almost dead. Such hypocritical meetings are now a days very common in our sub-continent. In *Lajo* there is no exception to it, and this can easily be perceived in the following lines:

> Money donated for their welfare went into the pockets of their caretakers. Truck upon truck arrived laden with food, medicines, clothing and blankets. But where did it all go ? Certainly not to those for whom it was intended.[9]

A similar situation occurs in *Lajja*:

> In order to maintain peace and harmony, all the parties in Dhaka were spontaneously organizing processions. But all this was a facade. Behind the front, it was a different story.[10]

In *Lajo*, yet another pathetic scene cannot escape our notice. This is the plight of the orphans. These lost little souls move about in camps, rudderless, with a hollow look in their eyes. The announcement of Rs. 10,000/- for each orphan exposes the caretakers and their disloyalty and mean-mindedness. Its truth is revealed in the sub plot

of the novel when Lajo willingly adopts an orphan Guddi. Very tactfully and with remarkable presence of mind Lajo solves the problem by the agreement that 'those people sitting in the office' would get Rs. 10,000/- on paper while she would be Guddi's guardian. In such cases the role of the police usually is not expected to be better. On the whole, there was a nationwide large scale "planned genocide masterminded by politicians".[11]

Likewise, the situation in Bangladesh seems to be going from bad to worse at that time. What Suranjan feels is worth-noting :

> What then was the purpose of these committees for the maintenance of communal peace and harmony ? What satisfaction did the republican political parties gain from the constitution of such an all-party committee ? ... What they didn't realize was that in Bangladesh the whole thing was one-sided. In India, the Muslims retaliated, but in Bangladesh the Hindus did not.[12]

The root of the evil of fundamentalism lies in the hands of the respective governments who work only for their own political gains.

Again, both Chapters IX and X are valuable part of the novel, *Lajo*. The plot of the story is unexpectedly turned to another direction. It is when Vikram Kumar, whom Lajo has assaulted in a fit of anger and for avenging the killing of her husband, comes back to her alive. Lajo's views on religion and God are, in this respect, worth-mentioning:

> ...it struck me with full force that inspite of all I loved you with all my heart and in stabbing you I had stabbed my love and was horrified over my deed. Now I cannot thank God--whichever God you or I believe in for giving you back to me.[13]

A remarkable change, from one state to another, from her individual to Universal God occurs in her. Consequently, she further says :

> Getting you back has renewed my faith in God a universal God and yet strangely shaken my faith in the diversity of religion, otherwise why should a Hindu God make you love me a Sikh woman and why should I love you more than anyone else on this earth.[14]

It is through love that Lajo can understand the meaning of life. Love alone brings a purpose and gives a direction to life. To Lajo, it seems to be clear that it is nothing in life but humanity alone that should be valued and honoured. Despite the realisation of this fact, Lajo cannot forget the cruelty and mass torture done to her kinsman. The spark of avenging the atrocities is still flaming in her mind. It is because of

these ill feelings and hatred that she makes her son Sharan a true Sikh for the sole purpose of avenging the terrorists against her people. Chapter XI and XII record the continuing process of the repercussions of this.

In Chapter XIII, ironically enough, Vikram Kumar is killed at the hands of his son Sharan, one of the infuriated terrorists. Lajo then comes to realize at last how wrong she has been in drumming the communal feelings into her son's head. The mental conflicts between right and wrong soon set in. In the novel, this inner conflict has been successfully dramatized and has been raised to great literary heights what at best is, in reality, a political protest. Lajo's repentance is marked off in these lines:

> I did everything in the name of love but then Alas ! that too is no excuse. Horrendous blunder I have made ... I have turned son against father, because I thought it was the best thing to do at that time.[15]

What Amrinder intends to bring to light is to focus the attention on the tales of how people with simple minds get involved in the obnoxious activities of the terrorists. In "Author's Note", she writes:

> After the initial numbness and shock wore off there arose in their breasts emotions as varied as complete apathy to searing hatred. This set into motion a vicious circle that now seems to have no end.[16]

There is no denying the fact that out of hatred grows a communal feeling that arouses in the minds of youths anger and frustration which find expression in spontaneous violence, loot and plunder whenever such opportunities come. Politics is thus used as a weapon to create a prolonged social turmoil for the people.

In *Lajja,* again, Suranjan thinks with great regret that in his country at least politics would never be free from the clutches of religion. As a matter of fact, religion is used as a political weapon. The more he thinks deeply, the more he is beside himself with anger and yet he sees darkness all around him: "He was an alien in his own country."[17] Both the novels, *Lajo* and *Lajja,* are accounts of such horror and bewilderment. Is there no way to come out of this grave situation? The question seems to be easier than the answer. To describe a faithful picture of society is one thing, but to treat its disease, (in other words, to eliminate social evils) is hardly possible. Dr. Amrinder in *Lajo* has certainly made some vital assertions, the moral and political relevance of which give value and appeal to her

novel. "The Ultimate Religion" is the concluding chapter of *Lajo* in which a note of message is proclaimed: humanity is "the best of all religions rather than the only religion like Sikhism, Hindusim, Islam or Christianity."[28] In other words, man should be driven by inner dynamic power, affecting both his individual and national life. Her broad, secular outlook enables Lajo to accept the truth that there is actually no discrimination between Sharanjit Singh, a Sikh, and Sharan Kumar, a Hundu:

> Because you are the same person with the same mannerism, the same nature, the same handsome face and the same faults. What matters to me is that you are a lovable human being.[19]

In spite of the differences in the structural design of the novels, Taslima and Amrinder had a common purpose. A close perusal of the novels testifies to the fact that both Amrinder and Taslima are of the opinion that fundamentalism is a disease, a social evil. Both are not satisfied simply to say that fundamentalism is a disease in the society, but feel morally bound to seek out a remedy. Humanity is, therefore, the best remedy. The political life of the nation can be made strong and healthy and peace can be maintained throughout, if the secular outlook is cultivated in the true sense. To quote Taslima's remark on this aspect of social and political life would not be out of place here:

> I am convinced that the only way the fundamentalist forces can be stopped is if all of us who are secular and hunmantistic join together and fight their malignant influence.[20]

Thus, we find that the two writers have gone deep into the malaise from which our whole sub-continent has been suffering, particularly from the day it was partitioned principally on the basis of different religions. It is the deep sorrow, almost traumatic in its intensity, which is the keynote of both the political novels. As we close the books, they make us ponder over the question: where are we really going ?

REFERENCES

[1]Dr. Amrinder, "Author's Note" to *Lajo* (New Delhi : Sharma Publishers,1990), p.I.

[2]Taslima Nasrin, "Preface" to *Lajja* (New Delhi : Penguin Books,1993),p.IX.

[3]Irving Howe, *Nation* (4 February,1950),pp. 110-14.

[4]"Preface" to *Lajja*, p.IX.

[5]*Lajo*, p.27.

[6]Ibid., p.33.

[7]*Lajja*, p.165.

[8]Ibid.

[9]*Lajo*, p.44.

[10]*Lajja*, p.160.

[11]*Lajo*, p.50.

[12]*Lajja*, pp.178-79.

[13]*Lajo*, p.77.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Ibid., p.125.

[16]Ibid., p.I.

[17]*Lajja*, p.215.

[18]*Lajo*, p.13.

[19]Ibid., p.133.

[20]"Preface" to *Lajja*, p.X.

THE "DIVINE COMEDY" OF OLIVER GOLDSMITH'S *THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD:* A NOTE

Pradipta Borgohain

The Vicar of Wakefield is a characteristically eighteenth century work, and it is steeped in many traditional elements. It seems to endorse a pious, simple attitude towards life, and to uphold the tenets of orthodox Christianity. Goldsmith announces in the "Advertisement" to the book that the "hero of this piece unites in himself the three greatest characters upon earth; he is a priest, an husbandsman, and the father of a family."[1] Goldsmith's epigraph for the book is taken from Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* and it means: "Take heart, you who are miserable, take heed, you who are happy." Yet notwithstanding the simple religious framework or scaffolding that Goldsmith devises for his novel, it can be seen that *The Vicar of Wakefiled* rewards a pluralistic interpretation. It has long been appreciated as a charming idyll; yet it ambitiously incorporates elements that enhance its complexity and its readability for readers who may not admire a Christian comedy for its religious message alone.

Goldsmith includes, and at times seems to question and subvert literary types such as the pastoral idyll and the Christian romance. Finally he succeeds in writing a cosmopolitan comedy which accommodates diverse and sometimes conflicting attitudes. Of course, his primary challenge is to write a "divine comedy", a challenge because the ways of comedy and of religion are often antithetical in common view. Comic writers have always had to work against suspicions about comedy's intention and impact. Pointing out that "Comedy has had a relatively low status in the hierarchy of literary forms", Robert Polhemus attributes this to comedy's apparent antagonism to Christianity: "There are many answers (to the question what makes the comic a lesser mode to many) but a primary one is that laughter and comic revelry have been tinged with an aura of blasphemy; the comic has traditionally had to bear the stigma of sacrilege."[2] While moralists have often inveighed against comedy, writers have been sometimes defensive or modest about their comic craft. In his Preface to *Joseph Andrews* Fielding says that in the comic romance we have "persons of inferiour Rank, and consequently, of inferiour Manners, whereas the grave Romance sets the highest before us."[3] Goldsmith

himself seems to accept Aristotle's observation about the lowness and inferiority of comedy: "When Comedy therefore ascends to produce the characters of princes and generals upon the stage, it is out of its walk, since low life and middle life are entirely its object."[4]

In *The Vicar of Wakefield*, however, Goldsmith juggles the claims of religion and comedy and finally propels the reader to a climax where religious faith is not simply rewarded but the powers of comedy are celebrated. In the main body of the narrative, Goldsmith never explicitly undermines a religious attitude, but there is a moderate mockery, especially of the ways of the main character, Dr. Primrose. In the beginning of the novel, there is an equilibrium, which will however be quickly ruffled. Dr. Primrose enjoys the blessings of a good income, a well-behaved and loving (if sometimes a little vain and foolish) family, and a quiescent homeland: "We had no revolutions to fear, nor fatigues to undergo; all our adventures were by the fire-side, and all our migrations from the blue bed to the brown" (1, 37). This seems to be the green world of comedy -- a sunny, fecund, tranquilly happy realm. But after the scene registers a mood of well-being necessary to a comedy, things go on a down-hill slide. Due to the ruinous speculation of a merchant with whom the vicar Dr. Primrose has invested his money, the family's fortunes plummet from 14000 pounds to 400, and they have to move to less exalted surroundings.

However, they seem to move to a world, which is, if anything, greener than their erstwhile establishment. It is an insistently idyllic, pastoral scene that greets them in the place of their retreat:

> The place of our retreat was in a little neighbourhood, consisting of farmers, who tilled their own grounds, and were equal strangers to opulence and poverty. As they had almost all the conveniences of life within themselves, they seldom visited towns or cities in search of superfluity. Remote from the polite, they still retained the primeval simplicity of manners, and frugal by habit, they scarce knew that temperance was virtue. They wrought with cheerfulness on days of labour; but observed festivals as intervals of idleness and pleasure. (4, 49)

The Primroses join in the merrymaking, creating the impression that this is a festive comedy in the pagan tradition, with a minimal Christian colouring. Actually, Goldsmith seems to use the pagan convention to test the resilience of a Christian attitude, also using both comedy and tragedy as mediators. The novel enacts several mirthful moments, enlivened by ballad-singing, country dances and

the playing of fiddles and pipes and tabors. As said earlier, all this seems pagan rather than devoutly Christian. The vicar utters admirable religious sentiments from time to time, but traditional Christianity is certainly very low-key in these initial moments of revelry. At one point, Goldsmith humorously acknowledges that the pagan has intruded into the holy life of the good Dr. Primrose. His vain wife has a painter to portray the family, because their neighbours had one. Although the vicar remonstrates at first, he gives in (as he so often does to the wishes of his family) and the portrait is drawn. For the portrait the wife decks herself up as a bejewelled Venus, while the vicar in his gown and band presents her with his books on Christian polemics. In a footnote, the Penguin editor comments on the ridiculous tableau:

> The picture itself is absurd both by reason of its size and its confused subject-matter. It comments beautifully on Primrose's social and moral confusion. Such a mythological or 'historical' subject was the noblest of pictorial genres and hardly appropriate to his family's status. Mrs. Primrose is not a suitable figure for Venus, while as the pagan goddess of love receiving a treatise on monogamy from a churchman, she is placed in a position frankly absurd. (207-8)

We are not meant to condemn Dr. Primrose, whose Christian faith is both genuine and finally unflinching in the face of adversity. Moments in which he either exhibits "social and moral confusion" or contemplates up-Christian vengeance (against Thornhill, the seducer of his elder daughter Olivia) actually humanise him, instead of making him a simple butt of satire and laughter. Nevertheless, the family-portrait episode fosters a critical attitude in the reader which is necessary to appreciate the cosmopolitan comedy of the novel.

However, the recurring comedy in the novel stems only partly from the lapses of the vicar, and we need a broader perspective to accommodate and hold in some kind of balance the opposing forces and philosophies of the novel. Occasionally Goldsmith seems to valorize an anti-comic puritanical stance. For instance, in chapter seven he makes the odious Thornhill joke about the church and then gives us the vicar's reaction which is one of "no pleasure" (7, 61). Naturally, we share the good vicar's perspective rather than the wicked Thornhill's. Later, in the prison scenes, a serious attitude is help up as an antidote to the levity and profanity of the prisoners who would while away the hours in pranks and obscene jests. When the vicar is mocked while he is giving a sermon to the prisoners, he makes a comment that is almost tantamount to a comment or

judgment about the ephemerality of comedy itself. Despite being mischievously interrupted in his sermon, the vicar goes on, "perfectly sensible that what was ridiculous in my attempt, would excite mirth only the first or second time, while what was serious would be permanent" (27, 161).

While the comic seems to be put in its place in this manner, when we make a final assessment of the work, we find that comedy is not subordinate to orthodox religion, and finally triumphs. At the end, one might say that comedy and religion are perfectly reconcilable as both ensure happiness. But if one discerns no more than that palpable truth, one would be missing a lot of comedy's sly operations in the novel.

Religion promises ultimate happiness, but not necessarily in this life. In the "Advertisement" itself Goldsmith says that "such as has been taught to deride religion, will laugh at one whose chief stores of comfort are drawn from futurity" (p. 31). Beleaguered and heart-sick in the prison, the vicar dwells on the blessings of afterlife:

> To fly through regions unconfined as air, to bask in the sunshine of eternal bliss, to carol over endless hymns of praise, to have no master to threaten or insult us, but the form of goodness himself for ever in our eyes, when I think of these things, death becomes the messenger of very glad tidings.... (30, 175-6)

Yet the comedy of *The Vicar of Wakefield* ends resoundingly with a gala of very mundane rewards. All the good characters are rewarded, either with money or a fit mate. It is secular justice rather than divine justice that seems to reign, made possible by the generosity and fairness of Burchell who turns out to be William Thornhill, a man of power and wealth.

William Thornhill, together with the reformed rogue Jenkinson, makes possible the comic close. Towards the end calamities accumulate in such a breathless manner (first the elder daughter Olivia is reported dead, then the younger daughter Sophia is abducted, and finally the elder son George appears bloody and fettered) that the thrust of the narrative almost demands some kind of extraordinary salvage action. All the vicar's piety and stoicism provide no real relief. It is William Thornhill who initiates the process of comic reversal by rescuing the abducted Sophia and then by promising to dispense justice:

> I am now come to see justice done to a worthy man, for whom I have the most sincere esteem. I have at his little dwelling enjoyed respect uncontaminated by

> flattery, and have received that happiness that courts could not give, from the amusing simplicity around his fireside. My nephew has been apprized of my intentions of coming here, and I find is arrived; it would be wronging him and you to condemn him without examination:if there be injury, there shall be redress; and this I may say without boasting, that none have ever taxed the injustice of Sir William Thornhill. (30, 181)

Indeed, William Thornhill metes out justice to all, securing the release of the vicar and George from the prison, marrying Sophia, and punishing his villainous nephew Thornhill. But it is important to see what he has been earlier in the narrative. Until his true identity as a baronet is revealed in the prison, he appears as Burchell, an impecunious if amiable and hard-working man. "Burchell" actually talks about William Thornhill-- a man who found that the world was fickle and full of fair-weather friends. His bitter experiences make him more detached and critical about humanity, and he becomes, as Burchell/William Thornhill describes himself, a "humourist" (3,48).

William Thornhill finds that being open and simple curbs his power to do good. Therefore he fabricates the persona of Burchell, whereby he can deceive the world but the world cannot deceive him. Now he will assess human beings before coming to their aid, and not thoughtlessly lavish bounty on them as he did earlier. Since he appears poor, he can truly test whether people will value him for himself alone. Of course, the Primroses pass his test. By playing a role, William Thornhill regains the power that he has lost. Role-playing is a mode of behaviour which is repugnant in the eyes of religious orthodoxy because it entails dissembling. Role-playing is also at the heart of *comedy*, and a comic character needs to be flexible. As Robert M. Torrance says, "in metamorphosis is the comic hero's most stable identity and in make-believe is his truth to himself."[5] Another role-player in the novel is the rogue Jenkinson who changes his appearance to hoodwink the people. As he tells the vicar: "You are little acquainted with the world; I had at that time false hair, and have learned the art of counterfeiting every age from seventeen to seventy" (25, 155). In his first appearance ---"at that time"--- Jenkinson swindles the vicar's son Moses and then the vicar himself. Later he repents his misdeeds and makes damaging revelations about the villain Thornhill which effectively make the latter a spent force.

Jenkinson belongs to the band of lovable scoundrels in British fiction whose dissimulation and role-playing are seen as resilient

comic responses to the harsh contingencies of the world. After remarking that readers instinctively identify with role-players, Roger Henkle goes on to say that characters such as Montague Tigg and Sairey Gamp (in Dickens's *Martin Chuzzlewit*) "are classic instances of the creation of fictions as a way of coping with the contingent flux of actuality."[6]

The world of *The Vicar of Wakefield* (as is the world of *Martin Chuzzlewit*) is a world of flux and peril. Women such as Amelia Skegg and Lady Blarney-- prostitutes masquerading as sophisticated and refined ladies-- represent the threat of the corrupt city to innocents such as the Primroses. In the country the deceptive, devilish Thornhill preys on the Primroses. The hangers-on who desert the immature William Thornhill also point to the dangers of being transparent, innocent, and credulous. Jenkinson and the mature William Thornhill together show that to survive and to do good in this world it is essential to be protean, to hide and change identities. The vicar and his family are allowed to retain their innocence, as would be proper for a family of religion. On the surface, they are rewarded for the vicar's religious faith which does not really waver in the hours of crisis. Yet we see how religious principles and sentiments can remain intact only because of modes of quintessential comic behaviour such as role-playing and flexibility. Then again, the satisfaction at the end is very earthy and comic, notwithstanding the vicar's lonely moment of thanksgiving. There is laughter, merry-making, feasting, marriages, and the distribution of material rewards-- in the classic comic manner. What are the implications of comedy seeming to overshadow religion in the novel?

Earlier I said that Goldsmith uses comedy to test religion. Perhaps that remark could be qualified to some extent. Religious conviction was quite firm in the eighteenth century, and doubts would creep in only in the Darwinian nineteenth century. On the other hand, comedy is still morally suspect, and generically (especially novelistic comedy) not completely well-entrenched. So Goldsmith is really testing the powers and possibilities of comedy. By using a religious framework he can legitimise comedy and enhance its prestige as comedy is shown to be reinforcing what is after all a religious affirmation: that goodness is rewarded and sin or crime punished.

REFERENCES

[1]Oliver Goldsmith, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, ed. Stephen Coote (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1982), p.31. All subsequent references are to this edition. Chapter and/or page number follow each citation.

[2]Robert Polhemus, *Comic Faith: The Great Tradition from Austen to Joyce* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), pp.6-7.

[3]Henry Fielding, *Joseph Andrews and Shamela*, ed. Douglas Brooks-Davies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), p.4.

[4]Oliver Goldsmith, *A Comparison Between Laughing and Sentimental Comedy* (an extract), in *The Comic in Theory and Practice*, ed. John J. Enck, Elizabeth T. Forter, and Alvin Whitney (New York: Appleton Century! Crofts, 1960), p.12.

[5]Robert M. Torrance, *The Comic Hero* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 19,8), p.33.

[6]Roger Henkle, *Comedy and Culture: England 1820-1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), p.140.

THE PICNIC AND THE EXCURSION: A NOTE ON VIKRAM SETH AND D.H. LAWRENCE

M.S. Nagarajan

Travel writing, from days of yore, has been marked by the twin functions it had always sought to fulfil--Delight and Instruction. Quite in the nature of things, it flourished in the 18th century, the age of prose and reason. And in the hands of accomplished artists of the calibre of Swift and Goldsmith, it attained the high water-mark of consummate craftsmanship. Gulliver and Altargi were primarily wayfarers who went on a grand tour across imagined lands and reported about the manners and morals of the people they came across. These travellers were in reality Swift and Goldsmith wearing a mask which was necessary for them to distance themselves and engage in what they considered a necessary social reform for England. With the dawn of Enlightenment and the accompanying advantages of comfortable travels and facilities for a well-organised itinerary, Travel writing has widened its horizons, gone beyond its self-defined limits and demarcated boundaries.

The objective of my paper is to set two travel writers against each other for a possible evaluation of the range and scope of the emerging vision in their works. Vikram Seth's *From Heaven Lake* (1983) which won for him the Thomas Cook Travel Book Award is an account of his travels through Sinkiang and Tibet. A requirement for his Ph.D.in Economic Demography of Stanford was a field study and this he completed in Nanjing University. After the completion of the two year project, he understook a travel through Tibet and Nepal reaching Delhi via Kathmandu. *Etruscan Places* (1932) is an account of the travels of D.H. Lawrence through North West Italy which, in the 8th century B.C. was inhabited by a group of people of uncertain origin, later came to be called the Etruscans.

Vikram Seth starts his journey from Turfan, situated in the extreme Northwest province of China, bordering on the former Soviet Union in July 1981 and lands in Delhi on August 31. The route is Turfan through Liuyuan and Dunhuang and Nanhu in the Sinkiang region, through the Chidam Basin in Qyinghai, crossing river Yangtsy to reach Northen Tibet: through Lhasa and Shigatse and Nilam to Nepal, from Kathmandu to Delhi. The expedition involved crossing four Chinese provinces and for the most part it meant hitch-

hiking. After the first lap of the trip, Seth develops a distaste for organised group travels and conducted tours. This may have the built-in advantages of punctuality, strict control over the management of time, easy mobility; but the need to occupy oneself from dawn to sunset and the consequent exhaustion any hectic tourism involves leaves no time for personalised exploration. And so Seth gets the idea of the hitch-hike. For one thing it gives you the sense of adventure; you can tramp, you can roam, range and venture out into the realms of the unknown. It is hard to ignore three major strands in the narration of the journey. At one level there is an unmistakably realistic account of the problems encountered by Seth in the form of permits for short stays, visas to Tibet and Nepal, the numerous exits and entrances and endless delays and waitings and what not.The perpetual waitings and the resultant predicaments, the petty frustrations caused by supercilious bureaucrats, his bouts of rage, circumventing hurdless by quick practical decisions or chance happenings are all part of the chatty narrative. As wine in animated conversation or dirty jokes in coffee houses, these serve as the functional parts of an arduous and hazardous trip. At the second level, there is the human side of meetings with strangers, short-term contacts with them, the give and take of human relationships, 'the little unremembered acts of kindness,' all narrated with basic honesty avoiding mawkish sentimentality and despicable self-consciousness. Instances abound. A great part of the journey is one in a truck and Seth strikes a deal with Sui the driver. "Sui is inured to the pleasures of the terrain, his pleasures along the road are mainly social." He has an intuitive practicality. He carries out the occasional repairs of the truck 'as if he were scratching his arm.' He 'steers with a sensitive adeptness.' He treats people 'as individuals rather than as representatives of types that preclude any sense of cultural superiority.' He reads omnivorously and smokes incessantly. "Wherever we are, he looks out for gifts or good bargains for himself and for his friends. He is a generous man." In fact, generosity begets generosity; though Seth admonishes him for chain smoking, he buys him the costliest of cigarettes. Such person to person relationships and the sweet exchanges, without expectations, have almost a subliminal existence in the second strand of narration. These are meant to offer solace and comfort to Seth's psyche caught in a long-drawn trek in an alien land away from one's kin. The third level of narration is, however, the major strength of this travelogue.

The poet in Seth comes forth in unguarded moments and it is this that raises the otherwise mundane account of the travel to dizzy heights of rapturous delight. Take for instance the description of Heaven Lake. "It is long, sardine-shaped and fed by snowmelt from a stream at its head. The lake is an intense blue, surrounded on all sides by green mountain walls, dotted with distant sheep. At the head of the lake, beyond the delta of the in-flowing stream is a massive snow-capped peak which dominates the vista; it is part of a series of peaks that culminate, a little out of view, in Mount Bogda itself." Witness the description of the lake in Nanhu: "To the west is the sunset, and eastwards the elongated lake leads to a green valley and then scrub, and finally nothing, desert. Perfect reflections of reed and bird and cloud are poised in the clear water, a pebble from my hand or bird droppings the only things that ripple the surface. Flights of pigeons swoop down like dive-bombers in a war comic, down from the mud cliffs on one side to the ten-foot-tall redds, down to the water surface, and then up again...."

The waters of Nilamu are rendered thus: "Water dissolves the salt of the parable in the Upanisads, covers the land of Genesis and flows by the paradise of the Koran.... It is all in the water....It is this valuable movement of the water, whether of the concentric ripples on a lake, or of the 'sounding cataract' falling whitely into chaos, that informs the purity of a uniform element with the varying impulse of life." What an evocation of the *Taitrio Upanisad.* Catching his flight to Delhi, he offers a few flowers to the Shiv Linga at the Pasupathi-nath temple at Kathmandu.

Out of the interlocking of the three strands, there emerges Seth's observation of China and Tibet. He sees it all. He has an inescapable, sure eye: "China is to learn foreign science and technology and not foreign habits and mores." In all Chinese cities there is 'a stupefying architectural sameness based on a stupefyingly ugly set of models.' In most cities the first impression one gets is 'of a wearisome physical predictability, and Lanzhon is a paradigm of this unlov-eliness.' Every morning in China 'the exercise' music blares out and the people are instructed by the loud speaker to bend and twist and do Callesthenics. One cannot know China merely by acquainting one-self with the language. "It is like knowing *Macbeth* without knowing 'Three Blind Mice' or the *Ramayana* without 'Chanada Mama'." During the travels he reads, besides Confucius, Naipaul's *The Wounded Civilization.* He compares the lot of the common man in

China and India. "The Chinese have a better system of social care and of distribution than we do. Their aged do not starve. Their children are basically healthy... whereas the possibility of absolute immiseration hangs like a sword above the Indian people." The Chinese are a far more patriotic people than the Indians. The average Chinese is better clothed, better fed and better sheltered than the average Indian. The Chinese are 'language rapists'. Every foreigner is a punch-bag for language practice. The state of the Buddhist temples ravaged after Mao Tse Tung's devastation (euphemistically termed 'Cultural Revolution') saddens him beyond measure. At a personal level, "to learn about another culture is to enrich one's life, to understand one's own country better, to feel more at home in the world, and indirectly to add to that reservoir of individual good will that may, generations from now, temper the cynical use of national power." (178). One cannot agree more with such a conclusion of Seth. But it is precisely this that the book--despite all its virtues--fails to offer. Seth has a sympathetic understanding of China and its problems. He is particularly strong in his unblinkered perception of Chinese laws and life, marriage and morals. For all that, his travelogue does not take you inside China. You do not certainly need a Seth to tell you of the regimentation and totalitarianism in China. The dispossession of the Dalai Lama of his land (Tibet) and legitimate rights, of his spiritual and temporal powers is part of the sorrowful saga of Tibet. The lacerated wounds and deep scars are still fresh in the hearts of the sensitive Tibetans. There are no courts of justice for the meek and lowly in this world. Seth, one is sad to say, is not touched sufficiently by these hard core historical facts.

It is well worth considering a writer of great repute, D.H. Lawrence who wrote four travelouges -- *Mornings in Mexico*, *Twilight in Italy*, *Etrucan Places* and *Sea and Sardinia*. And these happen to be perhaps the best travel books written in our century. And their greatness essentially lies in their ability to overcome and transcend the limitations of this genre of travel writing, such as excessive reportage, lack of analysis, and inability to look beyond into the life of things. The structure of *Etruscan Places* is straight and simple. In six sections, it plainly, without any padding, describes Lawrence's journey to the middle of Italy in the train and in coaches. The Etruscans, we gather from history, occupied and established their regime in Italy. Their civilization flourished upto the 5th century B.C. after which it began to decline and fall. They were

overpowered by the Romans who saw to it, by their military control and material wealth, that they were wiped out from the face of the earth. But the influence of the Etruscans, in the form of their highly evolved art and remarkably life-enhancing culture, survived long after their political authority waned. What we know of the Etruscans is known only through museums. Lawrence, however, takes us to their tombs where they lie burried. It is to these monuments commemorating the dead -- 'monuments of unageing intellect' -- that Lawrence takes us by the hand, as it were. In the days of the redoubtable Julius Caesar the people of çentral Italy spoke the Etruscan language. Now it is entirely lost to the world. How cruel is Destiny? Examine the following passage : "The tombs seem so easy and friendly, cut out of rock underground. There is a simplicity, combined with a most peculiar, free-breasted naturalness and spontaneity, in the shapes and movements of the underworld walls and spaces, that at once reassures the spirit.... The Greeks sought to make an impression, and Gothic still more seeks to impress the mind. The Etruscans no. The things they did, in their easy centuries, are as natural and as easy as breathing. They leave the breast breathing freely and pleasantly, with a certain fullness of life. Even the tombs. And that is the true Etruscan quality : ease, naturalness, and an abundance of life, no need to force the mind or the soul in any direction." Passages such as the one quoted above reveal for us in the fullest ramification ever possible, the aboriginal, prehistoric world where the people "lived by the mystery of the elemental powers in the Universe, the complex vitalities of what we feebly call Nature." Etruscan art was instictive, unihibited, spontaneous: it could hardly ever be standardised. "If one looks for the Greek form of elegance and convention, those 'still unravished brides of quietness, the foster child of stillness and slow time' one is disappointed. The Etruscans had a profound belief in life; they accepted life which is vivid in their painted tombs. From out of the burial of the dead, Lawrence resurrects life.

The controlling motif that unites and informs the work is the Estruscan principle of Life-enhancement. Lawrence will not give you facts, grey statistical data for codifying, pigeon-holing, ticketing and docketing people to understand their agricultural economy and the like. Instead one is sure to experience the Hazlitian 'Spirit of the Age and the Spirit of the Place', which in his own words 'our mechanical civilization tries to override.' He digs out and archaeol-

ogically reconstructs the 'sinister spirit of the age'. And this experience *anubhava*, shall we say, is infinitely more valuable than what can be best acquired by first-hand contact. The Lawrentian method is to make us feel in our blood, as it were. In place of information, he gives us knowledge, nay wisdom. To do this he seeks out the meaning of life from other non-human modes of existence.

Vikram Seth and D.H. Lawrence have both travelled through ancient, alien lands known for antiquity and renown. Seth explains to you the lie of the land and educates you. Lawrence reveals to you the land of wonder whose pure serene you never breathed before. Seth tells and teaches; Lawrence shows and liberates. Whereas Seth goes on a picnic all by himself, Lawrence leads the excursion to alluring, brighter worlds.

BOOK REVIEWS

Dr. Krishna Srinivas (ed.), *World Poetry : 1994*

(Madras : Dr. Krishna Srinivas, 1994), pp. 383 + XIV, $ 30.

O.P. Govil

Publication of poetry anthologies has few takers nowadays because it is not a profitable enterprise. It is, therefore, heartening to come across an enthusiast like Dr. Krishna Srinivas who has been devoted to the cause of poetry over the years. He has brought out an anthology of world poetry in a single volume, which obviously is an ambitious attempt to present contemporary poetry as it is being composed in various countries of the world. The volume contains the poems of 268 poets representing 55 countries. They deal with a variety of themes in their characteristic idiom and style.

In the Section "Americas", Knarig Boyadjian (U.S.A.) in her poem 'While Sea-gulls Climb' weaves a fine pattern of imagery-the promise of the rainbow, the warmth of the rising sun, the flame of faith touching from soul to soul and finally sea-gulls climbing the waves amid the fluted music of the winds— to convey the message of love to mankind. 'My Childhood Home' by John Guthrie (U.S.A.) is permeated by a note of wistful sadness ; while nostalgically recalling his childhood association with his home, he now feels like an alien there. Ellis Ovesan's poem 'There has to be a Happy Ending' touchingly brings out the psychology of a child who simply disbelieves that a story can have a tragic end. Harshi Syal's 'Searching for the Lord' presents a vision that in the course of his journey through the forest while resting underneath a tree he senses His hand tapping her on the back in the rustling of its leaves. Each one of Periera Lima's *Haiku*-type poems is a gem of profound thought. 'Sun's Farewell' shows how sun-light has 'sculptured all forms' and 'engendered the forms of our dreams in our Unconscious.' 'Hiroxima' sums up the monstrosity of that tragic event with a few chiselled strokes of irony. There—

> Postmen deliver letters without answers,

and

> Children play in the streets
> Happy they won't get old ;

and survivors are

Followers of a funeral that will last forever.

Equally poignant is his account, in the poem 'Jews', of the jews in concentration camps. In 'Pioneer10' and 'Limit', he makes the improbable probable by the stretch of his imagination. Jones Negalha, also of Brazil, stresses the value of a tiny insect in his poem 'Insect': he stops writing his poem so long as it is crawling on his hand.

Later when he departs
I'll write that I have in my mind.

In 'Symphony', Virgilio Olano (Colombia) conceives of an orchestra of flowers showing both her botanical knowledge and musical sensibility.

The next two sections on Australia and Africa, though much smaller, contain some fine poems. Jim Allan (Australia) in his poem 'Udaipur' offers a brilliant image of the earth 'breathing underneath the lake' in its undulating waves, 'Canticles of Life' by William Macky (New Zealand) is an excellent paean to God for blessing us with life's manifold, though contrary, gifts including 'holy' death-- 'dark shadow of life's angel'. A pessimistic note is struck, on the other hand, by William E.Morris (New Zealand) in 'Crime of being a Man'; man's willy nilly existence in this 'alien universe' has 'neither substance nor matter'. In a similar vein, Tchikaya V. Tamsi (Congo) uses fine synaesthtic imagery in 'Tree' to indicate life's cycle of death and rebirth 'hooted by demons' all along. 'The mind's insane scream/ Because of colour black' is conveyed by Solomon Deressa (Ethiopia) in his fine poem 'Shifting Gears'. He would paint his beloved's loving face 'with grapenel fingers/ in an empty colour rack'. The pun on the word 'rack' suggests the poet's mental agony.

The section on Europe contains 65 poems. 'Sonnet for Eternity' by Bernard M. Jackson (England) is marked by a note of equanimity. He welcomes both 'seasoned joys' of 'everlasting worth' and autumnal 'fall of leaves'. In 'First Come', Noela M. Mackenzie (England) muses philosophically on man's accidental belonging to a specific region or religion, race or complexion. 'The Old Photographs' by Valerie Ovais (Kent) is a poem of searching self-analysis; she fancies the great grand-parents watching out of their photographs at their grand-children's activities. The agonising inadequacy of words to

convey 'All that in me virbrates and sings/And sets my heart and soul afire' is expressed in 'Cetera Desunt...' by Vassilis G. Vitsais (Greece). In 'Aerial Dimension', Franca Meo (Italy) feels like 'an imprisoned butterfly' brooding over life's 'tiresome and repetitive' compulsions, and desires to be 'a free creature of light and colour and of love'. 'Nefertiti' by Suyunbai Yesaliyev (Kirghizia) speaks of the unfailing charm of archetypal female beauty. 'The Invasion of Atom' by Justo Jorge Padron (Spain) is a fine imagist poem; it captures the 'shrieking', 'frenzied' fire and fury of an atomic explosion.

The section on Asia is the largest, and offers a rich and varied fare. In 'The Splendour of Happiness', Emily Yau (China) fancies the colour of happiness to be multi-faceted--having 'the flames of sunrise', 'the red of spring roses', 'tender' brightness of 'the full moon', and the 'blue' purity of the sea, but all hues emanating from a single source, i.e., 'our prismatic love.' In 'Love Times' by Syed Ameeruddin (India), the gypsy lover, arrived at the end of the road, advises his beloved to turn her loving eye towards 'secret constellations'. In 'Reminiscence' Bhaskar Roy Barman (Tripura) poignantly describes how 'the algebra of life' has alienated him from the fine sights and sounds of nature which excited his childhood fancy. Sagar Bhadbhade's 'Son to Father' recounts the tragic story of a son whose efforts to 'Let I make you, me, understand' fail and so commits suicide when only twenty-two. A. Biswas's poem 'Who is Great?' is marked by profound irony when the poet asks :

> Who is great- the houseless mother
> Who builds for others houses to live
> Forsaking her child in the wild
> Or, this boy with a broken toy
> Who sacrifices his future
> For the builders
> Of this nation ?

Kamla Das in 'Tomorrow' uses convoluted synaesthetic imagery to affirm that the courage of the voice of dissent will 'lay new white legends in its nest', though it be put on the scaffold tomorrow —death thus ending 'in haste a story half-told'. In 'Nirvan', S.C.Dwivedi's ironical fling at 'our leaders overlooking corruption in administration', while imploring God to overlook the *avidya* in him is incongruous. He also does not spell out his concept of 'Nirvan here and here itself'. Kulwant Singh Gill's 'Vanished Dream' is a

graphic commentary on the prevailing communal disharmony, making the 'blessedness of existence a vanished dream,' Shiela Gujral's 'Signature of Silence' is an imagist poem, showing how the layers of surging emotion gradually shed themselves in tears and silence ultimately settles in the heart. 'The Question' by R. Rabindranath Menon is a bitter satire upon the 'Shepherds' who serve 'the new soup' of ethnic kill to 'the faithful sheep' in 'sermons on the Mount'. In 'Friendship' K.Venu Gopala Rao uses rich sensuous imagery to indicate how friendship manifests itself; it 'flashes in exchanged looks', 'flows in warm handshakes', shines on smiling lips, 'breezes in waving hands' and is, above all,a full ripe 'luscious fruit' to be relished as part of 'our daily menu'. In 'Which is better', Nilhie Victor states that the tragic dilemma of the young prostitute is whether -

> the sapling
> Wilt before its bloom and die or it
> Convulse, racked between the jaws of life.

In 'Orchid', Jo Chong Ho (Korea) shows how at the end of 'the day's blood-shot struggle' he regains his manliness in the warm fragrant embrace of the orchid 'with such stiff yet soft tentacles.' In 'Fishing', Kim Sang-heung (Korea) metaphorically describes how he goes about fishing his big wishes in the flowing river of time. 'The Flaw' by Ormilla Vijayakrishnan (Kuwait) beautifully presents how man 'a very own work of art' of God is 'instrumental in wrecking His bliss', and thus proves to be 'the greatest flaw of His masterpiece'. 'Mountain and Water' by Maurus Young (Taiwan) has a mystical overtone suggesting the essential unity and interdependence of all existing--even the heterogeneous--objects in nature. 'Ever Since' by To Huu (Vietnam) is marked by a self-effacing note ; the poet's soul blossoming 'in full bloom' reaches out to all who are 'wandering without fire or home, without love or pity'.

The volume, on the whole, has a fair number of fine poems, though some of them, being marred by misprints, have precluded comments on them. A good many poems are just indifferent. The editor has done a good job in compiling poems from all corners of the globe, but one would wish that he had taken equal pains to ensure a fool-proof text and to provide more satisfactory editorial and biographical notes.

O.P. Mathur, *Modern Indian English Fiction*

(New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1993), pp.216+ viii, Rs. 220.

Kajali Sharma

Among contemporary Indian English critics, Dr. O.P. Mathur occupies a distinguished place by virtue of his highly acclaimed publications both in India and abroad. After his initial interest in British drama as evidenced by his widely known work, *The Closet Drama of the Romantic Revival*, he has been devoting himself whole-heartedly to Indian English literature, and the result is the book under review which is a collection of twenty articles on modern Indian English fiction, displaying the remarkable range and depth of his study of Indian fiction written in English. Though not a very comprehensive critical account of the nature and growth of modern Indian English fiction, the book is certainly a very good, fruitful handbook of the subject.

The opening essay on Indian protagonist's Western experience, which is a fundamental one, deals with the major characters of the major Indian novelists writing in English. These protagonists have been judiciously divided into three categories: those who pass through the very process of absorption of the Western experience; those who are under the impact of the Western experience after their return to their native land; and those who exhibit the entire panorama of the Western experience. To the first category belong Valmiki of Kamala Markandaya's *Possession*, Suresh Gupta of Shiv K. Kumar's *The Bone's Prayer*, Yogananda and Devjani of Bhabani Bhattacharya's *A Dream in Hawaii*, Ravi of Chaman Nahal's *Into Another Dawn* and Ramaswamy of Raja Rao's *The Serpent and the Rope*. In the second category fall protagonists like Nalini of B. Rajan's *Too Long in the West*, Indira Goray of Santha Rama Rau's *Remember the House*, Krishnan of B. Rajan's *The Dark Dancer* and Mali of R.K. Narayan's *The Vendor of Sweets*. The third category consists of Mulk Raj Anand's Lalu of the Lalu trilogy, Bimal or Billy and Sindi Oberoi of Arun Joshi's *The Strange Case of Billy Biswas* and *The Foreigner* respectively, Jai Kumar of Manohar Malgonkar's *Open Season*, Comrade Kirillov of Raja Rao, and Dev and Adit of Anita Desai's *Bye-Bye Blackbird*. The author's conclusion after an in depth study of these protagonists is "that the salvation of the 'blackbird' lies in 'homing'.... Only when he reaches his native shores is his

voyage of self-discovery complete. This seems to be the message of these novelists" (p.28). It is, indeed, difficult to differ from this view.

Of the next three critical pieces, two are exclusively devoted to Mulk Raj Anand -- one to Anand's untouchables as oracles of social protest and affirmation, and another to his concern for national integration. Dr. Mathur is the first critic to bring to light Anand's preoccupation with national integration, and it has been rightly said of him: "... he can prove to be a bridge of understanding between the North and the South, the Hindu and the Muslim, and the East and West" (p.52). The fifth article in the book presents an interesting study of Anand's and Narayan's treatment of the Sita myth in two different modern ways. Then there are two articles on Narayan about the West Wind blowing through his fictional world of Malgudi.

Two essays on Raja Rao are basically the examination of the East-West theme in *The Serpent and the Rope* and *Comrade Kirillov,* while the third one is the pioneer work on existentialism in his fiction. Dr. Mathur's two articles on Arun Joshi are simply brilliant, but the one on the novels of Chaman Nahal does not offer any penetrating appraisal of his works; it is rather a sort of preface to his writings. But Dr. Mathur has aptly pointed to the wide gap between what Nahal says in his reviews of Indian English novels like *The Guide* and *Combat of Shadows* and what he actually does: in his reviews he asserts that an Indian creative writer can produce a first rate work only in his mother tongue, and not in English; but he himself writes fiction in English, and not in his mother tongue. Does it not show that he, in his own view, is creating something far from being first rate.

The book under review also contains an enlightening essay on Margaret Chatterjee, two very exploratory on Nayantara Sahgal, and one informative plus analytical on Khushwant Singh's *Delhi*. The three interviews with three distinguished fictionists add to the usefulness and charm of the volume. Though all the interviews are very significant, yet the one with Anand is specially so because Dr. Mathur has taken immense pains in preparing very searching questions to elicit the best of Anand with regard to the novelist's evolving and changing views on society, morality and literature.

In short, the book fully evinces the writer's integrity as a genuine academic critic of the first order. No wonder the articles are usually marked by artistic detachment, empathy and sanity, and are signifi-

cant contribution to modern fiction criticism. What is particularly striking about this collection of critical essays is that it is refreshingly free from printing errors, and from complex ideas and expressions which often mar most of the contemporary exercises in criticism. The only apparent flaw in the book is its title, which is misleading because the volume does not deal with all the fundamental aspects and with all the major voices of modern Indian English fiction as is expected of it on first looking at it.

Surender Singh, *Princely Life in Indian English Writing*
(New Delhi : Reliance Publishing House, 1995),
pp. 167+XIV, Rs. 195.

Asha Viswas

Though Indian English literature is of recent origin and *Rajmohan's Wife* (1864) by Bankim Chandra is usually considered as one of the earliest serious attempts of an Indan writing in English, it has grown very fast and has already attained maturity, with outstanding works in almost all the literary genres, displaying commendable richness qualitatively and quantitatively. Consequently, there is almost a plethora of critical studies on this fairly prominent variety of 'New Literatures in English'. But what is deplorable is the fact that for quite some years on Indian English literature very few books have come out which, honestly speaking, have any flavour of originality and newness; in fact, most of these critical works are poor, duplicative and imitative. In such a situation, it is, indeed, exhilarating to come across a book like *Princely Life in Indian English Writing*, for it is conspicuous by its freshness in regard to both matter and manner.

The book offers a comprehensive study of the princely life portrayed not only in the fictional works but also in other books of Indians writing in English. Thus, it deals with the novels of S.K. Ghosh, Mulk Raj Anand, Manohar Malgonkar, Kamala Markandaya and Ruth Prawer Jhabvala; and with thd prose writings of Diwan Jarmani Das, namely, *Maharaja* and *Maharani*. What is remarkable about the book is that it sets forth a central issue very lucidly with all its six characteristics in the very opening chapter. The six major features of the basic issue, which are common to all the books analysed by Dr. Surender Singh, are: (1) Preparation of the prince academically and administratively; (2) Form and quality of administration, good or bad; (3) The prince's relationship with the British rulers and the public; (4) The impact of queens and concubines on the private and public life of the prince; (5) The life-style of the prince -- his pastime, hobbies, administration, etc.; and (6) The attitudes of the prince before and after the Independence. After elaborating the main features of the central issue taken up in the book, the author surveys briefly the rise, glory and fall of princes in India. Thereafter,

he brings out a clear-cut distinction between the British novelists and the Indian English writers who have written on this subject. It has been rightly pointed out that while the British authors -- Louis Tracy, Flora Annie Steel, F.E. Penny, Lawrence Clerk, Frank Hatter, G.H. Bell, L.H. Myer, J.R. Auckerley, Dennis Rincaid and others -- wrote on the subject before the Independence, the Indians after the Independence; and that the English authors failed to depict the princely life realistically and wrote only to entertain the British people by portraying the princes as mere puppets of the British Government and as sordidly sex-maniacs. Only E.M. Forster's *The Hill of Devi* is an exception in this regard because it paints an authentic picture of the Indian royal courts.

Chapter II is a valuable, detailed study of Mulk Raj Anand's *Private Life of an Indian Prince*, and is indispensable for a correct apprehension and appraisal of this much-debated and controversial novel. Chapters III and IV are devoted to *The Princes* by Manohar Malgonkar and *The Golden Honeycomb* by Kamala Markandaya respectively. These two novels really deserve two separate chapters, which make an in depth evaluation of these two major works. But Chapter V appears to be a bit unsatisfactory, for it attempts to assess as many as five books of considerable significance in just thirty pages, and hence it is sketchy. I feel the author should have paid a little more attention to these five works. Besides, the book under review is not free from printing errors, though these are fewer than what we often find in most of the standard publications in our country.

On the whole, this book is very well-written and is a useful contribution to Indian English criticism. Also, it will doubtless generate in the readers a genuine interest in the private and public life and deeds of princes who strode the Indian political scene for centuries but who are now an extinct variety of human species. True, Dr. Surender Singh has done a good job by undertaking this rather difficult and uninteresting subject, and what is admirable is the fact that this budding author has been fully successful in making the subject interesting and stimulating. No wonder this new book will surely pave the way for several new general studies and literary researches on this important aspect of Indian social and political life of the bygone days.

Sarup & Sons

4740/23, Ansari Road
Darya Ganj, New Delhi-110 002
Phone No. : 3281029

1. *Studies in Literature* by T.R. Sharma

2. *Bhabani Bhattachary : Some Points of View*
   Edited by K.K. Sharma

3. *Mapping the Shores : Exercises in Criticism* by Asha Viswas

4. *I.A. Richards and Indian Theory of Rasa*
   by Gupteshwar Prasad

5. *R.K. Narayan's India : Myth and Reality*
   Edited by Bhagwat S. Goyal

6. *Romantic Poetry : A Study in Satiric Strain* by Nand Kumar

7. *Essays in English Literature* by B.D. Sharma

8. *Essays in American Literature* by B.D. Sharma

9. *The First Fruit of American Romanticism* by Aziz Ahmad

10. *The Closet Drama of the Romantic Revival* by O.P. Mathur

11. *Kamala Markandaya's Novels : A Thematic Study*
    by A.K. Bhatnagar

12. *Human Relationships in Anita Desai's Novels*
    by Shashi Khanna

13. *Humanism in Bernard Malamud's Novels* by Chitralekha

14. *Symbolism in Sri Aurobindo's Plays* by Meenakshi Bana

POINTS OF VIEW

Declaration under Secton 5 of the Press & Registration of Books Act, 1867

1.	Place of Publication	Ghaziabad
2.	Periodicity of Publication	Biannual
3.	Printer's Name Nationality Address	K.K. Sharma Indian KH/127, New Kavi Nagar Ghaziabad--201 002
4.	Publisher's Name Nationality Address	K.K. Sharma Indian KH/127, New Kavi Nagar Ghaziabad--201 002
5.	Editor's Name Nationality Address	K.K. Sharma Indian KH/127, New Kavi Nagar Ghaziabad--201 002
6.	Owner's Name	Mrs. Kuhu Sharma KH/127, New kavi Nagar Ghaziabad--201 002

I, K.K. Sharma, hereby declare that the particulars, given above, are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

K.K.Sharma

NEXT ISSUE

POINTS OF VIEW

Volume II Number 2

Winter 1995

FEMINISM
SPECIAL NUMBER

Printed by K.K. Sharma for Mrs. Kuhu Sharma
at Nav Prabhat Printing Press, Street No. 2, Balbir Nagar,
Shahdara, Delhi-110 032, INDIA