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A FOUR-FOLD INTERPRETATION OF THE GAYATRI MANTRA

S. Viswanathan

Of all the Hindu mantras the most cherished is the Gayatri Mantra, a holy utterance of Vedic origin. It is central to the daily routine of prayer and meditation of the practicing Hindu; it is to be chanted three times a day, at dawn, noon and just prior to sunset, generally to a count of one hundred and eight each time, although the count may vary in actual practice. It runs

Om bhûr bhuvah svah
tat savitur vareṇyaṃ
bhargo devasya dhîmahi
dhiyo yó naḥ pracodayât.

The mantra is regarded as one of great power and meditative value, enriched with enlightening, purifying and mind-enhancing influence. The efficacy of the mantra has been well recognized. Its accessibility and the permissibility of its use in a variety of contexts, places and times, make it readily available. No wonder that it has been subjected to extensive and intensive analysis and commentary by scholars, religious thinkers and philosophers through the ages. In this brief essay I shall try to see how far the tradition of a four-fold interpretation of allegory in the West European tradition, once a widely practiced method, could be applicable in an attempt to expound the Gayatri mantra. The framework of interpretation was adopted by the early Christian fathers in their Biblical interpretation by religious thinkers such as Thomas Aquinas, and it was assumed implicitly by poets like Dante, not to mention several other anonymous poets in English and the continental languages in late medieval times. The framework subjected allegorical or metaphorical texts to an interpretation of four distinguishable levels of meaning and significance. The four levels may be designated as the literal, the real or the moral, the analogical or the historical or topical and fourthly, the anagogical or the spiritual level of significance.

Indeed something like this mode of manifold interpretation seems to have been adopted by the contemporaries and successors of the

late medieval and Renaissance with regard to poetic texts. Some scholars of the twentieth century also tended to read these poems more or less thus. The question arose at those early times, and still continues to be relevant, whether the literal meaning is superseded, overwhelmed or cancelled out by the other levels of meaning which unfold themselves. The Christian theologians tended to adopt one of three. One was that the anagogical or spiritual or metaphysical meanings (thus assuming a hierarchy of levels) only matter, these being the fruit or the grain and the rest chaff. The second view was that both the literal and the allegorical meanings have their valency. The third view was that the real alone counts, not the allegorical, a kind of realist assumption.

My idea is not to bring to bear the framework of four-fold interpretation in strict fashion and isolate levels of meaning in tabular form. That may be a rule-of-the-thumb method. Instead we may try to view the mantra with the broad idea of such an interpretation in mind, and with a sense of its thrust and spirit. Even though the early practitioners of this tradition of reading may not have consciously recognized it, it is vitally important to recognize the foundational principle of allegory, that it is a habit of mind, a cultural and psychological evolution. It is basically of a visual or visualizing or visionary orientation. Allegory is not mere personification, the kind that we encounter in eighteenth-century English verse. Nor is it a projection, as has been sometimes assumed, of the subjective thoughts and feelings, states of mind into the objective reality; the abstract in the process, is internalized as a concreteness. This may be called the mark to know true allegory at its best or most characteristic by. Thus allegory is not a mere mode of expression or a figure of speech but a mode of perception. This quality underlies the poetry of Dante, the medieval French *Romance of the Rose* or the Middle English *Pearl* and *Piers Plowman* or Spenser at his best. By the same argument, there is no ultimate hierarchical or real differences in categories such as allegory, metaphor, symbol or type (in typology), though for practical purposes distinctions have to be made; they may be called distinctions without a difference. The real consequence of our awareness of the nature or allegory, when we try

to apply the manifold interpretation to an utterance like the Gayatri mantra is that the categorization and distinguishing of levels of meaning such as the literal, the real or moral, the analogical or scientific in this case, and the spiritual has ultimately to be given up, when we seek to understand or feel into or see it as a whole. After all, the ultimate outcome of the allegorical habit of mind is that in the writing which is at once a mode of conception and perception and a mode of communication the abstract is seen as the concrete, and thus, the levels of meaning cohere and coalesce into one. Thus the literal is the real which in turn is also the other levels of meaning. The abstract is apprehended and felt as the concrete. It is somewhat like the true Srivaishnavite seeing the idol of the deity as Lord Narayana himself or as Goddess Lakshmi herself. The idol is the deity, and the deity the idol. In this reckoning, the literal matters as much as the abstract, the two are fused together.

A correspondence may be traced between the Western fourfold interpretation or allegoric or mystic utterance and the four levels of meaning in speech (*vak*) isolated by Bhartruhari the ancient seminal thinker on language in his Sanskrit treatise, *Vakyapadiya*. He posited four kinds of meaning, *vaikari* (the manifest meaning), *madhyamu* (meaning in common understanding), *pasyanti* (meaning perceived by the senses) and, fourthly and finally, *paravak* (spiritual or metaphysical or anagogical meaning). But, here again, it is to be noted Bhartruhari's total accent in *Vakyapadiya* (as the title suggests) is on meaning as made by the sentence as a syntactical whole rather than as meaning word by word. And this is a perception very relevant to, and in a way proved by the case of the Gayatri, as we may see in the course of this essay. With an awareness of the factors outlined above, we may try to recognize the meanings that emerge in the Gayatri mantra.

The mantra starts, as all mantras do, with the Pranava syllable Om. Then follows the collocation of the three words traditionally classified as the *Vyakrithi* words or expressions of mystic force, which also occur as prologue to all mantras that are part of the daily ritual routine. The three words, between them, suggest and invoke a variety of senses or levels of meaning. But the essential feature

of the words in collocation is that they cover the whole gamut of the universe and thus evoke a cosmic context as well as a sense of the place of the individual. 'Bhuhoo', for instance, denotes at once the earth, land, *terra firma* where one has one's feet or abode and also the existential feeling of being Bhuhoo 'Bhuwaha' connotes the life and living beings on the earth, the entirety of created being, and all that grows on the earth including mankind, animals, birds and probably vegetation. So a sense is suggested implicitly of a broad kinship of oneself with all life and nature and places or spaces, near and far. 'Swaha' denotes the heavens, the vast spaces around the earth, the planets and the stars, and the abode of the gods and the blessed souls. So much so that a sense is called up of the vast, infinite spaces and of the universal context of man. The coordinates in the picture are thus true to the kindred points of heaven and home together with an implicit ecological recognition. No fear here of the vast empty spaces of the universe such as was expressed by Pascal.

The next expression is to the effect that all these invoked earlier are pervaded by 'savitu'. The word denotes the sun and the light of the sun but it really connotes, the prime cause behind 'great creating nature'. What is interesting is that the word 'savita' (or 'savitri) suggests the sun, the generation or springing of life, in short, the principle of energy and creativity, and all that makes for life. The expressions at the start together constitute a salutation to the wonder that is creation and the life giving energy. It brings a sense of internalization, however momentary, of life-enhancing energy as permeating the whole universe.

Indeed the name 'savitu' indicates creativity and generation of life. Both the Indian and some other Eastern traditions on the one side and the Western tradition recognized in early times the close connection between the sun and the generation of life. In the medieval Western view, deriving from Aristotle, of generation, the then counterpart of modern genetics, the sun played the key role in generation. Aristotle had the dictum, 'the sun and man create man'. This idea of the sun's role was adopted by poets like Spenser and Milton. Milton introduces it in his *Paradise Lost* (Bk. 8) in the account given there of the process of creation of the first man, Adam. Adam

tells the arch-angel

> Soft on the flow'ry herb, I found me laid
> In Balmy sweat which with his beams the sun
> Soon dri'd .... (253-255)

There it is somewhat like God and the sun creating the first man, to adapt the Aristotelian dictum. Spenser and the important Italian Renaissance hermeticist Marsilio Ficino called the sun the 'father of generation' and the 'vicar of God in generation'. Ficino was translating Plato-Ananda Coomaraswamy expounds the Eastern view of the sun's power and influence in this regard in 'The Sunkiss' *Journal of the Oriental Society of America*, 60 (1940), 45-67.

After the invoking of, and a salutation to the universe, the sun and life, energy and light, follow the words that complete the mantra, Burgo Devasya Dhee Mahi Diyo Yo Naha Prachodayat. The light, the effulgence of the God of light, of intelligence, of knowledge and of wisdom is called upon to light up and enlighten our minds or connotatively in the implied metaphor our lamp of mind, inner light and consciousness or 'our lights' 'as the idiom for perception, understanding and reason goes'. Thus the prayer is not set in the form of a direct appeal or request but in the imperative mood. It takes on the quality of an assertion, a kind of 'speech-act', a declaration such as the Queen's 'let the Commonwealth games begin' or the biblical 'God said "Let there be light" and there was light.' The wish is not merely that the energy and light of the sun may light up our light or lamp but that the cosmic intelligence may infuse itself into our mind and being, bringing inner enlightenment. It is a longing for the merging of the individual consciousness and the cosmic consciousness. That is what the terms 'bhargodeva', 'dhee' and 'diyo' imply.

The Gayatri mantra has been read by some Western Orientalists as essentially a tribute to the sun, and a glorious one, at that, not entirely without justification. But such a view falls short of a true and full understanding of the import of the mantra. It is good to remember in this context William Blake's utterance that when he sees the sun rise he does not, like most others, see a bright disc shining like a fresh-minted coin but envisions a bright god manifest-

ing himself with a number of angels all around him, singing, 'Holy, Holy, Holy'. The sun in the mantra is not the ordinary sun that we see but the power, energy and the godhead that Blake saw in the rising sun. the sun is an embodiment or incarnation of the ultimate principle of creative energy and universal and divine consciousness. Thus, we may say that the anagogical and other levels of meaning and the literal meaning merge and meld into one seamless whole in such envisioning. A clue to an understanding of such an envisionment can be found in a daily prayer that occurs towards the close of the *sandhyavandana* mantra which starts as an apotheosis of the sun as the 'sole eye of the universe', and as the cause of the creation, the existence and the final dissolution of all the earth and all it holds, and, interestingly, soon shades off smoothly into an address and appeal to Lord Narayana as Suryanarayana.

In the case of the Gayatri mantra the analogical (or the historical or topical) phase of the four-fold interpretation may be by way of attending to relevant factors in modern science such as astrophysics and particle physics. The sun is the recognized source of all energy in our galaxy. If new galaxies are out there and planets in them, each of these galaxies will have its sun, for that matter. The idea has evidenced itself that the universe is composed of both matter and energy, an interpenetration of the two. That is so at the macro level of the universe and at the micro level of the atom. In the atom too there is an inter *in*animation of matter and energy which keeps them and the universe going. It is perhaps to such an extent that matter and energy run into one another and become indistinguishable. It is an important finding of particle physics, the energy-matter interfusion, which the Gayatri mantra may remind us of.

The anagogical or spiritual or metaphysical part of the interpretation may be sought not merely in the philosophical idea that we should invoke divine energy but as consisting in a quest for a grasp or flash of understanding or illumination, a feeling of the power of the primal energy flow. It lies in the experience that the chant brings one in an ideal situation, however momentary.

An account available in the Vedic tradition of the battle between the Devas and the Asuras cites a memorable instance of the

power of the Gayatri mantra. The Devas found the onslaught of their formidable foe the Asuras irresistible. They started chanting the Gayatri mantra invoking the supreme power. The Asuras were thrown back and scattered. It acted as a charm against the enemy.

In short, the Gayatri mantra is a paean to the life-principle. It could be described as a sacrament linking us, as it were, with the heavens, the whole universe and all life. It is a speech act that invokes inner power and is a rich source of inward empowerment.

This brief investigation of the plurisignification or multivocality of significance of the mantra helps us to perceive that the multiplicity comes home as a unity. That is, the levels of meaning unify themselves into a cohesive total impression. It is a continuum of levels of suggestion. The mystical and visionary power of the mantra owes itself in good measure to thus fusion. For this reason, the apparatus of the four-fold interpretation cannot cover the case or do justice to the effect of the mantra. It may serve as a scaffolding or a point of departure, at best.

Towards the close one cannot help adverting to certain consequences of such a situation. In this case, one may say that many meanings have one word rather than one word many meanings. Expressions which invoke many items, such as 'bhoohu,' 'bhuvaha', 'savitru', 'diyo' are examples. It poses problems for translation. A translation cannot formulate and capture in its language all the meanings in one word. It is not feasible either to have several translations of the same word by the same translator. The translators will have to make their own choice. Yet we cannot do without translation, though these may not be able to capture the visionary power of the originals.

I have tried to use the traditional European four-fold interpretation of allegorical or visionary writing only as a point of departure. The title of the essay could have carried a question mark at the end. But, perhaps that would make it more intriguing than it is now.

IS THERE SUCH A THING CALLED CANONICAL CRITICISM?

Bijay Kumar Das

The caption of my paper is in the form of a question deliberately chosen to examine the validity of criticism and its application to literary texts. Reading of literature invites us to go into the tradition of interpretation of literature all over the world, althrough the ages. This prompted Valentine Cunnigham to say that 'For better or worse, though, reading cannot ignore Theory, because reading can never ignore its prehistory'...(2).

Following Cunningham, Colin Davis observed that, "proper reading required a 'readerly tact' which involves not only respecting literary texts but also 'listening to what Theorists really say as well' " (165). To make the focus of my paper clear, I would like to refer to canonicity of literature. We know that there had been attempts made by the critics in the past to establish literary canon. In his well known book, *The Western Canon,* Harold Bloom dives deep into the question of "What makes the author and the works canonical" and states that, "the answer more often than not has turned out to be strangeness, a mode of originality that either cannot be assimilated or that so assimilates us that we cease to see it as strange" (3). If for being different from other texts and also being original make a work and its writer canonical, can we say the samething about a critic and his criticism? That brings us close to the examination of the aim of the critic and the purpose of criticism.

Before explaining the business of criticism, the purpose of a critic and the reception of a reader in the act of reading a piece of literature, let us take a geometrical figure say a rectangle or a square. The four points of a rectangle or a square, let us say, represent the author, the text, the reader and the world respectively. When the emphasis is given on one point to the exclusion of the other three (points) different kinds of criticism emerge. Upto the end of the nineteenth century in the West, the emphasis was laid on the author that gave rise to empirical criticism or biographical criticism. This is also known as romantic criticism based on the 'Author - God' concept (like God, the Author is the creator). Hence, the biography

of the author was taken as a clue to interpret the work. In my paper I propose to examine the twentieth century literary criticism and find out if it is possible to accord canonical status to criticism.

In the beginning of the twentieth century T. S. Eliot, I. A. Richards and F. R. Leavis, have shifted the emphasis from the author to the text and laid an objective base for criticism In "Tradition and the Individual Talent", Eliot said, 'To divert interest from the poet to the poetry is a laudable aim, for it would conduce to a juster estimation of actual poetry, good and bad' (*Selected Essays* 22). If this becomes the aim of the critic, then, 'Honest criticism and sensitive appreciation is directed not upon the poet but upon the poetry', (*Selected Essays* 17) asserts Eliot. If Eliot laid emphasis on the content of poetry, I. A. Richards laid emphasis on the form of poetry by laying emphasis on the use of language in literature. Both Eliot and Richards paved the way for the New Critics of America in 1940s to take centre stage by laying emphasis on the close reading of the text.

New Critics - John Crowe Ransom, Cleanth Brooks, Allen Tate, William Empson, Robert Penn Warren, William Wimsatt - each has a theory of his own. Paradox, Irony, Ambiguity, Ontology, Intentional Fallacy are the prime concern of the New Critics who espouse the cause of critical monism. They are right in making a close reading of the text and maintaining that the text has a core. But where they have erred is that they cut off the text both from the author and the reader. And what is more is that by emphasizing the autonomy of the text, they have denied inter textuality. This is a serious lapse. No wonder, the Chicago School of Critics headed by R. S. Crane reacted against the critical monism of the New Critics and pleaded for critical pluralism.

Structuralists who appeared on the critical scene in post- 1950s emphasized the form and use of language in literature In the hands of the Structuralists books became texts. Etymologically the text is a cloth, and 'textus' from which the text derives, means ' woven.' Like all structuralists and post-structuralists Barthes believes in multiple meaning or polysemyof interpretation. Hence the 'Text' does nto have fixity of meaning. On the other hand, it has potentiality for meaning. Barthes like other post-structuralists directs his attention

primarily to how a piece of literature exemplifies the language system. In other words, he treats literature as 'Text.' It is in this sense he says that the 'Text' is plural. The 'Text' yields to plurality of meaning. In the language of a Stylistician we can say that the 'Text' has plurality of 'signification' and it is for the reader to deduce its 'value' in a given context. Roland Barthes divided the texts into two types - readerly text and writerly text. In the readerly text the reader is a passive receiver of meaning but in the writerly text, the reader re-creates the text from his point of view. That means, in the former category the text belongs to the author and while in the latter it goes into the hands of the reader. This is an erroneous judgement. It's like asking a child who does he belong to - father or mother ? And as all of know that he belongs to both the parents. Similarly a text belongs to both the writer and the reader — one can't afford to ignore either.

Deconstructionists, like Structuralists are right in saying that language is not referential but self- referential. But they go a step ahead in advocating the doctrine of absence - that is, absent signs influence the meaning of the signs present. As Derrida wants us to believe that a 'chair' or 'table' is a unit, because all other units are absent from it. For not being anything else it is 'a chair' or 'a table'. This is a simplistic observation compared to I.A. Richards's 'interinanimation of words'. That is, words which are co-present in a sentence influence the meaning of each other.

Derrida is right in suggesting that writings do take place outside language. A portrait, a painting have their meanings outside language. His terms ' arche writing', 'trace', 'indeterminacy of meaning' are valid observations. Deconstructionists are right in saying that in a text there is no 'fixity' of meaning but an indeterminacy of meaning. Text is like palimpsest with layers of meaning. Key terms of deconstruction such as 'differance', 'erasure' ' trace' 'aporia', 'arche writing' are highly useful to analyse a text. But there is a difficulty in deciding who among the two, the writer and the reader deconstructs the text. Does the text get deconstructed at the time of writing? Alternatively does the text get deconstructed in the act of reading it? Deconstruction reiterates the Indian ancient view that no one can

say the last word on literature. Texts are open ended.

Reader Response criticism lays emphasis on the act of reading and takes away the text from the author and gives it to the reader. It is true that a reader contributes to the meaning of the text by bringing his own knowledge and experience to it. He, becomes in a sense, the co-creator but to say that reader is arbitrator of the meaning of text is to miss the wood in the tree.

The text precedes the reader and survives him. A thousand readers can't alter a single line of a Shakespearean text. Reader Response Criticism being both subjective and objective, illumines the text but it errs against proportion when it seeks to make the reader the owner of the text. The argument that meaning lies not in the text but in the mind of the reader is a brilliant example of syllogism.

But it is true that the meaning of the text depends to some extent on the interpretation of it by the reader. As readers differ, interpretations vary. Stanley Fish's observation that 'one man's reason is another man's irrelevance' (qtd in Armstrong 19) seems to be valid.

Reading brings the subjectivity of the reader and the objectivity of the text together. The written text almost being the same for everyone, the unwritten text varies from reader to reader depending on the individual imagination. Wolfgang Iser gives one analogy to make his point clear :

> [.....] two people gazing at the night sky may both be looking at the same collection of stars, but one will see the image of a plough and the other will make out a dipper (57).

J. Hillis Miller in his MLA Presidential Address in 1986 underlined the course that theory has taken in the closing decades of the twentieth century in the following words :

> Literary study in the past few years has undergone a sudden, almost universal turn away from theory in the sense of an orientation toward language as such and has made a corresponding turn toward history, culture, society, politics, institution, class and gender conditions, the social context, the material base (313).

Post - theory has different connotations. It may be taken as after theory, past theory but none of these meanings associated

with the term seems to be adequate. Peter Barry makes a valid observation on the state of criticism in the following paragraph:

> Literary theory moves, not from pillar to post, but from post to post - post-structuralism, post-modernism, post-colonialism and the rest-but the post to end all posts is the widespread belief that we have been in the era of 'post theory' for more than a decade now, 'Is there life after theory?' a major UK conference wanted to know in 2003 (Derrida et al. 2004), and Eagleton's *After Theory* in the same year shows that what comes after theory might be his own version of despairing moral theology. Eagleton's book is 'post' Valentine Cunningham's *Reading After Theory* (2001), which it doesn't mention, but 'post-theory' books were around as early as 1990, when Thomas Docherty's *After Theory* was published. Yet the notion of 'after theory' as a self-contradiction, just like 'life after death' for on the one hand, if there's life after it can't be death, and on the other, if *we're* after it, it can't have been theory. Of course, theory has changed, but that doesn't mean it's dead - on the contrary (Wolfreys 190).

Why do critics differ from each other in evaluating a text? That is because of the ideology the critics believe in. Paul B. Armstrong makes a valid observation on this aspect.

> Psychoanalysis, Marxism, phenomenology, structuralism - each has a different method of interpretation because each has a different metaphysics, a different set of convictions that makes up its point of departure and defines its position in the hermeneutic field. If an interpreter believes with Freud, for example, that human beings are sexual animals and that literary works are the disguised expression of repressed libidinal desires, he or she will arrange textual details into configurations different from those of a Marxist critic who believes that we are social, historical beings and that art reflects class interest. To embrace a type of interpretation is to make a leap of faith by accepting one set of presuppositions and rejecting others (4–5).

Literature has 'a social dimension' and it 'exists in time and space, history and society' (52), says Michael Ryan. Its appeal to readers increases if it depicts contemporary issues. Marxist literary criticism, lays emphasis on issues that are prevalent in the society. As Michael Ryan puts it:

> Marxist literary criticism takes two major forms. The first seeks to locate literature within its social, economic, and historical context and to understand how the ideas advanced in the work of literature relate to the ideals and values that circulated in the society of the time. Such criticism tries especially to link literature to class struggle, to the conflicts between social groups that contend for economic and political power often by cultural means. A second

> major form of Marxist criticism consists of a critique of ideology. It seeks to understand how ideology works in literature to mask social contradictions such as those between economic groups (53-54).

Let us take a few more schools of criticism. Feminist criticism lays emphasis on the representation of women in literature both by male and female writers. If women think that under the partriarchal system they have suffered at the hands of men, in the post modern world and society marked by globalization, men too feel that they are overtaken by women. There is not a single position in the world such as President, Prime Minister, which has not been held by women. Women writers write now freely about sexuality and lesbianism (Manju Kapur's *A Married Women* is a case in point). Feminism gave rise to Gay and Lesbian Criticism and gender studies in the closing decades of the twentieth century. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's *Between Men : English Literature* and *Male Homo Social Desire* (1985), Judth Butler's *Bodies That Matter :* On the *Discursive Limits of Sex, Jane Rule's Lesbian Images (1995), Liltian Faderman's Surpassing the Love of Men : Romantic Friendship and Love Between women from the Renaissance to the Present* are some of the seminal texts that popularized Gay / Lesbian criticism. British Queer theorist Jonathan Dollimore puts Foucault's argument as follows :

> Perversion is the product and vehicle of power, a construction which enables it to gain a purchase within the realm of the Psychosexual : authority legitimates itself by fastening upon discursively constructed, sexually perverse identities of its own making (106).

Foucault and Derrida influenced Queer Theorists in UK and USA respectively.

New Historicism's master text is Stephen Greenblatt's *The Power of Forms and Forms of Power in the Renaissance* (1982) It came as a reaction against Formalism, Structuralism and Deconstruction to re-historicize literary texts. The idea of re-historicizing the text came from Bakhtin, Foucault and Althusser. Newhistoricists like Greenblatt, Jonathan Goldberg and Louis Advian Montrose contested the notion of 'stable point of reference' of old historicists like E.M.W. Tillyard and John Dover Wilson. Tillyard's *Elizabethan World Picture* is the master text of old historicism. The

new historicists questioned the objectivity of history. As I have stated in my book, *Twentieth Century Literary Criticism*:

> The New Historicists' concept of viewing a literary text as a historical process brings to our mind Louis Montrose's comment that "the historicity of the text and the textuality of history formulate New Historicism's dialogic relation between history and literature." New Historicists discarded the concept of autonomy of the text, so assiduously built by the New Critics of USA in the forties who suspected history and considered it antithetical to literature. They have also rejected the Deconstructionists' notion of literature as a kind of 'free play' without a centre and tried to bring a kind of understanding between two extreme positions held by the New Critics on the one hand and the Deconstructionists on the other (Das 125).

Criticism has taken a trajectory path by moving from ideas and concepts to language and then to culture, which is now considered as the source of literature. Therefore, Cultural Criticism became a favourite tool with the critics. Raymond Williams's term, 'Cultural Materialism,' Stephen Greenblatt's term 'Cultural Poetics' and Mikhail Bakhtin's term, 'Cultural Prosaics' have become significant in the field of Cultural Studies and Cultural Criticism. Here, I would like to make a reference to my earlier observation in the follow words:

> In 1970s there is a shift in emphasis as literary critics started discussing cultural criticism in terms of 'hegemony' under the influence of Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci. With the arrival of Louis Althusser and Jacques Lacan on the literary and cultural field, the structuralist mode of cultural criticism got interesected with ideological approach of Althusser and Psychoanalytic framework of Lacan. If Hoggart, Williams and Hall gave one direction to culture studies and cultural criticism in the 1950s, and after, in 1970s Gramsci, Althusser and Lacan gave another direction for exploring literary studies within the ambit of a given culture in the social context in which the text is produced (Das 405).

Postcolonial criticism, springs from post-colonialism associated with the colonial power and the colonized subjects. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin in their well known book titled *Postcolonial Studies : Key Concepts* explained the term post-colonialism in the following words:

> Post-colonialism (or often post-colonialism) deals with the effects of colonization on cultures and societies. As originally used by historians after the second world war in terms such as the post-colonial state, 'post-colonial' had a clearly chronological meaning, designating the post-independence

> period. However, from the late 1970s the term has been used by literary Critics to discuss the various cultural effects of colonization (186).

Postcolonial criticism owes its origin to Frantz Fanon, Mahatma Gandhi, Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak Chakravorty and Homi K. Bhabha. It deals with politics, ideology, identity, migration, alternative histories and leads to neo-colonialism. Political imperialism of the colonial period is replaced by economic imperialism of the neo-colonial era. Above all, postcolonial criticism is politico - social criticism.

The term post-theory is not past theory and after theory is not the absence of theory. 'Post' may mean a transition from one school of theory to another. For instance, We say, structuralism / post structuralism, feminism / post-feminism, colonialism / post-colonialism modernism / post-modernism, and so on. Literature is read and will continue to be read in terms of a theoretical frame work. *In Conflicting Readings : Variety and Validity in Interpretation,* Paul B. Armstrong has rightly stated:

> The literary work is not autonomous but "heteronomous". While a work transcends any individual interpretation, it exits only in and through its concretizations - so much so that it will cease to exist in any meaningful sense if it is no longer read (11).

Literary criticism is the product of collective endeavour. Therefore, it is heterogenous, and pluralistic in nature. Since a literary text is built on several texts, it admits of inter textuality. The foundation of a text is explained by an anecdote by Paul B. Armstrong in the following words:

> This state of affairs recalls the well known story of the man who tells the philosopher that the world is supported on the back of a turtle. When the Philosopher asks him what holds up the turtle, the man replies, 'Another turtle'. When asked what the turtle stands on, he answers with some exasperation, 'Sir, it's turtles all the way down'. The quest for foundations invariably leads ad infinitum to ever more foundation (153).

We know that literary texts have achieved canonical status by surving the death of the authors for generations. Similarly some writers have achieved canonical status through their works. In the words of Harold Bloom, "Canonical Prophecy needs to be tested about two generations after a writer dies" (522). We have a number of English authors that have stood this test successfully.

Literary theory / criticism unlike literature run the risk of being contested by other schools of theory / criticism quickly. We find between 1960s and 1980s there is a plethora of theories - Structuralism, Deconstruction Marxist Criticism, Reader - Response Criticism, Cultural Criticism, Feminist Criticism, New Historicism, Queer Theory and Post-Colonial Criticism. Each school is based on an Ideology and therefore, evoked resentment.

Each school of criticism has some validity though limited and is applicable to some texts. That is because no school of criticism is comprehensive enough to apply to all literary texts Texts always elude criticism by its capacity to be interpreted by different schools of criticism at the sametime. The focus of criticism is limited but not all pervasive. For instance, in Psychoanalytic criticism we take the subconscious mind as vital, overlooking the fact that though man has a subconscious mind, he is not a subconscious mind. In Queer Theory we argue with Judith Butler that bodies matter 'on the discursive limits of sex'. Our fate lies in the body, argue the queer theorists but they tend to forget that we have a mind too (not to speak of the soul). Sex and sexuality are a part of life but not the whole of it.

To conclude, I should say that literary criticism in the last thirty years (i.e., post-1980) ceases to be literary. It has become part of culture studies and social criticism. Cultural theory and social critical thought now continue to dominate literary studies. It is a serious loss. The theory now does not seek to distinguish between literature and non-literature. The emphasis has now shifted from examining the literariness of the text to the factors that have gone into the making of the text. The border line between literature and non-literature seems to be blurred. Hence, criticism can't be canonized the way literature is canonized. However, criticism will continue to influence our reading of literature. We may call it 'post-theory', 'death of theory' 'after theory' or by any other name. Theory will survive and influence interpretation. But 'theory' will continue to be contested by other theories (old and new). On the other hand, some critics will be remembered for setting the trends in literary criticism in the twentieth century. T. S. Eliot, I. A. Richards, F. R. Leavis,

Cleanth Brooks, Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Stanley Fish, Jonalthan Culler, Stephen Greenblatt, Raymond Williams, Antonio Gramsci, Louis Althusser, Jacques Lacan, Edward Said, Homi K Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak Chakravorty will continue to influence literary theory and criticism in the years to come. But criticism however objective it may be, will always remain an academic exercise. It will exist only as a satellite of literature to enhance the communication between the text and the reader. Individual schools of criticism may come and go but criticism as a tool of evaluation of literature will remain. We may say that criticism is dead, long live criticism ! That's the beauty of criticism.

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THE RELEVANCE OF SANSKRIT POETICS TO ENGLISH STUDIES

K.G. Srivastava

The guiding principle of the present paper is the conviction that the language of poetry (i.e. the words poets use in their respective languages for purposes of their poems) is universal, for poets across the countries — India, Russia, China, Greece, Italy, England, Syria, Egypt — employ words in as charming a way as possible, no matter whether they are aware of the ways concerned and could name them or not. Homer, for example, uses figures like "arthantaranyasa" and "utpreksa" quite like Indian poets even though, to be sure, he did not know the names of the figures concerned. And that is true of all poets in all languages. So in the appreciation of poetry, if critical terms are of any use, these should be used without any racial, national, religious, political or social prejudice. For, poetry must be appreciated as poetry *per se* whether it is in German, Russian, French, Greek, Sanskrit, Urdu or Hindi. So far as critical terms and their niceties are concerned, Sanskrit, beyond doubt, supplies their largest and most detailed accounts: no other language in the world can match it in terms of the categories, kinds, classifications and depth of literary and critical concepts. Take up a simple term such as metaphor which from Aristotle to I.A. Richards has been so popular in the discussion of poetry in the West and has been used extensively down ages. The West is no doubt far superior to the East (i.e. Sanskrit) in terms of philosophical discourse regarding its nature, function and philosophical effect; but so far as its classifications are concerned, Sanskrit is matchless. The varieties of metaphor or "rupak" — nirangarupaka, paramparitarupaka, Samstavastuvishyaka Sangrupaka, Ekdeshvivarti Sangarupaka, malarupaka — and numerous forms of laksana, based on it, are, in most cases, unheard of in the Western criticism. Similarly, another well known figure called simile or upma has 32 different varieties, if we could trust the Sanskrit theorist Acarya Dandi. The same theorist discusses a form of "Pun" called "yamak", dividing it into 315 varieties. And both classifications, I believe, should be the despair

of the West. I agree that Sanskrit acaryas sometimes indulge in hair-splitting though we can conveniently ignore this bad habit of theirs. But their broad divisions certainly deserve attention and even acceptance. The discoveries of figures like visheshokti,arthantaranyasa, kavyalinga, ullekha, utpreksa, pratipa, tadaguna, milita, vyatireka, hetu, suksma, bhavika, to name only a few, for which there are hardly any western equivalents (though Western poetry can supply excellent examples of all of them), can enrich the appreciation of Western poetry; there cannot be an iota of doubt about this. These figures cannot be the monopoly of Sanskrit or indian poetry; these are the properties of all poetry — Eastern as well as Western. I see absolutely no harm in using these terms in the appreciation of the passages of Western poetry where these figures exist. For example, Shakespeare supplies an excellent example of vyatireka in the octave of his Sonnet No. XVIII, beginning with the line 'Shall I compare thee to a Summer's day?' Now the mootquestion is: will English criticism gain or lose by using the term 'vyatireka' in the appreciation of the sonnet concerned? The answer to this question, I believe, will be affirmative. I see no harm in pronouncing the beauty of the sonnet's octave as residing in Shakespeare's creative use of vyatireka. Let us cite the relevant lines for our ready reference:

> Shall I compare thee to a Summer's day
> Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
> Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
> And summer's lease hath all too short a date.
> Sometimes too hot the eye of heaven shines,
> And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;

Now, in a simile or upama the "upamana" or 'standard of comparison' is normally superior to "upameya" or the subject on hand. But a skilful poet, by means of his imaginative argument, could establish the superiority of the "upameya" over the "upamana" and thus reverse the established order and when that happens, Sanskrit theorists hold that the poet has used a trope called "vyatireka". Precisely that is the case with the lines, cited above. The sun of the summer season is the standard of comparison here; and the sun is normally superior to any man in terms of shine and glamour. However, Shakespeare has very skilfully established here the su-

periority of Mr. W.H. (i.e. the "upameya" of the passage) by means of a *tour de force* which Sanskrit poeticians have designated as "vyatireka". I am not aware of any term invented by the West for this *tour de force*. So there should be no problem for Western criticism in accepting the term in its critical terminology for the same would be richer and brighter by enlarging its own scope. But "vyatireka" is just an example. Sanskrit theorists have recognized nearly 125 figures and tropes and each one of them could be illustrated from Western texts as well, apart from Indian texts. Clearly, these terms have a kind of universal applicability. Sanskrit denominations of these figures can be usefully employed in the analysis of Western poetry, provided the analyst is familiar with those denominations.

"Kavyadosha" (poetic defects) is another area where Sanskrit poetics has no peer. The West can very conveniently exploit this rich weaponry of Indian poetics in the analysis and appreciation of its poetry. Sanskrit acaryas have recognized 37 defects of words, 23 defects of sense or meaning and 10 defects of sentiments of "Rasa". All these various defects of poetry can be illutrated from Western poetry. Let us consider the case of the poetic defect called "apratita" which consists in the use of some technical term of some branch of science, not normally known to people at large. In the following passage from the essay "My Relations" by Charles Lamb we have this defect in the expression "grand climacteric":

> May they continue still in the same mind, and when they shall be seventy-five, and seventy three years old (I cannot spare them sooner), persist in treating me in my grand climacteric precisely as a stripling, or younger brother!

The expression "grand climacteric" is from astrology and refers to the sixty-third year of a man's life, usually regarded as a critical year. It must be noted that ninth and seventh years of a man are astrologically regarded as critical years but the number sixty-three which is the outcome of the multiplication of 'nine' by 'seven', is the most dangerous year and so the sixty-third year is regarded by astrologers as a "grand climacteric." But very few people are familiar with this expression. Thus the quotation from "My Relations" can be subjected to "apratita dosh". I am not aware of any corresponding term in the Western tradition. Will not Western Criticism be richer

by accepting the Sanskrit concept of "apratita dosh"? Clearly, yes.

"Nayaka-Nayika-bheda" of the Sanskrit poetics is yet another field which could profitably be exploited by the world, especially the Western world. Some people have the illusions that the Nayaka-Nayika discourse is valid only for Indian literature and that it has no relevance for non-Indian literatures. But this is an entirely wrong notion, having no substance. The classifications of heroes and heroines conceptualized by the Indian theorists are true not only of Sanskrit and other Indian literatures but also of all literatures of the world, at least in their most essential forms. All the major heroes and heroines discussed by the Sanskrit acaryas can be illustrated from Western texts. Take up, for example, the class of heroines, broadly speaking, called "mugdha" who are sexually innocent. A special class of these heroines is called "agyatayauvana" or ladies unaware of their grown youth. Is not Miranda, the heroine of Shakespeare's last play *The Tempest* an "agyatayauvana nayika" particularly when she makes the following speech, addressed to Ferdinand in the first scene of the third Act:

> I do not know
> One of my sex! no woman's face remember,
> Save, from my glass, mine own: nor have I seen
> More that I may call men than you, good friend,
> And my dear father: how features are abroad,
> I am skill-less of;

Any sensitive and responsive reader of poetry will agree that the term "agyatayauvana" is very helpful term and can be unhesitatingly employed in analysing characters like Miranda.

What is true of "Nayaka-Nayika-bheda" is equally true of the doctrines of "Rasa", "Dhvani", "Vakrokti" and "Auchitya", for all these theories are valid for all literatures and not just for Sanskrit and other Indian literatures. Western poetry can supply examples of all the "Rasas" Indian theorists have dealt with. Whether or not the following passage from Dante's *Divine Commedia* is illutrative of "vibhatasavarasa" well-informed readers of poetry should decide:

> A crust of slimy mold
> Covered the walls, by exhalations formed
> In foulness steaming up from far below,

Disgusting to the eye and nose alike.
So dark the bottom lay beyond our sight
That only when we stood atop the span
Could we discern it. Here we made our way
And peering down we saw souls deep submerged
In filthy dung, as human privies yield.
("Inferno," Canto XVIII 97-106, trans. Thomas G. Bergin)

Since Western criticism seldom takes account of the emotional aspects of poetry, at least never in the way Sanskrit acaryas have done, a wholly fresh area of the study of Western poetry can be created by subjecting it to the rigours of the doctrine of "Rasa". And that holds good in respect of the doctrines of "Dhvani", "Vakrokti" and "Aucitya". The theorists of the "Dhvani" doctrine have conceptualized thousands of "dhvani" and I regard that position as absurd; it is hair-splitting, pure and simple. However, the major forms — vastudhvani, alankaradhvani and rasadhvani, including their broad sub-divisions are valid and viable. They can illuminate Western poetry a great deal as much as they can illuminate Sanskrit or Hindi poetry. For example, let us take up the following concluding lines from Robert Browning's famous poem "My Last Duchess":

Nay, we'll go
Together down, Sir! Notice Neptune, though,
Taming a sea-horse, thought a rarity,
Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me.

This is an excellent example of vastudhvani; for it suggests the speaker's (i.e. of the Duke of Ferrara) assumed humility, self-glorification, ostentation, tyrannical attitude and love for art-works-all at once. I agree that Western critics of Browning have illuminating comments of all shades and hues on the passage concerned to offer but they suffer from a lack of critical terminology to pinpoint the success of the suggested readings they propose. This want is fairly met by the employment of the Dhvani-doctrine. For example, the term of address, namely, "Sir", used in the second line of the quotation, used by the Duke, for the ambassador (of some Count) who has come to the Duke for a marital settlement on behalf of the daughter of the Count, can be considered here. The Duke is far far superior to the ambassador in social hierarchy; so he is not ex-

pected to use the word 'Sir' for the ambassador and yet he does precisely that presumably because he is trying to flatter the Count's emissary with a view to winning the highest dowry to be recommended by the emissary to his master (i.e. the Count). Thus, the word 'Sir' is a deliberate design, dictated by the sense of greed of the speaker (i.e. the Duke of Ferrara). No other term of address (e.g. the name of emissary) would serve the purpose. This is an example of "shabdashakti-udabhava-anuraranadhvani" where the suggested sense comes from the word used by the poet alone and where all substitute words are ruled out; only the use of the word 'Sir' can suggest the Duke's inherent purpose and no other word. Similarly, the reference to the art-work displaying the sea-god Neptune, taming a sea-horse is intended to bring home to the ambassador of the Count the thought that the Count's daughter will have to remain contented with a servile position in the home of the Duke of Ferrara for the Duke will remain ever lordly to her, treating her as a very inferior being, expected to obey the Duke's commands at all hours. Here, too, the word 'Neptune' enjoys a sense of inevitability — no other word can suggest the complete sway that the Duke will have over his new bride. This is also illustrative of "shabda-shakti-udabhava-anuraranadhvani" as the tyrannical behaviour of the Duke is suggested by the word 'Neptune', the Roman god of the sea who has complete mastery over the waves of the sea and the creatures living therein such as sea-horses and whales. In like manner, the description of the bronze artefact depicting Neptune taming a sea-horse as 'thought a rarity' reveals unmistakably the Duke's indulgence in self-glorification by pointing to his collection of very precious and rare art works such as the one detailed above, showing Neptune, the sea-god taming a sea-horse. That the Duke is given to bluffing is clearly revealed by his reference to a fictitious sculptor Claus of Innsbruck who never existed. Even this is an example of "shabda-shakti-udabhava-anuraranadhvani" for no other name would do what Claus of Innsbruck does.

Kuntaka's theory of "Vakroktl", too, can help our reading of Western poetry better. The theory explores the causes and sources of the various charms of poetry, inhering in all parts of a poem from

individual letters and their artful arrangement in the work as a whole, artistically manipulated. This theory again applies to all poetry and not just to Sanskrit or Indian poetry for, all forms of "Vakrokti" can be illustrated from Western texts. Indeed, Professor Shrawan K. Sharma of Gurukul Kangri University, Haridwar, has applied Kuntaka's theory to English poetry in detail, citing examples of all forms of "Vakrata" from English poems. This he has done in his *Kuntaka's Vakrokti Siddhanta: Towards an Appreciation of English Poetry* (Shalabh Publishing House, Meerut, 2004). Here I will discuss only what Kuntaka calls "Paryaya-Vakrata" (i.e. poetic charm by means of the skilful use of a particular synonym out of several possible synonyms available in the language). Great poets, Kuntaka believes, have an innate apprehension of the respective beauty of words; they select spontaneously only those words, out of multiple choices available, that serve their purpose most efficiently and artistically. Consider, for example, Keats's use of the word "embalmed" in the following lines from his "Ode to a Nightingale" (stanza 5):

> I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
> Or what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
> But, in embalmed darkness, can guess each sweet
> Wherewith the seasonable month endows
> The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild:

If Kuntaka were to analyse the beauty of the lines, cited above, he would come out with the suggestion that the excellence of the verses lies in the poet's choice of the word "embalmed" out of its several possible synonyms available to him: 'fragrant', 'perfumed', 'spiced', 'preserved', etc. Now, the question is: Why did Keats choose "embalmed" and not any other word bearing the same sense? The answer is: "He knew the intrinsic charm surrounding the word 'embalmed'. He wanted to project darkness, not just as something sweet-smelling but also as the preserver and custodian of all basic forms of natural life, the reservoir of all scents and smells, to be distributed, in accordance with season, among plants and trees. The poet knew that no other synonym of 'embalmed' could convey the two ideas of preservation and sweet-smellingness simultaneously. So he projected darkness as smelling of all flowers of all times and as the container and preserver of the scents and smells of all Nature,

recalling to our mind the Egyptian art of preserving dead bodies by means of certain spices that averted decay of those bodies." Thus the word 'embalmed' has an extraordinary charm and makes the entire passage marvellous and examplifies Kuntaka's concept of "paryayavakrata" at its best.

I have no doubt whatsoever that the critical insights of Kuntaka under the garb of numerous forms of vakrata will open new vistas of critical thinking regarding Western poetry, or for that matter, any poetry of the world. This is equally true of the doctrine of auchitya that acarya Ksemendra had pleaded for on the ground that the observance of 27 forms of auchitya guarantees the excellence of poetry. True, the Western world has never been unaware of auchitya; for, even Aristotle had stressed its importance under the head of 'Prepon' and Horace had stood for 'decorum'. But Ksemendra's theory of auchitya is far more penetrating and far more broad-based than either of the two Western doctrines of 'Prepon' and 'Decorum'. I am quite sure that by applying the theory of auchitya to poems like "To a Skylark", "Ode to the West Wind" and "Adonais" the charges levelled against Shelley by critics like Arnold and F.R. Leavis can be successfully met and justice can be done to the genius of the poet. The theory can also reveal the mystery of Milton's apparently misplaced glorification of Satan in the opening books of the *Paradise Lost*. The application of the theory of auchitya to the vexed question of several episodes in the great novels of the world can bring out the significance of those apparently irrelevant episodes. Evidently, the theory is very broad and universal in its appeal and can enrich our reading not only of Indian texts but also of non-Indian texts.

The discussion of the 3 powers of words called abidha, laksana and vyanjana by the theorists of Sanskrit poetics can also be exploited by the readers of Western poetry in a very positive manner. A reader, well-versed with the concept of laksana and its varios forms, can explicate many dark passages of the great literary works of the West and remove the obscurity involved very easily. Let us take for example the famous lines from the seventh stanza of Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale":

> The same that oft times hath

Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery-lands forlorn.

What precisely is the meaning of the expression "magic casements" English commentaries do not explain. But a fair knowledge of "Laksana" can easily clarify the position. There is definitely "arthabadha" here for 'casements' are, to all intents, inanimate things — they cannot be supposed to be charmed by the song of the nightingale because only animate beings with minds and hearts can be charmed. But when we take into account the word 'magic' with which 'casements' form a compound, we cannot help thinking of some kind of "adhara-adheya sambandha" involved here. This leads us to conclude that 'casements' here mean 'princesses' of the fairy-tales, sitting fixed to the 'casements' (window panes) of the castles located in some island, far away from 'human settlements': the castles are the places where the magicians of the fairy-tales have kept the princesses captives. The picture suggested is that of princesses, magically fixed to the casements, looking despondantly on the waves of the sea, surrounding the castle, cherishing the hope of some saviour-prince's arrival there for their liberation. Thus the expression 'magic casements' clearly means the princesses, fixed to the casements by the magic-wand of the magician who has kept them as captives for the purpose of marrying them some day. The word 'charm' which has given the word 'charmed' as the past tense of its own verb-form compels us to consider the comparative merits of 'charm' on the one hand and of 'magic' on the other. Both are the forms of 'enchantment' but 'charm' is clearly more powerful than magic, at least, in the view of Keats who asserts that the song of the nightingale has the power to undo what magic has done. The magic of the evil magician has rendered the captive princesses senseless and motionless — in a state of trance or stupification. But the song of the nightingale could charm the souls of even the princesses, under the spell of the magic of the magician, by nullifying the effects of the magic-words blown on the princesses concerned. Thus the knowledge of laksana can unravel the tangled knots of obscure passages of any language — Sanskrit, Hindi, English and Chinese alike. Similarly, the knowledge of vyanjana could be

equally fruitful to the reading of Western poetry. True, Western critics talks of 'suggestion' and 'suggested meaning' quite often. But the Sanskrit acaryas have probed the matter on a very grand scale. There are 15 different bases of abhidhamula vyanjana itself, what to talk of the bases of laksanamula vyanjana. There cannot be any doubt regarding the usefulness of vyanjana and how it functions; its knowledge is sure to enrich our knowledge of any poetry of the world. The symbolist poetry whether of France, Germany, England or America can be understood better by one who has mastered the vyanjana-vyapara of words at the feet of acaryas like Mammatha and Visvanatha. Let us take up the following lines from Sylvia Plath's famous poem "Daddy":

> Daddy, I have had to kill you,
> You died before I had time —
> Marble-heavy, a bag full of God,
> Ghastly statue with one grey toe
> Big as a Frisco-seal
> And a head in the freakish Atlantic
> Where it pours bean green over blue
> In the waters off beautiful Nauset. (II. 6-13)

British and American studies of the poem do not explain the lines satisfactorily but a student of vyanjana and its vyapara (how it functions) can explicate the lines quite satisfactorily. What is the meaning of the word 'kill' in the first line of the quotation? Auto Plath, the father of the poetess is already a thing of the past — he had died when Sylvia Plath was barely 7. So the word 'kill' cannot be taken in its usual sense; it has to be taken in the sense of 'getting rid of through some process of exorcism'. The memory of the father is haunting the mind of the poetess all the time and naturally she is feeling suffocated; she, therefore, wants to get rid of her obsession with her daddy; that is what the line: 'Daddy, I have had to kill you' presumably means. But how to interpret the second line: 'You died before I had time -'. The hyphen after 'time' compels us to take 'time' to mean 'time to kill'. That is to say that the poetess was too young to take an independent course and thus get rid of his influence when her father breathed his last and naturally her obsession with her father continued. The third line of the quotation 'Mar-

ble-heavy, a bag full of God' is really very perplexing. It can be taken as a description of the obsession-figure that was the father of the poetess so far her psyche was concerned where he was lurking all the time like a piece of sculpture made of marble. The word 'heavy' points to the undesirability of the father obsession, ever lurking in the mind of the process. The father also appeared in the mind of the poetess like 'a bag, full of God'. Evidently, the description is that of absolute reverence the poetess always felt for her father who was a virtual God to her,though that reverence did not have a salutary effect on her growth. This unsalutary aspect of the fatherly obsession becomes clear when the poetess describes her mental figure of the daddy as a 'ghastly statue'. The ghost-like behaviour of the father-fixation is clearly stressed here, requiring to be exorcized — mark the word 'grey' which is suggestive of death-liness, gloominess and cheerlessness. The details of the toe of the fatherly statue can be understood only through the biography of the poetess and that of her father. Auto Plath had hurt his toe accidently and the same had become gangrenous with the result that his leg had to be amputated and he had to wear artificial leg. This image of the father, in a way, an unwholesome image, was imprinted on the daughter's mind which never liked the sight. The adult mind of the poetess is recalling the father's form with an artificial leg having a toe which had struck her child-imagination as a big Frisco seal (i.e. a seal of the Frisian sea, known for the largest seals in the world). Here it must be made clear that Sylvia Plath has an ambiva-lent feeling for her father: she likes his activities in America and detests his European roots — his German ancestry. That is why the toe (i.e. Auto Plath's initial growth, the instrument of his migration from Europe, Polish Corridor, to be precise, to America) is grey and the head (i.e. the centre of intellectual power) pours green bean over blue waters of Atlantic. Here, it must be mentioned that Auto Plath was a professor of Botany at Boston University, Massachusetts, U.S.A., and worked on the behaviour of bees. The reference to the head, pouring 'bean green over blue' suggests the intellectual ac-tivity of Auto Plath by way of writing a book on bees. 'Beans' in the poetry of Sylvia Plath, invariably relate to bees. The word 'Nauset'

in 1.8 of the quotation makes the favourable American connection of Auto Plath crystal clear. The adjective 'beautiful', used by Nauset, is a pointer to it. Nauset is a sandy place; its modern name in Easthom. The poetess calls it 'beautiful' because its original inhabitants — the Nauset Indians — had saved the lives of their enemies — the Pilgrim Fathers (who were trying to uproot the natives of the area, i.e. Nauset Indians), when the latter had started starving, by providing them corn and bean. The poetess imagines the arrival of the Plaths in the company of the Pilgrim Fathers in 1620 at Nauset where they settled and one of them, namely, Auto Plath, benefitted the new land of their adoption through his botanical researches, 'pouring bean green over blue'. This interpretation of the lines, under discussion, has been possible only through the application of the rules by which vyanjana, both shabdi and arthi, works. Undoubtedly, the wisdom of the Sanskrit acaryas contained in their analysis of the powers of the word can be of great help in studying even non-Indian writings of imagination. This is so because the broad views of the acaryas are the outcome of their deep meditation on how poetic language works whether it is Indian or non-Indian.

However, there is no intention of claiming universal applicability only for the critical doctrines and concepts evolved in India. No; wisdom cannot be the monopoly of any nation or race; by God's grace, it can descend on any people on the earth and become the common property of humanity at large. There is no denying that many concepts of the West — Katharsis, Hamartia, Anagnorsis, Peripety, Unity, High Seriousness, Sublimity, Impersonality, Tension, Paradox, Realism, Naturalism, Expressionism and Impressionism, to name only a few, are not just true only of Western literature: they are equally true of Eastern literature as well. India and the rest of the world should be prepared to accept these critical terms and employ them freely in the discussion of their respective literatures. This is the age of globalization and the true spirit of globalization consists in bringing all literatures of the world on a common platform without any kind of prejudice or favour in the most objective manner. If the East in its pride of the great antiquity of its critical tradition refuses to accept healthy concepts of the West, it

would remain poorer than those countries that welcome and embrace them. Similarly, if the West in its arrogance of the advanced technology and prosperity, developed and acquired by it in the modern age, refuses the gifts from India in the form of critical terms unknown to its own tradition, it would be liable to be charged with foolhardiness and self-conceitedness. The healthiest attitude would be that of give and take, fellow-feeling and mutual respect — all in the name of enlarging human vision and understanding. The following statement of Kalidasa, full of sagacity and practical wisdom should be our motto:

> puranamityeva na Sadhu Sarvam,
> na Chapi kavyam navamityavadyama.
> Santah parikya anyatart bhajante,
> mudhah parapratyayeneyabuddhih. (*Malavikagnimitram*, 1/2)
> (All that is old cannot be good simply because it is old and all that is new cannot be declared bad simply becuse it is new. Wise people accept that which is wholesome after examining its merits and demerits and the fools act at the suggestions of others (without applying their minds).

All that is Indian with a long antiquity, therefore, cannot be said to be viable and significant and all that is western cannot be irrelevant and insignificant either. Both East and West must be prepared to hear the voice of sanity and to accept all that is useful and wholesome in either tradition. 'East is East, West is West/ The twain can never meet' is a myth which ought to be exploded at the earliest — the sooner the better. At least in the sphere of poetry this dichotomy has no place for poetry speaks to the heart and human heart is all alike whether it is of the East or of the West. If it were not so, it would be difficult to explain as to how the West danced with joy when it read Kalidasa's *Abhijnanashakuntalam* when Sir William Jones published its Latin translation in 1789 and its English translation the following year (i.e. 1790). And equally true is the case of Shakespeare whose plays are enjoyed by all students of English literature throughout the world. Literature defies all barriers — geographical, racial, religious, cultural, ethical, political and personal.

NOTE

It is regretted that diacritical marks have not been strictly followed in this article because of the computer operator's inability to do so (Editor).

THE ARABS AND THE ARAB WORLD IN THE PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE

Brahma Dutta Sharma

In Shakespeare's dramas we find observations about the Arab countries like Arabia, Palestine, Egypt and Morocco, a number of the inhabitants of the Arabic countries like the Prince of Morocco, and Queen Cleopatra of Egypt figure in them, and a number of remarks have been made about the ways of life in the Arab world and also about the landscapes of this part of the globe. A study of these observations, characters and remarks can enable us to figure out what Shakespeare believed the Arab world to be. Let us begin with the observations made about the Arabic countries.

Palestine is one of the regions which figures in the play *Othello.* Here Palestine has been described as a holy place where the Christians go on pilgrimage to get their Lord's blessings so that they may realize their ends. The fact comes to light when we read Emilia's following observation made in the presence of Desdemona about a lady who was in love with Lodovico :

> I know a lady in Venice would have walked barefoot to
> Palestine for a touch of his nether lip. (*Othello* IV, iii, 36-37)

Arabia figures in *Macbeth* and *The Merchant of Venice.* In *Macbeth* Arabia has been regarded as a land producing perfumes as the conscience-stricken Lady Macbeth says in the sleep-walking scene: " 'All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand'" (*Macbeth* V, i, 48-49).This remark of hers makes it evident that according to Shakespeare the perfumes of Arabia were known for their body-sweetening quality even in Macbeth's Scotland. Arabia has been described as a wide land in Shakespeare's drama *The Merchant of Venice*, as the Prince of Morocco in this drama describes this region as " '[t]he ... vasty wilds/ [o]f wide Arabia' " (*The Merchant of Venice* II, vii, 41-42). This signifies that according to the Prince of Morocco Arabia in the days of Portia was a wide country having in it a number of vast unused areas.

Some trees of Arabia have been described by Othello a little before he stabs himself: " '...the Arabian trees [which drop fast]/ Their medicinable gum' " (*Othello* V, ii, 345-46). It means Shake-

speare was conscious of the fact that there existed in Arabia some trees the gum of which was used as a medicine, though he does not mention their names. Shakespeare also believed that spells could be given by some Arab charmers to some objects. This fact comes to light when we find that in *Othello* the handkerchief, which Othello gives to Desdemona and which later makes Othello regard his wife as faithless, was the one to which a spell had been given by an Egyptian, as is evident from the following report of Othello:

> That handkerchief
> Did an Egyptian to my mother gave.
> She was a charmer, and could almost read
> The thoughts of people. She told her, while she kept it
> 'Twould make her amiable and subdue my father
> Entirely to her love; but if she lost it
> Or made a gift of it, my father's eye
> Should hold her loathed, and his spirits should hunt
> After new fancies." (*Othello* III, iv, 51-59)

Since Othello is very loving to Desdemona so long as the handkerchief is in her possession, and loathes her after she has lost it, it appears that everything is happening in accordance with the spell given to the handkerchief, and one can infer that according to Shakespeare a spell was actually given to this handkerchief. This implies that according to Shakespeare there lived in Egypt in Othello's days some people who could put spells on objects like a handkerchief.

The Ptolemaic Egypt has been described in *Antony and Cleopatra.* In this play Egypt is a very rich country noted for its splendour. The splendour of the country can be seen in the way Cleopatra went to meet Antony to accord him a warm welcome: the poop of the barge in which she was sitting was " 'beaten gold' " (*Antony and Cleopatra* II, ii, 196), " 'the oars were silver' " (II, ii, 198), the sails were " 'so perfumed that/ The winds were love-sick with them' " (II, ii 197-98). Even the performance of the flute-players and the way the sailors sailed the boat keeping in harmony with the flute players, which has been reported by Enobarbus in the words:

> ...the oars
> Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
> The water which they beat to follow faster,
> As amorous to their strokes. (II, ii, 198-200)

signify that the music was so attractive that the sailors made the strokes of their oars rhythmic in harmony with the notes of the flutes. Since the barge in which Cleopatra sat looked like a " 'burnished throne' "(II, ii, 195) it is obvious that she was rich enough to get her barge decorated so well.

Another fact evidencing the fact that according to Shakespeare Cleopatra's Egypt was very rich and that Cleopatra had a lot of gold in her possession is that when she went to receive Antony she had in her pavilion " 'cloth of gold, of tissue,/ O'erpicturing that Venus where we see/ The fancy out-work nature' " (II, ii, 203-05). Thirdly, when a messenger comes to her from Rome, she says to him:

> ...If thou say Antony lives, is well,
> Or friends with Caesar, or not captive to him,
> I'll set thee in a shower of gold, and hail
> Rich pearls upon thee. (II, v, 43-46)

Since she is able to set a messenger in a shower of gold and hail rich pearls upon him it is evident that she has rich stores of gold and pearls. Fourthly, when Antony and Cleopatra proclaim their sons kings of kings, they sit in " 'chairs of gold' " (II, vi, 3-5). Fifthly, Cleopatra promises to give Scarus, Antony's favourite soldier, armour of gold (IV, viii, 26-27). All these facts signify that according to Shakespeare she had a lot of gold in her possession.

Since in *Antony and Cleopatra* Queen Cleopatra and her maid Charmian get themselves bitten by asps and die (V, ii, 301-11, 319-26) in order to escape falling into the hands of the aggressor Octavius Caesar and get humiliated as is evident from Cleopatra's expression of her fear in her remark:

> Saucy Rictors
> Will catch at us like strumpets, and scald rhymers
> Ballad us out o'tune; the quick comedians
> Extemporally will stage us, and present
> Our Alexandrine revels; Antony
> Shall be brought drunken forth, and I shall see
> Some squeaking Cleopatra boy my greatness
> I' th' posture of a whore. (*Antony and Cleopatra* V, ii, 213-20)

it is evident that according to Shakespeare this Queen of Egypt and her maid committed, what the Japanese call *hara-kiri* and preferred death to dishonour. In other words, in Shakespeare's view these

ladies from the Arab world were self-respectful enough to kill themselves in order to escape getting insulted at the hands of the aggressor who had conquered their country.

Another fact that deserves mention here is that according to Shakespeare the land of Egypt was very fertile in the days of Cleopatra as his Antonio reports to his countrymen in Rome that as the waters in the river Nile ebb, " '...the seedman/ Upon the slime and ooze scatters his grain,/ And shortly comes to harvest' " (II, vii, 21-23) and, thus, does very little work even to get a rich harvest.

Astrology was at a highly developed stage in the Ptolemaic days in Egypt according to Shakespeare as in the play *Antony and Cleopatra* there is a soothsayer who makes correct predictions about the future of Charmian. This soothsayer predicts that Charmian shall outlive Cleopatra when he tells her: " 'You shall outlive the lady whom you serve' " (I, ii, 30) and the prediction comes true as when Cleopatra, having applied an asp to her breast and another to her arm, dies, Charmian is still alive to bid good-bye to her dead mistress in the words:

> So, fare thee well
> Now boast thee, death, in thy possession lies
> A lass unparallel'd. (V, ii, 312-14).

However, militarily the Arab world in *Antony and Cleopatra* is weaker than Rome and almost the whole of it has become a part of the Roman empire and the Romans are vanquishing one country after another. For example, Ventidius, one of the Roman soldiers, announces his victory over Parthia in Syria when he declares:

> Now, darling Parthia, are thou struck, and now
> Pleas'd fortune does of Marcus Crassus' death
> Make me revenger. (III, i, 1-3)

And Egypt becomes a part of the Roman empire when the joint forces of Antony and Cleopatra are defeated by Octavius Caesar and Antony himself admits:

> All is lost! ....
> My fleet hath yielded to the foe, and yonder
> They cast their caps up and carouse together
> Like friends long lost. (IV, xii, 9-13)

Shakespeare also draws his readers' attention to the Egyptian

monarchs' practice of building their monuments in their own life-times. He does so in the play *Antony and Cleopatra.* When Antony's fleet yields to Caesar's and Antony not only declares: " 'This foul Egyptian hath betrayed me' " (IV, xii, 10) but also threatens Cleopatra that he will kill her: " 'Vanish, or I shall give thee thy deserving/ and blemish Caesar's triumph' " (IV, xii, 32-33) Cleopatra resolves to hide in her monument as she says to her women servants: " 'To th' monument' " (IV, xiii, 6). This evidences that Cleopatra had built her monument, according to Shakespeare, during her own life-time.

Let us now come to the persons from the Arab world. The most remarkable of them is Queen Cleopatra of Egypt. Even though she is Ptolemy's widow, she has given birth to the children of Julius Caesar and Mark Antony. The fact has been reported by Octavius Caesar when he mentions Caesaerion, who is believed to be the son of Julius Caesar, and two sons of Cleopatra and Antony, namely Alexander and Ptolemy:

> Contemning Rome, [Antony] has done all this and more
> In Alexandria. Here is the manner of 't
> I' th' market place on a tribunal silver'd,
> Cleopatra and himself in chairs of gold
> Were publicly enthron'd; at the feet sat
> Caesarion, whom they call my father's son,
> And all the unlawful issue that their lust
> Since then hath made between them....
> His sons he there proclaim'd the kings of kings;
> Great Media, Parthia, and Armenia
> He gave to Alexander; to Ptolemy he assign'd
> Syria, Cilicea and Phoenicia. (II, vi, 1-16)

But still she has been shown to have been a faithful beloved of Antony alone, as when Antony has died, she not only says, addressing dead Antony: " 'Husband, I come' " (V, ii, 285) but also gets herself bitten by a snake and thereby kills herself with the belief that he must be waiting for her in the other world and by killing herself she can join him as she says:

> Come thou mortal wretch
> With thy sharp teeth this knot intrinsicate
> Of life at once untie. Poor venomous fool
> Be angry and dispatch. (V, ii, 301-04)

This signifies that even though circumstances had made Cleopatra a bed-fellow of several men, she was faithful to one single man.

Another man from the Arab world figures in *The Merchant of Venice*. He is the Prince of Morocco. He has two remarkable features; first he suffers from an inferiority complex on account of his black complexion, and, secondly, he judges things by their external appearances. That he considers himself inferior to the whites on account of his black complexion is evident from the fact that the moment he finds himself face to face before Portia he starts explaining as to why his complexion is black, as he says to her that he is black because his country is closer to the sun than is any of the European countries, and that even if his complexion is black, his blood is as red as that of any European. He says:

> Mislike me not for my complexion,
> The shadowed livery of the burnish'd sun
> To whom I am a neighbour, and near bred,
> Bring me the fairest creature northward born,
> Whom Phoebus' fire scarce thaws the icicles
> And let us make incision for your love
> To prove whose blood is reddest, his or mine.
>
> (*The Merchant of Venice* II, I, 1-7)

The fact that he judges things by their appearances and does not go deeper to know them comes to light when he chooses the golden casket under the impression that Portia's picture must be there in the casket of gold because gold is the most precious of the metals of which the caskets are made:

> Never so rich a gem
> Was set in worse than gold. They have in England
> A coin that bears the figure of an angel
> Stamp'd in gold; but that's insculp'd upon,
> But here an angel in a golden bed
> Lies all within. (II, vii, 54-59)

This choice of his and the judgment on his choice embodied in the words:

> All that glisters is not gold,
> Often have you heard that told
> Many a man his life hath sold
> But my outside to behold.
> Gilded tombs do worms infold

Had you been as wise as bold
Young in limbs in judgment old
Your answer had not been inscroll'd. (II, vii, 65-72)

signify that even though he is bold , he is not wise enough to know that appearances are often deceptive and that even though gold has an attractive outside, it may have an inside of a different kind.

There have been given details of several Arabian towns and cities in the plays of Shakespeare. One of them is Alexandria. This city figures in the play *Asntony and Cleopatra.* This city, as shown in this drama is a city noted for its abundance and prosperity as according to Enobarbus the Roman soldiers living here with Antony " 'did sleep day out of countenance and made the night light with drinking' " (*Antony and Cleopatra* II, i, 181-82), and did feasting so richly that for the breakfast of a dozen persons they roasted eight wild boars (II, i,183-84).

Another city from the Arab world in Shakespeare is Jerusalem. It is talked about in *King Henry IV Part I.* Soon after coming to the throne King Henry IV reveals to his lords his plan to try to recover Jerusalem from the hands of the non-Christians, as it is the city of Jesus:

Therefore friends,
As far as to the sepulchre of Christ
Whose soldier now, under whose blessed cross
We are impressed and engag'd to fight –
Forthwith a power of England shall we levy,
To chase these pagans in those holy fields
Over whose acres walk'd those blessed feet
Which fourteen hundred years ago were nail'd
For our advantage on the bitter cross. (*Henry IV* I, I, 18-27)

In other words, Shakespeare believes that the Christians treat the city of Jerusalem as a holy place and want it to be in their hands rather than in the hands of non-Christians, and that in the days of King Henry IV it was in the hands of the pagans.

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All quatations cited in the text of the paper are from *William Shakespeare, The Complete Works*, ed. Alexander Peter. London: EIBS & Collins, 1951. Rept. 1964.

THE RELEVANCE OF SONGS IN THE COMEDIES OF SHAKESPEARE

Iffat Ara

An appreciation of music, song and dance was the fashion of the day and there were several ways of incorporating these into art. Shakespeare was more inclined towards spiritual and divine music that he associated with some of his characters. All the plays of Shakespeare reverberate with musical overtones and some of these abound in songs whose vocal chord is heard frequently. The sound of music and use of songs add to the charm of the comedies that become meaningful and impressive through the songs sung by the different characters.

Act two scene two of *A Mid Summer Night's Dream* opens with song and dance to make the play resemble a masque but it has the effect of a lullaby to cause Titania sleepiness that she yearns for eagerly. Oberon thus gets a chance to put a spell of magic on his wavering Queen who is cross with him for she wants to retain the baby boy she owns and Oberon wishes to make him his follower to explore the wild forest. The Fairies enter together and sing a song causing sleep and it has a soothing effect:

> You spotted snakes with double-tongue,
> Thorny hedge-hogs, be not seen;
> Newts, and blind-worms, do no wrong;
> Come not near our fairy queen.
> Philomel, with melody,
> Sing in our sweet lullaby;
> Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla, lullaby:
> Never harm,
> Nor spell, nor charm,
> Come our lovely lady nigh;
> So, good night, with lullaby.
> Weaving spiders, come not here;
> Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence!
> Beetles black, approach not near;
> Worm nor snail, do no offence.
> Philomel, with melody,&C. (Act II, Sc.ii, lines 9-26)

The fairy characters are in a way representatives of Nature , and so have close association with flowers, insects, birds and reptiles. The

snakes having double-tongue and hedge-hogs with thorns are asked to move away for such dangerous things are likely to harm the beautiful, delicate fairy queen. Newts, the blind worms having stings causing pain, are therefore asked to avoid indulging in any kind of mischief which might disturb the queen. Instead, Philomel, the classical name for the nightingale, with its sweet singing voice, is invited to sing a lullaby to the Queen of fairies. Also, the little fairies in anticipation try to ward off all kinds of harmful effects and magical charms from affecting the beautiful Queen. The spiders weaving their webs are warned to go away instead of causing inconvenience to the fairy Queen for they were thought to be poisonous. The Black beetles, with their ugly appearance, should not be seen to cause uneasiness to the Queen. They request the nightingale to amuse the Queen with her sweet songs.

The first encounter of the fairies and the rustics is interesting because it leads to the transformation of Bottom into an ass on whose head a fake mask is placed to make him look like a donkey. Though he is made a target of ridicule he sings merrily to show his normal state of mind. He does not feel lonely even if his friends leave him, being scared of his ass's head that has changed his appearance:

> The Ousel-Cock, so black of hue,
> With orange- tawny bill,
> The throstle with his note so true,
> The wren with little quill.

And he continues to sing inspite of interruption:

> The finch, the sparrow, and the lark,
> The plain-song cuckoo gray,
> Whose note full many a man doth mark
> And dares not answer, nay; (Act III, Sc. I, lines 118-127)

Bottom mentions many natural singers whose familiar songs attract all. The male black-bird has black complexion and dull-yellowish brown beak, the throstle who is perfect in tune, the wren whose throat is fine and suitable for singing, the finch, the sparrow, and the lark who are also known for singing and there is the simple song of the gray Cuckoo, whose voice is associated on account of its sound with the word "cuckold", and the bird seems to mock at married men

whose wives are faithless. He is not swayed by emotions and keeps his head cool even though it is a strange surprise for him but the fairy queen is full of romantic illusions.

The Queen yearns for peace of mind, and Oberon readily accepts reconciliation. The sound of music that softens hard-hearts and moves and charms all is heard. The fairy-king becomes friendly to his Queen for he intends to bless Theseus and Hippolyta, along with Titania, on the occasion of their Wedding-day celebrations:

Then, my queen, in silence sad,
Trip we after the night's shade;
We the globe can compass soon,
Swifter than the wandering moon. (Act IV, Sc. i, lines 95-98)

The play ends with a song and dance which communicates the feeling of a masque and which may be called a marriage-song:

Though the house give glimmering light
By the dead and drowsy fire;
Every elf and fairy sprite
Hop as light as bird from brier;
And this ditty after me
Sing and dance it trippingly. (Act V, Sc, ii, lines 21-26)

Oberon gives a lead to the song that follows it. He blesses the royal house or the couple Theseus and Hippolyta. Thereafter he enjoins the fairies to sing softly. Then Titania comes forward to make her own relevant contribution to the merry occasion:

First, rehearse your song by rote,
To each word a warbling note:
Hand in hand, with fairy grace,
Will we sing, and bless this place. (Song and dance)
Now, until the break of day,
Through this house each fairy stray.
To the best bride-bed will we,
Which by us shall blessed be;
And the issue there create
Even shall be fortunate.
So shall all the couples three
Even true in loving be;
And the blots of Nature's hand
Shall not in their issue stand:
Never mole, hare-lip, nor scar,
Nor mark prodigious, such as are

Despised in Nativity,
Shall upon their children be.
With this field-dew consecrate,
Every fairy take his gait,
And each several chamber bless,
Through this place, with sweet peace;
And the owner of it blest,
Ever shall in safety rest.
Trip away;
Make no stay;
Meet me all by break of day. (Act V, Sc. ii, lines 27-53)

The songs and dances in the play are indistinguishable from the theme of the play which has a firm hold on the audience. The play is a celebration of Duke Theseus's nuptials. It is like the festivals organized in Shakespeare's day which through songs, dances, pageants and a variety of characters like witches, devils, fairies and goblins magically transformed men into birds or animals and also made them perform other unbelievable miracles. The play echoes with lovely sounds and rhythms and even the speeches of the characters have musical effect.

In *As You Like It* Amiens sings a song of the 'greenwood' and highlights the elegance and the genuine feelings relating to the countryside that prevail there. He also considers the song of the bird similar to that sung by human beings and it offers the same sense of delight that is expressed by the high-born persons who have no cares to vex them. He therefore invites people to enjoy the warmth of Nature which will enable them to resist the attack of the inclement weather:

Under the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat;
Come hither, come hither, come hither:
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather. (Act II, Sc. V, lines 1-8)

At the request of Jacques, Amiens sings the song left incomplete by him. In the Forest of Arden one who yearns not for precedence nor power and affluence but seeks satisfaction from the

simplicities of life will be entertained by solitude and nurtured by objects of Nature:

Who doth ambition shun, [All together here.
And loves to live i' the sun
Seeking the food he eats,
And pleas'd with what he gets,
Come hither, come hither, come hither:
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather. (Act II, sc. V, lines 35-42)

Jacques, the serious thinker, does not like the 'gallant folly' of Amiens and parodies his song in a cynical way:

If it do come to pass
That any man turn ass,
Leaving his wealth and ease,
A Stubborn will to please,
Ducdame, ducdame, ducdame:
Here shall he see
Gross fools as he,
An if he will come to me. (Act II, Sc. V, lines 47-54)

He does not acknowledge the wisdom of those who think they can flourish in the humble surroundings of the countryside and forget their ease and comfort in which they were reared up.

The Duke and Jacques indulge in grave conversation reviewing the complex pattern of human existence. Soon he invites Amiens to entertain the guests with song and music.

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh-ho! Sing, heigh-ho! Unto the green holly.
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly.
Then heigh-ho! the holly!
This life is most jolly.
Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters Warp,

Thy Sting is not so sharp
As friend remember'd not.
Heigh-ho! Heigh-ho! Unto thy green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly.
Then heigh-ho! The holly!
This life is most jolly. (Act II, Sc. VII, lines 174-193)

Amiens in his song refers to the enchantments of Nature despite their unpleasantness sometimes. In contrast is the ruthlessness of human beings, their ungratefulness, pretention, folly and cynicism. Through the refrain of the song he determines the fact that life wrestles both with pain and happiness.

Orlando and Rosalind, and Touchstone and Audrey feel the magic of love that enthralls them. May be Touchstone is not quite serious about this romantic sentiment and merely intends to mock at his superiors by taking love as lightly as he does all serious aspects of life. And the scraps of an old song echo his thoughts and reflect his unstable mind:

O sweet Oliver!
O brave Oliver!
Leave me not behind thee:
but, —
Wind away,
Begone, I say?
I will not to wedding with thee. (Act III, Sc. iii, lines 89-95)

Hunting in the countryside was not merely a joyful activity but essential for providing food and sustenance. Jacques mocks at the foresters who feel proud of their achievement and then in accordance with the tradition prevalent in the 16th century this 'woodland craft' and its exhibition was celebrated by garlanding the huntsman, putting deer's horns upon his head to mark this brave activity and singing songs. Amiens is assigned this job for Jacques draws pleasure from Amien's singing:

What shall he have that kill'd the deer?
His leather skin and horns to wear.
Then sing him home. [The rest shall bear this burden.
Take thou no scorn to wear the horn;
It was a crest ere thou wast born:
Thy father's father wore it,
And thy father bore it:

The horn, the horn, the lusty horn
Is not a thing to laugh to scorn. (Act IV, sc. ii, lines 10-18)

Amiens invites all to sing the burden of the song to highlight his endeavour and skillfulness.

Touchstone with his sense of humour also offers hope to Audrey that they will soon be married. And to give a taste of that glittering hour he urges the page of the banished Duke to sing a song:

It was a lover and his lass,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
That O'er the green corn – field did pass,
In the spring time, the only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing, hey ding a ding, ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.
Between the acres of the rye,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino,
These pretty country folks would lie,
In the Spring time, & C.
This Carol they began-that hour,
With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino;
How that a life was but a flower
In the Spring time, & C
And therefore take the present time,
With a heigh, and a ho, and a hey nonino;
For love is crowned with the prime
In the spring time, & C. (Act V, Sc. iii, lines 15-32)

Youth is a period of time when passions are stirred and Spring brings about sportiveness. Life seems a reflection of the beauty and tenderness of a flower because like spring youth is also attractive. Touchstone, like Feste, has no touch of the musician in him and yet he pretends to act like a music critic and shows distinction in this regard. He denounces the song as inadequate and does not like its musical quality.

The play *As You Like It* ends with a wedding-song that Hymen, god of marriage, sings in anticipation before the actual wedding rites are performed:

Wedding is great Juno's crown:
O blessed bond of board and bed!
'T is Hymen peoples every town;
High Wedlock then be honoured.

Honour, high honour, and renown,
To Hymen, god of every town! (Act V, Sc. IV, lines, 137 to 142)

When the romantic pairs of lovers in *As You Like It* are united music and dance accompany them as a necessary adjunct.

As *Twelfth Night* refers to the twelfth day following Christmas it is marked by enjoyment and gaiety. This play presents an Italian setting and it concentrates on a love-story. It was performed before Queen Elizabeth I in her own palace at Whitehall and the Queen's guest of honour on the occasion was an Italian nobleman named Don Virgino Orsino, Duke of Bracciano. The handsome young man impressed Shakespeare so much that he named his hero Orsino in the play. In *Twelfth Night* all the characters experience love but none except Viola has a sane attitude and proper understanding of it. Orsino's apparently deep love for Olivia is triggered towards viola. Olivia, the dedicated lady, absorbed in her brother's 'dead love' falls in love at the first sight of Viola disguised as Cesario. Viola's love for the Duke is constant and chaste. Malvolio is a victim of self-love. Maria, who intends to marry Sir Toby, is wise and sagacious. The clown Feste, an objective observer of all the fools let loose in the battle-ground of love, judges each character in an almost perfect manner. His dreamy old ballads that he sings are an asset to make pleasant fun of the sentimental and love-sick Duke Orsino. His witty remarks and the songs he sings reflect the state of mind of all characters.

Feste's songs are varied in accordance with the mood and temperament of characters concerned. His melodious voice enthralls the lovers and effects a psychological transformation in them. When the Duke expresses his sense of gratitude to Feste who sang well he replies good-humouredly: "No pains, Sir; I take pleasure in singing, Sir!" He expresses his thoughts freely without any inhibition and also refrains from indulgence in obscenity. Shakespeare especially presented a clown in each comedy whose inclination towards music was inborn and therefore he was easily provoked to sing.

No other play except *Twelfth Night* begins and ends with music. All the songs are assigned to Feste for he has the knack to compose and sing very beautiful and appropriate songs. Duke Orsino of

Illyria is fond of music and love which he feels deeply for Countess Olivia. But in reality he seems to be more in love with language, music and himself. His speech "If music be the food of love" has more links with music and poetry than with love. When Viola is shipwrecked and separated from her brother she decides to disguise herself as a pageboy and serve Orsino, the melancholy Duke. She came to know about his love of music and she could also sing in accompaniment with musical instruments. The Duke demands music to ease his agonized mind.

Feste's songs illustrate the mood and temperament of each character for whom he sings a song and thus has a dramatic relevance to the play. The remarks of Sir Andrew regarding the 'learned foolery' and good singing voice of Feste make it clear that the clown was trained and educated to serve the purpose of music and humour. As Sir Toby and Sir Andrew are engaged in the act of drinking they offer reward in the form of money to Feste for the good office of singing a song to add to their gaiety. And Feste sings a song before them that is found in Morley's *Consort Lessons* (both in 1599 and the 1611 editions) and also in Queen Elizabeth's *Virginal Book*:

> O mistress mine! Where are you roaming?
> O! stay and hear; your true love's coming.
> That can sing both high and low.
> Trip no further, pretty sweeting;
> Journey's end in lovers meeting,
> Every wise man's son doth know. (Act II, sc. iii, lines 37-42)

This song is not Shakespeare's own composition but a popular ballad that Shakespeare used like a song in the context of the play and thus served his purpose. In this love-song the beloved is advised to have patience and observe discipline and show generosity in matters of love. The lover is capable of singing both in high and low tunes which refers to the Elizabethan belief that singing reveals the softness of human nature and therefore those who are kind are fond of singing. The beloved, called 'sweeting', a term of endearment, meaning 'twenty times sweet' is asked not to remain indifferent in matters of love for the truth is that 'Journeys end in lover's meeting' which is in fact the essence of the play *Twelfth Night*.

The above-mentioned play has a note of joy and merry-making

which reflects Shakespeare's optimism. There is also a tinge of sadness when the clown meditates on the philosophy of love and its relevance to the past and the present. The transience of youth and love, a Renaissance commonplace, is also a matter of concern. It is therefore not wise to sit in isolation without satisfying one's natural and normal human desires. The youths need not curb their natural impulses:

> What is love? 'tis not hereafter;
> Present mirth hath present laughter.
> What's to come is still unsure:
> In delay there lies no plenty;
> Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty,
> Youth's a stuff will not endure. (Act II, Sc. iii, lines 45-50)

All the minor characters, Sir Andrew, Sir Toby, the Clown and Maria, are in a hilarious mood singing and dancing and indulging in humour contrary to their superiors. There are old catches like 'Hold thy peace' (Act II, Sc. iii) sung by Sir Toby, Sir Andrew and Feste in this play. When Maria criticizes the three men for being quarrelsome and mischievous they call themselves: "Three merry men be we" which is the title of a song. Thus their love of music is emphasized here.

The Elizabethan songs are fairly long especially those presented in the comedies. One may cite the example of: "Come away, come away death". The Clown sings this song and as in a soliloquy expresses his thoughts freely:

> Come away, come away, death,
> And in sad cypress let me be laid;
> Fly away, fly away, breath;
> I am slain by a fair cruel maid.
> My shroud of white, stuck all with yew,
> O! prepare it.
> My part of death, no one so true
> Did share it.
> Not a flower, not a flower sweet,
> On my black coffin let there be strown,
> Not a friend, not a friend greet
> My poor Corse, where my bones shall be thrown.
> A thousand thousand sighs to save,
> Lay me, O! where

Sad true lover never find my grave,
To weep there. (Act II, Sc. iv, lines 42-66)

The Clown in this song visualizes death when it overcomes the person concerned who is wrapped in black cypress cloth signifying mourning and laid to rest in the grave. This death is caused by the indifference and cruelty of the beloved. The white cloth spread over the dead body is covered with yew, the branches of this plant being symbols of mourning. No one will spread flowers on the black coffin to pay tribute to the dead person. Also no friends will visit the tomb where he is laid to rest. He therefore wishes to be buried in a remote place to remain unknown and unlamented even by a true sad lover. Feste is a character expressing his moods in a variety of ways. When he is with Orsino he scans his brain to condemn his melancholy. He thinks that the Duke's sorrow on account of lack of response from Olivia shows his indulgence in extremity of temperament and self-centredness. And then he mocks at him that the same love of solitude will be his lot even after his sad demise when he will remain unmourned and unblessed and will lie alone in his grave.

The same tone continues when Feste comically imitates the pretentious attitude and behaviour of Malvolio. Feste mocks at the Puritans who neither hear music nor do they have any aesthetic sense. The Fool replies to Malvolio's remark "Go away" as follows:

I am gone, Sir,
And anon, Sir,
I'll be with you again
In a trice,
Like to the old Vice,
Your need to sustain;
Who with dagger of lath,
In his rage and his wrath,
Cries, Ah, ah! To the devil:
Like a mad lad,
Pare thy nails, dad;
Adieu, goodman devil. (Act IV, Sc. ii lines 118-129)

In this song which resembles an old song he conveys the truth. He will leave but return in a moment. He compares himself to the Vice in the old Morality Plays who will satisfy the madman Malvolio, a representative of the Devil. He will carry the required material to

indulge in counterfeit and beat the Devil and also speaks on behalf of Malvolio who will be cured of his madness. He will trim the nails of Malvolio as the Vice does in the case of the devil and then Feste bids him farewell who is a devil in the guise of a gentleman. This song is just a reflection of Malvolio's unconscious link with the devil. Also the point of satire is that Malvolio, being a Puritan, and therefore opposed to singing is being criticized by an Elizabethan jester.

At the end of the play it is Feste who stays on the stage to sing Shakespeare's most wistful song. It may be a revision of a folk-song but here in the play it serves the purpose of a farewell-song or an epilogue bringing us back to the wind and the rain that blows and falls every day. Here he relates the story of his life in simple terms:

When that I was a little tiny boy,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain;
A foolish thing was but a toy,
For the rain it raineth every day.
But when I came to man's estate,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain;
'Gainst knaves and thieves men shut their gate,
For the rain it raineth every day.
But when I came, alas! To wive,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain;
By swaggering could I never thrive,
For the rain it raineth every day.
But when I cam unto my beds,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain;
With toss-pots still had drunken heads,
For the rain it raineth every day.
A great while ago the world begun,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain;
But that's all one, our play is done,
And we'll strive to please you every day. (Act V, Sc. I, lines 377-396)

This song, like Jacques's speech about Seven Ages of Man in *As You Like It,* presents a very quaint picture of life. When Feste was young he was immature and did not take things seriously and life was a plaything for him. The repetition of the refrain of the song "with hey, ho, the wind and the rain; For the rain it raineth everyday" refers to the eternal enjoyment of Nature and its blessings. And

then he grew up to be a man passing through the manifold experiences of life. In this stage he is capable of indulging in dishonourable and foolish acts. And then unknowingly he stepped into old age, a period of decline. Hence his mood reflects both realism and fancy, truth and illusion which in turn is the impression created by the Illyrian lords and ladies. The song also lays emphasis on the fact that one passes from a state of innocence to that of experience and during this enterprise one undergoes all kinds of trials and tribulations but at the end like the characters in *Twelfth Night* one becomes mature and sensible. The concept of rain falling throughout suggests the concept of hope and happiness provided we adopt a sane attitude towards life. Feste is the genius of *Twelfth Night* and he is also regarded as 'the most charming of Shakespeare's fools'. He has "a sweet melancholy" about him and he is regarded as "a superb singer" and that is why though he belongs to Olivia's household he is welcomed warmly by Duke Orsino. Feste describes himself at the end as one who possesses intelligence and radiance while others are only embodiments of vitality.

Shakespeare also made an arrangement of court singers and instrumentalists for making the plays impressive and presentable before an august audience. But very few notes of instrumental music have been preserved relating to Shakespeare's plays except the Witches' dances occurring in the play *Macbeth*. Vocal music in Shakespeare's plays sets the mood. The songs are therefore usually accompanied by music. In Queen Elizabeth's times some dances were performed along with music while others were merely played like the verse "Ballad of Constant Susana" which is referred to by Sir Toby: "There dwelt a man in Babylon". Shakespeare lays emphasis on two aspects of human life through song and music. One is a proper assessment of humanity and the other is relevance of love to life.

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MYTHOLOGY OF FREEDOM THROUGH FANTASY: AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL EXPERIENCE AND POPULAR CULTURE IN WILLIAM BURROUGHS'S *CITIES OF THE RED NIGHT*

K.B. Razdan

Cities of the Red Night becomes akin to *Nova Express* in using constructed autobiographical experience and popular culture. Burroughs makes extensive use of new materials from both sources. The author's experiences as a drug-addict constitute the very narrative material; in fact, childhood memories and especially the sexual fantasies of adolescence, form the very crux of the autobiographical material in this novel. Not only this, a comprehensive pop mythology, that uses popular materials to present a critique of contemporary reality, becomes the technique to create alternate realities. The earlier addiction metaphor, illustrated in works like *Naked Lunch* and *Nova Express,* gets replaced by sexuality as the central metaphor. The entire novel gets divided into three books, with alternating inter-related plot of suspense. The structure of popular thrillers is also imitated, similar to those written by Fredrick Forsythe whom Burroughs admired. Pleasure and Freedom through fantasy balance the experience of bondage, repression and death. Sexual fantasy gets linked to artistic creation. Burroughs's recurrent observation "that art can be made by everyone and that everyone is an artist", forms an orientation quite different, besides being a powerful formulation of the author's creative autobiographical axis. What *Cities of the Red Night* exactly reflects is providing new insights into prevalent issues, giving greater importance to the ability of the writer in creating new worlds. Writing gets transcreated as an art-form that cannot be replaced by other media and the narrative also becomes structurally a creative cocktail incorporating fiction, a pirate story told in diary form and the detective story which adopts the hardboiled, factual-style of the cynical private eye. The story about the cities involves Burroughs's typical periodic style, with all the three stories taking popular narratives as their inspiration. These stories cannot be labeled as imitations of popular stories because these contain

typical themes and motives of Burroughs, which transform the popular into the avant-garde.

The mythology of freedom through fantasy attains a culmination in *Cities of the Red Night*. The author's second mythology, like the Nova myth, becomes a part of the autobiographical material and this is how the childhood memories, along with the sexual fantasies of adolescence, get illustrated:

> Farnsworth lay down on his shirt and pants and fell into a wordless vacuum, feeling the sun or his back and the faint ache of the healing scratch. He saw Ali sitting naked above him, Ali's hand messaging his back, moving down to the buttocks.... he saw as if projected on a screen a strange incident from his adolescence..... He was alone in the room. In the case was the figure, about two feet long, of a reclining man.....and the face was of reptile or animal, something between an alligator and a jaguar.
>
> .... Ali's hands parted his buttocks, he spit on his rectum-his body opening and the figure entering him in a silent rush.
>
> .... Farnsworth as an adolescent lying face down on sand, Ali is fucking him and he squirms with a slow wallowing movement showing his teeth in a depraved smile. (*Cities of the Red Night*)

It becomes quite clear here that Burroughs makes sexuality as the central metaphor of his later works, replacing the drug addiction metaphor employed in the earlier works.

Another significant factor is Burroughs's insistence upon the ability of the writer, more than any other artist, to create new worlds, and on writing as an art form that cannot be replaced by other media. Pulp fiction, which Burroughs read in his youth, becomes the source of imitation as the author adopts the narrative style of popular fiction making it the most used favourite culture in the later works. In this manner, he makes a commendable use of the fantasies of freedom and escape found in the pulps, for his own personal and subversive purpose. In mass media, these fantasies may become commercialized but they do express the basic human desire for individual autonomy, freedom, and rebirth. *Cities of the Red Night* also records a major departure by developing the myths through narrative style, rather than cut-ups. In this novel he attempts to expand his mythological narratives to include the entire earth, all of its people, both sexes, and all human history. In the earlier fiction from 1961 to 1981, Burroughs had combined autobiographical and popular mate-

rial to create a mythological world, whereas the length and style of *Cities of the Red Night* makes the intention clear which is to portray an all-encompassing mythology. The novel's three inter-related plots thoroughly develop the three major themes as the crux of Burroughs's second myth. The basis of Burroughs's social criticism is a retro-active utopia founded by 18th century pirates. This is how we are given a glimpse of the pirates' lives :

> ... Drums and flutes appear and the boys began to dance and as they danced, stripped off their clothes until they were dancing stark naked on the brightly, coloured silk scarves strewn about the deck.....
> Some of the boys have hammocks and sleep on deck, but we are often two to a bunk in the forecastle. Since we now have a double crew, there is much time with nothing to do, and I have been able to acquaint myself to some extent with the strange history of these transvestite boys.
> Some of them are dancing boys from Morocco, others from Tripoli, Madagascar and Central Africa. There are few from India and the East Indies who have served on pirates vessels in the Red Sea, where they preyed on merchant vessels.....Then the crew sights an apparently unarmed vessel carrying a cargo of beautiful women, all singing and dancing lewdly and promising the mariners their bodies. Once on the board the "women" pull out hidden pistols and cutlasses, while their accomplices on shipboard do the same.... Often the boys would sign on as cooks-at which trade they all excel-and then drug the entire crew. (*CRN* 69-70)

The stress in the above quoted lines is on an instinctual life for a human individual rather than just being a cog in the wheel. Here the novelistic narrative incorporates a new theme with the emphasis on politics. Sociological pirates operate upon the seas, breaking all the rules of society besides entertaining political ambitions. Ostensibly, they train themselves for guerrilla war, preparing different deadly weapons. *In Cities of the Red Night,* Burroughs's treatment of social criticism offers an alternative to the degraded society. Since 1971, the author's attempt has been to create utopian alternatives to the present social order so that his satirical fantasies now present both utopias and dystopias in conflict with each other. In his earlier fiction, he had dealt extensively with the portrayal of only dystopias: "Burroughs's utopian vision begins in *The Wild Boys* with the futuristic fantasy of 'the wild boys' — an adolescent all-male hunting society" (Jennie Skerl, *William S. Burroughs* 77).

After writing *The Wild Boys* (1985), Burroughs, throughout the fiction of the next decade, incorporates *The Wild Boys* into various utopian and dystopian fantasies. The conflict between utopian and dystopian forces leads to war between them and the pirates attack the dehumanized system of the society.

> We now have sufficient stockpile of the new weapons to initiate one campaign and it seems unwise to delay any longer.....we'll apply the classic rules of hit-and-run warfare against a larger force drawing them deeper and deeper into our territory while raiding and cutting supply lines. This is the tactic that beat Crassus's Roman Legion in the disastrous Partnian Campaign....
>
> We can expect a landslide of defections to our cause, and we must follow through to deliver a series of knockout blows." *(CRN* 160-161)

Burroughs seems to be taking the war on world-wide scale after taking over the utopian forces, nullify all rules of the previous government and implement their own Articles. These Articles are a vision of the utopian society where no one will be slave to anyone and all will live independent lives without any outside interference.

The author seems to give vent to his inner most feelings and writes his constitution according to his wishes. The pirate Articles seem to be words spoken by the writer himself. The retroactive utopia of the pirates apparently emerges from these articles. *Cities of the Red Night* creates a science fiction myth that explains all of human history as we know it and an alternative history that shows the power of fantasy. The Cities of the title are an imaginary prehistoric civilization portrayed in a science fiction mode that satirizes contemporary Western Society. The cities are a dystopia set in the past but reflecting the present. The Cities of the Red Night were six in number : Tamaghis, Ba'dan, Yass-Waddah, Waghdas, Naufana and Ghadis, located in an area roughly corresponding to the Gobi Desert, a hundred thousand years ago. At that time the desert was dotted with large oases and traversed by a river which emptied into the Caspian Sea.

The narrative explains that pilgrims came from all over the inhabited world to study in the academics of Waghdas where "the arts and science reached peaks of attainment that have never been equaled" (*CRN* 153). Much of this ancient knowledge is now lost.

Burroughs not only satirizes the modern western society but is sarcastic in his tone about the ways of society. There is little chance of random or unexpected deaths. Since the council of Transmigrates in Waghdas had attained such skills in the art of prophesy that they could easily chart a life from birth to death and determine successfully the exact time and manner of death. These prehistoric cities are also the source of the B-23 virus, a metaphor for the biological trap of sex and death.

Cities of the Red Night is dedicated to all the evil spirits of all the world's mythologies, ending with this statement:

> To all those scribes and artists and practitioners of magic through whom these spirits have been manifested.... NOTHING IS TRUE. EVERYTHING IS PERMITTED". (William S.Burroughs, Dedication of the Book). Burroughs does not remain content with simply telling a story. He wants to show the reader the power of story-telling and in particular, the power of fantasy in all senses of the word. Characters, action, and images merge and shift, so do the identities as they enter different narratives. Time and space also merge so that all the three stories in the novel's narrative seem to be taking place in a past that is also the present and the future. Fiction and reality are portrayed to construct a world of possibility, thus again illustrating Hassan-i-Sabbah's maxim "Nothing is true. Everything is permitted."

Cities of the Red Night as a novel can also be defined as reflecting the postmodernist fictional technology of creation and recreation, innovation and renovation, and finally decadence and skepticism. The entire structure of the book is in tune with the postmodernist architectonics of narrative structures based upon the author's presentation of the ravages of urbanization. The City no longer remains the ideal abode of man in which he can have an ideal and rewarding experience. Instead, what Burroughs finally conveys as an image of the city in postmodernist American fiction, is one of a symbolic dungeon in which contemporary man becomes an object of displacement and moral disintegration.

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AN IRONIC ADAM IN AN APOSTATIC EDEN: BERNARD MALAMUD'S *GOD'S GRACE* IN THE CONTEXT OF NORTHROP FRYE'S "THEORY OF MODES"

Ashu Vashisht

Bernard Malamud, Jewish American novelist, is fairly well known as a writer in whose works we consistently witness the modern human being getting portrayed as the victim of a world in which behavioral indifference and totalitarian massing of social forces constitute the existential *angst*. Calvin Cohn, the central protagonist in *God's Grace*, personifies a virtual apotheosis of Jewish self across a fable-type plot. The novel depicts a post-catastrophe fictional world of nightmarish proportions in which the human race has been wiped out as a corollary to a nuclear holocaust. Cohn, a paleologist by profession, miraculously survives the nuclear catastrophe, simply because at the time of the disaster, he remains in a submarine, a part of a crew engaged in deep-sea explorations. The Jewish American hero finds himself stranded as the only human survivor on a deserted island. An Ironic Secular Adam placed in an apostatic Eden, he tries to recreate mankind and human society and civilization with the help of chimpanzees, the primates being the only inhabitants of the island wilderness. Not only does Cohn's experiment ends for him as a personal disaster, his practicing the Jewish canon boomerangs and brings about the hero's tragic end.

Needless to say, Northrop Frye's highly relevant and symbolic "Theory of Modes" aptly applies to *God's Grace* in terms of historical criticism. When Frye talks about "Fictional Modes", he classifies the works of fiction according to the hero's power of action and his situation in internal fiction. If the hero is "superiors in *kind* both to other men and to the environment of other men....."(NF 33) he becomes a divine being and the story about him unfolds as a myth, "in the common sense of a story about a god". (NF 33). Calvin Cohn in *God's Grace* does not fit in within this classification at all. Nor does he become superior "in degree to other men and to his environment", (NF 33), thus not qualifying as a typical hero of *romance*. While teaching the chimpanzees Cohn depicts "authority, passions,

and powers of expression far greater than ours...." (NF 34). Thus the hero's power of action in *God's Grace* does not merit inclusion in the *high mimetic* mode which is the mode of epics and tragedies. Cohn does look as one of us, the reader does respond to his sense of common humanity. In this way Malamud's hero seems to gravitate toward the *low mimetic* mode, the mode of most comedy and of realistic fiction. What happens to Calvin Cohn at the end of the novel when he gets tragically killed by Esau, the Alpha Ape, renders him "inferior in power or intelligence to ourselves". (NF 34). The sense the reader inherits is one of a "sense of bondage, frustration or absurdity..." (NF 34), which totally makes the hero belong to the ironic mode.

Cohn's main plank is his Jewish faith, his inviolable belief in God and Scriptural Conscience. This is what makes him determined in spite of terrific odds to educate and civilize the chimpanzees and thus attain a personal celebration of the Jewish self across a terrain devastated by nuclear apocalypse. The irony becomes insurmountable when Calvin's dream fails, when the inhabitants of the island do not respond productively to his efforts in educating and humanizing them. Even after the hero mates with Mary Madeline, a female chimpanzee, who gives birth to a hybrid child, Cohn's experiment boomerangs and proves abortive. The baby is killed by some of the apes who defy the hero and these evil rebellious primates are lead by Esau who calls himself as the Alpha Ape. Cohn is a postmodern American hero, whose sincere motives propel him to over-reaching personal disasters. As a "deep-driver" (NF 34) Cohn struggles in a world without God and ceaselessly attempts to find value and fulfillment, but instead becomes a member of that history which 'is a record of losses, of loss even of all chances for improvement" (Marcus Klein 270). In this manner, *God's Grace* epicentrically becomes an ironic parody of man's quest for fulfillment.

Malamud, as an ironic fiction writer "deprecates himself and, like Socrates, pretends to know nothing, even that he is ironic". (NF 40). Irony as a mode gets created in *God's Grace* from the *low-mimetic* essence implicit within the novel's narrative matrix. The work does look as an ironist fable without moralizing and Malamud

"has no object but this subject" (NF 40). Ostensibly, irony becomes a natural sophisticated mode in *God's Grace* and as Malamud constructs his narrative as a post catastrophe text, the reader can easily discern the "chief difference between sophisticated and naïve irony..." (NF 40). Northrop Frye in his "Theory of Modes" points out that "the naïve ironist calls attention to the fact that he is being ironic, whereas sophisticated irony merely states, and lets the reader add the ironic tone himself" (NF 40).

The tragic irony in *God's Grace* starts unfolding from the early parts of it when we witness Cohn's companions among the chimpanzees. The prominent ones among these are Buzz, who accompanies the hero till the end, Melechior "a grey- beard male with rheumy eyes" (*GG* 90), Esau, a "south faced youthful male" (*GG* 90) having strong sexual desire for Mary Madeline, Esterhazy, Bromberg and Luke and Saul of Tarsus, "Two squatty skinny male children". (*GG* 90). All these names sound Biblical, clearly implying Malamud's ironic juxtaposition of scriptural motifs. The two opposite poles of irony, as Frye points out, are "the incongruous and the inevitable "(NF 42) which combine in tragedy and eventually get separated into these two poles. Adam becomes the archetype of the inevitably ironic which Frye denotes as "human nature under sentence of death" (NF 42). Calvin Cohn in *God's Grace* automatically qualifies as an ironic Adam who ultimately fails in the ironic "Garden of Eden". His desperate endeavours to restart the human race in the post-catastrophe world culminate in perfect anticlimax. Cohn also personifies in his character and role the modern Prometheus who, at the end of novel, becomes a victim of "the dialectic of the divine and the human nature....." (NF 42). He fulfills both the contexts; he is both the Adamic as well as the Promethean type if we consider him as a victim of God, which he actually becomes.

Frye argues that the archetype of Christ is Prometheus "the immortal titan rejected by the gods for befriending men" (NF 42). He concludes his argument by saying that Job, in trying to justify himself as a victim of God "tries to make himself into a tragic Promethean figure, but he does not succeed" (NF 42). The same analogy applies to Cohn, the hero of *God's Grace.* Like Moses, in the Old Testa-

ment, who holds a conversation with God on the Chosen mount, Cohn also in the beginning of the narrative holds a visionary, metaphysical conversation with God who orders him to restart the human race. Cohn's ultimate undoing comes in the forms of an evil primate named Esau. Esau nourishes a strong sexual desire for Mary Madeline and along with him we have other primates whose only job is to perpetrate violence and bloodshed. These chimpanzees, chief among them Esau, represent the cult of Satan among the primates.

Calvin Cohn's world, on the isolated island in *God's Grace*, is a world which totally conforms to Northrop Frye's definition of "Demonic Imagery" as a component of his "Theory of Archetypal Meaning", the first component being "Apocalyptic Imagery". Frye classifies Five worlds of Apocalyptic symbolism as the chief defining entities of his ideas regarding archetypal meaning in literary symbolism. These Five worlds are listed as follows:

The Apocalyptic Divine world
The Apocalyptic Human world
The Apocalyptic Animal World
The Apocalyptic Vegetable world
The Apocalyptic Mineral World

It is the demonic parody of these Five world that comprises what Frye call "Demonic Imagery". All the Five worlds of Frye's "Apocalyptic Imagery" subsequently parodied in a frightening form in his "Demonic Imagery" are represented in *God's Grace* in a remarkable and highly disturbing fashion. What we exactly get in the portraiture of Calvin Cohn and his disciples, the chimpanzees, is the existential hell that man creates on earth. Humanity in *God's Grace* simply does not exist and even a demonic human world is non-existent, having been totally wiped out by a gigantic apocalypse. Cohn's post-catastrophe existence, among the primates, on the desert island, becomes Malamud's fantasy which brings the reader face to face with the trivial, the monstrous and the preposterous.

The rebellious evil apes lead by Esau symbolize a vision of human hell, the same hell witnessed in the myths of Narcissus, Orpheus, and even Prometheus. It is the demonic parody of not only the divine and the human worlds but also of the animal, the vegetable, and the mineral worlds which *God's Grace* presents to

the reader as a degenerate mishmash, a kind of witches's porridge. The desert, post-catastrophe island, on which Cohn gets stranded in the company of the chimpanzees, is a horrible wasteland analogous to "Cities of destruction and a dreadful night... the great ruins of pride... images of perverted work belong here too: engines of torture... unnatural as well as inhuman" (NF 150).

The hero of *God's Grace* inhabits a post-catastrophe world which is extremely dangerous, unpredictable and very complicated. The hero, dedicatedly and tirelessly teaches the savage apes. But his effort ends in utter failure, as Cohn's desert island and his primate disciples symbolize "the imagery of cannibalism" (NF 148), which not only includes "images of torture and mutilation" (NF 148), but also depicts Malamud's excellent use of "the radical demonic form" (NF 148). Cohn's relationship with the chimpanzees is a social relation, a relation "that of the mob, which is essentially... looking for a *pharmakos,* and the mob is often identified with some sinister animal image... (NF 149).

In *God's Grace* the animal world is portrayed in the form of the chimpanzees who are no better than "monsters or beasts of prey" (NF 149). Also, it can be said that Cohn's ultimate killer, Esau becomes the counterpart of the dragon in the Apocalypse, "the beast that was and is not and yet is (NF 149). Cohn fails because God wills it otherwise and His grace does not go beyond sparing Cohn tili this ironic Adam's experiment finally fails. He represents the archetype of existential man who exists primarily in the post catastrophe situation as an act of God's ironic extension of his existence in a destroyed world.

Like Moses in the *Bible,* Cohn as an ironic individual holds conversation with an angry God. The entire conversation is worded in the ironic thematic mode as Northrop Frye labels it in "Thematic Modes". Every word God speaks to Cohn reflects his wrath as He says: "From the beginning when I gave them the gift of life, they were perversely greedy for death. At last I thought I will give them death because they engrossed in evil." (*GG* 12). Thus the situation as it appears after the disaster, symbolizes man's betrayal of the trust God had reposed in him.

Frye, in his last component of the "Theory of Modes" titled "Thematic Modes", says, "in such genres as novels and plays, the internal fiction is usually of primary interest... the primary interest is in *dianoia*, the idea or poetic thought... that the reader gets from the writer "(NF 52). Malamud's *dianoia* in *God's Grace* with a strong conceptual interest becomes totally thematic. The plot as it unfolds in *God's Grace* is not only unnervingly apocalyptic but "relates to *dianoia*, and indicates that themes have their elements of discovery just as plots do "(NF 52).

In "Thematic Modes" Frye also says "when a work of fiction is written or interpreted thematically, it becomes a parable or illustrative fable". (NF 53). *God's Grace* admirably fits into this very definition having *ipso facto,* a strong thematic interest. The hero's ultimate end, described in the narrative, becomes really pathetic, terribly ironic and an emblem of sheer grotesquerie:

> Cohn laid still on the floor of the cave waiting to be lifted into the flames by the golden dark light of the fire. He could see that his long beard was flecked with spots of blood. (*GG* 201)

Cohn's end makes him the ironic *alazon,* the ultimate rebel- victim, the absurd *eiron*, the willing *pharmakos.* Persecuted and finally martyred, he yet is essentially a noble person. His island dystopia is a "more benighted and self-destructive world" (Maxwell Geismer 35) in which there is not even an iota of hope, of renewal or reconstruction vis-à-vis Frye's "Thematic Modes".

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AESTHETIC VALUE VIS-À-VIS POETIC VALUE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF I.A. RICHARDS AND A.C. BRADLEY

Renu Bhadola Dangwal

I.A. Richards, one of the exponents of the New Criticism, has detested and challenged the popular notion of 'Art for Art's Sake' in the chapter 'Poetry for Poetry's Sake' in his much acknowledged *Principles of Literary Criticism*. In putting the notion with all its implications to A.C. Bradley's attitude in 'Poetry for Poetry's Sake', he has opposed its aesthetic embodiment throughout. The object of the present paper is to evince and present an analogous analysis of the views of the two great critics on one of the basic issues of the 'aesthetic value', which reads that art has its own value, independent of all other concerns.

A.C. Bradley, an ardent follower of 'Art for Art's Sake', believes that poetry as art carries a separate and independent realm, and that it has an autonomous existence, aesthetic experience and value. Richards quotes the views of Bradley and targets on the autonomous existence of art, and rejects the viability and application of such views in critical approaches to any literary creation. Bradley has specific reasons for his emphasis upon propounding the ideal of 'Art for Art's Sake' with three significant statements. First, the aesthetic experience "is an end in itself, is worth having its own account, has an intrinsic value", and that "its *poetic* value is this intrinsic worth alone" (Quoted in Richards' *Principles of Literary Criticism* 66-67). Second, "its ulterior worth neither is nor can directly determine its poetic worth as a satisfying imaginative experience" (67). Third, "the consideration of ulterior ends whether by the poet in the act of composing or by the reader in the act of experiencing, tends to lower poetic value" (67).

Here the key term aesthetic means full of delight, bliss or ecstasy. The aesthetic experience is a state of such a delight, a state of blissful perception, a state in which attention is focused on the object of perception. The most characteristic feature of such an experience is that it is cherished for 'enjoyed perception' only and

not for any other purpose. The sound in music, the colours in painting, the words of a poem, and the movements of dance are perceived not for any practical utility but for themselves. Due to this reason there is greater degree of perception in aesthetic experience. They are valued just for themselves. Therefore, the world of art is considered free from ethics, politics, religion, metaphysics, or the practical purposes. In order to enjoy such an experience, one has to give up his concern with the things other than the object itself. This kind of attitude is called 'aesthetic attitude', which has also been called the state of 'pure contemplation'. Such an attitude is different from 'practical attitude' and hence, not vulnerable to moral or political considerations. The intrinsic value is determined not by anything outside the object or the experience of the object, but by the substance of the experience, which is conveyed through feelings and emotions, and the manner through which this substance is conveyed. In this way, intrinsic value partakes of both the content and the form— the two indispensable aspects of art.

The position of Richards, in comparison to Bradley and other traditional aestheticians, seems very dubious. Richards does not believe in the separate realm of aesthetic state or aesthetic experience. Accordingly, he defies the purity of aesthetic value, which is said to be free from personal interests, moral values, economic considerations, and so on. He believes that the purity of notion (aesthetic experience, aesthetic state, aesthetic value etc.) is non-conceptual, and unjustified by anything besides itself. In the chapter, 'Poetry for Poetry's Sake', in *Principles of Literary Criticism*, he boldly makes his reservation for some of the ulterior values in determining the poetic value (aesthetic value of a poem). These are: culture, religion, softening of passion, and such like, "otherwise", as he says, "the word 'poetic' becomes a useless sound" (67).

Richards' views cannot be accepted because they are not in accordance with the essential nature of art. All kinds of values, which are not derived from the art object but are obtained from outside it, are ulterior values. For example, the value of an article of a newspaper lies in its providing some information and persuading

readers to some particular end. But the value of a poem, no matter whether it depicts some moral philosophy or popularizes some religious thought, lies in its providing enjoyable perception. The end here lies not outside the poem but within itself. The fact is that art objects do not satisfy or contribute to happiness through their use. Hugo A. Meynell's statement that art objects "are meant to contribute to happiness or satisfaction directly, not via their causal connection with any other state of affair" (Meynell 6) must be considered here.

Richards' answer to the third proposition of Bradley that the consideration of ulterior ends, both by the writer and the reader, tends to lower poetic value is rather much abrupt. Here Richards divides poetry to recommend the intrusion of ulterior ends, arguing that this proposition (Bradley's above mentioned proposition) depends on "*which are the ulterior ends in question* and what the kind of poetry" (Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism* 68). To him, *Psalms*, *The New Testament*, *Pilgrims Progress*, works of Dante, Rabelais, Swift, and such like are works where ulterior ends determine their poetic value. There are yet other categories, as he says:

> . . . [P]oetry is of more than one kind and that different kinds are to be judged by different principles. There is a kind of poetry into the judgement of which ulterior ends directly and essentially enter; a kind part of whose value is directly derivable from the value of the ends with which it is associated. There are other kinds, into which ulterior ends do not enter in any degree, and there are yet other kinds whose value may be lowered by the intrusion of ends relatively trivial in value. Dr. Bradley is misled by usual delusion that there is . . . only one kind of poetry. (68-70)

It is Richards, rather Bradley, who is misled with his self-made delusion. Bradley knows quite clearly that any ulterior end, after having gone through its poetic delineation, does not remain a separate part in poetry. G. Rostrevor Hamilton aptlysays that for Bradley all kind of ulterior ends "are all alike in this one negative respect and none of them can directly determine the poetic value of poetry" (Hamilton 99). Poets and writers, like every one around them, also get besieged by the doe's and don'ts of this temporal world. They also need to give moral lessons or get perturbed by increasing prizes of daily goods, share politics, and so on. Such concerns possibly

enter into their literary works, but when they do so, they no longer remain the same as they were in their daily experiences; they get transformed. These concerns enter so deeply into their imaginative experience that they become an integral part of their poetic object, and in themselves become an object of contemplation and enjoyment. All great works of art may depict some kind of philosophy or some social or political theory. But they are valued as great works of art not for all such reasons, but for their aesthetic appeal, that is, for the artistic juxtaposition of their content in particular manner or form. Matthew Kieran, in his article 'Value of Art', clears this point by giving example` of Picasso's painting 'Weeping Woman'. Its appreciation as a work of art, as he says, does not involve delighting in the represented woman's grief as such, rather in the way in which its artful properties portray its grief.

As far as Richards' division of poetry is concerned, it can be said that poetry can never be of two or more than two kinds on the basis of ulterior ends. Not only poetry but all literary compositions are fundamentally of one kind, and they are judged on one single ground of imaginative experience. In Indian aesthetics, there are sixty four 'kalas' but all arts are considered one, and one aesthetic theory is applied on them all. Such a classification as Richards has made, in view of Croce, is "philosophically trivial" (qtd. in S. Langer 389). If what Richards says were really true then poetry would have lost its name amid so many classifications. It is like judging the emotions and feelings of different people on different standards, whereas the essential human feelings are the same everywhere.

Of all ulterior concerns, it is morality and religion with which poetry has always been closely associated and valued. Along with Plato, Ruskin, and many such, Richards belongs to that coterie of writers and poets who regard that art is valuable for promoting moral betterment and religious fervor. But to say that a work is aesthetically good is one thing and to say that it is morally good is another:

> An aesthetic judgment is not a moral judgment and the value of a work of art as an aesthetic object is not at all the same thing as its value in edifying readers of improving their moral character, which may be effect of the reading of a work of art but not what we are judging when we judge a work

of art to be good. (Hospers 50)

It would be unjustified to account for aesthetic value on the basis of morality as Richards does. If it were possible, then no one could ever have appreciated *Ulysses* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* as great works of art.

Maintaining in the very beginning that the "vital function" of poetry is to "induce a fitting attitude to experience" (Ogden and Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning* 158-159), Richards says more frankly in *Principles of Literary Criticism* that the "the basis of morality . . . is laid not by preachers but by poets" (*Principles of Literary Criticism* 55). Further, he establishes poetry on as high a pedestal as religion saying that poetry is the only hope to save mankind from chaos in the modern world. (54). Iris Murdoch, when asked in an interview about artist's moral and social commitments, replied that "an artist's first job is to be a good artist and not to feel that he has to serve his society" ("An Interview with Iris Murdoch" 24). As far as the question of art and religion is concerned, it can be said that to some extent they have some likeness and overlap at points, but whereas religion demands a commitment and makes claim on the beliefs of the people, art experiences or objects make no such commitment or claim. Removing aside the thin veil between these two similar looking institutions, Harry B. Lee makes the right comment, "we seek the experience of arts as an end in itself, and that of religion as the means to an end; that art leaves our thoughts free, and even frees our fantasy, whereas religion imposes obligations upon our thinking and behaviour" (Lee 120).

Artists (poets), no doubt, deal with ulterior concerns in their art works, but they transform the nature of these elements, so that these values, which were ulterior so far, become part of the aesthetic value of the work. If artists do not do so and use these elements as they appear in practical life, they would be writing or creating something else and not poetry or art. Therefore, Bradley says that the consideration of ulterior ends, both on the part of the writer or the reader, necessarily diminishes poetic value because "it tends to change the nature of poetry by taking it out of its own atmosphere" (Quoted in Richards *Principles of Literary Criticism*

67).

Needless to say, critics may explore extra literary ends for the sake of analysis and discussion, but not for the aesthetic judgement. Their concern is to give the true account of the poet and the adequacy with which the poet has conveyed his experience, rather than to judge whether the particular experience is worth perceiving or not. Therefore, Matthew Arnold regards 'disinterestedness' as the essence of criticism, which can be maintained by keeping "practical view of things" (qtd. in Harpham 374) away from it.

Richards has been severely criticized by many critics and philosophers for equating aesthetic value of a poem with its ulterior values. Consideration of culture, religion, morality in aesthetic judgement, on his part, has incurred opposition of many great critics. Max Eastman calls him a "painfully austere and moralistic critic (*Contemporary Literary Criticism* 376). Jerome P. Schiller regards such views of Richards as "truly absurd" (Schiller 120). Richards tries to locate the value of poetry in the effects of the poem and not in the poem itself. For Bradley, the value of a poem lies in the poem itself, while for Richards it consists in its various effects. Little wonder Eliseo Vivas says that Richards formulates his conviction of the importance of art "not so much on the intrinsic value of the aesthetic experience, as on the effects which the organization of impulses of which it consists can have on our daily life" (Vivas 357). No aesthetic theory can work without the consideration of the aesthetic object, because it is, in fact, the object which contains the experience of the artist, and ultimately it is the object only which captures the attention of the on-looker and gives him the enjoyable perception. Again, it is the object itself which gives rise to the series of other effects also.

Art is valuable not because it popularizes the philosophical or the metaphysical ideas or truth, teaches morality, inspires religious beliefs, brings political revolutions, wins money or fame, or is useful in any other way; it is valuable for its aesthetic qualities which exist in it only. The uniqueness of art is manifested in these qualities, in the manner in which colours, shapes, sounds, movements and other such elements are juxtaposed and presented in definite pattern as

the content demands. It is the content which guides the form and vice-versa. It can be said that "there are indeed a hundred and other matters connected with poetry, historical and perhaps scientific . . . but we should not delude ourselves into thinking that such interests are literary" (D.G. James 473).

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PRONOUNCING THE DISCOURSE OF THE NATION: A CONTEXTUAL STUDY OF CHINUA ACHEBE'S *THINGS FALL APART*

S.C. Dubey
M.K. Gaurav

Broadly speaking, the African novel is a response to and record of traumatic consequences of the impact of Western capitalist colonialism on the colonial values and institutions of the African peoples. While recognizing the need for a redefinition and reordering of values in modern Africa in the wake of the disruptive effects of colonial administration, writers like Achebe and Soyinka also realize that before their reordering can take place there must be a confrontation with the past. In the article "The Novelist as a Teacher" Achebe talks interestingly of how he sees his role as a writer in a new society. One of the consequences of the impact of Western civilization on Africa, he says, is 'the disaster brought upon the African psyche in the period of subjection to alien races.' He further continues:

> Here then is an adequate revolution for me to espouse to help my society regain belief in itself and put away the complexes of the years of denigration and self abasement.... I would be quite satisfied if my novels (especially the ones I set in the past) did no more than teach my readers that their part, with all its imperfection, was not one long night of savagery from which the first European acting on God's behalf delivered them. (Achebe, *Hopes and Impediments* 2)

Having an instinct to make aware the world of the African people's glorious past, gallant present and glittering future, Nnmadi Azikiwe states:

> Educate the renascent African to be a man. Tell him that he has made definite contribution to history. Educate him to appreciate the fact that iron was discovered by Africans, that the conception of God was initiated by Africans, that Africans ruled the world from 765 to 713 BC, that while Europe slumbered during 'Dark Ages' a great civilization flourished on the bank of the Niger, extending from the salt mines of Therghazza in Morocco to lake Tehad... let him relish with the rest of the world that while Oxford and Cambridge were in their inchoate stages, the University of Sankore in Teimbuktoo welcomed scholars from all over the Muslim World. (Nnmadi 9)

We now focus on the Nigerian novelist, poet and critic Albert Chinualumogu Achebe, who at the young age of 28 brought honour to Nigeria by writing his magnum opus maiden fictional work, *Things Fall Apart*, a novel of unquestioned literary merit from west Africa. Critics tend to agree that no African novelist, writing in English, has yet surpassed Achebe's achievements in *Things Fall Apart.* It was published in 1958 and since then his reputation has grown like a bush fire in harmatten. Eustace Palmer, in his critical treatise, *The Growth of African Novel*, asserts the literary merit of *Things Fall Apart*: "Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) demonstrates a mastery of plot and structure, strength of characterization, competence in the manipulation of language and the consistency and depth of thematic exploration which is rarely found in a first novel" (Palmer 63).

Several critics have pointed out that one of the major reasons Chinua Achebe was inspired to become a novelist was his desire to counter the demeaning image of Africa that was portrayed in the English tradition of the novel. Provocative confrontation against European model, Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is the novel that inaugurated the long and continuing tradition of postcolonial enquiry into the problematic relation between the West and the Third World Nations.

Best known for his critical and very controversial treatise "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness", Achebe in his novel *Things Fall Apart* stands against the portrayal of African image by Western oriented intellectuals like Joseph Conrad and Joyce Cary. Achebe in this novel asserts that instead of knowing Nigeria as a nation of primitive culture, savages, and only the nation of body and limbs, and not of men of senses, one should be very clear that before the entry of the new White civilization on the bank of Niger a well managed national culture was existing in Nigeria. The notion held in some quarters that it was the White man who brought administration and order into African society, must by now be completely disproved. The ethics of the African community portrayed in *Things Fall Apart* can be summarized as follows: Live and let live. This concept is repeated very often, especially during the prayers

that accompany the breaking of the cola nuts:

> He broke the cola nut saying: We shall all live. We pray for life, children, a good harvest and happiness. You will have what is good for you and I will have what is good for me. Let the kite perch and the egret perch too. If one says no to other, let his wings break. (Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* 2)

The administrative, social and judicial arrangements were interrelated and linked with the religious system. Through the social structures and the various initiation rituals the individual came to learn the norms of behaviour, and the belief in the ancestors who played a very vital guiding role in the world of the living that helped to strengthen personal moral awareness. Eustace Palmer strengthens this view:

> The various social and administrative units the family, the lineage groups, the age groups, the council of the elders and the chief priests played their own roles which were appropriate in resolving disputes and dispensing justice. (Palmer 66)

Scrutiny of law and custom is one of the perennial activities of Nigeria. The villagers probe into the logic of their traditional rites to test their usefulness and the elders recall the evolution of the present traditions from the past. We see the process in action early in the novel when Okonkwo breaks the Week of Peace:

> Ogbuefi Ezedu, who was the oldest man n the village, was tilling when two other men who came to visit him said that the punishment for breaking the Peace of Ani had become very mild in their clan:
>
> 'It has not always been so,' he said, 'My father told me that he had been told that in the past a man who broke the peace was dragged on the ground through the village until he died. But after a while this custom was stopped because it spoilt the peace which it was meant to preserve.' (Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* 21)

The changing perspective according to the demand of time has been the very obvious part of Nigerian management. This very episode contradicts very boldly the projection of African imagination. *Things Fall Apart* has some more packages to assert the very discourse of Nigerian national identity.

Another aspect that shows the richness of African culture is its language. The language of the African characters in *Things Fall Apart* can not be described as babbling or animalistic in anyway. On the contrary, it is a very effective medium for communicating the

way of life that is portrayed in the novel. Among the Ibo the art of conversation is rated very highly, and "proverbs are the palm oil with which words are eaten" (10).

In Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, the Africans are portrayed as not having developed a system reckoning time but the Africans in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* not only compute the time of the day and the days of the week, but also have a traditional technique for computing the month and even the year. They use nature objects such as the cockcrow and the position of the sun to compute the hour of the day and they know that four days make a market week and that seven market weeks make their lunar months. These characters use their lunar calandar to determine the date for their annual festivals such as New Yam Festival which are central to their communal lives:

> The feast of the New Yam was held every year before the harvest began, to honour the earth goddess and the ancestral spirits of the clan. New Yams could not be eaten until some had first been offered to these powers. Men and Women, young and old, looked forward to the New Yam Festival because it began the season of plenty — the new year. (37)

The next episode that discusses a very crucial issue is about the conception of God. In worshipping wooden representations of the gods of Ibo people like Amadioha, Ani, Ojukwu, Ifejioku, and above all the greatest Chukwu, far from indulging in idolatry they were merely manifesting the belief, similar to the Christian theory of the omnipresence of God; in fact, they were present in all aspects of creation through which they could speak to their people.

Finally the protagonist of *Things Fall Apart* Okonkwo, who has been led towards committing suicide due to the domination of White imperialism could be elected as the crucial representative asserting the national identity of Nigeria in the wake of adverse colonial trauma. *Things Fall Apart* can be divided into two parts: the former is success story of Okonkwo in his tribal setting and the latter is the story of his destruction in the newly managed setting. In the beginning of the novel, Okonkwo can be seen as the man of power, prosperity and protest in Ibo community. His fame, at the young age of twenty eight, spreads in the seven villages like a bush fire in harmattan.

Caroll David writes that Okonkwo's only aim in life is to succeed in terms of warfare, wrestling, wealth and status. Everyone in Ummofia (Nigeria), old or young, is compelled to recognize his achievements:

> If ever a man deserved his success, that man was Okonkwo. At an early age he had achieved fame as the greatest wrestler in all the land. That was not luck. At the most one could say that his Chi or personal god was good. But the Igbo people have a proverb that when a man says yes his chi says yes also Oknkwo said yes very strongly; so his chi agreed. And not only his chi but his clan too, because it judged a man by the work of his hands. (19)

Okonkwo, who begins his life as a son of a failure father, turns himself into a successful son of a failure father because of his hard work and will power. But this success story does not continue as a long term business. After returning from seven years exile from Mbanta, the platform of Okonkwo's destruction has been prepared and the root cause is the outside penetration of White missionaries. The rapid changes which have taken place in Umofia destroy the triumph of Okonwo's return from exile in part three of the novel. Not only has the new religion grown in strength, the Europeans have also brought their own form of government and increase trade in the area. One of the most crucial scenes in *Things Fall Apart* is the confrontation between the elders of Umofia and the White District Commissioner as a result of which the elders are handcuffed and imprisoned until the enormous fine is paid:

> We have brought a peaceful administration to you and your people so that you may be happy. If any man ill treats you we shall come to your rescué. But we will not allow you to ill treat others. We have a court of law where we judge cases and administer justice just as it is done in my country under a great queen. I have brought you here because you joined together to molest others, to burn people's homes and their place of worship. That must not happen in the dominion of our queen, the most powerful ruler of the world. (105)

Achebe has used this very episode as his chief weapon to counterattack the European imagination of Africa. This scene raises a very significant questions which exposes the real face of White administration. How can an alien court of law can do justice without knowing or keeping the former culture and laws on margins? This very passage asserts the British hegemony when the District Com-

missioner introduces his queen as the most powerful ruler of the world. There is a saying common to native Americans and Africans alike which goes like this: "Before the White man came, we had the land and they had the Bible. Now we have the Bible and they have the land." This new administration compels the Igboes to question their own religion, administration and management. Indeed, the White missionaries, ironically, instead of bringing a new stable governance in Nigeria, breed corruption in society. The Nigerians learn to disregard their culture and disrespect their elders.

Achebe's protagonist raises his head against the entire hypocrisy and trauma and tries to gain the lost authority in a traditional way. Okonkwo's relationship with the newcomers is exacerbated by the fact that he has a very great deal at stake in maintaining the old ways. All his dreams and hopes are rooted in the continuance of the traditional culture. The fact that he has not been able to accustom himself gradually to the new ways helps to explain his extreme reaction. The missionaries have brought British colonial government with them, and that is why the missionaries were often viewed as agents of imperialism. In an anxiety he welcomes Umuofia for an open conflict against the new system to retain the national identity. As the meeting gets started the court messengers appear to stop the meeting. Okonkwo blows his heavy matchet and the head of one of the messengers lie down on the sand. Suddenly Okonkwo hears some whisperings from his own clan, "Why did he do it" (15)? Okonkwo knows that Umuofsia is not going to announce war. He wipes his matchet and is led to give a tragic end to his life; he commits suicide.

The successful Okonkwo of the earlier Nigerian culture hangs himself for pronouncing the national identity of his nation Nigeria. Chinua Achebe, whose very instinct to be an author is to counter-attack the demeaning image of Africa that has been projected by the Western intellectuals and to assert the Nigerian well managed and cultured national identity, gets a grand success in his maiden effort and *magnum opus* novel *Things Fall Apart*.

To conclude, Don Macral, the very first reader of this novel, writes the shortest possible comment on it in just seven words:

"The best first novel since the War", and this very remark was the launching pad for *Things Fall Apart* which till this date has been translated into sixty languages of the bworld. It has been proved that this is the very first novel that sets the nation as the crucial project for the postcolonial writers in their writings. In all the three parts of the novel, each and every chapter has enough packages that counterattack the African projection as savage, primitive, conventional and orthodox by the European intellectuals. All the chapters assert the Nigerian national identity and have been able to prove that before the outside penetration of the White Imperialist, a well ordered, cultured and developed society and administration existed in Nigeria and Africa as well. It was the White administration that breeded corruption in the land. In fact, Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* launches a platform where the reconstruction of a nation gets started in a new frame that portrays the enriched traditional national identity and rejects completely the African portrayal by colonial masters.

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THE IMPACT OF THE *UPANISHADS* ON RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S POETICS AND POETRY

Pramathesh Bhattacharya

I

The acme of the *Vedas* — the very voice of God, according to the common Indian belief, and perhaps the best that can be thought and expressed about the inner and the outer human life, world, the finite and the Infinite, etc. —, the *Upanishads* have been the part and parcel of Indian psyche from time immemorial, and naturally have shaped the mind and art of innumerable Indians and many Westerners. Dara Shikoha, the eldest son of Mughal Emperor Shahjehan and a distinguished Sufi scholar, and Schopenhauer, the celebrated European thinker, were simply astonished by the stupendous magnitude of the philosophical insight embodied in them. Some of the modern American creative artists such as Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, T.S. Eliot and many others were deeply influenced by the *Upanishadic* ideas. Surely, more than these and the three great Indian writers — viz. Tulsidas, the creator of the most popular work in India entitled *Ramacharitmanasa,* Jayashankar Prasad, the poet of the unique epic *Kamayani,* and Raja Rao, the author of the metaphysical novels like *The Serpent and the Rope, The Cat and Shakespeare* and *The Chessmaster and His Moves* —, Rabindranath Tagore came under the puissant impact of the *Upanishads* and was almost obsessed with the philosophical, lofty thoughts contained in them. Apropos of this, he states in the preface to *Sadhana*:

> To me the verses of the Upanishads and the teachings of Buddha have never been things of the spirit, and therefore endowed with boundless vital growth: and I have used them, both in my own life and in my preaching, as being instinct with individual meaning for me, as for others, and awaiting for their confirmation, my own special testimony, which must have its value because of its individuality. (*Sadhana* viii)

The reason of this is not far to seek: we are told by Tagore that he was brought up in an ambience in which the *Upanishads* formed an integral part of everyday life and these ancient texts were recited

in daily worhsip. We learn from his reminiscences (*Reminiscences* 94) of the boyhood days that during wanderings at the Himalayas, his father taught the boy Rabindranath how to chant the holy verses of the *Upanishads*. Speaking of this kind of family background, he writes in the preface to *Sadhana*:

> The writer has been brought up in a family where texts of the Upanishads are used in daily worship, and he has had before him the example of the father, who lived his long life in the closest communion with God, while not neglecting his duties to the world, or allowing his keen interest in all human affairs to suffer any abatement. (viii)

The result was that he closely read and absorbed these monumental Hindu scriptures which coloured his entire being throughout his life as is evidenced by the fact that there are references to, and echoes of, them, time and again, in his creative and expository writings. His famous lectures, delivered at the Harvard University in 1913 and later published in book form as *Sadhana*, are, indeed, his interpretation of the *Upanishads*. Thus, Ernest Rhys, to whom this work is dedicated, rightly remarks: "In Tagore you feel the humanity that was in the Son of Man, comforting the children of light in their awe of the Eternal. In him the spirits of the *Upanishads* reach the same threshold" (Ernest Rhys, *Rabindranath Tagore* 6). Also, his whole letter, written to Mahadev Desai in 1935, is devoted to a brilliant analysis and interpretation of *Ishopanishat* (*The English Writings of Rabindranath Tagore*, Volume Three, ed. Sisir Kumar Das 810-11). Inevitably, Tagore's concept of art (inclusive of poetry) as well as his poetical works are saturated with, and enriched by, the profound ideas contained in the *Upanishads*.

II

Tagore's cogitations on art and poetry, steeped in the matchless wisdom of the *Upanishads*, are scattered all over the massive mass of his prose writings in the form of essays, books, lectures, interviews, letters, critical pieces, etc. Though against the idea of defining precisely anything, particularly art, for such an attempt means limiting one's own vision just to see something clearly, he unconsciously defines art as "the response of man's creative soul to the Real" (*The Religion of Man* 139). Anyone familiar with the ancient Indian sacred texts clearly sees that this definition of art is based

on the essence of anyone of the major eight *Upanishads.* To the Eastern mind, the Real, as Tagore points out, manifests Itself in "ideal form of fulfilment" (*Angel of Surplus*, ed. Sisirkumar Ghose 46). Tagore opines that art, like life, is born of creative impulse, soaked in immense joy. This creative power of man fills him with a surplus of emotions, ideas, etc. He differs from animal, for while the latter is confined only to the bare necessities for survival, the former has a lot of surplus, that is, much more than what is required for his existence. As Tagore asserts, "This surplus seeks its outlet in the creation of Art, for man's civilization is built upon his surplus" ("What Is Art?" *Personality* 11). Tagore's view that the surplus in man is behind all his activities including the artistic ones, is based on a beautiful verse in the *Atharva Veda* which is translated into English by him in these words: "Righteousness, truth, great endeavours, empire, religion, enterprise, heroism and prosperity, the past and the future, *dwell in the surpassing strength of the surplus*" (*The Religion of Man* 44; italics added).The artist's whole gamut of thoughts and activities emanates from the surplus he has all around him, and this usually makes him deeply conscious of a higher and greater life transcending the simple physical and biological needs. Obviously, his concept of the origin of poetry in man's successful quest for surplus of everything is founded on the *Upanishadic* basic idea that *Brahma* is limitless in His superfluity which finds its articulation in the eternal process of the world and in all things in life.

True, Tagore believes that the creative artist owes immensely to the Eternal Being, the focus of discussion in all the *Upanishads.* Thus, pointing to the subject of aesthetics, he avers: "That which is not known by logic, which defies definition, whose value is not in any practical use, but which can only be intimately felt, finds its expression in Literature, is the subject of Aesthetics" (*Angel of Surplus* 85). Moments of spiritual realisation constitute, in Tagore's opinion, the true subject-matter of art and literature, for a human being has an irresistible craving for the realisation of the Infinite Being and the true awareness of the essence of his own being. And this craving and the subsequent blissful spiritual experience are indefinable and inexpressible. Apropos of this nature of the real contents of art,

Tagore affirms referring to the *Upanishads*:

> The Upanishad says of the Infinite Being that we can reach Him not with speech, nor with the mind, but by our consciouness of delight, wherewith all fear departs from us. Our soul has her hunger for this immediateness of realisation, whereby she is enabled also to know herself. The love, the contemplation, the vision that alone can satisfy this hunger finds its place in Literature, in Art. (86)

Tagore derives from the *Upanishads* his unflinching belief in joy as the soul of art. To him, the artist is like God, Who, as presented in the *Upanishads*, is ceaselessly and indefatigably involved in the act of creation, not under compulsion, but out of sheer joy in, and fathomless love for, it. As Tagore states, "Man in his robe of a creator is ever creating forms, and they come out of his abounding joy" (*Sadhana* 104). He repeatedly points out that the *Upanishads* unmistakably embody the idea that infinite joy is the essence of all creative activities. As a matter of fact, the spirit of joy pervades and dominates the entire cosmos, and it is this which forces the artist to indulge in delightful creative acts. In this context, he cites the great *Upanishadic* statement: "For of Joy are born all created things" (*Glimpses of Bengal* 138). Pinning his full faith in this, Tagore asserts that joy is the very breath of art, and that man's realisation of joy "is the source and nature of the aesthetic being of man" (*Angel of Surplus* 103).

Tagore's conviction that art is inalienable from the quartet of joy, beauty, truth and goodness, clearly shows on him the influence of the Romantic poet John Keats, whose memorable lines on this subject he quotes a number of times in his prose writings, but more than this the impact of the ancient Indian sacred texts, particularly the *Upanishads.* Little wonder he observes: "When our universe is in harmony with Man, the Eternal (the centre of discussin in the *Upanishads*), we know it as truth, we feel it as beauty" (*The Religion of Man* 222). He holds that great art is concerned with Beauty born of the unity of the Good and the True. He writes: "The Good, we say, is at one with the whole of existence and it finds a ready response in the spirit of man, and whenever the Good and the True are in accord, Beauty stands revealed" (*Angel of Surplus* 56). Tagore further states that the highest good is truth, which invariably "brings both

Joy and Beauty" (58). And then believing wholeheartedly in the central theme of the matchless writings of the ancient Indian sages that the Eternal, Who is all truth, goodness, beauty and joy, manifests Himself in the entire universe and overflows it with infinite joy, he quotes from the *Upanishads*: "All appearances, from the speck of dust at our feet to the far away stars in the galaxy, are manifestation of His immortal Delight, *anandarupamamritam yadvibhati*" (59).

Tagore holds that great art should deal with the relationship between the Infinite Being and the finite self of man. He illustrates it from the *Upanishad* which contains the parable of two birds sitting on the same branch of a tree, one of which feeds while the other just looks on. Tagore observes that both the birds are in man: while the subjective one is absorbed in the detached joy of vision, the objective one is immersed in the activities of life. Of the two, the delight of vision is loftier than anything else, and the artist is basically concerned with it. Apparently, art presents man's comprehension of a reality, an epiphany which is much higher than the objective reality or the day-to-day occurrences in human life. Inevitably, this great realisation that man/artist feels with his soul makes art, according to Tagore, as "the response of man's creative soul to the call of the Real" (*The Religion of Man* 137). Basing his discussion on the *Upanishads*, specially *Isha Upanishad,* Tagore avers that the essence of all reality is in Supreme Person, and not in any form of phenomenon or substance. The cosmos is merely a baseless fabric if it is not the manifestation of Eternal Person. Like this Person, the artist possesses an infinite personality which finds articulation in all his activities. Illustrating his viewpoint from *Isha Upanishad*, Tagore observes:

> From the dawn of our history the poets and artists have been infusing the colours and music of their soul into the structure of existence. And from this I have known certainly that the earth and the sky are woven with the fibres of man's mind, which is the universal mind at the same time. If this were not true, then poetry would be false and music a delusion, and the mute world would compel man's heart into utter silence. The Great Master plays; the breath is his own, but the instrument is our mind through which he brings out his songs of creation, and therefore I know that I am not a mere stranger resting in the wayside inn of this earth on my voyage of

existence, but I live in a world whose life is bound up with mine. The poet has known that the reality of this world is personal.... (*Personality* 73-4)

III

After examining Tagore's poetics vis-a-vis the *Upanishads*, now an attempt will be made to demonstrate the unmistakable impact of these Hindu scriptures on Tagore's poetry. The songs of *Gitanjali* and quite a large number of his poems collected in several volumes clearly exhibit his unflinching faith in the *Upanishadic* approach to the reality of the Infinite, cosmos, life and death. According to these ancient philosophical texts, the finite self, after encountering numberless failures, sufferings and death, attains at last God, the Infinite who is Bliss and the Ultimate Glory that transcends, and shines beyond, death. Imbibing this lofty metaphysical idea of the *Upanishads*, he expresses it poetically thus:

The travail of the night,
Will it not usher in the dawn?
In the night of sorrow, under death's blow,
When Man bursts his mortal bounds,
Will not God stand revealed
In his glory? (*A Flight of Swans* 37)

The exquisite long poem, "Tapobhang", is about the Supreme Lord as described in one of the hymns as *Siva* who, with his consort Uma (His *Shakti*, Power) practises penance and *yoga* on the high mountain called Kailash. At the very beginning of the second line of the poem, He is addressed as "Lord of endless time", the Infinite, Who is also Joy, Good and Beauty:

You yourself found out your profound beauty.
Joyously you held out in your hand the lustrous vessel of nectar
For the hunger of the universe.
.....
.....
I glimpsed the radiance of smile inlaid in comeliness
I saw the hesitant gesture of joy of the blushing one —
The ripples of beauty. (*Love Poems of Tagore*, trans. Rabindra Nath Choudhury 146).

In fact, the ancient Indian sages were of the view that the Absolute, the Infinite, the *Brahma* could not be fully comprehended by human mind, and in this context Tagore aptly cites the famous

line from the *Upanishads*, "I do not think I know Him, nor that I know Him not." Nevertheless, the creators of the Hindu sacred texts were able to realise Him, through ceaseless contemplation, as Bliss (*Anandam*, i.e. indivisible joy) manifesting Itself in Love, Light, Beauty, etc. Like the Indian *Rishis*, Tagore's whole being was completely immersed in the vision of the Infinite Who pervades the universe as well as the inner being of man. It is from this vision that Tagore's poetics and poetry emanate. Naturally, he, like the creators of the *Upanishads*, bursts out rapturously:

> I know the joy that hidden in the heart of Light
> Touches me, is one with my soul.
> I have been annointed in the holy waters of Consciousness,
> That flow from the font of Light,
> And have my share of immortality.
>
> In this multitudinous earth
> I can be united with the supreme Me
> And enter the path of bliss. (*Wings of Death* 80)

Gitanjali, Tagore's *magnum opus* and the high watermark of Indian English poetry, is, doubtless, saturated with *Upanishadic* thoughts and beliefs. This is why Edward J. Thompson affirms: "What is best in *Gitanjali* is an anthology from the ages of Indian thought and brooding" (*Rabindranath Tagore: His Life and Work* 80). A few of these songs are analysed here to illustrate it. The very first song embodies the poet's adoration, with utmost humility, of the Infinite Who is omnipresent, immersed in creation ceaselessly and joyously. The opening paragraphh of it, "Thou hast made me endless, such is thy pleasure. This frail vessel thou emptiest again and again, and fillest it ever with fresh life" (*Gitanjali* 1), expresses the poet's belief in the immortality of man's soul and the unending cycle of life and death.

Lyric 30 stresses the great truth that it is almost impossible for man to get rid of ego which is one of the root causes of his bondage and which persistently and shamelessly accompanies him everywhere all the time and does not leave him alone even when he is at the door of the Immortal. The poet says: "He is my own little self, my lord, he knows no shame; but I am ashamed to come to

thy door in his company" (24). Again songs 57 and 58 poetically express the *Upanishadic* idea that God is Light and Joy that pervade the entire cosmos. Echoing the ancient sages, Tagore in lyric 53 articulates his unflinching belief in the omnipresence of God Who is the only genuine companion and saviour of man in every life he has to live. Then, song 65 portrays God as poets' poet, the inexhaustible source of all the musical utterances in the world. This is a poetic form of the *Upanishadic* concept of God as the primeval poet, "*kavirmnishi paribhuh swayambhu*".

Like the creators of the *Upanishds*, Tagore believes that the Everlasting, Who is all joy, manifests Himself in human soul as well as in all the animate and inanimate objects of the world. Lyric 69 expresses this in exquisite poetry thus:

> The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and day runs through the world and dances in rythmic measures.
>
> It is the same life that shoots in joy through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass and breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers.
>
> It is the same life that is rocked in the ocean-cradle of birth and of death, in ebb and in flow.
>
> I feel my limbs are made glorious by the touch of this world of life. And my pride is from the life-throb of ages dancing in my blood this moment. (64-5)

Then there are songs 71 and 72 which are about the idea of the Creator's *maya*, illusion which is the recurrent theme of the *Upanishads*, the *Gita* and all Indian holy scriptures. According to this concept, God splits Himself into many, and He weaves the web of *maya*, the charms of which make every person oblivious of the reality of life and of Him who is the actual creator of sorrows, joys, etc. The following extracts from these two lyrics are worth quoting:

> That I should make much of myself and turn it on all sides, thus casting coloured shadows on thy radiance — such is thy *maya*.
>
> Thou settest a barrier in thine own being and then callest thy severed self in myriad notes. This thy self-separation has taken body in me.
>
> .....
>
> This screen that thou hast raised is painted with innumerable figures with the brush of the night and the day. Behind it thy seat is woven in wondrous mysteries of curves, casting away all barren lines of straightness. (66)

He it is who weaves the web of this *maya* in evanescent hues of gold and silver, blue and green, and lets peep out through the folds his feet, at whose touch I forget myself.

Days come and ages pass, and it is ever he who moves my heart in many a name, in many a guise, in many a rapture of joy and of sorrow. (67-8)

In addition, lyric 75 is the reproductionof the thought contained in *Mundaka Upanishad,* i.e. everything, living or non-living, emanates from God and hence it flows towards Him.

In fact, *Gitanjali* is the lyrical reproduction of the basic philosophical thought of the *Upanishads* that man can conquer death and achieve true, permanent freedom/ salvation only by knowing the Infinite. Importantly, the last song of it is an intense prayer to the Supreme to whom Tagore bows in salutation, submitting himself completely with all his senses, mind, creative activities and a life. The song runs as follows:

In one salutation to thee, my God, let all my senses spread out and touch this world at thy feet.

Like a rain-cloud of July hung low with its burden of unshed showers let all my mind bend down at thy door in one salutation to thee.

Let all my songs gather together their diverse strains into a single current and flow to a sea of silence in one salutation to thee.

Like a flock of homesick cranes flying night and day back to their mountain nests let all my life take its voyage to its eternal home in one salutation to thee. (94)

Undoubtedly, Tagore's mind was soaked in ancient Indian scriptures, particularly the *Upanishads,* which is evident even in the last poems that he wrote in 1941, of which one written on 24 January 1941 is cited below to demonstrate how he, like the Indian *Rishis* of the remote past, was obsessed by the quest for the Infinite present in him and behind the illusion (*maya*) of the finite world:

I see in sudden flashes
The realm beyond Darkness,
Where immersed I lay
In consciousness of the Great Being —
Unexpressed is He,
Unperceived, Unknown!
In this dawn
The words of the *Rishis* rise to my mind:

'Oh Sun! remove the veil that covers thy light!
In thy perfect light
May I see my true self

.....

In the playground of this world,
In joy, in suffering,
I have beheld in sudden flashes
The Infinite behind the veil of the finite;
Have comprehended:
The meaning of this birth lay
In that Beauty ineffable,
In that Song inexpressible! (*Later Poems of Rabindranath Tagore*, trans. Aurobindo Bose 132-33)

In a word, Tagore, like the Indian sages, is convinced that everything in the universe is a manifestation of the play of the Eternal. God is the creator of this cosmos and also lives in it. The *Upanishads* call It the *Hiranyagarbha* (*Eight Upanishads* 235): the spirit immanent in the universe and reveals itself though the universe.

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NAYANTARA SAHGAL'S TRYST WITH DESTINY: A CRITIQUE OF *THIS TIME OF MORNING*

Sunita Siroha

Nayantara Sahgal has given a new dimension to the art of novel writing in India. As a highly sensitive artist she is aware of the importance of historical /political consciousness in the shaping of fictional concerns. What is important in her case is that she artistically examines the complex interplay between history and politics of freedom struggle and uses it as a powerful medium to highlight the complexity of human relationships. She is of the view that the creative use of history and politics in fiction lies in demonstrating the fine nuances of those factors that contribute to the making of a nation/culture. It goes without saying that the history and politics of India from 1857 to 1947 have served as a trigger to her creative imagination.

The fact that she belongs to a very important political family — the legendry Nehru family — and has a first hand experience of political developments that took place before the dawn of freedom in 1947 must be taken into account for examining her role as a creative artist who uses the visionary politics to project a teeming mass of contemporary reality in her fiction. Her apprehension of political reality is based on her understanding of Gandhian philosophy and her artistic realignment of political points and counter points is used to measure the growth of individual consciousness in the context of national consciousness. Political commentary becomes only one of the means for her to highlight the nature of political situation that shaped the individual consciousness in contemporary India particularly before and after 1947. Let it be said at once here that her handling of political events is entirely different from novelists like Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao. Moreover her use of Gandhian philosophy is also different from Raja Rao's handling of Gandhi in *Kanthapura* because Raja Rao's artistic aim is entirely different from Sahgal's representation of Gandhi. It is historical and political rather than mythical or *puranic* (as we are reminded of Raja Rao's Moorthy in *Kanthapura*). As a creative artist, she observes that after attain-

ing freedom, people have started ignoring Gandhian principles. The colonial forces are still active and the whole socio-political atmosphere smacks of immoral ideology.

Sahgal's second important novel *This Time of Morning* (1965) occupies a distinctive place in her creative world. The novelist quotes Jawahar Lal Nehru's views on the eve of independence:

> Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge... At the stroke of the midnight hour when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom.

In one sense the novel may be read as a telling comment on his famous speech. What is important in the case of this novel is that the novelist raises certain fundamental issues concerned with post independent India, the meaning of freedom and integrity in human life. Like a great artist she asks searching questions: Have we been able to redeem our pledge in reality? Are we still conscious of our "tryst with destiny"? Has India really awakened to life and freedom? (We are reminded of Henry James when he pointed out that two concepts are extremely important for the novelist: "freedom" and "life"). Does freedom mean political power? Does it mean freedom to work? Does it mean a golden opportunity to create a new society? Does it mean individual sacrifice and pain to create a nation? Does it mean a process of fostering each other's humanity as individuals? Does it constitute a process of self-purification? Does it refer to communication and understanding? Does it mean an end to all problems which Indians faced during the British Empire? These are some of the searching questions which Nayantara Sahgal probes through the aesthetic structure of this novel. The novel starts with Rakesh and Salim who are foreign service officers. They are highly critical of the way the foreign ministry is run. They would not feel at ease with what is going on. That is why they refer to ministry as "the ministry not of external but of eternal affairs", for

> Things drift, decisions pend. The psychological movement comes and passes unnoticed. The leader of who is appointed where and why becomes more and more unfathomable. (172)

It has been pointed out that all is not well in post independent India and an atmosphere of utter confusion prevails which results in stultifying the very spirit of freedom. One is shocked to find out

that the meaning of Nehru's "tryst with destiny" is lost and civil servants who actually play a very vital role in the administration have become blind to the values cherished by political stalwarts like Gandhiji, Jawahar Lal Nehru and Sardar Patel. Sir Arjun Mitra and Rakesh work in the ministry of external affairs but the novelist graphically depicts their different attitudes and the way they implement certain vital decisions. For Rakesh

> the muddled yearnings of his schooldays found an outlet in his career, and in the early years after independence the Foreign Service was not merely a career. It was, he told his father, the restoration of national opportunity. He was acutely conscious that those who represented India abroad would be the first to project the image of a new nation. (68)

It becomes clear that Rakesh is primarily concerned with the projection of free India and his loyalty to the Prime Minister keeps on bothering him. On the other hand, Arjun Mitra is quite opposite to Rakesh as he still thinks himself to be a tattered remnant of British raj. He is the secretary general of external affairs. The paradox of his life is that his natural place lay in the scheme of empire but he is working in a free India and so feels "very uncomfortable in the country of his birth" (29). Politics for him emanated from Whitehall:

> The reliable approach to the world and its affairs was that of England's rulers. You could not spend ten impressionable years in England and not make that approach your own. It had, after all, ruled the world for a hundred years, and it dazzled the sentimental dreamy-eyed Indian boy who explored London's historic offerings and paid homage to the House of Parliament.(30)

Through the characters of Arjun and Rakesh the novelist dramatizes the contrast between the eastern way of thinking and the western way of thinking. It will not be wrong to suggest that through this contrast another prominent question is raised: India's search for identity in a global world. Can India truly feel free with people like Arjun Mitra with their western outlook emphasizing the "scheme of empire" (30). If such people determine the external affairs policy, it is sure that the ideal of freedom is bound to lose its glory. Freedom has a specific meaning in the context of India. The fact that the people of India have suffered at the hands of foreign rulers and it was for all intents and purposes, a colony of the British. Hence the whole glory of Indian culture and civilization ebbed away due to the

British rule. That is why, the attainment of political freedom in 1947 raised the aspirations of the Indian masses and people thought that their woes would come to an end. However, their aspirations did not materialize and they were subjected to a different kind of slavery. Corruption – moral as well as economic – still prevailed and with the passage of time India became a den of corruption. It is this worry which bothers the creative imagination of the novelist. No wonder the novel is prophetic as it certainly raises contemporary burning issues which are still relevant in the twenty first century.

The fact that the novel was published in 1965 after the death of Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru must be taken into account while analyzing the meaning of freedom in post Nehruvian era. The word "morning" in the title may refer to the dawn of independence but the aesthetic beauty of this dawn is sullied by the "sizable donations from men like Hari Mohan" (113) and other corrupt practices which have crept into the world of politics. The fact that the "old fossils are still preserved in Parliament" (114) may refer to the impact of colonization on the mental make up of those who consider themselves to be the protectors of freedom. One of the basic issues raised in the novel is "what does independence mean"? (69). Does it basically mean "foreign relations because to the extent that another country influences your foreign policy or tells you what to do, you are not independent. At least this is how we look at it" (69).

Sahgal raises another pertinent question through this novel: Has political freedom solved all problems? Is political freedom capable of mitigating our economic suffering? No doubt politicians keep on chanting:

> 'India is a tremendously vital country,' the voice went on, 'and it has often enough imposed its cultural pattern on other countries, not by force of arms but by the strength of its vitality, culture and civilization. There is no reason why we should give up our way of doing things, our way of considering things, simply because of some particular ideology which emanates from Europe or America. I have no doubt at all that we have to learn a great deal from Europe and America and I think we should keep our eyes and ears open. We should be flexible in mind and receptive, but we should not allow ourselves to be swept off our feet by any wind from anywhere'. (69)

But the fact remains that in the case of Rakesh, the demand-

ing and complex relationship "between him and his countrymen had gone far beyond political bounds. There had been scope in it for storm and calm, gentleness and severity, anger and above, but scarcity of a mutual objectivity" (69). The fact of the matter is that problems of the Indian masses multiplied ceaselessly inspite of attaining freedom because the politicians have failed to analyse the problems of the common man in an objective manner. Policies for the welfare of the common man were no doubt framed but the benefit of these policies could not reach the common masses and hence they were subjected to constant suffering. They found themselves surrounded by the atmosphere of greed and utter irresponsibility.

The members of the Indian delegation to Moscow behave in a highly irresponsible manner. The novelist wants us to see the incongruities of this world which has recently acquired freedom. Characters like Kalyan Sinha have a different opinion about the idea of progress but at the same time he shows contempt for "neatness and propriety" (84). The "glorified bull session" (85) with a kind of brooding grandeur raises certain discomforting questions and the novelist wants us to see how people find themselves at a crossroad. Every decent thing seems to be slipping away from their grip. Salim and Rakesh try to analyze the whole situation and wonder what is wrong with the Indians.

There is a message from PM's house to find out if any minister can use the PM's tickets for *Hamlet*. Nobody seems to be interested except Kalyan and he represents the PM at the opening performance of *Hamlet*. The opening performance of Hamlet has been used as a very powerful symbol to highlight the atmosphere of confusion that prevails in India of the 1960s and 70s. Characters like Hari, Mohan and Dheeraj Singh are also interested in using freedom as a tool to serve their selfish purpose. They don't attach any importance to the moral aspects of the issue because they do not consider morality relevant to the present time:

> But freedom had launched its own quota of problems, not the least of them the new political masters, men not remotely like Arjun and his colleagues. There were men among them of little education, little imagination, men with the limitations of a narrow, peasant upbringing, men who had spent years in prison and lost touch with the world outside, men who had never set foot

outside India and would not acknowledge that a wider reason counted. (121-22)

The novelist seems to suggest that Gandhian dream of Swaraj has been dashed to the ground and politicians, public servants and business tycoons have utter disregard for moral values. Freedom devoid of moral values is meaningless – it will not serve any purpose – rather it will sultify the whole atmosphere. What is important to note is that the novelist is highly critical of those politicians whose ruthless manipulations become the source of corruption. Like a great prophet Nayantara Sahgal seems to suggest that the fate of the middle classes is still dismal even after political freedom. Their economic needs remain unfulfilled. The whole system has also become corrupt and common people have no respite – infact – they cannot enjoy the fruit of political freedom. The *morning* of political freedom has dawned but its aesthetic charm is missing. It is also important to understand that disorder and anarchy is prevalent in India in this time of morning. At one level, the novel may be read as a warning against the political and moral corruption. People like Kalyan also question the validity of non-violence as a political method and reject it as an exercise in futility. Kalyan's view regarding the relevance of Gandhian non-violent movements are completely misconceived and far from reality. And the novel in no uncertain terms is a telling comment on what has happened recently in India. Anna Hazare's recent crusade against corruption is a living testimony of the relevance of *Satyagraha* and only by translating the principles propounded by Gandhiji and Anna Hazare one can really enjoy the freshness and aesthetic charm of *this time of morning*.

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LIMINAL CHARACTERS IN KIRAN DESAI'S *THE INHERITANCE OF LOSS*

Sonali Das

Modern age disintegrating forces — colonialism, globalization, territorial dispute, and immigration — turn the people affected by it into liminal subjects. Guobin Yang states that a liminal subject stands between two social structures, neither separate from the previous nor entered into the next. After years of colonization transforms a post-colony's original culture, the hybrid postcolonial subject becomes a liminal figure between multiple sets of traditions. Globalisation further intensifies this cultural imposition. Let us understand the terms 'Globalisation' and 'Liminality' before applying it to Desai's characters in *The Inheritance of Loss.* The term 'Globalisation' is the process whereby individual lives and local communities are affected by economic and cultural forces that operate world-wide. In short, it is the process of the world becoming a single place. Globalisation has largely affected culture and made it 'hybrid' and 'impure'. Not only Globalisation affects the culture, tradition and ways of living the world over, it also affects literatures of the world. It shapes the literary taste of the age and affects neo-colonial literature and literature of new diaspora. Globalisation also evokes resistance from the locals giving rise to localization. If economic globalisation comes from the West to the East and Third World countries, cultural globalization does not follow that course. It is the global/local interaction that becomes the subject of postcolonial (neo-colonial) literature. Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* is a case in point.

Coming to the term 'liminality', both 'liminal' and 'liminality' are derived from the Latin "limen", which means "threshold", i.e., the bottom part of a doorway that must be crossed when entering a building. In the 2nd half of the 20th century both the terms gained popularity through the writings of British cultural anthropologists, Victor Turner. Turner borrowed and expanded upon Van Gennep's concept of liminality. Liminality is a psychological, neurological, or metaphysical subjective state, conscious or unconscious, of being

on the "threshold" or between two different existential planes, as defined in neurological psychology (a "liminal state") and in the anthropological theories of ritual by such writers as Arnold van Gennep and Victor Turner. The importance of the liminal for post-colonial theory is its usefulness in describing an 'in-between' space in which cultural change may occur: the 'transcultural' space, a region in which there is a continual process of movement and interchange between different states. For instance, the colonized subject may dwell in the liminal space between 'colonial discourse' and the assumption of a new 'non-colonial' identity. But such identification is not a simple process. It is a constant process of engagement, contestation and appropriation. In fact, we can say that post-colonial discourse itself consistently inhabits this liminal space.

This paper attempts to probe into the minds of such liminal characters as presented in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss.* Kiran Desai believes that an absolute rejection of external influence oversimplifies postcolonial identity. Postcolonial liminality is a reality and is here to stay. Rejecting it to reclaim national identity is a sham of truth. Gyan is disgusted with Sai because she observes Christmas but no South Asian holidays. Gyan yells, '"Why do you celebrate Christmas? You're Hindus and you don't celebrate Id or Guru Nanak's birthday or even Durga Puja or Dussehra or Tibetan New Year"' (Desai, 163). We can see inconsistency in his argument. His argument is that being a Hindu, Sai should only celebrate Hindu festivals, but he lists Muslim, Sikh and Buddhist holidays alongside Hindu ones. Our national culture had always been an amalgam of diverse cultures, even before colonialism. Thus, we can say that intercultural liminality pre-exists colonialism. As the authorial voice notes that 'it had always been a messy map' (9), the expectation that a postcolonial subject should side with a single culture is artificial. Cultural authenticity does not pre-suppose cultural exclusiveness. What Gyan asks Sai to do is not an expression of cultural authenticity, but an imposition of false ideology — of rejection of the West. Desai is in total opposition to such an ideology which reduces postcolonial identity to only two things — loyalty to native Asian traditions and mimicry of external Western tradi-

tions.

By redefining '"Christmas"' as '"an Indian holiday as much as any other"' (163), Sai allows the possibility for the external to become internal. We are in a phase of cultural liminality; celebrating Christmas becomes a part of it. The West no longer has sole ownership of Christmas. Observing it is a valid alternative expression of Postcolonial Indian identity. However unacceptable and painful it might be, it's a fact that we were once a colonized nation. Hence our culture is bound to be influenced by that of the coloniser's. Our political history makes our cultural liminality a reality. Gyan fails to understand Sai's 'unconventional background' (29). Desai inserts several reminders in the novel that Sai's adherence to Western culture results naturally from her Anglicized upbringing. She had 'no idea how to properly make tea (...) the Indian way', because she 'only knew the English way' (6). She cannot communicate with the cook because 'she was an English-speaker and he was a Hindi-speaker' (19). Desai has informed us about this well before Gyan's accusations. This makes Gyan's arguments invalid. Being an Anglicised Indian, with a convent education, Sai has only inherited a loss of tradition, as the novel's title suggests. Hence, she cannot be accused of abandoning traditions that she has not inherited.

When postcolonial national identity subsumes regional identities, rebellion takes place to reclaim a more authentic sub-national identity. However, Gyan's rash decision to join the Gorkha National Liberation Front demanding a separate land for Gorkhas, puts him in a liminal social space. Before being fully committed to this movement, Gyan immaturely desires to be in a larger-than-life moment. This embitters his relationship with the privileged Anglophone Sai. Collective participation in a freedom movement transforms an individual from a liminal state into a much deeper moral or social loyalty. After his participation, his values took a drastic reversal, 'tea parties with Sai on the veranda' brought him 'shame' (161). Though Gyan believes his new identification fulfils 'requirements of adulthood' (161), the context of his 'leaping' (160) suggests that he instead behaves immaturely. Though it 'felt entirely authentic' (160), it was only a misleading appearance to those

desperate for relevancy, 'an affirmation he'd never felt before' (157). Though Gyan's new companions (GNLF activists) felt that their 'fury' was 'liberating' '... because the grief of the past was gone' (161), Desai suggests that complete separation from historical reality is neither possible nor honest. Their 'American T-shirts made-in-China-coming-in-via Kathmandu' (157) contradict their supposed purity. Though they inspire Gyan to hate the West, they consume Western culture themselves. Desai mocks them as 'unleashed Bruce Lee fans' (157) and indicates that it is very difficult to escape liminality in the age of globalization when we consume most of the foreign products. Globalisation falsifies idea of culture purity in postcolonial spaces world.

The Postcolonial identity Gyan attains is not an authentic sub-national identity. 'Fired by alcohol' (160), Gyan is not in his real self but intoxicated. While Sai has a world view resulting from her life experience, Gyan adopts the ideology of a collective, unitary mass of 'Marwari merchants' as 'they melded into a single being' (156). He is swept by a popular ideology that surround him. Gyan represents the extreme form of anti-Western postcolonial identity. But Desai does not endorse the opposite extreme either. Indian immigrants returning home, bring back with them Western culture. Not only the foreign returned promote Western culture, even many back home are Anglophiles. According to Ania Loomba, Fanon argues that being unable to attain whiteness traumatizes the hybrid colonized subject. Such Anglophiles, having already rejected their skin colour, occupy a liminal psychological space (Loomba, 145). The retired judge, Jemubhai Patel in *The Inheritance of Loss*, is such a character. They feel, as Albert Memmi writes (Memmi, 119-141), rejecting the values of the colonizers is adverse to one's social advancement. Jemubhai Patel went to Cambridge to study law, but it was a time when people of colour weren't particularly liked in Britain. He was ridiculed for his accent, young girls held their noses as he passed insisting he smelled like curry. Being an Anglophile, this rejection by foreigners instilled in his soul a feeling of shame, inferiority complex and a dislike for his heritage, his culture and the colour of his skin.

Thus, we can see that globalization makes the degrading psychological effect of colonialism persist in the liminal spaces of Desai's novel. Post colonization, Stuart Hall explains that globalization continues this trajectory in making the world 'a market for the West' ('Globalisation: Cartographies of Power'). Affiliation with the West makes a person much more valuable than someone with no affiliation. When the colonial subject subordinates his own identity and values to Western ones in the novel, he imposes a kind of psychological liminality on people around him as well. Modern transportation makes possible various categories of migration, from immigration to migrant work to tourism. This sort of mobility is discernable in *The Inheritance of Loss* through 'Indians who lived abroad, Indians who traveled abroad, richest and poorest, the back-and-forth ones maintaining green cards' (297). By presenting Biju (Cook's son) along with a variety of travelers at the Calcutta's Dum Dum airport, Desai generalizes Biju's condition. There are many others who share Biju's fate. The accessibility of global transportation makes a range of transnational identities common. Desai equates the migrant class with globally transported goods. Postcolonial identity cannot be compartmentalized since globalization complicates it further. Liminal occupants range from the 'computer boys who'd made a million' at the top of the immigrant ladder to the 'taxi drivers', from 'those who were still maintaining their culture and going to the temple' to those who 'escape from being a drab immigrant' (296).

Globalisation demands assimilating into an alien culture and not sticking to one's own native tradition. Hence Biju, a liminal character, feels pressurized to declare that he works in a place where there is 'no Indian food, and the owner is not from India. He is from America itself' (14). The Cook becomes a neo-colonised character when he believes that 'since his son was cooking English food, he had a higher position than if he were cooking Indian' (17). He thought his son would make enough money and then he would retire. The Cook ignores his embarrassing present with the hope of a bright future. Similar is the case with Gyan, who too ignores his present and imagines a liminal temporal space, in which he historicizes the present from a future perspective. The Cook occupies an imagina-

tive liminality as unrealistic as Gyan's. He stops bothering about the humiliation of having his house searched by the police, and considers his son's arrival in New York as an achievement. By idealizing the West, he imposes a form of cultural imperialism on himself.

Globalisation causes postcolonial immigrants to internalize Western dominance to unwarranted degrees. The first time Biju is mentioned in the novel is in the context of his photo when he is 'dressed to leave home' (14). This one image of Biju signifies his entrance into liminality. Just as an uninformed and immature Gyan decides to take a hard-line stand against the West an ignorant cook glorifies immigration. Both mistake simple postcolonial identities, West-phobic or West-centric, to be larger than life. Colonialism distorts a former colony's cultural and national dignity. Globalisation further complicates questions of national and ethnic self-assertion. The liminality created by colonialism and globalization makes the postcolonial identity of the inhabitants ambiguous. Neither West-loathing nor East-idealizing attitude will sort out the problem. It has to be understood that liminal identity of postcolonial people is a reality. The characters of the judge, the cook, Biju and Gyan are not fictitious. They are very real and may be one among us. Indeed, Kiran Desai has very deftly portrayed liminal spaces to explain the nuances of postcolonial identity.

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CHUTNIFICATION OF ENGLISH: TECHNIQUES IN THE NOVELS OF MANJU KAPUR

Anupama Chowdhury

A new generation of Indian English novelists, radically different in thought and attitude from that of the predecessors, appeared in the literary scene in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Major novels like Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* (1997), Manju Kapur's four novels, R K Jha's *The Blue Bedspread* (1999), Pankaj Mishra's *The Romantics* (2000), Sunny Singh's *Nani's Book of Suicide* (2000) and Kapur's three later works- *A Married Woman* (2003), *Home* (2006) and *the immigrant* (2008) are revolutionary both in their content and form and have won the appreciation of readers both at home and abroad. Their work is marked by an impressive feel for the language, and an authentic presentation of contemporary India, with all its regional variations.

There is a distinction "between the 'standard' British English inherited from the empire and the english which the language has become in post-colonial countries"(Ashcroft, et al 8). Colonizers had always used language and literature as a powerful tool in the process of domination, be it political or cultural. The imperial education system installed a "standard" version of the metropolitan language as the norm, and marginalized all "variants" as impurities. Postcolonial literatures have followed three phases in their growth. These have been termed as "adopt", "adapt" and "adept". Indian English fiction in our country is now following the third phase, "adept", in which "the new literature breaks away from all the previous norms and conventions, and strikes a path creating a literature that is one's own" (Nagarajan 188). It has been seven decades since Raja Rao in his foreword to *Kanthapura* proclaimed that

> One has to convey in a language that is not one's own the spirit that is one's own.... We cannot write like the English. We should not. We cannot write only as Indians. We have grown to look at the large world as part of us. Our method of expression therefore has to be a dialect which will some day prove to be as distinctive and colourful as the Irish or the American. (5)

An attempt has been made in this paper to analyze this phenomenon vis-à-vis the novels of Manju Kapur.

In all her novels Manju Kapur has successfully created a new Indian English idiom that at once distinguishes it from the "English" and other "englishes". While focusing on the "strategies of appropriation in post-colonial writing (58)", Ashcroft and the co-authors mention some of the techniques used in the language of the post-colonial writers — "glossing", "untranslated words", "interlanguage", "syntactic fusion", "code-switching", "vernacular transcription", etc. Kapur has used almost all the items mentioned by these critics.

With the publication of her very first novel, *Difficult Daughters,* in 1998, Manju Kapur has shown her mastery in both style and technique. Full of innovative flourishes, it exudes a continuous urge for experimenting linguistically. Set in flashback technique it begins with the death of Virmati, the heroine of the novel. Her daughter Ida, who learnt the story of her life from her aunt, tells it to the readers. The novel moves along multiple time frames. The fabric of the novel is interwoven with multiple narratives. The major part of the story is narrated by the author herself, who seems to be omnipresent but does not take part in the story. Her omniscience is only intercepted by the narratives of Ida and her uncles and aunts in the last section of the book (266-80). Ida starts with a very cryptic statement: "The one thing I had wanted was not to be like my mother" (1). This sets the tone of the novel and the readers get curious to explore why she did not like to be her mother. The book ends, as it began, with Ida's angry comment:

> This book weaves a connection between any mother and me, each word a brick in a mansion I made with my head and my heart. Now live in it, Mama and leave me be. Do not haunt me any more (259).

The novel uses much of the Indian expressions and colloquial terms without any hesitation. This gives her English definitely a local flavour. Codemixing is an important trait in Manju Kapur's fiction. Punjabi and Hindi words that have been taken from different areas of experiences occur profusely throughout the novel. Here are a few examples from the text: Food items- "Atta", "Malai", "Lassi", "Ghee", "Puris", "Luchies", "Kulchas", "Tandoori", "Morraba", "Sherbat", "Papad", "Dal", "Pakora", "Chutney", "Dahi", "Paneer", "Mathri", etc.; Places- "Dharamshala", "Aangan", "Gully", "Kothi", etc.; Professions-

"Chowkidar", "Pundit", "Dhobi", "hakim", "vaid", "Munshi", "Bania", etc.; Events- "Chauth", "Uthala", "Shaddi", etc.; Relations- "Bhai Saheb", "Bua", "Maji", "Bade Pitaji", "Baoji", "Beta", "Masi", "Pitaji", "Bhenji", "Pehnji", "Mati", etc.; Dresses- "Pyjama", "Kurta", "Dupatta", "Kameez", etc.; Utensils- "Thali", "Katori", "Karahi", etc.; Religious items- "Sandhya", "Havan", etc.; Adjectives- "Shaan", "Gandi", "Badmash", etc.; Exclamations- "Bap re", "Arre", "He Bhagwan", "Arre wah", "Hai re, hai re", etc.; Reduplications- "Seedha-Saadha", "Bas-bas", "Shor-Shaar", etc.; Religious Invocations-"Allah-o-Akbar", har Mahadev", "Bole so Nihal", etc.

The brilliance of the novel under discussion also lies in Kapur's unique handling of the English language marked by her use of code mixing devices. "Code mixing" is normally defined as the use of more than one language in the execution of a speech-act. She also makes her characters voice their joys and hopes by using rich and colourful expressions in colloquial Punjabi and creates the cultural context of her plot. A few examples from the text will prove our point: "She was so keen to study, *bap re"* (5), "There she is, with just Viru to look after her, *bap re"* (13), "*Arre,* exclaimed her cousin patting her on the back" (18),etc. Also, the use of a few native slangs adds to the "Indian-ness" of the text. Kasturi's remark, "You've destroyed our family, you *badmash*, you *randi"* (221), very well brings out her anger and hopelessness vis-à-vis her typically Indian notion of the correct behaviour for girls. This off and on switching to words and expressions in different languages makes this novel an enjoyable reading for the Indian readers though this may pose some difficulty for the non-Indians. A sentence like "I don't want a chauth, I don't want an uthala" (1) may become completely meaningless to the English-speaking non-natives.

Manju Kapur's next novel, *A Married Woman* (2003), is a narrative dealing with highly sensitive issues of gender, lesbian relationship and communalism. Kapur uses the historical events of "Babri-Masjid issue" in Ayodhya as the backdrop for the life-stories of Astha and Pipee. The "english" used in *A Married Woman* is a hybrid linguistic formation consisting of a cocktail of vocabulary from Hindi, Urdu and Sanskrit. A distinctively Indian lexicon is transfused with

International Standard English to bring out the essence of familiarity for the Indian readers. The novel is replete with Indian coinages. Here are a few examples from the text — *Mohalla, mali, crore, swami, sari, etc.* Many of such native Indian words have been absorbed into general International English. This superbly readable fiction also abounds in native Indian words that have been absorbed into British English, either in colonial times or more recently, e.g. *wallah, tandoor, etc.* Kapur also mixes terms that now seem obsolete to a British reader but are still current coin in India — e.g. *STD* (Subscriber Trunk Dialling) with American neologisms — e.g. *MBA* (Master of Business Administration). In addition to these, there are also some terms that are only relevant in the Indian context — e.g. *scheduled castes, NRI,* etc.

Plenty of code mixing is characteristic of this novel also. As in *Difficult Daughters*, here also Indian words are profusely used in the body of the text – culinary items like Tikki", "papri", "chutney", "ghee", "dosa", etc.; relations like- "beta", "ma", "dadi", etc.; religious invocation like "Jai Shri Ram, Jai Siya Ram" and such other items. During her stay in the "zenana" (again a code mixing) with Aijaz's family, Pipee is exposed to Urdu, a language she appears to know passively but not actively: "the way they greeted each other, As salamalaikum — Wa Alaikum Assalam, their manner of speaking, the kh's that made her Hindi tongue seem crude and unsophisticated" (136). Indian multilingualism is also focused when, for instance, Pipee has the idea of linking her South India trip up with her academic research and we are told: "With an interpreter she could get some field work done" (247).

When Pipee proposes to Astha that she accompany her on the "Ekta Yatra" and Astha accepts the proposal, Hemant argues with his wife using a code mixing discourse combining the Indian terms with the British — "the Dalits have called a Nyaya Yatra ... some mill workers have called a Roti Yatra ... every Tom, Dick and Harry is going to march up and down India demanding something" (249). Hemant goes on to warn Astha of the perils of the journey: "Anything can happen. All these yatras have goondas attached to them" (249) — "Goonda" being the Indian term for "thug". While preparing

for departure Astha gives the readers informations about the food items they are carrying with them — "I have had puris made for us and aloo ki sabzi, along with pickles" (255). This hybrid linguistic richness adds fluency to the text.

Kapur's novel, *Home*, is written in live Indian English Idiom illustrating the way Indians actually use English. The language that the characters speak is a kind of "*Hinglish*" where Hindi words are blended humorously with the English vocabulary. A few examples will suffice: "sherbet", "gayatri mantra", "mangli", "Baoji",, "Maji", "didi", "masi", "durrie", "mamiji", "masi", "masarji", "chacha", "chachi", "papaji", "dadu", dadi" , "durrie", etc. The code mixing device used in this fast-moving story makes the context or narration more realistic. In the sentence, "It was your kismet not to have children..."(26) Kapur's choice of "kismet" instead of "fate" lends this expression a homely and realistic touch. The novelist's use of Indian expressions in the English sentences reminds us of Mulk Raj Anand's coinage, "pigeon English". Such expressions as "Achcha achcha, sorry" (61) or "Arre, why? He is your Bhaiyya..."(61) or when Sona moans,"You are too trusting, ji" (195), bear testimony to Anand's words. There are also some speeches which show the typical Indian way of expressing things: "We were so worried about Ammaji, thank God Bhaiyya agreed to marry at last" (319) or in "How sweet it is, bap re! Bhai Sahib, less sugar in the next round, if you please. We are Dilliwallahs" (81) or in the narration- "Suresh doing a B Eng from DU (200)." Sometimes small cryptic sentences are used. These are without verbs or the necessary conjunctions. Kapur has taken great liberty in handling her language. The profuse uses of acronyms like STD or MCD, etc. have been helpful in bringing out the Indianness of this fiction. Apparently, in its use of language the novel has carved its niche in the post-modern Indian English fiction.

Kapur's latest novel, *the immigrant*, differs from her other three works in being located throughout in a period recent but not contemporary, the 1970s of Indira Gandhi's Emergency. In an interview (Saturday, 9 August 2008) the author mentioned that the "genesis of the book was her desire to explore the NRI sensibility, as well as to convey a sense of the darkness that surrounded India around the

time of the Emergency – 'when there was this idea that India was just not a place to be in, you had to get out, nobody could get anywhere here. It's something I grew up with too'" (http://jaiarjun.blogspot.com/2008/08/meeting-with-manju-kapur.html). The title of the novel (all in small letters) perhaps suggests alienation, cross-culture, hybridity and globalization.

the immigrant is the story of Delhi-based Nina Batra, a 30-year-old unmarried lecturer in English at Miranda House, Delhi University. The death of her diplomat father has left her and her mother struggling to make ends meet in strained circumstances. The novel begins on her thirtieth birthday with a grim realization of her diminishing prospects of marriage. But a visit to a bureaucrat-cum-astrologer sets her life into a different path through an "arranged introduction" with an NRI dentist, who arrives from Halifax, Canada to meet her. Ananda, the prospective groom, left New Delhi a few years back after his parents were killed in an accident. Young and ambitious, he has made his mark as a wealthy doctor in Halifax. It is thus a partially arranged marriage, promoted by Ananda's sister and Nina's mother. Nina is finally able to leave her colourless life behind to fly to a small-town in Canada, only to discover later her husband's sexual and emotional dysfunctions. After an initial inertia, he secretly visits a therapist later and almost cures himself. But his successful experiences with the "surrogate" make him more adventurous. He becomes the insensitive, straying husband, and takes on a young, white mistress. Nina is left alone to brood over her pitiable state. But, in a few days, she too joins a library science course and has an extramarital affair. The couple seeks neither to understand nor love each other. Nina suffers a two-fold alienation. In a foreign land with no one to talk to but the husband, she feels rootless.

Nina's initial failure to make a balance between her American and Indian identity brings in an "identity crisis" in her life. This results in cultural isolation that leads to personal isolation as well. Nina's rootlessness in the new soil makes her pine for "home". The idyllic future — mother, daughter and grandchild united at last in a Canadian home — that Nina had dreamt of, shatters when her

mother dies alone in her apartment. However, she faces the problems of her marital life boldly, defies the role that tradition has scripted for her, and qualifies as a librarian. At last she has found her own identity — "Anchors. You had to be your own anchor" (328).

The Post-Independence era has witnessed the emergence of a large number of novelists whose works offer "interesting insights into the many ways in which the standard authentic notion of language has been subverted" (Ashcroft, et. al, 40). In this novel Manju Kapur has successfully created a new Indian English idiom that at once distinguishes it from the "English" and other "englishes". She uses much of the Indian expressions and colloquial terms without any hesitation. Also, she makes a brilliant use of code mixing devices. Here are a few examples from the text: "She accepted tea...along with mathri and pickle" (229), "Arre, beta, last visit..." (26), "sweeping woman, long handled mop, salwar kameezed", "the surprised scooter-wallah roared off" (291), "Ji, uncle" (26), and so on. A distinctively Indian lexicon is transfused with International Standard English to bring out the essence of familiarity for the Indian readers. Few examples will suffice: "Dal", "chicken do piyaza", "raita", "naan", "mishri", "Palak Paneer", "Mathri", "Beta", "Kameez", "matka", "Bap", "bas, bas", "Arre", etc. Thus, the novelist has been successful in creating Indian English idiom which well suits her themes.

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WHAT WAS RALPH RUSSELL'S ATTITUDE TO MIR'S HOMOSEXUALITY?

Hoshang Merchant

In her Foreword to Russell's *Three Mughal Poets* Annemarie Schimmel says:

> A poet like Mir echoes the famous verses of Hafiz, who wrote, in the great ghazal *Dush didam* ... (Yesterday [that is, on the day of pre-eternal covenant] I saw the Angels Knocking on the Door of the Tavern), the typical line, " Heaven could not bear the burden of the trust¾thus the lot was cast for me, the madman." This burden or trust, the *amanat* mentioned by the Quran, has been interpreted by the mystics as a burden of love. One may compare Gertrude Bell's rendering of Hafiz's line: "For Heaven's self was all too weak to bear / the burden of His love God laid on it." But it has also been interpreted by Muhammad Iqbal, for example, as the burden of personality, of individuality. Mir, in his verses about man as the "noblest of creatures" and about the pre-eternal burden, is faithful to the traditional interpretation, but gives a new, and quite unexpected, view of the value of human life.

Among the numerous inherited *topoi* of Persian-Urdu poetry we might mention also the constant tension between the poet or lover, on the one hand, and the theologian, the *sheikh* or *pir* or the Sufi order, on the other. Pre-formed at the confrontation of Hallaj and the theologian, of gibbet and pulpit, this relation of the ecstatic lover and the representative of the established theological or mystical tradition is one of the constantly recurring themes of poetry, from Hafiz, with his mockery about the sheikh who enters the tavern, to Muhammad Iqbal, who gives the old motif a new and practical dimension by applying it to the fossilized theologians of his own time.

Russell retells a gay story of Mir's:

> Parasram was a very good-looking boy, and was loved and admired by many of his friends. Among these was one whose love Parasram returned, and the two would spend much of their time in each other's company. But there came a day when Parasram stopped visiting his friend, and for days together nothing was seen of him. When at length they did meet, his lover taxed Parasram with his sudden indifference towards him and wanted to know the cause. Parasram replied that he had recently married; he loved his wife dearly and could not bear to be parted from her a moment longer than was necessary; and she loved him with the same

passionate devotion, so much so that he was convinced that she could not live without him. His lover replied: "I cannot believe it so. This is only woman's deceit. Do not be taken in by it. What woman was ever constant in love? And what woman ever failed to survive her husband's death? Outwardly they are all fair, but within is deadly venom. God himself has spoken of their deceit: no living being is more treacherous. The whole world knows of their treachery, and their deceit is on all men's tongues." He went on to say that if Parasram doubted his words, he should put his wife to the test; then he would see that he spoke the truth. Parasram agreed to do so, and a man was sent to his house to tell his wife that Parasram had been drowned while bathing in the river. When she heard the news, she gave one despairing look towards the door through which Parasram used to come, and then fell down in a faint and died. And so on.

In foot note Russell explains:

An inevitable consequence of the parda system was the prevalence of homosexual love, and here as elsewhere Mir portrays it without comment as one of the common manifestations of love. Some modern Urdu critics, especially those who pride themselves on having studied Western literature and assimilated its standards of taste, condemn classical Urdu poetry for the prevalence of this attitude, which, they claim, debars it from consideration as good literature. Such critics have either not noticed or have forgotten that, for example, 126 of Shakespeare's sonnets out of a total of 154 are about his love for a beautiful young man. (Cf. G. B. Harrison's Introduction to the Penguin edition [1938], pp. 10-11.) One commonly finds with this school of critics that the application of their canons would condemn a great deal of the literature from the study of which these canons are allegedly derived.

He follows it up with the next footnote:

We have throughout this chapter written on the assumption that the beloved of Mir's ghazal is, like his mistress in *The Stages of Love*, the typical woman of parda society. *The Stages of Love* is itself substantial evidence for the view that for Mir's ghazals this assumption is probably justified. But in parda society, like every other in which there is drastic segregation of the sexes and a marked difference between the cultural level of men and that of women, love also found outlets in homosexual and in resort to a class of cultured courtesans. Thus boys and courtesans, as well as respectable parda women, appear in the Urdu ghazal in the role of the beloved. In most verses the expression is too generalized for the class or sex of the beloved to be identifiable. In any case, in the philosophy of Urdu love poetry *all* beauty engenders love as its natural and proper human response, and there is no abhorrence.either of pederasty or of love for courtesans. Nor

is the concept of constancy a, so to speak, monogamous one. Constancy to one's beloved meant complete submission to her or his will: it did not necessarily imply that a man might not have more than one beloved. Mir, like most of the cultivated men of his day, must have mixed freely and intimately with courtesans. In the passage quoted on above, the "beautiful women... whose long tresses held me their captive" can surely only have been courtesans.

Then there is the Shaikh, the opposite prototype of the lover:

If pilgrimage could make a man a man
Then all the world might make the pilgrimage.
But *sheikh ji* is just back, and loot at him¾
An ass he went: an ass he has returned (V.560.22)

And again

Shaikh never knew the ache of love. How could he?
He took good care to feel no more than lust. (II. 246.21)

Mir quotes his father's words to him, urging him to love and learn that love is the supreme force in the universe. And years later he begins one of his masnavis (*The Flame of Love*) not with the lines in praise of God and the Prophet which convention prescribed, but with a hymn to love which virtually reproduces in Urdu verse these same words that his father had spoken to him. "Love brought forth light out of the darkness," it begins.

Without love God could not have made Himself manifest. Love alone drives on the work of the world: without it the world would cease to move, and the heavens to revolve. It is love that gave heat to the sun, love that scarred the heart of the moon. Love can set fire to water. It is love for the candle's flame that draws the moth to burn to death, and that same flame of love that melts the candle away. It is love that opens the delicate mouths of the rose-buds to blossom in a smile, love that moves the rose to unfold her beauty before the nightingale, and love for the rose that inspires the nightingale's sweet, lamenting song.... It is love that sets man's heart aflame, that heart which, without love, is no better than a stone. It is love that inspires him to heroic deeds, love that makes him bow his neck gladly to receive the death blow from his beloved's sword, love that makes possible those things that, without love, man could not even conceive of. The whole firmament is filled with love, and earth and sky are brimming over with it.

I end by quoting C. M. Naim:

> To the more blunt questions¾was Mir a homosexual?¾there can be no easy answer. We have reasons to believe that Mir married at least twice, and we know that he also had children¾as did his father, despite holding an extremely low opinion of conjugal ties. The fantasy figure that appeared to Mir during his bout of lunacy, described in ZM and in the masnavi *Khvab-o-Khayal*, could have been a woman or a young man. Arguably, a similar ambiguity surrounds the identity of Mir's beloveds in the masnavis, '*Mu amilat-I Ishq*' and *Josh-I 'Ishq.*' Should we then see Mir as a pederast hiding behind a façade of conjugal heterosexuality? Should we say he was heterosexual, but felt compelled by poetic convention to write about pretty boys? Or should we posit a bisexual orientation on his part? Obviously, given the paucity of our information concerning Mir himself, any categorical statement would be unsound. All we can assert with some certainty is that Mir had intense emotional/erotic involvement with more than one person outside of conjugal relationships. Whether these persons were young men or young women remains a moot question. However, if women, there is no evidence to let us conclude that they were 'cousins' or other 'veiled' women. What is noteworthy is that regardless of their sexual identity and social status Mir wrote verses about them with both passion and artistic care, and then made those verses public, like his other writings, to be read and enjoyed by everyone as poetry.

Conclusion

When Mir writes, "Lahu ki nadi mein / Naha kar chale (we bathed in rivers of blood and went (on)," he is referring to the literal blood letting by doctors during his "moon-madness". The colonial Russell humanises himself by immersing himself in the suffering of our poet, Mir Taki Mir, and in giving Urdu back to us in crystal-clear English, he has humanised us.

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JAYASHANKAR PRASAD ON REALISM (YATHĀRTHAVĀD): AN ORIGINAL INDIAN VIEW

K.K. Sharma

Jayashankar Prasad is doubtless the most original creative writer and critic in Modern Hindi literature. He was a natural, versatile genius: poet, short story writer, dramatist, novelist, critic, and an insightful scholar of ancient Indian history, mythology and philosophy — all rolled in one. With the exception of his early writings, all that he wrote during the great creative phase of the last ten years of his life is characterised by rare originality. True, he was 'the first great free thinker' in Hindi literature as the celebrated Hindi writer Jainendra Kumar, who happened to be quite close to him, has rightly asserted (Quoted in O.P. Govil, *Tears* [Jayashankar Prasad's *Aansoo*] 67). His originality was the inevitable corollary of his wide reading and profoundly philosophical bent of mind. He could produce highly realistic works like *Kankal* (a novel) and historical plays together with intensely romantic poetry like *Aansu, Lahar, Jharnā* and the acme of his creative power *Kamayani* (an epic). No wonder he was fully competent to write the critical essay,"Yathārthavād (Realism) aur(and) Chhayāvād (Romanticism)", besides several other remarkable critical pieces collected in the volume titled *Kāvya aur Kala tatha Anya Nibandh* (*Poetry and Art and Other Essays*).

Prasad begins his brilliant critical essay, "Yathārthavād and Chhayavad" with the observation that the modern age in Hindi literature is marked by two main tendencies called realism and romanticism. After this he deals with realism in detail. He holds that during the Indian Renaissance Bhartendu Harishchandra, while reinstating the importance and pleasure of ancient Indian dramatic art, was the first modern Hindi litterateur to portray the realistic side of life. He refers to his two works, "Prem-yogini" and "Dekhi Tumri Kasi" in support of his assertion. Thus, human suffering and realism began to appear slowly and steadily in literature as a result of his initiation in this regard. In contrast to the preceding period, the new modern age was clearly inclined to depict the poverty and misery-ridden ambience of the common ordinary people. Importantly, along with

the use of old *Purânic* mythology, ideals and the creation of new ideals suited to the period, realism, as introduced by Bhartendu Harishchandra, unmistakably continued to blossom even in the early phase of modern Hindi literature.

Prasad holds that the chief characteristic of realism is the literary attitude towards smallness, ordinariness (laghutâ), and hence it is necessarily marked by the felt experience of pain, suffering (vedanâ) and sorrow (dukh). What he means by smallness/ ordinariness is the realistic, factual portrayal of pain and poverty of human life as opposed to the imaginative depiction of extraordinary and important aspects of life in consonance with the well-accepted literary principles ("Yathârthavâd aur Chhayavâd," *Kavya aur Kala tatha Anya Nibandh* 82). In Harishchandra's time a movement for new cultural awakening was launched by groups of organised youths, who, considering the *puranic* characters only of ancient importance, developed a belief in ordinariness and humanism (love for all men alike) which automatically resulted in a spontaneous discard and derision of narrow, rotten traditions and conventions (sanskar). Harishchandra gave this a vociferous, effective literary expression, and thus realism in modern Hindi literature came into being.

After tracing, with a rare intellectual sharpness, the beginning and the root cause of the new realistic trend in modern Hindi literature, Prasad focuses on another factor that accounted for the emergence of realism in literature. He points out that people's endeavour to discover and reinstate the age-old reality of a race, hidden beneath the religious and communal changes, also helped realism to find its due place in literature. As a result of this, the bold and strange acts of princes were replaced by the portrayal of the common man's actual life (82). In the age of Indian Renaissance during which Harishchandra was bringing out a radical change in literature, both the weak, poor common men and the powerful, opulent kings and feudal lords were the realities of the Indian society. The secret of the reality of common men and their smallness lay in the fact that the Indian kings and the religious preachers had completely failed to protect the sovereinity of India, and the society from crimes. Therefore, people lost faith in the very existence of the political and

religious institutions, and both became redundant and meaningless. Inevitably, the common man, who was thought to be poor, miserable and helpless, began to appear great and extraordinary in his poverty and lowliness (ksudritā). Prasad rightly asserts that the literature, which deals with grief-ridden humanity, is automaticaaly embedded in realism. Obviously, this realistic literature abounds in men's poverty, fall and pain (83).

Prasad is correct when he states that literature has its beginning in idealism, i.e. literary/ poetic justice according to which good (Rāma) is shown triumphant over evil (Rāvana); but the realists are of the view that man is not free from weaknesses, and hence the realistic portrayal of life entails description of man's degradation and misery too. And then the main causes of this smallness and contemptibility (nindniyata) of man which are born of, and governed by, the rigid social conventions, appear in different forms after having come into existence (83). In fact, human actions, which, according to the particular period and characters, are said to be neither wholly good nor completely bad, are sometimes accepted and sometimes discarded by the society. Apparently, when the creative artists of an age try to reconcile people with the actions called bad due to their hostility to the society, they become sympathetic to such actions. Discerning the weaknesses and foibles of man, one attributes them to man's psychological state and rotten social conventions. And this leads to paln and suffering, inherent in the law of poetic/literary justice. The realist knows the value of this human fall, and also the great truth —viz. woman is female and man is male, and the two have only this mutual relationship.

Thus, urged by pain, the realistic literature attempts to articulate poverty and its actual state. This condition leads to the formulation of the principle that the causes of our sorrows and pains are the prevalent rigid social laws and the age-old, outdated social conventions. Then, the psychological analysis of crimes prove that these are the superficial societal sins. Consequently, literature begins to concentrate on reformative social changes emanating from sympathy towards the criminals and sinners (83). However, despite the elements of self-analysis and reformation in this artistic inspiration,

the artist makes all possible efforts to acquaint the society adequately with man's sufferings, sins and crimes. And all this originates and blossoms under the impact of the individual peculiarity and attitude. As regards women, the general view of femaleness/ femininity is so dominant that it renders their all other relationships born of motherhood worthless and insignificant. Prasad asserts that such is the glaring tendency of the modern period. When humanity comes in close contact with this naked form of psychoanalysis, the obstructions created by these very social restrictions and bondages seem to be dangerous and fatal, but at the same time these social shackles begin to be regarded as artificial, superficial and unrealistic. Thus, realism is concerned not only with the small and lowly, but also with the great. In fact, the basic feeling or mood of realism, according to Prasad, is that of pain, for when collective consciousness gets fragmented and undergoes suffering, the articulation of pain becomes a necessity (84). Some people opine that a man of letter ought to be an idealist, and as a principle an idealist becomes a religious preacher who urges the society how it should be. In the same way, a realist as a principle is hardly more than a social chronicler because realism is, indeed, the legacy of history. A realist paints what the society is or was, but a true litterateur is neither a historian nor a religious preacher or propagator. These two have separate entities with independent duties of their own. No doubt literature does the work of both of them, for it, while portraying the real condition of a period, also forges a harmony with idealism. This leads Prasad to define literature as the unification of pain-ridden world and blissful heaven (84). This is the reason why the artistic expression gives imagination an important place over unrealistic, improbable events, and thus it, by dint of its inherent beauty, establishes itself on the solid foundation of truth. Such an artistic piece is naturally saturated with the feeling of the welfare of the world.

Towards the end of his discussion of realism, Prasad points out that the development, perceptible in the cultural centres, is what exists between the two extremes of greatness and smallness. If the spiritual experience embodied in literature also represents self-expression, the absence of difference between the great and the small

and the generalisation of this, then there emerges the true nature and image of realism (84). Prasad rightly concludes that in Hindi literature this tendency of realism has manifested itself mainly in prose literature, i.e. prose fiction.

The foregoing analysis of Prasad's concept of realism impels me to make a few observations. Firstly, he demonstrates convincingly that the realistic movement in Indian Hindi literature was the product of socio-historical and political conditions of the early nineteenth century, and he is right in his affirmation. Secondly, he examines realism from the perspectives of socio-historical conditions, religion, psychoanalysis and individual attitude. Thirdly, he justly believes that realism, in its essence, is marked by a predilection for idealism, and thus has an unmistakable reformative zeal very much like that of the great Victorian fictionists such as Charles Dickens, Thackeray and others. Fourthly, to his credit, he could clearly perceive the naturalistic aspect of realism without knowing at all the French naturalists like Emile Zola, Goncourt Brothers and others, and this is the reason why he asserts that the criminals and sinners are the product of their environment. However, Prasad does not make a mention of heredity in this connection like the Western naturalists. Lastly, he is, to a great extent, correct in stating that life is portrayed realistically, mainly and usually, in prose fiction. True, the best works of realistic writing are in the genre of fiction in all the literatures of the world. But it does not mean that poetry cannot paint life realistically, for the so-called father of English poetry, Chaucer, was an avowed realist, an authentic chronicler of his time who could give us a picture of the society of his age not in fragments but completely from aristocracy down to peasantry, and the same is true of the poet Alfred Tennyson, the most representative writer of the Victorian age. Likewise, many modern Hindi poets like Nirala, Ramdhari Singh Dinkar and Bhagwati Charan Varma could create memorable poems soaked in realism. Importantly, Prasad himself could achieve a wonderful fusion of realism and romanticism even in his immortal epic *Kamayani* (this short article does not permit me to elaborate it here).

Notwithstanding these highly commendable features of Prasad's

view of realism, his concept is not free from a glaring drawback. He is only confined to modern Hindi literature, and does not refer to other literatures, Indian or Western, with which he was certainly familiar. Strangely enough, he does not make a mention of his illustrious contemporary Munshi Prem Chand who has bequeathed to us several masterly works of realistic fiction like *Godan*, *Gaban*, etc. Inevitably, his approach is narrow and so cannot be applicable to all literatures. Also, he has failed to see and foresee clearly the variegated kinds of realism such as psychological realism, naturalism, magic realism, socialist realism, existentalist realism, etc., and focuses only on social realism in a narrow, restricted mode. However, on the whole, his is a perceptive and highly original view of realism which he propounded as early as the beginning of 1930s. Undoubtedly, it is a mature critical endeavour of a mature litterateur in his early forties with a number of masterpieces in different literary forms to his credit, and hence merits serious consideration because realism is indubitably one of the fundamental aspects of all literatures of all ages and climes.

Now it must be highlighted that Prasad is simply outstanding in practising his theory of realism. What I mean to say is that he could create brilliant realistic literature elucidating his view of realism. The short stories and dramatic pieces of even the early phase of his literary career bear witness to it, and Ramesh Chandra Shah aptly remarks in this connection: "He had already established himself as the inaugurator of realism in prose-fiction. He had also acquired a knack for applying this realistic knowledge of characters and their motives in the field of play-writing (*Jaishankar Prasad* 19). His fictional masterpiece, *Kankāl*, is profoundly realistic, saturated with the most sordid and naked realities of life about which Jainendra Kumar, himself a celebrated Hindi novelist, correctly observes: "Read his novel *Kankal* and look at the sheer surgery of it — reducing everything to the clarity of a skeleton — bringing out the ugliest and the most unpalatable truths about man in a society that stinks with corruption" (Cited in Ramesh Chandra Shah, *Jaishankar Prasad* 15-6). His second and the last complete novel, *Titli*, paints the realities of life with a tendency towards idealism, and thus it illustrates his

belief, already discussed above, that realism should be accompanied by reformative fervour and idealism. Commenting on the overt but artistic social realism in these two novels of Prasad, Dr. Nagendra states: "His novels are characterized by a keen philosophical analysis of the social problems of life in his times, a quality which the thoughtful reader misses in his great contemporary — the doyen of Hindi Fiction (Munshi Prem Chand)" ("Foreword," *Jayashankar Prasad: His Mind and Art* v).

To conclude, Prasad has certainly made a definitive contribution to the concept of realism by defining this difficult literary term precisely. He considers it reason-based and is opposed to its intellectual philosophy, as Nanddulare Vajpaye affirms ("Introduction," *Kāvya aur Kalā tathā Anya Nibandh* 15). Also, he does not regard realism as essentially cultural and blissful. But unlike many Western thinkers like Courbet, Champfleury (the writer of the famous essay *Le Realisme*), Baudelaire and others, Prasad does not define it negatively or reject it as undesirable. Intuitively, he knows its worth, for it is the characteristic feature of the works of some of the greatest writers of the world such as Balzac, Flaubert, Dickens, Tolstoy and Munshi Prem Chand. Small wonder he not only theorizes it but also practises it in his outstanding fiction, poetry and drama in his own unique way. True, he has assigned realism as important a place in literature as is given to romanticism, mysticism and idealism on which he has also written brilliantly. This *ism* has existed for centuries and will continue to exist so long as art is produced, and thus Prasad will ever be remembered for his strikingly original theory and practice of it.

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BOOK REVIEWS

O.P. MATHUR, *POST-1947 INDIAN ENGLISH NOVEL: MAJOR CONCERNS*

(New Delhi: Sarup Book Publishers, 2010), pp.180, Rs. 600.00

I.K. Sharma

The book under review is a collection of his thirteen critical articles on Indian English fiction beginning with the bicycle age in India and ending in the computer age, in 2008. The first article is pivotal wherein he attempts to define the term 'political novel' from various angles. At the same time he offers a brief history of the growth and development of political novel in India beginning with K.S.Venkatramani, A.S.P. Ayyar and others. But his chief aim is to study all the 11 novels for their 'aesthetic facets' (p.3) like 'the qualities of symmetry and balance, progression, exploration into the human mind, a broad vision of society, the aroma of an ideal or ideology, — not excluding the multifarious portrayals of cruelty, suffering, death and even massacre....'

Azadi by Chaman Nahal is the first novel taken up for study, and is given a very appropriate title *A Train To India* contrasting it with the well known *Train to Pakistan*, which he finds 'individual-centred melodramatic'. Nahal's novel, on the other hand, has epic dimensions and is subtly charged with the essence of Gandhian thought. The next important political novel under study is *The Princes* by Manohar Malgonkar, which he regards as 'one of the most sophisticated Indian English political novels both in theme and narration'. *Comrade Kirillov* by Raja Rao is a political- cum-existentialist novel whose protagonist Kirillov born as Padmanabhalyer carries two shades — day and night — of his personality all the time. He is'an inverted Brahmin', ' whose intellectual peregrinations start from the belly where the curve of his necktie culminates' (56), an epitome of 'Oriental masculine psychology— tenderness and tether'. To portray such a complex character that is both static and dynamic, Rao adopts 'a multi-focused strategy'.

Shadow from Ladakh by Bhabani Bhattacharya is a Sahitya

highlights the major conflicts India has been facing since independence, i.e. to return to rural economy by establishing Gandhigrams or to move forward and build Steeltowns. Eventually they were to shape a new India incorporating within its sweep all other minor conflicts that had been hanging for long, for instance, East-West dichotomy, asceticism versus aestheticism, restraint and freedom, etc. Quite reasonably the learned critic has summed up this all: ' The removal of the Chinese shadow from Ladakh is also accompanied by the removal of another shadow of unreal Gandhism from the lives of a few human beings— thus, making the novel perhaps more of a human document than a political or an economic one' (70).

A Situation in New Delhi by Nayantara Sahgal deals with a shadow of another kind— a large shadow fallen on New Delhi politics after Nehru's (Shivraj in the novel) demise. At last the new dispensation came. That is, Indira Gandhi's arrival on the scene altered everything, and she briskly destroyed institutions so feelingly built by her predecessors. Democracy lurched into autocracy and it found its wildest expression in Emergency. The next chapter is a continuation of the same theme — Emergency. Next book, not unrelated to the same theme, is Salman Rushdie's great novel, *Midnight's Children. Shame(1983)*, according to the critic's interpretation, is 'an inverted image of India' (101). The book is 'a fine discourse in fiction which reminds how India's freakish twin, Pakistan, quickly converted our aspirations into shame, our hopes into horror' (111). The last novel of Rushdie included in the study is *Shalimar the Clown* (2005) It is designed 'on the overall pattern of a geo-political love-triangle' (134). It highlights an important point 'that terrorism was not 24-carat pure in its object: it was plentifully alloyed' (138).

Shadow Lines by AmitavGhosh is a 'highly evocative novel' (132) that laughs at the powerful politicians of the world who (the reviewer, in a poem, has called 'popcorns of history'). The novelist questions the very idea of 'partition', division, demarcation, and pleads for sanity in the world. How can politics divide 'Memory'? he asks. *The White Tiger* by Arvind Adiga is a story of the 'Two Indias': Men with Big Bellies and Men with Small Bellies. The 'white tiger'(justified

satwic rage) lodged in the heart of common man finds its approximation in the zigzag story of Balram Halwai. Another chapter titled 'Rumination: Looking Back and Forward' is the summing up of all Professor Mathur has tried to say on this House of Many Mansions and where he has honestly differed from other Indian critics.

Post-1947 Indian English Novel: Major Concerns is a political cum social history of contemporary India as viewed by her creative artists. It covers all the four phases of Indian English fiction: partition, Chinese aggression, Nehru's demise, Emergency and beyond. Without basing his point of view on any new-fangled theory of post-colonialism or post-structuralism, he, like a liberal intellectual, goes straight into the heart of the matter. Surely the book is worthy of university culture.

H.C. GUPTA, *POETICAL ROSARY*

(Delhi: Wisdom Publications, 2007), pp.110, Rs. 300.00

R.K. Dwevedi

Poetical Rosary is a collection of H.C. Gupta's poems. This book is divided into two parts: the first one is a collection of 23 poems on dispersed themes, while the second contains 77 sonnets bearing no tittles. It may be pointed out that the book bears a unique and catchy title which, in some ways, reminds us Tagore's *Gitanjali* for its Indianness. The book opens with a 'Haiku' poem 'Poet and Poetry'. Through this poem the writer aims at reviving Haiku poetry on the one hand and defining true as well as great poetry on the other hand. On the whole, the collection covers a wide range of the poet's own experiences, feelings and sufferings. The poem 'A prayer' appearing as third in order is, to my mind, a sort of invocation. The author has skillfully blended Indian mythology in using some words, viz. *Kamini, Mata, Sita, Chora, Sada-Shiv, Adi Shankar, Kalyugi, Tapasya,* etc. He has used words like Antena, Mobile, Biochemistry, mechanical and so on from scientific world. It seems the author has a great affinity with John Keats and his doctrine of beauty. By composing the poem 'Satyameva Jayate' he explicitly shows his deep inclination towards Indian aesthetics and is a fan of Keatsean

doctrine.

Sure enough, Gupta's poetry is written on varied themes, yet it is coherent and cohesive in nature. There is no room for amputation. His poetry bears striking graceful qualities, and captivating charm of phrases, sentences and meaning. Religiosity being the leitmotif prevails everywhere. God, though not visible, is yet made visible through words like *Sada-Shiv, Adi Shakti, Sita and Aradhnarishwar.* For a researcher there is a perfect scope for working on symbols and images. The analysis of symbols can be done in relation to the author's thematic concern. Some of the poems can be very good pieces for psychoanalysis as the words reveal such as hurt-heart, relieving relief.

The second part 'Sonnet Sequence' is, in its own way, singular in its texture and structure. The author has left no stone unturned in coining new terms and phrases. Technically speaking, all the sonnets have a definite rhyme scheme and stanzaic structure. Themes are as varied as the experiences of the author himself. The style, as the dictum goes, is the man himself. The sonnets reveal the author's scholarliness and mythological knowledge. These sonnets, as they stand, make a unique blend of intellectuality, emotionality and spirituality.

A word may be said about the experiments made by the poet vis-a-vis sonnet writing q v No. XL III (18 line sonnet) and no LVI (16 line sonnet in Heroic couplets) which means that to H.C. Gupta what is all important in composing a sonnet is the feeling or idea which should be completely conveyed. In other words, what matters is not the form but the content.

To sum up, the book is significant and may be very useful for the person who wants to learn the technique of poetic composition. There is no watertight demarcation between poems and sonnets. They are organic. Appendices, given at the end of the book, make the reader's work easy in finding out difficult words and for grasping the poetic sense. The printing and binding deserve praise. The colour combination for the title page is haunting. In all respects, the book is insured to make its niche in Indian English poetry. It deserves to be be examined seriously in critical circles.

ANKUR BETAGERI, *BHOG AND OTHER STORIES*

(Bengaluru: Pilli Books, 2010), pp. xii+108, Rs. 260.00

Anamika

'Bhog' is a multi-layered word with multiple cultural connotations. 'Bhog' means offerings to gods and dead dears through a fire-ritual. As a binary to 'yog' it is the hungry carnal consumption of earthly delights (refer to Charvakas' 'Loka-yat': '*yawat jeevet sukhen jeevet, wrinam hritwa ghritam peevet*': 'eat, drink and be merry/ buy, borrow, have it all'). Stoic acceptance of sufferings or sufferings both as the 'prasad' of God and the bearings of sin committed in past lives is also referred to as 'bhog'. On the whole, the word flashes in the Indian psyche as a state of 'being' on its way to 'becoming'. This writer, still in his twenties, names his first book after this complex cultural ritual of gradual purification. *Bhog and Other Stories* stages moments of complex inner transformations, internal rigidities, and resistance blowing high and low like flames around them. Ankur is a trained psychologist. Internalizing things and nothings, events and non-events before breaking them open is in-built in his grain.

Ankur is closer to the Woolfian and the Joycean models in some of the stories. 'Bhog', for instance, internalizes the whole process of the slow slashing down and splintering of a dead tree and then, with a dramatic turn, the Bhog-fire turns into a funeral pyre for the dead pet. The situational irony subtly plays upon the semiotic underpinning of wood-and-fire inbuilt in Indian mythology. The gutsy old man has a grain both of King Lear and the protagonist in *The Old Man and the Sea.* This slow and painful transfer of grace from the tree that gives way to the toiling man is subtle and complex, so is the transmission of the blaze. This blaze would turn into a definite burn. It'll travel through generations. Nature takes its toll but it also heals, becomes a balm on your burns.

Ankur describes what he sees and detects with accuracy, but he is interested more in the mind than in manners. Sometimes he dematerializes situations by allowing into them dreams, symbols, and ideas of an out-of-place, disinherited mind. Defamiliarization of everyday reality by breaking it into micro-moments of non-happenings seems to be his patent technique especially in the stories where

he delicately handles post-modern techniques of deconstructing diary-entries (... Aftermath of a Broken Love Affair), confessions and mood-swings (Malavika), dialogues and reflections (A Conversation: Story Written in the Manner of a Movie Script).

In some of the more reflective, unrealistic flights he talks through inanimate objects: 'The Armour', 'The Big Bicycle', 'Big Bear Remembers Kako', 'The City of Walls' and 'God's Flower'. And here his prose reads sometimes like poetry and sometimes like a fairy-tale. Events unfold very slowly, almost in slow motion, as if a computer has refused to take the load or a machine is running on low-voltage, but this is basically a technique to create situations of 'stand and stare'. Stand-stills like these, almost like soliloquies in a play, offer us moments to ponder and analyze, view and review. That this young man has got the makings of a philosopher is evident from the reflective mode of the stories; and at times one marvels at the crystals he carves:

> 'I beg your pardon. I think I have read enough about the blindness of knowledge, the ever-flowing dynamic nature of existence and stuff like that. I can only say that these lamps which flicker in the remote corner of the huge dark room have saved me from the terrible ghosts of despair. I have woken up at midnight, as if from a fever, and cowering under the crumpled bedsheet, I have blinked in the great darkness of the night.'

This hints at the existential angst every young mind suffers:

> 'The horror of not knowing what to want is greater than the tragedy of not having what you want. Girls, poems, movies, books, friends, family, college, career... everything disgusts me... I don't think I can create what I so desperately need... It is something concrete; something which is either had or not; something whose loss can't be substituted – even symbolically – with words and phrases....'

This tendency to live through proxy, not being able to love and accept, the tendency to sit upon judgement, 'the deficiency love', has constantly been critiqued: 'Everything in which the Spirit can't stay I call junk. Modern world worships this. It tries to force the Spirit on this junk by all kinds of yelling and bellowing, and thus ends up creating even an artificial Spirit. This plastic yuga is so dehumanized that even monsters are afraid to live in it... "Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards,"' thus speaks the young philosopher, and we agree with a smile.

RITA GARG, *AN ABBREVIATED CHILD*

(New Delhi: Vishvabharti Publications, 2011), pp.104, Rs. 195.00

Meenakshi Agarwal

'A good writer brings to the table a deep sense of observation' is true in the case of Rita Garg's novel , *An Abbreviated Child* which gives a clear and poignant description of the misery-stricken poor face of India , telling the story of Radha, a girl victim of poverty. For the agonized woman, the novelist has no way out but to coin the term, 'genderex'. The novel displays the different faces of the society and the inhuman and degrading treatment that the poor get at the hands of socially, economically and politically affluent and higher classes of Indian society. The novelist is able to strike a chord in the hearts of conscientious Indians by portraying the Indian downtrodden masses , the so-called have-nots, child adoptions and abductions, sexual exploitation, bonded slavery, malefic effect of drugs, sale and kidnappings of small children. Rita weaves a credible plot, and skillfully describes people and events.

The novel elaborates the heart-rending tale of Radha who is sold thrice and rehabilitated five times; being drugged for the controlling of 'human activities and emotions to make a crawling child'. She could never forget the power of men on women, the maltreatment of her mother by her father. Questions like whether she is a culprit? She is a dirty woman? often torment her. The voices of sale, sell, sold continue to whimper into her ears. Chandrima proves a worthwhile example of the NGO run by Radha. She, on being left by her biological mother by the roadside, was collected and brought by Radha and later on made independent. Radha, like a pixie, provides shelter to all those who are unsheltered or are forsaken by their nearest and dearest ones or are the prey to social atrocities.

Questions are raised against the prevalent concept" a baby is a must" in today's "underfed and poverty-stricken society". The viewpoint of the author "in this over-populated world, child adoption after proper care taken is a good substitute" may be revolutionary to the existing theory. The author has argued well, "Dead mother, working mother, all the time busy cooking mother is at a loss to bring up the child with psychological satiation, moral courage and physical pu-

rity with fitness. The never- never nest is worthless." Why must every HIV patient, leprosy sufferer, mentally degenerated or such beings enjoy parenthood? There should be some kind of curb on child rearing. The author connotes rightfully that in India more than fifty percent parents are not fit for child-bearing-rearing because of physically, mentally, and financially incapacitated conditions.

The trauma of rape and fatal experiences led most of the woman and children to mental disorders and they could not find any solace from the society. As far as child atrocities are concerned, they are often neglected or abused in a family or an institutional setting by those known to them. It is less common for a child to be abused by a stranger. Radha,Chhotu,Gauri etc. are made to suffer first by their biological parents, brothers or sisters: "Kalia sold sister, Gauri and later died of country made liquor."

The issue of gender discrimination, a universal phenomenon in human history from time immemorial, is brought to our concern. Women are treated as commodities or slaves. As they belong to the weaker sex, men used to keep them under thumb. Radha is used in Minister Ji's house as a showpiece or the selling on the part of Kalia. In the novel, through education and the resultant moral courage, woman is shown crossing the boundary of those social taboos and scriptural sanctions where she is always inferior and subordinate to man. Radha's decision to "make future generations independent, moral and caring" and Chandrima's decision of working for the "good of children" and putting a curb on her "family engagements" set an example. In free India, woman cannot be kept as sheer domestic servants. They have to play a vital role in the development of the country. Life offers Chandrima a set of priorities and in order to fulfill a few commitments, she rejects the thought of settling down with her Canadian batch mate, Bon. Rather, she returns to India to work for the underdogs of the society.

The novel, in fact, penetrates the value of reflection and reality. It is well-written and readable. Instances from history and legends make the novel interesting, the details are convincing and create an awareness of social responsibility which is needed the most today in order to stop the world from becoming a furnace.

BASAVARAJ NAIKAR, *THE FROLIC PLAY OF THE LORD*

A Translation of Chamarasa's Kannada Classic *Prabhulinga Life* (New Delhi: Authors Press, 2010), pp. x+180, Rs. 475.00.

Chandrashekharaiah

I have closely read *The Frolic Play of the Lord*, an English translation of Chamarasa's (A.D. 1450) Kannada classic *Prabhulinga Lile* by Basavaraj Naikar and am deeply impressed by it. In this work of twenty-five *Gatis* or Books Chamarasa's Allama is the quintessence of the spiritual glory as conceived by the best minds in Virasaiva epistemology. And those who are familiar with Chamarasa's original have enough reason to go on record that this excellent translation by Naikar in the form of exquisite prose-bits reflects the original in all its myriad spiritual colours and hues. In this realistically and imaginatively trans-created work the virtuoso of the translator lies in his perception of the possibility of modern readings and interpretations of this medieval Kannada classic, that too an overtly religious one of which the chief protagonist is Allama. The second priority of the translator seems to have arisen from his desire to explore the possibility of presenting Allama to our own time with all the facets of his multi-dimensional effulgence and yet simplistic spiritual persona. From this point of view *The Frolic Play of the Lord* is as much a reader's delight as it is of the translator.

The story of *The Frolic Play of the Lord* as told in the Kannada is in itself an innovative one and conceived imaginatively by Chamarasa. He differs considerably from the similar narratives by Harihara, Harishwara, Parvatesha, Marirachavattisha and others. But Chamarasa in tune with the general mood existing in the 15th century was inclined to view Allama as the incarnation of the incorruptible divine entity that could never be caught in the snares of the worldly entanglements even if it were to be the love of a beautiful princess. And this is where Chamarasa offers a strong contrast with other poets who for historical reasons associate Allama's early life with a woman. The translator in his beautifully minted proso-poetic bits has wrapped up all that in a style that has trans-created those magical moments charged with powerful spiritual overtones unveil-

ing the work's philosophical and spiritual grandeur.

For instance, those *Gatis* or Books that deal with the exchanges between Allama and Princess Maya, Allama and Muktayi, Allama and Marulusankaradeva, Allama and Siddharama, Allama and Goggayya and Allama and Basava in this translation are not only vivid and sophisticated but as presented in their surreal settings steal the reader's attention. Especially the encounters between Allama and Maya and Allama and Muktayi will unfailingly help recall the famous talks that Gargi, Maitreyi, Vachaknavi, Apala and others in ancient India had with their mentors. The persona of Allama that emerges here is both radiant and luminous suggesting there is everything in rising and nor in falling. In this context each episode is a lesson in spirituality trans-created by Naikar investing his own experiental readings into the Virasaiva lore. In this process he has transformed each *Gati* into a scintillating narrative capable of arousing a higher sense of consciousness in the reader. By the time we come to the end of our reading of the work we invariably feel that we had heard at length an enlightening socio-spiritual sermon sitting at the feet of a great master.

In the recent decades modern scholarship has demonstrated that the *vachana*-centric Virasaiva or Lingayat literature produced in the last eight or nine centuries is no longer studied as purely a religious one or in isolation of its social relevance. Its genuine secular and spirito-people-centric credentials have been widely recognized. In this context the episodes depicted in *The Frolic Play of the Lord* can offer refreshing readings into human psyche and its complex interiors. These stunningly portrayed instances in their trans-creation stand comparison to the best of their kind in world literature.

The Frolic Play of the Lord is bound to move and affect the readers to a better understanding of their own spiritual self in contrast to their worldly existence. Basavaraj Naikar's is a daring attempt at retrieving an invaluable Kannada classic in English. His prudence, erudition and his distinguished background have enabled him to delve deep into the subject and the result being the recreation of a seamless work of literary art that blends the real and the surreal magnificently.

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