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7.8.96

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DRAMATIC ILLUSION AS 'DREAM': THE 'DREAM' PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE AND BHASA

S. Viswanathan

I

In dramatic and aesthetic theory, the likening of dramatic illusion to the experience of dream has been made by critics--by Lord Kames and A.W. Schlegel in the eighteenth century and, most memorably, by Coleridge in the nineteenth. The dream analogy thus adduced in discussions of the name and nature of illusion in drama is a revealing and valuable metaphor, considerably helpful in our address to the question of the mode of existence and mode of operation of a play, a poem or a text of literature. This question of the quiddity or reality of a play-text has perhaps acquired a particular relevance in its ontological and hermeneutic implications in the current climate of postmodern 'theory' which generally tends to cast doubt on the identity, let alone the integrity, of the text as an entity. In such a context, the dream analogy for the experience of drama will provide a convenient speculative instrument to probe the question.[1] In this paper, a brief attempt will be made to explore how the idea of dream is exploited to telling effects of an inter-weaving if not a blend of illusion and reality in a Shakespeare play like *A Midsummer Night's Dream* almost throughout, and in a famous dream scene by Bhasa in his well known, ancient Sanskrit play, *Svapnavasavadatta*.

Lord Kames and Schlegel initially formulated the idea of drama or for that matter poetry as a 'waking dream' suggesting the voluntary element in the viewer's or reader's participation in dramatic or literary experience, and Erasmus Darwin confirmed the view in the prose interchapters in his poem *The Botanic Garden* (1789). But it was Coleridge who critically developed the idea and its implications in his Shakespeare lectures, especially his lecture on *The Tempest*, pursued its implications and applied it to actual plays by Shakespeare. His resultant theory[2] of a 'willing illusion,' 'an inward illusion,' 'negative belief,' 'temporary half-faith,' and 'willing suspension of disbelief' provided not only a corrective to Dr. Johnson's rather patronising view of theatrical illusion as tantamount to a kind of delusion though a willing one in its way, but also a basis for a theoretical and practical understanding of literary or theatrical response. Coleridge's emphasis is on the active engagement of the will and choice of the spectator ('We *choose*

to be deceived), similar and parallel to the critic's emphasis on the role of the voluntary exertion of the moral will in an act of true imagination. Coleridge also stresses the essential ultimate inwardness of the experience of the illusion of drama or literature. His reaction against the spectacular staging of the Shakespeare plays in his contemporary theatre with a preoccupation with scenic illusion in the name of stage illusion led him to point out the importance of the viewer's inner realisation of the 'semblance of reality' in drama. The vividness of the impression of reality, Coleridge argued, was like the unreal reality of dream of the psychology of which he and De Quincey at once his disciple and rival made subtle and penetrating investigation. In his view, it amounted to a 'mythic' sense of reality which was neither true nor false. He saw such a 'virtual reality' (in Susanne Langer's phrase) to be the essential quality of drama and its illusion producing as they did an imitation, not a copy of life.

II

In his marginalia on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* Coleridge wrote, 'I am convinced that Shakespeare availed himself of the title of the play in his own mind as a dream throughout.'[3] Jonathan Bate in his definitive study of the impact of Shakespeare on Coleridge and the other major Romantics[4] appears to be convinced that Coleridge's theory of dramatic illusion with its critical development and application of the idea of drama as dream but 'with a difference' is partly inspired by the motifs of dream and of imagination as a sort of dream as these figure in Shakespeare's 'dream' play. The play starts with the suggestion to 'dream away the time' (Hippolyta, 1 i.8)[5] and the command of Duke Theseus to his Master of the Revels to commission festive revels to mark the royal wedding, even as it ends with Puck as the Epilogue offering the conventional apologetic request to consider the play'but a dream.' This is not to mention that Bottom's discourse on his 'dream' as 'Bottom's Dream' (IV.i. 206-226) is, among other things, Shakespeare's ironical way of putting the whole play in the perspective of 'Bottom's Dream.' However, Shakespeare in the course of the play activates the 'multiconsciousness' inherent in the popular dramatic tradition of his times and plays on level after level of dramatic illusion and reality, indeed on different layers of the spectator's consciousness. So much so that the play has actions and situations set in plays-within in plays-within-the-play in Chinese-box-like intricacy of inlaid structuration. The final effect that

emerges is one of a fascinating and piquant if implicit underscoring no less of the reality of illusion than of the illusion of reality. The mode and process of representation in the play, at one level, raises the question of dramatic and theatrical representation. At the other levels, the world-within-world structure of the play with its web of interconnection among these worlds, those of the court, the citizens, the artisans and the fairies, besides complicating levels of illusion and reality, serves to bring out an impression of the complex lines of imaginative intercommunication between the stage-world and the world-stage. If the potent 'theatre of the world' metaphor was an active presence in the imaginative climate of the drama and literature of Shakespeare's period, if 'all the world is but a stage,' the playwright in the last phase of his career also came to put the idea into Prospero's mouth in *The Tempest*, 'we are such stuff as dreams are made on,' even as Calderon the Spanish dramatist almost contemporaneously called one of his plays *Life is a Dream*.(Calderon, we may remember, entitles another play of his *The Grand Theatre of the World*.) In the process, the close linkages, if not a merging or shading into one another, would seem to establish themselves, between the world and its reality and illusion, on the one hand, and drama and dream and their 'virtual realities' and illusions, on the other.

The 'green world' of the 'Duke's wood' near Athens, the chief venue of action is the dream world of this comedy; it is a pastoral make-believe world, the bewildering maze of multiple illusions at play of which locale leads and resolves itself into the triple weddings of the lovers, into the right sympathetic response of Hippolyta and then also of Theseus to the 'device' of the play of 'Pyramus and Thisbe' presented by Quince, Bottom and company as wedding revels, and, finally, into the protective auspices of the now reunited Fairy King Oberon and Fairy Queen Titania at the royal wedding. Sleep figures in the play as much as a 'figure-in-action,' as a prominent and persistent visual stage phenomenon,as it is a dominant 'figure-in-word,' as verbal reference. The experiences of cross-wooing, corrected by the same instrumentality of the magical juice and the agency of Puck as produced these into right wooing, occur in the play, as though these are undergone in dream fashion. No wonder the lovers try to form their impressions of these experiences on recall in such terms as these.

Lysander: My lord, I shall reply amazedly,
Half asleep, half waking (IV.i.152-153)

... ...
... ...
... ...

Demetrius These things seems small and indistinguishable
Like far-off mountains turned into clouds.
Hermia Methinks I see these things with parted eye,
When everything seems double.
Halena So methinks.
... ...
Demetrius Are you sure
That we are awake? It seems to me
That yet we sleep, we dream. Do you not think
The Duke was here, and bid us follow him.
Hermia Yea; and my father.
... ...
Demetrius Why then, we are awake. Let's follow him.
And by the way let us recount our dreams. (IV.1.193-205)

Bottom and company exhibit an amateur albeit amateurish enthusiasm for matters histrionic and, more particularly theatric. Bottom is if anything stage-struck. Hence his avid desire to don as many roles as could be in a versatile manner (II ii.27-44, 53-57, 73-76, 81-87 and 110-110). No wonder among the dreamer-characters in the play Bottom is the dreamer par excellence. In their own way, his speculations about the illusion of their play 'Pyramus and Thisbe' transforming itself into too much of reality such as Snout as the lion frightening the ladies, raise the question of the nature of stage illusion. Shakespeare thus prompts our thinking (in metatheatrical fashion) about the question, while he may also be making gentle ridicule of the old gild theatricals' amateurishness and the mechanics of stage representation as he would seem to take occasion to do often in inset dramatic performances in his plays. Within the fairy-world in the play-world, Oberon, with Puck as stage-manager, sets the script and scenario of Titania's wooing of Bottom with the ass's head on his. The 'translation' and the wooing go to make 'Bottom's Dream' which comes through as an inset play-within in the play-within-the-play, something of a dream-within-a-dream Shelley spoke of in a poem.

A kind of final response and summative estimation is provided by Shakespeare as if these emerge in the exchanges between Theseus and Hippolyta and also in those between the royal couple and the Athenian gentry of Lysander and Demetrius (V. i.). There is an estimation of the lover's dream-like experiences of the wood, the 'story of the night,' and there is also a generous sympathetic and

participative reaction to Bottom's play expressing the inadequacy of the captious and unsympathetic response of the Athenian youth. Hippolyta offers a prompt corrective to Theseus' rationalising mistrust of visions and of 'strange things' such as the lovers had experienced in the world. It is worth noting, all the same, that Shakespeare makes Theseus associate the poet, the lunatic and the lover as a trio who

> Are of imagination all compact:

and suggests in the process that the trio could become a quartet with the addition of the clown Bottom (played by the Fool Will Kemp). If Hippolyta it is who puts Theseus right by pointing out that the dream experiences in their imaginative reach exceed beyond 'fancy's images,'

> And grow to something of great constancy

thus vindicating the imagination, it is Theseus who later corrects her saying

> The best in this kind are but
> shadows, and the worst no worse,
> if imagination amend them (V. i. 214- 217)

It must be, as Hippolyta interposes (218), the spectator's imagination also, though. Theseus's reference to 'shadows' connotes the theatrical sense the word had in Shakespeare's times of 'actors' especially actors who take minor or supernumerary walk-on parts or bit parts with hardly any lines to speak.

The self-reflexive suggestion would emerge that if it comes to carping criticism even the best of players in the theatre, including the present ones in the main play performance, would appear really no better than 'shadow' actors or actors like the artisans who presented the 'Pyramus and Thisbe' play. Oberon is called, earlier in the play, 'king of shadows' (III. ii. 347), suggesting of course the 'fairy king' but also a main player. In the epilogue Puck says,

> If we shadows have offended,
> Think but this, and all is mended,
> That you have but slumber'd here
> While these visions did appear (V.ii.54-57)

The boy-actor speaks for fairies and actors alike and suggests that the whole play-experience can be regarded as a dream or vision. The upshot of all this is a sense communicated of the validity and reality, in the final reckoning, of dream and drama

and of the in one respect active and in another respect passive role of the spectator's imagination and judgment. Indeed, the changes which Shakespeare rings in the course of the scene on the term 'imagination' run the whole gamut of the shift in the significance of the expression from the Augustan-Johnsonian mistrust to the Romantic apotheosis of it.[7]

III

There is an instance of a memorable use of the device of the dream and the dream motif in what is perhaps the best play of Bhasa the father of drama in Sanskrit, his *Svapnavasavadatta.* Indeed the play bears the alternative title, *Svapnanatakam* ('the dream play'). The playwright entitles his play thus in relation to its central scene, the famous dream scene (Act V).[8] There takes place in this scene a prefiguration of the final reunion and restoration between the protagonist king Udayana and the heroine Vasavadatta with which the play ends in Act VI. The play is about the separated queen Vasava living incognito, at the instance of Udayana's minister Yougundarayana who deliberately gives it out that Vasava has been killed in a fire accident, as part of an elaborate stratagem he adopts to accomplish the end, which he eventually does, of getting Udayana married to Padmavati the Magadha princess as his second queen and investing him with new power to regain his lost territories. Vasava joins Padmavati as her favourite maid and confidant, adopting the name Avantika, and has to be an accessory to the love between her husband and the princess, and, to the two getting wedded, giving rise to a number of piquant moments of drama. And she is portrayed as playing such a delicate role with phenomenal self-effacement and empathic understanding.

The dream scene (Act V) opens with the maids searching for Vasavadatta-Avantika who would be the best person to attend to the newly wedded Padmavati who is lying in the Sea-House (evidently a palace apartment kept cool by surrounding water currents— afflicted with a headache.) They inform king Udayana's companion, the jester who immediately intimates his master about the new queen's fit of headache. Udayana who under the impression that his beloved first wife is dead has married Padmavati but could hardly get over his constantly lingering thoughts about Vasava feels sorry for the suffering of Padmavati and decides to go into the Sea-House to be of comfort to her. By then Padmavati had changed plans and is not there in that place. Udayana enters to find the prepared bed vacant, and waits hoping that Padmavati might

arrive. The jester's attempt to beguile the time with story-telling only puts Udayana to sleep, and the jester leaves him well covered and fast asleep. Vasavadatta-Avantika enters and takes the sleeping figure to be Padmavati and lies down by 'her' side on the bed, clasping 'her' in a gesture of intimacy. Udayana, as ever, dreams about Vasava and in the dream meets that real dream-girl of his. He starts talking aloud addressing her. Vasava who is there for real albeit in her concealed identity has to meet the situation with exemplary presence of mind and also takes right advantage of it to the proper degree as it were. The intercommunication between the dream world and the real world, between the dreaming Udayana and the awake Vasavadatta could last only for a short while. Vasava has to cut it short by leaving before Udayana awakes. But she rushes out only after offering the affectionately solicitous gesture of lifting the dangling arm of her sleeping husband and placing in the bed. The action rouses him from his sleep, and catching a fleeting glimpse of Vasava going out of the door he rushes out only to strike against the door panel in his haste and lose momentum. The jester who arrives back then dismisses the King's report of his encountering Vasava alive as a dream experience or, worse, an elf-smitten state.

This bare outline of the action of the scene can hardly convey the uncanny force of the theatrically effective poetic-dramatic rendering of the scene by Bhasa. The dramatist brings about a remarkably piquant blend of illusion and reality and captures the sense and feel of the meeting place between dream and dramatic make-believe on the one hand, and reality and dire hard facts, on the other, by a process of actualisation through the suggestions of the dream device. Such an effect is well prepared for in the scene when the jester encountering as he enters the Sea-House with the King a loose hanging jasmine garland dangling on the floor from the decorative arch takes it to be a snake in the soft light of a single flickering lamp lighting the room. The King identifies the garland right as producing the illusion of a snake through its almost sinuous moments in the blowing breeze and in the half-light. The aesthetician Lollata (9th century) one of the earliest commentators on Bharata's *Natyasastra* used exactly the idea of a rope being taken for and believed to be a serpent to denote the illusion created by drama and poetry, although the serpent and the rope semblance also became a great *topos* of Vedantic discourse. This 'secret impression' (to use Maurice Morgann's phrase regarding Shakespeare) made on the spectator of the problem of illusion

provides a lead-in to the story-telling episode in which the jester starts with what bids fair to be a 'true story', the history of Udayana's relationship with Vasava, when the king would have none of the story, since he is already too full of the thought of his lost beloved Vasava, the jester attempts to tell an imagined story but confuses the names of person and place and confuses himself so badly that the King is lulled into sleep, Left asleep by the jester, the King in bed is taken to be Padmavati by Vasava who arrives then. Another play of illusion. Indeed, this is preceded by a reference to yet another illusive experience in Udayana's adjuration to the jester that the story he starts narrating about himself and Vasava should be stopped and changed into another. Udayana is reminded all the more of how he misses Vasava who during the music sessions he had with her found her engrossed alike in playing on her lute and fixedly looking at him at once so that often she failing to note that the bow had slipped from her hands kept on moving her fingers and hands as though playing on the air instead of the instrument.

Yet, amidst such indications of illusiveness, the dream illusion of the sleeping Udayana of an encounter with his beloved Vasava turns out to be a flesh-and-blood reality. Vasava happening precisely to be at the moment his bed fellow, she has to go through a shock of surprise and acute embarrassment which for all the pleasure and happiness it might bring her turns out to a challenging situation of a great scrape when the king calls out her name in dream but also for real at the same time. In the preceding Act IV, the 'overhearing scene',. both Vasava and Padmavati had listened in on the King's expression of his deep-felt pangs of nostalgic love and affection for the 'dead' Vasava expressed by the King. Now in the bed-room scene, Vasava takes the situation on hand, and carries on a conversation, and the effect turns out to be a subtle coalescence or at least a merger of the illusion of dream and the real life actuality. A crystallization of such a merging is the two successive stage moments of the king stretching out his hands while in dream to clasp Vasava and of Vasava touching the dangling hand of the King to put it in place on the bed. A reunion not without suggestions of reconciliation also takes place, fleeting and evanescent as it may be. No wonder that Udayana is unable to decide whether it is a waking experience or vision or a dream.

> If at all this was a dream, then it were a blessing
> not to have awakened from it, or if it be an
> illusion, let me be under the illusion for a long

time.

(Act V, Sloka 9)

This might suggest Caliban's celebration of his sensuous dreams (*The Tempest*, III. ii.138-138) and his account of how waking from his sleep he would be made to 'sleep again' and dream such dreams that

When I wak'd
I cried to dream again.

The experience of Udayana is more like what Keats said of Adam's dream.

The imagination may be compared to Adam's dream--he awoke and found it truth."[9]

It is the truth of the imagination that grants the validity and truth of an illusion provided it is imaginative enough. The parallel with the situation of Madeleine in Keats's *The Eve of St. Agnes* is striking. Madeleine's St. Agnes Eves vision of her lover Porphyro materialises in the actual presence of Porphyro in her bedroom, and it leads to their union and happy match. When towards the close of Svapnavasavadatta (Act VI), the reunion of the King with Vasavadatta, and also with his minister Yougandarayana takes place, King Udayana contemplates

Is it a reality or dream, that she is again seen by
me? For though seen by her, I was then the deceived.

(Act VI, Sloka 17)

The lines prompt the thought of the indistinguishability of illusion and reality. Rather, it is the illusion of reality or the reality of illusion which is at issue.

IV

Both Shakespeare and Bhasa, as playwrights, may be said to engage their dramatic energies and power in rendering the existential force and sway, and the feel of reality, or of illusion. In the process they would seem to make available, in imaginative terms, the ground of intermingling of illusion and reality. They are, to that extent, less concerned to mark the quotidian black-and-white demarcation between the two, if only because they could take for granted the basic univocal contrast. Equally interestingly, the playwrights between the two of them, in the variations they make on the dream motif and the dream device, implicitly, vindicate dramatic illusion and the 'certainty' of drama for all the element of

an 'insubstantial pageant' it carries. More, the two dramatists would seem all but to make an intuitive anticipation of the later theorists' likening of drama to 'a waking dream'

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1]The historical dream analogy has been used recently by R.A. Foakes in his discussion of the question, see his *Hamlet vs. King Lear: Cultural Politics and Shakespeare's Art* (Cambridge University Press, 1993), 130-135. J.I. Cope, *The Theatre and the Dream: From Metaphor to Form in Renaissance Drama* (Baltimore:Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973) treats the analogy from a different point of view, that of the ideas of Florentine Neoplatonism. From yet other points of view dreams in Shakespeare are dealt with in Marjorie B. Garber, *Dream in Shakespeare: From Metaphor to Metamorphosis* (New Haven: Yale U.P., 1974), and John Arthos, *Shakespeare's Use of Dream and Vision* (London: Bowes and Bowes,1977).

The aesthetician and hermeneutist Friedrich Schleiermacher also proffered the similitude between dream and art/poetry/drama, making the important distinction between the ordered nature of art and the lack of order in dream. See Benedetto Croce, *Aesthetic*, (London: Vision Press and Peter Owen, 1953 edn.),318.

[2]Terence Hawkes, ed. *Coleridge on Shakespeare* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969), 53-54,94-95 and 222-224. See also the well known passage in Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*, ed. James Engell and W.J. Bate, Collected Works of S.T. Coleridge vii (Two volumes, Princeton University Press, 1983), vol. II,p.6.

[3]Terence Hawkes,ed. *Coleridge on Shakespeare*, 275.

[4]Jonathan Bate, *Shakespeare and the English Romantic Imagination* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989 edn. orig. pub. 1986), 57-58.

[5]I Cite from the old Oxford Shakespeare, ed. W.J. Craig.

[6]Also Oberon's comment earlier on in the play.

> When they next awake, all this derision
> Shall seem a dream and fruitless vision.
>
> (III. ii. 370-71)

[7]There are other instances of the use of the dream/vision device in Shakespeare; besides the narration of his dream by Clarence (*King Richard III*, I.iv. 9-63), there are the enacted dream-visions experienced by Posthumus in *Cymbeline* (V. iv. 29-151) and Katherine in *King Henry VIII* (IV. ii.83 and long s.d.). The 'tablet' left behind by Jupiter on Posthumus's breast in the course of the dream enactment remains with him as a concrete reality and subsequently figures in the play. Also the Induction to *The Taming of the Shrew* carries the overall suggestions that life, after all, could be a dream. See James L. Calderwood, *Shakespearean Metadrama* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 1971), for a different reading of the metadramatic element in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and other plays.

[8]Citations and translations are from M.R. Kale's edition of the play (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, 1982, orig. edn. 1929).

[9]John Keats, Letter to Benjamin Bailey, 22 November 1817. Cited from *The Oxford Anthology of English Literature: Major Authors Edition*, Volume 11, p.597.

DRYDEN'S TRANSLATION OF HORACE'S ODE (BK. III, XXIX)

D.N. Bandyopadhyay

I

Translation of classics, inceptively, did not presuppose any formation of critical systems. In the sixteenth century, the translators generally sought to enrich the vernacular. Sibilet's intention "to further and advance the language and letters of France"[1] testifies to this proliferating movement. He even discovers a referential frame in Italy where "translated books from every language"[2] serve as veritably aids of instruction. The primary purpose of translation seems to be one of "furtherance and adornment"[3] of the native language. Nicholas Udall in his Dedication of *Paraphrase upon the Newe Testamente* points at this patriotic spirit at work behind the translations. It is this predominant impression of patriotism which, again, accounts for much of the debates in relation to the spirit of emulation in John Brende's dedicatory notes appended to his translation of Quintus Curtius' *History of Alexander the Great* (1533).

Even when no definite theory of translation, as developed by Dryden much later, was available, controversies as to specific ideals were not rare. The ideal of literary translation or "metaphrase" , as Dryden would call it, has long been a mootpoint in critical discussion. While it has been defended by Alfred in his Preface to *Pastoral Care* and Thomas Hoby in *The Epistile of the Translator*,[4] a feeling of opposed reaction is gradually under way. As early as 1508, Alexander Barcelay in his *Argument of The Ship of Fools* considers translation in terms of alterations and additions, when necessary, without damaging the beauty of the original. Berner in his translation of *Froissart* exhibits his detestation of following an author "worde by worde."[5] The nature of this shifting balance is further evident in Chapman's personal choice to become "paraphrastical and faulty."[6] Cowley adheres to a similar principle is his Preface to *Pindaric Odes*. Roscommon is more concrete than everyone else in putting forward a specific theory of translation. He objects to word-for-word reproduction of the original text. In "An Essay on Translated Verse," he points out:

Words in one Language Elegantly us'd,
Will hardly in another be excus'd
And some that Rome admir'd in Caesar's Time,
May neither suit our Genius nor our Clime.
The Genuine Scence, Intelligibly Told,
Shews a Translator both Discreet and Bold.[7]

Dryden's thesis on translation seems to be a well-accumulated synthesis of the sporadic thought-patterns. His documentation in "Ovid and the Art of Translation" on the basis of the works of practising translators points at his individuated critical acumen: "First, that of metaphrase, or turning an author word by word, and line by line, form one language, into another.... The second way is that of paraphrase, or translation with latitude, where the author is kept in view by the translator, so as never to be lost, but his words are not so strictly as his sense; and that too is admitted to be amplified, but not altered... The third way is that of imitation, where the translator assumes the liberty not only to vary from the words and sense, but to forsake them both as he sees occasion."[8] In Dryden's analysis, the second method is the appropriate measure of artistic creativity for the translator. In his Dedication to *Aeneis*, he affirms his objections to the ideal of metaphrase. This comes to be expressly stated in his Preface to *Fables Ancient and Modern, Translated into Verse from Homer, Ovid, Boccace, and Chaucer*: "I have not tied myself to a literal translation; but have often omitted what I judged unnecessary, or not of dignity enough to appear in the company of better thoughts."[9] His Preface to *Sylvae* is an explication of similar ideals.

II

Dryden's translation of Horace's "Tyrrhena regum" (BK.III, ode XXIX) is a case in point. In Dryden's translation. every word used by Horace in the ode comes to be suggestive of specific "topos" or themes that conduce to the rhetorical use of 'amplificatio.' In other words, the relationship between SL (Source Language) and TL (Target language) comes to be largely determined by the rhetorical amplification. The idea of taking up a theme for the sake of amplification had been a major prevalent practice that could well be traced back to the critical literature on rhetorical discipline.

Richard Rainolde in *A Booke Called the Foundacion of Rhetorike* (1563) concentrates on the ideal of rhetoric that "dilateth

and setteth out small thynges or woordes, in soche sorte, with soche aboundaunce and plentuousness... that the most stonie and hard hartes, cannot but be incensed, inflamed and moved thereto.[10] A further elaboration is noticed in John Brinsley's *Ludus Literarius* (1612): "I have given them a theame to make, following the example in their booke, to prosecute the same parts of the Theame; as Exordium, Narratio, Confirmatio, Confutatio, Conclusio, and also to follow the severall places, to amplifie each thing by."[11] Ralph Johnson in *The Scholars Guide from the Accidence to the University* (1665) shows how 'amplificatio' may conduce to an elaboration of theme: "A sentence is amplyfied by reckoning up all the parts included within the General heads of the Theam. ex.gr. love conquers all men: here amplifie men, by reckoning up all three under included, as, poor, rich: wise, foolish: young, old: prince: peasant, etc."[12]

Horace's Ode is a long apostrophic exhortation to Maecenas. Dryden intentionally leaves out two significant details: (i) the name of Maecenas and (ii) the specific reference to his lineage: "Tyrrhena regum" (of Etrurian Kings). Dryden aims at depersonalisation of theme which has been achieved by "Descended of an ancient line." This is further amplified by a detail not mentioned by Horace: "That long the Tuscan sceptre swayed." Horace's statement of having stored up "mellow wine" ("lene merum") in an unbroached cask ("non ante verso cado") has been translated by infusing a definitive sense of urgency:

> Make haste to meet the generous wine
> Whose piercing is for the delayed.

Flowers of roses ("flore rosarum") and perfume for your hair ("balanus tuis capillis") have become :

> The rosy Wealth is ready made;
> And artiful hands prepare
> The fragrant syrian oil, that shall perfume thy hair.

Horace asks Maecenas to leave the ever-moist Tibur ("semper Udum Tibur"), the sloping fields of Aesula ("Aesulae declive arvum") and the hills of the parricide Telegonus ("Telegoniiuga parricidas"). Dryden depersonalises it by an omission of the Roman geographical details and begins to amplify the theme of farewell to a life of business:

When the wine sparkels from afar,
And the well natured friend cries," "Come away"
Make haste, and leave thy business, and thy care,
No mortal interest can be worth thy stay.
Leave for awhile, thy costly country seat!
And to be great indeed, forget
The nauseous pleasures of the great.

Horace condemns the smoke ("fumum"), the Wealth ("Opes") and the bustle ("strepitum") of Rome. Dryden metaphrastically translates it. But Horace's succinct reference to the rich men's share in the humble dwelling of the poor ("parvo sub lare pauperum") becomes a favourite amplification in relation to the theme of Christian humble life:

Sometime 'tis grateful for the rich to try
A short vicissitude, and fit of poverty:
A savoury dish, a homely treat
Where all is plain, where all is neat,
Without the stately spacious room,
The persian carpet, or the Tyrian loom
Clear up the cloudly foreheads of the great.

Then Horace goes on referring to the time when the sun brings back the days of the thirsty season ("sole dies referente siccos"). This is when the weary shepherd ("pastor...fessues") with his languid flocks ("grege languido") seeks the shade ("unbras"), the stream ("rivumi"), the thickets of the rough Silvanus ("horridi/ dumeta Silvani") and the silent bank ("rupa taciturra") free from the wandering winds ("Vagis ventis"). To these are added two other details like rock and rivulets along with a word-play on "shades" and "streams" in Dryden's translation. This restructuring and amplificatory modulation gives off a flavour of pastoralism:

The shepherd drives his fainting flock
Beneath the covert of a rock
And seeks refreshing rivulets nigh:
The sylvans to their shades retire,
Those very shades and streams, new shades and streams require,
And want a cooling breeze of wind to fan the raging fire.

Horace now turns to a consideration of hectic activity of man ignorant of the ways of the wise deity ("prudens deus") who shrouds the future ("futuri temporis") in gloomy night ("caliginose nocte"). But Dryden takes to amplifying it:

But God has wisely hid, from Human sight,

The dark decrees of future fate,
And sown their seeds in depths of night.

In Horace's analysis, life is comparable to a stream that now runs calmly ("cum pace") in mid-channel ("medio alveo"), now rolls along its course corroded stones ("lapides adesos"), uptorn trunks ("stripes raptas"), flocks ("pecus") and houses ("domos") with the noise of the mountains ("montium clamore") and the neighbouring grove ("vicinae silvae"). In Dryden's translation, the theme of the running stream has been amplified:

... the running stream
Is sometime high and sometimes low,
A quiet ebb, or a tempestuous flow,
And always in extreme.

While analysing the destructive course of the stream, Horace offers no more than a catalogue of corroded stones, uptorn trunks, flocks, houses etc. But Dryden amplifies every detail so as to make things all the more suggestive. In his translation, trunks "come rolling down;" "sheep and their folds together drown;" again, the houses and "homestead into seas are borne"; the rocks are "from their old foundations torn;" the woods "made thin with winds, their scattered honours mourn."

Horace, then, refers to fortune ("Fortuna") that rejoices in her cruel occupation ("saevo negotio") and is obstinate ("pertimax") in playing her insolent game ("ludum insolentem"); she (fortune) transfers her honours now to him, now to another. In Dryden's translation, fortune cherishes a "malicious joy," makes man her "slave," and oppresses him:

Proud of her office to destroy
Is seldom pleased to bless;
Still various, and inconstant still,
But with an inclination to be ill
Promotes, degrades, delights in strife,
And Makes a lottery of life.

Horace ends the ode with a laconic prayer that a favouring breeze ("aura") and Pollux and his twin brother will convey him safe ("tutum") in the protection ("praesidio") of a two-oared vessel ("scaphae") through the storms ("tumultus") of the Aegean sea. This is turned into an impassioned speech by Dryden:

For me, secure from Fortune's blows,
Secure of what I cannot lose

In my small pinnace, I can sail,
Contemning all the blushering roar;
And, running with a merry gale,
With friendly stars my safety seek,
within some little winding creek,
And see the storm ashore.

III

The virtue of these departures and latitudes perhaps lies in an unsuspected quarter. In fact, the formal dichotomy between the Renaissance romanticism and the Neo-classical rigidity or between the Neo-classical formalism and the 19th century Romantic Spontaneity collapses, as one carefully examines the nature of translation of Horace's odes. The amplificatory ideal in Dryden's translation moves towards the gradual emergence of the language of passion. This rise of impassioned language, at least in the context of translation of Horace's odes, is also found to be compatible with the Longinian ideal of the Sublime achieved through creative extensions of the thematic patterns. The influence of Longinus is apparent in Dryden's explicit quotations and especially in his affirmation that Longinus "was undoubtedly, after Aristotle, the greatest critic among the Greeks"[13]

Horace's odes were extensively translated by the 17th and 18th century creative writers. But it was Dryden's paraphrastic translations that possibly made sure the permissibility of latitude, thereby falsifying the claim that the use of spontaneous and passionate language is exclusively a Romantic legacy. With Dryden, it marked only a beginning of the shape of things to come.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1]J.E. Spingarn (ed.), "Introduction," *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century* (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1968), Vol. I, pp.1-1i.

[2]Ibid., p.1.

[3]In 1539, Richard Tavener states that he has taken to translating some parts of Erasmus' *Chiliades* for the "furtherance and adornment" of his native country. See F.O. Matthiessen, *Translation: An Elizabethan Art* (New York: Octagon Books, 1965), p.25.

[4]Many creative thinkers have been strongly supporting the ideal of literal translation. Nicholas Grimald strongly objected to paraphrase which threatens the ideal of faithful translation. See F.O. Matthiessen, *Translation : An Elizabethan*

Art, p.29. Again, Ben Jonson believes that translation, properly worked out, will create no difference between one tongue and the other. Hence his handsome tribute to Thomas May's literal translation of Lucan's *Pharsalia*:

> But who hath them interpreted, and brought
> Lucans whole frame unto us, and so wrought,
> As not the smallest joint, or gentlest word
> In the great masse, or machine there is stirr'd?

C.H. Herford & E. Simpson (ed.), *Complete Works of Ben Jonson* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947), Vol. VIII, p. 395.

[5]Cited in F.O. Mathiessen, *Translation : An Elizabethan Art*, p.29.

[6]J.E. Spingarn (ed.), *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, Vol. I, p.72. Chapman considers translation as a creative art and severely condemns the bad translators who are slavish rather than creative:

> So the brake
> That those Translator stick in, that effect
> Their word-for-word traductions (where they lose)
> The full grace of their naturall Dialect
> And shame their Authors with a forced gloss
> I laugh to see.

J.E. Spingarn (ed.), *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, Vol. I, p.77.

[7]Ibid., II, 209-214; and Vol. II, p.303.

[8]John Dryden, *Dramatic Essays* (Everyman's Library: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1931), p.151.

[9]Ibid., p.285.

[10]Cited in Crane, W.G., *Wit and Rhetoric in the Renaissance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1937), p.221 ff.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Ibid.

[13]W.P. Ker (ed.), The Author's Apology for Heroic Poetry and Poetic Licence (1677), *Essays of John Dryden* (Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1900), Vol. I, p.179.

That Dryden had a serious respect for the Longinian ideal of noble expression is evident in his Preface to *Troilus and Cressida*. "The poet Aeschylus was held in the same veneration by the Athenians of after ages as Shakespeare is by us: and Longinus has judged, in favour of him, that he had a noble boldness of expression, and that his imaginations were lofty and heroic." (Ibid., vol. I, p.202).

ADONAIS RECONSIDERED

R.S. Sharma

Any discussion of P.B. Shelley's works today must begin with the recognition that he has emerged triumphant out of the mist of adverse criticism directed against his life and poetry by the modernists of T.S. Eliot's persuasion. The two Conferences on Shelley held at Gregynog in 1978 and 1980 in which British and American scholars shared a common forum provide a clear proof of an upturn in the poet's reputation. But this does not mean that the problems and challenges--even contradictions--that we encounter in reading Shelley's poetry have disappeared. Like any other Shelley production, *Adonais* is riddled with problems as regards form and sentiment in spite of the fact that it has been acclaimed as a great achievement. Shelley himself regarded it as "a highly wrought piece of art and perhaps better in point of composition than anything I have written."[1] Yet the divergence of critical opinion on the poem is bewildering. On the one hand it is asserted that in *Adonais* Shelley's Platonism finds its exemplary expression; on the other, the poem is regarded as a statement of extreme skepticism. According to one approach the poem is a testament of religious faith; according to another, Shelley remains unreconciled to God. Some critics hold that it is a poem of hope and immortality; others that it represents a surrender to all-powerful death. To some scholars the poem appears ill-structured and devoid of unity; to others it is an aesthetic triumph, "an apotheosis of imagination."[2]

These are some of the polarities that we find in the critical studies of *Adonais*, but our purpose in the present paper is to deal with a few more fundamental problems which one faces in the very act of reading the poem, though our discussion will not be without implications for the second-order arguments briefly mentioned above. The fundamental questions we have undertaken to examine relate to the title itself, the validity of the sentiment, structural unity, Shelley's self-portrait, and inconsistency in details and imagery. We shall take them up one by one.

As regards the title, most writers have assumed that 'Adonais' is a variant of the word 'Adonis'. Grierson and Smith take 'Adonais' to be 'just a modification' of 'Adonis,' "intended to suggest that Keats was as dear to Urania, the goddess of heavenly love and the

muse of high poetry, poetry that quickens in men's souls the love of liberty, as Adonis was to Aphrodite.[3] W.M. Rossetti in his notes to *Adonais* put forward the suggestion that 'Adonais' had something to do with Hebrew 'Adonai.'[4] Now the word 'adonai' means "my lord" and is cognate with Phoenician 'adon' meaning "lord". In the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) the expression was applied to Yahweh, the Hebrew God. Donald H. Reiman believes that 'Adonais' is a conflation of 'Adonis' and the Hebrew word "adonai" or Lord and points to the common origin of the two words.[5] According to Desmond King-Hele the modification was an inspired piece of word coining. For King-Hele the modification is confined to the word-form only and it resulted into a phonetic advantage—it has nothing to do with the referent and 'Adonais' is simply another name for Adonis.[6]

As pointed out earlier, most commentators take a similar view, but before examining it more closely let us consider W.M. Rossetti's suggestion. The first question is why did Shelley add an s to the Hebrew form 'adonai'; there does not appear to be any justification for it. Secondly, the word 'adonai' introduces certain associations which would be repugnant to Shelley's thinking-- even if it is conceded that in *Adonais* Shelley moved closer to a religious faith, it would be too much to assert that he deliberately wanted to invoke the ideas of Godhood and authority that inhere in the word 'adonai'. Harold Bloom and Trilling are, therefore, right in considering the suggestion as unlikely. But their own statement that the best suggestion is still that 'Adonais' is a variant on 'Adonias', the annual lament for Adonis by his female votaries, is equally untenable. The reason is that 'Adonais' in Shelley's poem is clearly a mythical character representing John Keats and not a lament: 'Adonias' denotes a lament for Adonis, whereas 'Adonais' is the name of the person being mourned.

We are thus left with the commonly held view that 'Adonais' is a variant of 'Adonis', that is to say, both these names refer to the same character. But that will mean fitting a square peg in a round hole, because there is little in common between Adonis and Adonais, except that both of them were killed in young age. To point out only some of the inconsistencies, Adonis was the lover of Aphrodite; Adonais, her son; Adonis was killed by a boar while he was out hunting on Mount Lebenon, Adonais received a mortal wound from the arrow of an enemy and died in Rome. The per-

sonalities and gifts of the two characters are quite different; they are mourned by different kinds of people, and their transformations after death are also not identical.

The problem remains unresolved and we must explore some other means of explaining the title; perhaps we can find a clue in the commentary of Grierson and Smith referred to earlier. They think that the variant was adopted by Shelley to suggest that Keats was as dear to Urania as Adonis was to Aphrodite. This means that Urania and Aphrodite are two different goddesses and Adonais, the son of Urania, is different from Adonis, the lover of Aphrodite. The separate identities of the two goddesses receive great emphasis in the speech of Pausanias in Plato's dialogue, *The Symposium*, a book specially liked by Shelley.[8]

This distinction has a certain advantage. It loosens the name from the strict mythical constraints which bind the term 'Adonis'. 'Adonais,' then, can be understood as a new graft on the Aphrodite myth-- a pure Shelleyan creation invented to fit the life and death of John Keats. This should not be surprising to those who are aware of Shelley's mythopoetic imagination; everything in the world and in the mind of man appeared to him in an animated mythical form: the wind, the cloud, love, hatred, time and necessity. In securing a divine connection for Keats, Shelley was doing no more than exploiting a minor yet highly significant device of myth expansion by elevation of the heroes of mankind: Virgil had done the same thing for the historical and legendary ancestors of Augustus Caesar.

Now Aphrodite Urania, the goddess-mother of Adonais in the Shelleyan myth, had her own affairs. As Robert Graves relates, "she destroyed the sacred king, who mated with her on a mountain top, as a queen-bee destroys the drone." Anchises, the father of Aeneas, was the sacred king, who in later versions of the myth escaped death. Graves further informs us that "'Anchises' is, in fact, a synonym of Adonis.[9] In the light of this analysis Adonais can be regarded as the son of Adonis/Anchises and Urania. And whether we regard the goddess as a single person or two different persons, we meet with Adonis as the lover.

Once we agree to the view that Adonais is the son of Aphrodite Urania by Adonis, our problems as regards the details disappear, because Adonais has no biography except the history of Keats's

life: his parentage does not affect the details, but it powerfully symbolises love and pursuit of beauty. Indeed in Shelley's time it was late in the day to assert the literal truth of a new myth; the fresh addition could only be symbolic and so much the better. We will no longer be faced by serious violations of a well-established myth which gave violent jolts to our reading of the poem. The widowhood of Urania mentioned in stanza VI can be given a more sensible explanation--assigning Urania's widowhood to the death of Milton[10] is grossly inappropriate because she is a mother-figure too exalted to be thought of as his wife or beloved. In relation to Adonis, there are three senses in which Urania may be considered to be a widow: first, after the death of Adonis in the mythical narrative; second, every year during winter when he is in the Underworld; and third, during the winter of mankind when love is absent from this world. The third symbolic meaning, not unrelated to the second, is perhaps the most satisfying, because Shelley regarded his own age as the winter of mankind.

The second charge against *Adonais* is of a general nature and applicable to all poems expressive of the poet's personal grief. It derives from Dr. Samuel Johnson's well-known attack on Milton's *Lycidas*. Johnson found nothing praiseworthy in the matter and manner of this pastoral elegy. There is no genuine feeling in the poem, because sincere sorrow would allow no imaginative construction and scholarly allusion: "Where there is leisure for fiction there is little grief."[11] This criticism is an indictment of all elegiac art, because art does involve some distancing from experience.

Angela Leighton, in her deconstructive study of *Adonais*, has developed this point to some detail. First she pleads with Paul de Man and Murry Krieger that literature being fiction and self-referential is self-deconstructing and in this regard it is different from philosophical discourse, and then she proceeds to show how the poem deconstructs itself. Remarking on the nature of elegy, she observes: "The written elegy has inevitably foregone the sound of the mourner's lament, its spontaneity and passion. But still its rhetorical aim must be to re-enact that spontaneity, recapture the speaking voice, express its grief. Such an aim is both promised and frustrated, and this deconstructing movement becomes central to the nature of elegy." The figurative devices in the poem "become modes of deconstruction which the poem itself makes available to the reader." The rhetorical statement, "I weep for Adonais"

is undermined by the meaning of the verb: "to weep is to be unable to speak effectively." Then there is the dualism of voices undermining each other: the injunction, "Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and weep:" is cancelled by "... let thy loud heart keep/Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep." Angela Leighton concludes her article with a significant generalisation which deserves to be quoted in full:

> To read *Adonais from* a deconstructionist perspective is to find in its ending a merely equivocal comment on that dualistic theory of inspiration which informs the poem. For as long as the immortal voice of the dead, the voice of unfailing inspiration, remains lost to the written text, the poem plays out the drama of its 'dispossession'; the drama of 'differance' , where language must find its object perpetually different and deferred. To reach the desired realm of the 'Immortal' is thus a triumph only gained at the price of silence and despair. Creativity still belongs to the deceptive rhetorics and fictions of the poem. Deconstruction criticism, then, may seem to deprive us of the poem's ideological and religious consolations, to dismantle its triumphant aesthetics, but in the end it still protects and makes precious our 'leisure for fiction'.[12]

Another way to deal with the implications of Johnson's strictures would be by reference to the empirical-anthropological aspects of grief and its literary expression in the form of an elegy; perhaps literary criticism can still benefit from an appeal to our common experience and observation. We begin by clarifying our notions about elegy; an elegy is not an unpremeditated response to grief --it should not be understood as a lament, pure and simple; rather it is a poem lamenting someone's death. This means that art must mediate between grief and its expression and the raw feeling of grief must be reconciled with the demands of convention and creative composition. Artistic creation often involves some distancing from the experience, but this distancing need not be taken as a sign of dishonesty.

As far as the pastoral machinery is concerned, it has been favoured by the best practitioners of the elegy, and there is perhaps more to it than a merely dead convention. Perhaps poets from the ancient times have realised that death is best portrayed against the simplified background of rural setting and characters in the midst of nature governed everywhere by the law of necessity and in the sophisticated affairs of man it is death alone that makes us aware of this great law. The pastoral framework also makes for universalization of the theme so as to render it symbolic of the pathos of the human condition: to make us hear "the still sad

music of humanity." In one sense, it introduces artificiality, but in another it resolves life to its essentials. Moreover, in so far as *Adonais* is concerned, it has a very thin veneer of pastoralism and that too over only a part of the poem--it would not have offended even Dr. Johnson's standard of propriety.

The grief itself need not be very personal. It is enough that the poet should be sufficiently moved to write an elegy after getting an account of somebody's death--it is immaterial for poetic purposes whether the details are true, false or distorted. There is no doubt that the supposed cause of Keats's death, and thereby the quenching of a young talented life, filled Shelley with grief and anger and roused him to poetical fervour. Similarly, the fact that such a methodical man as Milton forced himself to tap his poetical genius prior to its maturing should be a sufficient proof of his sincerity. Once the two poets decided to compose their pastoral elegies, they had to submit to the rules of the game.

The poet's submission to the requirements of form and style is not without its noble aims. There is a generous desire to secure some kind of immortality for the deceased. This is a measure of the poet's feeling for him or her. This can be accomplished by transforming the event into a cultural object that the resulting poem is. Thus conformity to the artistic norms--however artificial these may appear--is for the greater good: life beyond death; the desire to be remembered after leaving this world is a distinctly human wish in every person. The second noble object is to bring out the pathos of the human condition by universalizing the particular. The death of Adonis becomes a schema or formula for a certain class of human tragedies: untimely loss of love, youth and beauty, as indicated earlier. The death of Keats provides another schema; blighting of creative talent in youth by poisonous criticism. This also outlines a typical human situation which will never exhaust its potential as long as we have budding artists and their uncomprehending critics. According to Graham Hough, "in *Adonias*, Shelley is depicting the fate of the romantic poet in the world of Eldon, Castlereagh and the *Quarterly Review*, as Milton that of the young puritan poet in the world of Laud and Strafford."[13] It was a lucky chance that Shelley conceived this powerful theory of Keats's death without caring to consult the true facts, but how can we assert that Shelley was completely wrong? Perhaps he was partly right. Consult any youthful creative writer dedicated to his calling

to know how deeply he feels wounded when his work is savagely attacked by contemptuous reviewers. Perhaps Keats would have survived or lived some years more, had he received the encouragement that was his due, instead of damning criticism.

As pointed out by Carlos Baker, "When one turns to the final third of the poem, a question of the unity of *Adonais* arises." The mythological narrative sustained up to the thirty-seventh stanza is abandoned in favour of philosophical deliberation in the remaining portion of thé poem. "It has therefore been supposed on occasion, that Shelley destroyed the unity of *Adonais* through his failure to sustain the device until the end."[14] Baker then refers to Hungerford's argument in defence of unity of the poem.[15] Hungerford attempts to show that the myth is not given up by Shelley; it is, by implication at least, carried along to the conclusion. In the course of the poem Urania has merged with light and become transformed from a goddess into the original "One" or the World-Soul. When Adonais himself attains immortality he is reunited with Urania permanently—Urania as the World-Soul.[16] Baker says that this argument receives further support when we ponder the intrinsic meaning of Urania: "She is the heavenly muse under whose aegis the most sublime poetry is written; at the same time she is the Uranian Aphrodite, goddess of spiritual love." As such,"she has been both the inspiration for Keats and the goal of his aspiration, a goal which he has now attained."[17] Baker has also advanced his own argument for the unity of *Adonais*. It is based on Shelley's use of star-symbolism as a device of unification. He implies that the image of Keats as a star underlies the thought of the poem from beginning to end, and the clue to this organising idea is given in the handnote Shelley prefixed to the poem.[18] It is a passage from Plato which Shelley himself translated in the following words:

> Thou wert a morning star among the living,
> Ere thy fair light had fled;
> Now having died, thou art as Hesperus, giving
> New splendour to the dead.

Apart from these arguments, perhaps the best way to deal with the problem of unity in the poem is to refer to the structure of real laments among the people and to consider the social and cultural psychology of mourning; the former are in fact based on the latter. When people go to mourn somebody's death, they generally begin by expressing their sense of grief; the dead person is praised--

rather overpraised-- and his good qualities and talents are recalled. The circumstances of his death and damnation of those who caused it are bound to be dwelt upon. Then the direction of thinking is reversed; the bereaved family is told that the person is not dead, his soul is immortal and he is in heaven, his spirit is still with them, he still lives in his works and fame etc., etc. The contrary notes may appear alternately or in some other order and the continuance of the deceased may be asserted on more than one plane. It is also most likely that a sensitive mourner on such an occasion will feel depressed and begin thinking of his own end and may even visualise the shadow of death coming closer. And who does not wish that after his own death there should be someone to feel sorrry for him, to talk about him? --a very human wish:

> For thee, who mindful of th'unhonoured dead
> Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
> If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
> Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate.

All of these elements may not be present in an elegy, but psychologically, they go together and form a cluster of feelings and thoughts that constitute mourning. As suggested earlier, they are present in traditional lamentation among the common people. It is in this psycho-cultural complex that we must look for the unity of *Adonais* or any other elegy for that matter. This foundation of a family of associated responses can and does provide a much sounder ground for unity than any purely technical or formal features although the supporting role of these latter cannot be discounted. The elegiac poets, therefore, evince a deeper insight into the nature of the elegy than their critics. We should also not forget that the term 'elegy' coming from Greek'elegos', "mournful poem" could originally be applied to any poem of solemn meditation: the two elements of mourning proper and meditation got coalesced to give the term a broader coverage than is allowed in modern literary theory, but Milton or Shelley cannot be punished for being more knowledgeable.

The greatest fall from good taste is located in Shelley's inclusion of his own portrait in *Adonais* and yet, paradoxically enough, his self-portrait is a marvellous piece of poetry. Angela Leighton tries to mollify the criticism by recourse to deconstructive interpretation. Like meaning in language, the appearance of the poet is both promised and postponed. She says,

> . . . But it is important to note that the poet enters his poem in disguise. He is marked by an ever-changing series of images, which trace a retreat from the man, from the human: he is a 'frail form', 'A phantom', 'a cloud', 'Actaeon-like', 'a spirit', a 'Love', a 'Power', and lastly those failing images of the 'lamp', 'shower' and 'billow'. Like so many personifications in the poem, this one too is in the process of its own dissolution. These images do not represent a sentimental self-portrait, but rather the process which, for Shelley, is the very condition of poetry: poetry is the failing image of inspiration.[19]

Stuart Curran in his article, "Adonais in Context", notes that Shelley's self-portrait "seemed to some readers the only real lapse in the poem,' but he attempts to justify it in terms of one of the most important contexts. He says that "the oneness of the dead Keats and the living Shelley is the axis on which the poem strains towards the infinite,"and the abstract nature of Shelley's own portrait is a means to achieving the identification. By contrast the portraits of the other mourners are personalised. In identifying himself with Keats, Shelley effected "an extreme revision of generic convention." In his poem on Bion, "Moschus had claimed to be the inheritor of Bion's gift of song and thus his rightful successor. In abstracting himself, Shelley attempts to surpass his model, creating not a succession but a virtual identification of himself with Keats, an incarnation."[20]

The two justifications reported above may not be fully convincing, although the elements of disguise and identification with Keats are important extenuating factors. We shall therefore look afresh at Shelley's self-projection in the poem in its internal context in the hope of arriving at a more satisfactory solution. First, we must note that the "mountain shepherds" who came to visit Adonais' grave are fellow poets of Shelley and Keats-- Lord Byron, Tom Moore, Leigh Hunt. Now would it not have been a noticeable lapse, if Shelley had been altogether missing from that company? We tend to overlook the structural requirement of the self-projection because we fail to see the need of distinguishing the roles of author and visitor at the grave. But in *Adonais* the orchestra of different voices and roles is of great importance. Secondly, the company of mourners are turned into allegorical characters which results in a large gain in universality. Each mourner is designated by his salient quality in terms of excellences of human nature--what fascinates us in the description is not the living individual, Byron or Moore,but the personality-type, which will exist and impress us as long as mankind survives upon the earth. And Shelley's

self-portrait must conform to the same mode: hence his description of himself as a specific composition of human nature--a unique feat to look at oneself as a third person. Moreover, the self-portrait is not uniformly independent--for its own sake --no, it insinuates at a mystical entwinement of the destinies of Shelley and Keats:

> All stood aloof, and at his partial moan
> Smiled through their tears; well knew that gentle band
> Who in another's fate now wept his own.

Our last problem relates to the inconsistency of images and events. A detailed study of this topic would require a full paper. Here we can afford only a brief discussion along general lines. The first thing to be kept in mind is that in *Adonais* imagery and narration are interpenetrative. The various facets and implications of acts and events are presented in figurative language-- any attempt to judge the relationship in realistic and logical terms is forestalled. Conversely, the disposition of images reflects the progress and turns of the narrative at least on a symbolic plane. It has been pointed out earlier that star-imagery constitutes a unifying factor in the poem. To be more precise it is flower-star symbolism which permeates the poem, but not haphazardly: there is a pattern in it and the pattern corresponds to the dualism of human life which becomes evident in death.

Upto Stanza XIX, the flower imagery predominates in the mainstream narration and description; star images are incidental or for contrast as in stanza V. In stanza II, Keats's poems are compared to flowers. In VI, he is said to have grown "Like a pale flower by some sad maiden cherished", a tear is compared to dew upon a sleeping flower (X); there is also a concealed flower image in XVI if we consider a flower (--Keats) to be the Spring's delight. The major image is often accompanied by the auxiliary images of leaves, dew, plants, etc.

A transition from flower to star imagery is noticeable in stanza XX:

> The leprous corpse, touched by this spirit tender,
> Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath;
> Like incarnations of the stars, when splendour
> Is changed to fragrance.

In these lines the two images converge; the flowers themselves are seen as incarnations of the stars. Now on the star-image becomes

predominant and the flower-image appears incidentally. And Adonais begins to ascend to his preordained position among the luminaries. In Stanza XXVII Urania regrets that Adonais did not wait the full circle when his spirit "should have filled its crescent sphere"; the reference is to the moon. Stanza XXIX is full of star-imagery. It is later reinforced by verbs of ascending, images of light and contrasting images of depth and darkness. Adonais has become one with Nature, his presence can be felt "in darkness and in light." In the meantime the dead poets of the past have appeared like a constellation; they welcome Adonais with the words:

> "Thou art become as one of us", they cry,
> "It was for thee yon kingless sphere has long
> Swung blind in unascended majesty,
> Silent alone amid an Heaven of Song.
> Assume they winged throne, thou Vesper of our throng!"

In the concluding part of the poem the Absolute is conceived as Light and Love, and Shelley feels being pulled upwards, being "borne darkly, fearfully, afar,"

> Whilst, burning through the inmost veil of Heaven,
> The soul of Adonais, like a star,
> Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are.

We now move on to the second part of our problem. We are told in stanza II that Adonais lay "pierced by the shaft which flies/ In darkness." This means he was killed by a treacherous enemy. He is said to have gone where all wise and fair things descend; later he is seen to be ascending to Heaven--this discrepancy we have already tried to explain. The images of "barbed fire", the enemy's piercing, of Adonais' "innocent breast", Urania's wound "more fierce than his" are all quite in order. In stanza XXXVI we are told "Our Adonais has drunk poison" and this seems clearly contradictory to the cause of death given before. The "viperous murderer" of this stanza becomes a venomous reptile in the next. Desmond King-Hele is, however, particularly disturbed by one glaring inconsistency: "Adonais is 'pierced by a shaft' in Stanza 2, but he 'drinks poison' in stanza 37."[21]

There is a hope of this problem being resolved if we take into account the complexly metaphorical mode of expression involved. Now the chief image is that of an arrow shot by a malicious enemy. From this it is a small step to imagine the arrow being poisoned--'poisoned arrow' is the most appropriate figure for a

vituperative review article. The verb 'drink' is used metaphorically, but even if we take it literally it may mean sucking or absorbing poison from the arrowhead. In fact, the words 'cup' and 'drought' in the third line (stanza XXXVI) tend to complicate the issue, but we must realize that both these words as well as 'crown' in the preceding line are metaphors-- there is also a mixed metaphor:

> Our Adonais has drunk poison - oh!
> What deaf and viperous murderer could crown
> Life's early cup with such a draft of woe.

The other inconsistencies noted above are not so insurmountable, provided we take the expressions as metaphors.

I have said nothing about the most problematic stanza in the poem, i.e. No.LII, opening with "The One remains, the many change and pass." For one thing, the stanza has been extensively analysed and commented upon; a good example of detailed discussion is King-Hele's explanation of its meaning. But no one seems to have succeeded completely in giving a fully coherent and intelligible account of the thought-content of the lines under reference, and I do not hope to succeed where so many have failed. But there is no need to despair; the lines may not be fully intelligible, but they are sensible in the sense that we are helped to feel intuitively the relation between appearances and the Reality; when he wrote these lines, Shelley, no doubt, was in that excited state of mystical experience in which death is seen as a door opening on a new world of awful glory, and we are enabled to get a very faint 'sensation' of that excited state. Shelley himself tells us that the Reality he was trying to define was in fact beyond the reach of any media including words--perhaps even art itself:

> Rome's azure sky,
> Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words, are weak
> The Glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.

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DIVER'S PEARL: INDIA IN THE NOVELS OF MAUD DIVER

M.K. Naik

If the British empire in India was won, as it has been said, on the playgrounds of Eton and Harrow, it was probably lost in the drawing rooms of the British cantonment towns in India. For the Memsahib who was the presiding deity of the drawing room shaped, at least in some measure, the general British view of India, the Indians, and the Eurasians, and the role of the Englishman in India. And there was so much in this view that the intelligent, sensitive Indian rightly resented, that it ultimately created a gulf between the two races-- a gulf that went on widening until assisted by several other factors, it finally and inevitably led to the severance of the imperial bond.

With a few honourable exceptions, the average Memsahib was generally imbued with a strong feeling of racial superiority; an over-weaning contempt for the Indian, who was regarded either as a wild barbarian or as a childish creature, which it was the God-ordained task of the British to civilize; a lurking fear that the ungrateful 'barbarians', who were unfortunately in a brute majority in the land, might one day rise in revolt against the microscopic minority to which she and her kind belonged, and outrage her White modesty; a still greater contempt for the Eurasian, who was believed to manage to combine the worst in the two races; and a general lack of interest in the boring 'Land of Exile' in which she had been condemned to pass the best years of her life.

This description, by and large, fits most of the Memsahibs who tried their hand at fiction, but here again there are honourable exceptions. Anglo-Indian Women Novelists form quite a sizeable school. An exhaustive Bibliography (which is already twenty-five years old) of Anglo-Indian fiction lists as many as one hundred and fifty-five of them. One of the most outstanding of these Women novelists was Maud Diver, whose fiction deserves to be known much better than it is at present. Though she undoubtedly shares some of the attitudes and assumptions of the representative Memsahib, she is one of the very few members of her tribe to challenge some of the pet beliefs of the English woman in India.

Maud Diver (187-?-1945) was the daughter of a Colonel

Marshall and was born at the hill-station of Murree in the Himalayas. She was highly connected, being the great-niece of the wife of Sir Henry Lawrence, while the sister of Rudyard Kipling was a close friend of hers. According to the standard Anglo-Indian practice, she was sent to England at the age of seven, and after finishing her education there, she returned to India around the age of twenty or so, as part of the 'Fishing Fleet' (i.e. young Englishwomen of marriageable age in search of a suitable husband in India). Soon succeeding in her mission, she married Lt.Colonel T.Diver in 1896, and returned to England with him.

Maud Diver wrote twelve novels with India as the setting: *Capt. Desmond, V.C.* 1907; *The Great Amulet*, 1908; *Candles in the Wind, 1909; Lilamani, A Study of Possibilities*, 1910; *Desmond's Daughter*, 1916; *Strange Roads*, 1918; *Far To Seek*, 1921; *Lonely Furrow*, 1923; *A Wild Bird*, 1929; *Ships of Youth*, 1931; *The Singer Passes*, 1934; and *The Dream Prevails*, 1938.

She published two short story collections: *Sunia and Other Stories*, 1913, and *Siege Perilous and Other Stories*, 1924 too. Apart from these, she also produced two accounts of the exploits of the 'Frontier Hero' : Major Eldred Pottinger: *The Hero of Herat: A Frontier Biography in Romantic Form*, 1912; and *The Judgment of the Sword: A Tale of the Kabul Tragedy and of the Part Played therein by Major Pottinger*, 1913. Diver has to her credit another interesting book: *The Englishwoman in India* (1909), which is a very perceptive study of the role of the English woman in her sojourn in India.

Maud Diver's fiction constitutes an interesting attempt on the part of an imaginative and sensitive Englishwoman to respond to the beauty of the Indian landscape, and the essence of Indian culture, and to plead for a confluence of the two cultures--British and Indian, for the good not only of the two countries but also of the whole of humanity. It is this that, in the main, sets her apart from most of the other Anglo-Indian women novelists . She is, of course, a child of her times, and cannot totally escape the strong influence of the usual British assumptions regarding the Indian, the Eurasian and the Englishman with his civilizing mission in India, which do colour her work; but the very fact that she can rise above all this and boldly plead for a union between the best in the Indian personality and the finer elements in British character (a

heresy which probably shocked most of her contemporaries) is proof enough of her independence of mind.

Maud Diver evidently brought to her task a seriousness of purpose, of which the average Anglo-Indian woman novelist can scarcely be accused, for any Memsahib fond of putting pen upon paper and capable of sitting for a couple of hours at her desk was perfectly capable of producing a novel or two on Anglo-Indian life and manners, finding time being no problem, because she had little to do, except 'arranging... cut flowers laid to her hand by the faithful Mali', as Diver herself puts it in her *The Englishwoman in India* (1909:16). How seriously Diver took her task is clear from her manifesto-- 'The Author's Note' to her novel, *Ships of Youth*:

> 'India of today--as indeed of any day--is too great and complex a theme to be used merely as an effective back-cloth. It seems to be incumbent on all who use it for imaginative end to make even a partial presentment of its people and conditions as true in essence as any imaginative picture, based on artistic selection, can claim to be. That at least has been my own guiding principle in every Anglo-Indian novel I have written.' (1931:*n.p.*).

A scrutiny of Diver's view of India, the Indian, and his nexus with the Englishman must begin with her image of India. First, India is 'a magic word' to Eve, the protagonist in the novel, *A Wild Bird* (1929:185). 'Even from afar,' it lays 'a spell--a spell as indefinable as it is potent' upon Desmond in *Ships of Youth* (1931:124).

Probably because of this, in more than one novel of hers India is characterized as a 'feminine land': 'India may be said to rank with Italy as a Woman-country, loved of male lands, and exercising the same dominion over the hearts of men. India, even to her inmates seems still a veiled mystery, aloof, yet alluring, like one of her own purdah princes' (*Desmond's Daughter*, 1916:358). Similarly, we are told that Lilamani's 'Poetic brain' saw England as 'husband of India'(*Far to Seek*,1921,128).

Diver also subscribed to the pet Anglo-Indian dogma, that India, a hotch potch of several disparate peoples constantly at war with one another, was for the first time molded into a nation by the benevolent British. Hence, we have this description of India in *Ships of Youth*: 'India, that virtual creation of his (Desmond's) casual genius' (1931:123). In the same novel, Lynch laments,'We ourselves are responsible for the political fairy tale, India -- a

nation cemented by our language and by hatred of the British to whom they owe it all'(256).

Nevertheless, Diver is one of the few Anglo-Indian novelists who freely acknowledge the spiritual heritage of India. In *The Singer Passes*, Edom admits, 'There is something magnetic in the atmosphere and the very soil of India... Why does this strong, secret power of India get me so profoundly?' (1931:245). His interlocutor, Roy Sinclair then comments, 'Perhaps, it is the power of God, the power we have lost sight of in the machine-made west... Indians *live* religion' (*Ibid.*). India for Diver is a 'God-intoxicated' (though 'priest-ridden') land (*Ibid.*,178).

This, however, does not blind her to the fact that India is also a land dominated by fatalism, 'that moral microbe of the East' (*The Great Amulet*, 96). In *Far to Seek*, Roy, half British and half Indian, contemplates suicide, when he is disappointed in love:'The fatalistic strain in his blood drew him on'(426).

In contrast with this, there is one feature of Indian culture which Diver admires, lamenting that it is absent in Modern Western civilization. She quotes approvingly the opinions of Roy and Lilamani on the Indian view of the Man-Woman nexus in *Far to Seek:* complaining that modern Englishwomen unnecessarily try to imitate men in all respects, Roy remarks,'But it kills the charm of contrast--the supreme charm, they understand that in India better'(101). Lilamani agrees: 'From the Hindu point of view, the greatest richness of life comes from the greatest possible difference between men and women' (*Ibid.*).

Among Anglo-Indian novelists, it is perhaps Diver, who responds most enthusiastically and perceptively to the natural beauty of India. The reason for this could be that born at Murree, tucked away in the Himalayas, she must have spent her childhood in close company with the northern mountains, and since childhood impressions leave a permanent stamp on one's mind, Maud Diver never perhaps lost her love of mountain scenery, which is not merely a thing of beauty for her, but an awe-inspiring phenomenon. This is how Lenox in *The Great Amulet* reacts to the quiet Himalayan scene:

> 'The white silence of the mountains called to him as friend calls to friend, and the whole heart of him answered, 'I come'. 'As the dew is dried

> up by the sun, so are the sins of mankind by the glory of Himachal' : the words of the old Hindu worshipper sprang to his brain and for him they were no fanciful imagery but a radiant truth.' (359)

And this is the way Diver registers her impressions of a Monsoon storm in the Frontier Mountains:

> 'Crash on flash, crash on flash, at ever-lessening intervals--... the heavens raged and clattered round his unprotected head. Thunder toppled about him like falling timber sacks. Fiery serpents darted all ways at once among black boughs that swayed and moaned funereally'. (*Far to Seek:* 427)

Diver admired Indian art also. 'In this one instance, (i.e. Art), she declares, 'despite an inextinguishable conviction of our own superiority, we should rather have sat at India's feet, than have presumed to shackle her free genius with the canons of Western art, to foist upon her our mindless monstrosities in lieu of her own exqisitely natural grace of workmanship and design (*The English-woman in India*: 149).

But Diver is perhaps more fair to India than to Indians in depicting whom she often betrays how her vision is heavily blinkered in the typical Anglo-Indian manner, though in some respects she does try to peep through the blinkers to see something new and heretical. One of the basic tenets of the Anglo-Indian creed was that the only good Indian was the servant, loyal, honest and ever-faithful to the British master. Diver too subscribes to this creed. In *Ships of Youth* young Puran Singh is ever eager to do 'any small personal service to Lance.... a disconcerting word would woefully abash him:yet persistently he would renew his effort, like a faithful dog' (414). In fact, so strongly does Diver believe in the doglike devotion of the Indian that at one place she shows an Englishman rousing the sleeping Pathan orderly of a British officer,'with the toe of his boot... The native sprang up, fumbled at his disarranged turban, salaamed deeply and finally stood upright, a splendid figure of a man six feet of him' (*The Great Amulet*: 24). One really wonders where exactly on the North West Frontier did Diver encounter so servile and gutless a Pathan!

Diver would also appear to subscribe to the other pet Anglo-Indian axiom that Indian nationalists were mere wind bags, whose agitation for freedom actually harmed India. In *The Dream Prevails,* Indian nationalists are dismissed as 'These talking Round Tables in Town that go forever round and round and seem to arrive

nowhere. Plenty of clever men....But two things they cannot do with their much talking: they can't talk India into a united, independent nation, and they can't talk the British out of India'(284). Similarly, in *Ships of Youth*, Lance tells Puran Singh, 'If any damage has been done to India during these troubled years, it has been chiefly through Ghandi's *(sic)* Civil Disobedience and the Congresswallahs. The Government they abuse strives only for peaceful progress'(25).

Nevertheless, the balance is somewhat redressed in Diver's treatment of Indian Womanhood. In *The Singer Passes*, she pays a glowing tribute to Indian womanhood, which for her is 'the fine metal forged from generations of suffering and suppression'(90). And in *Lilamani*, she makes Sir Lakshman Singh wax eloquent on the subject: 'For the Indian Woman, religion is all; and marriage is a chief part of that religion. It is consecration for this life and all other lives. That is the inmost reason of Suttee. The wife being spiritually higher than her husband has all power over the welfare of his soul in future incarnations, he without her having none'(131).

It is equally reassuring to know that Diver's image of the ideal Indian personality is one 'Steeped in the threefold culture of his country--Vedantic, Islamic and European; and she finds this ideal realized in Sir Lakshman Singh in *Far to Seek* (186).

How does Diver view the Englishman in India and his role in the country? As a child of her times, she obviously shares the Anglo-Indian creed, of which the convenient concept of 'The White Man's Burden' was the cornerstone. Like almost every other Anglo-Indian novelist of her day, she subscribes to the 'Prospero' Image of the Englishman undergoing his Indian ordeal bravely, purely in order to benefit the ungrateful Indian Caliban. At more than one place, she emphasizes the necessity of the Englishman's presence in India, which she believes has been actuated by the purest altruistic motives. The Epigraph to one of the chapters in *The Singer Passes* reads: 'The question is not whether England has a right to keep India, but whether she has a right to leave it' (233). In *Far to Seek*, she makes Sir Lakshman Singh (her 'Ideal' Indian) wish to be saved from the crazy nightmare of Home Rule', because he is utterly convinced that 'Loyal allegiance to British Government will give India the best chance for peaceful progress she is likely to have for many generations' (190).

Another favourite argument always trotted out to justify the presence of the British in India was that the moment they left, India would relapse into anarchy. In *Far to Seek*, Roy Sinclair declares, 'They spoke of her (India) as one, when in truth she was many. The 'semblance of unity sprang mainly from England's unparallelled achievement--her *pax Britannica* that held the scales even between rival chiefs and races and creeds; that had wrought in miniature, the very inter-racial stability which Europe had vainly fought and striven to achieve'(423).

It was also believed that the British presence in India was indispensable in the interests of social reform as well. In *Ships of Youth*, Grace is convinced that 'The long, difficult comradeship between England and India had existed these hundred years and more, mainly to one great end--the lifting and enlightenment of India's women; that England could not lay down her responsibilities or India dream of self-government till that great purpose was many degrees nearer fulfilment than now'(352).

Since she is so utterly convinced of the sacred British mission in India, Diver is filled with admiration, respect and even awe as she thinks of Anglo-Indian officials, whether military or civil, in India. 'What are they', she asks in tones of manifest reverence, 'these Anglo-Indians and what spell is put upon them by the land of their service that even their own countrymen deem them almost a race apart?' (*Desmond's Daughter*:49). In the same novel, we are told, 'England holds her supremacy in the East as much by the power of individual character as by the power of the sword, (566). Lenox in *Candles in the Wind* is a representative example of this kind of a paragon:'A soldier-political of the type that more effectively upholds British prestige in India than all her benevolent schemes for legislation, enlightenment and justice rolled into one--a rugged, lonely personality walking uprightly and with unshaken nerve among the quicksands of intrigue and corruption'(17). Diver grows almost lyrical as she extols the heroism of the Frontier British officer, working 'in unconsidered corners of the Empire, in the vast spaces and comparative isolation, where old-fashioned patriotism takes the place of parochial party politics, and where alone, strong natures can grow up in their own way' (*The Great Amulet*:211).

Diver notes with special approval the fact that some British

families had a tradition of hereditary service to India. In *Far to Seek*, while mentioning how the Desmonds had been connected with India for about a century, she adds, 'That is no uncommon story in India, She has laid her spell on certain families and they have followed one another through generations as homing birds... And their name becomes a legend that passes from father to son... It makes for continuity, for a fine tradition of service and devotion'(137).

At the same time, Diver is not blind to the reality that every British officer in India was not a paragon of heroism. In *Far To Seek*, Sir Nevil points out that 'The ardent declaration,' "I love India" was apt to mean merely that the speaker loved riding and dancing and sunshine and vast spaces, with the 'real India' for a dim, effective background'; he is therefore highly critical of the Englishmen who 'spend years in India without coming to know very much about the real people over there' (39-40;35).

For the same reason, Diver disapproves strongly of those Englishwomen whose attitude to India was marked by apathy, boredom and even positive distaste. In *Far to Seek*, she draws an ironical portrait of Mrs. Hunter Ranayard, whom the 'Natives gave 'creeps.' 'East is East', this lady declares, 'and I'm not. It's a country of horrors, under a thin layer of tinsel'(293).

It is in her portrayal of the Eurasian that Maud Diver seems to stand apart from almost all her peers, in that she stands alone in venturing to suggest that a mingling of the best British and Indian blood was a consummation devoutly to be wished. The Eurasian was always an embarrassing subject for the British, because he was the concrete, undesirable evidence of British wild oats sowed not wisely but too well. Certain myths were therefore assiduously built up to prove that he was a worthless creature, who represented the worst in the two races.

This orthodox view of the Eurasian does not go unrepresented in Diver; but it is significant that most of the time it is her British characters who are expectedly critical of the Eurasian and it is they who repeat the usual charges that were normally levelled against him. Thus, in *Candles in the Wind*, Alan Laurence delivers a long harangue against Eurasians: 'The half-caste out here falls between two stools.... He has the misfortune to be neither white

nor brown; and he is generally perverse enough to pick the worst qualities of the two races, and mix them into a product peculiarly distasteful to both.... They really are a most unsatisfactory crew on the whole. Clever enough, some of them, but there's a want of grit in their constitution, physical and moral. It's a bad business all round, this mixing of brown and white racés in marriage' (37).

And this is how Laurence reacts to Dr. Videlle, the Eurasian physician, who finally dies fighting a plague epidemic: 'Laurence could not deny the man good looks--of a sort. But eyeballs tinged with yellow, and the too brilliant flash of white teeth...set his insular prejudice on edge' (44).

Similarly, Lyndsay, the British girl who has married Dr. Videlle without knowing that he had an Indian mother, later comes to realize that 'the very strain of weakness in him--manifested in the sensuous indecision of the lips, the poor outline of the chin and jaw--appealed irresistibly to her own strength, to the mother spirit, which had been partially responsible for her marriage'(58-59).

But Diver is not evidently prepared to accept this simplistic and prejudiced view of the Eurasian without reservations. In *Far to Seek*, she quotes with approval the views of 'a distinguished Indian Christian woman' on the subject. This lady admits that Eurasians are, by and large,'the fruit, most often, of promiscuous unions between low-caste types on both sides, with a sense of stigma added to drag them down lower still'; but she adds,'where the crossing is of the highest caste...I can see no stigma, perhaps even spiritual gain to your children...India may some day be saved by the son of just such a union. He will have the strength of his handicap: the soul of the East, the forceful mind and character of the West' (129).

In the character of Nevil Le Roy Sinclair in *Far to Seek*, Diver projects her ideal of a Eurasian, the son of Lilamani, the daughter of Lakshman Singh, an aristocratic Rajput and Sir Nevil Sinclair, Baronet. Poles apart from the usual run of Eurasians, 'Pathetic half-and-halfs who seemed to inhabit a racial No-Man's Land' (294), Roy sees himself as 'of double caste, a fusion of the best in both the races' (*Ibid.*). In another novel, he is described as 'an Englishman who is proud of his Indian blood--his double gifts' (*The Singer Passes*:229). 'The blood of two virile races...was

mingled in his veins,' and he is rightly proud of his 'high and complex heritage'(*Far to Seek*: 5;4).

Nevertheless, Diver does not look at Roy and his career through rose-coloured spectacles, She is aware of the fact that his mixed blood is bound to create problems for him, both of a practical and a psychological nature. Thus, he is shocked to know that Rose Arden, the English girl to whom he is almost engaged, is upset when she learns that his mother was an Indian, and at one point he almost contemplates suicide. But he soon rallies his strength, and in Diver's final novel we see him going out in the Himalayas to meditate. Through the influence of his Guru, he had arrived at seeing life and its problems with a measure of the detachment that is the hidden strength of Indian character, a mental quality deeper than mere fatalism. 'Accepting everything beneath the sun' '--that was the essence of Hinduism, the essence of wisdom, East or West' (*The Dream Prevails* :430).

In a much earlier novel, Sir Nevil tells his wife Lilamani that their son 'Will have the strength of his handicap as one doubly endowed with the best that the two races can give--the spirituality of the East, the power and virility of the West; one whose destiny may be to draw these mighty opposites together by his own intimate love and understanding of both' *(Lilamani* :382). Prophesies are seldom fulfilled to the letter, but they have sometimes an uncanny knack of getting realized in spirit, though in ways radically different overtly. Thirty-seven years after Diver wrote this, when the final parting of ways between India and England came in 1947, the man who stood at the helm of the new born Indian nation was appropriately enough one to whom Sir Nevil's description of his son fits admirably, though there was no question of mixed blood in this case. As one who, on his own admission, owed 'too much to England in my mental make up...to feel wholly alien to her' (*An Autobiography*: 419), Nehru, like Maud Diver's Roy Sinclair, was a man 'doubly endowed with the best that the two races can give.'

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THE FEMALE CHARACTERS OF SYNGE AND O'CASEY

K.S. Misra

Modern Irish drama can claim a singular distinction on the strength of its two illustrious practitioners alone, namely, J.M. Synge and Sean O'Casey. Both the dramatists drew their inspiration from contemporary Irish ethos and used Irish life as the corpus of their writing. Hence, in a sense, the canvas of life used by them is narrow and the flavour in their dramas is rather provincial. But by the alchemy of their dramatic imagination they have recreated out of their patently topical corpus works of art which, contrary to the initial critical apprehension, have not dated. Their alchemical artistry is best discernible in their attitude to and portrayal of female characters during a period when feminism as a movement and a critical apparatus was more enthusiastically being debated and popularised than ever before. The proclivities of these dramatists towards a more concerned attention to the portrayal of female characters than to that of the male are quite obvious in their plays.

Both Synge and O'Casey differed from dramatists like Ibsen and Shaw in their approach to the conception and portrayal of female characters. Whereas the former duo had a doctrinaire bias in their approach to feminism, the latter had remained wedded to their observed experience and artistic detachment. Synge and O'Casey, in fact, remained rooted in their own soil so far as their response to the reality, constituting their dramatic corpus, was concerned. They were a product of a strongly matriarchal society whose folk tales and myths abounded in portraits of strong-willed females, with all the contraries in their psychic make-up. These females were capable of stupidity and heroism, silent suffering and defiance, petty selfishness and supreme sacrifice, ignorance and clear perceptiveness, and superstitious clinging and scientific pragmatism. Both Synge and O'Casey demonstrate extraordinary artistic honesty in portraying their female creations realistically, though the latter in his later plays moves more and more in the direction of mythicising them while the former remains concerned with an indulgent but realistically truthful portrayal.

Synge's plays are dominated by female characters and the

menfolk remain almost silhouetted. The protagonists of his five out of six plays--*Riders to the Sea, Shadow of the Glen, The Tinkers' Wedding, The Playboy of the Western World,* and *Deirdre of the Sorrows*--are women. Even *The Well of All Saints* leaves in our mind primarily the images of female characters and only secondarily those of the male figures. Synge's sympathies for his female characters are unequivocal. Except Maurya in *Riders of the Sea*, all the female characters--Nora, Sarah, Pegeen, the blind beggar woman and Deirdre--are the victims of their own urges, illusions and notions. Since the existential or circumstantial reality of their predicament is hostile to the realistically romantic part of their yearnings, urges and notions, they suffer. Nora's romantic yearnings and their incompatibility with her existential circumstances can bring her only suffering. Deirdre's romantic notion of overcoming the ravages of time may be unrealistic, but even its temporary validation is confronted with an arrogant, brute and scheming royal might, which can lead only to what happens to her. Pegeen, too, suffers because of the confrontation between romantic illusion and harsh truth encapsulated into the hostility of the circumstances. Synge does not take sides with either of the opposing forces and upholds the validity of both.

Though he has predilection for his female creations, Synge does not sentimentalise them. On the contrary, he endows them with strong individuality and willpower. Nora is thrown out of her protective shelter. But she ungrudgingly accepts the alternative of an uncertain future with a determined will to brave the hardships which might come in the way of her new life. Sarah is determined to achieve her goal in spite of the drunken bungling by her mother-in-law and vindicates her yearning by punishing the greedy, inhuman priest. Deirdre, with full awareness, and calculated determination, brings over her and her lover's destruction to register a unique victory over her royal adversary. Pegeen shows extraordinary tragic heroism in bringing doom on herself with full knowledge of what she was doing. All these women sustain themselves by their convictions and refuse to appear eventually as pathetic victims of fate or circumstances. These authorial endorsements to the validity of whatever these female characters do naturally invite our uncritical sympathy for them.

Synge's female characters from Nora through Sarah and Pegeen to Deirdre are full-fledged characters with abundant emotional and

intellectual richness. They are capable of profuse love, caring, and sympathy. But these emotional traits of their personality do not bring in them any sense of servility, submissiveness or timorouseness. They are faithful to their lovers, but at the same time they are aggressively independent and can bridle their emotional exuberance by the strength of their mind and will. Nora, Synge's earliest female portrayal, far from being a helpless victim of a socio-economic system (loveless marriage because of economic factors), is assertive and knows herself and the world around her. Though economically dependent exclusively upon her old husband, she asserts freedom of her will and even does the very things which her husband forbids her to do. In her exit from her husband's cottage she declares her resolve for freedom and independence rather than her being rendered homeless and lonely. Maurya in *Riders to the Sea* is the image of the universal mother bewailing the loss of her children. But she is courageous and endowed with the capacity of stoic endurance. She has the determination to fight and Lear-like courage to confront with the furies of Nature. Sarah in *The Tinkers' Wedding*, socially a very ordinary person, naturally desires social acceptance of her relationship with her spouse with whom she has been living as wife without the formal recognition of their union by the church. She is tender, romantic and passionally tenacious in her relationship with her 'husband.' But, in spite of her humble status, she can be ruthlessly aggressive when her freedom and independence are jeopardised. Pegeen and Deirdre can be singled out as having titanic will in the heroic mould of artistic creation. But they are neither idealised nor are they raised to a conscious, explicit mythical level. They can rebel against customs and conventions, but are full of love and affection and pulsate with instincts of both the beloved and the mother. They, in fact, shape the direction of the lives of their males with the fullest awareness of the tragic consequences which evoke in us awe and sympathy.

O'Casey's portrayal of female characters is determined by his anti-naturalistic stance in play-writing. His proclivities towards his female characters are discernible throughout his dramatic career, starting with the realistic portrayal of females in his early plays with mythic under-currents to their vision of mythic embodiments of the sustaining values of affirmative existence in his later plays. The chief difference between his realistic female characters and

those who are deliberately mythicised, in spite of their being identifiably invested with flesh and blood, is that while the former are realised on the principle of Brechtian 'alienation', the latter are more indulgently and favourably treated. Again, the former are subtly subjected to occasional satiric touches, involving intermittent critical detachment, while the latter invite full empathetic response. The characteristic features which are common to almost all of O'Casey's female characters are their emotional and intellectual honesty and frankness, besides their sense of independence, determination, strong will and positive love of life. They are all defiant, strongwilled and rebellious in their own ways, always unwilling to succumb to external pressure against their conviction. They are mostly guided by the practical wisdom of living with all the contraries which constitute the fabric of realistic life, such as materialism and idealism, romanticism and stark realism, selfishness and self-sacrifice, self-preserving instincts and uncritical heroism, belief in religion and God without depending on them superstitiously as an antidote to the ailments of their existence. The staple of O'Casey's characterisation is his unflinching objectivity. Whereas he scathingly lashes at his menfolk's timidity, hypocrisy and male chauvinism in an unveiled manner, he does not desist from portraying his female characters as mean, petty, selfish, and foolish, but capable of large-heartedness. His menfolk remain confined to their bedimmed world, but his females grow to perceive higher truths, truths not of a transcendental nature but strictly embedded in the reality of life. Juno's remarks--"What can God do again' th' stupidity of man "; and "Ah, is there not even a middlin' honest man left in the world?"--are the supreme examples of this aspect of O'Casey's female characterisation.

O'Casey's females are unsentimentalised as contrasted with the hysterical behaviour of his males. Seumas and Davoren in *The Shadow of a Gunman*, Captain Boyle and Joxer in *Juno and the Paycock*, Jack Clitheroe and his comrade Captain Brennan in *The Plough and the Stars* are all hypocrites, timid, even egotistical and self-benighted, and despicable at moments. Contrasted with their comically incongruous and superficially selfish concerns are the equally incongruous economic concerns voiced by Mrs. Grigson and Mrs. Heegan in the midst of serious happenings, which are rooted in the reality of their existence and are a pointer to the clarity of their existential perspective. For example, Mrs. Grigson

is more concerned with the insurance money than with the security of her husband. Similarly, Harry's mother is anxious to send her son to the front lest he should lose his war-service allowance and is unsentimentally reconciled with the situation of the permanent incapacitation of her son in view of his entitlement for full disability allowance. This unsentimentality and down-to-earth pragmatism are most conspicuously discernible in Harry's fiancee's (Jessie's) shifting her heart's attraction from the once passionately loved and hero-worshipped but now crippled Harry to the physically fit, though mentally and emotionally inferior, comrade of his (Barney).

O'Casey uses the weaknesses of his menfolk to highlight the strength of his female characters. For example, the timidity, self-centredness and cowardice of the peddlar and the 'romantic poet' in *The Shadow of a Gunman* bring in bolder relief the courage, self-sacrifice and heroism of Minnie Powell, which, in fact, judged critically, would appear sheer stupidity. Even the tediously garrulous and ridiculous Mrs. Henderson, who fights with the Tomnies to rescue Minnie Powell, appears more courageous than the two despicable males for whom Minnie has sacrificed her life. The males lose the cool of their mind, exposing the narrow, petty and hypocritical interior of their psyche in moments of difficulties and trials, while the females in such situations show greater than usual mental resourcefulness, unselfish courage and large-heartedness. Mrs. Gogan and Bessie Burgess in *The Plough*, and Nannie in *Nannie's Night Out* are such characters.

During the Dublin period of O'Casey's play-writing--from his first play, *The Harvest Festival* to *The Silver Tassie* --we notice that his concern was to present his female characters realistically with all their foibles, contraries, and intellectual and emotional strength and fullness. Sentimentalism and idealising are deliberately kept outside the scope of the plays. Among the major female characters, Juno in *Juno and the Paycock* and Nora in *The Plough and the Stars* deserve special mention. They are the true O'Caseyan models of feminine strength and willpower. Both are the controlling figures in their family, deeply rooted in the realities of their domestic world. They are caring, motherly and understanding personalities, exclusively concerned with the daily chores and related matters. They understand the weaknesses of their menfolk, and besides occasionally reprimanding them seem to have

accepted the reality of the household problems. But their idealised or mythicised image is not allowed to shape because of their narrow and self-centred concerns. Juno, the most roundly drawn of all O'Casey's female characters, is presented in the most crucial situation of the play as positively callous, inhuman and indefensively repulsive. This fact of her character is clear in her attitude to the funeral news and procession of her neighbour, Mrs. Tancred's only son, which punctuates the on-going merry-making in her apartment to celebrate the prospect of the expected legacy. Instead of condoling the occasion, she blames the bereaved mother and the dead son for their unjustifiable and dangerous political activities and alliances to which, ironically, her own lot is tied through her crippled son. O'Casey reverses our 'alienation' from her later through her realisation of the meaning of her callousness to Mrs. Tancred's predicament when she herself faces an identical situation of bereavement. She appears in varying colours of her personality, with considerable commonsense, having controlling and managerial acumen, gullible and pragmatic, sentimental and firm-willed, burdened with calamities but determined to fight and live. When all her supporting props and hopes of even bare sympathy are smashed, she shows an extraordinary resolve to leave her wastrel of a husband behind. She decides to march on the path of resurrecting life, as it were, out of the debris of her family and society by taking her sexually beguiled and now expectant daughter to a new world, to new life. She, in her final assertion, assumes the stature of the mythic Life Force, though she remains rooted in the reality of her worldly existence. Juno has defiance, rebellion, independence, strong will-power and determination to brave calamities.

The other female character who is elaborately drawn is Nora in *The Plough and the Stars*. Nora, like Juno, is exclusively concerned with her private affairs and little home which she tries to decorate to correspond with her notion of a decent living. She has as much abundance of the mother in her as of sexual and romantic charms. She acts as mother-mediator for the Covey and Uncle Peter Flynn and uses her sexual charms to keep her husband from the barricades. Her tenacious efforts to keep her husband away from the fire of the misconceived notion of patriotism result from the clarity of her perspective of reality. She opposes a bitter truth to hypocritically idealistic or romantic notions: "No woman gives

a son or a husband to be killed --if they say it, they're lyin' against God, Nature and against themselves." Like Juno,she knows herself as well as her husband, his comrades and the reality of existence, She knows that the uniformed patriots, her husband included, are all hypocrites and cowardly. Contrasted with the cowardly escape of Captain Brennan after the routing of his compatriots, Nora's fearless wandering in the bullet-ridden streets in search of her husband is truly heroic. Whereas Nora's strength and courage spring from her conviction, the wavering and hypocrisy guiding the action of the patriotic menfolk are derived from self-deception. Nora etches out their true selves: "I tell you they're afraid to say they're afraid.... I saw fear glowin' in all their eyes." Bessie is another richly endowed but uncomplicated character. She appears cynical, self-centred, unfriendly and even sardonically bitter at times. But she has profound humanity implanted in her soul and is capable of rising to the level of unselfish heroism and self-sacrifice. Her personality is a curious epitome of antinomies without any authorial attempt at idealisation. She has never had any illusion about the bitter reality of existence and would never give in to the pressures of hardship or emotional burden. Her only son is away in the trenches fighting on a foreign land. But her emotional agonies on this account are not allowed either to sentimentalise her character or hinder her heroic resolves at crucial moments when her neighbours' lives are endangered.

Frank O'Connor's remark that the realistic solidity of the female characters in O'Casey's Dublin plays provides a unifying thread binding all the plays during this phase is, in fact, a pointer to the dramatist's later endeavour to mythicise his women characters. This mythicisation elevates these females from *Within the Gates* to *Cock-a-Doodle Dandy* to the level of supra-human stature, no doubt, but it also divests them of those earthy qualities which had made their characters solid, and realistic, capable of producing the effect of immediacy. Characters like Nannie in *Nannie's Night Out*, the Irish girls in *Purple Dust*, Jannice in *Within the Gates*, Foorawn in *The Bishop's Bonfire*, Loreleen and Marion in *Cock-a-Doodle Dandy*, are some of the significant examples of O'Casey's mythic treatment of female characters. They are all the mythic embodiment of instinctual freedom, sexuality, fertility and the joy and dance of life. They are emblematic of the regenerative force, the symbol of Life Force itself.

Life Force, embodied by the female characters mentioned above, faces direct confronting forces which are patently topical. For example, Jannice and Loreleen, the two prominent female characters in O'Casey's post Dublin-Trilogy plays, are confronted with the kill-joy forces of the Catholic church. The antagonistic forces out to demolish the dance of life symbolised by these characters are topical, no doubt. But they, too, acquire symbolic dimensions. Since these forces topically represent a strong and, to some extent, an inescapably nefarious hold on these worshippers of instinctual freedom and joy of life, O'Casey does not allow his mythicised female characters to come out victorious in the dramatic world of his plays. That would tend to idealise the concept of the life force. In reality the antagonistic forces are too strong to be subdued, defeated or even moderated by the joy-of-life-asserting forces which these female characters symbolise. Jannice is crushed to nothingness and Loreleen is humiliated, tortured and banished. However, the hurricane sweep of Nannie and elf-like disappearance of the Irish girls in *Purple Dust* show these female characters in a more favourable light and register their victory.

Both O'Casey and Synge are realistic in their attitude to their female characters and their dramatic artistry in this regard shows transparent objectivity. But Synge is a greater and more concerned painter of women than O'Casey. O'Casey's dramaturgical strategy leans heavily upon the flawed minds of the menfolk. Women here appear heroic more by necessity than by their intrinsic inner strength. Be it Minnie, Juno, Bessie Burgess or Loreleen, they all act heroically and courageously because they are obliged to do so by necessity. But Nora and Jannice, in spite of their courage, give in to the pressure of their predicament. However, the richness of human attributes discernible in all these characters endears them to us and arouses our sympathy for them in the proportion we feel repulsed by the useless, bragging and hypocritical menfolk. Finally, the dominant aesthetic response of the audience to these O'Caseyan female characters is one of pathos and a sense of waste than of admiration. But Synge's women do produce an elevating effect in the audience because of their being fully unsentimental, strong-minded and independent.

T.S. ELIOT'S *THE FAMILY REUNION* : A TECHNIQUE IN TROUBLE

S.S. Deo & Sumitra Kukreti

Notwithstanding the meritorious gauge of situations, compatible to the *Mourning Becomes Electra, Flies, Ion* and *Hamlet*, the complexities, and also the intricacies of human nature, dexterously explored in *The Family Reunion*, T.S. Eliot crosses roads of success in failure for several of his problems in the technique of the play. As most of the critics find, the 'sin and expiation' theme of the play succeeds on a Christian stage, seemingly satisfying the religious sentiments of the audience. It is also there that the maze of apparently psychological problem has successfully been diverted for a perfect religious tone of alienated sainthood. But the excellence achieved in the thematic lure of expiating the sins of the generations shatters down into a failure due to the slackness of a dis-coordinated technique. The play comes as an antidote to a puritan malady without a prescription.

There are more than one critics who apprehend the reasons for Eliot's failure in perfecting the play to its right end. Among these, it is Eliot himself who admits that the"failure of the play lies in his adjustment of a Greek story to a modern situation."[1] C.H. Smith, holding the"drawing room world of polite society"[2] as responsible for the failure of the play, finds that the presence of"expressionistic devices of choral chants, lyrical duets, soliloquies and the appearance of ghostly furies"[3] leads to confuson about Eliot's dramatic aims. Denis Denongue believes that Eliot, in this play, becomes undramatic due to yielding "to the poetical temptation."[4] At times, the"ghost"[5] becomes more dramatic than all Eliot's speakers in the play. F.O. Matthiessen calls into fray Eliot's "inexperience,"[6] which he believes, "betrays"[7] him in the theatre, and hampers the success of the play for his incoherent devices. Critics, for one or the another reason, identify Eliot's failure for the hazy theme, and also a bewildered technique of altering"at a crucial moment,"[8] after having developed the "inner crisis of the protagonists in clear and unambiguous terms"[9] to a certain point, consisting of the climax of the play. The playwright is not only supposed to "proceed intolerably to confuse the

stage,"[10] but also evoke the same emotions of the audience for a full relishment.

A very long but comprehensive list of critics, commenting upon the problems of adjustment and perfection, is not enough to cover up the technical drawbacks of the play. Anything that would hamper its success is the discernment of an implicitly hidden, autobiographical impression of the theme of the play. Among other things, what makes it a failure is the use of autobiographical element, which, for its misadjustment, not only spoils the rhythm of the action but also its presentation.

The play, obviously, fails for not practising the idea of art and literature, as expressed in 1922, in the literature acctually written after 1939. In "Tradition and the Individual Talent," written in 1920, Eliot declared: "the emotion of art is impersonal."[11] In defining poetry not as a "turning loose of emotions but an escape from emotion, and not the expression of personality but an escape from personality,"[12] he simply meant that the piece of art, particularly poetry, should be so coined and articulated that the poet feels himself away from the emotions he has actually conveyed. The poetic-process should evince progress which is"a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality."[13] Eliot's concentration is upon projecting the idea of objectivity by an impersonal act of objectifying 'emotion'. Among other provisions of *The Sacred Wood*, it is but an intention of making poetry universal by narrating the world around the poet, and not the poet himself. The reaction of Mr. Eliot to the autobiographical element was as an accord in presentation of an aesthetic experience through art and literature. As long as his finding of the theory of impersonality stands as a great literary concept, literature, particularly poetry, should be an objective detail of a natural experience.

But what Eliot had said in 1920 regarding impersonality seemed contradictory to all that he wrote and said in 1939. *The Family Reunion* has neither the extinction of Eliot's personality, nor does it show a flickering of sacrifice in regard to his personal emotions, exhibited in the play. Contrarily, it can be easily established that the play is autobiographical for several reasons. There is inherently a personal story behind the main episode of the play, governing the plot as abundantly as do the

Eumenides. Should Eliot tell the implicit play of happenings from his personal life to the audience as a source, the meaning would be both clear and effective. Infact, the overshadowing of one mystery upon another makes the technique chaotic and ambiguous. The play of the untold, but personal, happenings makes Eliot to commit double fault of not being clear and overlapping one unsaid truth upon another confusion. The autobiographical leanings of Mr. Eliot are distinct, and unmistakably exist throughout the play.

The Family Reunion, ultimately, fails for not following Eliot's own conditions of impersonalizing "significant emotion, the emotion which has its life in the poem, and not in the history of the poet."[14] The play consists of experiences from his personal life because of which the conscious technique remains under the pressure of such experiences. Harry, the hero of the play, bears similitude to Eliot's own life in almost every respect. Harry's estrangement from Wishwood for eight long years into the Mediterranean, as well as the tropical lands, has been authenticated with Eliot's own exile into England. The mother's concern in the play is as serious and careful as that of Eliot's own mother, Charlotte Eliot. Amy has been presented as Charlotte Eliot with all her discipline and command over the family. The intensity of personal emotion is so deep that the mother's demeanour carries all characteristics of Eliot's mother. If Eliot wrote, "I am committed to Vivienne that she will not live anywhere but in England,"[15] Harry's wife in the play has been projected as Vivienne herself, including her temperamental obsessions. Eliot could choose between Vivienne and his return to his native land, and he chose the former. This evidently caused his alienaton in England forever. His aberrations from his own life constitute a framework for sketching the character of Harry's wife in the play. Eliot could not go back home because of his commitment to Vivienne, the gist of which has been presented better by Amy in saying, "she never wished to be one of the family,"[16] than by Eliot's biographers. Amy charges Harry's wife as a "restless shivering painted shadow,"[17] which, in fact, describes Vivienne with all her temperamental insinuations. Harry does not return to Wishwood with his wife; and likewise Eliot never returns to his homeland with Vivienne. The two situations, one from Eliot's life, and another from that

of Harry, have been intermingled, creating an immediate mess of communication in which clarity does not seem the concern of the playwright. The unconscious impressions, as presented in Harry's experience, do not objectify his technique, despite Eliot's repeated dictum of calling "the emotion of art"[18] as "impersonal."[19] Martin Turnell is correct in his complaint when he says that "Mr. Eliot has abandoned so consistently the standards that he himself taught us to respect."[20]

Another instance of personal emotions, which disrupts the natural course of his technique, is the shadow of Americanism behind Harry, whom Eliot declares "the humbug and an unsufferable prig."[21] In spite of his several conversions in citizenship, religion, career and also profession, Eliot stands to be essentially American, with all the ideals of Unitarianism and ascetic living which he had imbibed in Massachusetts. England suited him best, but the question of liking was a different one. Harry's thought of getting rid of his wife, and the accident immediately after, brings into question Eliot's own concern about Vivienne. The intensity of Harry's furies and suffering, in being away from his mother and home, is more or less Eliot's own suppressed self. His brooding over his wife's behaviour is not less intense than Harry's panic-stricken movements under the nightmarish onslaught of the dark angels.

In a story, created out of Euripides' *Ion*, Eliot has made a mess of the Greek myth, the British situations and his emotionalism due to his memories of American days. Then "as favorite of his mother,"[22] Eliot finds his own identity in Harry's character, and Vivienne haunts him as an indispensable ghost. Vivienne "would leave Tom at home and go dancing with someone else,"[23] which ultimately made Eliot "ashamed of his marriage."[24] Vivienne, with all her pensive attitude towards Eliot, made him a creature lost in psychic dilemma. Harry, in the mainstream of a situation like that of Hamlet, undergoes the panic of a cancerous self, which would but eat away his life. Things are not only analogous but as well disastrous in perfecting the play, as Eliot very often had planned on the pattern of *Mourning Becomes Electra* and the *Flies*.

The play, *The Family Reunion*, fails because of Eliot's obsession for objective correlative. He regards *Hamlet* as an

artistic failure due to the inexpressive as well as the incommunicable emotion of the hero. He feels that Hamlet is puzzling and disquieting, for Shakespeare "could not drag to light, contemplate and manipulate"[25] the guilt of the mother and the emotion of the son into art. Having been obsessed with Shakespeare's greatness, both before and after his career as a poet and also as a dramatist, Eliot criticises *Hamlet* on three grounds. The first objection, making Hamlet "a Mona-Lisa of literature,"[26] is the lack of expression of Hamlet's emotion which could be made both easier and perceptible to the readers. Eliot finds that the emotion of Hamlet is difficult, and is not made relishable to the common audience, because it is "in excess of the facts as they appear."[27] Hamlet is baffled, and the feelings he undergoes have not been presented through an "objective equivalent."[28] Eliot asserts that Hamlet's feeling is ununderstandable, and Shakespeare could not objectify it. The drawback in not objectifying Hamlet's feelings obstructs the whole action of the play.

Eliot's supplication of 'Objective Correlative' as "a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events"[29] is definitely a successful formula to evoke the emotion, terminating it in a sensory experience. But Eliot has committed more mistakes than Shakespeare himself. The objective correlative means a metaphysical technique of associating the concrete idea to an easy emotion and vice-versa. It implies that any idea has to be simplified by its actual conversion into an emotion. In more explicit a way Eliot means that by substituting an equivalent for the idea, the experience can be converted into emotion for an easy understanding. He has tried to justify that Shakespeare fails in converting the uncommon experience into a common emoton 'for the lack of the equivalents.' On the contrary, Eliot's statement that "intense feelings, ecstatic or terrible without an object, or exceeding its objects are kept alive by the artist's ability to intensify the world of his emotions"[30] clarifies his notions very well that the experience of art is not to be understood but felt. Shakespeare, in his opinion, could neither bring out Hamlet's confusion as a case history for the understanding of the audience, nor could he let Hamlet flow out into a feeling of common perception. In short, it can be summarized that Hamlet's malady is a hard nut to break both for the

audience and the critics. The artistic failure exists beyond all Shakespeare's artistic creations. These are some of the reasons on the basis of which Eliot condemns Hamlet's emotions to have been inexpressive and intractable.

But Eliot in *The Family Reunion* has himself been more inexpressive and intractable than Shakespeare. When Eliot writes of Harry to have been an"insufferable prig,"[31] he points out a similar drawback in Shakespeare's technique. Hamlet, at least, understands his inner problems very well, though these may not be communicative in the external world. Harry is more obtuse and difficult to be understood, since until Agatha's explanations he himself does not know his problems. He is hallucinated, and believes that the ghost of his wife, whom he had"pushed over"[32] in the mid-Atlantic sea, chases him, though this is not true. Even the spectres, whom he identifies and sees for the first time face to face at his return at Wishwood, are not understood by Harry for the actual reason of his nightmarish as well as perturbed nights. Expression of an emotion is a secondary thing; Harry's problem, unlike Hamlet's, is that he does not know his problem at all. Agatha rightly apprehends Harry's situation, and feels that by living in a highly modest and sophisticated society Harry has lost a common articulation, and so talks in unintelligible abstractions: "But how can I explain, how can I explain to you./You will understand less, after I have explained it."[33] Harry altogether understands that his inner experiences, mental panic and emotional trauma are "unspeakable and untranslatable."[34] Once he misunderstands the Eumenides for the ghost of his wife and all that Agatha tells afterwards, Eliot fails in projecting both the Eumenides and Agatha in Harry's life; it makes the problem an alien matter to which Harry is introduced as a very new creature. The Eumenides are hidden and so bear upon Harry's emotions; Harry's problem at the moment is of confusion, a mystery, and a puzzle to be solved by Agatha, and not of an emotion in any sense. Eliot could be charged of "evoking emotion out of an empty cistern that there can't be a question of measuring a water-level in an empty jar." Harry's problem, whether psychological or religious, is a question of physical health, encountering the ghost; it has nothing to do with emotion and its invocation. It must be much better to call Eliot's technique "algebraic"[35] than objec-

tive, equating the postulates of a human situation, or emotion, or purely given abstracts of philosophical mathematics.

If Eliot has objected to both the impersonation of the mother's role in *Hamlet* and Hamlet's own predicament, *The Family Reunion* has been treated worse than Shakespeare's play. Instead of rectifying the mother's role, as delineated by Shakespeare, Eliot is more obsessed to make Amy ironical. Of course, she is a complete character, but no less perfect are the discontentions about her. Eliot says in his criticism, "every work of imagination must have a philosophy; and every philosophy must be a work of art."[6] But he does not adhere to his own standards of perfecting the mother's character. If at times Eliot's version of perfection about Amy is accepted, the insinuations shift to the father. Likewise, Harry suffers from worse future than Hamlet himself. If sending a hopeful youth on a missionary path, full of miseries and penance, is a solution, Hamlet's irresistible, violent path is no less significant in another kind of tragic situation. Eliot's efforts in imitating *Hamlet*, like *Ion*, are just aspirations, and not improvements. The failure of the play is not due to "the adjustment in Greek story and modern situation,"[7] but due to the technique of correlating imitations, consisting of obsessions for Shakespeare on the either hand, and maladjustment of human situation on the other.

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METAPHORS OF TIME AND HISTORY IN *THE HAIRY APE*

Bhagwat S. Goyal

The historical dimension of O'Neill's dramatic imagination forms the paradigm of a scintillating metaphoric structure. Some of his more significant plays exhibit a deft inter-weaving of the strands of the truth of human condition, of man's ambivalent situation in history, and of his desperate struggle towards self-understanding amidst the encapsulated images of darkness floating through the corridors of time. Among his early plays, *The Hairy Ape* stands out as a masterpiece of creative beauty by virtue of its superb dramatization of man's quest for identity through the psychic maze of illusion and reality, through the spatial scaffolding of earth, heaven and hell, and through the temporal river of past, present and future. The historico-aesthetic configurations of Yank's consciousness map out the play's dramatic universe and dot it with the charged punctuations of cosmic, social and psychic alienation.

O' Neill's skilled handling of the camera of history makes him present his play in eight vivid, black-and-white shots. The first scene of the play vividly recaptures the undulating rhythm of history and sets the dramatic framework for the unfoldment of its temporal design. Speaking from the vantage point of a dynamic present, Yank projects a dream-like enchantment on to the nightmarish appearance of the industrio-technological reality. He gallantly endeavours to set forth the comforting assurance of a built-in 'belongingness' to this technocratic universe against the bitterness and agony generated by the threat of an annihilating encounter with the environmental pollution on the one hand and the terrible ministrations of an awakened sensibility on the other. His instinctive sense of belonging to the ship reminds us of that dimension of history in which man built up a structure of meaningful relationships to overcome the despair of a personal nihilism. But although Yank's deep faith in the dynamic interrelationship between the worker and the product of his work has the sting of dialectical truth in it; its naive assumptions are consistently exposed to the relentless dead-pressure of institutional regimentation. Counterpointed against Yank's simplistic belief in his inviolable contact with the technocratic reality and his identification with the entire industrial complex symbolized by 'steel' is Long's

projection of an ideal future which will no more witness man's inhumanity to man and when the instruments of human exploitation will yield to the more natural emblems of human brotherhood, as well as Paddy's evocation of a lyrical past which pictures man's direct contact with the heart of unpolluted nature as the only redemptive feature of life. Yank, however, stubbornly sticks to his commitment to the deceptive realities of the modern machine age, though challenged both by Long and Paddy to redirect his energetic pull towards a future free from the taint of human exploitation and a past free from the enervating effects of a spilling pollution. The proportional representation of these temporal dimensions in the cycle of history is thwarted by the misguided overtures of Yank to monopolize the centre of history for his own egocentric posturings.

The cyclical pattern of human history is revealed in the image of modern machine man who reminds us of Neanderthal Man, imprisoned in a steel cage. His faith in the potency of brute force coupled with his confused and bewildered protest against his enslavement at various levels of existence shows him off as a human gorilla who has lost the paradise of nature but has not been able to find a new one. The initial stage directions in the play mark out the havoc wrought by the interaction of historical dichotomies on human existence, reducing man to the primitive level of instinctive animality with his naive faith in his belongingness intact, untouched by the fire of skepticism and unfragmented by the operation of an inhuman social reality. The sorriness of the situation lies in the ironical realization that though man has gained mastery of the machine, he remains its worst slave. The tragedy deepens further when we observe that the man-as-worker is blind to his own imprisonment, and in his mistaken pride of the force generated by his muscle he begins to regard the prison as his home.

Yank in his total rejection of the values of a bygone era ("Nix on dat old sailing-ship stuff! All dat bull's dead, see?") shows the ideational distortions caused by a uni-dimensional view of history. Yank's attempt to disengage himself from the totality of history in order to concentrate only on his commitment to the deadly dynamism of an evermoving present causes him to feel the pressure of an unrelenting, ever-present past and the incertitude of an ever-eluding future. Wedded to the ideal of an individualistic mode of existence created by the march of history through the glittering

glass-house of capitalist ethos, Yank contemptuously dismisses what he perceives as the 'medieval', 'outdated' values of an organized community life, based on the concepts of family and home: "Home? Home, hell!.... T'hell wit home! What d'yuh want wit home?" (p.10)

But Yank's uni-dimensional view of history is immediately challenged by the radical voice of Long. Long's historicism has a futuristic streak in it, based as it is on the realisation of a rotten, exploitative existence in the present. He protests against the dehumanizing aspects of social structure, which with the connivance of "the damned capitalist class" has reduced them to the status of "on'y, wage slaves in the bowels of a bloody ship, sweatin', burnin' up, eatin! coal dust!" (p. 11) The distortion of human relationships and values caused by the operation of a bourgeois ethic is held responsible by Long for their miserable plight. But Long's protest doesn't appeal to Yank's false individualistic consciousness that feeds itself on the primitive concept of brute strength as the most distinguishing mark of a real man. He feels that neither religion nor socialism can provide any answer to a problem which is basically psychological. A man's worth is to be determined by what he contributes to the movement of the things, by his active participation in the structural dynamism of all motion. Expressing his withering contempt for "dat Salvation Army-Socialist bull," Yank dismisses Long's protest as a mere trick of the soapbox orators, a misconceived and misdirected effort of the frustrated and cowardly beings. He is unable to understand what the capitalists have got to do with them: "Say! What's dem slobs in de foist cabin got to do wit us? We're better men dan dey are, ain't we? sure! One of us guys could clean up de whole mob wit one mit." (p.12) Yank's yardsick to measure the qualitative excellence of a man is his vigorous capacity to withstand that heat of hell--a belief that illustrates the historical throwback of his psychic compulsions under the impact of a false value system. In equally strong terms he dismisses the entire capitalist class as a devitalized victim of thingification: "Dem boids don't amount to nothing. Dey're just baggage"(Ibid.) Yank doesn't class the bourgeoisie with humans, he considers them an inert mass of hollow baggage. Even man's historical status as an insider is determined by his dynamic penetration of the heart of stillness and by his capacity to make everything move by the sheer force of his muscle: "We belong and dey don't, Dat's all....Dis is a man's job, get me? It belongs. It

runs dis tub"(Ibid.).

Yank's sanguinely solipsistic glorification, however, is short-circuited by Paddy's impassioned protest against the former's distorted dream of belonging to the bloody bowels of a ship, as it belies the pure and mystical dimension of history when "a ship was part of the sea, and a man was part of a ship, and the sea joined all together and made it one" (p. 15). Paddy invokes the historical vision of man's communion with nature which, alas!, seems to have been lost for ever. The natural has been replaced by the mechanical rhythm of history damaging in the process the harmony of man's sensibility and his qualitative relationship with the world around him. This has resulted in man's reversion to his ape-like status in history, with no more of the old freedom and kinship with nature but "caged in by steel from a sight of the sky like bloody apes in the Zoo!" (Ibid.). This artificial separation of man from the natural rhythms of life and history has made him a "flesh and blood wheel of the engines" (Ibid.), stripping him of his human essence. But Yank doesn't believe in shedding tears for the bygones. He feels that history in its relentless movement doesn't care for the old and the dead. One ought to reconcile oneself with the realities of history-in-the-making: "See what's happened since yuh croaked" (p.16). His almost total commitment to the new rhythm of history which emanates from the smoke, steel, and speed of the industrial world makes him feel proud of being instrumental in destroying the old and opening new vistas to human imagination: "Sure I'm part of de engines! Why de hell not! Dey move, don't dey? Dey're speed, ain't dey? Dey smash trou, don't dey? Twenty five knots a' hour! Dat's goin' some! Dat's new stuff! Dat belongs!" (Ibid). In his blind acceptance of the new but nightmarish facet of history he discards its old romantic phase as having no valid connection with the realities of today: "All dat crazy tripe about stars and moons, all dat crazy tripe about suns and winds, fresh air and de rest of it--Aw the hell, dat's all a dope dream! Hittin'de pipe of de past, dat's what he's doin'"(Ibid). For him the past is devoid of the significant distillate of human experience which alone provides the real insight into the meaning of historical present. His total dismissal of "all de tripe" constituting the historical past makes him more and more enamoured of his fated and fatal assignment in the march of history. "Hell, sure, dat's my fav'rite climate. I eat it up!I git fat on it! It's me makes

it hot! It's me makes it roar!It's me makes it move!... I'm de end! I'm de start!"(p.17). Hell becomes a new paradise for him and he himself becomes the activating centre of all historical movement, the be-all and end-all of the design and meaning of history. He claims that all "de rich guys dat tink dey're somep'n dey ain't nothin'!Dey don't belong" (p. 18). Thus he keeps the bourgeoisie outside the magic circle of psychic history assigning them no significant function in their devitalized passivity. When once again confronted by Paddy's radical romanticism, Yank's unthinking adherence to the steel cage of history expresses itself in the rejection of specifically human faculties of thinking and dreaming:"Tinkin' and dreamin'! what'll that get yuh?" (p. 19)

Scene Two introduces us to the two listless products of the artifice of history. If Yank's physical vitality makes him perceive himself at the centre of the scheme of things, the debility of Miildred and her Aunt makes him put them at its circumference. They are "two incongruous, artificial figures, inert and disharmonious," out of tune with "The beautiful, vivid life of the sea all about" (p. 20). Their conversation reveals not only their inner emptiness but also the constant distance they keep at from the living centre of history. The pseudo-sociological dimension of history manifests itself in Mildred's eagerness to discover how the underprivileged half of the mankind lives, from New York's East Side to London's Whitechapel. Her "groping sincerity" might enable her "to touch life somewhere", but she is afraid she has "neither the vitality nor the integrity" (p. 22). She is a "waste product in the Bessemer process--like the millions"; she is "sired by gold and damned by it" (pp.22-3). Thus the inverted ironies of history have reduced Mildred to the status of a pathetically passive and devitalized victim of her own anemia, engendered by the interaction of two artificial waste products. Then a very revealing comment by Mildred throws light on the static nature of history, which appears to us not as a progression from one achievement to another, but only a confused movement from one predicament to another, never altering its basic meaning. The jungle where man's primitive ancestors set history into motion had its own law, the law of "struggle for existence and survial of the (physically) fittest." Modern capitalism with its doctrine of *laissez faire* is a reenactment of the same law: "Purr, litle leopard. Purr, scratch, tear, kill, gorge yourself and be happy--only stay in the jungle where

your spots are camouflaged. In a cage thay make you conspicuous"(p.23). The philosophy of naked and gross exploitation perpetrated by every possible device known to the spotted predators hiding behind their comouflage becomes the leit motif of bourgeois history, establishing its bloody signposts at varying degrees of barbarism. Yank still glories in the vitality of his system, the barbarism of muscle, unaware of the onset of a more sophisticated barbarism of money. Mildred, on the other hand, desperately struggles to get out of the trap of her "anemically chaste" millions which hold her away from the living centre of creative vitality.

Now the dialectic of history is poised for the inevitable confrontation between its differently dispossessed products. Scene Three takes us to the stokehole, the hell of Paddy and Long, but the paradisal kingdom of Yank. Its ear-piercing dissonance caused by the "brazen clang of the furnace doors", "the grating, teeth-gritting grind of steel against steel, of crunching coal," "the roar of leaping flames in the furnace," "the montonous throbbing beat of the engines," (p. 28) acquaints us with the diabolical image of the present history. Yank with his attitude of a patronising and emotional gallantry towards the ship feeds her with coal which is her 'booze,' and feels her move. But the persistent whistle of the guard drives him into a fury and he begins to rail at him profusely. Just then occurs the central confrontation between Yank and Mildred, between "abysmal brutality, naked and shameless"and the "white apparition" descended from the world of decadent luxury (p.32). The mythical dimension of history is revealed in Midred's Medusa like stare which turns Yank to stone, while Mildred herself is "paralyzed with horror, terror, her whole personality crushed, beaten in, collapsed," (Ibid.). Mildred faints at the sight of this "filthy beast"(Ibid.), while Yank "feels himself insulted in some unknown fashion in the very heart of his pride"(p. 33). The reality of present history thus acts like a double-edged sword, dispelling the illusions of Mildred about her capacity to face the naked reality of the other half of the world and of Yank about his place in the scheme of things. The realistic forces of history thus sunder them from their illusory dreams that had the stamp of inalienable realities for them.

Scene Four shows us Yank as a "blackened, brooding figure" sitting in the exact attitude of Rodin's "The Thinker" (p.34). The

rhythm of history has now taken a sudden, dramatic shift. The tragic shadow of "thought" begins to disturb Yank in his attempt to re-evaluate his place in history. From a purely instinctive level of animal existence he now finds himself thrown into the thinking and brooding world of human existence. His erstwhile secure position as an insider in history now begins to raise doubts about its reality and supremacy. But even in the changed situation, the social rhythm of history is denigrated by Yank as having little relevance to his perception of the realities of human civilization. The institutional validity of "Law" and "Government" and the emotional verity of "Love" and "God" are all debunked by him. They might have served history well, but now their hollow ring doesn't instil any inspiration in the hearts of men. Yank does'nt find them of any value. But he can't understand why he was called a "Hairy Ape" by Mildred. He wouldn't allow anybody to put something over on him and get away with it. He swears that he would get "square wit her" (p. 43). He thinks only in terms of seeking a personal vengeance on Mildred. Unlike Paddy and Long he is unable to socialize his individualistic conscience. This divides the rhythm of history into the solitary waves of individual islands, with no channels of communication to link them together. Nevertheless, he does try to anatomize his qualitative relationship with Mildred: "Who de hell is she? Ain't she de same as me?.... Who made her? Who give her de noive to look at me like dat? Dis ting's got my goat right. I don't get her" (p. 41). Yank doesn't know the source of Mildred's power to insult him. The only thing he can think of is to fling her into the furnace so that she too might become a part of the living momentum of history.

Scene Five takes us to the bourgeois paradise on Fifth Avenue in New York. Two shops--one of jewellery and the other of furs--stand out as symbols of cheap and tawdry commercialism that has reduced its victims to mere automatons depriving them of their natural alignment with the humanistic impulses of history. Both the jewellery and the furs provide only external glitter, a sort of mask to cover the inner emptiness. Although Yank feels attracted to the jewellery a little, he turns away from it finding it of little use. It has no place in the scheme of values cherished by him. But when he looks at the monkey-fur, the hurt goes deep within him and he begins to feel himself an exhibit on display for the recreation of Mildred and her class. He gets the first inkling into the ironies of history and swears to have his vengeance. As he gets

more and more excited Long asks him to hold his horses, because "force defeats itself. It ain't our weapon. We must impress our demands through peaceful means--the votes of the onmarching proletarians of the bloody world!"(p. 49). For Yank, however, "Votes is a joke"(Ibid.). He has no faith in these quasi-democratic beguilements meant for the gullible. As he reasserts his faith in force, "Force, dat's me! De punch, dat's me every time, see!"(Ibid), a "procession of gaudy marionettes"(p. 50) comes out of the church. The sham, hypocrisy and hollowness of these victims of "detached, mechanical unawareness"(Ibid.) is revealed in their stray comments.Yank tries in vain to impinge his 'identity' on this blind, enervated, lonely crowd. His desperate attempt to make them realize his importance in history, as against their rotten insignificance, misfires, and he finds himself in prison for thirty days to "tink it over"(p. 57).

The prison in which Yank finds himself in Scene Six appears to him a zoo, he himself being caught in it as a "hairy ape". From the other prisoners, however, he learns about the Wobblies who can help him in his fight against Mildred and "de gang she runs wit". One of them suggests him to read Senator Queen's speech published in the *Sunday Times*. This speech sheds a flood of light on the contradictions and paradoxes of bourgeois history which while guaranteeing "equal opportunities to all" would not tolerate organizations like I.W.W. for their alleged attempt to "tear down society, put the lowest scum in the seats of the mighty, turn Almighty God's revealed plan for the world topsy-turvy, and make of our sweet and lovely civilization a shambles, a desolation where man, God's masterpiece, would soon degenerate back to the ape!"(p. 61). The speech doesn't have even a modicum of truthful sincerity. The predatory bourgeois ethic wallows in the self-styled glorification of "Truth, Honor, Liberty, Justice, and the Brotherhood of Man" (p. 60), while it actually strives to maintain the *status quo* in which millions are scorching in deprivation and starvation, not even aware that history has conferred on them the title and status of human beings created by God in his own image. Yank, who once prided himslf on being a part of steel, driving the whole world with its forceful thrust, now feels himself a victim of its enslaving trap: "Steel! It don't belong, dat's what! Cages, cells, locks, bolts, bars--dat's what it means!--holdin' me down wit him at de top!"(p. 62). This stinging realization drives him more and

more into the gorilla-arms of fierce resentment and he decides to melt the steel cage of history within which he finds himself a prisoner with the fire of his burning resolution: "Fire, dat melts it! I'll be fire--under de heap--fire dat never goes out...."(Ibid.).

Yank now decides to seek the aid of I.W.W. to dynamite the steel Works of Douglas, the father of Mildred. Scene Seven shows him at the I.W.W. office where he enrols himself a member. But he is rather intrigued at finding everything there open and above board. When he expresses his desire to "shoot de woiks"(p. 67) for them, he is immediately apprehended as an agent provocateur and is thrown out of the office with the salutation of a "brainless ape"(p. 71). Lying in the middle of the narrow cobbled street, he begins to feel the lacerating pinch of social and self alienation. Sticking adamantly to his belief that the materialistic interpretation of history has nothing to do with the agony of human condition, he contemptuously dismisses the role of history as a process of social amelioration. "Cut out an hour offen de job a day and make me happy! Gimme a dollar more a day and make me happy! Tree square a day and cauliflowers in de front yard--ekal rights -- a woman and kids --a lousy vote-- and I'm all fixed for Jesus, huh? Aw hell! What does dat get yuh?" (pp. 71-2). He strongly feels that the source of his anguish lies somewhere within: "Dis ting's in your inside, but it ain't your belly... It's way down--at de bottom. Yuh can't grab it, and yuh can't stop it. It moves, and everything moves. It stops and de whole woild stops"(p. 72). What is this subtle, mysterious essence that holds the boundary-line between all and nothingness in eternal suspension? It's, of course, the invincible faith in man's own functional significance within the dynamic process of history. But the staggering truth of an incomprehensible history has left Yank stranded in the paralysing stillness of time. Everything has come to a standstill now. In this mood of tantalizing uncertainty, he asks the wise-looking Man in the Moon, "Where do I get off at, huh?" (Ibid.) He wants to locate the destination of man in the design of history. But instead of receiving any information in that direction, he gets the warning of a policeman that he will get off at the police station if he doesn't make a move from there. In his utter despair at this mocking anti-climax of his quest, he tries to acquaint the policeman with the existential dimension of history: "I was born, see? Sure, dat's de charge. Write it in de blotter. I was born, get me!"(pp. 72-3).

Having failed to grasp the human essence of his place in history, he regards himself as a freak of nature, a mistake of history.

The stage is now set for Yank to take the final plunge in the dark, deadly waters of history. Scene Eight finds him in the monkey house at the zoo, standing before the cage of a huge gorilla. Kicked out of his place in human history, he begins to establish his kinship with the animal world, particularly with gorilla, which for him is an emblem of force that can still win him the elusive recognition as a human being. He doesn't want to be a mere blank in the void of history. He must find out some sort of meaning, some kind of significance in his relationship with history. Epitomizing his encounters with the realities of history, he reflects on his predicament as spun out by the contradictory pulls of history. He couldn't go back to accept the paradisal image of history, nor could he seek comfort in the disembodied image of a historical possibility. What is left to him is the bleak image of a historical present in which there is only the anguish of alienation, of not belonging anywhere, of not being a part of the structure of history. "I ain't got no past to tink in, nor nothin' dat's comin', on'y what's now-and dat don't belong"(p. 76). As he reflects on the spatial structure of history, he begins to realize that in his attempt to separate the distinct claims of earth and heaven, he has landed himself in hell, becoming the underdog of history: "I ain't on oith and I ain't in heaven, get me? I'm in de middle tryin' to separate 'em, takin' all de woist punches from bot' of em'. Maybe dat's what dey call hell...?" (Ibid.). He is an exile on earth and an outsider in heaven. Hell is there for him, but there too his existence has lost its meaning. Wherein then lies the salvation? As the gorilla crushes Yank to death, disallowing him the comfortable thought of belonging even with him, we begin to feel that somehow Yank has gained entry into the cycle of history, even if he merely touches it at the fringe. His last brush with death has perhaps freed him from the dichotomies of history, and yet has inevitably placed him within the bosom of timeless history.

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TREATMENT OF CHILD IN TAGORE'S SHORT STORIES

Archana Sen

Tagore wrote short stories during almost all the periods of his long career. He told a questioner about the background of his stories:

> To begin with I only wrote poetry--I didn't write stories. One day my father called me and said, 'I want you to take charge of the estates.' I was astonished. I was a poet, a scribbler--what did I know about such matters? But father said, 'Never mind that--I want you to do it.' What could I do? Father had ordered me, so I had to go. Managing the jamindari gave me the opportunity to mix with various kinds of people, and this was how my story writing began.[1]

Tagore says that the children innocently play on the sea-shore of eternity. They are unaware of the affairs of the world. They are busy in their innocent play. The worldly people like the pearl-fishers and merchants sail in their ships and dive for pearls of wealth and prosperity. But the children do not care for those things. They enjoy life in its simplicity and are not afraid of death. Nature is just like a mother to children. The child is not afraid of its mother even when she has a frowning look. That is why children are not afraid even when the sea throws up 'death-dealing waves' and 'tempest roams in the pathless sky.' They play on the seashore of eternity from which they have come.

Tagore has portrayed child-characters very beautifully in his stories. He could see every aspect of children's condition in the village. He has described the divine nature, psychology and exploitation of children in his short stories. But he presents them not naturalistically, but poetically which is really a higher kind of realism. Child's innocence, wisdom, fragility and helplessness, all provoke the poet, while the efficient story-writer merely records their laughs, sighs, groans, murmurs and moans.

Children are god-gifted. When these children enter the new world, they find everything strange. To them the entire world is very beautiful. Tagore's views on children correspond to Whitman's idea of animals expressed in Section 32 of "Song of Myself." They are self-contained, very placid, calm and satisfied. Their life is very carefree, free from the burden of cares. There is

simplicity in their life. They do not have to sweat to earn a living nor do they grieve at their condition. They do not remain sleepless or feel sorry for their sins. They commit no sins, and have no knowledge of evil, corruption and hatred. They lead a life of innocence, content and virtue. They do not make sick anyone by discussions relating to their duties towards God. They are satisfied and they do not work like a mad person for worldly power and wealth. They do not cringe or flatter anyone, nor do they worship their heroes who may have been dead for thousands of years.

Walt Whitman compares the child to a spear of grass. The grass has all those qualities which are found in a child. Grass is a symbol of democracy. It knows no discrimination. It grows at all places. It grows in broad as well as in narrow zones. It loves equality. It grows among the black as well as the white. It gives them the same delight. Tagore has similar views about children.

Tagore's child-characters are real. They are drawn from the village life. The description of the boys playing at the beginning of holidays, for example, is taken straight from observation, though the girl who sits on the fallen mast becomes a boy in the story:

> There was a large mast lying on the mud by the river. A bunch of naked little boys had, after much debate, realised that if they heaved and puffed and shouted they would be able to roll it along, and that this would be an exciting new game. They set to work to carry out this plan: 'Heave ho! Watch here go! Heave ho! Each time they managed to roll it over, they all cheered but there was a couple of girls among the boys, and their feelings were different. They were forced, because they had no friends of their own, to join in with the boys, but were obviously not enjoying such a violent, physical game. One of the girls, solemnly and coolly and without speaking, firmly sat herself down on the mast....[2]

Children are always hungry for love. Those who love them are everything for them. Pathik is the child who is naughty and always teases his younger brother and all the boys of the village. His mother sends him with his uncle to Calcutta, so that he could learn some good manners. He is very happy. But when he reaches Calcutta, his aunt does not show any interest in him. Pathik is devoid of that love which a child deserves. One day, in grief, he leaves the house, but is handed over by the two constables to his uncle. He falls ill. During his illness, he continuously remembers his mother's love:

> The cramped atmosphere of neglect in his aunt's house oppressed Pathik so

> much that he felt that he could hardly breathe. He wanted to go out into the open country and fill his lungs and breathe freely. But there was no open country to go to. Surrounded on all sides by Calcutta houses and walls, he would dream night after night of his village home, and long to be back there. He remembered the glorious meadow where he used to fly his kite all day long; the broad river-banks where he would wander about the livelong day singing and shouting for joy; the narrow brook where he could go and dive and swim at any time he liked. He thought of his band of boy companions over whom he was despot; and above all, the memory of that tryant mother of his, who had such a prejudice against him, occupied him day and night.[3]

The one hunger that none one can suppress--not even the dead and dumb, not even the backward child--is the hunger for understanding, sympathy and love:

> Pathik very slowly turned his head and, without seeing anybody, said: "Mother, the holidays have come."[4]

In the "Elder Sister," the innocence and helplessness of the little brother, Nilamani, are seen in relation to the sister's dependence on her unscrupulous husband, Jaygopal, and her last tremendous protective gesture that saves the little brother but probably costs her very life. Nilamani is an orphan. His parents have left him a large amount of money, but he has no will to get money. He has hunger of only love. His sister wants to give him the love of a mother but her husband always considers Nilamani as his rival. At last his sister leaves the child under the care of the Nabab:

> With tears streaming behind her veil, Shashi said, 'Darling brother, go now—you'll see your Didi again. Then she embraced him, stroked his head and back, somehow extricated the end of her sari from his grasp and swiftly walked away. The Saheb put his left arm around Nilamani, but he cried out, 'Didi, Didi!' Shashi turned once and waved at him with her right hand, trying to send him silent consolation. Then heart-broken she continued on her way.[5]

The child's innocent heart is hurt by his teacher in "Housewife." The teacher has given the child a name'Housewife' because one day his teacher has seen him playing with his younger sister. The child cannot understand why it is bad to play with his younger sister. The child is insulted by his teacher in the class, but he cannot understand the reason behind this insult:

> It was as if the whole of Earth's gravity were dragging young Ashu down, but all he could do was sit with his legs and the end of his dhoti dangling down from the bench, while all the boys stared at him. There were many years to come in Ashu's life, many days of joy, sorrow and shame more significant than this but none could compare with what his young heart suffered on this

occasion.[6]

A little seven year old Brahmin boy cannot understand his relation to the beautiful princess to whom he is married and who is older than him. The king has a very keen desire to get a son. He forgets that his only daughter is attaining the marriageable age. He married his daughter to a seven year old Brahmin boy in "Once There Was a King." The child's companions always ask him about the beautiful lady who is living with him in the palace. But he is not able to satisfy them:

> His companions always asked him: "Who is that beautiful lady in the palace with the seven wings?" And the Brahmin's son would come back from school and sadly tell the princess: "My school companions always ask me, who is that beautiful lady in the palace with the seven wings, and I can give them no reply. Tell me, oh, tell me, who you are."[7]

How the feelings of a young girl are injured by the indifferent behaviour of an elderly person is depicted by Tagore in the story, "The Postmaster." All the day she serves the postmaster who comes to her village from the town. Ratan is very affectionate towards the postmaster, but the latter never cares for her. He regards her only as a serving girl. One day he decides to resign his job and go back home. When Ratan asks him to take her with him, he leaves her in grief:

> But Ratan had no such philosophy to console her. All she could do was wander near the postoffice, weeping copiously. May be a faint hope lingered in her mind that Dadababu might return; and this was enough to tie her to the spot, prevent her from going far.[8]

A child's broken heart is shown in "The Divide." In this story, the friendship of Banamali and Himangshu breaks because of the quarrel between their parents. This quarrel does not matter for the two friends, but their emotions are crushed by the elders. Now both the friends do not have permission to meet each other, and thus are separated from each other. Only their sighs are left behind:

> When fate had taken each of the seven days from Monday to Sunday away from Banamali, leaving no day on which to pin her hopes, she turned her eyes towards Himangshu's shuttered house, appealed to it, from the depths of her distress. 'Have mercy,' she cried gathering all her-life's pain into the words.[9]

We are stunned to see the condition of Nilakanta in "The Castaway." He is an orphan adopted by a lady from a respectable family. She loves him more than her own child. But after the

coming of her brother-in-law, he feels extremely lonely in the house:

> When with evening the child of want lies down, dirty and hungry, in his squalid home, and hears of prince and princess and fabled gold, then in the dark hovel with its dim flickering candle, his mind springs free from her bonds of poverty and misery, and walks in fresh beauty and glowing raiment, strong beyond all fears of hinderance, through that fairy realm where all is possible.
>
> Even so, this drudge of wandering players fashioned himself and his world anew, as he moved in spirit amid his song: The lapping water, rustling leaves, and calling birds; the goddess who had given shelter to him, the helpless and the Godforsaken; her gracious, lovely face, her exquisite arms with their shining bangles, her rosy feet as soft as flower petals, all these by some magic became one with the music of his song. When the singing ended, the mirage faded...[10]

A child's cleverness is shown in "Forbidden Entry." Jaikali Devi is a strong, tough-minded woman and never allows anyone to take flowers from the medhabi creeper in the temple compound. Children always have the desire to get the thing which is impossible. Nalin, a small boy, has a keen desire to steal the flowers. One day, he dared to steal the flowers and is caught by Jaikali Devi and she puts him into a dark room. The child is very clever, and he escapes from behind:

> The body crept up from behind and stood underneath the medhabi. He found that the flowers on the lower branches had all been used for puja. So he gingerly started to climb the trellis. Seeing some buds on a high branch, he stretched with the whole length of his body and arm to pick them; but the strain on the frail trellis was too great, and it noisily collapsed. Boy and creeper fell sprawling on the ground together.[11]

A spoilt child's disrespect towards his own father is shown in "Little Master's Return." Raicharan manages all the pleasures of life for his son. But the boy does not care for his old father. Raicharan spends his days very painfully because of the bad habits of his son. To fulfil his son's desires, he even sells his old house:

> He had been starving himself for the boy's sake. So he had grown physically weak, and no longer up to his work. He would forget things, and his mind became dull and stupid. But his employer expected a full servant's work out of him, and would not brook excuses. The money that Raicharan had brought with him from the sale of his land was exhausted. The boy was continually grumbling about his clothes, and asking for more money. [12]

Children play many tricks not to go to the school. In "Once There Was a King," the small child wishes that his tutor should not come

to teach him; he makes every effort to avoid reading and at last succeeds:

> Mother dear, the tutor has come, and I have such a bad headache; couldn't I have no lessons today?[13]

Tagore exquisitely portrays the psychology of a naughty child. Sushil is a very naughty boy. He would go around annoying all the people of the neighbourhood. His father tries to chase him, but he suffers from rheumatism and the boy runs like a deer. Sushil is not interested in going to school. He tells his father that he has a stomachache. He believes that old men are better than children, for they can do what they wish. Naturally, he wishes to become older so that he might fulfil all his wishes. This is the main theme of the story, "Wishes Granted":

> If only I could be as old as Father! I could do so I liked and no one would be able to stop me.[14]

A child's acute desire to get things is presented in "Little Master's Return." In this story, when Raicharan takes little master for outing, the latter sees a large Kadamba tree in full-flower close by a mud-flat. The child wants to take these flowers, but he cannot express his desire. He only looks towards the flowers with greedy eyes. Raicharan tries to divert the child's mind but to no avail. But when Raicharan goes to bring the flowers, the child moves towards the river:

> The baby saw the river rushing by, splashing and gurgling as it went. It seemed as though the disobedient wavelets themselves were running away from some greater Raicharan with the laughter of a thousand children. At the sight of their mischief, the heart of the human child grew excited and restless. He got down stealthily from the go-cart and toddled off towards the river. On his way he picked up a small stick, and leant over the bank of the stream pretending to fish. The mischievous fairies of the river with their mysterious voices seemed inviting him into their playhouse.[15]

The myth-making power of the inimitable writer is illustrated by the well-known story, "The Cabuliwallah," in which the child character is seized by inward vision and is presented with total understanding and love:

> The child sees the Cabuliwallah with the eyes of trust and affection, and so the beast becomes the 'Beauty,' and the stranger becomes the friend. In due course, the child Mini-- "who is incapable of wasting a minute in silence"-- becomes a bashful girl and with a few deft touches Tagore suggests the miracle of the bud's unfoldment as the full-blown flower...[16]

Clad in the red silk of her wedding day, with the sandal paste on her forehead, and adorned as a young bride, Mini came, and stood bashfully before me.[17]

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[11]William Radice, *Selected Short Stories of Tagore*, p.151.

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[15]Rabindranath Tagore, *Hungry Stones and Other Stories*, p.77.

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MOTHERS AND MOTHER-FIGURES IN INDIAN ENGLISH POETRY

Santosh Nath

Mothers and mother-figures have not been the *raison d'etre* of poetic inspiration for the Indian English poets on a large scale. It is, therefore, difficult to cull a composite set of poems from Indian English verse depicting motherhood *per se*. A purview of the concept is, however, attempted here on the basis of poems reflecting, directly or indirectly, the varied perceptions of mothers and mother-figures in the poems of some Indian English poets, viz. Sarojini Naidu, Bimla Agarwal, Kamala Das and Nissim Ezekiel. The subject is being treated in the background of these poets' comprehension of womanhood which is the basis of its most significant aspect, i.e., motherhood.

Very few Indian English poets have been genuinely conscious like Sarojini Naidu of the role women play in shaping the future of a nation through the proper rearing of children who grow up to be its builders. Child is the father of man and child is as its mother moulds it to be. This is why Sarojini Naidu feels deeply concerned about the suppression of women's rights in Indian society. She pleads eloquently for women's education: "Educate your women and the nation will take care of itself for... the hand that rocks the cradle is the power that rules the world."[1]

The cultural ethos of India projects three aspects of the mother image: (a) the earthly mother, (b) the homeland (Mother India), and (c) divine mother. All these aspects find a place in Sarojini Naidu's poems. "To My Children," "Village Songs," "The Queen's Rival," "Cradle Song" and "Slumber Song for Sunalini" reflect the role and attitude of the earthly mother towards her children. In the poem "Life" she herself assumes mother-figure and cautions her children about the hazards of life. She asks them to be prepared to take its bitter and sweet in their stride for the harsh reality of pain is an integral part of pleasure. Both are like two sides of the same coin--life, and hence have to be taken with equanimity. The poetess, thus, projects the protective mother instinct from a different stance. To know life fully one has to live it fully:

> Children, ye have not lived,
> ye but exist

Till some resistless hour
shall rise and move
Your hearts to wake and
hunger after love
And thirst with passionate
longing for things
That burn your brows with
blood-red sufferings.
Till ye have battled with
great grief and fears,
And borne the conflict of
dream-shattering years,
Wounded with fierce desire
and worn with strife,
Children, ye have not lived:
for this is life.[2]

"To My Children" is a personal poem comprising four stanzas, each stanza embodying Sarojini's wish and blessings for each of her four children--two sons, Jaya Surya and Ranadheera, and two daughters, Padmaja and Lilamani. Her blessing for Jaya Surya is to be steadfast in his commitment to duty toward the nation and enjoy the glory of success: "Sun of victory, may you be/ Sun of song and liberty." She wishes Ranadheera to be "Lord of battle.../ Lord of love and chivalry" in the manner of the heroes of Valmiki's *Ramayana*. But the daughters are to remain sheltered from strife, pain, and want in every respect. The benediction for Padmja says:

Lakshmi, fortune's queen, defend you,
Lotus-born like you, and send you
Balmy moons of love to bless you...
Lotus-maiden, may you be
Fragrant of all ecstasy.[3]

While for Lilamani it reads:

Leap and sparkle, dance and shine,
Blithely and securely set
In love's magic coronet
Living jewel, may you be
Laughter-bound and sorrow free.[4]

This poem, somehow, brings out an underlying conventional attitude of the mother towards her children in the gender divide. "Village Songs" describes a daughter's deep concern for her mother's anxiety for her (daughter's) safety. It also brings out the difference between the love of a brother and the love of a mother. A country belle has overstayed at the river-side lured by a boatman's

song. She suddenly becomes conscious of the gathering darkness and approaching nightfall and is assailed by the fear of her brother's anger and the thought of her mother's anxiety for her safety.

The spirit of motherhood that emerges in "The Queen's Rival" can be said to be unmatched in its scintillating and gay delineation, for here the mother's love itself is "animated with the spirit of delight" and transcends the various manifestations of love in its moods of jealousy or rivalry. Bored with surfeit of love, riches and beauty, Queen Gulnaar turns to her husband to provide her with a rival to make life challenging for her, but none is found suitable enough to arouse her jealousy. As she broods over her ennui, she sees her little daughter and says:

"Here is my rival, O King Feroze."

The pert rival wins hands down while the vanquished mother partakes of the spontaneity of the Narcissism of her little daughter. The novelty of Sarojini Naidu's treatment of the mother image here lies in her making motherhood shine in pristine beauty not merely in great moments of sacrifice, but also in purely happy incidents such as these.

Some of the happiest moments of a mother's life are those when she sings lullabies to rock her little ones to sleep. The soft notes and lilt of these songs which are suffused with her love and blessings caress the very being of the child as it slips into the land of nod. Sarojini Naidu has given a sample of such songs through two exquisite lullabies: "Cradle Song" and "Slumber Song for Sunalini." The last stanza of the "Slumber Song" embodies the mother's tender love, care and blessings for her child.

Sarojini Naidu tries to remain detached in handling themes on the predicament of Indian women. She depicts their misery without impinging on it her own enlightened views. However, a close study of her poems will make us discern a covert sympathy for suffering women. In "Dirge" the unmistakable poignant note surfaces in the last stanza. The poetess first describes how a widow is divested of all the embellishments of a married woman (*sadhawa*): how her 'shining bracelets' are shattered, 'the string,/ Threading the mystic marriage beads' broken, the 'golden anklets on her feet' unbound. Divested of her 'azure veils', her 'living body' is forced to live 'in a living shroud.' Unable to contain

herself any more the poetess breaks out with:

Nay, let her be !...what
comfort can we give
For joy so frail, for hope
so fugitive?
The yearning pain of
unfulfilled delight,
The moonless vigils of
her lonely night,
For the abysmal anguish
of her tears,
And flowering springs that
mock her empty years?[5]

In "Suttee" the poetess depicts the heinous custom of forced suicide by a widow as a glorification of love. But whether a widow, or a suttee, it is a moving spectacle of a denial of the simple joys of life, a denial of the right to live, a denial of the fulfilment of the basic instinct of womanhood--motherhood.

Sarojini Naidu associates her country with mother-figure. Being a great patriot, she envisions India as a sacred mother having unique qualities and for whose glory and freedom all her children remain prepared to make the greatest sacrifices. Poems like "Awake," "The Anthem of Love," "The Gift of India," "In the Night," "At Dawn" and "The Lullaby" throw light on the symbol of India itself as mother. Indians, as individuals, are her children, but as a unified mass inhabiting the country they metamorphose into the mother deity who groans under the shackles of foreign rule. In "Awake" her children implore her:

Waken, O mother! thy children
implore thee,
Who kneel in thy presence to
serve and adore thee!
The night is aflush with a
dream of the morrow,
Why still doth thou sleep in
thy bondage of sorrow?
Awaken and sever the woes
that enthral us,
And hallow our hands for the
triumphs that call us:[6]

In the "The Gift of India" Mother India seeks fair play for her children and pleads with the foreign sovereign to pay due regard to her sons' martyrdom and sacrifices during the First World War.

Maternal feelings, suggestive of Mother India as mother-figure, are interwoven in poems like "In the Night," "At Dawn," and "The Lullaby."

Sarojini Naidu's poems on divinity do not necessarily project her personal views. They merely reflect "the ancient beliefs current among Indian people" for "they brought comfort and hope to millions of Indians."[7] Her poem"Kali, the Mother" is a hymn sung to the divine mother. It can be said to be a loose translation of a prayer popularly sung in praise of the deity in temples and homes. The poem on goddess Laxmi, "Laxmi, the Lotus-Born," does not reflect motherhood in any way, while "Kali, the Mother" "unfolds the various aspects of the divine mother."[8]

Sarojini Naidu projects the image of another divine mother from mythology, closer to real life than the image of Kali, the mother. She is Yashoda, mother of Kanhaya. In the myths of Lord Krishna's childhood, the experience of mother Yashoda (divine not as deity but as the mother of an incarnation of God), in rearing up the god as a naughty child is not much different from the experience of any other earthly mother. Sarojini Naidu has tried to incorporate some of its spirit through one of the poems of "Songs of Radha Kanhaya." The mother's exasperation and anger at the naughty child's boldness and diffidence, her embarrasment at the complaints brought to her by her neighbours, the thrashings and punishment inflicted on the mischievous son--punishment sans animos in its being given--, punishment sans resentment in its being taken-- is a unique quality of the tender and affectionate mother-child relationship. It is reflected only in *Vatsalya Ras* in Hindi poetry. Sarojini tries to give some of its savour to the English speaking world in this poem.

Though Sarojini Naidu is deeply concerned about the subjugation and sufferings of women, she does not condemn or show resentment against the injustice meted out to them in her poetry. She in fact deals with the bright and joyful aspects of life, leaving out the seamy side of many ticklish social questions. The contemporary Indian English poets, however, depict womanhood more realistically on the basis of their different perceptions They condemn male-dominated obscurantist Indian society for maltreating their women folk. Bina Agarwal, Kamala Das, and Nissim Ezekiel are some of the prominent ones among these Indian English poets.

Their canvas for the mother image is limited in range and with the exception of Bina Agarwal, none of them seems to include the divine mother or Mother India. Their projection of motherhood is confined to and based on their own personal experiences as are their delineations of womanhood. Bina Agarwal indicts society for the injustice meted out to women down the ages in a hard-hitting poem, "Sita Speak":

Sita speak your side of the story.
We know the other too well....
... ...
With your husband you chose exile;
suffered privation, abduction
and then the rejection--
the chastity test on the scorching flames
the victim twice victimized.
... ...
Your brother-in-law, so quick to anger
on his brother's behalf,
left you, mother-to-be, alone
in the dark forest
without explanation or comforting word.
His brother's command!
Some citizen's demand!
Was injustice to a woman not worthy of his anger?
... ...
The sons you nurtured with such love
amidst nature and wild woods--
sons with the prowess to challenge their father's army
were disarmed with a word.
Unhesitatingly they joined him--
future rulers of the land.

Their lineage was accepted
yet your purity still questioned?
you, devoted mother, stopped them not;
bowing to the test, palms folded in farewell
you bid earth beneath to give way.
The poets who wrote your story
said: a woman is not worthy of hearing
the Ramayana; like the beast she is fit only
for being beaten.
... ...
Sita speak:
You could lift the magic bow in play
with one hand
who could command the earth with a word
how did they silence you?[4]

Kamala Das vis-a-vis Bina Agarwal is much more direct in her exposition of womanhood. Her poems explore her own mind and reveal her feminine sensibility in a daringly frank and unabashed manner. Her depiction of womanhood centres around a woman's futile search for love. In the poem "Freaks," her forthrightness is in evidence in the description of a woman's frustration at what she gets in the name of love:

> ....Can't this man with
> Nimble finger-tips unleash
> Nothing more alive than the
> Skin's lazy hungers? Who can
> Help us who have lived so long
> And have failed in love? The heart,
> An empty cistern, waiting
> Through long hours, fills itself
> With coiling snakes of silence....
> I am a freak. It's only
> To save my face, I flaunt, at
> Times, a grand, flamboyant lust.[10]

She starts doubting her normalcy and fears she may be a freak. In "The Old Playhouse" she describes her attempts at self-discovery with the help of love but all she gets is a loosening hold over her senses because of the stifling of her personality in a man-dominated world:

> ....It was not to gather knowledge
> Of yet another man that I came to you but to learn
> What I was, and by learning, to learn to grow, but every
> Lesson you gave was about yourself.[11]

Kamala Das's delineation of motherhood, though confined to just a few poems, viz., "Afterwards," "Three P.M." "The White Flowers," "Jaisurya" and "Middle Age," is as realistic as her depiction of love. This aspect of her poetry reveals the instinctive attachment of a mother to her child right from inception:

> Love is not important, that makes the blood
> Carouse, nor the man who brands you with his
> Lust....
> .... Only that matters which forms as
> Toadstool under lightning and rain, the soft
> Stir in womb....[12]

In "Jaisurya" she describes her feelings at the time of his (Jaisurya's) birth. Her son's birthday fills her with joy and benediction. But she experiences a loss of her personality even in relation to her

children when they no longer depend on her for their small needs. She describes her poignant reaction to her children's growing up in "Middle Age,"

While Kamala Das puts forth a woman's perception of love, Nissim Ezekiel projects a man's comprehension of it and of the modern woman in the same daringly frank manner. He finds that women no longer derive satisfaction by the halo attached to their chastity or marital fidelity by the men who themselves flagrantly transgress these norms in their lives. He finds them as deceptive in manner and as sharp in perceptions as men. His poem, "The Couple," can be said to embody the woman's new, liberated image. Having thrown all inhibitions to the winds, she is man's equal in the "Charade" of love:

> In that moment of mutual deception,
> she was truly quite beautiful
> and almost lovable.
> She did it prettily enough,
> demonstrating
> with childlike glee
> a trick or two.
>
> As for him--
> He knew he was lying,
> but then how else
> could he hope to win her?
> The flattery and bold advances
> were necessary afterall,
> the minimum politics of survival and success.
>
> And how charmingly she took it all!
> What could a man do?
> Her false love became infused
> with truest love
> only in making love[13]

Ezekiel's repertoire of poems on women is quite extensive, but one poem that stands out from the rest is "Night of the Scorpion."[14] It embodies the poet's apprehension of motherhood projected through the experience of a mother stung by a scorpion on rainy night. The whole village seems to gather in the house and keeps up an incessant chant of advice and suggestions to alleviate the pain, interspersed with clicks of sympathy for the mother and curses for the vanished tormentor. The poet skilfully keeps building up the tempo with the continuous chant of 'they said', and then

contrasts it with a triplet embodying the succinct utterance of the mother: "Thank God the scorpion picked on me/and spared my children." It throws into relief the essence of motherhood, her protective, selfless love for her children.

Perceptions on womanhood have changed through time. Love, in the gender relationship, has been redefined with new parameters. Values have changed and more realistic and less idealistic code of conduct that centres on the self has come into being. The flux of re-adjustments, however, has left one figure untouched, one relationship constant-- the figure of the mother in her relationship with her children. Her unique love transcends time and is beyond the reach of vacillations caused by social upheavals. Sarojini Naidu's preparing her children for the rigours of life ("Life"), Sita's not stopping her sons from joining their father and inheriting the kingdom ("Sita Speak"), Kamala Dạs's poignant seeking for the feel of her children in their possessions ("Middle Age"), and Nissim Ezekiel's projection of mother's protectiveness ("Night of the Scorpion"), are images instinct with the principle of selfless love which grows and glows with giving. It can thus be seen that Indian English Poetry, from the beginning, reflected the complexities of the mother-figure as etched in the ethos of the people of India.

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ALLEGORY AND SYMBOLISM IN *ALL ABOUT H. HATTERR*

Basavaraj S. Naikar

There is, perhaps, no novel in Indian English Literature more puzzling than G.V. Desani's *All About H.Hatterr*.[1] It has teased many a critic because of its grotesque-cum-comic theme as well as its peculiar technique, made all the more complex by the element of allegory and multiple symbolism interwoven in its texture. The novel, thus, has many aspects to be critically explored and interpreted. An attempt, therefore, has been made in the present article to interpret the meaning of allegorical and symbolic element in the novel.

Although both allegorical and symbolic elements are found in the novel, the latter is preponderant as compared to the former which appears to be quite negligible. As far as symbolism is concerned, it may be observed that it is of three kinds: Freudian (psychological), numerological (religious or philosophical) and secular (or general). Many times these symbols are found to be interwoven into one another, thereby adding to the complexity and multidimensionality of symbolism, a detailed analysis of which may be seen in the following paragraphs.

The first thing that strikes us as symbolic in the novel is the very name of the eponymous hero, i.e. H.Hatterr. The forlorn boy has been adopted by the English Missionary Society. As he finds out that his temperament is not suited to the evangelical life, he escapes from there after stealing three books. Now he assumes the nom de plume, i.e. Hindusthaniwalla Hatterr which is very suggestive and symbolic. The name 'Hatterr' is indicative of his hat which is too large for him and suggests his Anglo-Indian background (and of his adopted parents as well). The hat may be interpreted in terms of Freudian symbolism. The hat can be a symbol of both masculine (in its normal position on the head) and feminine (when upturned) principles. Sigmund Freud opines that "An instance of an obscure symbol of this kind is the *hat* or perhaps head-coverings, in general; this usually has a masculine significance, though occasionally a feminine one."[2] But in the present context of the novel, his hat may be taken to symbolise his

male ego and his desire to achieve some status (especially that of a sahib in a colonised country) in life. But the story of symbolism of his hat does not end here. The surname 'Hatterr' is prefixed with another word "Hindusthaniwalla" which adds a new meaning to it. So the long form of his name "Hindusthaniwalla Hatterr" is comically suggestive of the cultural hybridisation of his identity. H.Hatterr has in his blood both the elements of East and West; the coloniser and the colonised; the Hindu and the Christian. His entire life happens to be a struggle to harmonise the two apparently contradictory cultures. His name is obviously a symbol of the encounter between East and West which appears to be a bit comic and even absurd

The three books that Hatterr has stolen from the Missionary society can be interpreted as general symbols of knowledge or wisdom that he is in quest of. These books easily bring to our mind Prospero's book and holy books or scriptures of organised religions of the world in general. Although he has escaped from the Missionary Society, these books act as vestiges of his erstwhile evangelical life at a theoretical level. The meaning of his future life lies in the actualisation of the theoretical possibilities symbolised by the books. The words of the books are to be translated into a world of experience.

As Hatterr is not formally educated in school or college, he wants to gather his knowledge through the University of *Life*. His desire to meet the seven saints of different parts of India may be interpreted in terms of numerological symbolism. Number 7 happens to be a holy number in both Eastern and Western astrology as well as religion. "Seven is a sacred number in many traditions. Because it is, according to Hippocrates of Chios, related to the lunar phases, seven influences all sublunar things. It appears in the periodicity of chemical elements and of music, and it has generally been connected with the phases of human development to a Grand Climacterium of sixty three (7x9). Seven is the first prime number of symbolic meaning: it is 'virgin,' since it does not generate by multiplication any number under ten, and it is the only integer of the first decade that is not a divisor of 360. Consisting of the spiritual ternary and the practical quaternary (3+4), seven embraces everything created."[3] Heptatic division happens to be accepted as holy and connected with many astrological and cosmic

phenomena. For example, seven planets, seven days a week, seven tunes in music, seven days of creation (Christianity), seven worlds, spheres, gates, steps, valleys or veils; seven pillars of wisdom are universally known. Seven is connected with the Hindu fire-god Agni. In folk-tales seven is accepted as a round number and whatever is done seven times is said to be especially effective. In Islamic and Christian legends seven feminine saints and seven masculine saints are commonly mentioned. Number seven happens to be accepted even in modern secular life, especially airplanes bearing the numerals like 707, and 747 etc. The galaxy of seven saints or *saptarsi mandala* is an important ingredient of the Hindu astrology. In the light of the universally accepted richness of numerological symbolism of 'seven,' Hatterr's encounter with the seven saints (however fake they may be) of India is indicative of his quest for spiritual knowledge, experience, holiness and perfection. According to Hindu philosophy every spiritual aspirant has to be guided by his *guru* along the path of salvation. His experiences in life are guided by his *guru* who happens to be the medium of spiritual realisation. Sometimes *guru* is said to be even greater than God himself, as he happens to be a living incarnation of the abstract and invisible principle of Divinity. There is simply no possibility of the attainment of *moksa* or salvation without the help of a *guru*. Hatterr's encounter with the seven saints happens to be in line with the Hindu spiritual tradition.

Dreams are quite common in the novel. "Dreams are the means of removing, by hallucinatory satisfaction, mental stimuli that disturb sleep...Every time that we fully understand a dream it proves to be a wish-fulfilment, and this coincidence cannot be accidental or unimportant."[4] Hatterr has many dreams which show his subconscious fears and hopes and throw light upon his personality. For example, Hatterr enters into a dream-world after undergoing a traumatic experience in the circus when he had to act as a 'human plate' for the lion to eat the mutton-piece. The dream has three phases. In this dream one can easily see how dream symbolism and numerological symbolism are interwoven. In the first phase, Hatterrr finds himself in North Dakota and sees the convocation of graduates there, especially Ph.Ds and M.Ds. There are twelve graduates in all, of which six are tall and six dwarf. One of the dwarf guys wants to deliver thirteen telegrams for two bucks each. But Hatterr has no money at all to buy one of the

telegrams from Lord Nuffield. In spite of the apparent absurdity of the dream, one may interpret it as a wish-fulfilment of Hatterr's secret desire to be formally educated at a University, as his very presence among the graduates symbolises. The dream also symbolises his pauperism by showing his inability to buy the telegram with two rupees. The reason why the telegrams have to be bought by the parties cannot be ascertained as it may easily be ascribed to the absurd element in the dream. The numerological symbolism of six dwarfs and six graduates making a total of twelve may be interpreted in the following way. "Twelve (3x4; 5+7) is the great cosmic number."[5] It easily indicates some kind of order in the universe. In Sumer and China it is the number of signs of the zodiac and the basis of sexagesimal system. Similarly the twelve tribes of Israel, the twelve disciples of Christ and the twelve gates of heavenly Jerusalem are well known examples in the history and literature of the world. If the twelve graduates of NorthDakota symbolise an order and balance, Hatterr being the thirteenth person indicates that he is an unwanted and unlucky fellow upsetting the order or evenness. "Thirteen (12+1) disrupts the perfection of the duodecimal system and being connected with the inter-calary month, was considered unlucky in Babylon..."[6] Likewise number thirteen is associated with superstitions. As pointed out by Bertrand Russell, "Among ourselves the prejudice against... number 13 is very active,...many hotels have no 13th floor."[7] Usually number 12 and 13 are found to be closely associated on many occasions. For example, one leader with twelve followers, twelve jury headed by one judge and twelve open rooms and one closed room are commonly associated in world literature and life. In the present novel the twelve graduates and the thirteenth uneducated person i.e. Hatterr symbolise Hatterr's ill-luck and his oddness there in the atmosphere.

The second part of his dream shows Hatterr's entry into St Paul's Church of London. According to Freudian interpretation "churches and chapels are symbols of a woman."[8] Hatterr's entry into the church may be Freudianly interpreted as symbolic of his latent desire for entry into a woman. One may also easily see in this dream the easy translatability of spirituality and sexuality into each other. His sight of 'an inconceivably beautiful coffin' being carried into the church and being fixed with a tinplate containing Hatterr's name and countless degrees and honorifics like Ex-Sahib,

Ex-Sportsman, Ex-human, Ex-parte may be taken to symbolise his own metaphorical death or wish for death, perhaps caused by his forlornness and deep frustration in life. But the dream may also be taken to be symbolic of Hatterr's wishful glorification of himself even after his death in the form of being sealed in a beautiful coffin displaying his name with innumerable degrees on the tinplate. This part of the dream shows the contradictory element of his frustrations and helplessness and metaphorical death on the one hand and the element of his desire for glorification even in death, on the other. The contradictory nature of his dream appears to be in tune with his own philosophy which declares that life is nothing but a bundle of contrarieties.

The third and last phase of his dream shows his admittance into the surgical ward in the hospital, for an operation on him for the removal of his appendix. The doctors and nurses are employing infra-red irradiation on him. But Hatterr quarrels with the doctor urging him not to take away his appendix as he mistakes the medical term 'appendicitis' for the textual term 'appendix' and opines that the appendix is even more important than the autobiography. Hatterr's entry into the hospital is likely to symbolise his fear of operation (may be, even of castration) while his quarrel with the doctor is absurd, though it throws light upon his literary aesthetics.

Freudian symbolism has a significant share in the novel. For Angus, the Occidental teacher of Sheik Ell Arabi, teacher of H.Hatterr, the necktie happens to be a symbol of masculine or phallic power. As pointed out by Freud, "A *tie*, being an object which hangs down and is not worn by women is clearly a male symbol..."[9] Decked with necktie, Angus could kiss a high class woman under the table and succeeded by way of wenching in marrying a very talented society woman called Maggie. For Sheikh, the necktie is a "mystic symbol" or 'mystic material'. But this symbolism assumes a comic touch about it when the reader discovers that mysticism is nothing but etiquette. Anyway, one thing is quite clear that the necktie is a symbol of power, either phallic or social. Hatterr, therefore, asks for Sage Sheik Ell Arabi's neckwear but the latter is exasperated beyond measure as he does not want to part with the secret of his own prosperity. The Sage, in his anger, asks Hatterr to go back to the abstract-minded Sage of Madras. One may easily interpret Hatterr's request for the necktie

as his desire for some kind of power and prosperity in life. The necktie, therefore, assumes double dimension in its symbolism i.e. both Freudian and Marxian.

After having a number of contradictory and frustrating experiences with six saints, Hatterr goes to the seventh mentor who is known as 1008 Sriman Guruji. In Hindu spiritual tradition, the numbers like 108 and 1008 are supposed to be holy and suggest 9 when totalled up. 108 happens to be a holy number as it is made of 54+54 fundamental letters of alphabets (*bijaksaras*) uttered in ascending and descending order respectively for transcendental meditation. Likewise 1008 happens to be a holy number which is generally used by many Hindu monks, especially of North-India as a prefix to their names (of holy order). In spite of his attachment for literature and beauty, Hatterr is advised by 1008 Sriman Guruji to become a *yati*. Accordingly Hatterr becomes a swami by assuming the new name of the holy order i.e. 504 Yati Rambeli. Since he is the disciple of the spiritual mentor, he cannot be equal to the latter in spiritual achievement. His number 504 clearly shows that he is half of his *guru* who is 1008. Even then he may be said to be qualitatively equal to his *guru* as his number 504 will be 9 when totalled up. Number 9 is suggestive of nine planets or *navagrahas* and their auspicious aspects. As pointed out by Mircea Eliade, "Nine, as three times three, is the number of completion.... Christianity speaks of nine orders of angels, and Dante thus saw Beatrice as the embodiment of nine."[10] The numerological symbolism of 9 is thus of universal importance and acceptance. This number obviously indicates that Hatterr has at least been able to achieve some kind of completion or perfection and the attendant tranquillity of mind which is only a consequence of the resolution of tensions or contrasts of life.

After undergoing an abundant and multifarious experience in life, Hatterr codifies it in the form of epigrammatical sentences which he calls his *Thesis Proper* having eighty (8x10=80) paragraphs. The number of paragraphs may again be interpreted according to numerological symbolism. Eight, according to numerology, happens to be a symbol of good or good fortune not only in Eastern but in Western religions also. As Mircea Eliade says, "Eight, the double four, is associated with good fortune. In Judaism the eighth day is singled out for circumcision. Christian tradition sees in the eighth day (the day after Sabbath) the resurrec-

tion of Christ; hence eight points to eternity."[11] According to Harold Baley, number 8 has "from ancient times been the emblem of regeneration."[12] Number 8, according to Swedonberg, "corresponds to purification."[13]

Number ten also symbolises many positive things not only in Eastern and Western religions, but also in science. "Ten, the number of human fingers, and thus a basis of the decimal system, is connected with completion. In the decade, multiplicity returns again to unity and the system is closed. The Pythagoreans regarded ten as the perfect number, since it is the sum of the first four integers (1+2+3+4) and is represented in the perfect triangle."[14] Hebrew and Buddhist scriptures speak of 'ten' principles and Aristotle recognises 'ten' categories of thought. In the light of these ideas, Hatterr's *Thesis Proper* in eighty paragraphs may be interpreted as a record not only of the findings of his spiritual experiments, but also of their codification and categorisation. It symbolises the distillation of the categorical essence from his rich and complicated existence. It symbolises the completion of his quest for Truth and grasp of the unity of life in the apparent contradictions and multiplicity of existence. It suggests the purification of his soul and its liberation from the dross of existence. It is indexical of his attainment of *jivanmukta* stage or regeneration i.e. of being released from the bondage of this worldly life by transcending the contradictions of the phenomenal world.

There is, thus, a preponderance of symbolism in the novel. Compared to symbolism, the allegorical element is very little. Hatterr, for example, has a tendency for allegorisation. In the fourteenth paragraph of his *Thesis Proper* he puts forth one of his formulae that living well is the best form of revenge and that the best physicians are Dr. Diet, Dr. Quiet and Surgeon Sir Bemerry. The medical truth has been personified in the form of these physicians who easily bring to our mind the allegorical characters found in the works of John Bunyan and Ben Jonson.

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY: A RE-CREATION OF THE SELF

Meena Sodhi

The multitude of voices raised by the Structuralists, the deconstructionists over the complete extinction of the author's personality from his created work, found its culmination in Roland Barthes's "The Death of the Author." The discussions, debates and arguments by the supporters of this theory tried to annihilate the author's biography from the text. It was an antithesis of the Romantic cult of Narcissism, the fascination with one's own image. The Romantics did not consider man's reflection or his encounter with himself to be a taboo or a mythical death sign. The development of the Venetian Mirror in the Middle Ages had made even a child become conscious of his own personality and identity. And so, for the Romantics, the image in the mirror became a part of man's everyday life.

Eliot's "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1917) was written mainly to combat the idea that a poet should be praised in proportion to his originality. No poet or artist, Eliot asserted, could be understood solely in terms of himself. It was a reaction against the excessive expression of personality, the exaggerated display of 'I', the uninhibited revelation of the self by the Romantic writers.

Eliot rightly compares the mind of the poet to a platinum shred which remains unchanged and neutral during the process of a poetic creation. He very cogently and authoritatively concludes that

> the more perfect the artist, the more completely separated in him will be the man who suffers and the mind which creates...[1]

Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) recommends the stance taken by Eliot in treating any kind of writing, which includes literary criticism, as objectively as a scientific endeavour. Similarly Eliot's emphasis on depersonalization, in the scientific context, finds an echo in Wayne C. Booth's *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (1961). Booth shoots out a number of synonyms for the Eliotian act of "depersonalization": "impersonality, detachment, disinterestedness, neutrality etc."[2] But for a writer to forget his "individual being" and his "peculiar circumstances",says Booth, would be to underestimate the relevance of his individuality:

> As he writes, he creates not simply an ideal, impersonal 'man in general' but an implied version of 'himself' that is different from the implied authors we meet in other men's works.[3]

Booth maintains that "The 'implied' author chooses, consciously or unconsciously, what we read; we infer him as an ideal literary, created version of the real man; he is the sum of his own choices."[4]

Augustine's *Confessions*, written between the years 397 and 400 AD, was a landmark in establishing the conversion of experience into narrative, that is, in an autobiography. It is conversion of life into textual self-representation. The life of the writer is made to conform to certain narrative forms and thus appears unique. However, Paul de Man[5] was prompted to take an extreme stand:

> ...he argued that the whole referential foundation of autobiography was based upon an illusion, that autobiography was not a life but a text. Such an argument, tendentious as it may be, is quite unsettling to most Americanists and all readers who would like to believe, with Whitman, that when they touch a book they are touching a living person-- or coming as close to one as they can.[6]

The stand of the deconstructionists and the implied pun in Paul de Man's "de-facement" often use the metaphor of murder for biography and suicide for autobiography. But, as Robert F. Sayre summarizes, it is necessary to remember that while reading an autobiography we only metaphorically read "a life." We read a book. The writing of an autobiography is an act like any other act performed by the humans.

What this paper seeks to exemplify is the supremacy of the "implied" author and his importance in the literary sub-genre, the autobiography, where the self of the writer is remade through the process of writing and therefore the text does not exhibit "The Death of the Author." The autobiographical process is not the mere depiction of the author's personality, but rather a recreation of his personality, which is seen in retrospection in his autobiography. The "autos", the "I" of the autobiography, determines the "bios" or the life. But it is the third element, the "graphe" or the act of writing, which is of real importance. It combines the self and the life and gives them a certain form, and enables them to reflect the image back and forth as between two mirrors. The artistic activity helps the autobiographer in establishing his true identity and enables him to present an accurate picture of himself.

The self-referentiality of autobiography is in the language, the narrative and the structure of the work and is also self-interrogative. It establishes tension and drama within the work and also asserts the life of the writer. It is to be noted that the autobiographical writing is undoubtedly a process of self-alteration. The man writing about his life becomes almost stranger to himself. The life which he has lived belongs to the past, whereas the life about which he is writing, or shall we say creating, belongs to the present. It does remind us of the importance of the Eliotian concept which demands the writer to be conscious not only of the "pastness of the past, but of its presence."[7] Although when Eliot coined the phrase, he had the notion of Tradition in his mind.

Yeats in his autobiography says that "It is myself that I remake"; this is exactly my contention that the art of autobiography involves a process of reconstruction of the writer's life; it is the self-picturing in which he indulges. It is a contradiction of the theory of the "New Critics" and later of Eliot and Barthes. The urge to portray oneself is obvious: "Self portraiture.... is a synonym of self-knowledge."[8] And it should not be doubted because, as Coleridge had observed: "when a man is attempting to describe another's character, he may be right or he may be wrong--but in one thing he will always succeed, in describing himself."[9]

The autobiographical genre was transformed during the Romantic period, from an objective memoir to a personal subjective remembrance. The embodied self or the real self is replaced by a new, self-made object, an artistic artefact--the "implied self" of the autobiographical text. Emphasising the death of the author, Roland Barthes's point of view more or less expresses the same idea.[10] What I am trying to stress is that even if we accept the death of the author in a text, the writing process results in the birth of a new person in an autobiography; it is a creation of a new self. The autobiographical act collects the scattered material of an individual's life to convey a comprehensive vision of the writer.

Georges Gusdorf[11] compares the autobiographer to a historian, who narrates his own history. He is the hero of his own tale and wants to unfold his past "in order to draw out the structure of his being in time." But unlike the historian, he is not engaged in an objective endeavour but in a personal exoneration, in a search for himself through the history of his life. It is a difficult process and

Georges Gusdórf thinks that "integral resurrection of the past" can seem meaningless due to its complete relation to the present. The autobiographer, who is also a historian of himself, is faced with a complex situation in revisiting his past. The tension faced by the writer in trying to overcome the time gap between the life lived in the past and its depiction in writing, should be evident in the narrative.

The chief criticism directed against this seemingly meaningless historical method is that it tries to substitute the completely formed for something which is in the process of being formed. The narrator finds himself being caught in the motif of the narrative which joins his past to the future. The past events, which were probably meaningless or had multiple meanings at the time of occurrence, acquire a new meaning. This demand of a meaning makes him *choose* the details of his past life in a presupposed intelligible manner. We can say that an autobiography is a "revised and corrected version" of the writer's life.

Georges Gusdorf thinks it to be a "document about a life" and its historian has every right to check its accuracy. But more than being a mere historical record it is a work of art; the literary writer is well aware of its style, beauty and the harmonious image which he desires to project. So it is primarily valuable for its artistic excellence; its being termed fiction or fraud becomes irrelevant. Consequently the literary value of an autobiography is of far greater signification than its historical or objective function.

> Every work of art is a projection from the interior realm into exterior space where in becoming incarnated it achieves consciousness of itself.[12]

Therefore as a work of art the autobiography is not only a focus on the author's life, but an artistic creation which employs all narrative devices and restrictions like accuracy, impartiality and inclusiveness; it is not merely a recapitulation of the past but also an attempt by the autobiographer to reconstruct himself in his own likeness.

It is an interesting fact that the autobiographer emphasises the past "I" to be different from the present "I."

> The narrator describes not only what happened to him at a different time in his life but above all how he became--out of what he was--what he presently is.[13]

It is imperative for the writer of an autobiography to seek the genesis of the present condition. The dictionary defines "autobiography" as "the story of one's life written by himself." But there is a world of difference in that "himself." Stephen Spender[14] detects an objectivity in the depiction of the autobiographer's subjective experiences and feels that unless he is able to achieve this transformation, his experiences are of no value to his art. It does not remain his own experience but it becomes that of everyone. He creates a life, which is new and revealing. He is himself the thesis of his book but views himself as if he were another person writing about himself. Since the autobiographer is the "unique and unknown I," it is a case of depresonalised autobiography.

James Olney feels that the views expressed by phenomenologists have been conveyed metaphorically in a classic expression from Heraclitus, which more or less emphasises the autobiographer's dilemma:

> Heraclitus somewhere says that all things flow and nothing remains still, and comparing existing things to the flowing river, he says that you would not step twice into the same stream.[15]

The factuality being an essential part of all those things which involve perception, consciousness and memories, which Heraclitus likens to a flowing of a river. Memory and the present reality bear a reciprocal relationship: the now, shaping the memory, just as the present moment, the now, is shaped by the memory. And the autobiographer, while trying to remember the past in the present imagines himself to be another person and lives in another world of existence. Roland Barthes also concedes the estrangement between the two personalities of the writer.[16]

The recomposition, reexamination or to use the word appropriated by John Sturrock, a "conversion," takes place only through the medium of language. The autobiographer shapes his past according to the restriction of the language and the language is shaped to suit the restraints of his past. He then concludes that the work is a "textualization of that pretextual life," and "that autobiography is not life itself but a certain artful representation of life."[17] Thus the means of language is absolutely essential for the communication of meaning.

A deconstructionist might argue that language is an abortive gesture, since it cannot mean anything beyond itself; and he will

not hesitate in dissolving the text of an autobiography into thin air. But critics like Georges Gusdorf believe writing to be a second incarnation and language to be "an outpouring of the thought" and also

> thought's externalised form, which once expressed, is able to return to its point of departure. Thus it becomes consciousness, an inner speech, man's discourse to himself, self debating with self, by virtue of which the individual's destiny is formed. Deprived of speech, the mind would fall back into confusion analogous to an animal's, with an unclear consciousness clinging to the present moment... like the torpor of sunbathers on the beach who have made their minds a blank.[18]

Paul John Eakin[19], too, is opposed to the viewpoint of the deconstructionsts which says that since an autobiography is supposed to refer to a past context, the act of reference distorts the image of the past as it really was. So, they argue, that all the historical references are mere fictions by nature. Defending the autobiographical genre as recreation and not merely as a creation of the past, Paul John Eakin contends that the deconstructionist unnecessarily bothers about the unbridgeable gulf between "the things itself" (the experiences of the past) and the "picture" (the representation in the language).His submission is that whereas on the one hand, the language cannot encompass anything beyond itself, the "picture" in language may be taken for the human experience or "the thing itself." Since we experience in language, we cannot analyse pure experience outside its linguistic experience or the verbal text. He finds similar viewpoints expressed by Ricoeur, Fleishman, and Janet Varner Gunn who postulate a phenomenological correlation between the temporal structure of autobiography and what they take to be the essential narrativity of human experience. This point of view finds affirmation in *The Words* by Sartre who demonstrates that the living of the life, which he records, was already firmly steeped in the teleology of nineteenth century biography; a teleology which gave him the basic structure for the design of a life and the creation of an identity.

The deconstructionists may talk about the genre or its linguistical import or about its deep lying structures. But what they have still not understood nor fathomed is the knowledge of self and consciousness even though, in a flamboyant attitude, they may deny rather than affirm its reality. The created self is resultant of the autobiographical process, where it is not only created, but discovered and asserted in the process of writing; and it "re-

quires the reader or the student of autobiography to participate fully in the process, so that the created self becomes at one remove, almost as much the reader's as the author's."[20]

It is a work of enlightenment which gives a glimpse of the individual's inner privacy, hitherto unknown, unseen not only to the readers but also to himself, so that he is able to view himself not as he is but as he wishes to have been. Or the autobiographer may ask and answer the question "How did I become what I am?" "Writing is liberation," wrote Sainte-Beuve, and it is true of autobiography; having indulged in self-examination and having written about it, the writer is not the same person that he was before the artistic creation. The past has been successful in altering the present. The process continues as the human being is constantly being remade. It is a never-ending dialogue with the self, a remaking of self which goes on forever.

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THE ENGLISH LITERATURE CANON, GENDER POLITICS AND FEMINIST SUBVERSIONS: A NOTE

Nilufer E. Bharucha

The English Literature Canon is an imperialist construct with an underlying agenda of racism and gender-based discrimination.[1] The battles Colonialism fought were not merely territorial, they were also textual. Colonisation was as much a war for the hearts and minds of the colonised as it was for their lands. Victory in this war was largely won by the introduction of English Literature as an academic discipline at Indian Universities. English Literature became a part of the curriculum in India decades before it was studied at a formal level in Britain.[2] The subjugation of India begun by Clive and Hastings was continued by Lord Dalhousie and completed by Messers Shakespeare, Milton and Wordsworth.

The establishment of English Literature as an academic subject meant that choices had to be made about the writers to be taught. This formalised the process of canon formation, which had earlier been an informal construct. This English Literature or Eng. Lit. Canon as it is generally called, not only asserted the moral and cultural superiority of the Colonisers over the colonised,[3] but being hypermasculine and androcentric, also marginalised women. Such a canon fitted in well with an imperial ideology that valorised the Male Principle of aggression, assertion and adventure and devalued Female values and qualities. As Edward Said has pointed out, this analogy of male superiority and female subordination was extended by imperialism to the subject nations. So the Orient was imaged as effeminate and powerless, while the West was masculine and powerful.[4]

This was subordination at the socio-cultural and psychological level and hence more powerful and dangerous than mere political conquest. Frantz Fanon and Ngugi Wa Thiong'o have said that such subordination--"Slave mentality"--survives the end of the Empire.[5] The continuing adherence to the imperialist English Literature Canon in Post-colonial India is in keeping with the imaging of the self in the mirror of the West. This Canon continues to proclaim the privileged position of English Literature and is thus

demeaning to the self-esteem of the decolonised nation--also being overwhelmingly male, it devalues women.

It is interesting to note how this racist and sexist canon has been appropriated by the decolonised Indian male, along with the legitimising, authorising powers such as a canon embodies. The mantle of the Dead White European Males (DWEMs) in the English Literature Canon has fallen on the shoulders of the Alive Brown Indian Men. It is an empowerment by proxy. In this game of ideological and gender politics the female sex is the loser. In spite of the fact that the majority of the English Literature teachers and students at most Indian Universities (as indeed in most parts of the world) are women, they are reduced to a passive subject position, where they are the unwitting consumers of a syllabus that either totally ignores them or at best allows them a tokenistic presence and thereby consigns them to the margins of the canonical order. Just as women are relegated to the periphery of the syllabus, so are the Blacks, Jews and Post-colonial writers. Their presence is possible only in the optional papers and not in the core of the canon.

To return more centrally to the question of canon and gender politics, the canon not only relegates women writers to the very edges of the syllabus, but also undermines the female self-image. It reinforces an inferior identity and social position *vis-a-vis* the male. More insidiously the canon equates all things intellectual with men rather than women. The feminine psyche when it is allowed to surface in the canon is a deliberately *marked* sensibility. The critical/authorising/legitimising materials on a Jane Austen novel focus on her female sensibility. Her small, cameo-like world view is contrasted with the sweeping vision and vast canvas of the male novelists. Critical theorists would have us believe that it's a woman's world, a woman's interests which are portrayed in an Austen world. There is an unvoiced, but nevertheless implied aside that such a woman's world is not on a par with and cannot be equated with the wider male world.

Such a canon notwithstanding, methodology can be used to subvert patriarchal critique and reduction of all things female. Subaltern feminist readings can be made to counter a patriarchal canon. Feminist readings can correct the distorted patriarchal world view embodied by the canon. Austen's rationality, cool, analytical

thinking, irony, distance and the objectivity with which she invests her novels can be focussed upon in a feminist reading. This would correct the stereotypical notion that rationality, irony, objectivity and the ability to think analytically are male monopolies. Also where Austen is emotional, warm and nurturing in the novels should be highlighted as positive, desirable feminine qualities. This would explode the male purveyed myth of nurturing feminine attributes being intrinsically inferior to essentially aggrressive male qualities. Then, George Eliot has been reduced in a different manner by the canon. She has been stripped of her femininity and turned into an honorary male. Hence being a mental, if not biological, man, she is allowed to write the male-type of serious novels--novels where religion, philosophy and ethics can be discussed as opposed to frivolous female fripperies. Here the female reality, the biological gender is sought to be suppressed by a superimposed, male identity. Feminist readings could reclaim a writer of George Eliot's status to the female fold. Again, Virgina Woolf, the token woman in the modernist canon, is differently managed by patriarchy. In her case the hysteria, neurosis and other such female weaknesses are stressed-- the so-called negative attributes of highly-strung, blue-stocking type of woman. Such women at best ended up with broken marriages or at worst as suicide statistics. Here the pressures on women in modernist/industrial societies, where they are expected to be economically independent, sexually liberated and at the same time conform to the societal expectations regarding 'good' wives and mothers, can be the focus of feminist readings.

Gender politics in a patriarchal canon surfaces even more sinisterly in texts written by men who are generally considered to be sensitive/empathetic to women's needs/aspirations, i.e. Bernard Shaw and Shakespeare. The latent sexist biases of Shavian texts surface in a feminist reading of *Man and Superman*, as do the traps such men set for women who are liberated, the earlier Suffragettes and now the Feminists. The sneaky, sneering at Anne Whitefield, the undermining of women in the Hell Scene, the equating of women with the biological Life Force and that of men with the intellectual Creative Force, is no less sexist than Tennyson's oft-quoted lines "she for the hearth and he for the field."

Shakespeare's fabled sensitivity towards his romantic heroines is challenged by a feminist reading of *Merchant of Venice*. My

students, in workshop sessions, have seen Portia as a stifled feminist, oppressed by a patriarchy which reaches out from beyond earthly existence, to impose its will on her and to suppress her female sexuality.[6] The sexist bias is even more evident in the portrayal of both Ophelia and Gertrude, both of whom are quite blatantly, and in very crude language denied the right to their own sexuality. Lady Macbeth is another much reviled woman character in Shakespeare, who becomes sympathetic if given a non-patriarchal reading.

Gender politics and sexist biases can thus be countered by feminist readings. These act as awareness-raising devices and create a positive self-image among women students and correct sexist stereotypes among men students. This could well frustrate the insidious machinations of a patriarchal, canonical syllabus.

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[2]This aspect of the Eng. Lit. curriculum has been highlighted by Chris Baldwick in *The Social Mission of Criticism: 1848-1932*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1983.

[3]See Macaulay's (in) famous "Minute on Education (1835)," wherein he had claimed that a shelf of European Literature is worth more than entire Eastern libraries.

[4]Edward Said, *Orientalism*, Pantheon, New York, 1978.

[5]See Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, 1961 and more particularly *Black Faces White Masks*, 1967. Also refer to *Decolonizing the Mind: the Politics of Language in African Literature* by Ngugi Wa Thiongi'o, 1986.

[6]This Workshop has been reported in *Focus on English*, British Council, Madras, Vol.III, No.3, June 1993 under the title, "Shakespeare in the Time of Postcolonialism."

FEMINISM IN NAYANTARA SAHGAL'S NOVELS

B.D. Sharma

Nayantara Sahgal's leanings towards feminism, even though mild, are quite marked in her novels *Storm in Chandigarh* and *A Situation in New Delhi*. The fact comes to light when one studies the undeserved ill-treatment a large number of her women characters in these novels have to undergo in the society, and tries to know why they are driven to committing suicide or to seeking divorce, or to undergoing torments defencelessly when it becomes inevitable.

The woman character who is driven to committing suicide is Madhu in *A Situation in New Delhi*.[1] The society that Nayantara creates in *A Situation in New Delhi* is one which fails to protect women even on the University campus in the capital city of the country as here Madhu, a student of Delhi University, is raped in the Registrar's office. The boys who rape Madhu obviously regard Madhu only as an object of lust to be used at their disposal and have no regard for her feelings, will and self-respect. A society which produces such men and cannot punish them does not deserve to have women in it. One may raise an objection and argue that the whole society should not be disparaged for what three boys do, because if this society has produced these three boys, it has also produced Usman Ali the Vice-Chancellor, who not only expels the three guilty boys but also braves a physical assault and finally resigns as Vice-Chancellor in order to organize people against the guilty. Usman Ali, no doubt, fights the forces responsible for the rape of the girl, but the fact remains that his efforts bear little fruit and, at last, the girl realizes that even her brother "would be thankful when he was relieved of the responsibility of her" (*ASIND*, p.156) and commits suicide in a state of helplessness by immolating herself. So it is obvious that this society has failed to create conditions in which women feel themselves safe and out of the reach of immoral men.

The women characters who have to opt to move out of the conjugal walls in order to escape illtreatment are Saroj in *Storm in Chandigarh*, and Lydia and Nell in *A Situation in New Delhi*. Saroj's husband Inder ill-treats his wife chiefly for her having lost her virginity before marriage as is evident from the following piece of conversation between him and his wife:

> "Well, why did you do it? That's what I keep coming back to. Why did you do it?" "I was fond of him," she said wearily, "and I was curious. Is that a crime?" "Good God. Didn't you have any inhibitions, any sense of modesty? Couldn't your curiosity wait till you got married?"[2]

But Inder himself too had lost his virginity long before his marriage, as the narrator reports: "There had been no such nightmare to contend with until his marriage. He (Inder) had been precocious and successful in sex, robustly collecting experience where he found it. Saroj had plundered that robustness, made a tortured image of the body's surrender, and nailed him to the inquisitor's chair" (*SIC*, p.136). Since he had had a lot of erotic experience before his marriage there is no ethical justification behind his expecting his wife to have none. Saroj undergoes even beating for this fault of hers, but Inder never punishes himself for his faults of identical nature.

Lydia and Nell, the two ladies who become Michael's wives successively in *A Situation in New Delhi* have to seek divorce because they find the husband's behaviour to be intolerable. When Michael was Lydia's husband, "his drinking had blossomed into epic proportion" (*ASIND*, P.12) and his behaviour towards her was far from satisfactory. Likewise, Nell began to feel soon after her marriage with him that he was only using her, as is evident from her remark: " 'You go on using [women] up like matches....' " (*ASIND*, P.12). Since in each of these cases it is the husband who is at fault, it can be safely inferred that the novelist lays blame for the failure of each of these marriages at the husband's door and regards the wife as a victim of the male domination in society.

The woman character who has to undergo torments defencelessly because she finds her husband incorrigible is Nadira, the wife of Usman Ali. Nadira feels herself to have been wronged by her husband, as she has come to know that he is in love with Devi, even though she herself has not shown even one single symptom of frailty, as the narrator reports: "Nadira, looking on, wondered how he could, without going near a woman, *this* woman, look as if he possessed her utterly, a latent sensuality about even this ordinary leave-taking. It was the intangibles in her life with Usman that tormented her, nothing so explicable as adultery, though that was one of her demons too" (*ASIND*, pp.80-81). Nadira is faithful to her husband in spite of the fact that Usman Ali married late as a result of which there is a wide gap between their ages.

Nadira is hurt to find that her husband is availing himself of more freedom than a married man has a right to avail himself by making love to Devi. There is nothing unnatural or extraordinary in a wife's desiring her husband to be exclusively hers as there is nothing unnatural in a husband's desiring his wife to be exclusively his. Inevitably, he has hurt Nadira very deeply, as is evident from the following exchange of remarks between them:

> 'Everyone has a past', said Usman, 'and the past has a way of continuing into the present. We can't at some point say it's over and done with. Bits of it linger and they should. It's part of the perfume of life.'
>
> 'I gave up everything when I married you,' said Nadira.
>
> 'That you did not. You brought it all with you, your attitudes, your prejudices. We all do.' Nadira drew a hand across her eyes. 'Very well Usman. What I mean is her. As long as our life was more or less normal I could put up with her. But now I don't know what to expect.' (*ASIND*, p.136)

Nadira's compelling Usman to cease to be in love with Devi is not at all unjustifiable. Usman's insisting on letting his past continue in the present has no moral or social justification behind it and his wife has every reason to resent and call him ruthless.

The way Nadira suffers torments defencelessly is, in Mrs. Sahgal's opinion, typical of womankind, as her narrator in the novel reports: "{Nadira} turned around, her eyes with their look of more than childlike defencelessness, a creature of slaughter and sacrifice. Either that or a prized possession. In any case, womankind, not woman" (*ASIND*.p.82) and provides an aperture for the reader to peep into Mrs. Sahgal's mind and read there that for her womenfolk have been suffering torments defencelessly at the hands of menfolk just as Nadira has been at the hands of Usman Ali.

Secondly, Mrs. Sahgal creates a number of feminists in her novels and makes them give appealing arguments in support of women's claims to be regarded as individuals rather than as mere dependents. Such characters include men like Vishal Dubey in *Storm in Chandigarh* and Rishad in *A Situation in New Delhi*, and women characters like Tazi and Reba again in *A Situation in New Delhi*. Vishal Dubey would like women not to remain subdued and to express themselves:"(Dubey) thought of his own country-women as the subdued sex, creatures not yet emerged from the chrysalis, for whom the adventure of self-expression had not even begun. Whatever womanhood had once meant in India had been lost in

the mists of antiquity. In its place these had long been a figure of humility, neck bent/ eyes downcast, living flesh consigned to oblivion" (SIC, p.191). Vishal resents the fact that a woman is not regarded as an individual, as he reflects, "Women were not a subject for discussion. They were wives, daughters, mothers. They belonged to their men by contract or by blood. Their sphere was sexual and their job procreation. They were dependents, not individuals" (*SIC*, p.191). Dubey holds that a woman is punished for the faults which are considered tolerable if a man commits them: "A woman was not entitled to a past, not entitled to human hunger, human passion, or even human error. In the fires and desolations of living she ranked as not quite human" (*SIC*, p.192). These are the arguments of a feminist voicing his protest against the dominance of male human beings in the society.

Rishad, the other feminist, would like a girl to marry a boy of her choice, and regards an arranged marriage as a case of " 'organized rape'" (*ASCIND*, p.25).When Rishad comes to know that Pinky is going to be given in marriage to a boy whom she has never met, he refuses even to attend the marriage and expresses his resentment. If he had had his way, he would have freed Pinky from the need of her seeking her mother's permission or, for that matter, anybody's permission to go out. His argument that a girl be allowed to marry a boy of her choice is quite appealing. Tazi and Reba voice women's resentment at being subjected to the humiliation of undergoing close supervision: they would like to get married early so that they escape prying supervision. The fact becomes evident when we read the narrator's report: "Tazi and Reba kept repeating soon [Pinky]'d be living her own life away from prying supervision:..." (*ASIND*, p.148).

However, these assertions should not be taken to mean that Nayantara Sahgal is a champion of women's complete liberation and likes women to have nothing to do with men. If her women characters, who are free from the dominance of men, had exercised adequate restraints over themselves and had been shown leading spotless lives, she could have been regarded as a champion of women's complete liberation. But the fact remains that her women characters, who are free from the dominance of men, do not exercise adequate self-restraint and do not lead blameless lives. We can take the case of Devi, for instance: even though she is free from the dominance of a husband as she is a widow, she is in love

with two men, namely Usman Ali and Michael.

The second reason why Nayantara Sahgal cannot be regarded as a champion of women's liberation is that she admits the fact that a woman needs a husband biologically. The fact comes to light when we study the way Nadira reconciles herself to her lot and refrains from rising in rebellion against her husband even though she finds him not at all inclined to ceasing to be in love with Devi. Thirdly, it is also noticeable that neither Tazi nor Reba has a desire to remain single, nay either of them is desirous of getting married as early as possible so that they may escape "prying supervision." If Nayantara Sahgal had been an aggressive feminist, at least some of her feminist women characters must have resolved to remain single as Tennyson's Princess at the early stage does. Fourthly, it is worth-noticing that the feminist male character, Rishad, when her enters Dr. Jaipal's house, cuts with his scissors the dresses of late Mrs. Jaipal-- a woman--rather than those of a cruel husband, and loses his life, when a bomb planted by one of his friends explodes, before doing anything worthwhile. If Mrs. Sahgal had been strongly in sympathy with him, this feminist of hers would not have done anything against woman and would have met a better fate. Fifthly, the arguments some of her champions of women's liberation give in support of liberation are too poor to deserve serious consideration. For instance, Tazi and Reba resent their elders' not letting them smoke, drink, wear tight dresses, come back home late at night and pose for advertisements.

If these girls had any knowledge of medical science, they would have realized that it was in their own interest not to smoke, drink and wear tight dresses. And if they had had any knowledge of the conditions prevailing in their society, they would have been aware of the fact that it was prudent to come back home early in the evening.

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[2]Nayantara Sahgal, *Storm in Chandigarh* (New Delhi. : Penguin Books, 1980), p.131. All the subsequent quotations from this novel (*SIC*, for short) refer to this edition.

HOLDING THE HEIGHTS: HART CRANE'S EVOCATION OF WALT WHITMAN IN "CAPE HATTERAS"

K. Narayana Chandran

Readers of Hart Crane's "Cape Hatteras" (*The Bridge IV*) have little reason to question the propriety of Walt Whitman's spectral presences there. For Crane takes special care to speak not only the name of his debt to Whitman but the nature of its troubled inheritance for him. In a world riven by war and machinery, Whitman's is probably the only enabling presence, a bridge Crane sees as spanning the diminished present and the country's heroic past.

Understandably, therefore, we see Crane making a series of focalizing gestures in order to accommodate Whitman's spectres as friend, confidant, elder brother, *Panis Angelicus,* adversary, mourner, lover, mythic saviour, Meistersinger, etc. The wider consensus on Whitman's spectral role in *The Bridge* notwithstanding, one might wonder why Crane exalts Whitman, a proud evangelist of America's technological powers, a dreamer of his country.

Has the spectre now become for Crane a prisoner of Whitman's own popular image? That, I think, is very unlikely for we know that Crane was arguably the most intelligent assimilator of Whitman one could imagine in American literary history. I wish to propose, then, that the poet himself gives us a clue to his enlightened use of Whitman's example in the following passage:

> But who has held the heights more sure than thou,
> O Walt!--Ascensions of thee hover in me now
> As thou at junctions elegiac, there, of speed
> With vast eternity...
> ...
> O, upward from the dead
> Thou bringest tally...
> of living brotherhood! (Crane, "Cape Hatteras":81-82)

Crane's point, I believe, is that he can see Whitman's ascensions as qualitatively and intentionally different from others', for example, from those of Crane's skygak and by extension, from those of Crane himself. Mark, for example, how the poet feels it so urgent to proclaim, "O Walt!--Ascensions of thee hover in me

now..." (emphasis added). Let us also recall now that *The Bridge* was completed in 1930 and that "Cape Hatteras" was the last section to be written by Crane. I cannot help thinking that the spiralling ascent and descent described so dramatically in "Cape Hatteras" replicates the doom of those financial wizards of the American stock market. The Wall Street was gripped by panic selling in October 1929. The downward movement in stock prices triggered desperate and insane selling. Crane does not forget to mention the aeroplane, now about to crashland, "sink[ing] with/ Enormous repercussive listings" as "Giddily spirall[ing]" (Cranes:81). What price the investors had had to pay for their arrogance and moral hebetude now belongs to history.

Furthermore, there is more to Whitman's *flight* Crane seems to have perceived intuitively than most readers of his poem are willing to allow. I quote just one example of an interpretive quandary, quite extreme as it happens, regarding "Ascensions" from a recent study. "More than a trace of ironic bitterness can be detected in Crane's exclamation: 'But who has held the heights more sure than thou, /O Walt!' Indeed, while the image of Whitman incorporated into Crane and internalized...appears to figure only the younger poet's inspiration by the older, these risings and hoverings of Whitman do not bode well for the host who finds his poem inhabited by this ghostly parasite" (Edelman: 221).

Far from it. Crane, I believe, glorifies Whitman's "Ascensions" precisely because they are so happily free from "ironic bitterness" that characterizes ego's momentary thrill of an ascent and the consequent embarrassment of a crashed descent. For Crane at least, unlike the skygak's doomed orgy of pride, Whitman's urge for conquest has a cognizable and valid *spiritual* sanction. No matter how presumptuous Whitman's "Ascensions" seek "junctions of speed/ With vast eternity," what ennobles them is his recognition of man's empirical self as different from, and infinitely smaller than, the Soul. This exercise in, and experience of, humility strikes Crane as most salutary. Whitman, we recall, spoke of this realization so movingly in "Passage to India":

> Swiftly I shrivel at the thought of God,
> At nature and its wonders, Time and Space and Death,
> But that I, turning, call to thee O Soul....(Whitman:327)

The self that celebrates is not the celebrated, the "Actual Me;"

they are different but need to collaborate in order to deliver the "Sanskrit charge/To conjugate infinity's dim marge..."(Crane: 81). Whitman has had no problem in taming *his* ego, making it subserve the Soul's demands. The union of these two selves--the phenomenal "me" and the "Actual Me"--is indeed the fraternal bond Whitman celebrates in the passage, again from his "Passage to India," from which Crane selects his epigraph to "Cape Hatteras:"

> Reckoning ahead O Soul, when thou, the time achiev'd,
> The seas all cross'd, weather'd the capes, the voyage done,
> ...
> As filled with friendship, love complete, the Elder Brother found
> The younger melts in fondness in his arms. (Whitman: 327)

The Whitman whose "Ascensions" hover in Crane has always been attentive to those solemn soundings of the Vedas that exhort man to transcend the ego-- and all the phenomenal versions and vanities that beset it. Put differently, in order to *conjugate* "infinity's dim marge,' man must *subjugate* his empirical self. Crane realizes that the Western mind, heady in the whirl and speed of modern technology, has begun to confuse his proud little self (the poet calls it "an atom in a shroud," "an engine in a cloud") with Whitman's "Actual Me." That, surely, is a grievous error. Crane's Whitman soars upward in an act of transcendence rather than of transgression. And that, again, is no small lesson for a poet whose giddily spiralling verses in "Cape Hatteras" seek calm resolution in slow, measured, broken, step-like descension:

> yes, Walt,
> Afoot again, and onward without halt,--
> Not soon, nor suddenly,--no, never to let go
> My hand
> In yours,
> Walt Must--
> So--(Crane:84)

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NISHA DA CUNHA'S *OLD CYPRESS*: A NOTE

Urmila Varma

Widely acclaimed for her first collection of short stores, *Old Cypress Stories* (1991), Nisha da Cunha has established herself among the top-ranking Indian writers in English. She displays great insight into the poignant human conditions and writes mostly about those who are oppressed in spirits and lonely, and are suffering from a sense of loss. Her sensibility is primarily feminine. Her women suffer from fear, uncertainty, despair and rejection. They, however, come to terms with separation, insecurity and death. In the title story, "Old Cypress", Radha's husband of twenty-nine years' marriage leaves her for a younger woman, whereas in "On Summer Meeting," a mother tries to explain to her adult son why she suddenly left him and the home. In "African Bird," we witness an inside view of the thoughts of a beautiful woman who has just had a leg amputated. In "Three Lives," a young girl is forced into a hated marriage as her mother looks on helplessly. Obviously these stories look like disconnected chapters of a novel.

"Old Cypress," which happens to be the longest story of her first collection, is the story of Radha and Rohan who have been married for almost thirty years. They decide to leave Bombay and settle, after retirement, in a house named 'Old Cypress' situated in a tea-estate. It is when Radha has almost finished the packing, Rohan comes out with the announcement that he is not going to leave Bombay to live with her at the Old Cypress as he is involved with a young woman working at his office. The woman, Aditi, happens to be as young as their son who is twenty-six years old. The news is quite heart-rending and unbelievable. It is an appalling as well as poignant situation for Radha and amounts to an act of treachery on her husband's part. The life, however, does go on and Radha proceeds to begin her life at Old Cypress. Going through the phases of fear, anxiety and loneliness, she finally comes to terms with her life.

"Old Cypress" is not simply a story of broken marriage as so many things are packed in it. The situation has been seen through Radha's psyche. To begin with, she reacts in a typical womanly fashion. She is shocked at the pretensions and secrecy of her husband. She is inquisitive as well as sarcastic about Rohan's

relationship with Aditi. The betrayal and the resulting hurt is quite pronounced in her utterances, when she questions the trust, loyalty and fidelity of her husband. She abuses him, calls him a bastard. She is unable to reconcile with her husband's abrupt move and feels only a man can act in such a beastly manner. She wishes women more like men. Rohan's point of view remains quite subdued and weak. He sounds rather unconvincing when he intervenes to say that he likes Aditi for she makes him feel younger. She hates Rohan for his deception. His act meant only betrayal and a kind of death for her.

Many subtle emotions have been captured through Radha's thought process which goes back and forth. It is through her interior monologues that we come to know her personality and her reflexes. She admits, "Always went backwards-- I mean I did-- and I still do." For her the past and the present are the same. She feels we have separated the time just for our convenience and pretend or force ourselves to forget it. Radha's inner world brings about many more differences between Radha and Rohan. While packing things, letters, photographs and the books, she finds them as one's own life, a proof of everything that has happened. Rohan, however, feels that packers can do the job better as they would pack the things impersonally, discarding away the junk. Radha rejects the idea because she feels that packers cannot deal with one's past.

The theme of the sense of loss is quite pronounced. In a letter to Radha, a friend writes to her, "Loss, I think is an opaque pane of glass in a window, vista lost."[2] Nisha da Cunha is very perceptive and sensitive to lonely people due to old age. While describing the old, unwanted people she goes on piling up visual images in a cinematographic technique:

> Living with their grown-up children—more than a little unwanted--facing a smaller and smaller space, trying to be unobtrusive, making oneself invisible, finally not even a room of their own, a part of a room—sharing and not wanted, baby-sitting in a flat, gazing out of a window or a bit of a balcony—one dusty potted plant and teeny bit of sky--upwards a kite, a crow, a cloud and downwards people hurrying—people running-off-to-work or back-from-work sounds. Apart. Not wanted—a bit of a bore if truth were told.[3]

The images used by Nisha da Cunah are mostly borrowed from the world of nature and there is a sensuous appeal about them. She describes how the feel of person lingers on in the

present which cannot be taken merely as a feeling of nostalgia. It is very much real in the present, in the sounds, in smell, in touch. It remains in "The smell of a sari worn by someone. The smell of mogra in the hair-- the long-ago person is there. Is here."[4] The landscape, looking like an impressionist painting, shows her sense of colour, "...water cascading down, deep green, deep green silence—all around in the near and far distance, violet blue hills."[5] The image of leaves on a tree appears almost Keatsian when Rohan asks Radha to let the past go," ..naturally, like the leaves on a tree...."[6] The house where Radha has gone to settle down appears almost animate in looks: "For many days the house stayed aloof, very cold, hostile."[7] The prevailing atmosphere in the house and its surroundings has been described in terms of darkness and light. The mist, the smoke and the darkness of bushes recur and acquire a symbolic stature. The old cypress looms large over the house and the garden, intensifying gloom. Radha can even hear the creaking sounds of cypress, a reminder of the breaking point in her long standing marriage and her relationship with Rohan. Compared to this darkness, the light signifies kindliness and friendliness.

In spite of her academic background, Nisha da Cunha does not display any literary pretensions. She uses simple words, short sentences, but at times, she does use rather long sentences and long paragraphs, which give expression to mental aberrations, disturbances and excitement. There is a natural flow, a rhythm and lyrical quality in her style and a vibrant yet familiar note in her language. She tells her story well, using variety of methods like the flash-back technique, interior monologue, parenthesis between the half-articulated sentences, repetition of words, and phrases, which bring out the poignant moments.

Her stories are similar to those of Katherine Mansfield which state a situation without bringing the story to a neat ending. She talks about this aspect of short stories in "The Author's Very Short Note" to *Old Cypress Stories*: "The stories get longer and longer because I no longer feel a story need have a neat little twist to end it. I think a story now will just keep moving on open-ended allowing me and the reader to make up our minds about life, or rather, the lives of those who live in my stories."[8]

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[2]Ibid.,p.36.

[3]Ibid., p. 37.

[4]Ibid.,p.19.

[5]Ibid.,pp.25-6.

[6]Ibid., p.19.

[7]Ibid., p.21.

[8]Nisha da Cunha, "The Author's Very Short Note," *Old Cypress Stories.*

BOOK REVIEWS

M.S. Pandey, *The Religious Poetry of W.H. Auden*
(Jaipur: Pointer Publishers, 1990), pp.152, Rs. 160.

A.N. Dwivedi

This critical treatise reveals a somewhat hidden aspect of W.H. Auden's poetic personality--his religious preoccupations after his conversion into Christianity and his settlement in America in 1939. Generally, Auden is known as a poet of Marxist leanings, not as a religious poet. The present treatise dwells at length on his religious poetry and attempts to trace the religious implications even in his poems of the Thirties. But the religious predominance is discovered in his poetry written in the Forties and afterwards.

The present work consists of seven chapters, besides preface, acknowledgments, select bibliography, and index. The first chapter being introductory highlights the chaotic conditions obtaining in the human world between the two Great Wars. The inspired young poets of the day resorted to Marxism as a measure of relief to the poor and the aggrieved. Auden, who saw the defeat of the Spanish Republicans by the army of General Franco as well as the conquest of Poland by the Nazis, felt as though his dreams and ideals had been shattered. He vented his anguished thoughts and feelings in his touching poem "Spain 1937." So much so that he left Europe, crossed the Atlantic, assumed American citizenship, and shifted his loyalty to the Church. The second chapter, "The Shaping of the Religious Sensibility," concentrates on various influences having contributed to the build-up of Auden's mind and art.

In chapters 3-6, Dr. Pandey makes an analysis of the religious poetry produced by Auden in his creative career. Though in the Thirties the religious strain is not so pronounced in Auden's verse, some of his poems carry moral and spiritual overtones--poems like "1929," "Petition," "The Wanderer," "The Watchers," "Spain 1937," and "Victor." Chapter 4 deals with Auden's poems composed during 1939-1942, and some of the poems having religious inclinations are: "New Year Letter," "Like a Vocation," "The Prophets," "The Riddle," "Anthem for St. Cecelia's Day," "The Quest," "Leap Before You Look," etc. Chapter 5 shows the

poet's keener awareness of the Christian faith and his exploration of the relations between the aesthetic and the spiritual. In this connection, one can particularly mention "The Sea and the Mirror," *The Age of Anxiety* (July 1944--November 1946), "Canzone," "A Healthy Spot," "Anthem," and "The Duet" (1947). The poetical volume titled *The Age of Anxiety* powerfully investigates the depth of human guilt caused by the Original Sin bringing about the Fall of Man. But it is tacitly and poetically suggested that man can strive and eventually 'regain Paradise,' to use a Miltonic expression. Chapter 6 takes into account Auden's poems composed from 1948 to 1973, and pinpoints 'another change of heart', as Gerald Nelson puts it. At this stage, the poet tries to transcend the barriers of religion and ethics and enters into a felt mystical kinship with the Divine. He also tries to evolve a harmony between the ordinary and the extraordinary, the temporal and the eternal, the personal and the universal.

The seventh and last chapter draws certain pertinent conclusions. Like Yeats and Eliot, Auden also attempted to create a kind of order and harmony in the otherwise taxed and troubled world. Both Eliot and Auden have treated of Sin and Evil prevalent in the modern human world, and both have sought a way out of it by upholding the triumph of Virtue and Good in the long run. Dr. Pandey finally agrees with Prof. M.K. Spear in suggesting that Auden's pilgrimage resembles that of Dante from "Inferno" through "Purgatorio" to "Paradiso" (p.139).

A close analysis of Dr. Pandey's book on Auden's religious poetry has convinced me that there are certain hidden aspects of his art and that one should approach such a resourceful poet with an open heart and an unbiased mind. This critical study makes a detailed exposition of a hitherto-unknown facet of Auden's poetic personality--of his religious and spiritual preoccupations --in his later poetry. It is certainly creditable that Dr. Pandey has not digressed anywhere or indulged in undue rhetorical devices in the presentation of his chosen subject.

Asha Viswas, *Mapping the Shore: Exercises in Criticism*

(Delhi: K.K. Publications, 1995), pp.153+VI, Rs. 240.

G. Nageswara Rao

Mapping the Shore contains a variety of responses to different genres and different artists. The critical responses reveal an evolution of critical sensibility, analysis and taste. What one undeniably notices in these responses is freedom from critical dogmas and honest verbalization of an unprejudiced reader. Very often we find critics saying things as they are writing. Genuine criticism, on the other hand, is produced because the critic writes when he has something to say, particularly when the critic believes what he has to say, is an honest response to a work of art.

What absorbed me in these responses recorded is the author's pursuit to define realms of experience communicated by the works of the artists studied. *Mapping the Shore* is thus positing the realms of experience and the contours of vision. Only in such an attempt to relive we transcend the stifling tyranny of the critical theories, principles and doctrines. What Dr. Viswas perceived in Shakespeare is the dramatist's artistic genius in utilizing the scenic opportunities to posit his tragic vision of life. The essay brings to mind the commonly forgotten dramatic aim of Shakespeare-- "Shakespeare has developed this scenic opportunism to induce emotional variations in his audience by the most subtle methods, though, of course, character is never abandoned completely. Drama after all aims at an illusion of life." What Shakespeare presents in his plays is not a poetical conflict or a specific tragic flaw but the whole range of emotions--sublimity, comedy, heroism, failure, hatred, disgust, love and so on--the complex web of the mental, psychological and the spiritual make up of life, the perennial human predicament. Dr. Asha Viswas has drawn the attention of the reader to the least explored aspect of Shakespearean art, undeniably essential to a proper understanding and appreciation of Shakespeare.

What is strikingly fresh in these essays is the predominance of quotations from the text and primary sources to substantiate her response to the work studied. Besides analysing the works of art, the innate poetic beauty and the artistic expression of it are unmis-

takably expounded. The kind of critical insight we find in the essay on Tennyson is something that emerges only through a rich assimilation of literary environment of the Victorian age, a perceptive understanding of the intellectual milieu, the social ethos and a proper understanding of the entire creative writings of Tennyson. The critic, certainly, has not only relished the artistic vision and the poetic rendering of it, but has, what one may call ascetic patience, to wait until her response blossoms through the delight of meditation. This looks like a poet responding to a kindred poet. The best criticism comes from the poets responding to poets. The study of "*Gitagovinda* and *Gitanjali*," at times, enters the mazes of a splitting classification of the 'Naikas' by Jaideva and Tagore. Neither Jaideva nor Tagore could escape from the Romantic feebleness of stereotype sentiments. One wonders how such lapses a critic could keep aside in the process of appreciating the divinity of human love. The tolerance shown in the essay on Jaideva and Tagore rarely appears in her study of Ezekiel and Hesiod. Asha Viswas unsparingly condemns their male Chauvinism.

The validity of some studies in the collection may not be accepted by a student of literature but disagreements of this kind are exactly the stuff on which criticism flourishes. One has to read *Mapping the Shore* not merely for what one accepts but also for what one questions.

O.P Mathur, *Indian Political Novel and Other Essays*
(Allahabad: Kitab Mahal, 1995), pp. 200, Rs. 250.

K.K. Sharma

Indian Political Novel and other Essays by Prof. O.P. Mathur is a useful collection of eleven critical essays and three interviews. Though all the pieces amply evince the celebrated critic's brilliance and range of reading, yet it is the long opening one which most displays his critical insight and perception. It is not easy to define the political novel and differentiate it from the historical novel, for the word 'politics' has been defined variously, and is almost all-pervasive and hence, as Prof. Mathur rightly points out, is "so flexible as to include all human activities related to some form of 'dominance,' from government to clubs, kitchens and even the relationship between man and woman" (p.10). In an attempt to define the political novel, the author refers to the views of Joseph L. Blotner, Irving Howe, and H.A.L.Fisher. He brings out the subtle distinction between politics and the umbrella term 'history,' and then demarcates the area of politics and the nature and scope of the political novel by stressing that it is concerned with contemporary political life and ideas. After getting through the difficult maze of 'politics,' the writer concentrates on the Indian political novels of the post-independence era written in English and Hindi. What makes this very long essay, running over sixty-six pages, especially valuable is the fact that it offers an illuminating comparative study of two of the most important and popular literatures of the country.

The next two articles set forth Prof. Mathur's bold analysis of Salman Rushdie's two early novels from the standpoint of reality and 'sense and sensibility.' Saleem, the picaresque hero of *Midnight Children*, presents, to quote Mr. Mathur's words, "a mirror of the fragmentation and multiplicity of Indian society and the confusion of social, religious, regional and parochial identities under which Indians suffer"(p.76). *Shame*, which is called by the novelist a "fairy tale," is rightly interpreted as a work written in oblong narrative technique to portray the Pakistani reality as a world in "fragments of broken mirrors." These two political novels by the highly controversial novelist, who could write *The Satanic Verses*, have been evaluated both thematically and technically by Prof. Mathur with empathy.

The two critical pieces on Arun Joshi's last two novels are an attempt to comprehend and communicate the novelist's

preoccupation with modern man's predicament and his efforts to grasp the labyrinth of life and eternity. On account of Arun Joshi's positive and profound delineation of life, death and eternity, it is very difficult to disagree with Prof. Mathur when he proclaims the author of *The Last Labyrinth* and *The City and the River* to be "one of the most significant Indian English novelists today." True, had he lived for a few more years to produce a couple of novels more, he would have surely been in the class of great metaphysical novelists of the world.

Prof. Mathur scrutinizes Amrinder's *Lajo* and Khushwant Singh's *Delhi* from the viewpoint of socio-political reality and the Sikh's facing a crisis of identity. It is a very difficult task to bracket two novels written in two different countries in two different contexts by two writers of different sex and nationality. But the scholarly critic has been able to accomplish it and has made a commendable comparative study of the two works both thematically and technically. He does not hesitate in pinpointing the artistic strength and weakness of these two best sellers of recent years.

The volume contains three essays on Indian English poets--one each on Sarojini Naidu, Shiv K. Kumar and Margaret Chatterjee. While Dr. Mathur highlights the singing quality, the lyrical genius of Sarojini Naidu, he accentuates the Indianness of two different kinds in the poetry of Shiv K. Kumar and Margaret Chatterjee. The arrangement of these three essays would have been more meaningful thematically, if the essay on Sarojini had been followed by those on Shiv K. Kumar and Margaret Chatterjee. The article on Tagore's plays, though incisive, breaks the continuity of the author's approach to Indian English poetry. Moreover, the pieces on Graham Greene and William Golding do not fully fit in with the thematic scheme of the book. Without these two preces, the book could have a very effective thematic unity, for in that case it would have been basically about Indian English literature with a focus on socio-political reality, Indianness and identity crisis.

Whatever comments I have made on the arrangement and inclusion of some of the pieces are just by way of suggestion, and are not meant, in any way, to detract from the intrinsic worth of the volume. Prof. Mathur is an eminent academic critic of global fame, and the book, under review, fully bears a testimony to it. I very much wish that he may publish more to enlighten us and to enrich Indian English criticism.

A.N. Dwivedi, *Random Reflections*

(Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation, 1994), pp.74, Rs.60.

R.L. Khandelwal

It is a matter of great pleasure to me that I have a collection of original poems (about 40 poems in number) in English on hand. The title of the collection, *Random Reflections*, unfailingly suggests to me the essential character of the poems contained in it—as being basically reflective, intellectual and critical in nature on matters social, cultural, philosophical and personal. The entire composition wears a dress of sobriety, serenity and sensuousness. The perennial source of such a composition is traceable to the values and ideals deeply ingrained in Indian ethos which stirs the poet to wield his pen at moments of a white heat of ardent creative fervour. The age-tested Upanishadic teachings and the high tenets of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism have appropriately provided the spotless flashes of joy and glory to the poet, who has transmitted his bold, life-long convictions to the modern readers. The glow and warmth of the eternal values of life unmistakably pervades the texture of this poetical creation. The stark and harsh realities of modern life--political, social and cultural--form the basic concern of the poet who is ever alive to the vibrations of human life and the winds of social changes. All this offers strength and vitality to the genuine utterances of the upcoming poet.

The total personality of the poet as it emerges from a close reading of this poetical collection may be recollected as follows:

a. it is a sober and meditative nature given to philosophical broodings and reflections (poems 1 and 25) as situations unfold themselves;

b. it is a pious and genial soul (poems 9 and 11);

c. it is a close and keen observer of Man and Society in their intricate relationships and behaviour (poems 3-6 and 19-21);

d. it is forthright and conscientious in delineating a true citizen's duty while minding its own business and upholding the civic and human values;

e. it remains a *SADHAK* at heart and soul (poems

2,8,13,,14,15,16,27,28 and 29);

f. it is highly romantic and sensuous at times (poems 35 to 40); and

g. it is sometimes rebellious against the existing state of affairs or the established and yet worn-out social order.

In short, the poet's personality is mutifaceted and multicoloured.

To manage such a vast thematic canvas with a matching skill in handling a foreign language and its subtle nuances in a masterly manner is highly commendable. Nothing seems to be blurred and hazy in expression. Words and phrases chosen with a caring eye are polished and chiselled to the last touch, and sentences are studded with striking, neat and clean, heart-to-heart transparent expressions.

In fine, the creative effort of Dr. A.N. Dwivedi may prove to be a sumptuous treat to those who care to be aesthetically nourished through winged words and sententious statements. The poet feels thinkingly and thinks feelingly.

Satish K. Gupta, *Kenneth Burke's Literary Theory*
(New Delhi: Anmol Publications, 1995), pp.XVI + 137, Rs. 175

Meera Panigrahi

This book assesses Kenneth Burke as a literary critic in the context of the various cross-currents of literary theorizing in the twentieth century. Dr. Gupta has highlighted the role and significance of "Binarism" in the writings of Burke. At the outset he makes it clear that his use of the word binarism has no relevance to the use of the same word by Ferdinand de Saussure, Roman Jakobson, Roland Barthes, Claude Levi Strauss, or by any other structuralist or Post-structuralist critic. He examines Burke's seminal concepts--"Terministic Screenes," "Dialectic," "Logology," "Dramatistic Pentad," etc. in the light of binarism. He arrives at interesting results. He establishes the fact that Burkean literary theory is a departure from the post-modern and post-structuralist activism. He succeeds in bringing out the essential dialectical nature of Burkean criticism and its abhorrence of linguistic and cultural determinism. He presents Burke as a New Critic in line with Eliot, Richards, Blackmur, Winters and others. But Burke's method is to link literary criticism to social sciences and other disciplines to effect binarial structures and is described as "planned incongruity"--a term that is peculiarly Burkean. Dramatism and logology, Dr. Gupta discovers, are used as binary formations. Through the juxtaposition of binary opposites, the writer contends that Burke arrives at literary concepts that value order, balance, dignity, resignation, tolerance and sympathy.

Dr. Gupta synthesizes R.P. Blackmur's theory of language as a jesture, Searle's theory of speech-acts and Burke's theory of poetry as symbolic action to throw light on Burke's binarial approach to Coleridge's poem, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. Special mention may be made of Chapter IV of the book which explains the terminological strategies of Burke. Here Burke's logology is shown as having gone beyond a simple historical dialectic by "supplementing it with an upward-downward dialectic that is continuous and constant through history." In this way, Burke's logology releases us from the "prison house of language" by opening up possibilities of a critical approach that is more than logological but free from theological and moral implications. This book clarifies the pro-technological attitude in which the meaning of Being is to be discovered from a conception of language itself.

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