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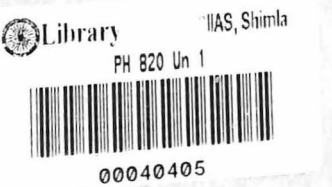

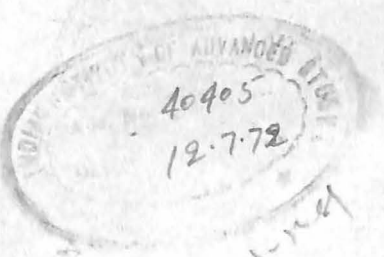

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Printed at
THE RAJASTHAN UNIVERSITY PRESS,
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CONTENTS

ILLUSION IN THE MODERN THEATRE*

PROF. V. Y. KANTAK

Drama engages our mind by producing a strong illusion of reality so that our attention is held and absorbed by the 'logic' of what happens on the stage. The whole question is: How is this illusion related to reality outside the magic circle of the stage? Is drama achieved merely by making the scene look natural, as nearly as possible an imitation of what happens outside?

The statement that drama is a mirror held up to nature is apt to be seriously misunderstood. What if the mirror be convex or concave? Considering the unaccountability of genius, what if it appear somewhat cracked? Dramatic reality is a product of skill and control; and the incursion of our 'quotidian' reality, besides being somewhat ludicrous, might spell disaster.

Perhaps the best example of this is an incident Ellen Terry describes in her autobiography. Playing Desdemona to Henry Irving's Othello, at one point it seems she was so overcome by her role that she actually sobbed and shed real tears. For the duration of the flicker of an eye-lid the effect on the audience was electrifying. But soon her make-up was blurred, the sobs disrupted the sequence of words, cues were lost, and the curtain had to be rung down in mid-scene.

Drama is a collaborative art. The illusion is supported by the art of the scene designer, the costume maker, the choreographer, the music-master, the light manipulator, the actor, the director. These together help to stimulate the spectator's imagination and give it direction. It is distinguished from the illusion created, say, in a novel in another way. In the Novel there is a past; in fact the Novel is a past reported in the present: whereas in the theatre there is always *NOW*. This confers upon the action a kind of increased vitality the novelist longs often in vain to incorporate in his work. Again, it is an art addressed to the group mind and partakes of the

*The Miss Stock Lecture, 1971 [abridged]

nature of ritual or festival and requires a throng. The pretence will fall to pieces without the support given it by a crowd.

The theatres of the Greeks, the Elizabethans and the Moderns have thus evolved each its own distinctive set of conventions and some of these have retained their potency through eras of experiment and change.

To take one example—even Modern drama has some use for the soliloquy. Outwardly it is a mad act of one talking to one self and often delivering a yard of glowing rhetoric like Hamlet's "To be or not to be" or Faustus' last soliloquy. Admittedly, many people have now lost the appreciation for rhetoric and prefer the low-key conversational tone. As a critic complains: "Some actor who couldn't memorize or wasn't sure of his lines discovered 'naturalism'. The loss is rather sad, says Duerrenmatt, for nothing wins its way across the footlights and grips an audience more effectively than a well-delivered speech. In Faustus' last soliloquy, for instance, how many certainties of our waking lives, of the world of our actual perceptions, have been set at naught? It offends almost every canon of credibility. As to place, Faustus seems poised with one foot already in the region called Hell. Spirits come to fetch him there bodily. And time? The speech begins with Faustus saying he has just one bare hour to live and yet hardly fifteen minutes pass when the Devil must appear. The fact is, Time is stretched like india rubber by suffering. We are attuned to another order of time measured by no terrestrial clock. What we witness is another kind of landscape taking shape, that of the soul, where we would not stop to ask if the hands of the clock have in fact moved to 12.

Thus, by relying on conventions tacitly accepted, employing different means to activate the spectator's imagination, the dramatist achieves what may be called 'a certain structure of feeling'. That structure of feeling initially at least derives strength from the fact that we have a framework provided to us, enough ground to rest our feet upon.

There is, in other words, the assurance of the solid and palpable renaissance man's world picture for us to take off from. It is the orderly public world out there, whatever our private worlds may discover for us; in fact, we can always measure the private fantasy with this public yardstick and feel sure of our bearings.

But what if the world we presumed real should itself betray signs of being an illusion? Much of what has happened in the Modern theatre is owing to this sudden weakening or near dissolution of our faith in the reality of people, their selves and their world in which events take place. When your sense of character as an identity, a unified self, capable of volitional acts producing an impact on the real world, is itself eroded, and your commitment to social and individual values undermined, the drama is apt to become more like an illusion of an illusion.

Of this, we have important starting points even as early as Ibsen. He worked well within the realist convention, placed the characters in a social setting easily recognized as Victorian or late Victorian. Within it there are always people, the chief protagonists especially, the Stockmanns and the Rosmers whose true type is Peer Gynt and who live the life of illusion. The way out for them is to make the one supreme decision, that of breaking out of the life of illusion, thus gaining true identity. The individual fulfilling himself thus becomes for Ibsen the 'liberator-hero'. He often makes a dignified and tragic end as does Rosmer going to self-ordained destruction with the words: "There is no Judge over us, and therefore we must do justice upon ourselves." Ibsen creates again and again, and often with extra-ordinary richness of detail, this kind of a world of false relationship, a false society, a false condition of man. Often the lie, the falseness, is not merely a local condition but is seen to be the symptom of the essential condition of man. It is interesting to see how he handles the theme of illusion in a play like *The Wild Duck*.

The real break from past practice, and the emergence of a fully formed and original dramatic idiom, seems to have occurred with Anton Chekhov. He, too, works in the main tradition of realism and yet curiously moves in the direction of a total rejection of realism. We notice above all a new element of great moment in the development of the modern theatre. The illusion, now, is a fact not so much of an individual's existence as that of society as a whole. The break-down of the private world is also simultaneously the break-down of the public world. Each character has his particular illusion, and his corresponding frustration to nurse. And there isn't that solid world of society to hold out a hope of redeeming it not even a lone character to indicate a point of rest, an earnest of a healthy evolution the society might possibly undergo. There is no question, strictly

speaking, of the individual's feeling hostile against society because his aspirations are thwarted, as it may happen in a realist drama of social protest. In an Ibsenite world, a man may struggle to free himself of his own blindness as a Hjalmar or a Rosmer struggles, however vainly or perhaps with the dignity of a tragic finale. In the Chekhovian world, illusion has become a total inescapable way of life accepted by each character who lives in the queerly debilitating environment. Awareness of living in such a world settles on everyone like a heavy pall and takes away from the reality of both individual and society alike. Every willed action takes on the quality of something self-defeating.

While Chekhov's work adds thus a new dimension to the fact of human suffering in a total vision of man's world, there has been a great deal of probing in what we mean by character itself. In Pirandello, the situation is that the illusive life of the stage is itself the solid base of reality. "When a character is born he acquires at once such an independence even of his own author that he can be imagined by everybody in other situations where the author never dreamed of placing him," as the Father in *Six Characters in Search of an Author* says. The essential premise behind the whole conception is that what we call 'reality' is itself a shifting fabric of illusion. It is composed of transitory fleeting things, "taking this form to-day and that to-morrow according to your will, your sentiments"; and there is a peculiar 'puppetry' of character and action in our lives, the wearing of masks. Pirandello aims at bringing the action to a critical point where there is a profound clash between mask and face, between the surrogate and the authentic, resulting ia a clarification of ourselves. There is always such a point in the action as the neglected boy's shooting of himself in *Six Characters* where illusion and reality meet. By that shot shadow is made solid. "It hits us with the horror of a blow in one's sleep."

The fact is, as far as modern drama is concerned, the concept of character retains a good deal of the quality of its original derivation from the mask or *persona*. Character is a convenient vehicle to embody experience. The only satisfying way to understand a character is to see it as a way of defining a dramatic impression. Even the growth of a character is only a finer definition of the features of the mask. The only response appropriate is to accept his performance

as truth. Thus through the shams of the theatre we reach the relation between character and reality. When the actual tragedy occurs, our sense of the real is baffled, pixilated :

Leading Lady : He's dead ! Poor boy ! He's dead. Oh what a terrible thing to happen !

Leading Man : What do you mean ? Dead ? It's all a make-believe ! It is all a pretence ! Don't get taken in by it.

Other Actors : Make-believe ! Pretence ? Reality ! He is dead !

Others : No ! Make-believe ! It's a pretence !

All the same, we are left stunned because somehow the sham has entered the real. The truth embodied in the puppet-show has been more real than real life. The effect of that shot is to leave the audience dizzy with the terror of the unknown.

To spell out the implications of this position a little : Reality is at best temporary; it is what human beings create in themselves and inheres in a state of mind; the rest is history. That state of mind is best available to the living in a masquerade, the shadow world of the stage. It cannot be destroyed, this reality of theirs, by any of your documents because they live and breathe in it. We think we understand each other but we really do not understand. For each one of us is many persons—according to all the possibilities of *being* that are within us. Yet we have the illusion of being one and the same person to all. When there is such a radical uncertainty about the self, the whole business of becoming involved with others is a tragic farce.

Pinter was asked by an irate lady who couldn't make anything of his play *The Birth-day Party*, where an unidentified lodger in a rooming house, one Stanley, is being systematically destroyed by two unidentified intruders : "(1) Who are the two men ? (2) Were they all supposed to be normal ? (3) Where did Stanley come from?" To which Pinter replied, he couldn't understand her letter till she had answered three questions of his : "(1) Who are you ? (2) Where do you come from ? (3) Are you supposed to be normal ?" Now one may say, Pinter's reply is merely evasive or that he confuses art with life. But what seems implied is that any attempt to answer his questions about a person in life truthfully would be just as difficult as answering her questions about the characters. We could only claim

a very tentative warrant for either. What the drama does is to question our facile faith in the 'reality' of both characters and human beings in life as viable units, final integers!

In any case, a wholly new drama seems to be born from these insights. "The Theatre of the Absurd", for instance, has something like this as a first premise: "The world in which we live appears illusory and fictitious...human behaviour reveals its absurdity, and all history its absolute uselessness..all reality, language seems disjointed, to fall apart, to empty itself of meaning, so that since all is devoid of importance, what else can we do but laugh at it ?"(Ionesco).

Two or three principles seem to be firmly established in the modern theatre :

(1) The tragedy is not in what this or that person does, but in a total condition. As individuals, we only succeed in weaving an inter-locking fabric of illusion. In the theatre of most previous epochs there was always an accepted moral order, though largely unspoken, and a world whose aims and objectives were clearly present to the minds of its audience, so that the motives and actions of characters on the stage could readily be interpreted with reference to it. Our own time wholly lacks such a generally accepted world-picture. The only drama that there is, of any vitality, reflects this total condition—of deprivation, if you will. The spectacle of a great individual, like the renaissance hero in whose grand tragic gesture we saw human destiny writ large, is no longer an acceptable proposition, and indeed, is rather ludicrous.

(2) We have come to realize that drama cannot be approached as that virtuous lady did, who, on seeing Othello rough-handling Desdemona, exclaimed, "You black idiot, can't you see she is innocent ?" Now we do not get to a play's meaning through identification with and sympathetic understanding of a character as a person in life, which has been the main support of the dramatic aesthetic so far. The Aristotelian *mimesis* required that the actor 'imitate' the hero and the spectator 'imitate' the actor, thus entering into and possessing himself of the hero's experience. What Aristotle described as *katharsis* could arise only with such a possibility of identification resulting in a kind of spiritual purification. The modern dramatist asks with Brecht, "Do we participate in Lear's wrath ? Or rather

do we react by flying into a passion at the unreasonableness of Kent's thrashing of the daughters' servant?" This requires, Brecht points out, our substitution of the principle of 'alienation' in the place of identification or sympathetic understanding of character and event in a play.

Brecht is not saying anything strictly new; other modes of drama use this alienation effect, notably, the Chinese, the Japanese, the ancient Indian. And in fact all miming and puppetry uses, it, and even the Elizabethan theatre within limits. In this connection it must be remembered that Shakespeare's characters in the Romantic Comedies like a *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night* are more structural and formal than 'personal'. Not identification but a detached and critical and, at the same time, an intensely interested response is what is progressively called for in the modern theatre.

(3) The old separation between tragedy and comedy is no longer tenable. It now becomes suspect, with the vanishing of the old faith in spiritual values, individual and social. Drama becomes at once tragic and comic—the tragedy is implicit in the comedy—and in a manner radically different from the tragi-comedy of earlier practice. It is the sense in which Northrop Frye speaks of "tragedy as the uncompleted comedy", not as a spatial mingling of different strands but as a quality of the same texture. As Ionesco asked, "What else could one do but laugh at the spectacle?" Laugh at the tragic spectacle since it is just absurd. The most representative examples of the new *genre* like *The Chairs* or *Waiting for Godot* are at once funny and terrible. It is the absurdity, the peculiar tragicomedy of life that the dramatist seeks to make his plays an image of.

Thus the Theatre of the Absurd presents a grotesquely heightened picture of man's own world. At the same time it is clear that the grotesquerie is not merely a satirical device employed in the interest of the norm. It is a truth of life; and the play is 'mimed' truth, not represented truth. It presents the essential puppetry of human existence. We have lost God, lost the family, lost the state to the politicians. "Suddenly deprived of illusions and of light, man feels an exile. The divorce between man and his life constitutes the feeling of absurdity." So said Camus from whom most of these new dramatists derive their cue.

The finest example of the Theatre of the Absurd, what is perhaps its greatest classic, is Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. The entire basis of the action has undergone change. It is a form of pure expressionism which draws upon the naturalistic world only to the extent needed to mark off the total 'isolation' of what is presented. What is dramatized is an essentially personal feeling which is incommunicable in direct terms of the stage we are used to because of its very isolation. The real action in Beckett's play is the tension between movement and the stasis of habit—for habit is a great deadener. This action is prevented through an idiom and imagery which is virtually universal. The central experience of 'hope deferred'—"He wont' come this evening but surely to-morrow'—is immediately comprehensible quite apart from the support of the Biblical reference. Vladimir muses, "The last moment... Hope deferred maketh something sick. Who said that?" and the play as a whole seems to complete that half-remembered phrase, the original being : "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick, but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life" (Proverbs XIII, 12). And the tramps wait for Godot to appear, hope deferred keeping them where they are, despite recurrent disappointment. And the Biblical image is carried forward, in a way, because they wait under a bare tree—in the second Act it puts on a few leaves—which remains incomplete and never becomes the tree of life. And yet, curiously, the action is not of the kind that can be explained as a *Morality*, though resemblances are clear. The *Morality* is a demonstration of a faith which is definite and has taken the form of concepts, while here the faith is only an uncertain waiting, tentative, peripheral. Here the stage life has fallen to *a minimal action*—the telling gesture, speech simplified to the barest exchange about the minutiae of life and a peculiar pattern of recurrence :

Est : Well, shall we go ?
Vald : Yes, Let's go. (*They do not move*)
Est : Well, shall we go ?
Vlad : Yes, Let's go. (*They do not move*)

And, of course, breaking through the stage illusion the characters are free to make a comedian-like appeal to the audience: "It hurts ?" "Hurts ! He wants to know if it hurts !"

If Estragon and Vladimir are essential 'everyman' in the minimal kinship with other men and the bare tree characterised by

the *static* posture, Pozzo and Lucky are body and soul as well as social relationship in an *active* posture. But neither group is merely an allegorical illustration of ideas; they are human beings in the special Absurdist sense of human puppetry.

So we may arrive at some kind of a summarizing comment on the modern dramatist's manipulation of illusion in the theatre. As a character in Chekhov's *The Seagull* says: "We must depict life not as it is, not as it ought to be, but as we see it in our dreams." What we now dramatize is the inner landscape somewhat in the fashion our dreams dramatize our tensions as any Freudian case study might demonstrate. In doing so we sometimes echo the tired Prospero : "We are such stuff as dreams are made on and our little life is rounded with a sleep."

What of the identity of a Rosalind ? a Hamlet ? That would seem to re-instate the sense of mystery. We are forever trying to get at the shape of Hamlet—as do Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. And Hamlet himself makes an affirmation of this kind when he puts his two nosey friends to questioning :

> Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me ! You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top to my compass; and there is much music, excellent voice in this little organ, yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe ? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, yet you cannot play upon me.

The modern theatre is all the bleaker for having lost this sense of the unsounded depth and the immeasurability of the Self's worth, whereas Shakespeare does retain this sense, so central to the Renaissance man's faith in the reality of this world.

But he only uses it for a larger purpose in his drama. He is clearly interested in making his characters recognizable in this or the other form as a Beatrice, a Shylock and a Mercutio are recognizable. But these are infinitely more. We must distinguish between the *dramatis personae* and the 'personalities' which emerge as part of the total impression we derive. Hamlet is not Hamlet without Claudius, without Gertrude, without Ophelia and without the Ghost of his father ! The characters fall into some other rhythmic form than

the uncertain rhythm of out quotidian existence. Rosalind in *As You Like It* retains her solid 'personal' reality while being free to participate in the larger rhythmic pattern of Arden. For by the pattern alone do things endure; that's where the intersection of Time and the Timeless resides, as Eliot would say:

> Only by the form, the pattern,
> Can words or music reach
> The stillness, as a Chinese jar still
> Moves perpetually in its stillness.

Which, then, is the reality ? 'Ordinary' nature or the pattern man finds in it ? Shakespeare's answer in his last plays seems complicated: Firstly, it lies in realizing to ourselves the evidence of art. The living statue Hermione, the Arcadias and the rural Utopias of *The Winter's Tale* and *Cymbeline*, the masque and the island of Caliban and Ariel—these are reality's true agents. And yet, the statue has wrinkles of age, the Arcadias and Utopias are broken off when more seriouns matters supervene. And you go home with Prospero determined to live your life, as he does, "with every third thought towards the grave" asking for prayer to save you—the sense of each ego-centred life fading out and a sentiment of eternity gaining ascendency in your soul.

The moderns do not go that far. They are content to see the absurdity of that 'ordinary' reality and make their effective gesture of dissociation by laughing as though out of season—and an ominous kind of laugh it is. The sense of the Self's reality, so essential for drama, has suffered eclipse, has disintegrated, in the world of a Beckett. It's as though the last out-post of Humanism has fallen. When Western drama recovers that sense, as I believe it must, would it bear the birth-mark of a more pantheistic impulse ? One wonders.

TENNYSON'S ULYSSES

P. S. SUNDARAM

If the only certainty in life is death, the one thing immutable in Western literary criticism is mutability. Even Shakespeare has to abide our question, and as for the Brownings and Tennysons, when they are not completely ignored, those who see any merit in them have periodically to go into the prisoner's dock and face a stiff cross-examination. The Victorians are once again coming into fashion, but this is not to say that the things taken for granted towards the end of the last century are accepted again without question.

To students and perhaps even teachers it may come as a surprise that "it has been much discussed whether or not we are to find Tennyson's Ulysses as altogether noble". Christopher Ricks, editor of the *Poems of Tennyson* goes on to say: "the most scrupulous account of the arguments is by J. Pettigrew, *Victorian Poetry* i (1963) 27-45."[1] Not having been able to get at this book, I can only wonder whether the matter requires 18 pages to discuss.

Meanwhile, L.E.W. Smith in *Twelve Poems Considered* puts down his own views without a "but" or an "if". Taking issue with those who inscribed on Scott's Antarctic Memorial the well-known line "To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield", Smith is outraged at the inappropriateness of quoting "the words of this megalomaniac ...on the graves of men we wish to praise."[2] What, he asks, does Ulysses mean by referring to the faithful Penelope as his "aged wife", describing his island kingdom, "the beautiful Ithaca" as "barren crags", and meting "unequal laws unto a savage race"?[3] Is there anything to admire in an egoist like this ?

The poem was written, says Tennyson, "soon after Arthur Hallam's death and gave my feeling about the need of going forward and braving the struggle of life perhaps more simply than anything in *In Memoriam*".[4] And again, "there is more about myself in *Ulysses*, which was written under the sense of loss and that all had gone by,

but that still life must be fought out till the end. It was more written with the feeling of his loss upon me than many poems in *In Memoriam*".[5]

There is of-course a school of modern critics to whom the greatest heresy in literary criticism is the "intentional heresy". What the poet intended simply does not count in the evaluation of the poem. But it may perhaps help us to understand the poem better ?

What seems to be forgotten is that in the writing of *Ulysses* Tennyson based himself not only on Homer but also Dante and Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida.* The long address of Ulysses to Achilles containg the lines

> Pers everance, dear my lord,
> Keeps honour bright: to have done is to hang
> Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail
> In monumental mockery

Tennyson described as one of the noblest things in Shakespeare.[6] Cary's translation of Dante which Tennyson seems to have used refers specifically, in words put into the mouth of Ulysses himself, to his lack of piety :

> Nor fondness for my son, nor reverence
> Of my old father, nor return of love,
> That should have crowned Penelope with joy,
> Could overcome in me the zeal I had
> T' explore the world, and search the ways of life,
> Man's evil and his virtue.[7]

But Cary, continuing to translate Dante, goes on to the exhortation :

> Call to mind from whence ye sprang :
> Ye were not formed to live the life of brutes,
> But virtue to pursue and knowledge high.[8]

Dante places Ulysses in the eighth circle of hell for having, in the matter of the wooden horse and elsewhere, counselled fraud. He lacked piety—but there is no suggestion that when he talked of pursuing virtue and knowledge, he was being once again the crafty Ulysses, making use of others solely for his own ends. In any case, when Tennyson talks of following knowledge like a sinking star beyond the utmost bound of human thought, he is not presenting Ulysses as another Satan whose only end and aim is self-glorification.

On the other hand, in the light of the Shakespeare passage which Tennyson found "one of the noblest things" in that poet, here was one who was not going to rest on his laurels, to hang in monumental mockery, but was ready at all times to go forward and risk his life.

Tennyson's *Ulysses* is a dramatic monologue, and Robert Langbaum, author of a brilliant book on the dramatic monologue entitled *The Poetry of Experience* puts forward the theory that the purpose of a dramatic monologue is not to see life steadily and see it whole, but rather to present truth as perspective, see life from a limited angle and through particular eyes. "Limitation and even distortion of the truth" gives pleasure. "Consistency of the distortion gives unity to the poem by establishing the singleness of the point of view."[9] "The dramatic monologue specializes in the reprehensible speaker because his moral perspective is extra-ordinary."[10] *Porphyria's Lover, My Last Duchess, St. Simeon Stylites, Caliban upon Setebos* are, from this point of view, the best dramatic monologues.

But does it follow from this that all dramatic monologues must present a reprehensible character, that Browning's *Grammarian's Funeral* is, as argued by Mr. Altick, Browning's *Praise of Folly*[11] holding up the grammarian only to ridicule, and Tennyson's *Ulysses* Tennyson's Sir Willoughby Patterne or Ahab or Satan ?

A more sensible approach to the poem will be to regard it in the light of Alfred Noyes's description of poems like Shelley's *Cloud*, or Tennyson's *Brook* or *Sir Galahad*. He calls these poems "objective lyrics."[12] They are in the form of lyrics, and presented in the first person singular, but actually embody objective facts. When the cloud says,

"I am the daughter of earth and water,
And the nursling of the sky;
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores,
I change, but I cannot die"

it is not boasting, but stating a scientific fact. When the brook says,

"Men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever"

it is not being arrogant, but stating what is actully the case.

Similarly, when Galahad says,

"My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure",

Tennyson does not mean us to see in him an intolerable prig, any more than, when he makes Arthur talk to Guinivere in sorrow rather than in anger about the havoc she has wrought, he wants us to judge him as we would judge a person in real life saying those words : Arthur is to be understood as the embodiment of conscience striving to bring order into a chaotic world and defeated by the unruly passions of men and women. I have heard an Indian Christian's summing up of Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita* as an extra-ordinarily arrogant man for advising Arjuna to cast aside all duty and cling only to him. In any ordinary human being this would certainly be arrogant : but when you realise that the Gita is a religious classic and that Krishna is presented and meant to be taken as almighty God himself, what he is made to say is no more that the barest fact. As well might one call Jesus selfish and ego-centric for asserting, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me : and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."[13]

We could perhaps get a clearer idea of the poem if we said to ourselves : "Supposing Tennyson wanted to portray Ulysses in the third person. Suppose he wanted to solve for himself and to explain to the reader the mystery of an old man, after twenty years of exile from his home characterised by ceaseless fighting and the most perilous journeys, a bitter fight against a whole lot of men to regain his wife and home, and some years of well-earned rest, wanting to go on his journeys again. And suppose his explanation is that after all he was a born adventurer; he must have got tired of a people whose ideals were very different and who were perhaps incapable of understanding him; he might not have found anything in common with his son; and even his wife might have had no romantic appeal for him" : such an explanation in the third person certainly would not outrage us. Just because it is put in the first person and into the mouth of Ulysses, should it immediately be read as an invitation to judge the character of Ulysses from a satirical or ironical point of view ?

I remember my old Professor, W.C. Douglas, teaching this poem and contrasting Tennyson's staid and ornate manner with Browning's highly dramatic and colloquial style. If Browning had written the poem, Prof. Douglas said, he would probably have started off somewhat like this :

"Ten years at Ithaca, ten years at Troy :
Which went quicker ? Surely, ten years at Troy !"

But Tennyson wrote the poem, not Browning. And it is characteristic of Tennyson to ruminate.

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Matched with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.

It creates a picture of ennui, a feeling of frustration. Ulysses does not call Penelope "an old hag" : he calls her an aged wife, which in fact she was. Why should we despise the clear-eyed Ulysses for not looking through a pair of romantic spectacles ? And isn't it sentimental to talk of "the beautiful Ithaca ?". To Mr. Smith the tourist it perhaps was—but a native, and such a native as Ulysses—who had wandered far and wide and seen the cities of many men—might be allowed to have a different point of view.

L.E.W. Smith, writing in 1963 and seeing in Tennyson's Ulysses a megalomaniac, and in his determination "not to yield" a Hitlerite insolence and ruthlessness is matched by another Smith—Goldwin—writing in 1855, thirteen years after the poem was published :

> Even the Homeric Ulysses, the man of purpose and action, seeking with most definite aim to regain his own home and that of his companions, becomes a "hungry heart" roaming aimlessly to "lands beyond the sunset" in the vain hope of being washed down by the gulf to the Happy Isles, merely to relieve his ennui .. we say he roams aimlessly—we should rather say he intends to roam, but stands forever a listless and melancholy figure on the shore[14].

In other wards, Tennyson is only attributing his own death-wish to Ulysses. He has no business to put a dramatic monologue into the mouth of a man of action. Ulysses, whatever Dante might have written, is not to be credited with the desire to follow virtue and knowledge, nor would he have ever wanted to sail beyond the sunset : and we cannot possibly think of him as chewing the cud of memory or so much as talking to his companions before taking them out on a perilous voyage ! This is the other extreme—where the poem is all Tennyson and no Ulysses.

If the later Smith is right, and Tennyson never meant us to admire this megalomaniac, what about a whole philosophy of life

like the Hindus' which ordains that at a certain age, a king must give up his kingdom and go with his wife into the forest, and at a later stage give up his wife and become sanyasin? What of the artist who like Bernard Shaw sacrifices everything and everybody to his vision of life and creative impulse? What of the astronomer so rapt up in the stars that he cannot bother to take his wife out every evening to the cinema? Or the explorers like Robert Scott himself who, all for the South Pole or the moon, think the world well lost?

This may not be Mr. Smith's ideal, but is there any justification for saying that it was not Tennyson's, or that it ought not to be anyone's?

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THE MYSTICAL IN SHAKESPEARE

RAMESHWAR GUPTA

Shakespeare was a poet. Was he a mystic too—of any level of mysticism ? Doesn't his "meaning" or artistic intensity show on his part an apprehension of a suprasensible reality—some "mystery", "moral", or "motion", persisting behind the visible world ?

The general opinion is that Shakespeare is too human to be supra-human; too natural to be supra-natural; too much of this world to be of any other world; he is no mystic. Moreover, how could one who wrote for money and frequently visited the Boar's Head tavern be expected to rise to the holy ? No wonder Shakespeare finds no representation in the *Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse.* Dr. Spurgeon in her *Mysticism in English Literature* while mentioning that "mysticism underlines the thought of most of our great poets, of nearly all our greatest poets, if we except Chaucer, Dryden, Pope and Byron",[1] remarks about Shakespeare, that he "must be left on one side, first because the dramatic form does not lend itself to the expression of mystical feeling, and secondly, because even in the poems there is little real mysticism, though there is much of the fashionable Platonism."[2]

First let us take up the view that dramatic form does not lend itself to the expression of mystical feelings. I think it is not necessarily so. Shakespeare's dramas are highly poetic; they are, besides, symbolic : a fact by now well established. And that poetic and symbolic dramas can be deeply mystical is evidenced by European dramas of this type, such as Gerhart Hauptmann's *Hannelas Himmelfahrt,* Agust Strendberg's *Dream Play,* Maurice Maeterlinck's *Blue Bird,* and Ibsen's *When we Dead Awaken,* and in India by Tagore's symbolic dramas. Even T.S. Eliot's *Confidential Clerk* has an unmistakable strain of mysticism in it. In fact later in life when he wrote comedies he preached pure mysticism in them. Now to the question : whether there are only fashionable Platonic and metaphysical ideas imposing themselves as such on Shakespeare's thinking mind, or there is something else too that strikes as coming from a

sensibility or an awareness deeper than the thinking mind : That there is such a deeper thing in Shakespeare, quite some critics and scholars have felt; and expressed it directly or unwittingly. To mention only a few : Bradley, of course, and then John Masefield, Middleton Murry, Prof. G.W. Knight and even later Spurgeon—critics not in fashion, still too doughty to be shaken. Let me begin with Prof. Wilson Knight. Shakespeare's final plays he reads as "mythical representations of a mystic vision".[3] Then he claims that Shakespear's play, *The Tempest*, is strongly impregnated with mysticism,"[4] and sees "the flaming course of the Lear theme itself growing out of this dun world, and touching at its full height a transcendent and apocalyptic beauty."[5] More of Wilson Knight later. Meanwhile let us turn to others. Bradley, after a full-length discussion in his essay "Shakespeare the Man", arrives at the opinion that Shakespeare like Hamlet (when Shakespeare wrote Hamlet's speeches he wrote down his own heart) had "the conviction gathering in his tortured soul that man's purposes and failures are divinely shaped to ends beyond his vision", had "his incessant meditation, and his sense that there are mysteries which no meditation can fathom."[6] Even Dr. Spurgeon while talking about Shakespeare's "excessive susceptibility to movement", "his passionate absorption in the life of things", makes a suggestion that he did see a unitive motion or spirit behind all things and life. She writes : "With Wordsworth also, but with a difference, less self-consciously and reflectively, but instinctively and spontaneously, Shakespeare seems to find in motion the very essence of life itself, and, had he formulated such thoughts at all, he would, I believe, have agreed with Wordsworth that the highest principle we can conceive of is

> 'a motion and a Spirit that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought
> And rolls through all things.'"[7]

John Middleton Murry feels convinced that Shakespeare was visited by such solitary thinkings as dodge conception to the very bourn of heaven.[8]

Megroz sees mystical element in Shakespeare's most passionate sonnets and in all the rest of passionate verse. He says, "Shakespeare, who has often been described as pagan, seems strangely close to the Christian poetry of mystical love in his most passionate verse. There is a feminine tenderness and submission in this lordly genius

which gives a character to his poetry as mystical as the Hymn to St. Teresa.'"[9] And as one of the many instances that could be cited in verification of his view, he quotes sonnet No. CIX, whose last two lines are :

> For nothing this wide universe I call
> Save thou, my rose; in it thou art my all.

Is it the Cupid, aroused by the "Dark Lady", knocking nakedly at the door of Shakespeare's heart ? Or, is it really some ineffable divinity in her, knocking at the gate of his consciousness ?—knocking as the central fact of existence in this wide universe. Really, it is desire abandoning itself completely in a Divinity : "Thou art my all." It is attachment turning into devotion. In fact, when Shakespeare (or any of his characters) is in a fit of passion, the awareness in him does by itself grow deeper and wider, the thunderous upheaval in him ending on the highest spiritual note. He then perceives, as it were in a vision, "the drama in full", perceives time in timelessness. In an experience of too intense a passion and too intense a tragedy, one glimpses "a thing beyond"—call it the Infinite. That is what Knight says : "The grandeur and essential optimism of the true Shakespearian tragedy is due to these two elements : passion and death. And both equally bring in the Infinite."[10] Timon, in passion, "speaks the language of a soul beyond the world of manifestation and turned to its own solitary music."[11] And further : "by throwing a death-in-time into sharp contrast with a soul-life-out-of-time, the poet reveals the finite silhouetted against the infinite...Thus the mind recognizes, along the fringes of the consciousness, the awakening light of an impossible revelation.".[12] In Shakespeare's lines :

> I spoke as one who never would speak again
> And as a dying man to dying men

the poet-mystic, Sri Aurobindo, avers : "the psychological door through which the overhead touch (a touch of the Higher Mind) comes is some intense passion."[13]

But does Shakespeare at all need propping up by critics and scholars to reveal the "mysterious tremendum" in him ?

When we look at the Shakespearean world, we cannot fail to see that the master poet, has, as it were, traversed and seen through

the entire strata of existence : his is a spirit "which shoots its being through earth, sea and air". It rises from the inanimate physical existence to life, to life's myriad thoughts, feelings and emotions, and through them to "more things in heaven and earth" that transcend sense and mind. The poet sees that this entire existence is informed by a Mystery – a mystic Reality : Everything in nature and the human world is ultimately thrown into relation with It. The terryfing truth—all things lead to a mystery, "is in Shakespeare as it is in no other of the world's great books."[14]

We could examine the question from another angle of vision too—from the point of view of the source of Shakespeare's highest poetic utterances. Most critics now agree that the creative process in the great artists is something more profound and universal than the conscious personality of the creator. Poets and artists themselves have confessed that some of their deepest expressions have been entirely unrelated to their conscious will and thought : They spring from another source altogether like God stepping into time from ever-lastingness. So also did it happen in the case of Shakespeare. "We have indeed his own testimony," writes E.I. Watkins, "to the peculiarly inspirational character of his work in the well-known passage from *A Midsummer Night's Dream :*

> 'The poet's eye in a fine franzy rolling
> Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven
> And as imagination bodies forth
> The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
> Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothing
> A local habitation and a name.'[15]

"Shakespeare's art", Watkins holds, "is inspirational rather than deliberate, the art of anima moving animus",[16] and adds that his "finest plays indeed are almost wholly products of anima inspiring and moving animus."[17] John Masefield believes that there were occasions when Shakespeare's mind "became pure energy and its thought partook of the nature of pure energy."[18] Remarking about imagery, growing in Shakespeare's mind, Dr. Spurgeon writes, "He (Shakespeare) was probably conscious of the picture in his mind, but the imagery it evoked was, at any rate in the later plays, so entirely spontaneous and so natural a creation that it is likely he was himself unaware of how completely and repeatedly it revealed his symbolic vision''.[19]

It appears it is at some "wind-swept upland" that the interaction between the word and the vision takes place, and when it so happens, frenzied utterances, like the following, come rolling down by themselves :

O God, I could be bounded in a nut shell
And count myself king of infinite space
Were it not that I have bad dreams. (*Hamlet*, IV–2)

And then, Lear in prison, talking to Cordelia :

We two alone will sing like birds in the cage :
.....So we will live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
Talk of court news .....
And take upon's the mystery of things,
As if we were God's spies. (*King Lear*, V—3)

Then these words, again from *Hamlet* :

What is he whose grief
Bears such an emphasis ? Whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers ? (*Hamlet*, V—1)

These are moments in his plays when the usual course of events connected with the plot seems to be suspended and we are treated to an apparently inconsequential sort of talk which gives us a pleasant experience of a "Divine absent-mindedness." More passages could be cited. Take the lines :

daffodils
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with Beauty (*The Winter's Tale*, IV—3)

They give us an intimate sense of objects, seize their secret for us, and make us participate in their life.

We may as well recall the culminating passages in the death scene of Cleopatra in *Antony and Cleopatra*, more particularly Cleopatra's speech :

Give me my robe, put on my crown; I have
Immortal longings in me : now no more
The Juice of Egypt's grape shall moist this lip :—
Yare, Yare, good Iras; quick—Methinks I hear
Antony call; I see him rouse himself
To praise my noble act; I hear him mock
The luck of Caesar, which the gods give men
To excuse their after wrath. Husband, I come;
Now to that name my courage prove my title !
I am fire and air; my other elements
I give to baser life, etc.—(*Antony and Cleopatra* V—2)

These are words which in the very intensity of their passion release man from the contagion of "materiality" and lift him to a region of existence where death and pain are remembered not, and the moment of self-abandon dissolves into eternity.

Then note the following phrase breaking forth on a sudden in one of his sonnets :

> the prophetic soul
> Of the wide world dreaming on things to come

about which Sri Aurobindo's own disciple and mystic poet, K. D. Sethna, writes : "The phrase is a grand intrusion in Shakespeare, the rhythm and rapture of another world than his tense quivering sonorities of sensation and passion. The phrase has a fathomlessness of word suggestion and sound suggestion, an immediacy of some spiritual vastitude is there...The unmasking of the secret Divine is direct instead of indirect and the revelatory impulse is from a plane where the Spirit stands wholly bare. Shakespeare's accidental unmasking of the Divine by a Word one with some cosmic Truth-Consciousness exceeds as spiritual poetry even the large magnificance deepening into mystery that we cantact in that Wordsworthian Being 'Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns'. This is no Pope's or Dryden's business. To understand it one needs not so much "wit" as an "especial intuition"—a mind akin to mystery itself. A "modernist" need not twitch his nose if there were readers who saw in that famous *Tempest* passage beginning with

> Our revels are now ended; these our actors,
> As I foretold you, were all spirits

and ending with

> We are such stuff
> As dreams are made on and our little life
> Is rounded with a sleep

the light of a "mystic trance in which the whole world fades like an illusion and the individual soul enters the supreme Spirit's unfeatured ecstasy of repose."[21]

To conclude : Although the general impression that we gather from Shakespeare's life, drama and poetry is of the wondrous diversity and richness of human life—of a life spirit, vital, intellectual

and emotional on an entirely human plane—yet, on the basis of what has been laid down above, I am inclined to believe that Shakespeare the poet, did, at times, rise to a state of higher awareness when he had an apprehension of "something" hovering about or active everywhere in the moods of nature and passions of man, as if all that existed was in itself some incomprehensible "uniquitous motion" (the eternal spirit's eternal pastime—shaping, re-shaping) whose essential element he knew to be love. The suprarational world of experience to which he was at times—perhaps during the moments of some superbly creative mood—transported was still a world of mystic-shadowism; it had not become clear as the Sun-hemisphere, as it would to a mystic with higher experience. He was helped to rise to those heights neither by any theology or religion, nor by any metaphysics or logic; but by his own self's deeper sensitiveness that would enter into the very being of every circumstance and person; and by the harmony of word and imagery that descended on him like grace from on High. Did not Shakespeare really have within him that "which passeth show" ?

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SAMUEL JOHNSON ON SCIENCE IN EDUCATION

V. C. SHARMA

Samuel Johnson took a gentlemanly interest in science. It was to him one of the pleasing diversions, not a subject worthy of serious study. Being a humanist, he preferred the study of man to the study of physical sciences. In his "Life of Milton" he lends an enthusiastic support to the study of humanistic subjects :

> But the truth is, that the knowledge of external nature, and the sciences which that knowledge requires or includes, are not the great or the frequent business of the human mind. Whether we provide for action or conversation, whether we wish to be useful or pleasing, the first requiste is the religious and moral knowledge of right and wrong; the next is an acquaintance with the history of mankind, and with those examples which may be said to embody truth, and prove by events the reasonableness of opinions. Prudence and Justice are virtues, and excellences, of all times and all places; we are perpetually moralists, but we are geometricians only by chance. Our intercourse with intellectual nature is necessary, our speculations upon matter are voluntary and at leisure. Physiological learning is of such rare emergence, that one may know another half his life without being able to estimate his skill in hydrostatisticks or astronomy; but his moral and prudential character immediately appears. Those authors, therefore, are to be read at schools that supply most axioms of prudence, most principles of moral truth, and most material for conversation; and these purposes are best served by poets, orators, and historians.[1]

In his brilliant rhetoric, Johnson ridicules those people who are strong protagonists of science at the expense of other humanistic subjects :

> Let me not be censured for this digression as pedantic or paradoxical; for if I have Milton against me, I have Socrates on my side. It was his labour to turn philosophy from the study of nature to speculations upon life; but the innovators whom I oppose are turning off attention from life to nature. They seem to think, that we are placed here to watch the growth of plants or the motions of the stars. Socrates was rather of opinion, that what we had to learn was how to do good, and avoid evil.[2]

Johnson was not alone in this hostility to science. He shared many of his views with Swift. In *Gulliver's Travels* Swift ridicules the Laputan's love of music, mathematics, and astronomy. Analysing the reasons for their deep obsession with these subjects, Swift writes:

> But I rather think this quality to spring from a very common infirmity of human nature, inclining us to be more curious and conceited in matters where we have least concern, and for which we are least adapted either by study or nature.[3]

The inhabitants of Laputa lived under continual disquietude due the apprehension of certain changes in celestial bodies in the remote future. One of the beliefs which troubled them was the fear that the earth, by the continual approaches of the sun towards it, was in course of time bound to be swallowed up by the latter. They further believed that the face of the sun will by degrees be encrusted with its own effluvia, and give no more light to the world, that the earth very narrowly escaped a brush with the tail of the last comet that would have surely reduced it to ashes, and that the next encounter which, according to their calculations would take place thirty one years afterwards, would probably destroy us.[4]

Johnson also refers to a similar belief in *The Rambler* (No.8.):

> Many philosophers imagine that the elements themselves may be in time exhausted; that the sun, by shining long, will effuse all its light; and that, by the continual waste of aqueous particles, the whole earth will at last become a sandy desert. I would not advise any readers to disturb themselves by contriving how they should live without light and water. For the days of universal thirst and perpetual darkness are at a great distance. The ocean and the sun will last our time, and we may leave posterity to shift for themselves.

Swift and Johnson condemned man's thirst for novel methods, his lack of ability to refrain from senseless experiments. The "inspired" experts returning from the airy regions of Laputa "full of volatile spirits" and of schemes for putting all the arts, sciences, languages, and mechanics upon a new foot, establish the academy of Lagado, in which professors contrive new rules and methods of agriculture and building, among other things. All these projects end in "grotesque ineffectiveness", but they are never prepared to accept their failure. They are convinced that their inventions may be capable of great improvements. In the grand Academy of Lagado,

people are engaged in making discoveries in different branches of science. Gulliver saw a man of "a meagre aspect with sooty hands and face, his hair and beard long, ragged and singed in several places. His clothes, shirt, and skin were all of the same colour. He had been eight years upon a project for extacting sunbeams out of cucumbers, which were to be put into vials hermetically sealed and let out to warm the air in raw, inclement summers." Another projector was busy in an operation to reduce human excrement to its original food by separating its several parts. An architect was trying a novel method of building houses, by beginning at the roof and working downwards to the foundation. He got such an idea from two prudent insects, a spider and a bee. A congenitally blind professor was employed to mix colours for paint. Another man was trying to find out a method of using hogs for ploughing fields. An artist was busy in finding out a method of producing dyes of different colours by feeding spiders with flies of those colours. A "universal" artist was busy in sowing chaff and producing a variety of naked sheep. These were the activities in which the scientists were busy in the Academy of Lagoda. Johnson's virtuosos are also engaged in trifling ambitions which never aim at virtue or wisdom. They have "an unextinguishable ardour for curiosity and an unshaken perseverance in the acquisition of the production of art and nature." Quisquilus is a "laborious and zealous virtuoso".[5] He tried to extend his knowledge to all possible human activities and it may be difficult to recount all that he had collected in his "curiosity shop." He had insects of uncommon variety. He paid ten shillings for the sting of a hornet during a cold moist summer when no hornets were seen. He loved to collect maps drawn in the barbaric ages before any regular surveys had been conducted. He had a book in which not a single country had been shown according to its true situation. His rare collection included all "papilionaceous tribe", three species of earthworms not known to naturalists, a new ephemera, four wasps caught torpid in their winter quarters, the largest blade of grass, an ear of wheat containing more grains than seen before upon a single sheaf, a marble with broken letters, engraved before the foundation of Rome, three letters broken off from the monuments of Persepolis, paving stone from the Areopagus of Athens, a plate without figures or characters found at Corinth, sand gathered out of Granicus, a fragment of Trajan's bridge over the Danube, some of the mortar which cemented the water-course of Tarquin, a

horseshoe broken on the Flaminian way, a dew drop brushed from a banana in the gardens of Ispahan, the brine that rolled in the Pacific ocean, a snail that crawled upon the wall of China, a humming bird which an American princess used to wear in her ear, the tooth of an animal which carried the Queen of Siam, the skin of an ape that was kept in the palace of the Great Mogul, a ribbon that adorned one of the maids of a Turkish sultana, a scimitar once wielded by a soldier of Abbas the Great, a lock of Cromwell's hair in a box turned from a piece of the Royal oak, sand scrapped from the coffin of King Richard, a commission signed by Henry the Seventh, the ruff of Elizabeth, the shoe of Mary of Scotland, a tobacco-pipe of Ralegh and a stirrup of King James, a glove of Lewis, a thimble of Queen Mary, the fur cap of the Czar, and a boot of Charles of Sweden.

What was the end of the virtuoso ? His love of antique and the quixotic led him to a financial disaster : "The cruelty of creditors seized his repository: he was condemned to disperse what the labour of an age will not reassemble."

Tim Ranger,[6] another virtuoso, found to his utter disappointment that the life of a virtuoso was full of ill-will and competition. When he became an heir to vast riches, he tried many professions. Once he happened to attend a meeting of virtuosos. He was "instantaneously seized with an unextinguishable arodur of all natural curiosities". He ran from auction to auction, became a critic in shells and fossils, and purchased "a secret of the art of preserving insects" which made other virtuosos envy his collections. He was envied and despised by other members of the fraternity and a few scandalous stories were circulated to let his prestige down. Tim did not want to be hated for things which brought no obvious advantage to him. He gave his shells to children who wanted play things, and suppressed the art of dyeing butterflies because he did not want to promote idleness and cruelty.

Johnson approved of virtuosity on two grounds. First, it should lead to the improvement of the present practice. "For the utensils, arms or dresses of foreign nations, which make the greatest part of many collections I have little regards, when they are valued only because they are foreign and can suggest no improvement of our own practice". Second, it should add to virtue or wisdom. He

did not completely disapprove of virtuosity. The people busied in this "secondary class of learning", as he called the habit of curio-collections, are at least free from idleness and harmful activities. Such people are capable of great achievement: "he who does his best, however little, is always to be distinguished from him who does nothing. Whatever busies the mind without corrupting it, has at least this use that it rescues the day from idleness and he that is never idle will not often be vitious".[8] Collection of curiosities can be useful secondary aim of a man's life after laborious studies, and in spare time it may keep a man busy. "The pride or the pleasure of making collections, if it be restrained by prudence and morality, produces a pleasing remission after more laborious studies; furnishes an amusement not wholly unprofitable, for that part of life, the greater part of many lives, which would otherwise be lost in idleness or vice; it produces a useful traffic between the industry of indigence and the curiosity of wealth; it brings many things to notice that would be neglected; and by fixing the thoughts upon intellectual pleasure, resists the natural encroachments of sensuality, and maintains the mind in her lawful superiority."[9] Virtuosity, at least, extends the bounds of human intelligence, which is the supreme purpose of all knowledge, and thus provides the pleasure of acquisition. Therefore, for Johnson, the greatest ground for the study of science, was its value in extending human curiosity and in improving the human mind. A scinetist's life is "usefully and virtuously employed". It is "a single talent well-employed." To Susannah Thrale Johnson's advice was that she should try to cultivate acquaintance with Mr. Herschil, the astronomer :

> With Mr. Herschil it will certainly be right to cultivate an acquaintance for he can show you in the sky what no man before him has ever seen, by some wonderful improvements which he has made in the telescope. What he has to show is indeed a long way off, and perhaps concerns us but little, but all truth is valuable and all knowledge is pleasing in its first effects, and may be subsequently useful. Of whatever we see we wish to know and of which we perceive another to be ignorant.[10]

Milton also suggested that his pupils should, sometimes, be allowed to visit those who practised practical crafts, such as carpenters and smiths. They might learn much, he believed, from hunters and fowlers. Both Milton and Johnson agree that all opportunity to increase knowledge should be utilized, as if both had "taken all

knowledge to be (their) province." Here is Johnson's advice to Miss Thrale :

> Make therefore all opportunities of learning that offer themselves, however remote the matter may be from common life or common conversation. Look in Herschel's telescope, go into a chemist's laboratory; if you see a manufacturer at work remark his operations. By this activity of attention, you will find in every place divertion and improvement.[11]

"By drinking at the fountains of knowledge" like Bacon, he would have liked "to quench the thirst of curiosity." But by solely devoting themselves to the study of a particular branch of science, scientists seemed to him to violate the respectable law of universality. Therefore we find in Johnson a complete rejection of science as a subject of independent research and professional devotion. He makes no mention of any of the modern subjects in his scheme of studies for the Edical Academy.

This does not mean that Johnson was unaware of the progress of science in the previous centuries. In his Dictionary he frequently quotes from the works of Browne, Bacon, Newton and Boyle. He gives datailed quotations on topics like *electricity*, *aquafortis*, *aqua vita*, *amber*, *ambergris*, *air*, etc. For making comparisons, he uses ideas of science. Some examples may be cited here. In Adventure No. 45 he uses Newton's principles of gravitation for comparison :

> The reigning philosophy informs us, that the vast bodies which constitute the universe are regulated in their progress through the etheral spaces, by the perpetual agency of contrary forces, by one of which they are restrained from deserting their habits and losing themselves in the immensity of heaven; and held off by the other from rushing together, and clustering round their centre with ever-lasting coherence.
>
> The same contrariety of impulse may be perhaps discovered in the motions of men : we are equally unqualified to live in a close connection with our fellow beings, and in total separation from them. We are attracted towards each other by general sympathy, but kept back from contact by private interest.

In Adventure No. 95 he uses another of Newton's principles stated in *Opticks* (1704) :

> It has been discovered by Sir Isaac Newton, that the distinct and primogenial colours are only seven; but every eye can witness, that from mixtures in various proportion, infinite diversification of tints may be produced. In like manners the passions

> of mind...are very few; but those few agitated and combined... make such alterations on the surface of life, that the show while we are busied in delineating it, vanishes from the view.

In *The Rambler* No. 61 he compares Mr. Frolick's wit to a magnetic needle : "—or that Mr. Frolick thinks us unworthy of the exertion of his powers, or that his faculties are benumbed by rural stupidity, as the magnetic needle loses its animation on the polar climes." In the life of Blackmore he uses a metaphor from medicine : "contempt is a kind of gangrene, which if it seizes one part of a character corrupts all the rest by degrees." It may be worth noticing that Johnson uses innumerable similes and metaphors from various sciences.

In the seventeenth century, science had made much progress due to the efforts of people like Wilkins, Goddard, Wallis, Seth Ward, and Robert Boyle. Most pioneering work in the field of scientific revolution had started outside the universities. Dee., Recorde, Harriot, Gilbert, Napier, and Oughtred all worked outside the universities. Bacon and Hobbes separately criticized the outdated curriculum of the universities. Science did not gain a respectable place in educational institutions. From the modern point of view Johnson's scheme of studies may be called narrow and restricted. He makes no mention of these modern subjects in his curriculum. He never took them seriously. He was a humanist who treated science as a pleasing divertion alone.

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TENNYSON'S "TEARS, IDLE TEARS"

R. A. WAJID

Tennyson's Lyric "Tears, Idle Tears" continues to puzle explicators[1]. Though it has been highly praised, its obscurities have not been satisfactorily explained. Often these have been ignored, or have been noticed only to be made the occasion for "poetic" digressions by the critic himself.[2]

This note proposes to notice some of the obstacles in the way of any consistent interpretation of the poem as a whole. This does not mean that poetry must be couched in the form of a logically consistent statement, but that unity and coherence of theme are essential for a successful poem. This lyric, while it presents a variety of traditional symbols and images, lacks coherence; the images pull in different directions and its powerful initial impact, its apparent lyricism, cannot withstand close analysis. It is here taken for granted that a successful work of art invites and richly repays such scrutiny.

The poem opens with the weeper's expression of bewilderment at the unrealized depth of the grief which moves him. The 't' sounds together with the arrangement of vowels, specially the sharp 'e' sounds in the line, contribute to the effect of poignant sorrow. Tears can be "idle" in several senses; because they have no effect, avail nothing, or because the speaker is aware of no clear reason for this sudden welling up of tears; they may be tears born of idleness (so the Princess thinks "thine are fancies hatch'd in silken-folded idleness.") The concluding phrase however makes it clear that the tears are "idle" primarily in the sense of being causeless, though other meanings may also remain in the background. In this context the phrase "I know not what they mean" may also express the weeper's sense of being a powerless tool in the hands of his feelings—not only, "I do not know what they would have me do", but also "I do not know what they will do to me". We expect in the succeeding line an investigation of the causes which lie behind these "meaningless" tears—so that the feeling can define itself in the process of this investigation.

The second line declares that tears arise "from the depth of some divine despair". The N.E.D. defines despair as "a state of mind which is without hope". Thus despair is not an emotion grounded in the past, it is the result of frustration in the present and pessimism about the future. We may regret the passing away of the past, even desire its return, without being said to feel "despair". Despair would arise if we felt that the passing away of some situation or person leaves us without hope of happiness in the future. Two points may be made here. First, in such a context "idle" would mean "unavailing, leading to no result", for the speaker is aware of the cause of the tears, i.e., "despair", a sense of irreplaceable loss. It does not make sense to say : "My tears are born of a feeling of despair, yet I do not know why I weep". In that case, one might be inclined to agree with the Princess, that the cause is perhaps none other than want of better occupation. Also, in what sense is this despair "divine" ? Brooks[3] says it "springs from a deeper, more universal cause". The N.E.D. does not list "deeper, more universal" as one of the meanings of "divine", but the difficulty is not removed if we concede that this is a possible sense (though a strained one), because the despair of gods is by implication deeper, more universal than ordinary human loss of hope. There is here a complete reversal of the mood evoked in the first line. What appeared to be a poignantly moving cry of the heart, unexpectedly turns into an expression of despair at the human condition, on a sense of the decline of civilization. The change is unprepared, for we do not normally associate a sharp welling up of tears with such a mood. In measure as sorrw is meditated, philosophised, it will be less impulsively expressed, though not therefore be less moving or less intensely felt. Between "Dover Breach", for example, and the opening of this lyric, the difference is not one of intensity but of the quality of mood expressed.

In the third line the mood changes again, from "divine despair" to one of tender nostalgic memory. The tears arise in looking at the "happy autumn-fields", happy in the plenitude of the harvest, but reminiscent of the spring which has passed away. We recall Keats' ode. If "happy" is taken merely as distinguishing the fields from the weeper, who by contrast experiences "divine despair", the point of the phrase would be more or less completely lost. For then, they could as well, perhaps better, be "April-fields". The autumn fields though

happy, are suggestive of sorrow at the individual level. For the individual, spring (youth etc.) once past may be said to be past forever; though at the cosmic level autumn is part of the endless cycle of creation-fulfilment-death.

In this context it appears that "divine" is a vaguely romantic intensive, connoting "more than human, excellent in a superhuman degree" (N.E.D.), with overtones of "surpassingly beautiful, heavenly". "Divine" in this sense combines with "happy" in the 3rd line of the stanza, and with "sweet" in the 2nd line of the concluding stanza (perhaps also with "so sad", "so fresh" in the second stanza), to suggest the romantic commonplace, "sorrow is sweet". The phrase, for all its diffusely suggestive quality, reinforced by alliteration and a touch of paradox, connotes nothing very specific.

The two succeeding stanzas present images and by analogy describe the weeper's feelings about the "days that are no more." Whether they characterize thus the days themselves, or the speaker's feelings upon recalling them, is not always clear. We might ask in what way the recollection of the past (Is it the sad past or the happy past that is being recollected ?) can be said to be as "fresh" as the experience of reunion with friends returning home from abroad. The reunion, if at all it can be meaningfully described as "fresh", is so in the sense of being happy. Recollection is "fresh" primarily in the sense of being vivid (not necessarily happy). We are thus left uncertain whether the speaker wishes to say that past memory is both vivid and tinged with sorrow, or that the excercise of reminiscence gives him both pleasure and regret, or whether he is recalling some actual reunion and parting. Perhaps lines 1 and 3 of this stanza gain their effect in part from the fact that "fresh", "glittering", "sad", and "reddens" apply as well to "tears" and the reader unconsciously tends to do this. The images succeed each other in an over-neat antithetical order. Thus, the ship *comes up* at *dawn*, the departing ship *sinks below* at *sunset* the *first* beam is *fresh* and glittering, the *last* is *sad* and *reddens*. This gives to the stanza an added touch of artificiality and the images appear contrived rather than significant.

In the third stanza a scene is pictured with Tennyson's usual skill. The slow dimming of conciousness, the querulous haze in the dying man's mind is suggested by the dim-light of half-dawn and the tentative cheep of "half-awakened" birds. The suggestion is reinforced

by the haunting, mysterious music of the first line, by the repetition of "dying ears", "dying eyes", and by the picture of the window slowly dimming out as life and consciousness ebb. But while both the dying man and the mourner for the past, view reality from a distance, as it were, they view it very differently. To the dying consciousness present sounds and sight gradually grow a glimmering twilight. If there is regret it is similarly subdued by the general blurring of faculties. The weeper's recollections on the other hand, distress him by their very immediacy and freshness. Their "strangeness" lies for him in the fact that what is so real to him is, in a sense, unreal because it is past. To equate these two experiences is to falsify them both, reducing them to a vague sense of something "sad and strange".

The last stanza describes the past as "Dear as remembered kisses after death". That is, the memory of the past is cherished as tenderly as the memory of past kisses ! In the second line the kisses are presumably feigned by the speaker's fancy in the present, the present tense verb in "lips that *are* for others" also suggests this. The dream kisses and the memory are both unreal (do not belong to present, actually) and both are "sweet" to the speaker. The banality of sentiment here is typical of the poem as a whole. Finally, one may ask in what sense can the "days that are no more" (the past itself or its recollection) be described as "deep as first love" ? A certain incident may have made a deep impression upon us, but in what significant way could we call it or its memory "deep" ? Even if the grammatical awkwardness is passed over, there remains a confusion of categories; "deep" when said of the incident or its recollection would mean "profoundly significant", whereas, applied to first love, it can only mean "intensely felt, poignant". Apart from any emotive effect accruing from the use of the phrase "deep as first love", the comparison seems to afford no insight into the nature of memory. The temptation to re-write a poem as we feel it might have been written, must always be gaurded against, but it does seem true that "first love" is more likely to be "deep" and "wild" as an immediate experience than in the perspective of memory. The last stanza seems indeed to concern itself with the keen regret felt by youth at unrequited first love, and while it has some links with the first stanza, appears more or less detached from the immediately preceding part of the lyric.

I have tried to show that the poem as a whole has no single theme. It makes use of various moods, nostalgic recollection of past beauty and happiness, etc., personal or general sorrow at the passing of some particular person or situation which causes a feeling of despair, the recollection of past sorrow, deeply felt ("wild with all regret") and equally, if not more moving in retrospect, and uses them all indifferently to evoke a general feeling of pathos. Through the musical quality of the verse, the use of vaguely evocative phrases and emotion-laden, richly traditional imagery, it disarms analysis and invites the reader's imagination (and the obliging critic's too) to wander in a number of sentimental blind alleys.

It could, of course, be said by the appreciative reader that despite all this the poem remains quite moving. With that judgement of taste there need be no dispute. But the poem's inconsistencies should be realized, not glossed over, as has been done so often.

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1. There are considerable differences regarding the poem's meaning among critics who are agreed as to its merit. Brooks (*The Well Wrought Urn*) analyses the poem in terms of irony and paradox. Stocking ('Tears, Idle Tears'-reprinted Exphiator Cyclopaedia Vol. II, P. 339) disagrees with this : "the poem seeks to investigate, define and present the specific qualities of experience. Furthermore, this experience is universalized, the first person singular is never (?) used." Hough ('Tears, Idle Tears'—Hopkins Review 1951, reprinted, Killham : Critical Essays on the poetry of Tennyson, London, 1960) feels Brooks has dismembered the lyric which expresses 'despair—not divine in the Christian sense, but only in the sense of being demoniac. Finally one of the most recent commentators, seeking to relate the lyric to its context, concludes : "It laments the discontent of women deprived of heterosexual relationship". (E.D. Lemire : "Tennyson's weeper 'context', Windsor Review, 1967 P. 202). This tradition began with the poet. Two different explanations of the poem by him are reported : "The passion of the past, the abiding in the transient, was expressed in "Tears, Idle Tears" (H. Tennyson : Tennyson—A Memoir, (1906), p. 211), and the second one reported by a friend, "He told me that it was not real woe, as some people might suppose; it was rather the yearning that young people occasionally experience for that which seems to have passed away from them forever". (Ibid., p. 478).

2. An outstanding example is provided by Leo Spitzer's Essay 'Tears, Idle Tears' Again. (Hopkins Review, 1952, reprinted in Killham, op. cit.)

3. Brooks, op. cit.

DREISER'S AMBIVALENT NATURALISM : A NOTE ON *SISTER CARRIE**

R. N. MOOKERJEE

Commenting on his work, Theodore Dreiser once remarked; "Ladies and gentlemen, this has been my vision of life. This is what living in my time has seemed to be like..... You may not like my vision, ladies and gentlemen, but it is the only one I have seen and felt, [and] therefore, it is the only one I can give you."[1] Few authors are able to remain completely unaffected by the life and conditions of their times and this impact is to be felt in their writings. In the case of an avowed realist like Dreiser, this indeed becomes one of the most dominating forces on his work and thought. A brief examination of these formative influences on Dreiser, therefore, becomes necessary for a proper understanding of his work and thought.

The America of Dreiser's youth was an exciting spectacle of a country on its march towards industrialization and urbanization on a massive scale with all its concomitant conflicts and tensions. Born a decade after the outbreak of the Civil War, Dreiser, by the time he grew into a young man, had stepped into a critical period of American history. The period was one of great turmoil not only because secularism and materialism, long growing into power, became crucial, but also on account of the challenge hurled at by the new scientific theories, particularly of evolution, and the vogue of Darwin and Spencer which had invaded the intellectual atmosphere of the United States.[2] The rise of giant industries of steel, coal and the railroad, and the men who controlled them, the vast fortunes of these "captains of industry"[3], the glow of the American dream of success and the popularity of the Alger hero[4], the prevalence of poverty and abject misery, the beginnings of the clash of employers and workers, all this made the period a difficult training ground for an impressionable and unstable youth like the young Dreiser and tore him into conflicting loyalties and values.

*The author gratefully acknowledges the courtesy of the Rare Book Library, University of Pennsylvania, in permitting him the free use of its vast Dreiser Collection.

One of the most potent influences on Dreiser was his contact with Darwinism through the writings of Spencer. The works of Darwin had a tremendous effect upon the social thinking of his day and, as Richard Hofstadter observes in his brilliant study of the subject, "in some respects the United States during the last three decades of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century was *the* Darwinian country."[5] Theories and philosophies based on Darwin's thesis and the subsequent modifications and systematization by his followers found great favour with the American reading public. In an age of rapid and striking economic change with wide-ranging disparities, both social and economic, Darwinism was quite understandably seized upon as a "welcome addition, perhaps the most powerful of all, to the store of ideas to which solid and conservative men appealed when they wished to reconcile their fellows to some of the hardships of life and to prevail upon them not to support hasty and ill-considered reforms."[6] The strong wave of determinism which so deeply permeated the imaginative literature of this period could be directly traced to this pervasive influence. These ideas affected Dreiser most profoundly and gave a definite direction to his thinking for three decades. His reading of Huxley, Drummond and Spencer made him believe that Christian doctrine was another dogma and there was little justification in judging human conduct by the standards prescribed by the scriptures or conventional society. Spencer not only "blew" Dreiser "intellectually to bits,"[7] but, also, to use his own words to Frank Harris, "nearly killed me, took every shred of belief away from me; showed me that I was a chemical atom in a whirl of unknown forces; the realization clouded my mind."[8]

Dreiser's experiences as a newspaper reporter during his early career also played a decisive part in formulating many of his attitudes towards life and his choice of subject matter.[9] His journalistic career enabled him to come into contact with life at many social levels and witness scenes of misery and deprivation which made him shed "dry sobs looking into broken faces and the eyes of human failures," and rage against "fate and the blundering, inept cruelty of life."[10]

There was yet another formative influence on Dreiser seldom discussed but, nevertheless, significant. This was his familiarity with early American realism. He was already familiar with Stephen Crane and had even published a story by him in his magazine.[11] It

was, however, Henry B. Fuller whom he had read fervently while in St. Louis and admired as the only person who could be regarded as "the father of American Realism."[12] He was also acquainted with the work of writers like George Ade, Frank Norris, Hamlin Garland and Howells and had started collecting their works for his "private library of American Realism".[13]

Thus stood Dreiser at the turn of the century : bewildered, sad, swept off his feet by his new found knowledge of Huxley and Spencer, accepting their theories as a valid explanation for the spectacle he saw around him, and yet unable to discard completely his religious background, his love of life and beauty, the humane feelings of kindness, sympathy, tenderness and charity—traits he had inherited from his mother. The author of *Sister Carrie*, torn between these opposite pulls, terribly depressed, his dream of success, wealth and splendor shattered, was unable to think dispassionately and take a broad or inclusive view of things. He alternated between the two and there emerged two Dreisers, one a ruthless Darwinist, and the other, a gentle humanist. This split and duality in his personality accounts for the contradictions one finds in his writings. Dreiser's so-called uncompromising naturalism and mechanistic conception of life can be properly understood only against this background.

Dreiser criticism during his lifetime had invariably labelled him as a pioneer naturalist, the leader of the American Naturalistic writers.[14] Though a pioneer certainly in many ways, it is hardly fair to cite him as an example of what is often termed as "pure naturalism". A close examination of Dreiser's writings reveals that though he did, of course, have many features in common with what generally goes by the name of naturalism, he also exhibited in an equally important manner characteristics which could be termed anything but natualistic. There are to be found in his novels elements distinctly spiritual, moral, and supernatural. Often the characters would seem to be exercising their wills. This qualifies his naturlism very much.

The term "naturalism" has been used rather loosely in literary criticism and different critics have meant different things while using this word. As James T. Farrell, often described as a naturalist himself, once remarked : "Various definitions of these

words (naturalism and realism) have been given. Some say naturalistic writers have in common a theory of pessimistic determinism. Some hold that naturalism is optimistic. Others believe it pessimistic and will say that if a book has a hopeful ending, it can't be naturalistic. I do not know all of the definitions of naturalism, but I have come across enough to know that there are many."[15] It is neither possible nor necessary for the purpose of this paper to discuss at length this vast and controversial topic. However, it is necessary to clarify the term and its implications as it relates to Dreiser. This will help us define the precise nature of his naturalism.

Very few definitions of the term are broad enough to include all the authors who have, at one time or another, been called naturalists. What is pertinent to note is that any definition of the word to describe these authors should be based more on the features of their work rather than on any abstract theoretical premise. Norris, Crane, London and Dreiser were all creative artists and had not studied the naturalist philosphers before embarking on their work. Dreiser, frankly doubtful of the literary value of such an approach, wrote; "It is very unlikely, in my opinion, that any examination of the fictional theory is going to help one, writer or reader, to understand creative writing, and least of all enable anyone to better undertake it. It is just as well to remember that all critical and aesthetic theories arose after the fact."[16] Hardly any definition of naturalism seems to fit Dreiser whose works obey no bounds or limits imposed by such theories.

Professor Lars Ahnebrink's definition seems to be a good starting point. Professor Ahnebrink, who made a detailed study of the movement both in Europe and America, defines it thus :

> Naturalism is a manner and method of composition by which the author portrays life as it is in accordance with the philosophic theory of determinism (exemplified in Zola's *L'Assommoir*). In contrast to a realist, a naturalist believes that man is fundamentally an animal without free will. To a naturalist man can be explained in terms of forces, usually heredity and environment, which operate upon them.[17]

Much of Dreiser's fiction, no doubt, will fall within the limits set by this definition; yet his novels are hardly in accordance with the theory of determinism, or for that matter, any other theory,

The origin of literary naturalism is generally traced to Zola and his work, and his essay, *Le Roman Experimentale* (Paris, 1880) is taken as its theoretical basis. But Dreiser who disclaimed any knowledge of Zola at the time he wrote these novels,[18] differs from him in many essentials. Zola's theory is based largely on science and the "application of the experimental method to the novel and to the drama,"[19] and as such, required an objective approach and had no room for personal feelings on the part of the novelist. Dreiser's treatment of his characters and their courses, on the contrary, are subjective, and his personal feelings appear in various forms, often a strong compassion, or a bitter tirade against conventions. The gap between Dreiser's work and the experimental novel of Zola is, indeed, much wider, for, as Walcutt points out, "just where Zola, for example, would theoretically put most emphasis—i.e. on the extraction of laws about human nature—Dreiser is most uncertain and most sure that no certainty can be attained."[20] The same, in a way, is true of Crane and Norris, on whom the influence of Zola was far greater. As Professor Ahnebrink concludes towards the end of his book, neither of them "strictly speaking should be labelled as a pure naturalist; perhaps the term experimenters in naturalism is more descriptive of their aims and methods."[21] This is more true of Dreiser who can hardly be labelled as a naturalist in the same sense as Zola and the view that "there was no single writer who could be described as a naturalist, no one wholly devoted, before Dreiser, to the philosophy, the material, and method of Zola"[22] does not seem to be valid as the studies of Walcutt and Ahnebrink have shown.[23]

Though all the important American naturalists writing during the turn of the century and later, Norris, Crane, London, Garland and Dreiser, had their roots firmly planted in the American soil and wrote about segments of American life in the manner (they borrowed more of technique than philosophy) of the French, they had their own distinctive features and differed from one another when it came to details. A comparison of Dreiser with his fellow contemporaries brings his own naturalism into sharper focus. Norris, who, it would seem, was influenced most by Zola (he often styled himself "the boy Zola", his biographer, Franklin Walker tells us), thought of the novelist's work much in the same terms as the French naturalists. While commenting on Zola's work in *The Wave* in the mid—1890s, he wrote :

> The world of M. Zola is a world of big things...the enormous, the formidable, the terrible is what counts; no teacup tragedies here ..Terrible things must happen to the characters of the naturalistic tale. They must be twisted from the ordinary, wrenched from the quiet, uneventful round of everyday life and flung into the throes of a vast and terrible drama that works itself out in unleashed passion, in blood, and in sudden death.[24]

This was when Norris was working on *Mc Teague* and quite understandably, he tried to incorporate these elements in his novel. Dreiser, however, is not much concerned about "terrible" things happening to his characters, and still less with blood and "sudden death". Like Zola, Norris also paid great emphasis on heredity : the similarities between *L' Assommoir* and *McTeague* are too obvious. Heredity is offered as the explanation for the brutality of Mc Teague. Dreiser, on the other hand, like Crane in *Maggie* or Norris himself in *The Octopus*, is more concerned with environment and social conventions and values. In *Sister Carrie*, heredity hardly plays any part. Dreiser also differed from Crane. His observation of social detail and social reality was far greater than Crane's, and as Richard Chase has pointed out, "by comparison, Crane is a *romancer*, and his naturalism remains relatively poetic, abstract, pure, and impressionistic "[25] Hamlin Garland was more conventional and his works reflect the moralism of his times which appears to be quite alien to the naturalistic spirit.

What Dreiser and other naturalists had derived from Darwinism was the conviction that physical, economic and social environment, and not strength of character, nor divine intervention determines the fate of man. In Dreiser's case, though one can be sure of his outright rejection of any divinity, one is hardly sure if he really does away with strength of character in his novels (Cowperwood is an example) or extra-natural forces as determining factors. David Maxwell's observations on naturalism, therefore, come nearest to incorporating, though not fully, the scope and nature of Dreiser's naturalism :

> Naturalism was based on philosophical as well as aesthetic postulates. Aesthetically, it demanded scientific accuracy in the fictional use of social backgrounds and the admission into the novel of all aspects of experience, particularly the sordid and the socially unjust. Philosophically, it depicted man as largely the product of his environment and his heredity : thus from people reared in violence, dishonesty and squalor of slum life

> we can expect only violence, dishonesty and dirt. Clearly there is a leaning towards Marxist socialism and the evolutionary theories of the formative effects of environment on species. For the outright naturalist, man was the helpless plaything of impersonal economic forces and life a struggle for existence which only the strongest survive. This did not, however, prevent his believing that humanity might somehow rise against these forces and direct them to more beneficent ends.[26]

Dreiser's novels, while moving within a deterministic framework, are yet not wholly confined by physical reality or materiality. Spiritualism, humanitarianism, and, at a later stage (as in *An American Tragedy*), the possibility of social reform appear, making it dfficult for us to classify them. All his novels written during this period show these divergent and, at times, conflicting pulls in varying degrees. The strains of naturalism and anti-naturalism seem to co-exist. This is more true of *Sister Carrie* and *Jennie Gerhardt* (1911) than of the first two volumes of the Cowperwood trilogy, *The Financiar* (1912) and *The Titan* (1914), and *The "Genius"* (1915) which show a greater influence of deterministic ideas. But even in these novels Dreiser does not fail to introduce social, moral and spiritual considerations.

Sister Carrie (1900), Dreiser's first novel, the story of his "little soldier of fortune"[27] is significant for an understanding of Dreiser in many ways. It shows the duality which turns out to be a distinguishing feature of his naturalism. As Oscar Cargill has put it, "like life itself, it is deterministic to a determinist and moral to a moralist .... It is an unusual Naturalistic novel which leaves the reader as free to draw his conclusions from the facts as does Sister Carrie."[28] As in his journalistic writing about the same time, in this novel also Dreiser attacks the puritanical mores and social attitudes and half-accepts and half-rejects the cult of success. Three years after the publication of this novel, Dreiser had written that "the sum and substance of literary as well as social morality may be expressed in three words—tell the truth."[29] This is precisely what he seems to be doing in *Sister Carrie*. He was writing of life as he had seen it around himself without the least attempt to embody in it any preconceived theory. It is based mainly on the elopement and subsequent history of his sister, Emma, who in 1886 had eloped with a much older person named Hopkins. Dreiser was translating these experiences into the book. This accounts for the absence of any conventional plot conflict : the focus is toward the dispassionate observation of life.

This, as Walcutt remarks, "brings one to the heart of what is new in the form of *Sister Carrie*."[30]

Sister Carrie is often taken as a landmark in American Naturalistic fiction. In technique it is certainly one of the first to use the method of piling up of massive details to give the reader an impression of the novelist's desire to present life in all its totality. The minute descriptions in *Sister Carrie* is an effort in this direction. The novel also showed more thoroughly the implications of literary naturalism. To a large extent, all the important characters, Carrie, Drouet, and Hurstwood, are at the mercy of incomprehensible forces within and without, over which they have little control. The sense of fate ordering the course of human life is, in many respects, like Thomas Hardy's whom he had read and greatly admired.[31] Carrie is a "lone figure tossing in a thoughtless sea" (p. 10), a victim of her instincts on the one hand and environment on the other. The responsibility for Carrie's and Hurstwood's actions, Dreiser partly attributes to "forces wholly super human" (p. 2). Yet even in this novel Dreiser is not exclusively a mechanical determinist. Carrie's experiences in Chicago and her later suffering and success reveal a depth of human consciousness and will power which raise her above the level of a helpless puppet. Even in the important episode of Hurstwood's breaking open of the safe which accidentally clicks and closes, leaving him no choice but to take the money and escape, Dreiser is not entirely denying Hurstwood's responsibility for the act. Hurstwood's hesitation, his troubled state of mind, indecision, the prolonged debate over whether he should steal or not, are dramatic expressions of the conflict in his mind, which alone is sufficient evidence that the act was not committed blindly at the bidding of some external force. Dreiser, however, like Hardy, parries the question of Hurstwood's own final decision by the chance locking of the safe. It is interesting to note that a quarter of a century later in *An American Tragedy* too he avoids the question of Clyde's responsibility for his decision by the chance over-turning of the boat.

Dreiser here does not accept or deny the existence of any such thing as absolute morality—absolute morality in the ethical sense of a knowledge of what is right and what is wrong as distinguished from social morality which may vary from society to society. Dreiser only hints that the Spencerian analysis of morals had not provided

an answer to this complex problem. "For all the liberal analysis of Spencer . . . we have but an infantile perception of morals. There is more in the subject than mere conformity to a law of evolution. It is yet deeper that conformity to things of earth alone" (p. 101), he held. Just what the true principles of morality are, he does not say, but, in his comments on Hurstwood's state of mind, he seems to be accepting the existence of something like absolute morality :

> Hurstwood could not bring himself to act definitely. He wanted to think about it—to ponder over it, to decide whether it were best . . . yet he wavered. He did not know what evil might result from it to him—how soon he might come to grief. The true ethics of the situation never once occurred to him, and never would have, under any circumstances. (p. 288)

Dreiser thus implies that in Hurstwood's mind there was an ethical principle inherent in the situation. Even more significant is his expression of the view that man has a moral instinct which is operative in such cases :

> To those who have never wavered in conscience, the predicament of the individual whose mind is less strongly constituted and who trembles in the balance between duty and desire is scarcely appreciable, unless graphically portrayed. Those who have never heard that solemn voice of the ghostly clock which ticks with awful distinctness, "thou shalt," "thou shalt not," .. are in no position to judge. . . . The dullest specimen of humanity when drawn by desire toward evil, is recalled by a sense of right, which is proportionate in power and strength to his evil tendency. We must remember that it may not be a knowledge of the right, for no knowledge of right is predicated of the animal's instinctive recoil at evil. Men are still led by instinct before they are regulated by knowledge. It is instinct which recalls the criminal—it is instinct (where highly organized reasoning is absent) which gives the criminal his feeling of danger, his fear of wrong. (pp. 286–287)

Yet another long passage in the novel further discusses this problem as part of authorial comment and provides a fundamental insight into his naturalism. Critics have often picked up the line "untutored man is but a wisp in the wind" from this long statement ignoring the rest and held it out as the definitive statement of his outloook. This gives an inaccurate and rather distorted view. It is, therefore, worthwhile to quote the full passage :

> Among the forces which sweep and play throughout the universe, untutored man is but a wisp in the wind. Our civilization

> is still in a middle stage, scarcely beast, in that it is no longer wholly guided by instinct; scarcely human, in that it is not yet wholly guided by reason. On the tiger no responsibility rests. We see him aligned by nature with the forces of life—he is born into their keeping and without thought he is protected. We see man far removed from the layers of the jungles, his innate instincts dulled by too near an approach to free will: his free will not sufficiently developed to replace his instincts and afford him perfect guidance. He is becoming too wise to hearken always to instincts and desires; he is still too weak to always prevail against them. As a beast, the forces of life aligned him with them; as a man, he has not yet wholly learned to align himself with the forces. In this intermediate stage he wavers—neither drawn in harmony with nature by his instincts nor yet wisely putting himself into harmony by his own free-will. He is even as a wisp in the wind, moved by every breath of passion, acting now by his will and now by his instincts, erring with one, only to retrieve by the other, failing by one, only to rise by the other—a creature of incalculable variability. (p. 83)

Dreiser thus leaves us in no doubt about his acceptance—however imperfect and undeveloped it might be—of the notion of free will and his view of the complexity of human beings and their essential difference from the animal species.[32] He makes this still more unambiguous when he says that in Carrie "instinct and reason, desire and understanding, were at war for the mastery," and asks : "In how many of our worldings do they not" (p. 83) ? The later happenings in Carrie's career amply illustrate this conflict.

In the first half of the novel, Dreiser presents Carrie's idea of success and happiness as purely materialistic. It is her lack of money which tortures Carrie most and it is money and what it can buy for her that she constantly dreams of : "her imagination trod a very narrow round, always winding up at points which concerned money, looks, clothes, or enjoyment" (p. 58). She sighs at her poverty : "Ah! what was it not to have money." (p. 67). and exclaims with longing: "Ah! money, money, money! what a thing it was to have" (p. 74) !

Carrie, however, says her creator, like many others of her age, had hardly any idea of the significance of money: "Money: something everybody else has and I must get,' would have expressed her understanding of it thoroughly" (p. 70). But this was not Dreiser's

idea. "The true meaning of money," he writes, "yet remains to be popularly explained and comprehended. When each individual realizes for himself that this thing primarily stands for and should only be accepted as a moral due—that it should be paid out as honestly stored energy, and not as usurped privilege—many of our social, religious and political troubles will have permanently passed." (p. 70)

Carrie, when she has all money she had been yearning for, is, however, soon disillusioned. This brings us to an important point Dreiser makes in the novel. Carrie is still unhappy and fails to find contentment with her successful career. According to the novelist, this was to be so. There is going to be no contentment: it is all an illusion: a craving which if satisfied "shall eternally result in dreams and death. Aye! dreams unfulfilled—gnawing, luring, idle, phantoms which beckon and lead, beckon and lead, until death and dissolution dissolve their power." (p. 322). This yearning is never to end and Dreiser closes the novel by addressing these words to Carrie :

> Know, then, that for you is neither surfeit nor content. In your rocking-chair, by your window dreaming, shall you long, alone. In your rocking-chair, by your window, shall you dream such happiness as you may never feel. (p. 557)

Here, Dreiser seems to imply, is the irony. Even if one succeeded materially, being strong, one would not find inner contentment. For the goals that society set before men, these very goals, must inevitably fail to satisfy his deepest yearning for a complete human fulfilment. If they who achieve success, must suffer an equally strong inner defeat then there is no chance for personal fulfilment as long as one pursues the materialistic values placed so high on the social scale. Ames, a character who seems to be dear to the novelist's heart, tells Carrie, "I shouldn't care to be rich .... What good would it do ? A man doesn't need this sort of thing to be happy" (p. 357). It is this concern for the inner life, this preoccupation with the spirit, which runs as a parallel strain through most of his work and differentiates him from other naturalists. It is significant to note that on one occasion he had titled this novel as "The Flesh and the Spirit." Indeed the story of Carrie Meeber is the story of Dreiser's own divided soul.

A study of Dreiser's thought and work reveals a mind that saw and felt life deeply and was thrilled and repelled by what it saw. The beauty of life, "the wonder and the terror of it" fascinated him. His life shows what it was like for a sensitive, lonely soul to grow up and live in a society dominated by materialistic aims, which, even when attained, left man unhappy, groping for something beyond. Between the lure of materiality and the call of the spirit, he lay torn, divided, isolated and alone, seeking to know the unknowable. Transcending all his discordant notes was the one constant article of his life-long faith: his abiding love and zest for the mystery and wonder we call life, which at last, gave some measure of peace to this inquiring spirit :

> I am thrilled by life's endless grandeur and genius.... I am profoundly grateful for my manifestation of itself that may be looked upon as *me*. ...to know that I have been, and may possibly continue (in any form) as a part of it, is sufficient not only for my present well-being but my continuing peace of mind.[33]

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HARLEY GRANVILLE-BARKER —A STUDY OF HIS APPROACH TO SHAKESPEARE

D. PREMPATI

C. B. Purdom criticizes Granville-Barker's *Prefaces to Shakespeare* sharply, maintaining that, admirable as they be considered as performances on paper, they suffer from an un-necessary subservience to A.C. Bradley, and that since Barker had no theory of his own as to the nature of drama he was not able to withstand the powerful professor.[1] Kenneth Muir concedes Granville-Barker combined experience as a producer with the knowledge of a playwright, but "he leans rather heavily on Bradley's interpretations."[2] Such an estimate of this great Shakespeare producer, perhaps the greatest of all, tends to overlook his many insights and achievements. Modern Shakespeare scholarship, of which Kenneth Muir and Purdom are typically representative, fails to take note of Granville-Barker's approach, which is the approach of the actor and the producer, and relates it to the practices of the thertrical laboratory. Incidentally, Granville-Barker himself, when he came to the stage, attacked this very malaise, perhaps not knowing that the malaise was recurrent, now in the form of spectacular shows and now in the form of painted scenes.

It is not sufficiently realised that the aims and methods of modern Shakespeare production stem directly from the work of Willian Poel and Granville-Barker. Each in his own way contributed to a true discovery of Shakespeare. Each in his own way brought about a change in the contemporary approach to the staging of his plays. They were jointly responsible for many Elizabethan productions. They both collaborated and brought a truly Shakespearean revival. Granville-Barker acknowledged his debt to William Poel[3]; yet it would explain the total significance of neither to maintain that Poel's theories are seen exemplified in the work of Granville-Barker. Willian Poel doubtless was one source of the new approach to

Shakespeare. Granville-Barker however, had his own dimensions to add to Poel's pioneering job.

At this stage it would be profitable to recount Granville-Barker's career and the contemporary stage practices in so far as they affect his Shakespeare productions. Granville-Barker in 1900 was a young actor with ten years' experience of the stage and was already an incipient dramatist. He had already acted in Shakespeare productions, had played for William Poel and had been Dean in Mrs. Patrick Campbell's Company. The leading dramatists were still Arthur Wing Pinero and Henry Arthur Jones, while the domestic problem play and musical comedy were the popular theatrical fare. The nineteenth century Shakespeare productions with their elaborate sets, were far too spectacular to allow the more or less unabridged texts, the rapid speech, the sustained pace and the simplified settings that allowed scene to follow scene without frequent long and tedious breaks. The scenic treatment of Shakespeare characterised the productions. This treatment in the grand manner had reached its height under Irving at the Lyceum. Under Beerbohm Tree, at his Majesty's it chose to be still more gorgeous. Both Henry Irving and Herbert Beerbohm Tree had little or no reverence for the text and did not hesitate to chop it off and introduce long waits and intervals whenever time was needed for changing and building up their disgustingly elaborate sets. A perceptive man of theatre like Shaw said : "Shakespeare then became physically impossible .. His plays were presented in mutilated fragments, divided into acts with long waits between, in which form they were so horribly boresome, being mostly unintelligent, that only the most powerful fascination could induce play-goers to endure him".[4] The sort of powerful fascination Shaw referred to often demanded a pretty high price. "Actors have twisted them up into swagger shapes, scholars have rolled them flat, producers have immured them in scenery,..."[5] describing, thus, in one sentence, Granville-Barker summed up the practices of three centuries of history and learned commentary.

In histories of Shakespeare criticism, Graville-Barker is usually treated—and dismissed—as a disciple of Bradley. It indicates how little the nature of his work has been understood. Precious little has been done to formulate Granville-Barker's dramatic theory. The suspicion that he had no theory of his own as to the nature of drama

indicates that we have failed to see drama from the actor's point of view. Himself an actor—he brought this other attitude to Shakespeare. His "explicit" and "implicit" methods of play-writing stem from his acting compulsions. "There are roughly—considering both today's and yesterday's—two methods of of play-writing, that demanding explicit interpretation, and that in which much of the meaning is left implicit, to be conveyed by the actors, not in words nor even in very forthright action, but largely by demonstrating the sort of pattern made in the relations and attitude of the characters toward each other and in the contrasts between them, the dialogue stressing the significance of the design."[6] Division of plays into explicit and implicit dramatic kinds brings the role of the actor in a dramatic performence. Incidentally it may be pointed out that this division is more satisfying and relevant to the purpose of production than the purely literary divisions into poetic and prosaic kinds. "Actors are not puppets; and since, for the performance certainly, they will have to be let go from leading-strings, the less they are tied by them at all the better."[7] The actor is not to be an animated puppet. Pleading for a collaborative partnership with the actor, he says : "The character as it leaves the dramatist's hands has to be re-created in terms of the actor's personality; and the problem of the dramatist is how to write it so that he may prevent it—*his* character—from perishing in the process."[8] He put the matter clearly in *Prefaces to Shakespeare* : "The actor—neither mere mouth-piece nor mere puppet—interprets a character —the material the dramatist gives him—in the terms, more or less disguised, of his personality. He cannot, strictly speaking, know more of the character than the dramatist has told him, and this, though it be the essential part, can never be much. But he must seem to know much more, and in many ways, if we are to think of the two as one. Yet this need be but seeming. He need acquire no knowledge but apparent knowledge, cultivate in this respect no ability but to seem able, nor need he build up, of this composite personality demanded, anything but a painted facade. Note that it is not a question of trivial knowledge or poor ability,...but of knowledge and ability merely reflected as in a mirror...."[9] Much, it appears, has been made of Granville-Barker telling us that the art of the theatre is the art of acting.[10] He however, realized that in certain periods of the history of the theatre the actor dominated and in some the dramatist. He pleaded that collaboration was more an alliance than

a rivalry. He found his own contemporary drama generally lifeless and to this he ascribed the ascendence of the actor. The Elizabethan age was an age of the dramatist. "The greatest periods in drama, the periods of renascence and development, have almost invariably been dominated by dramatist who knew so much of the theatre and of actors and their acting that they had no illusions left about them."[11] What he aimed at was a true relationship between actor and dramatist than had prevailed in the Victorian theatre. At one extreme he had great actors of spectacular shows and at the other critics like William Archer who held that the actor's performance of the play was not indispensable. Granville-Barker restored the drama to its true sphere as the actor was now to be the vital centre of theatrical performance.

More than once Granville-Barker confessed to a feeling of despair when he tried to define "the principles of dramatic art." "It is a dangerous phrase, it delivers the artist bound to the doctrinaire," said Granville-Barker explaining why he fought shy of that phrase.[12] His dramatic method was empirical and he called it the natural law of theatre. "There must, of course, as in every human activity, be a certain order of things involved, there will be certain conditions to be fulfilled; but there will be found—so I mean to suggest to you —not to be laws of play-writing, but only the natural laws of the medium in which plays exist, the laws of the theatre, that is to say. The distinction is an important one. An artist must so master his medium that its use will be second nature to him, and the nearer he can come to complete freedom of expression the better."[13] To the rule of the ancients—he meant Aristotle—the artist should owe but a temporary belief, not an absolute resignation of himself or a perpetual captivity. The kind of criticism associated with Aristotle, said he, was a sort of didactic criticism. "Such didactic criticism, which makes for the formulating of what comes to be thought the principles of play-writing, is a mischievous thing."[14] The drama's life lies elsewhere; it is in "elemental things, in vehement humanity venting itself in a medley of action and speech, dance and song."[15]

True, Granville Barker talks of characters. In the *Prefaces* and elsewhere, he offers long discussions of characters. The literery or poetic approach to drama and dramatic criticism fights shy of character. About Shakespeare's characters Mr. Wilson Knight says : "the persons, ultimately, are not human at all, but purely

symbols of a poetic vision."[16] But he did not, in the analysis of the play, make any attempt to present the likely way to produce and embody such "symbols of a poetic vision". To the actor, a character is as human as he himself is. Bradley's approach to Shakespeare, if faithfully represented on the stage, could have produced performances in which the character certainly would have become the false centre of attention, as it did happen in the nineteenth century productions, which Granville-Barker sharply attacked. Professor Wilson Knight makes no reference to a physical stage nor does he discuss the problems of actors. J.L. Styan talking about manipulating the characters makes a refreshing plea to envisage the character's function in the play : "Common sense cannot accept that a character is no more than a mouth for an arrangement of words. We are bound to examine the fuller contribution we know to exist. It would be irresponsible to ignore its strangely binding quality in commanding an audience's response. And that quality is tied up with the presence of the actor on the stage."[17]

The actor's contribution has not received a sufficient recognition, not withstanding Granville-Barker's repeated pleas making the actor the vital centre of the play : "...a play's essential life lies neither in story nor construction, nor mere words. All these may be effectively assembled and yet leave a blank, which the actors with their personalities will have to fill."[18] Granville-Barker's quest was to evolve the contribution of the living actor to fill in the author's outline. In 1962 he said of his first Savoy production, *The Winter's Tale*, "the first thing I aimed at was to get the thing alive at any cost." M. St. Clare Byrne rightly concludes : "For Harley Granville-Barker the clue to Shakespeare and his art was vitality. The words he uses when he talks or writes about him are 'Life', 'Living', 'alive.' Shakespeare 'aimed at vitality and achieved it intensely.' This vitality must be recaptured at any cost."[19]

Naturally Granville-Barker is interested neither in characters nor in poetic symbols if they cannot be *vitally* communicated. J.L. Styan makes a pointed reference to this function : "All values in art depend upon the power of communicating them, making them a wholly felt, breathing force to the recipient. This is the limitation on the symbol : the character must be sufficiently human for the actor congruously to present it in his own person and for the spectator to recognize it."[20] The legitimate test of a play is performance.

And the legitimate test of dramatic criticism lies in its ability to help the actor *embody* the playwright's creation. A dramatic criticism charged with this ultimate function cannot but come to terms with characters. Dramatic poetry is Shakespeare's natural medium; everything in the plays emerges directly from it. He, therefore, rules out pre-conceived, external standards from real life to the judgement of an artificial arrangement like a play. In his Preface to *King Lear*, he spelt his approach to drama:

"We need no more expect to receive—lapses of performance and attention apart—the full value of a great drama at a first hearing than we expect it of a complex piece of music. And what preliminary study of the music, with its straiter laws and more homogeneous material, will effect, study of drama will not. A play's interpretation is an unrulier business, and we must face it rather as we face life itself...it is the business of the dramatist, doubtless, in turning actuality to art, to clarify all this....But if he aimed only at its clear statement he would produce no illusion of life at all. Abundance of power...there must be, and a certain waste must be allowed for.. though we may lose at the time in fullness of understanding, we shall gain in conviction."[21] Here, as elsewhere, he re-inforces his central stand that the key to dramatic power does not lie in the play-wright's ability to pronounce clear statements; on the contrary, it is in the resonance of thought, imagery and feeling. Bradley's was a different approach: "The centre of the tragedy may be said with equal truth to lie in action issuing from character, or in character issuing in action.... What we feel strongly, as a tragedy advances to its close, is that the calamities and catastrophe follow inevitably from the deeds of men, and that the main source of these deeds is character. The dictum that, with Shakespeare, "character is destiny" is no doubt an exaggeration.....but it is the exaggeration of a vital truth."[22] To Bradley "character" is an author's raw material; and to Granville-Barker, it is the playwright's product. Notwithstanding this real distinction, Granville-Barker, at more than one place, referred to the mighty job accomplished by A.C. Bradley. He was full of admiration for Bradley's labours. Yet his approach to Shakespeare is quite different. If anything else, it certainly cannot be called Bradleyan. The tendency to write him off as Bradleyan is due to his preoccupation with characters, often for reasons other than Bradleyan. Is there

anything wrong with his preoccupation with characters ? Writing about the widening gulf between stage appreciation and study appreciation, Allardyce Nicoll makes a telling point : "Those many nineteenth century studies of Shakespeare's characters, culminating in Bradley's famous volume, even although they rarely referred to the plays in theatrical terms, and, indeed, habitually treated them as literary texts, came closer than many modern studies to the approach of the stage—since obviously it is upon characters that actors concentrate, and since andiences gain most of their impressions from hearing the actors deliver the lines assigned to those Characters."[23] Precisely for this reason Granville-Barker returns to Bradley again and again. His preoccupation with acting, however, gave a different dimension to his treatment of Shakespeare. A.C. Bradley's well-known indictment of *King Lear's* lack of stage-worthiness brings out the sharp divergences which marked Granville-Barker's approach. Shakespeare he protested, had not failed : "In this hardest of tasks—the showing of Lear's agony, his spiritual death and resurrection—we find Shakespeare relying very naturally upon his strongest weapon, which by experiment and practice he has now, indeed, forged to an extraordinary strength, and to a suppleness besides : the weapon of dramatic poetry. He has, truly, few others of any account. In the storm-scenes the shaking of a thunder-sheet will not greatly stir us. A modern playwright might seek help in music —but the music of Shkespeare's day is not of that sort; in impressive scenery—he has none. He has, in compensation, the fluidity of movement which the negative background of his stage allows him. For the rest, he has his actors, their acting and the power of their speech. It is not a mere rhetorical power, nor are the characters lifted from the commonplace simply by being given verse to speak instead of conversational *prose*. All method of expression apart, they are *poetically conceived*, they exist in those dimensions, in that freedom, and are endowed with that peculiar power. They are dramatic poetry incarnate."[24]

As a young man, Shakespeare's passionate interest was in human beings. Not all early plays, however, were conceived in terms of characters. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* "is one play which seems to stand apart from his consistently progressive interest in the creating of character."[25] Is character in drama a separate entity ? Are we to look for character as something which can be

taken as complete and autonomous ? Even in Shakespeare's early work, in which he finds the playwright chiefly interested in the creation of characters, Granville-Barker does not find him running into the trap the questions above postulate. Discussing the place of *The Merchant of Venice* in Shakespeare's progress, he says : "In play after play now we find his interest in character broadening and deepening; but it still does not outweigh his care for the story, nor does it yet bring more metrical freedom to his verse. On the contrary, if we take the maturer Histories, and *The Merchant of Venice*, even if we add the later three, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *As You Like It*, and *Twelfth Night*, we might say that he has forged his verse into a firm, a sufficiently supple yet fairly regular medium which answers all his purposes."[26] With *Hamlet* there begins a period which he calls the period of "the great discovery"[27]. Tracing the main lines of Shakespeare's progress, he ascribed the maturity of his art from *Hamlet* onwards to the great discovery that "character" is not an author's raw material; it is his product : "The discovery which turned Shakespeare from a good dramatist into a great one was that the outward clashing of character with character is poor material beside the ferment in the spirit of a man, confined by law or custom or wills, but quickening in their respite"[28]. The art of drama is a trifle more than presenting men in action. "For behind the action, be the play farce or tragedy, there must be some spiritually significant idea"[29]. Now how did the playwright convey the idea ? Was it by means of action issuing in character and character issuing in action ? What Granville-Barker finds must have gone into the making of the idea is "an abundant ease and freedom of expression, an enrichment of speech by a suddenly imperious use of words and phrases, a new and bold opulence in the development of character and dramatic effect, and an amazing increase of dynamic power"[30]. This is the point of view he adopted and in the *Prefaces* he did no more than study some plays from this point of view. Tracing the lines of Shakespeare's progress, he says that from *Othello* begins another development which he calls super-drama : "...in *King Lear* and its neighbour work, not single characters merely, but the whole play will be pitched in this superhuman key. An intensive process this, by which the playwright makes such demand on the poet, who betters the opportunity and learns by it to ask more of the playwright, who in turn sets the poet a yet bigger task'"[31]. Finally he attributed the dramatic miracle of Shakespeare's

plays to this state of constant tension between the poet and the playwright. The result was a new medium—the dramatic verse. On dramatic verse be gave a body of criticism, which alone entitles him to be regarded as a leader of producers : "From the beginning he has been moving ..towards the making of his verse a dramatic language ..And this, I suppose, is the great artist's final achievement, to absorb his medium into the purpose of his art"[32].

It should be a barren criticism to praise the one at the expense of the other. It should be a dubious critical exercise to overlook the totality of one's critical achievement. Producing *Hamlet* for Stanislavsky's Art Theatre, Gordon Craig insisted : "Hamlet treats his mother with the tenderest love, respect and care, for she is not bad, but simply light-minded and spoiled by the atmosphere of the court"[33]. Luckily for Craig, he did not write prefaces to his productions. If he did, as Granville-Barker did, he should have exposed himself to the limitations of character-criticism. Granville-Barker was committed to a rejection of realistic devices for the production of the poetic drama. He insisted that we must gain Shakespeare's effect by Shakespeare's means. Verse-speaking was central to his production : we must, therefore, master "the tunes he writes to, the whole great art of his music-making"[34].

It would, therefore, be rash to suggest that he had no dramatic theory of his own and that his *Prefaces* belonged to the nineteenth-century character-criticism.

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24. Barker, *Prefaces to Shakespeare* Vol. II (Batsford), p. 6.
25. Barker, *On Dramatic Method*, p. 76.
26. ibid., pp. 79–80.
27. ibid., p. 92.
28. ibid., pp. 92–93.
29. See Granville-Barker's "From Henry V to Hamlet" in *Studies in Shakespeare*—ed. by Peter Alexander, p. 81.
30. Barker, *On Dramatic Method*, p. 94.
31. ibid., p. 110.
32. ibid , p. 111.
33. Stanislavsky, *My Life in Art* (Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow), p. 392.
34. Barker, *Prefaces to Shakespeare*, 1, (Batsford), p. 15.

VERSIONS OF JOYCE'S *PORTRAIT*

V. D. SINGH

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man first appeared serially in *The Egoist* (London, 1914–15) and was subsequently published in New York in 1916, and London in 1917. The dates appended at the end, indicating the period of its writing, are significant. In its final shape the book is the result of revision, rewriting and compression going over a period of ten years. The manuscript *Stephen Hero* which Joyce gave up writing in 1907, is popularly supposed to be the version later reshaped into *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.* However, there exists an earlier work in prose of some two thousand words, written by Joyce in 1904. This document—"A Portrait of the Artist"—which was brought before the scholarly world in 1960[1] by Richard M. Kain and Robert E. Scholes[2], seriously challenges the supposition of the critics that *Stephen Hero*[3] is the *first* draft of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.**

Joyce wrote this sketch for the new journal *Dana*, started in Dublin in 1904 by John Eglinton. This work, written off in one day, anticipates in many respects the *Portrait* to which it is nearer in design than to *Stephen Hero*—the intermediate draft. This work may be said to mark the beginning of Joyce's mature work.

This unusual document is "part manifesto, part narrative; a story with only one character, a portrait without descriptive details".[4] It is written in a discursive, reflective-narrative style, always referring to the unnamed artist in the third person. "It is difficult to say whether what he (Joyce) wrote was essay or story."[5] In this sketch he portrays the artist through the influences and changes acting on his mind. Though the stages are not clearly marked, the outline and manner of the artist's growth have a striking resemblance to the final *Portrait* to which Joyce came after the "cathartic" process of writing *Stephen*

*Hence forward *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* will be referred to as the *Protrait*. However, the title of the 1904 version "A Portrait of the Artist" will be given in full, within quotation marks, unitalicised, as here.

Hero.[6] A clear outline of what he portrays in the final *Portrait* can be found in this first version.

> For the artist [of the first version] the rhythms of phrase and period, the symbols of word and allusion, were paramount things.[7]

In this, i.e., the 1904 portrait, Joyce sketches an adolescent who is a product of the "features of infancy"[8] because "past ..implies a fluid succession of presents."[9] In this early version, Joyce conceives his artist as one of those who

> seek through some art, by some process of the mind as yet untabulated to liberate from the personalised lumps of matter that which is their individuating rhythm, the first or formal relation of their parts. But for such as these a portrait is not an identificative paper but rather the curve of an emotion.*

In this first draft Joyce shows a clear influence on him of the psychological theory that the events of early life play an important role in the shaping of a man's character. "A Portrait of the Artist" begins :

> The features of infancy are not commonly reproduced in the adolescent portrait for, so capricious are we, that we cannot or will not conceive the past in any other than its iron memorial aspect. Yet the past assuredly implies fluid succession of presents,....

This clearly anticipates the importance that Joyce gives to Stephen's "infancy" in the final *Portrait*. To understand the adolescent artist, it is very necessary to know the influences on him as a child.

In 1904 Joyce had clearly perceived that a proper portrait of the artist is not a fixed thing : it is "a fluid succession of presents"; that it cannot be adequately presented through conventional narrative : it can only be revealed through a series of vignettes and epiphanies that manifest the character and the unique sensibility of the artist. Ellmann rightly comments that Joyce's conception of personality in this work as river rather than statue is premonitory of his later view of consciousness.[10]

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*This and other quoted portions below, until the next superscription of reference number, are taken from the text of 'A Portralt of the Artist' as published in *The Yale Review*, 1960, 353-69.

This unnamed artist becomes, rather early in his life, aware of "the ideas of eternal damnation, necessity of penitence" and "efficacy of prayer". Later he dislikes the "digestive value of religion" and hates authority. When he enters university he is "still soothed by devotional exercises", though his dislike of religious authorities "foolish and grotesque virginities"—increases. He looks down upon the vulgar Irish students, the "younglings". He adopts a policy of "secrecy and reserve". As he grows "the image of beauty" falls "as a mantle" on the soul of the artist. He develops "a temperament ever trembling towards its ecstasy". He contemplates "the rhythms of phrase and period, the symbols of word and allusion".

He haunts "silent and lonely places". These wanderings on a summer day lead him seaward and there he sees "the wilfulness of the sea" in "the childish or girlish hair" of the waders. And now little by little he begins to be conscious "of the beauty of mortal conditions". "The ardent adventures of lust" follow. This is the stage of sexual freedom leading to spiritual freedom.[11]

Those who are familiar with the final *Portrait* would discover from the above summary that in developing the sketch portrait into *Stephen Hero* and *Stephen Hero* into the *Portrait*, Joyce has dealt with basically the same material. His economy of material is striking. Sometimes he lifted with minor alterations extracts from one version and put them into the other. Kain and Scholes (in their introductory editorial note to the first version) list such instances of borrowing from the first version for *Stephen Hero*. Many of the incidents are the same in the three versions and sometimes the language of even the final version is reminiscent of the first one. An instance not noticed by them may be pointed out. In the *Portrait* while narrating Stephen's nocturnal prowlings in search of a prey for his lust, Joyce shows him wandering from street to street in "veiled autumnal evenings".[12] The "Yellow gas-flames arose before his troubled vision against the vapoury sky, burning as if before an altar".[13] In the first version he had written "The yellow gaslamps arising in his troubled vision, against an autumnal sky, gleaming mysteriously there before that violet altar...".[14] This would contradict the assertion by Scholes and Kain that hardly a line of the original was allowed to stand in the third and final version. However, this is not to reject the argument presented by the editors.

The sketch ends with "stirring peroration" and remarks on "the general paralysis of an insane society".[15] This "general paralysis" of Dublin life is the dominant theme in *Dubliners* and a key-word in *Stephen Hero.*

In the final *Portrait* Joyce presents "a pattern of moral growth and social alienation" of the artist.[16] Wheras Joyce had the vision of the moral growth of the artist as early as in 1904, he had not quite developed then the theme of alienation which one can perceive lingering through *Dubliners* in which paralytic Dublin prepares the ground for the exile of the artist. Towards the end of the final version Stephen finds himself completely alienated from his friends and family, and has to resort to self-communion in the form of diary writing, Finally he leaves home and friends and welcomes a new life "Welcome, O life ! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race".[17] In this departure of Stephen can be seen the blending of Joyce's two departures from Dublin for the continent. In the first version, i. e., in "A Portrait of the Artist" (1904), which was written after Joyce's return to Ireland and before his final departure, this resolution on the part of the artist to be an exile is not there in spite of his disgust with the "paralytic" society of Ireland. He sees his vocation in uplifting his people: "Man and woman, out of you comes the nation that is to come".[18]

When Joyce wrote the first version, he was thinking of establishing for himself a literary career in Ireland, and "A Portrait of the Artist" itself seems to be an effort in this direction. However, John Eglinton's refusal to accept it for publication made Joyce, as Kain and Scholes remark, "at once to turn his unusual production into a novel, which with its conventional form, might find a readier audience".[19] He made up a list of characters and events and outlines of early chapters. Some of the outlines which have been traced and preserved[20] give an idea of the contents of the earlier portion of *Stephen Hero.* As Joyce went on with the writing of *Stephen Hero,* his dissatisfaction with it grew. He gradually realised that "the individuating rhythm" and "the curve of emotion" which he intended it to be, were eluding his writing. This partly was the reason why he gave up writing *Stephen Hero,* and presented basically the same material through a new narrative technique in the form of the *Portrait.*

Stephen Hero as available to us today in British and American editions is a text of about 250 printed pages. These are the manuscript pages 519 to 902 sold in the autumn of 1938 to the Harvard College library by Miss Sylvia Beach, the first publisher of *Ulysses*. These pages were edited and published with an introduction by Theodore Spencer in 1944. Twenty-five additional manuscript pages were published with the 1955 edition.[22] Since the publication of this edition, five more pages have come to light. These pages have been included in the 1963 paper-back edition of *Stephen Hero*, published by New Directions Publishing Corporation, New York. Now the manuscript begins at page 477. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*[23] is roughly the same size as the extant fragment *Stephen Hero* which consists of eleven chapters–chapters 15 to 26. In his diary entry for February 2, 1904 (James Joyce's twenty-second birthday) his brother Stanislaus added after commenting on Joyce's reaction to John Eglinton's rejection of his paper :

> Jim is beginning his novel, as he usually begins things, half in anger, to show that in writing about himself he has a subject of more interest than their aimless discussion. I suggested the title of the paper "A Portrait of the Artist", and this evening, sitting in the kitchen, Jim told me his idea for the novel. It is to be almost autobiographical, and naturally as it comes from Jim, satirical. He is putting a large number of his acquaintances into it, and those Jesuits whom he has known. I don't think they will like themselves in it. He has not decided on a title, and again I made most of the suggestions. Finally a title of mine was accepted: "Stephen Hero" from Jim's own name in the book "Stephen Dedalus". The title, like the book, is satirical.[23]

This explains the origin of *Stephen Hero*. Joyce had planned a novel of sixty-three chapters. In his letter to his brother written from Zurich on 19 November, 1904, he wrote that he was writing the eleventh chapter of *Stephen Hero* about his days at Belvedere. In February 1905, he got on to chapters 17 and 18 depicting Stephen with his friends at the University. The surviving manuscript begins in the middle of chapter 15. By 7 June, 1905, Joyce had written twenty-one chapters of the novel. At this time Joyce was passing through anxious and uncertain days in Trieste.[24] The writing of *Stephen Hero* ran down unfinished a little after chapter 25. The manuscript ends with the unfinished chapter 26.

As Joyce went on with the writing of the book, he became more and more dissatisfied with the work which he later thought

was no better than a "puerile" exercise, a "schoolboy's composition". His immaturity is reflected particularly in his failure to achieve the "impersonality" which, as Stephen says in the oft-quoted passage from the *Portrait*, is the essence of the dramatic form, "the mystery of esthetic creation",[25] Joyce could not manage to sustain with objectivity the ironic and satirical vision he set out with. He fails to "refine" himself "out of existence".[26] When Joyce feels uncertain about the convincingness of Stephen's character, he puts in a "devaluating" phrase or sentence to give a "distancing" effect. Finding himself too involved in Stephen's exposition of his theory of art he refers to him as "this heaven-ascending essayist".[27] Elsewhere Stephen is "foolish enough to regret....".[28] With Joyce's indulgent judgment and commentary on the character of Stephen, the book remains a fictionalised autobiography written in an expository style. A random sample from *Stephen Hero* and its comparison with another from the *Portrait* will illustrate the point :

> Every morning he rose and came down to breakfast. After breakfast he took the tram for town, settling himself on the front seat outside with his face to the wind. He got down off the tram at Amiens St. Station instead of going on to the Pillar because he wished to partake in the morning life of the city. The morning walk was pleasant for him and there was no face that passed him on its way to its commercial prison but he strove to pierce to the motive centre of its ugliness. It was always with a sense of displeasure that he entered the Green and saw on the far side the gloomy building of the college.[29]

It is not difficult to see Joyce's purpose here. He is trying to show the sordidness of Stephen's surroundings—family, college, town-which are repulsive to his artistic sensibility. The immature Joyce does it by *stating* that Dublin was a "commercial prison", that it was ugly to the core, that the building of the college was gloomy and that he felt displeasure. The details are intended to add to the effect he is trying to build up.

A parallel passage from the *Portrait* will show the economy and concentration that Joyce achieves in the later work:

> He drained his third cup of watery tea to the dregs and set to chewing the crusts of fried bread that were scattered near him, staring into the dark pool of the jar. The yellow drippings had been scooped out like a boghole and the pool under it brought back to his memory the dark turf-coloured water of the bath in Clongowes.. greasy fingers....[30]

The dominant image in the passage is that of "boghole" and "pool' which is selected to suggest to the reader in a powerful way not only the state of Stephen, but of everything else around him. The pool and the boghole become a poetic equivalent of the all pervasive stagnation. This selective employment of imagery which replaces the sprawling narrative of *Stephen Hero* renders infinite expansion to the suggested meaning.

Meaning operates at several levels. "Boghole" and "pool" not only draw our attention to Stephen's awareness of stagnation, and the resultant feeling of frustration: they also demonstrate the associative process through which the artist's mind acts and reacts.

Behind Joyce's discovery of the style he uses in the *Portrait*, is a long story of struggle and experimentation. It was not easy for him to find a mode efficient enough to serve the requirements of his view of consciousness. As he did not take long to realize, the omniscient narrator's style of *Stephen Hero* was inadequate for his purposes. If he had to realize *his* vision of character and consciousness, he must devise a mode and technique of his own. The experimentalist in Joyce was unceasing in his quest. It took him nearly a decade (1904–1914) to discover a mode which could enable his writings to transcend the limitations of a mere "identificative paper". The stories of *Dubliners* show Joyce's gradual mastery of an effective (though not quite satisfactory from Joyce's point of view) technique of character presentation. "The Dead" written in 1907, is in its style closest to the *Portrait*, in which we are shown the inner perspective in a more sustained manner, and the entire action is seen constantly from the protagonist's point of view. Joyce succeeds in achieving this by using a narrative which is unobtruded by the narrator, and can easily blend in itself the interior monologue of Stephen.

Thus the superiority of the finished version lies in the narrative technique that Joyce adopted in it. A comparative study of the successive versions of the artist's portrait indicates that its basic material remains the same but the manner of its presentation changes. The dominant narrator of *Stephen Hero* impersonalises himself in the *Portrait*. The protagonist's consciousness, like the stage in a play, becomes the centre of the reader's attention. Stephen's reveries, memory disgressions, interior monologues, and thoughts swing the

reader back and forth in time. There is very little of "synchronic" and chronological narration. This accounts for the extreme selectivity and economy of the *Portrait.* The whole lot of characters who crowd the world of *Stephen Hero* and are vividly described there, are reduced in the *Portrait* to the minimum. Many, including Emma Clery, only occur in the monologues and reflection of Stephen.

Apart from the concentration on Stephen's consciousness, the language of the narrative of the latter work itself is so textured as to become the reflex of the artist's mood and personality at every stage of his growth.

It is not the purpose of this paper to dwell at length on the superiority of the *Portrait* or to discuss the techniques used in it. Attention may however be drawn to Joyce's extensive use in the *Portrait* of free indirect style which becomes the vehicle of Stephen's interior monologue. This mode which is intermediate in form between the traditional direct and indirect modes of presenting speech and thought, employed in conjunction with the author-derived narrative, helps Joyce to portray Stephen's growth in terms of the artist's own experience and direct awareness of the world.

REFERENCE

1. Richard Ellmann, however, discusses the paper in *James Joyce* (London 1966) pp. 149–52. The book was first published in 1959, a year before "A Portrait of the Artist" was published in *The Yale Review.*
2. *The Yale Review* XLIX (1960), 353–69. For the sake of convenience the page references relate to the text of "A Portrait of the Artist" as published in *The Yale Review.*
3. The revised British edition of *Stephen Hero* (London 1956) the republished Four Square paper back (1966) appends the following to the title : Part of the first draft of *A Portrrait of the Artist as a Young Man.* The New Directions Paperback (New York 1963) drops the explanatory sentence.
4. Kain and Scholes, "The First Version of Joyce's 'Portrait';" *The Yale Review,* XLIX (1960), 353.
5. Ellmann, *James Joyce* (London, 1966), p. 149.
6. H. Kenner, *Dublin's Joyce* (London, 1955), p. 38.
7. "A Portrait of the Artist", published in *The Yale Review* XLIX (1960), 362.
8. *Ibid,,* 560.
9. *Ibid,* In the *Portrait,* p. 251, Stephen writes in his diary : "The past is consumed in the present... "
10. Ellmann, *op. cit.,* p. 150.

11. Mention of these things was partly the reason why the work was refused publication. Joyce's brother in his diary entry dated 29th March 1904 writes : 'The paper...was rejected...because of the sexual experiences narrated therein-at least this was one reason they (editors) gave. "*The Dublin Diary of Stanislaus Joyce*", edited by George Harris Healey, Faber, and Faber, London, 1962, p. 25.
12. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (Penguin Books, 1965) p. 99.
13. *Ibid.*, 100.
14. "A Portrait of the Artist", *The Yale Review*, XLIX (1960), 364.
15. *Ibid.*, 366.
16. Goldberg, *Joyce* (Edinburgh, 1960), p. 47.
17. The *Portrait*, p. 253.
18. "A Portrait of the Artist", *The Yale Review*, (1960), 366.
19. *The Yale Review*, XLIX (1960), 355.
20. Published along with the text of the first version of the Portrait in *The Yale Review*, XLIX (1960) 366-69.
21. Published by Jonathan Cape, London, and New Directions, New York. In London the book was reprinted in 1966 as a Four Square paperback.
22. As published by Penguin Books, 1960. The text runs into 245 pages.
23. Quoted by Ellmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 152–53.
24. For these factual details I have depended mainly on Ellmann's biography of Joyce, 1959.
25. The *Portrait*, pp. 214–15.
26. *Ibid.*
27. *Stephen Hero* (New York 1963), p. 80.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 83.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
30. The *Portrait*, p. 173.

THE VISION OF ORWELL

JASBIR JAIN

Orwell's main concern in the totalitarian world of the inter-war years was the preservation of values like social equality and individual liberty. Though it has never been possible to realise them fully, the rise of totalitarian ideologies and the progress of technology threatened to destroy them completely and that too at a time when human equality was realisable and men could be freed from the drudgery of "exhausting manual labour."[1] The power hunger of this age was a denial of all those values which the Enlightenment had expounded; it seemed as if human reason and freedom had reached a dead end.

In theory socialism offered the best conditions for the realisation of a liberal society but in practice this was not the case; something was obviously wrong either with its interpretation or its execution. Orwell was aware that none of the available ideologies had any hope to offer. And though he shared the fears of many of his contemporaries, he did not share their despair regarding the future of mankind.[2] Men by aspiring too high had lost sight of human values. Another hurdle was the growing dependence on the machine which made a "fully human life" impossible.[3] It made human life safe and soft not only in physical terms but in moral behaviour as well. Many qualities which can function only in "opposition to some kind of disaster, pain or difficulty .."[4] would become redundant in a machine civilization. For all his dislike of the machine he recognized its utility as well as the inevitability of mechanical progress. There was no question of a retreat or of "scrapping the machine."[5] It had come to stay. His disapproval was not in any way connected with its ugliness or irreligion but with the debauchery of taste and the servility of the human will it produced. The machine had pervaded every field of human action and thought and threatened to destroy all liberty. What Orwell feared was the streamlined sterile ideal of a machine world which had come to be identified with the socialistic principles Thus socialism failed to attract the right type of people and was easily distorted by the wrong kind of people.

The rise of totalitarian states in Russia, Germany, Italy and Spain made it abundently clear that material progress was not necessarily going to lead to moral progress and individual liberty. In *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937) Orwell wrote :

> The choice is not, as yet, between a human and an inhuman world. It is simply between socialism and fascism, which at its very best is socialism with the virtues left out.
>
> The job of the thinking person, therefore, is not to reject socialism but to make up his mind to humanize it. Once socialism is in a way to being established, those who can see through the swindle of 'progress' will probably find themselves resisting. In fact, it is their special function to do so.[6]

He stresses the importance of human effort and the need for healthy non-conformity. This depends on the ability and the desire of men to do so. Orwell believes this to be possible, for men and women are basically decent people. Men as individuals are not selfish. They are capable of making immense sacrifices for abstract ideals like honour, duty and patriotism.[7] In normal times asceticism, sacrifice, self denial do not appeal to human beings but in time of crisis the noble sentiments always predominate :

> When it comes to the pinch human beings are heroic. Women face childbed and the scrubbing-brush, revolutionaries keep their mouth shut in the torture chamber, battleships go down with their guns still firing when their decks are awash. It is only that the other element in man, the lazy, cowardly, debt-bilking adulterer who is inside all of us, can never be suppressed altogether and needs a hearing occsaionally.[8]

In Orwell's opinion, a slight increase in their consciousness could help transfer their loyalty from country, party, race or some other ideal to humanity. In fact the way to escape totalitarianism was to reinstate belief in human brotherhood without the need for a "next world" to give it meaning.[9] Everyone is capable of responding emotionally to the idea of human brotherhood.[10] Orwell himself responded to this when he took up political writing and when he showed concern with social reforms and above all when he got involved with the Spanish Civil War. He did not, at any time, visualise man as a perfect being. Man is basically good, his consciousness can be heightened, his emotional strength evoked but he cannot become a saint. Man wants to be good but not "too good and not all the time."[11] For him the ideal of perfect man in a perfect society is not realizable and perhaps not even desirable.

An important question remains unanswered : why do men desire power ? Orwell takes up the intricate problem of man's desire for power. If decency is native to human nature then power-hunger is an external factor, produced by external circumstances. Men have desired power in the past because it was a means to an end; it meant prosperity, leisure, money and comfort. Power-hunger was born out of inequality. Power, perhaps at one time, was also a necessary prop to a person's self-respect. In *A Clergyman's Daughter*, *The Road to Wigan Pier* and *Keep The Aspidistra Flying*, Orwell again and again returns to the problem of economic inequality. The rich desire power to continue in their present state and the poor desire power in order to attain equality. The power struggle is both an economic and political struggle. At times it may also be a racial one as portrayed in *Burmese Days*. While the power instinct is active, it is futile to believe that the end of social activity is the greatest happiness of the greatest number. When brutal activities like war take place men cease to be individuals or to be responsible for the destruction they cause.[12] In *Coming Up for Air* the desire for power is a desire for conquest on the part of those who are powerful; those who are powerless desire it out of fear.[13]

In 1939 when the war broke out it was difficult for people to decide as to how it should be met : by war or pacifism. Military power now acquired a certain reality but this was by no means the only manifestation of power. Non-militant means can sometimes be equally coercive.[14] It is primarily a question of desiring to rule over people in some way and thus curb their freedom. Power is therefore a kind of intolerance.

In a review of a book by Russell, Orwell agreed with him that the essential problem of the day was the taming of power.[15] But it was not easy to find the means to check it. A year later, in his essay on Dickens, Orwell admitted that the central problem of how to prevent power from being abused remained unsolved.[16] Every effort to establish liberty led directly to tyranny.[17] Contemporary society was inclined to tolerate power and power-worshippers. In this the intellectuals also joined the ordinary men. Orwell disapproved of this desire for power for it was no longer a means but had become an end in itself. Men, on the way to their present economic achievements, had parted with their ethical code. O'Brien in *Nineteen Eighteen-Four* sums it up :

> We are not interested in the good of others, we are interested solely in power. Not wealth or luxury or long life or happiness : only power, pure power. What pure power means you will understand presently.... Power is not a means, it is an end. One does not establish a dictatorship, in order to safeguard a revolution, one makes revolution in order to estabilish the dictatorship. The object of persecution is persecution. The object of torture is torture. The object of power is power.[18]

Moral scruples or considerations did not appear to have any place in the political action of the time, the ruling principle seemed to be expediency—placing self-interest above any other consideration, violating treaties and promises for the sake of some immediate gain or concession. Expediency demanded the switching over of loyalties and a short public memory. It also led to the suppression of truth and the destruction of objective fact. This led Orwell to think about the question of means versus ends. In an article "Who Are The War Criminals ?" Orwell wrote :

> When one thinks of the lies and betrayals of those years, the cynical abandonment of one ally after another, the imbecile opposition of the Tory Press, the flat refusal to believe that the dictators meant war, even when they shouted it from house tops, the inability of the moneyed class to see anything wrong whatever in concentration camps, ghettos, massacres and undeclared wars, one is driven to feel that moral decadence played its part as well as stupidity...In their clumsy way they were trying to play the game of Machiavelli, of "political realism", of "anything is right which advances the cause of the Party..."[19]

Expediency was a negation of all moral values. It was an acceptance of the fact that might is right. Though not a believer of any puritanical morality, Orwell felt that virtues like consistency, loyalty and the keeping of one's promises, as also being truthful and honest should not be scrapped for political or personal interests. The communist attitude, in Orwell's opinion, scrapped the old absolute concepts and associated power with virtue.[20] This tendency was not limited only to the Left, the Right had also learnt to behave in the same way.

Orwell did not approve of the use of wrong means for the attainment of good ends. While advocating revolution he did not equate it with change through violent means. He regarded war as a necessary evil, permissible in self-defence against coercion or violence. Orwell like Koestler faced the familiar dilemma : "You

can achieve nothing unless you are willing to use force and cunning, but in using them you pervert your original aims."[21]

Orwell was not a conservative or reactionary. This does not mean that he wanted change to be radical or total in its nature. He wished the change to be gradual and limited, he did not at any time desire a break with the moral ideas : He disapproved of the changing moral values and the reflection of this change in popular (crime) fiction. The old world had a moral code; certain things were just "not done" like the abuse of hospitality or the betrayal of friendship. In an age which, according to Orwell, had abandoned moral scruples, even keeping up appearances sometimes resulted in the maintenance of certain standards.[22] It has to be understood that Orwell's use of the word "hypocrisy" is comparative. If by abandoning appearances men were to gain in candour and sincerity it would be worth-while. But if by abandoning appearances man are to gain only in falsehood then obviously hypocrisy is lesser of the two evils. It at least ensures a certain minimum observance of appearances. In a review of *The Edge of the Abyss*, Orwell wrote :

> In the chaos in which we are living, even the prudential reasons for common decency are being forgotton. Politics, internal or international are probably no more immoral than have always been, but what is new is the growing acquiescence of ordinary people in the doctrine of expediency, the callousness of public opinion in the face of the most atrocious crimes and sufferings, and the black-out memory which allows blood-stained murderers to turn into public benefactors overnight if "military necessity" demands it.[23]

In Orwell's opinion, war and before war the threat of war, were largely responsible for the brutalization of human emotions and feelings. During war it is taken for granted that the enemy is always wrong and instead of forgiveness and tolerance, hatred and revenge are evoked. War damages the "fabric of civilization" not by destruction or death but by stimulating hatred and dishonesty :

> By shooting at your enemy you are not in the deepest sense wronging him. But by hating him, by inventing lies about him and bringing children up to believe them, by clamouring for peace terms which make further wars inevitable, you are striking not at one perishable generation, but at humanity itself.[24]

The preparation for war and participation in it affect human behaviour and values. One noticeable change is the dwindling importance of human life. It ceases to matter that individuals suffer or die

or are killed; war becomes a race in cruelty and revenge. In the past, public execution had served as a means of training for the ruthless attitude necessary for military success. In the world of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* there is a return to this kind of thing.[25] The power-hunger of the few requires tolerance and acceptance by the many. This is achieved in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by suppressing the normal emotions and activities of human life and by upholding power-worship.[26] Sadism is encouraged and the difference between right and wrong is obliterated.

It is obvious that both organisation and freedom are equally important for the maintenance of human safety and society. Apparently these two pull in opposite directions; an extreme of any one is likely to be detrimental to human development. Beginning from the assumption that organisation, authority and control are necessary not only in political but also in economic spheres, Orwell reaches the conclusion that it is equally important to keep this control itself in check. At the same time the distinction between right and wrong should be maintained and "certain rules of conduct have to be observed if human society is to hold together at all."[27]

This dilemma is presented in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Winston Smith, who is unable to accept the existing situation, is prepared to go to great lengths to overthrow it :

'You are prepared to give your lives ?'
'Yes'.
'You are prepared to commit murder ?'
'Yes'.
'To commit acts of sabotage which may cause the death of hundreds of innocent people ?'
'Yes'.
'To betray your country to foreign power ?'
'Yes'.
'You are prepared to cheat, to forge, to blackmail, to corrupt the minds of children, to distribute habit-forming drugs, to encourage prostitution, to disseminate *veneral* diseases—to do anything which is likely to cause demoralization and weaken the power of the Party ?'
'Yes'.
'If for example, it would somehow serve our interests to throw sulphuric acid in the child's face—are you prepared to do that ?'
'Yes'.
'You are prepared to lose your identity and live out the rest of your life as a waiter or a dock-worker ?'

'Yes'.
'You are prepared to commit suicide if and when we order you to do so ?'
'Yes'.[28]

The price they are required to pay for a new free society runs full circle from murder to suicide, repudiating all human values. The question is how much evil is justified to achieve how much good ? It is obvious that if such means are adopted Julia and Winston will be able to overcome all moral scruples by the time they are able to attain their ends. They will cease to differentiate between freedom and enslavement or between right and wrong. The abandonment of all ethical considerations is fatal to the survival of human values. Therefore power has to be checked; it has to be tamed. Power has to be prevented from becoming an end in itself.

This curtailment of power is an intellectual as well as a moral effort :

> And to refrain from admiring Hitler or Stalin—that, too, should not require an enormous intellectual effort. But it is partly a moral effort.[29]

In *The Road to Wigan Pier* (pp. 188–189) he maintains that socialism as long as it is a power-doctrine will neither be able to command mass support in England nor be able to overthrow the fascist domination in Europe. In his opinion the way out was the "underlying ideal of socialism, justice and liberty." Socialism, in Orwell's opinion, is a movement which has place for human beings and human values.[30] Military power can perhaps be overcome only by power,[31] but that is not the only kind of power. Military power is a test of strength between two or more countries. Within a society it is not important or at least it ought not to be.

While discussing the nature of power within a social unit, Orwell appears to lay store by certain qualities. One important quality, in his opinion, is the traditional moral approach. (In this sense he is a conservative). The common people, in spite of their ignorance and stupidity, are the direct inheritors of the past :

> But there is one sense in which the English common people have remained more Christian than the upper class, and probably than any other European nation. This is in their non-acceptance of the modern cult of power-worship. While almost ignoring the spoken doctrines of the Church, they held on to

> the one that the Church never formulated, because taking it for granted : namely that might is not right.[32]

Resistance to power requires a moral effort and has to come from the mass of people themselves. Socialism, like other forms of collectivisms, leads to a concentration of power in a small minority and ultimately to the misuse of this power. The solution, Orwell feels, is to find a way to combine freedom of intellect with a planned economy and this is only after "the concept of right and wrong is restored to politics."[33] Earlier in 1939, in his essay on Charles Dickens, Orwell had discussed the moral values in detail and had accepted the view that "if men would behave decently the world will be decent."[34] He also realised that this was only one aspect of the problem, for a "change of heart" without a corresponding change in the system would be futile. The other aspect of the problem, Orwell discussed in "Arthur Koestler" while examining his novel *The Gladiators*. The rebel slaves build a city of their own in which they expect that everyone will be equal and free and, above all happy. This, however, does not materialise; their society turns out to be as "unjust, laborious and fear-ridden" as any other.[35] In Orwell's own book *Animal Farm* the experiment of the animals to build a perfect society ends in failure. Therefore a simultaneous process ought to be adopted. Orwell does not agree with Koestler that all revolutions are failures; he believes that they have failed in the past primarily because corrupt means were adopted. He also exphasizes the point that the conformity demanded by the rulers is self-destructive; moreover, a perfect society is incapable of being realised. Revolutions in the past have either resulted in perpetuation of power or a hedonistic pursuit of happiness.[36]

> Perhaps some degree of suffering is ineradicable from human life, perhaps the choice before man is always a choice of evils, perhaps even the aim of socialism is not to make the world perfect but to make it better. All revolutions are failures, but they are not all the same failure.[37]

The problem is very intricate: the solution is equally so. But the fundamentals are clear. Man loves life for some indefinable reasons. He does not live merely to be happy or in the hope of the next world. The view that the betterment of human existence is likely to be one of degree and not of kind, that suffering is a part of human life, that human values are important, these are all humanistic assumptions).

Orwell's reluctance to accept or to share Koestler's pessimism is understandable. Life is worth living. And it can be made better. It would be unthinkable to live in an atmosphere of dispair.[38] Religion, in the earlier ages, had provided consolation to mankind. Now when faith in an after-life has been destroyed, religion has to be substituted by a faith in human nature. This faith led Orwell to *revive* the liberal tradition.

The liberal humanism of Orwell is different from that of the nineteenth century thinkers. The nineteenth-century thinkers did not feel it necessary to consider the whole of society : the working class could be ignored. This liberty to seek self-fulfilment becomes in the economic sphere a right to exploit the weaker sections. The twentieth century product of this liberalism is perhaps Henry Miller, a pure individualist "who recognises no obligations to society as a whole."[39] This kind of individualism is now out-dated. The machine civilization affected the individual's relationship to society in two ways. It compelled the upper and middle classes to an awareness of the working class. And by improving the conditions of the working class it made it possible for the individual to rise above the daily worry for food.[40]

Orwell's concern was to redefine the relationship of the individual to the society. The extremist positions were untenable for neither was individual liberty unlimited nor were the demands of society supreme. It should be possible to have increased political liberty at a time when economic inequalities were being decreased. In his opinion it was possible to reconcile the rival claims of the individual and the community. The liberty of the individual is the liberty "to have a home of your own, to do what you like in your spare time, to choose your own amusements instead of having them chosen for you from above,"[41] to think your own thoughts and to have your own friends.[42] It does not mean the right to exploit others or work solely for personal profit.[43] Freedom is the freedom of empirical truth, to be able to say that two plus two make four.[44] Individual freedom acquires meaning only in a social context; it is not possible to have a completely autonomous individual.

> Philosophers, writers, artists, even scientists not only need encouragement and an audience, they need constant stimulation from other people. It is almost impossible to think without talking. If Defoe had really lived on a desert island he could

> not have written Robinson Crusoe, nor would he have wanted to. Take away freedom of speech, and the creative faculties dry up.[45]

Freedom of speech is essential to freedom of thought and thought is activated only in a social context. Speech also has meaning only in society. Freedom is therefore the freedom to see the external fact, to record it and to discuss it. There are different classes in society, there is a difference in the quality of intelligence : this is understood but it does not invalidate the need for the freedom of intellectual inquiry or intellectual pursuit. Ideas are not innate, they have an empirical origin. The query which Orwell first raised in *A Clergyman's Daughter* he answers in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. It is not possible for men to be free "inside" in a totalitarian society. He also discusses this in "The Prevention of Literature."

> Even a single taboo can have an all round crippling effect upon the mind, because there is always the danger that any thought which is freely followed may lead to the forbidden thought.[46]

Physical conditions are a major influence on the liberty of the individual.[47] Under the threat of physical torture men confess to wrongs they may never have committed as in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

Orwell considered the empirical habit of mind to be admirable. It was a necessary prelude to the birth of new ideas. Unfortunately there was a growing tendency on the part of the scientists to isolate themselves from social responsibility : in such a case empiricism narrowed down to a mere study of exact sciences, abandoning the role of being an attitude towards life.[48] Orwell was critical of this isolation on the part of the scientist based on an awareness of his own indispensability.[49] This type of specialization would lead ultimately to the creation of a society in which all scientific effort would aim at diminishing human liberty. Such a society is the world of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

> The scientist is either a mixture of psychologist and inquistor or he is a chemist, physicist or biologist for scientific efforts are devoted towards finding out what other people are thinking or how to kill people.[50]

In this world there is a dearth of everything that might make life pleasant or enjoyable. The inferior quality of paper, blades, soap, clothes, food, drink, all aim at benumbing the sensuous awareness.

Winston, when he visits O'Brien, is offered wine. With eager hopes he picks up the glass of wine only to be disappointed :

> Actually, when he came to swallow it the stuff was distinctly disappointing. The truth was that after years of gin-drinking he could barely taste it.[51]

There is, for Winston at least, a great desire to be sensuously aware. His enjoyment of rhyme (sound), his voluptuous surrender to the smooth paper of the diary (touch), his fascination with the coral paper-weight (sight) and the rich smell of real coffee all represent to him the world which the Party denies its members. The Party begins from outside and digs a tunnel into the human brain : the aim being to destroy the freedom of thought and feeling and to distort everybody's perception of external reality and the comprehension of objective truth.

Truth, for Orwell, is never fully revealed or fully realisable. It is not an absolute concept and has no mystical or transcendental meaning. It was the belief in Revelation that placed religious truth above inquiry. Communism similarly claimed complete obedience on the assumption that Marxian theory was bound to come true through historic necessity. Orwell, however, in keeping with the Protestant tradition, does not believe in the revealed nature of truth. He also discredits the belief in historic necessity. Truth, for him, is the truth of one's conscience. It has a moral significance. Truth is also the objective fact where the subjective attitude is immaterial. This objective fact is not truth by itself : it needs to be noticed and to be accepted in order to become truth. Sometimes it is politically expedient or personally beneficial to ignore truth. In such cases nothing short of moral courage is required to face truth and to accept and recognise it. In this manner objective reality leads to the truth of one's conscience. What Orwell feared most was the deliberate falsification of historical records in the interest of party-politics.[52] In Spain Orwell noticed that great battles were being reported where there had been no fighting and "complete silence" where hundreds of men had been killed.[53] Back in England, Orwell was not able to get his articles on the Spanish War published in the *New Statesman and Nation*.[54] In the twenties it had been possible to make an attempt to see both sides of the case but by the end of the Second World War this was no longer possible as "accurate figures and objective accounts" simply did not exist.[55] Totalitarian

methods aimed at destroying both the memory and the apprehension of objective reality. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four* this type of thing is always happening. If all records tell the same tale, the lie ultimately becomes the truth, men begin to doubt their own memories. This is Winston's predicament :

> To know and not to know, to be conscious of complete truthfulness while telling carefully constructed lies, to hold simultaneously two opinions which cancelled out, knowing them to be contradictory and believing in both of them; to use logic against logic, to repudiate morality while laying claim to it to believe that democracy was impossible and that the Party was the guardian of democracy; to forget whatever it was necessary to forget, then to draw it into memory again at the moment when it was needed ..... Even to understand the word "doublethink" involved the use of doublethink.[56]

The search for truth is in the first instance a recognition of facts. It includes the courage to acknowledge past mistakes either of judgment or of prediction and also requires the courage to be brave in a moral sense; for this, one has to fall back upon some accepted code of human behaviour regarding the rightness or wrongness of a thing.[57] Free discussion and exchange of views are also necessary for a correct picture to emerge.[58] These conditions however were being threatened from two directions : the totalitarian way of life and the indifference of the intellectuals to intellectual integrity. The realisation of truth is only complete when it is publicly acknowledged. In "The Prevention of Literature", Orwell wrote : "A heretic—political, moral, religious, or aesthetic was one who refused to outrage his own conscience.[59] This links up with Orwell's faith in moral values. True, the moral code applicable to international politics is likely to differ from the moral code which one practises or tries to practise in private life.[60] The difference in Orwell's view is one of degree and not of kind. Morality cannot be identified with wealth, with rank,[61] with mere adherence to religious principles or with expediency.

Morality thus is obedience to one's conscience. The politicians and itellectuals[62] ought not to be exempt from this moral code. In actual life, however, moral values were being abandoned by both the politicians and the intellectuals. Instead of being despaired of the contemporary situation, Orwell turned to his faith in the decency and the sound instinct of the ordinary people. The ordinary people are at once "too sane and too stupid"[63] to acquire the totalitarian outlook. The intellectual was not altogether indispensable, he was

required for positive leadership and guidance. But in the meantime the ordinary people proved that they had the values requisite for founding a better society.

In 1941 in *The Lion and the Unicorn* Orwell portrayed a picture of the future society in England. This portrayal is not intended to be the picture of an ideal society but of a very human and fallible society. It is indicative of his desire to reconcile liberty with organisation and of his dependence on the liberal tradition. This society, he wrote, would not be doctrinaire or even logical :

> It will abolish the House of Lords, but quite probably will not abolish the Monarchy. It will leave anachronisms and loose ends everywhere, the judge in his ridiculous horsehair wig and the lion and the unicorn on the soldier's cap-buttons. It will not set up any explicit class dictatorship...But it will never lose touch with the tradition of compromise and the belief in a law that is above the State...It will disestablish the Church, but will not persecute religion. It will retain a vague reverence for the Christian moral code ..[64]

In later years Orwell turned repeatedly to the question of rellgious faith. Religion had satisfied a basic need but now that religious faith had declined no substitute was available. Orwell himself did not approve of the religious concentration on the utopian pursuit of happiness and was willing to accept death as final. It was life that was important, not death.[65]

At the same time he was aware of the difficulty involved in this acceptance by the people. The problem was two-fold : how to restore belief in immortality while accepting death as final and how to develop a moral system not geared to belief in God.[66] If these two problems could be solved human action would become meaningful. But the first requisite in this direction was to accept this life as the only life, then alone would man be the measure of all creative and moral activity. While reviewing Graham Greene's *The Heart of the Matter*, Orwell wrote :

> The central idea of the book is that it is better, spiritually higher, to be an erring Catholic than a virtuous pagan. Graham Green would probably subscribe to the statement of Maritain, made apropos of Leon Bloy, that 'there is but one sadness—not to be a saint'. All such sayings contain, or can be made to contain, the fairly sinister suggestion that ordinary human decency is of no value and that any one sin is no worse than any other sin.[67]

If death is accepted as final, two things emerge very clearly : one, that this is the only life we have and second, that sainthood is not attainable and perhaps not even desirable. Beginning from the point that this is the only life we have, it is natural to desire improvement in our living conditions. (Orwell was not critical of material comforts.) In "Reflections on Gandhi" Orwell wrote :

> Man is the measure of all things, and our job is to make life worth living on this earth, which is the only earth we have.[68]

Why—the question still remains unanswered—does man love life ? Or to put it a little differently, what does man want from life ? Does he want happiness and perfection ?

Happiness is a very difficult thing to define. It differs from person to person. Dorothy Hare is able to feel happy when she gets interested in Mrs. Creevy's School. Her life does not provide her with any material comforts but only a certain degree of emotional satisfaction. Gordon Comstock finds it very late in setting up a home with Rosemary. It eludes those who consciously look for it like George Bowling or the animals in *Animal Farm*. Happiness, to some limited extent and in a personal way, is only attainable when one does not consciously work for it.[69]

Portrayals of a future society describing a condition of perfect happiness are normally shown devoid of freedom like Swift's Houyhnhnms in *Gulliver's Travels*, Butler's *Erewhon* and people in Skinner's in *Walden Two*. At times the intent of such portrayals may be satirical as in Huxley's *Brave New Word* and Zamyatin's *We*. Orwell reviewed *We* in 1946 and pointed out how the characters were happy in a "vacuous way." Life for them is absolutely pointless and is continued in a mechnical way.[70] Happiness and freedom are perhaps incompatible and one can be had only at the cost of the other. The Golden Age is unattainable,[71] perhaps it is not even desirable if all emotions have to go by the board in order to achieve it. In "Lear, Tolstoy and the Fool", Orwell commented upon this :

> If only, Tolstoy says in effect, we would stop breeding, fighting, struggling and enjoying; if we could get rid not only of our sins but of everything else that binds us to the surface of the earth—including love, in the ordinary sense of caring more for one human being than another—then the whole painful process

> would be over and the Kingdom of Heaven would arrive. But a normal human being does not want the Kingdom of Heaven : he wants life on earth to continue.[72]

Human beings do not wish to live in oyster shells, they wish to have human attachment, they wish to struggle, to care and to enjoy. Tolstoy's attitude, in Orwell's opinion, is a negative one. It is similar to Swift's portrayal of Houyhnhnms who are exempt from "love, friendship, curiosity, fear, sorrow....anger and hatred."[73] In their world everything is governed by "Reason," there is no love, no domestic felicity, and no emotional life as such. The world of the Houyhnhnms is as anti-humanistic as Tolstoy's ideals. On these very grounds Orwell disapproved of Gandhi's asceticism and detachment. Gandhi preached love for humanity but disapproved of any close friendship because friends reacted on one another. This is true but to an ordinary human being "love means nothing if it does not mean loving some people more than others."[74] In actual life people do not aspire for ideal happiness, they want personal freedom, steady jobs and a fair deal for their children.[75] Living life intensely means loving and suffering, getting hurt, feeling pain, and begetting children. Human beings are not like the Houyhnhnms who avoid all passion and continue for generation after generation to live prudently.

Men and women find life worth living and experience intense moments of joy and happiness. They form strong ties and want children. Orwell considered the family to be all the more important in the modern world for it was the sole refuge from the state.[76] The machine civilization, however, tended to undermine the family and the philoprogenitive instinct.[77] When this happens obedience to the totalitarian authority becomes easier. By removing children and weakening the filial ties a certain degree of meaning is removed from life. Then it becomes possible to create the kind of society portrayed in *Nineteen Eighty-Four.*

The humanistic assumption is that "life although full of sorrow" is worth living, the struggle must continue and death is the price of life.[78] Many of its joys cannot be bought with money. Orwell appreciated nature, he enjoyed gardening and growing vegetables. In "The Moon Under Water" he praised the imaginary public house because it possessed "neither a radio nor a piano" and the barmaids took "personal" interest in their customers. It also had a garden where children were permitted to wander.[79]

In *Coming Up For Air*, George Bowling dwells lovingly on the recollections of the leisurely times when he went fishing. An essay worth reading is "Some Thoughts on the Common Toad", in which Nature is described as "existing unofficial" in the very heart of London. The coming of spring imparts a hope and a joy which even the poor can share. But is it politically reprehensible " to point out that life is frequently more worth living because of the blackbird's song, a yellow elm tree in October . . . . ?"[80] Orwell strongly felt that concentration on the machine-civilization normally lead to hatred and leader-worship while by retaining "one's childhood love of such things as trees, fishes, butterflies", one made a decent future a little more probable.[81]

Orwell's letters to his friends reveal a consistent interest in gardening and animals. Wherever he stayed he allowed himself these pleasures. He was keen to live in the countryside for many reasons, one of them being his desire to provide Richard, his adopted son, with better surroundings.[82] He also expressed the desire that he would like Richard to grow up to be a farmer.[83]

The world of nature, in Orwell's opinion, was capable of yielding a great deal of happiness not only to us but also to posterity. The insecurity of life and self-centredness had diminished man's pleasure in the world of plants and flowers. In 1946, Orwell wrote :

> A thing which I regret, and which I will try to remedy some time, is that I have never in my life planted a walnut. Nobody does plant them nowadays—when you see a walnut it is almost invariably an old tree. If you plant a walnut, you are planting it for your grandchildren, and who cares a damn for his grandchildren ?[84]

Even oak or beech trees could be a pleasure to countless number of people. They survive for hundreds of years before being finally used for furniture or some such thing.

Like Lawrence, Orwell turned to the primal emotions and acknowledged the significance of the relationships between man and woman. This relationship, for Orwell, was the seminal power in human relationships and family life. Men, he believed had the necessary qualities and desires and they would have to make the effort towards improving their political and economic affairs. To begin with, Orwell accepted death as final and ended by considering

it insignificant. So long as human beings stay human, "death and life are the same thing."[85] Perfectibility and happiness are not for men :

> The essence of being human is that one does not seek perfection, that one *is* sometimes willing to commit sins for the sake of loyalty, that one does not push asceticism to the point where friendly intercourse is impossible, and that one is prepared in the end to be defeated and broken up by life, which is the inevitable price of fastening one's love upon other human individuals. No doubt, alcohol, tobacco and so forth are the things a saint must avoid but saint-hood is also a thing that human beings must avoid.[86]

Non-attachment is abandoned by the average human being not because it is too difficult to be realised but because it reduces life to a clean, purposeless, meaningless, deodorized level. Attachment and involvement, though demanding and painful experiences, make life worth living. One has to choose between Man and God and Orwell chooses man.

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26. *Ibid.*, p. 109. Also see "Boys' Weeklies", *CEJL.* I, 477; "Raffles and Miss Blandish" *CEJL*, III, 218–220.
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A NOTE ON THE NOVELS OF R. PRAWER JHABVALA

P. N. VARMA

Born and educated in Europe but married to an Indian and settled in India, R. Prawer Jhabvala is thoroughly familiar with the life and manners of her new country. At the same time her Western sensibility gives her an uncommon insight into the typical traits of Indians. She is particularly amused by the life and manners of the urban upper and middle classes because they keep on undulating between tradition and modernity.

The novels of Mrs. Jhabvala offer a vivid exposition of life in modern India and depict the social scene with wit and humour. Even a country like India proverbially known for her strong family and social ties could not retain an integrated personality under the impact of a long foreign rule and Western education. But Mrs. Jhabvala is quick to see that under the Western influence only surface changes have taken place in Indian society. Its core has remained unaffected. The wave of Westernization could touch only the outer precincts; it could not engulf the main shrine. Yet a slavish imitation of Western ways can have revealing repercussions. The proud, self-satisfying Occidentalization of an Oriental can bring in its trail such hollow vanities and sham appearances as to make him a fit subject for comedy.

Almost in every novel of hers Mrs. Jhabvala demonstrates, among many other things, the continuing dominance of tradition in Indian society. However strongly young people may revolt against the old order, they cannot obtain full release. Behind such revolts there is always a lurking fear, a streak of indecisiveness. Mrs. Jhabvala has successfully illustrated in more than one novel, what Nirad C. Chaudhuri calls "the irresistible reclaiming power of Hindu society".[1]

In *To Whom She Will* the affair of Amrita and Hari ends on a ludicrous note because of their inner contradictions. A Bengali girl,

Amrita, grand-daughter of an Anglicized retired barrister, goes out to work and subsequently falls in love with a Punjabi youth, Hari Sahni, working in the same organization. Both of them represent the aspirations of the modern age in their romantic predilections and seriously imagine themselves to be fully capable of marrying for love. But the overprotective attitude of their parents and relatives has already dwarfed their personalities; they have not matured emotionally. Hari cannot face even the slightest hurdles in his way and recoils into the world of phantasy where love would be only a glorious feeling "connected with flowers and moonlight and music in lotus-bowers".[2] To Hari Sahni "being in love of course was wonderful; not only wonderful but also necessary. It was what he had always thought of all through adolescence, what all the films he had seen and all the songs he had heard and all the conversations he had held with his friends had taught him to expect of himself. But he had not thought that it would be so complicated".[3] Quietly he allows himself to be married to a girl of his own community. Such a marriage will of course mean : sweets, music, garlands, and jokes, things he has always relished and looked forward to. However, he is sincerely willing to enact the great parting-scene with Amrita. It is only fate that is tearing them apart; otherwise his love for her is eternal. "He would love her and remember her for ever, even though he was forced to be another's."[5] Similarly Amrita, though apparently more stable and determined in her love, finally yields to the convenient prospect of choosing Krishna Sen Gupta, her mother's favourite, who belongs to her own community. Such discrepancies between loud affirmations and actual actions are projected by Mrs. Jhabvala in her novels with appropriate comic reserve and playful irony. Amrita's grand-father, the Raibahadur, thoroughly steeped in European ways, seems to uphold the Western concept of individual liberty in saying "when the girl herself comes with reasonable wishes, then of course we shall put nothing in the way of her happiness";[5] but what would be the exact nature of "reasonable wishes", Mrs. Jhabvala leaves this for the reader to guess.

In *The nature of Passion* Nimmi cannot imagine why Pheroze Batliwala kissed her near the Qutab; after all, on the settlement of her marriage with another man, he merely sent congratulations. But Nimmi is unable to do anything either. The thought of a hunger-strike is too dreadful and so is running away from home. When her friend

Miss Rajen Mathur offers another suggestion, she cuts her short saying indignantly : "You want me to go and be a teacher in an ordinary school with poor people's children !"[6] Rajen promptly adds that she should start a school of her own. But Nimmi again asks with an air of prudence : "Where will I teach the children ? If I leave home, I will have no house in which I can make a school."[7] Rajen Mathur gets annoyed at the callous rejection of her brilliant suggestions because she considers herself to be more modern and sensible. But the reader can only laugh at her false pretensions to independence. Even her modernism is born of filial devotion. She wants no girl to agree to be sold like a slave because her "daddy" always says arranged marriage is a primitive custom and should not be allowed. Another favourite phrase of her father's was : "How can you have democracy if women are not emancipated ?"[8] To impress her friend, Rajen reproduces this expression as her own. Here Mrs. Jhabvala wants to point out that these young men and women in spite of their college education have not at all been able to grow out of their infantile dependence. Their responses, mental processes, attitudes, and sentiments are too much conditioned by a social structure in which family bonds are overpowering and parental affections excessively possessive. In *The Householder*, a later novel of Jhabvala's, Prem does not think well of his wife because she does not show the same deferential attitude towards him as his mother did towards his father. At the same time, he expects his wife to be quite conversant with modern ways and etiquette. In this way the novelist with a remarkably acute insight brings out a great many contradictions in the behaviour of a people who have long forgotten to think independently and be sincere and true to themselves. A blind craze for modernity without a major socio-economic break-through is bound to result in hollow exhibitionism, false display, split-personality, and gradual degeneration.

Yet Mrs. Jhabvala's attitude towards her characters does not seem to be that of anger. In her vast portrait gallery each character is depicted with objectivity, though not without comic relish. In fact, she has an enviable knack of offering an incisive criticism of life through comedy. Prema in *To Whom She Will*, with her pseudo-sentimentality, crying over a story in a magazine and at the same time eating fresh *barfi*; Kanta in *The Nature of Passion*, holding back her tears in a quarrel with her husband for fear of spoiling her make-

up so essential to the dinner-party she is getting ready for; Sarla Devi in *Get Ready for Battle*, trying to bring solace and happiness to others when her own home is in complete disarray; Prem's mother in *The Householder*, regaining her spirits on the depaiture of her daughter-in-law; Clarissa in *A Backward Place*, talking of soul and God only to eat good dinners at other people's expense—all such characters speak for Mrs. Jhabvala's strength in producing comic effects by implicit suggestion and ironic undertones.

The keen and observant eye of the novelist moves in a wide compass noting all kinds of oddities and mannerisms in people. Lala Narayan Dass, in *The Nature of Passion*, has constructed a bedroom suite, it seems, out of mere social necessity since he prefers to sleep in the open for most of the year. He never uses any one of the seven marble bathrooms in the house and prefers to wash by the garden-tap and clean his teeth with a twig from the margosa tree. Yawning widely and loudly, rubbing the knees while talking, scratching the thighs quite often, slapping each other while laughing, burping richly after a big dinner—such traits discoverable among Indians are presented with much accuracy and detail. The novelist even considers the art of massaging legs and cracking finger-joints a necessary accomplishment in an Indian wife. Now all this may be true of a certain section of Indian society but an oft-repeated mention of these traits gives the impression that the novelist's main concern is to provide maximum fun to the Western readers even at the cost of sounding puerile. Mrs. Jhabvala's comic art sinks to a lower plane as soon as she starts harping on trifles and inanities. No society, however sophisticated and advanced, is free from typical mannerisms and racial idiosyncracies. A comic writer need not overstuff his theme with banal details for effect and appeal; his real strength, in fact, lies in the other aspects of comic exposure—in revealing the gap between appearance and reality, between preaching and practice.

One can clearly discern Mrs. Jhabvala's delicate satire in the way she unmasks social reform zealots who have proliferated in post-independence India. There is Tarla auntie surrounded by ladies of rank and distinction at her Training Centre for Women in *To Whom She Will*. How proud she feels when ministers send messages to her organization and V.I.P.'s bless her efforts ! In *Get Ready for Battle* Mrs. Bhatnagar and Mrs. Dass feel very

prominent with their philanthropic programme of rehabilitation and resettlement of sub-standard housing groups. They pompously talk of their schemes, preliminary recommendations, the U.S. Ambassador's wife taking a keen interest in their work, and of the expected gift of jeeps from the American people to the people of India. In *A Backward Place* Mrs. Kaul's Cultural Dais is intended to perform a similar function : the moral and intellectual uplift of the Indian people by means of cultural exchange and international get-togethers. Quite perceptively, indeed, Mrs. Jhabvala brings out the secret motives behind such organizations. In a poor and slavish country altruism and philanthropy can also be a means of attaining something else—social prominence and useful contacts and possibly a trip abroad.

Mrs. Jhabvala's delineation of manners is superb, characterized as it is, by an intimate knowledge of Indian society, its customs and beliefs. A wife is always taken for granted; one must not bother about her much as one does not about other household possessions. In *To Whom She Will* Suri tells Hari that a wife is always a wife and whatever she may be, one gets used to her. Shanta in *The Nature of Passion* is a model wife indeed, in the opinion of Usha, Nimmi's elder sister. Emphatically she disagrees with Nimmi about the married life of Shanta: "I think she is very happy. She has three children and they are all her own and she can wash them and feed them and dress them and play with them the whole day long."[9] But what if men dallied with other women ? It was their prerogative. In *Get Ready for Battle* Vishnu snubs his wife when she protests about not having been taken out on a certain day : "It is not my fault that you don't know what to do with your time. What do other women do ? They don't sit on their husbands' heads—take me here, take me there, don't go here, don't go there." Sarcastically he tells her : "You are living in modern times, go and be modern !"[10] As for himself, Vishnu asserts his privilege of moving with society girls and occasionally flirting with them. Here Mrs. Jhabvala points at a genuine problem. Indian society has in a considerable measure lost its old form and stability but is not yet ready for a change. Modernity has had only a peripheral influence on the educated Indian and he is still undecided about his social and personal norms. He is more or less on a see-saw of tradition and modernity. Consequently, he practises double standards, lives a life of divided loyalties and thus becomes an object of ridicule in the eyes

of those very Westerners whose emulation in manners and living-style has been his primary aim. In this regard, Mrs. Jhabvala's comic portrayals cannot but develop satiric overtones and become imbued with a definite social purpose.

The East-West problem becomes much more pronounced in mixed marriages. *Esmond in India* and *A Backward Place* throw considerable light on this question. In such marriages the thin veneer of modernity can be of no help indeed. Different ways of living and thinking inherited from different traditions can cause many an awkward situation in conjugal life. In *Esmond in India* the easy-going Gulab, with her Oriental relish for spices and hot curries, her typically Indian shyness of high society and apathy towards modern furniture, is a glaring contrast to her husband, Esmond, with his innate love for orderliness, smart society, and up-to-date furnishings. Similarly, Judy in *A Backward Place* tires herself out in adapting to the Indian pattern of life. Her husband's immaturity, lack of planning, and foolish day-dreaming perplex her. As a Westerner she has never been accustomed to such things. She has now to put up with the fatalism of Bhuaji and the Oriental impulsiveness of Bal. What Mrs. Jhabvala seems to indicate is that divergent attitudes as a result of different backgrounds, can precipitate many a crisis in such marriages, and that a great deal of sacrifice on the part of at least one spouse is essential for making them a success.

Mrs. Jhabvala also shows marvellous accuracy in the representation of interpersonal relationships in Indian households where the perpetual struggle for power between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law often leads mothers to dote on their sons in order to outdo their daughters-in-law. In *The Householder* Prem's mother does not even want her son to make loving inquiries from his wife who has returned home after a good many days, and demonstratively coaxes him to take his tea :

> 'Why don't you come when I call you ?' said his mother. She stood between them, looking cross.
>
> 'I did not hear you', Prem said.
> 'Come and have your tea, son. I have made for you'.
>
> Indu stayed behind in the bedroom. Prem's mother stirred his tea for him : 'I have put a lot of sugar, son. I know how sweet you like it.'[11]

In most Indian families old people try to recapture their lost authority by posing themselves as utterly neglected and thereby arousing pity in others. They frequently talk of their resignation from mundane affairs but at the same time do not refrain from criticizing any departure from the old. The Bhuaji of *A Backward Place* and the Phuphiji of *The Nature of Passion* tellingly illustrate this. An Indian household is a strange world where everybody's business can be everybody else's business. Even servants can intervene in family affairs and give opinions. All this is faithfully represented in each of her novels.

The spicy flavour of Mrs. Jhabvala's novels comes from her rich, ironic descriptions. When she relates a scene, she does it with perfect mock-reservedness without being bluntly direct about the absurdity of anything. The following description of Shanta's confinement in *The Nature of Passion* will be a good illustration :

> However, they had managed to make the nursing-home as much like home as possible. Their own *charpais* had been brought in for them to sleep on, their servant cooked for them on the veranda, their towels and the smell of their hair-oil were spread in the bathroom. And during the confinement they had been present in the labour-room. The doctor and the nurses had been almost an encumbrance—they could have managed much better by themselves—but still, they had given a good deal of advice to the doctor so that, thank God ! the labour had been quick and easy. Shanta was asleep now; she lay on the bed with her hair straggled over the pillow and her face sagging with exhaustion. Her mother sat beside her, waving a hand-fan in the sleeping face, though there was a perfectly good electric fan turning from the ceiling.[12]

Certainly, none can deny the jubilant fuss that is often made by relatives at the time of childbirth in India. Motherhood being the symbol of highest perfection for a woman in this country, Shanta richly deserves the tender care of a hand-fan notwithstanding the electric fan spinning fast from the ceiling.

Quite often Mrs. Jhabvala succeeds in achieving the satiric effect by inserting her own remarks while describing a scene. Here is Guppy in *A Backward Place* rather amused at the quarrel between Etta and Clarissa in his flat :

> 'Ladies,' Guppy appealed in a calm and reasonable voice. He judged it wiser to put a stop to this quarrel, though it rather interested him. He had heard plenty of women's quarrels

before—he had grown up and lived all his life in a joint family—but this one was different from the ones he was used to. His own women were very much more subtle : generations of purdah living had sharpened their wits and made them adept at insinuation, at neatly turned, finely veiled personal insults. Clarissa and Etta, on the other hand, were crude enough, he felt, to come to blows; and though he would not have minded witnessing such a scene, he feared there might be a disturbance with the people from downstairs running up to see what was happening and then there would be public unpleasantness.[13]

The dialogues of Mrs. Jhabvala have a natural and easy swing; they hardly strike as laboured or ponderous. With perfect ease she presents the most typical Indian situations without making marked distortions in the English idiom Let's look at the following dialogue from *The Householder* between Prem and his mother who is threatening to leave on some imagined grievance against her daughter-in-law :

'No. son,' she sobbed. 'Why should I burden you with my troubles ?'

He sat down and quietly sighed to himself again.

'It is enough that I should suffer . . . .'

The servant-boy came with her tea on a tray. 'I don't want it,' she said. 'I am not eating or drinking anything in this house again.'

'Put it down,' Prem told the boy.

'No, son, I will have nothing. I have been insulted in your house.'

Prem wrung his hands. 'How insulted ? Who insulted you ?'

'I would go out in the fields so as not to trouble anyone, but there are no fields and I must use the bathroom.'

Prem stirred her tea and said, 'Drink, you will feel better.'

'Why should she grudge me the use of the bathroom ?'

'But I did not know she was in there !'

Indu cried in an anguished voice from the bedroom.

'You see !' his mother said. 'You see how she shouts at me !'

Prem said, 'It was a mistake. She did not know you were in there.'

'What mistake ! She grudges me the use of the bathroom, even though I have come all this way to be with my son.' She wiped her eyes with the corner of her *sari*. 'Get me my ticket for tomorrow night, son. I will go home. I am not welcome here.'[14]

Here the angry outbursts of a mother-in law on the awareness of her lost power in an Indian home, and her habitual wallowing in self-pity as a defence mechanism find a poignant expression.

Sometimes Mrs. Jhabvala employs language equivalents to give an unmistakable Indian tinge to her dialogues. She even uses expressions like "committee-shommittees", "B.A-P.A.", "pearl-shearl", "fashionable—pashionable". We have a couple of instances here :

(i) 'The servant has not yet brought the vegetables,' Mohini said.

'He stinks with laziness, may his *eyes drop out*,' the mother said. (Italics mine)

To Whom She Will, pp. 96-97

(ii) 'Why do you think I am talking with you ?' Radha asked Tarla. 'You with all your *Committee-Shommittees*, you must know somebody.' (Italics mine)

To Whom She Will, p. 157

Mrs. Jhabvala's weakness lies in the management of plot. Too many insignificant details and over-elaborate scenes of different aspects of Indian life create big labyrinths in which her stories generally get lost. To treat a novel as a slide projector is to subordinate art to mere documentation. However, the plots of *Get Ready for Battle* and *The Householder* are better knit and rounded.

Mrs. Jhabvala's characters do not develop. In fact, she creates types and perhaps they alone constitute the suitable stuff for comic presentation. Her approach to characters is external and her appeal lies not only in the vivid portrayal of their typical traits but also in the comic exploration of their values.

Doubts have been expressed about the future of novels that mainly treat the socio-cultural implications of the East-West encounter in India. This uncertainty is mainly for two reasons. First, these novels depict the life of only a limited section of Indian society and leave out the common man altogether. Therefore, they cannot be said to be truly representative of Indian life. Secondly, the writers of such novels, keeping the larger reading public of the West mainly in view, tend to make them documentary in nature and overburden them with too many details of Indian life. Consequently, they are likely to be deficient in artistic value. There seems to be much truth in this objection and, therefore, such novels would do better to avoid

mere documentation. At the same time, they cannot be dismissed simply on statistical grounds; the Westernized classes may not consti tute a majority in India, but their number is too sizable to be ignored. Moreover, industrialization is going at a good pace and is resulting in cultural transformation even in our villages now. The collision of different backgrounds offers a novelist numerous opportunities of probing the curious assortment of conflicting ways and attitudes. Such novels are destined to fulfil a new function : to explore the conglomeration of diverse cultural bearings in a rapidly shrinking world of supersonic jets and powerful media of communication. Novels like these can be grouped under a new genre which, for want of a better nomenclature, may be called the International Novel. The uprooted individual in a cosmopolitan society is an interesting subject for study and investigation, and his life, both outer and inner, can afford a fine opportunity to a novelist.

Although Mrs. Jhabvala has chosen for herself only the exterior aspect of character, her extraordinary sensitivity in perceiving contradictions between the professed ideals and actual behaviour of a Westernized Indian can never go unacknowledged.

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TRENDS IN THE LANGUAGE OF MODERN ENGLISH LITERATURE : SENTENCE FRAGMENTS

R. P. RAMA

Trends in the language of modern English literature is a vast subject. I propose to explore only a small area : the use of sentence fragments.

I think I must state the assumptions first.

This paper assumes that there is no essential difference between the language of everyday communication and the language of literature in a given period. The language that we use for everyday communication is also the material of the writer's craft. The two are related, yet distanced. The paradox is unavoidable. What distinguishes the language of literature is its greater ordering and aesthetic purpose.

Further, the literary artist seeks the closest approximation of the mode of experience with the mode of expression until his words *become* what the words in everyday language merely represent. In literature, to use the American expression, "medium is the message".

This approximation of experience with expression is sought by the literary artist in sounds, words and sentences which in turn structure other forms. Wouldn't it follow then that the proper study of literary art is the linguistic form ?

In our study of literary language it is more realistic to view it as a continuum rather than divide it into prose and poetry. For we know that there is no fundamental difference between them. The only valid consideration wouldto be look for deliberate sound patterning, metre, rhyme, alliterations etc. in poetry more than in prose. Prose also exploits the sound value of words but generally poetry does it more.

The interest in the way a writer manipulates the basic resources of a language is peculiar to our times. Earlier the study of

rhetoric or the rules for effective writing proceeded with a very different view of language, namely that language is the verbal dress of disembodied thought. The study of literary language is now a much enlarged field and is not limited to a few devices of effective expression. The major break-through has been the study of syntax which for want of proper techniques of grammatical analysis has not been undertaken so far.

Now for the first time the study of syntax in the language of literature has attracted the attention of scholars. William Baker and Josephine Miles have published *Syntax in English Poetry* and *Style and Proportion*[2] respectively. Both the studies concentrate on trends and periods and employ statistical method. Josephine Miles in a very ambitious work covering English poetry from 1500 to 1900 has shown how structural patterns coincide with centuries, thereby providing a linguistic basis to literary periods.

William Baker makes a comparative study of the syntax of the Victorian and modern poets and comes to the conclusion that the main syntactic device the Victorian poets used was that of syntactic dislocation whereas the moderns lean heavily on the use of sentence fragments. The limitation of both these studies is that they are concerned with statistical proportions and not with the aesthetic effects of the changes in language. Further, they have restricted their syntactic studies to poetry but it is obvious that some syntactic features may be common to both prose and poetry.

One such feature is the use of sentence fragment. For the purpose of this discussion let us describe fragments as all those sentences which do not have a finite verb or which do not have a verb at all. Still they remain sentences since in the process of linguistic communication a sentence is the minimum utterance. In the case of fragments the reader invariably expands them into full form with the help of the context but the actual fragmentary shape determines the verbal surface of the text. Since literature is an art, its formal aspect cannot be ignored.

A conscious use of incomplete sentences has marked the language of many important books of modern English. I have made a broad distinction between fragments which are motivated by the desire for suggestive and impressionistic description and those that

are supposed to be the half-formed shapes of our unspoken thoughts. In this paper I shall first examine the probable origins of the two varieties of fragments and then analyse and discuss some passages from Eliot, James Joyce, Saul Bellow, and Archibald MacLeish with a view to bringing out the kind of aesthetic effect the different sentence fragments are likely to create.

The origins of sentence fragments can be traced in the experiments of the 19th century French writers. Stephen Ullman in his book *Style in the French Novel*[3] observes : "In the later half of the nineteenth century Flaubert first and then the Goncourt brothers started a revolution in syntax which received a further impetus from the symbolists and reached its high watermark in the prose of Proust." Commenting on the contribution of the Goncourt brothers he says, "the extreme limits of their nominal syntax are reached in the so-called verbless sentences where the verb is not even replaced but altogether suppressed."[4] The Goncourt Brothers had training in impressionistic painting and in literature they were for realism. Their verbless syntax was a device to preserve the sequence of sense perceptions. According to Stephen Ullman : "In the descriptive variety the Goncourt brothers played a decisive part in starting a fashion which has become widespread in modern literature."[5]

The number of verbless sentences in the fiction of Goncourt brothers is not large but the importance of the experiment cannot be underestimated. Very much like the free indirect speech used by Flaubert which increased the fiction writer's syntactic repertory, the verbless sentence of the Goncourts indicated a direction which the future writer could not miss.

A little later Eduard Dujardin—a symbolist—made experiments with syntax for different reasons. Unlike the Goncourt brothers Dujardin was trying to record what he called the interior monologue : "It is the expression of the most intimate thoughts that lie nearest the subconscious and in this form they are produced in direct phrases reduced to the minimum of syntax. And thus it corresponds essentially to the conception we have today of poetry."[6]

When James Joyce stumbled upon Dujardin's novel *Les Lauriers Sont coupès* (1887) in which he had experimented with interior monologue, he at once recognized Dujardin as a great innovator.

Dujardin was rather dimly known as a writer in France—even today many histories of French Literature do not even mention his name. But Joyce saw new possibilities in this style for his own creative venture. He did much to rehabilitate Dujardin and soon his novel was translated into English. With his greater creative energy, Joyce went ahead of Dujardin. In fact the prospect of transcribing the inner world of the mind offered the creative writer a rare opportunity to literally create a language of thinking aloud. James Joyce seemed to have been thrilled at the adventure. Nine hundred pages of *Ulysses* tell the story of this adventure.

At the same time the signs of syntactic change began to appear in other literatures and other countries too. The Imagists wanted to cut down adjectives and the futurists were crying down both the adjective and the adverb. "Just the verb in the infinitive", is what they wanted.

Out of these several linguistic experiments the use of fragments got established as a vogue because of two reasons. Firstly, it is in consonance with the basic tendency of English language. In dislodging the verb the writer had to go just a few steps ahead of the exclamatory and elliptical constructions. Secondly, fragments characterize everyday spoken language and their use to a limited extent made the language appear more natural and conversational.

Moreover, the introduction of fragments was not a mere technical innovation. It was a response to the aesthetic needs of the post-Freudian and the post-Jamesian writer who was faced with the task of catching in words the multifaceted reality and the flow of unuttered thoughts through the consciousness.

So much for the background. I have spent some time in giving this historical perspective because it saves us from confusing two differently motivated sets of experiments. I think the task of ascertaining the aesthetic effects of sentence fragments would be better accomplished if we viewed them as experiments in two directions and grouped them accordingly. First, those writings where verbless sentences are chosen for the impressionistic and suggestive description or delineation of a complex experience and, second, the other kind of writings which are meant to be notations of unspoken thoughts associated with the stream of consciousness narrative technique.

Taking first those which we have grouped as experiments in suggestive delineation of experience or impressionistic description we come across a variety of forms. T.S. Eliot in the beginning of the Song[7] uses a participle fragment :

Elizabeth and Leicester
Beating oars
The stern was formed
A gilded shell
Red and gold
The brisk swell
Rippled both shores
Southwest wind
Carried down stream
The peal of bells
White towers

.....

To Carthage then I came
Burning burning burning burning
O Lord Thou pluckest me out
O Lord Thou pluckest
burning

The first effect of the fragmentary construction is that Elizabeth and Leicester are detached from their time. Attention is focussed on *them* as two persons in love. The participle form of the fragment adds another effect, that of their being in perpetual movement. From the point of view of interpretation, Elizabeth, freed from her time moves in the ever-present flow in the proximity of the three disreputable daughters of London and all of them are consumed in the fire of love or lust which is suggested by another fragmentary repetitive phrase "burning burning burning". The two participles, one describing the universalised woman "Elizabeth and Leicester beating oars" and the other an agonised truth of the human situation "burning burning burning", are major suggestive devices in the piece. Suppose we complete the structure of the lines like this : Elizabeth and Leicester were beating oars, the stern was formed of a gilded shell, red and gold, the brisk swell rippled both shores, south west wind carried-downstream the peal of bells from the white towers. What happens

then? Besides disturbing the rhythm of the composition, we have, as it were, wiped off the clue that leads to the meaning. It becomes a plain narrative. Shall we say then, that the meaning was in the silence created by the fragments.

Let me next take up the infinitive constructions in a poem "You, Andrew Marvell".

YOU, ANDREW MARVELL

And here face down beneath the sun
And here upon earth's noonward height
To feel the always coming on
The always rising of the night

To feel creep up the curving cast
The earthly chill of dusk and slow
Upon those under lands the vast
And ever climbing shadow grow

And strange at Ecbatan trees
Take leaf by leaf the evening strange
The flooding dark about their knees
The mountains over Persia change

And now at Kermanshah the gate
Dark empty and the withered grass
And through the twilight now the late
Few travelers in the westward pass

And Baghdad darken and the bridge
Across the silent river gone
And through Arabia the edge
Of evening widen and steal on

And deepen on Palmyra's street
The wheel rut in the ruined stone
And Lebanon fade out and Crete
High through the clouds and overblown

And over Sicily the air
Still flashing with the landward gulls
And loom and slowly disappear
And sails above the shadowy hulls

And Spain go under and the shore
Of Africa the gilded sand
And evening vanish and no more
The low pale light across that land

Nor now the long light on the sea
And here face downward in the sun
To feel how swift how secretly
The shadow of the night comes on . . . .

—Archibald MacLeish

The title just reminds us of Andrew Marvell but the association becomes more specific as the poem unfolds and recreates the experience of the lines "But at my back I always hear/Time's winged chariot." The protagonist here in his country, probably the United States, feels for a second the physical revolving of the globe and visualises ancient ruins of many civilizations with the slow turning of the earth. The whole poem hinges on "to feel", the verb in the infinitive, an axis, as it were, on which the eternal movement from noon to night is imaginatively experienced. After the first stanza, the infinitive with participle complement changes to the infinitive plus infinitive pattern, isolating the effect of the infinitive from that of the participle. The effect of the participle is one of long drawn continuing movement and that of the infinitive is of a comparatively brief and conclusive action. The distinction is maintained by the poet. If we compare the structure of the first stanza with that of the last stanza the association of the ever-continuing movement with the participle, and the suggestion of the conclusive action associated with the infinitive become clear. The immediate purpose is to ascertain the effect of the infinitive construction but in the grammatical analysis of the whole poem, the initial conjunction "and", the nature of verbs, the order of proper nouns for cities, would all be important. Deeper analysis would reveal that the movement of the earth is also the movement of time suggested by the rise and fall of civilizations. Time and space, the motifs of *To His Coy Mistress* are also central to this poem, and perhaps it is this reference that recalls Andrew Marvell.

Now to take one example of fragments with a series of nouns alone. The example is that of a description from *Herzog*[8], a novel by Saul Bellow. It is a description of a scene viewed from a train

window. "The wheels were speeding with a sharp racket, biting the rails. The cold fall sun flamed over the New Jersey Mills. Volcanic shapes of sky, rushes, dumps, refineries, ghostly torches and presently the fields and woods."[9] In itself each noun is a still picture but as we move from one to another and finally end with the time adverb "presently", we become conscious of a movement reinforced by the enumerative rhythm. Without the adverb there would have been crowding of details but no movement in time.

Here is another example in which a series of adjectivals delineate a character with a few strokes. This again is from *Herzog* :

"A man like Gersbach can be gay. Innocent. Sadistic. Dancing around. Instinctive. Heartless. Hugging his friends. Feeble-minded. Laughing at jokes."[10]

The effect is of course that of a vague, high speed portrait of a man. Since the adjectives are not concrete—they are either activities, attitudes, or habits—this is more or less a psychological portrait.

Besides the infinitive, participles and a series of nouns, adverbs and adjectivals, there are many other structural possibilities in fragments. What I have tried to suggest is that the writer with some intuitive feel for the grammar of the language is able to control the aesthetic effect of his writings. By analysing many such stylistic experiments one can perhaps come to some conclusion about the structure and its corresponding aesthetic effects. Meanwhile I have suggested what, I feel, are the effects of the participles, infinitives, nouns, and adjectives in a series.

Now I come to the second set of experiments, the attempt to create a language suggesting the pre-speech psychic activity. The writer here seems to have been guided by theories in psychology, philosophy and linguistics. Unlike the first, where sentences were fragmented for certain kinds of effects mainly suggesting descriptions, we are here supposed to be participating in the silent thoughts and memories of certain people. Not all the writers writing in the stream of consciousness narrative style have used fragmentary syntax. James Joyce and Faulkner have, whereas Virginia Woolf and Dorothy Richardson have not. The record of a character's innermost thoughts in some kind of minimum syntax has also appea-

red in modes other than the stream of consciousness. *Herzog*, for example, is written in the confessional mode but blended with it are also passages recording the silent thoughts of the hero.

A point to note here is that fragmentation of sentences has nothing to do with the realistic situation of a character speaking in broken syntax under some emotional stress. Leopold Bloom and Stephen Dedalus are not under any unusual emotional pressure when their thoughts are suggested in fragmentary language. In *Herzog*, of course, there is a shift. Herzog is in a serious crisis and his sanity is in doubt and it may be said with some justification that his fragmentary thoughts are an indication of his disturbed mental life. But the matter is not as simple as that. Novels are not made from the stuff blurted out by a mad man. The question is that of the form of the fragmentary narration. What are the basic linguistic shapes of our thoughts as they flow on uninterrupted ? In what way are they related with the external events ? How are the heterogenous contents of our thoughts and memory glued together ? These are some of the questions to which the writer must have his answers. As it is, we have no knowledge of the writer's personal decisions and all that we can do is to look at his writing for any possible clues we might get.

Let us take a passage from James Joyce's *Ulysses*[11] for analysis. During the sixth episode of the book Leopold Bloom, a Dubliner, along with five others goes to Glasnevin cemetery to attend the funeral of one Paddy Dignam. The remark from a fellow that the death of Paddy Dignam must be a terrible blow for the poor wife, sets a train of thoughts going in his mind. Also relevant to the reverie are the facts that Bloom has recently lost his son and he knows that his wife is not faithful to him. Here is the passage :

"He looked down at the boots he had blacked and polished. She had outlived him, lost her husband. More dead for her than for me. One must outlive the other. Wise men say. There are more women than men in the world. Condole with her. Your terrible loss. I hope you'll soon follow him. For Hindu widows only. She would marry another him ? No. Yet who knows after ? Widowhood not the thing since the old queen died. Drawn on a guncarriage. Victoria and Albert. Frogmore memorial mourning. But in the end she put a few violets in her bonnet. Vain in her heart of hearts. All for a

shadow. Consort not even a king. Her son was the substance. Something new to hope for not like the past she wanted back, waiting. It never comes. One must go first : alone under the ground : and lie no more in her warm bed".[12]

This presents a broad, zig-zig pattern of thoughts and memories in Bloom's mind. He thought "more dead for her than for me". He imagines himself condoling with her. "Your terrible loss. I hope you'll soon follow him". The idea of the wife following her husband leads him to think of the medieval Hindu custom. He thought it was "for Hindu widows only". He is then led to think of Queen Victoria, remembers the pomp of the funeral service, thinks of her son, and reflects on the nature of time and death.

This is one of the fairly coherent monologues. The fragments that are wedged in between full sentences have a familiar form of phrases often heard in common usage : Your terrible loss; for Hindu widows only; Frogmore memorial service; All for a shadow. The most striking thing about the passage is the rhythmic pattern swinging between one to four beat rhythm with several repetitions of three beats. Then there are alliterations. (Blacked the boots; son is the substance). Very interesting are the sounds at the beginning and at the end of several sentences : "*More* dead for her than for *me*," "*But* in the end she put a few violets in her *Bonnet*," "*Consort* not even a *king*." There are other subtle verbal associations like vain, violet, Victoria. The inter-sentence rhythm of the last two sentences makes this prose sound like poetry. "It never comes. One must go first. Alone under the ground. And be no more in her warm bed."

There is a general fluidity of grammatical connections. The object of "Wise men say" can be "One must outlive the other" which comes before or "There are more women than men in the world" which comes after.

In this mocking reflection on death, funerals and widowhood, the fragments along with grammatical deviations and distortions and sound effects, emphasize what is uppermost in Bloom's mind. The recurrent widow suggests some obsession and the thought "She would marry another him" points to his own feeling of insecurity.

The next example is from *Herzog*. Herzog while waiting for the train moves about the platform looking at the mutilated posters

which bear slogans like "Moslems ! the enemy is white !", "Hell with Goldwater !", "If they smite you turn the other face." This sets him thinking about : "filth, quarrelsome madness. The prayer and the wit of the crowd. Minor works of Death. Trans-Descendence—that was the new fashionable term for it. Taunting authority. Immaturity, a new political category. Problems connected with the increasing mental emancipation of the untrained unemployables. Better the beatles."[13] The regular and dominantly three beat rhythm maintained here, and the subtle echo of consonants, culminate in an alliterative fragment "Better the Beatles."

Herzog's thoughts, all related to the posters, are expressed in pretty abstract phrases as compared to Bloom's in his monologue. Prof. Herzog's phrases seem to parody the manner of the intellectuals taking an academic view of the "wit of the crowd".

As far as the language of thought is concerned, despite obvious differences both Joyce and Bellow seem to have tacitly assumed a few things. First that the pre-speech thoughts are musical. Second that the forms of thought are more compact, terse, and have more of content words. The grammatical trappings are kept to the minimum. In fact the grammar of this language is more subtle. Most of the time grammatical relations are suggested rather than manifested. And it has a wider range, beginning from the recognizably deviant to a well formed acceptable sentence, Then we can also see that the narrative generally moves with smaller units, thus keeping the syntax at a minimum and thereby intensifying sound effects a peculiar balance of sound and silence is created. The language feels different. Whether this is actually how thoughts flit in our minds is a matter for the psycholinguists to investigate : but the writer seems to have at least shaped out in language his own conception of pre-speech thoughts.

One important point to note about such a language is that beyond the immediate textural effects it leads to the revelation of the working of a man's mind. A character is created with these patterns of thoughts. The language is moulded, as in Bloom's case, by his experiences, memories and obsessions. We understand his fragments because we know the man and as we know the man we seem to understand the language of his thoughts better—the interconnection of his memory, his fears and worries. The glimpse of Bloom in the example above is that of a man maintaining a mocking attitude

towards his essentially domestic and human worries. His mind wanders over a vast tract of time and space yet the associations remain the same.

Like Bloom, Herzog too is a big joker and sufferer, but he is also an intellectual, a peddler of ideas. He has a more objective outlook. In the examples cited above he seems to have matched the personal attacks of the crowd with his sharp, oblique, impersonal remarks.

To conclude: the purpose of this paper has been to show that the vogue which began in the experiments of the Goncourts and Dujardin has continued and now become an effective device for subtle, suggestive, impressonistic descriptions and for a more complete characterization. The techniques of analysis for these two types of fragments vary a little. In the first type, corresponding effects of the dominant structures can be postulated and objectively studied more or less like a rhetorical device. The second type involves more complex sound and sense passociations.

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BOOKS

The Making of George Orwell. By Keith Alldritt. Edward Arnold, London, 1969.

Alldritt's book is a welcome addition to Orwellian criticism for it considers Orwell's work not only from the point of view of subject matter but also from that of technique. Subtitled "An Essay in Literary History", it is indicative of Alldritt's main concern: Orwell's adoption of the symbolist aesthetics, his failure to succeed in it and his own contribution to this mode of writing. In Alldritt's opinion, "With the possible exception of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell created no valuable work of literary art; rather his contribution was to literary culture." (p. 2)

The book is divided into five sections. The first is devoted to a definition of symbolism and a brief discussion of some of its practitioners including Joyce and Lawrence for whom Orwell had great admiration. From this Alldritt proceeds, in the second section, to discuss Orwell's failure in his early novels. He attributes Orwell's failure to his own "misguided efforts" (p. 4) to adopt a technique which was incompatible with the kind of things he wanted to say and because Orwell realized his inability to reconcile the two, he abandoned the novel form halfway through his literary career (p. 27). Alldritt considers these novels to be only a "footnote to the history of the modern novel, a casualty of the symbolist aesthetic in fiction." (p. 41)

The next two sections are devoted to a consideration of Orwell's autobiographical books and essays. Alldritt divides Orwell's essays into three categories : straightforward autobiography, literary essays and intellectual autobiography. These two sections have a great deal of value in them including as they do a fine analysis of the early essays and a discussion of his style. Alldritt maintains that Orwell adhered to the symbolistic technique in his early essays but moved away from it in his later essays. He connects Orwell's experiences in Paris and Spain with his desire to find a more congenial literary from. These experiences were also an escape from his isolation and a search for the self. This search led him to *Animal Farm*

and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*—a fable and a utopia. The fifth section is devoted to a discussion of these two books.

One is more than tempted to accept Alldritt's explanation of Orwell's failure as a novelist without much protest but, for many reasons, Alldritt's explanation does not appear to be a valid one. Orwell did admire Joyce and Lawrence and spoke very highly of them. This, however, does not mean that Orwell's work is "highly derivative." (p. 19). Alldritt carries certain resemblances too far. *A Clergyman's Daughter*, in his opinion, borrows certain technical devices from Joyce, a social atmosphere from Lawrence and a sense of despair from T.S. Eliot. Except for the slight Joycean influence, the other resemblances appear to be too far-fetched. Lawrence's "Daughters of the Vicar" has hardly anything in common with *A Clergyman's Daughter* (except the clergyman). Lawrence's heroine defies her family and crosses the class barrier in order to marry the young healthy miner. Dorothy Hare has none of this pluck. Her problem is one of faith and not of marriage. Later on in the book Alldritt discusses Orwell's concern with religion and remarks that perhaps Orwell's illness was responsible for this concern towards the end of his life. Alldritt does not notice that Dorothy voices Orwell's concern with religion in this novel as early as 1934. He turns to religion only to discover that it has lost its true meaning and is invested with a hollowness which he finds abhorrent.

To carry the "derivative" quality further, Alldritt considers *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* as Orwell's portrait of the artist (p. 31) and *Coming Up for Air* as another *History of Mr. Polly* (p. 39) with a little bit of Proust thrown in (p. 37). This kind of criticism does not lead the critic or the reader anywhere and is of no help in understanding the works under consideration.

Absorbed as he is in tracing the symbolist influence, Alldritt pays scant attention to other reasons for Orwell's failure in these early novels like his natural reserve and his inability to dramative his personal experiences. Orwell was also unable to bring his characters to life. They are too much the victims of their circumstances. Whenever Orwell wrote in the first person narrative, he was more successful as we see in his autobiographical books and in *Coming Up for Air*.

During the interval between *Coming Up for Air* (1939) and *Animal Farm* (1944) Orwell did not abandon the novel form. It would not be correct to say that he did not wish to write fiction because he realized his limitations. These years coincide with the period of war—a period in which Orwell was engaged in various activities. He was working for the BBC, writing anti-war pamphlets and propaganda literature like *The Lion and the Unicorn;* he needed money and found the nightmarish conditions of war time impossible to work on a novel. Alldritt seems to ignore the evidence of Orwell's letters and his war-time diaries in order to render his own interpretation valid. In 1908 at the time when Orwell was working on *Coming Up for Air* he wrote in a letter to Jack Common :

> "I suppose after this book I shall write some kind of pot-boiler, but I have very dimly in my mind the idea for an enormous novel in several volumes and I want several years to plan it out in peace. "(I, 368*)

This gives us some of the reasons why he did not work on a novel during these days. Earlier in June 1938 he had written that "with Hitler, Stalin and the rest of them the day of novel writing" was over. "Inside the Whale" elaborates these reasons. Orwell repeatedly expresses his inability to write because of ill health, need for money and because of the sub-human atmosphere of the war not only in his war-time diaries but also in his essays and letters belonging to this period.

In the fifth section Alldritt turns to *Animal Farm* and *Ninteen Eighty-Four.* He is inclined to treat them as something different from the novel form. But he does not appear to be consistent in his approach. On page 41 Alldritt writes : "And Orwell's experience... was to draw his interest away from the novel and direct it towards different species of the genus prose fiction, namely the fable and the utopia." But in his discussion he traces the symbolist element in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (pp. 169–170; pp. 177–178), as also the Wellsian influence and concludes by considering it as a novel. As for *Animal Farm,* he dismisses it lightly—the book is "trivial," the allegory "too pat", the narrator "too secure". He feels that this set of opinion is so stale that it has become too simple. I am afraid many of us

*Orwell and Angus, ed. *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell,* 4 Vols. Secker and Warburg, 1968. Alldritt is aware of this book and mentions it on p. 95 of his book. Future references will only be made to the volume number and the page number of this work.

will not share this opinion. Alldritt himself fails to see the religious allegory in it and we would perhaps consider it valid as a history of every revolution. It is *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in its embryonic form; it is the story of power, its corruption and the failure of checks that can be applied to power. It is a commentary on more than two thousand years of human life.

Nineteen Eighty-Four is treated at greater length and with greater attention. Alldritt very rightly considers it a continuation of *Homage to Catalonia* and gives a valuable analysis of the issues involved. But here, too, he is unable to see it in relation to other contemporary writings. He compares it with Kafka's works and T.S. Eliot's *The Wasteland,* and also points to the autobiographical element. But is *Nineteen Eighty-Four* not also a continuation of many of his earlier themes, and does Orwell not crystallize here his opinions about man-woman relationship as well as individual-society relationship ? It is not a "precipitious declension into despair" as Alldritt takes it to be. It is an answer to Koestler's *Darkness at Noon.* The aspect of the pessimistic element in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is overworked. This book should be read not as a piece in itself but by viewing it in relation to his other writings connected with this subject, particularly some essays written at about the same time—essays on Arthur Koestler (1944), Gandhi (1949), and a review of T.S. Eliot's book *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* (1948). Orwell's letters written to some of his friends help us see the book in its proper perspective. (Refer to 'Letter to Rogen Senhouse', 26 December, 1948, IV, 560; 'Letter to Julian Symons', 4 Feb, 1949, IV, 475; and 'Letter to Francis A Henson', 16 June 1949, IV, 502). Orwell's personal life does not lead us to think of him as a man who yielded to despair. In fact his second marriage is proof enough that he was both hopeful and courageous and had no wish to drag the world into a "precipitious declension into despair" along with himself. (Sean O'Casey was perhaps the first to say this.)

Alldritt's initial mistake is perhaps his attempt to separate Orwell's autobiographical works from his fiction. Autobiography, in Orwell's case, is not limited to any transitional phase, it is parallel in time to his fictional efforts. In *"Such, Such Were the Joys"* (1947) Alldritt finds Orwell's old inability to "synthesize experience" (p. 102). This does not seem to be so, for the essay thoughd ivided in

six sections, does not give the impression of being disintegrated. The different parts are very closely inter-related and Orwell goes on enlarging the area of his di cussion in each successive section. In the discussion of "Inside the Whale", Alldritt brings out some fine points but quotes isolated passages that can be interpreted differently. He ignores Orwell's review of the *Tropic of Cancer* in 1935 and treats "Inside the Whale" as a consideration of Miller's attitudes necessitated by Orwell's own literary needs. Orwell makes it abundantly clear that he does not approve of Miller's attitude and expresses the fear that there are perhaps only two alternatives : one of propaganda literature like that of the writers of the thirties, the other of complete withdrawal like that of Henry Miller. (This kind of withdrawal George Bowling tries in *Coming Up for Air* only to find that it is not possible). Alldritt, however, sees in this essay "an impulse of quietism and despair" (p. 128). Such an interpretation appears incomplete and distorted. It may well be taken to be a misrepresentation of Orwell's attitude to contemporary situation.

The section on style presents a fairly comprehensive discussion, except for the fact that All dritt gives no weight to Orwell's changing attitude to language or the reasons for the same. He, however, does full justice to Orwell's lucidity, his images, colloquial robustness, and the proletarian features that give "life and immediacy to Orwell's prose." (p. 124)

Alldritt like many other critics before him, attaches too much importance to Orwell's change in name. Critics have tried to read in it a deep psychological meaning namely that Orwell wanted to get rid of Eric Blair and his regeneration was incomplete so long as this part remained with him (p. 54; p. 72; p. 177). This, I feel, is reading too much in the issue. Orwell's desire to adopt a pseudonym was motivated more by the shyness of a beginner and a desire for anonymity than by anything else. Later on he was compelled to use these names for different purposes; for his close friends he was Eric Blair, for his reading public George Orwell. His letters throw a great deal of light on this. Alldritt, however, leans here more on hearsay than on sound evidence. Orwell considered changing it because of his adopted son and the fear that legal complications might arise at some later stage. Can one visualize a man running away from his bakground ? Orwell did not underestimate

the value of this background as we find in many of his essays as also in *Nineteen Eighty-Four;* he shows no desire to sever all past ties.

The Making of George Orwell appears in its own way an application of T.S. Eliot's view as presented in his "Tradition and the Individual Talent" to Orwell's literary theory. Orwell's personal contribution lies in widening the scope of the symbolistic form, imparting to this "aristocratic" technique a proletarian touch, reconciling the individual's expression of loneliness with his social needs. Though Alldritt tosses off a number of jingoistic phrases towards the end of the book, he states very clearly that *Nineteen Eighty-Four* helps to crystallize the nature of the symbolist mind. The book serves a useful end in its efforts to free Orwell from political labels and to help us in looking at him afresh as a novelist. This consideration would have been more valid had Alldritt considered Orwell's own views on fiction and fiction writing and shown a little less dependence on his critics.

Jasbir Jain

Eternity in Words : Sri Aurobindo's Savitri. By Rameshwar Gupta. Chetna Prakashan, Bombay, 1969.

Eternity in Words : Sri Aurobindo's Savitri is an exploration of the nature and meaning of poetry and a critical examination of Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri*, an epic in the English language, comprising about 24000 blank-verse lines, "probably", as Prof. Raymond Frank Piper of America and others view it, "the greatest epic in the English languge ... the most comprehensive, integrated, beautiful, and perfect cosmic poem ever composed in verse of un-paralleled massiveness, magnificence, and metaphorical brilliance". Indeed, Sri Aurobindo, the world-known yogi, is slowly emerging as a world poet and his *Savitri*, as world poetry, and it was nothing short of a daring feat on the part of Dr. Gupta to have plunged into its depths. The exploration took fifteen years but, according to Prof. Gupta's own confession, at every stage it was inspiring and elevating and it gave him a new sense of poetry and of life.

Dr. Gupta's work comprises six chapters. The first, entitled "Eternity in Words", is the rock-basis upon which Dr. Gupta builds his thesis. It studies the nature and genesis of poetry, describes the state of the poet's mind in creation and of the percipient's in perception, discusses whether poetry be mere word-smithy, whether it be feeling alone or insight too, whether the poet's world be mere illusion, and such other questions, and ventures to peep into the future of poetry. Dr. Gupta's contention is that the poetic word, provided it is really poetic, bears the sound of eternity. To quote him : "Poetry is the power of the word, the word that comes accompanied with vision, both the word and the vision mostly rising from their source in a higher consciousness, in Eternity, and coming up not necessarily to amuse, or to teach, but as the inner being's own expressive impulse for self-expansion asking liasion with Eternity, and affecting the hearer in an intense fearful way, putting him in a whirling of sense and sound" (p. 33). The second chapter outlines Sri Aurobindo's life and divine experiences and concludes with a brief critical review of his poetical works. This chapter along with an appendix on Sri Aurobindo's thought marks the necessary preparation for initiation

into the profundities of *Savitri*. The third chapter introduces us to the theme of Savitri which as stated, briefly is : Nature which in its process of evolution has arrived at a stage of mental or rational consciousness must now take a leap into its own higher stage, achieve a new, higher consciousness, the supramental consciousness : it is the story of man, the present apex of evolution, working out his own destiny in the world. The theme is set in the framework of the well-known legend of Satyavan-Savitri, but in the sun-lit soul of the poet this mere heroic tale turns into a highly symbolic saga of Savitri—Savitri turning up as *Chit*, that is, consciousness involved in the cosmos. Dr. Gupta discusses the theme from various points of view and ably succeeds in establishing its world significance. In the fourth chapter Dr. Gupta studies the technique of *Savitri* : its structure, language, rhythm and imagery. This is a masterly study. Through a convincing linguistic and literary analysis of some of the significant passages of the epic and through other suitable illustrations, Dr. Gupta succeeds in meeting the charge of some of the modernistic critics that Sri Aurobindo's language and style are outmoded, and in convincing the reader that here was a poet who well understood the patois, the dialect, the peculiar private language of the heart of the cosmos and who could easily mould and regenerate the English language to the perfect expression of that peculiar cosmic throb. Indeed at places he infuses the reader with his own feeling of the power and glory of Sri Aurobindo's poetry.

The fifth chapter tries to show how *Savitri* would look when placed among world classics—*The Iliad*, *The Odyssey*, *The Divine Comedy*, *Faust*, *The Paradise Lost* and the great works of Shakespeare, the romantics, the Victorians and the moderns. There are some illuminating comparisons and very convincingly a place of honour is secured for *Savitri*. Finally, there is the grand recapitulatory chapter.

Throughout, the reader gets the evidence of the author's comprehensive vision, fundamental grasp of things, and quiet wisdom. *Eternity in Words* is a powerful book and makes one realize the power that is inherent in words poetic.

D. C. Agarwala

English Drama 1865–1900. By Surendra Sahai. Orient Longman, New Delhi, 1970.

The book is a study of English drama of the second half of the nineteenth century. The author seeks to challenge the widely-held assumption that the renascence of drama during this period was due to the "influence of Ibsen and the practice of Shaw." He "asserts" that the rejuvenation of drama was brought about also through the efforts of T.W. Robertson, W.S. Gilbert, A.W. Pinero, H.A. Jones and Oscar Wilde.

The first chapter combines theoretical treatment with textual elucidation. According to the writer, the year 1865 marks a great dramatic revolution with the production of *Society*—a play by Robertson—at the Prince of Wales' Theatre. He then offers a retrospective glimpse of English drama before 1865 and analyses the stage conditions and other factors which were responsible for bringing about the dramatic change. Enumerating the characteristics of change between the drama of 1803–1865 and that of 1865–1900 the author says : "...the romantic tradition in play-writing and acting gave place to a realistic approach; the stage manager, director or producer now came to hold a more dominating position than before, ...the writer commanded respect ... and what is more important, the audience of the later period was vastly different from that of the earlier times".

The first chapter is followed by a set of seven chapters, each dealing with one of the playwrights. The second chapter offers a discussion of Robertson's plays and *Caste* is regarded as his best play. The main varieties of plays prior to Robertson's comedies are discussed under three heads, viz., verse plays, melodrama and comedy. The third chapter is an examination of the work of William S. Gilbert who tried his hand at sentimental drama, extravaganza, burlesque and "operas". According to the writer, Gilbert's plays are marked by a "wonderful gift of originality and characterization." The next dramatist treated is Arthur Wing Pinero who wrote, as the writer says, comedies "with a strong predilection for sentimentality and satire and a curious mixture of the serious and the sentimental." Dr. Sahai regards Pinero's *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* as a land-

mark in the development of English drama. According to him, Pinero lacked "vision" but he was superb in his "brilliant characterization and skilful plot construction." Next comes Henry Arthur Jones who "installed drama as a significant social force and an institution for social education." In the sixth chapter, the writer points out how Ibsen influenced Robertson, Pinero and especially Shaw in various ways. The author thinks that "the objective anti-idealist plays" were Ibsen's main contribution towards the growth of the "problem plays" in England. Ibsen's female characters considerably influenced the concept of female characters in British drama, especially the female characters of Shaw. Besides Ibsen's influence, another movement—Naturalism—is also discussed and there are passing references to Hauptmann, Sundermann, and Strindberg. The next chapter deals with G.B. Shaw who is said to have completed in England the movement which was begun by Ibsen. According to the author, Shaw's greatest contribution lay in writing those plays which showed "the triumph of art for artist's sake." The last dramatist dealt with is Oscar Wilde whom, the author says, Pinero and Jones surpassed in several ways.

The penultimate chapter deals with the last three decades of the nineteenth century stage which "outgrew the decadent and moribund conditions of the theatre." Here the author points out the changes in the different aspects of the theatre, viz., the audience, scenery and costume, and actors—all of which brought about the renascence of drama.

The book points to Dr. Sahai's hard labour in gathering material which is not easily available in our university libraries. But can one say that the author has maintained any new thesis in his work ? It is a well-known fact that Shaw's plays bring to fruition the various experiments of his predecessors in the theatre like Robertson, Gilbert, and of course Ibsen. Shaw himself acknowledged his debt to both Robertson and Ibsen. Moreover, the author's range appears far too ambitious to allow him to deal with the representative works of the period in detail. The work, therefore, turns out to be of the nature of popular histories of English drama. It may, however, serve well as a hand-book for students. Curiously enough there are a number of misprints in spite of the book having been brought out by reputed publishers.

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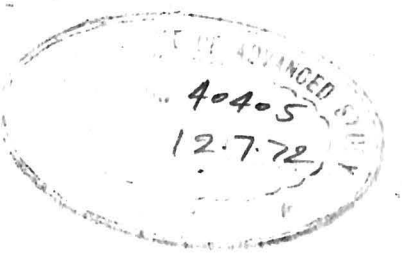

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