Critical Theory

Section - A - B - C- D & E

M.A. English (Final)

Paper - VI

Directorate of Distance Education
Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak

CRITICAL THEORY

Paper-VI

Section A & B

M.A. English (Final)

Directorate of Distance Education
Maharshi Dayanand University
ROHTAK – 124 001

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M.A. English (Final)
CRITICAL THEORY
PAPER-VI
Section A & B

Max. Marks : 100
Time : 3 Hours

Note: *Candidate will be required to attempt five questions in all, choosing one question from each of the five sections Questions will be based on the prescribed texts with internal choice i.e., one question with internal choice on each of the units.*

SECTION A
CLASSICAL EUROPEAN AND INDIAN THEORY

Unit I **POETICS**
Aristotle

Unit II **NATYA SHASTRA**
Bharatamuni

SECTION B
ROMANTIC THEORY

Unit III **PREFACE TO LYRICAL BALLADS**
Wordsworth

Unit IV **BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA**
Coleridge

Aristotle : Poetics Unit-I

Introduction

Aristotle was a notable Greek philosopher. He was born in 384 B.C. at Stageira in Chalcidice, (Macedonia). His father was Nicomachus, a friend and physician to Amyntas II, the king of Macedonia and the grandfather of Alexander, the Great, who invaded India, stayed here for some time and then went back. Aristotle, perhaps inherited his knowledge of medicine and biology from his father.

Aristotle was educated at Athens. He was a disciple of Plato under whom he studied and worked for twenty years and discussed much of his philosophy and thought. After Plato's death in 347 B.C., Aristotle left Athens and went to Assos to stay with his friend Xenocrates. King Philip of Macedon heard Aristotle's name and appointed him to be the tutor of his son Alexander. On the accession of Alexander to the throne of Macedon in 335 B.C., Aristotle returned to Athens where he founded his school, the Lyceum. In the shady paths and groves surrounding the Lyceum, he lectured to many scholars while walking up and down. His school came to be known as the 'Peripatetic'. Here he remained occupied for thirteen years and composed the greater part of his works. The Lyceum, says John Crowe Ransom, was the first university to exist according to the pattern that Europeans and Americans now know so familiarly. Here Aristotle dedicated himself to a career of oral teaching and lectured to many scholars, while walking up and down. From this habit of his, the school came to be known as the "Peripatetic School of Philosophy." Most of his works belong to this period and they have come down to us in the form of notes and summaries of his oral lectures.

The death of Alexander, the Great cast a shadow of gloom on Aristotle. He came under political suspicion and retired to Chalcis in Euboea where he fell ill and died at the age of sixty two in 322 B.C.

From the standpoint of subject matter, the writings fall into four major groups. First, there are the logical treatises now commonly referred to as the Organon. These include the Categories, the De interpretatione, the Prior and PosteriorAnalytics, and the Topics.

Second, there are the writings on natural philosophy and science. The most important of these are the treatise On Coming Into Being and Passing Away, the De caelo, the Physics, De historia animalium, De partibus animalium, De generation animulium, and the De anima on human nature. Aristotle himself wrote no treatise on plants, but such a work was undertaken by his student, Theophrastus.

Third, there is the collection now known as the Metaphysics. Aristotle did not use this title, but referred to the field as that of "first philosophy". The Metaphysics is a set of lectures written by him during the late development of his thought at Assus and during his final period at Athens.

Fourth, there are the works on ethics and politics, to which the Poetics and the Rhetoric are subordinated. The most important of these are the Eudemian Ethics, composed during the second period; the Nicomachean Ethics, during the last Athenian period; the Politics, consisting of different lectures written over a long period of time; the Rhetoric, and the fragmentary Poetics. Except for his account of the Athenian Constitution, Aristotle's great work on City Constitutions and several historical treatises have been lost.

Aristotle's works are in the main notes or summaries of his oral lectures. They had an immense influence on thought in the past and even today serve as text books. They cover an extraordinarily wide field: logic, moral philosophy, metaphysics, poetry, physics, zoology, politics and rhetoric. He created logic and taught the world science of reasoning. He surveyed the whole range of zoology and adopted broad classifications which have been accepted by later science. His most important treatises are 'Ethics', 'Poetics' and 'Politics. Ethics in an introduction to moral philosophy. In this treatise Aristotle points out that 'virtue is a state of the will and not of the reason'. The scope of 'Politics' is limited to the city state of this day. The 'Poetics' is an original or first hand statement of what we may call the classical view of artistic criticism. Aristotle was a myriad-minded genius, and he wrote nearly four hundred books on an astonishing variety of topics. His works covered almost every aspect of human life.

The originality and the brilliance of Aristotle are displayed in everything that he wrote. He always adopted a cool, rational and scientific outlook. He was objective and adopted a judicial and impartial view of the subject. It is this

scientific temper of his which marks him as one of the seminal minds that the West has produced. Not given to any enthusiasm, always in perfect control of himself, whatever the area he surveyed and whatever the subject studied, he looked solely and steadfastly at the subject. It is this quality of his mind that is reflected in the Poetics which is even today regarded as one of the greatest works of literary criticism.

It is not very difficult to compare and contrast Aristotle and Plato, the two master minds of the 4th century B.C. Plato was the teacher and the *guru* of Aristotle and it is only that teachership of Plato and the respect for him and his personality that Aristotle throughout the Poetics did not mention the name of Plato nor did he refer to his statements. It is very strange that the pupil of Plato differed from him so much that it would not be wrong to say that they stood at 'opposite poles' to each other. It was all due to the liberty of thought and discussion that was the hall mark of Greece in those days.

Plato was the philosopher, who of all philosophers, was the most richly endowed with poetic sensibility and who had absorbed the works of the great poets and unhesitatingly adorned his prose with lines and phrases culled from them. Aristotle's common sense was proof against enchantments. His learning was many sided, and with the limited range of knowledge of the fourth century B.C. it was possible to be fully versed in many branches of inquiry without the narrowness of the mere specialist. But he knew his limitations. He confined himself to the "theoretic life." He wrote of politics but he was not a politician. He discoursed on rhetoric, but he was not an orator. He theorized on poetry, but he was neither poet nor rhapsode. If we mean by 'Aristotle' all the work of his School that is left to us in his name, we might conclude that he knew everything that could be known to an ancient Greek, and participated in nothing. His subject was the Greek world as he found it. His method was to analyze it reasonably, without passion and without prejudice. He had a genius for distinction and classification. He is perfectly detached. He is without any philosophical axe of his own to grind.

It seems very strange that Plato who was poetic in thought and language condemned poetry and wanted to turn out the poets from the Republic. Aristotle, on the other hand, supported and upheld the cause of poetry. He was not a poet, nor his works can be called 'literature' in any sense. But he so staunchly stood by 'poetry' and by 'poets' that the people of the age and of all ages found in him a 'prophet.' It seems a paradox that Plato, who in his youth had done exquisite things in poetry, and in his maturity had such perfect command of literary art that he could present abstruse metaphysics as an enchanting music of ideas, should have been the man to condemn poetry; whereas Aristotle, whose extant works can scarcely be called literature at all, should have directed the full force of his philosophy into the sanest and strongest commendation poetry has ever had.

Plato developed for himself a positive aversion to poetry as deceptive to the individual and disastrous to the state. He held that poetry was not useful either to man or to his country. It was immoral and the poets who created it were corrupt. Plato, in this way, expressed the curious mental attitude of distrust towards the productions of great human art. There is in Aristotle no sign of contempt or distrust in respect to literature.

Plato's work is constantly to be judged with reference to its political and social context, for all his efforts were devoted to staying the deterioration of character, and to the restoring of health in both the individual and the state. He judges poetry from this point of view. He finds poetry wanting in this respect and, therefore, attacks it (and drama) on moral, emotional and intellectual grounds. On moral grounds, he attacks poetry as follows:

(a) Poetry is not conducive to social morality, as poets pander to the popular taste and narrate tales of man' pleasant vices. This has a demoralizing effect. This is more so the case with drama which depends entirely on popular patronage.

(b) Poet, "tells lies about gods". Gods, and great heroes descended from the gods, are represented as corrupt, dishonest, indeed subject to all the faults and vices of common humanity, even by Homer. They thus deprave public taste and morality and militate against reverence for gods. Works of poets, like Homer, must not be prescribed for school study for this reason. Children tend to imitate the doings of gods and other heroes as told to them by their mothers; they fashion their own conduct on what they read. As regards the allegorical interpretation of poetry, say the tales of Homer, Plato argues that the hidden meaning, if there is any such, is certainly beyond the reach of the young. Homer, therefore, cannot be a suitable medium of education, as he was considered upto [illegible] subject of study.

(c) Drama is even more harmful. Judgment in dramatic matter is left to the many, and the result is lawlessness and licence, both in theme and expression. Poets and dramatists appeal to the baser instincts of men, their love of the sensational and the melodramatic. The vulgar and the morbid is thus fostered, and a, "sort of evil theatocracy has taken the place of old aristocracy with disastrous consequences to national well-being."

Plato found in the poet a distinctive quality 'that divine madness which made poetry something to be dreaded and shunned'. The poet was a possessed creature, not using language in the way that normal human beings do but speaking in a divinely inspired frenzy. Such a view removed the poet from ordinary canons of judgement and made him something between a prophet and a madman-sometimes one, sometimes the other, and sometimes both. Plato in a passage, in Phaedrus, has beautifully suggested this view and has developed it further at great length in his 'Ion'. In 'Phaedrus', Plato says:

"The third kind is the madness of those who are possessed by the Muses; this enters into a delicate and virgin soul and there inspiring frenzy, awakens lyrical and all other numbers; with these adorning the myriad actions of ancient heroes for the instruction of posterity. But he who, having no touch of the Muses' madness in his soul, comes to the door and thinks that he will get into the temple by the help of art - he, I say, and his poetry are not admitted; the sane man is nowhere at all when he enters into rivalry with the madman."

In Ion, Plato holds that the poet is an 'inspired rhapsodist' through whom God speaks. The man is passive and lacks art and volition of his own.

"The Muse first of all inspires men herself; and from these inspired persons a chain of other persons is suspended, who take the inspiration from them. For all good poets, epic as well as lyric, compose their beautiful poems not by art, but because they are inspired and possessed. And as the Corybantian revellers when they dance are not in their right mind, so the lyric poets are not in their right mind when they are composing their beautiful strains: but when falling under the power of music and meter they are inspired and possessed; like Bacchic maidens who draw milk and honey from the rivers when they are under the influence of Dionysus but, not when they are in their right mind."

Barring dithyrambic (lyric), which is purely narrative, all other poetry–epic, tragedy and comedy – is imitative, wholly or partially, and all imitative poetry Plato regards as pernicious. In imitative poetry the poet, and the reader as well, identifies himself completely with the fictitious characters of poetry, and such absorption in other personalities is weakening and unhealthy. It enfeebles character and personality, and impairs the single mindedness and integrity of the individual. Imitation soon becomes a second nature and the actor who imitates tends to behave like the object of his imitation. Thus one who imitates a female part tends to grow effiminate. Imitation will make him cowardly, knavish, or clownish if such roles are imitated.

It is easier to imitate the lower or baser parts of 'the soul', i.e. the passionate elements Plato divides the soul into three parts (1) rational, (2) spirited, (3) desirous or appetitive - and such imitation of the baser, non-rational elements gives greater pleasure at the moment. Hence it is that the poets, whether epic, tragic or comic, abound in the vulgar, the sensational and the corrupt. Reason is thus kept in abeyance and full sway is given to the emotions. People give way to emotional disturbances (say during a theatrical performance) of which they would be ashamed in real life. Poetry thus has a debilitating effect: it leads to loss of balance, with feelings unrestrained by either reason or principle. He condemns poetry in Republic X, for the poets, "they feed and water the passions instead of drying them up and set them rule instead of ruling them as they ought to be ruled with a view to the happiness and virtue of mankind."

In Republic X, there is a discussion of the emotions of pity and grief. These emotions should be restrained, but in tragedy we give an uncontrolled expression to these emotions and thus play a woman's part. Now pity and grief are gentle, humane emotions, not violent and anti social, like sex and revenge. Plato is opposed not merely to the violent or anti-social emotions, but to all emotions as such.

Aristotle did not support Plato's view. He did not uphold the theory of 'Art for Art's sake.' He asserted that poetry is one of the activities of human nature' to purge mankind. It was not unrelated with a pragmatic goal. Aristotle demonstrated that poetry was true, serious and useful whereas Plato had shown it to be false, trivial and harmful. Coleridge once remarked that everyone is either a born Platonist or a born Aristotlian. Lascelles Abercrombie says

dwelt at great length on a comparative study of Aristotle and Plato. He says that Aristotle's philosophy was coloured by his interest in biology Plato's by his interest in mathematics. Biologically speaking, the reality of things gives to ideas whatever reality they possess. But mathematically speaking the reality of ideas give to things whatever reality they possess. In the mathematical mind things are real enough but only because they represent ideas; reality is conferred on things by ideas: the ideas would be real even if there were nothing to represent them. For a biologist the ideas are born out of things. Thus we find that Plato's mind liked to proceed from ideas to things while that of Aristotle from things to ideas, Aristotle had the scientific; Plato the metaphysical mind.

Plato applied deductive method to arrive at Truth; Aristotle believed in inductive logic. Plato was transcendental and idealist. Aristotle was experimentalist and realist. Plato was abstract; Aristotle was concrete. Plato was concerned with 'ought to be' or 'ought not to be' of things; Aristotle only with things as 'they are'. Plato subordinated Art to moral, Aristotle liberated 'art' from the tyranny of a moralist, or a politician or a philosopher. Plato was a literary artist; Aristotle was not. To Plato things were only important as the representative of ideas. He was prepared to say that a thing which was unnecessary or unworthy as a representative of ideas 'ought not to exist'. Poetry was a thing of this nature. But Aristotle with a biologist's respect for things looked on poetry; for him ideas were only important as the interpretation of things. For Aristotle poetry exists and may be supremely beneficent.

Plato legislated; Aristotle examined, observed phenomenon and described. Plato confused the study of art with the study of morals. Aristotle removed the confusion and created the study of aesthetics. Without the demonic genius of Plato and without his poetic gift he avoided his inspired errors. Still he remained a debtor to Plato for basic points on which he built the whole structure of his 'criticism' of poetry such as that poetry is an imitative art, that poetry rouses tbe emotions of the readers and the audience, that poetry gives pleasure and that the rousing of emotions affects the personality of an individual.

Aristotle approached literature as literature. He had no other axe to grind. He refuted Plato on many points. Plato showed a distrust of "aesthetic transport" as he thought it might lead to "terrors of sense" and misguide reason. He condemned poetry for the pernicious effects it might have on conduct in his ideal Republic. Aristotle launched his powerful defence of poetry against Plato's formidable attack. He reinterpreted Plato's concept of mimesis, and set forth his own theory of "poetic imitation" based on imaginative reconstruction of life. The master and teacher gave something to the pupil that made him, to quote T.S. Eliot the 'perfect critic' and the first man in history to expound certain principles of art based on Aesthetics.

The difference between Plato and Aristotle can be clearly seen in the way they approach the very existence of poetry. It is true that Aristotle was not gifted with poetic sensibilities like Plato and that his writings do not possess that charm and poetic flavour which characterize Plato's Dialogues, yet he remains the great critic among the ancients by sheer force of his erudition and research, detachment and clear-headedness and his laying down the first principles of literary criticism.

A brief review of Aristotle's views on morality and ethics is essential for a proper understanding of his theory of poetry and the fine arts as developed in The Poetics. In the philosophical system of Aristotle, God is not the Creator of the universe but the Cause of its motion. For a creator is a dreamer, and a dreamer is a dissatisfied personality, a soul that yearns for something that is not, an unhappy being who seeks for happiness - in short, an imperfect creature who aims at perfection. But God is perfect and since he is perfect he cannot be dissatisfied or unhappy. He is, therefore, not the Maker but the Mover of the universe. He is the unmoved mover of the universe.

Every other source of motion in the world, whether it be a person or a thing or a thought, is (according to Aristotle) a moved mover. Thus the plough moves the earth, the hand moves the plough, the brain moves the hand, the desire for food moves the brain, the instinct for life moves the desire for food and so on. In other words, the cause of every motion is the result of some other motion. The master of every slave is the slave of some other master. Even the tyrant is the slave of his ambition. But God is the result of no action. He is the slave of no master. He is the source of all action, the master of all masters, the instigator of all thought and movement. Furthermore, God is not interested in the world, though the world is interested in God. For to be interested in the world means to be subject to emotion, to be swayed by prayers or by criticism, to be capable of changing one's mind as a result of somebody else's actions or desires or thoughts - in short, to be imperfect. But God is passionless, changeless, perfect. He moves the world as a

beloved object moves the lover. The Aristotelian God, who is loved by all men, but who is indifferent to their fate, is a cold, impersonal and, from our modern religious standpoint, "perfectly" unsatisfactory type of Supreme Being. He resembles the Primal Energy of the scientists rather than the Heavenly Father of the poets.

Man is born for only one purpose - to be happy. But what is happiness? It is that pleasant state of mind which is brought about by the habitual doing of good deeds. But to be happy it is not sufficient merely to be good. It is necessary also to be blessed with a sufficiency of goods-that is, good birth, good looks, good fortune and good friends. Above all, a long and healthy life is necessary for the attainment of happiness. "One swallow does not make a summer, nor does one day." To make a perfect summer of our life we need many days, a sufficiency of sunlight and full measure of song.

To the Greeks this word did not mean, as it does to us, moral excellence alone. It meant any kind of excellence. Thus a Greek Casanova might have been called a virtuous lover because he was an efficient lover. A ruthless but competent General would in Athens have been regarded as a virtuous soldier. A virtuous person, in Aristotle's philosophy, was a person who possessed physical powers, technical competence and mental virtuosity. To these three qualities Aristotle now added a fourth requisite for happiness - moral nobility. In the Poetics the word 'Good' is used in this sense. This all-round excellence, therefore, was needed for Aristotle's "happy warrior" in the battlefield of life.

Aristotle summarized this manifold excellence in his famous doctrine of the, "golden mean". The happy man, the virtuous man, is he who preserves the golden mean between the two extremes. He is the man who steers the middle course between the shoals that threaten on either side to wreck his happiness. In every act, in every thought, in every emotion, a man may be overdoing his duty or underdoing it or doing it just right. Thus, in sharing his goods with other people, a man may be extravagant, which is overdoing it, or stingy, which is underdoing it, or liberal, which is doing it just right. In the matter of facing the dangers of life, a man may be rash or cowardly or brave. In the handling of his appetites, he may be gluttonous or abstemious or moderate. In every case, the rational way of life is to do nothing too much or too little but to adopt the middle course. The virtuous man will be neither supernormal nor subnormal, but justly and wisely normal. In The Rhetoric, Aristotle tells us that the virtuous man will act, "at the right times, with reference to the right objects, towards the right people, with the right motive and the right way." In short, he will at all times and under all conditions observe the golden mean. For the golden mean is the royal road to happiness. This view is also relevant to an understanding of Aristotle's theory of "Catharsis."

The Poetics

Its Importance

The Poetics, as we have it, is a fragmentary work of literary criticism by Aristotle. Perhaps he never meant it to be published as a treatise concerning the Art of Poetry. It seems to have been written just in the form of brief notes for his personal guidance, or it may be a rough sketch of what he wanted to write in detail. It is also probable that it may be the collection of notes compiled from his lectures by some student. And, as W. Hamilton Fyfe has said, 'lectures' notes are never good reading, and some of the notes included in Aristotle's 'works' may even be those still more tangled puzzles, the notes taken down by a pupil. It is rumoured that the discovery of such a book of notes, left behind by an undergraduate in the lecture-room, caused Dean Inge to relinquish in horror his professorial chair at Cambridge. So we must not blame Aristotle, if we sometimes find his notebooks difficult. Another possibility is that the entire book has not come down to us. Some sections, especially one on comedy, have been lost. Whatever the genesis of this treatise may have been, the fact remains that it is incomplete, disjointed, and at places abrupt and digressive. The treatment of subjects is also uneven and badly organized. Aristotle does not harmonise all his statements on related topics appearing in different parts of the Poetics. He was not a systematic writer perhaps, as Bywater has suggested. But whatever the apparent defects of the Poetics may be, its inherent value and fundamental importance cannot be challenged. It remains to this day the most fundamental treatise on the art of tragedy. Ever since 1536, the year in which Trincavelí published a Greek text of the Poetics, Pazzi his edition and Latin version, and Daniello his own Poetics it has been read and re-read as a guide to the techniques of dramatic art.

The first critical edition of the Poetics was published by Robortelli in 1548. Since then it has been profusely annotated

and interpreted by learned scholars all over the world. The literature which has accumulated around it is, as Mr. Francis Fergusson points out, "full of disputes so (eruidite that the non-specialist can only look on in respectful silence."

Some critics think that the Poetics was written by Aristotle primarily as an answer to the strictures of Plato on poetry. Professor J.W.H. Atkins, for instance, finds Aristotle "merely careful to frame a reply" to Plato's indictment. He says: "Plato had challenged both tragedy and the epic on account of their nature and effects; he had demanded a poetry of a philosophical kind, produced in the light of ideal knowledge. And the nature of the attack determined the line of defense." Lascelles Abercrombie also maintains that "almost certainly the Poetics is Aristotle's counterblast to Plato's celebrated condemnation of poetry. After having read Plato, one becomes quite convinced that the author of the Poetics did have the author of the Republic in his mind while formulating his own critical theories. It looks however strange that Aristotle nowhere mentions Plato, though his mind seems to be so filled with Platonic ideas that he is ever engaged in invalidating them.

When Aristotle wrote his Poetics in the 4th cent. B.C., there was only one literature before him and that was the literature of the Greeks. All his observations were naturally based on the epic poetry of Homer and the dramas of Aeschylus. Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes. He arrived at his conclusions inductively, but posterity looked upon him as a law-giver. During the Renaissance he was regarded as an 'absolute monarch to the poets and critics. The 17th century critics regarded him as the high priest on all problems connected with literary criticism and aesthetics. They forgot that he had not written about all poetry but only about Greek poetry which existed in his times. Dryden had the good sense to pull them up by saying: "It is not enough that Aristotle has said so, for Aristotle drew his models of tragedy from Sophocles and Euripides: and, if he had seen ours, might have changed his mind." Perhaps what Dryden wanted to emphasize was that a blind adherence to the rules laid down by Aristotle was not advisable. In fact Aristotle himself did not intend the Poetics to be an exact science, or even a text book with strict laws, as the Renaissance humanists tried to make out with their famous rules of the unities of time, place, and action. He knows that every poet has his unique vision, and must therefore use the principles of his art in his own way. The Poetics is much more like a cookbook than it is like a textbook in elementary engineering.

The Poetics which has been used by both playwrights and theorists of many periods, and has been variously interpreted in the course of its two thousand years of life, is still with us, in all its suggestiveness. Let us first see for ourselves what it actually contains. Only then it will be worthwhile to discuss some of the fundamental principles of art it deals with.

The Poetics, as we have it, contains 26 chapters, dealing with the basic principles of Tragedy, Comedy, and Epic poetry. Aristotle's discussion of Comedy is only fragmentary. He discusses Epic poetry but he dismisses it by saying that the principles of epic are only corollaries of those of tragedy which is the more complete form from the artistic point of view. It is-his analysis of Tragedy that constitutes the main argument in the Poetics and is discussed at some length.

The Poetics has been accepted as the first thoroughly philosophical discussion of literature and the foundation of all subsequent discussions. The Poetics is a book which is regarded simply as an exposition of the principles of literary criticism, as valid for Shakespeare and Milton as for Homer and Sophocles of Aristotle's days. The Poetics is really an exposition of the theory of tragedy, with the modifications to cover epic. But the theory of tragedy is worked out with such insight and comprehension, that it becomes the type of the theory of literature. The Poetics, in fact, is Aristotle's counterblast to Plato's celebrated condemnation of poetry as a pursuit unworthy of man's intellectual dignity, and radically vicious in its effect. The Poetic disposes of the theory of Art-for-Art's sake simply by describing his subject in terms satisfactory to a biological philosopher. "I shall speak", he says, "of the art of poetry and of its various species, discussing the function of each kind, along with the proper structure of a poem and the number and nature of its parts." Aristotle in the Poetics takes it for granted that a work of art, whether it be a picture or a poem, is a thing of beauty; and that it affords pleasure appropriate to its own kind.

The text of the Poetics that is available is a fragment. It is written in a terse and telegraphic style. Quite a few sentences in the original Greek are incomplete and some keywords are missing. And because of the fragmentary nature of the text, many of the issues and controversies raised by the text can never be satisfactorily resolved. For example, Aristotle in the Poetics frequently states that each kind of poetry gives its own specific pleasure. But while he repeats a number of times that the specific pleasure of tragedy is the pleasure of the 'katharsis' of the emotions of

pity and fear, he says nothing about the specific pleasure that epic poetry and comedy are supposed to give. As regards 'katharsis' which is the specific pleasure of Tragedy, in the Poetics itself, there is no discussion or even a simple explanation of the meaning of the word 'katharsis'. Again, in the fifth chapter of the Poetics, Aristotle states that he would discuss Comedy and Epic poetry later in the book. But in the last few sections of the book there is some discussion of Epic Poetry but nothing is said about Comedy. This is why critics are of the view that in the missing second book of the Poetics (Diogenes Laertius in the third century A.D. had written that the Poetics was in two volumes), Aristotle must have discussed at length Comedy. Thus, because of the terse and fragmentary nature of the text, the Poetics is even today a controversial document. However, if the value of a work of criticism is to be measured in tenns of attention it attracts or even the hostility it generates, then undoubtedly the Poetics is a very important work. No single work of criticism has been so extensively translated, annotated, interpreted, challenged, distorted, grossly overpraised, and equally violently denounced as this early study of Greek Tragedy. The Poetics is the first work of literary criticism in the West available to. us. Thus, historically it is important. It is also a great work because in this work one discovers a uniquely modern view of literature. This is why the book is relevant even today.

In the Poetics, Aristotle has dealt with the function of poetry. Poetry must have some function; for in the world of human activity, it must somehow behave: all human activities take place in human nature, and must therefore affect each other. It is governed by Aristotle's idea of Katharsis, which is to-date the most important idea with regard to the tragedy.

The critics of the 16th Century were very fond of Aristotle. In the 17th Century, the critics forgot that Aristotle was not writing all about poetry. It was therefore, that Dryden made that comment that Aristotle might have changed his mind, had he seen the plays of England of the 17th Century. Today all have accepted Aristotle as a master and the founder of literary criticism. He is a law-giver. He has accustomed the world to think along his lines of thought and he might just as easily have persuaded us to think of drama as a composite art composed of many elements, like Grand Opera. Aristotle taught the intellectual world to think of drama as an almost exclusively literary thing. The thinkers and so-called "serious" people of all the world have been profoundly and unduly influenced by his thought and his advice. It is due in great measure to this one sidedness of the Poetics that cultured people everywhere and always, have tended too much to think of "serious" drama in terms of that part of drama which belongs to literature. Today there is a tendency to condemn the intellectual slavishness to Aristotle; but what can one do when the foundation that Aristotle laid is so strong that no building can be made without taking one part of the other of the foundation.

Directly or indirectly, The Poetics has commanded more attention than any other book of literary criticism, so that the course of literary history after it is not intelligble without an acquaintance with the Poetics at first hand whether in the original or through a translation.

But further, the work has a permanent value, quite apart from historical considerations. Aristotle's fundamental assumptions, and the generalizations upon which he mainly insists, are as true of any modern literature as they are of his own. That a work of art, for instance - a drama, or the like-may be compared to a living organism, every part of whose structure is essential for the function of the whole, is a conception having validity for all ages. And the same may also be said of his contention that poetry has its own standard of correctness or fitness, and is to be judged primarily by its own laws.

The Poetics is further valuable for its method and perspective. Simply and directly it lays emphasis upon what is of first importance: upon the vital structure of a poem rather than the metre; upon the end and aim of tragedy. In its effect upon emotions rather than on the history of the Chorus. Profound thoughts are expressed in language suited to a scientific inquiry. Starting with the Platonic assumption that a literary form, an oration, for example, or a tragedy, has the nature of a living organism, Aristotle advances to the position that each distinct kind of literature must have a definite and characteristic activity or function and that this specific function must be equivlent to the effect which the form produces upon a competent observer; that is, form and function being, as it were, interchangeable terms, the organism is what it does to the person who is capable of judging what it does or ought to do. Then further, beginning again with the general literary estimates that had become more or less crystallized during the interval between the age of the Attic drama and his own time, and that enabled him to assign tentative values to one play and another, the great critic found a way to select, out of a large extant literature, a small number of tragedies which must necessarily

conform more nearly than the rest to ideal type. As in his Politics which is based upon researches among a great number of municipal constitutions, yet with emphasis upon a few, so in the Poetics his conclusions regarding tragedy depend upon a collection of instances as exhaustive as he could make it without loss of perspective; that is, his observation was inclusive so that he might not pass over what since the days of Bacon we have been accustomed to think of as, 'crucial instances'. By a penetrating scrutiny of these crucial instances in tragedy, he still more narrowly defined what ought to be the proper effect of this kind of literature upon the ideal spectator, namely, the effect which he terms the catharsis of pity and fear, the purgation of the two disturbing emotions. Then, reasoning from function back to form and from form again to function, he would test each select tragedy, and every part of it by the way in which the part and the whole conduced to this emotional relief. In this manner, he arrived at the conception of an ideal structure for tragedy, a pattern which, though never fully realized in any existing Greek drama, must yet constitute the standard for all of its kind.

Professor Lascelles Abercrombie in his Principles of Literary Criticism has summed up the achievement of Aristotle in the following words:

"Aristotle's treatise Concerning the Art of Poetry, usually called the Poetics, was never meant by Aristotle to be a treatise. Like almost everything else of his that has survived, it was not composed as a book; it merely represents the lectures which he used to give his students. It is abrupt, disjointed, awkwardly digressive; essential ideas are left unexplained. In short, it has all the literary defects of lecture notes. The intellectual centre round which everything else is organized, is defined; it is mentioned by a technical term (which is not only metaphorical, but ambiguously metaphorical) and is frequently alluded to ; but we have to make out, as best we may, what Aristotle means by it."

"In spite of all these defects, the argument reveals itself; and the argument is such, that the Poetics is not only the first thoroughly philosophical discussion of literature but the foundation of all subsequent discussions. It is, of course, the product of its time; a fact which is most obviously apparent in the limitation of his subject matter for literature has developed in many directions since Aristotle's time. With him, discussion of the problems of literary criticism, however restricted in scope, could not but be truly philosophical discussion. What was good philosophy in Greece in the fourth century before christ, is good philosophy everywhere and in every age. Much of what he says illustrates Greek thought and concerns Greek literature; but much of what he says is the essence of right thinking about literature in general. Thus, though it must always be important to consider the Poetics as belonging to Greek culture, for us the important thing is to consider the book simply as an exposition of the principles of literary criticism, as valid for Shakespeare and Milton as for Homer and Sophocles. Nothing could be more misleading than to attribute to Aristotle modern ways of thought and feeling; nothing could be more illuminating than to test his principles by applying them to modern expressions of thought and feeling."

Professor Lane Cooper says: " The Poetics of Aristotle is the most significant thing for the study of literature that has come down to us from Greek civilization. First of all, it represents the definitive judgment of the Greeks themselves upon two, and perhaps the leading two, Hellenic inventions; Epic Poetry and Tragic Drama. Though ample evidence be wanting as to the existence of other strictly scientific investigations into the nature of poetry, that is before Aristotle, and contemporary with him, we may assume that here as elsewhere in the round of knowledge' he is far from being an isolated scholar, but systematizes and completes the work of predecessors, with an eye to the best thought and practice of his own time - and yet, unquestionably, with great independence of judgment. Another work of Aristotle in the same field, a dialogue On Poets, has not, it is commonly believed, survived. And if, in addition, one half or one-third of the Poetics itself is lost, we should not wonder at the disappearance of similar works by lesser men. Indications that Aristotle has considered not merely traditional and popular notions of the drama and the epic, but theories of literature of contemporary scholars as well, are not absent from the Poetics. It might be interesting to speculate how much of this contemporary criticism filtered down through the Alexandrian critics to Horace, and perhaps later, through channels we no longer can trace to the Italian commentators of the Renaissance, in whom we find unexpected, yet seemingly conventional, modifications of Aristotle's doctrines; but the salient fact for us is this, that if literary-criticism in a broad sense begins with Aristophanes and Plato, in the narrower sense it begins with this work of Aristotle on poetry, which for ancient Greece is representative and final.

The treatise is important, secondly, because directly or indirectly it has commanded more attention than any other book of literary criticism, so that the course of literary history after it is intelligible without an acquaintance with the Poetics at first hand, whether in the original or through a translation.

But further, the work has a permanent value, quite apart from historical considerations. Aristotle's fundamental assumptions, and the generalizations upon which he mainly insists, are as true of any modern literature as they are of his own. That a work of art, for instance, - a drama, or the like - may be compared to a living organism, every part of whose structure is dependent upon the function of the whole, is a conception having validity for the ages. And the same may be affirmed of his contention that poetry has its own standard of correctness or fitness, and is to be judged primarily by its own laws. Of the minor generalizations, one that nowadays is often challenged concerns the social station of the tragic hero. It is maintained that Aristotle, having no provision of the modern democratic movement, could hold no true opinion respecting the average man, or the man in humble circumstances, as compared with the man of distinguished birth and position, in an important tragic role. To this it may be replied that Aristotle had formed and elsewhere expressed a very just estimate of the relation of individual worth to external goods and hereditary name; that the age of Periscles, in which high tragedy flourished, was notably democratic; that Euripides had represented men of humble birth in tragedy: and that Aristotle's own age, three generations after Euripides, and an age of despotism, took a somewhat unusual interest in burgher life upon the stage. It is easy to believe that many problems which are thought to be peculiar to the modern drama had been discussed, and were settled, in the theory of Aristotle's time, and that the desirability or undesirability, of choosing a tragic hero from the lower walks of life was among the mooted questions

The treatise is further valuable for its method and perspective. Simply and directly it lays emphasis upon what is of first importance: upon the vital structure of a poem rather than the metre; upon the end and aim of tragedy in its effect upon the emotions rather than the history of the Chorus (for the Chorus, by Aristotle's time, may have counted for less than it subsequently does in the Roman closet-drama). Profound thoughts are expressed in language suited to a scientific inquiry. There may be little indeed, to suggest the ease and grace of style for which other works of Aristotle were commended in antiquity."

Thus, the Poetics remains one of the greatest contributions to literary and critical theory, one of those rare books that have had lasting influence on the minds of men. With Aristotle came first the conception of theory as opposed to practice, of literary matter as opposed to literary form; and, after he had written, the way was prepared for a further analysis of art, free from prejudices of an ethical or political kind. Among the more important of his pronouncements is that in which poetry is defined as a concrete expression of the universal and therefore representative of the highest truth; though equally significant is his challenge of the ethical view of poetry, his contention that the poet's function is primarily to give pleasure. So that, from now on, there was no excuse for regarding poetry as a copy of reality or for confusing aesthetic with moral standards in judging art. Then, too, there is his theory of 'imitation', which in spite of later misunderstandings has the merit of making clear those relations of nature and art which undoubtedly exist in poetry; while, following Plato, he also emphasizes the supreme importance of organic unity in all artistic work. In his treatment of tragedy he introduces us systematically to the logic of art, to the technique of dramatic structure, the theory of 'probability' and the rest; and there is this further to be added, that while his doctrine of 'catharsis' is something more than an ingenious piece of special pleading, his remarks on hamartia and Peripeteia bring to light some of the most distinctive features of tragedy in its truest form. Elsewhere he calls attention to the place of the marvelous in poetry as affording a legitimate aesthetic delight, to the need for a certain distinction of language in poetic diction; and in numerous other places does he open up new trains of thought by means of casual hints which it was left for later ages to develop and complete. That his theorizing lent itself at times to later misconstruction is also, of course, true; and the uncertain position he takes up with regard to metre is an illustration of this. There is also the doctrine of the 'kinds' for which he was incidentally responsible. To him it was probably nothing more than a convenient classification of the practice of poets, whereas to later ages it came to denote a system of fixed 'types', with definite qualities and hard and fast rules, a theory which lay at the root of much of the later heresy. Then, too, it is significant that, although much of his work was concerned with formal questions, his definition of poetry was couched in terms of subject matter, not form; and so for ages to come the essence of poetry was held to reside in the idea conveyed, that is, in the invention, an idea that was seemingly confirmed by the prevailing study of rhetoric. Nor were his methods altogether

free from later misinterpretation. His Poetics was written in a coldly logical manner; and this did much to encourage the false idea that the emotional effects of poetry could be normally attained by following rules of composition, by orderly arrangement, sound structure and the rest, a conception which led on naturally to the later worship of the rules.

Yet, when all is said, the Poetics is perhaps the most living of Aristotelian works. Written in the severest of styles, it forms a treasury of ideas of lasting value, the full significance of which it has taken centuries to understand. In the Poetics, we see Aristotle as the first of the systematic theorists, an early exponent of the historical and psychological methods, and incidentally, a pioneer in the business of sound literary judgment; so that alike in the theory and the practice of criticism the work stands at the beginning of things, developing and extending the findings of Plato. Of late the small treatise has been subjected to some amount of depreciation, a reaction doubtless from the extravagant praise of former ages. Yet in the history of criticism its importance is unquestionable, and fundamental. It is neither an infallible guide nor yet an antiquated text-book, but for breadth of outlook and sanity of judgment, for sheer penetrating power into the mysteries of art, the work is unrivalled; and all modern theorizing has still to reckon with the contents of its 'discreet, unromantic' pages.

Short Notes

(i) **Epic:** Perhaps the easiest way of answering the question, 'What is an epic ?' would be to say, 'It is a poem like Virgil's Aeneid or Milton's Paradise Lost' " but this would not be very helpful to those of us who have read neither. Let us begin therefore by saying that it is a long poem (at least half as long as this book, and often longer) about the doings of one or more character from history or legend. These doings are usually war-like, and involve a large number of secondary characters, as well as a background of gods and spirits who join in the action from time to time. Because the epic is long, the poet has plenty of time for digressions and descriptions. In this he resembles the novelist, and is very different from the dramatist who must say what he wishes to say in two or three short hours of stage-time. So Homer gives us a description of the armour of Achilles which runs to several pages, and Milton does the same in describing the shield and spear of Satan. Aristotle says that an epic is a poem about men in action. Ezra Pound, a modem poet and scholar of the classical tradition, defines the epic form as "a poem containing history." By "history" he means history of a civilization and culture. The archaeological findings of the ruins of Troy have confirmed the historicity of the two epics, but it is the "action" that is the central concern of the literary critic. The Iliad and the Odyssey record a geography of the Medeterranean, but more important they reflect the characteristics of the people known to the Greeks, and veritably every human activity and emotions. War is the theme of the Iliad, in which the world's greatest heroes and the gods participate. In the Odyssey the central theme is homecoming. Here, man is shown confronting Nature, the world and the gods. The Odyssey successfully demonstrates that homecoming could be no less heroic a task than fighting in a battle.

Another characteristic of the epic is what Professor Tillyard calls its 'choric nature. By this he means that epic poetry is in a sense public poetry - generally nationalistic or tribal. The poet is not only writing to express his own thoughts and feelings, but the thoughts and feelings of some large group or community. So Dante in the Divina Commedia was in many senses a spokesman for the whole of medieval Christianity, and Milton for English and European' Protestantism in his own time.

Above all, perhaps, the epic is marked by what has been called its 'high seriousness'. The poet, like Milton or Virgil planning their great works, knowingly sets out to make something which will be the best of which he is capable - something of real importance which his fellow men 'will not willingly let die'. Milton in particular had this high sense of duty and dedication. He led a busy life in the politics of his time, yet he always felt himself to be a man chosen by God to do a great work: to write a poem which would place England among the greatest cultural nations of Europe.

(ii) **The Origin of Greek Tragedy:** The Greek tragedy originated in the cult of Dionysus. In the theatre, a large stone seat in the front row was reserved for the priest of Dionysus. The content of the tragedy was heroic legend. This content along with the dithyrambic chorus comprised the origin of the Greek tragedy. The ancient Greek Theatre was a religious institution under the direction of the state. The myth provided the main source of

inspiration to the tragic poets. They remodelled it to suit their individual vision of the tragic situation. The legends were the common property of the Greek people, part of their life and within their comprehension, so that they accepted as authentic these tragic figures of universal validity created by the great masters. The most famous of the Greek tragic dramatists, Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, wrote during the fifth century B.C. The tragedies written by them, are regarded as some of the greatest plays of all time. These plays are not naturalistic but highly conventional and stylized. The heroic characters are presented as larger than life. We see in these plays the glory of man's greatness as well as the inherent weakness of man and the sovereignty of the divine will. Some of the conventions of the Greek Theatre were the use of stilted shoes, heroic costumes and masks. All these added to the required atmosphere; grandeur to the scene and stature to the characters.

The Greek dramatist was not expected to invent new characters or plots, but to use the old stories of gods and kings and heroes. The great drama festivals in Athens were held in honour of Dionysus, god of wine and revelry. Even when people no longer believed in the old gods as actual persons, they felt that the world was controlled by moral law (themis) and that men who broke that law would be punished by divine justice (dike) and fate (nemesis). This feeling or belief lies behind all the great classical tragedies. The subjects of tragedy were often shocking and terrible, but the evil deeds were done off the stage. The audience learnèd of them from the chorus or from 'messengers'. The earliest plays had only two actors and a chorus. In the great days of Athenian tragedy however there were four, five or even six chief actors, and a chorus of fifty men. No play had anything like the number of actors found, for example, in a Shakespeare play. Characters were above the level of ordinary men: all the chief figures in a tragedy were kings, queens, princes, princesses or heroes. The idea of 'domestic tragedy, in which the people on the stage are 'Just like ourselves', would have been quite strange to a Greek tragedian. The Greeks may have invented democracy, but it does not appear in their tragedies. There was no mixing of tragedy and comedy: a Greek tragedy had 'unity of action' - that is to say, it had one story and only one. It would have been unthinkable for Aeschylus or Sophocles or Euripides to include comic characters and scenes in serious plays, as Shakespeare so often did. The Greeks liked fun as much as any other people, however, and many of them no doubt felt a little tired after watching a tragic trilogy (that is to say a set of three tragedies) for several hours. It became usual therefore to end the performance with a 'satyr play' - a play quite separate from the tragic trilogy, and often crudely comic.

Assignment

1. On what grounds did Plato attack poetry? How did Aristotle defend it ?
2. Write a detailed note on the importance of Aristotle's Poetics.

Analysis of the Text

The Poetics is a philosophical investigation into the nature of literary art. This most important critical work of antiquity has become a foundation of all subsequent of literature. Though based on Aristotle's observation of the dramatic practice of his day much of it is the essence of right thinking about literature in general. It is packed with ideas which have become basic tools of criticism. Among these are the theory of poetry as imitation, theory of tragedy as imitation of incidents, arousing pity and fear and securing 'Katharsis' of these emotions, the concept of unified plot, having a beginning, middle and end; and the concept of the tragic hero as a man of prosperity and reputation whose misfortune is caused not by vice and depravity but some error of judgment. Its aim is practical. It is a text-book of instruction to aspiring practitioners of a particular mode of writing.

The Poetics consists of twenty six chapters and includes among its main items certain introductory remarks on the nature of poetry, some fragments of epic theory, a few notes on comedy, poetic diction, and critical problems, as well as theory of tragedy constituting more than half of the work - to all appearances neither an exhaustive, nor yet a coherent treatment of the subject with which it purports to deal. The first five chapters (I-V) are introductory to the main subject of the treatise, which is a discussion of poetry and its various kinds. Thus Aristotle begins with some general remarks on art he deals summarily with the various imitative arts, reveals their psychological motives and then sketches rapidly the early history of poetry, and the evolution of the various forms, including tragedy and comedy. The

next fourteen chapters (VI-XIX) are devoted to tragedy. A definition is given, and the several formative elements, namely, plot, character, and the rest, are specified: but the discussion is confined almost wholly to plot, with one chapter (VXV) on character, and two (XVII-XVIII) on practical hints for the tragic poet. Then some consideration is given to poetic diction (XX-XXII), where grammatical details are discussed at some length. And, lastly, the epic is treated (XXII-XXVI) in brief with regard to its value as compared with that of tragedy; and by way of digression, reference is also made to current problems in criticism, and the principles underlying their solution (XXV).

Aristotle defines Poetry as a kind of 'Imitation'. The poet represents life as seen through the medium of his own personality. He creates something new. Other arts, besides Literature, 'imitate' life, e.g., the art of painting, of music, of dancing. In these also the artist represents life through the medium of his own personality. We distinguish these 'imitative' arts from each other by various means employed. These may be form and colour or sound or rhythmical posturing or words. Literature is the art which 'imitates' life in words. Those who do this are 'poets' whether they write in prose or in one or many kinds of metre.

The poet reproduces the essentials of life and the emotions which they have aroused in him. He is no more concerned with 'photographic' reproduction than is the composer of a 'pastoral' symphony, who does not try to make a noise like pigs and chickens but to convey to his hearers a special atmosphere of feeling, to share with them in the concert hall the emotions he felt in the country. It is in that sense that the poet (whether in verse or in prose) communicates his emotion by 'imitating' or recreating life.

A second distinction between various kinds of 'imitation' turns on the objects represented. They may be idealized or caricatured or realistically represented. Tragedy idealizes characters, represents its personae on a higher plane than that on which our own lives are lived; comedy caricatures them.

A third distinction turns on the mode of imitation. Some poets speak throughout in their own character. Some, like Homer and Milton, vary the narrative by the introduction of 'characters' who speak in dialogue. In drama the 'characters' do all the speaking "as though they were actually doing the things described."

Aristotle observes that poetry "seems to have sprung from two causes, each of them lying deep in our nature": Instinct of imitation and Instinct of harmony and rhythm.

The instinct of imitation is found in man from his childhood. It gives us aesthetic pleasure. An object which is painful to us in real life, when imitated in all minuteness, gives us pleasure. Thus real imitation is the cause of pleasure. The other instinct of harmony and rhythm is also found in us from our childhood. The child strikes the spoon on the table, not once, at least twice. This gives rise to metre.

Historically viewed, poetry diverged early in two directions. The imitation of the 'noble actions' is done by the 'graver spirits' as Homer, and also by tragedians; "the more trivial sort imitated the actions of meaner persons, at first composing satires," and later comedy.

While this explanation may be inadequate as an explanation of the origin of poetry, it is still necessary to appreciate Aristotle's scientific bent of mind. He does not repeat the traditional argument that the muse or poetry is the daughter of memory, he does not say that the poet is 'inspired' by some divine agency or that he is possessed by what the Greeks used to call enthusiasm: This is the essential modernity of Aristotle that he looks at poetry with the disinterestedness of a true scientist.

Aristotle, then, discusses the contributions of Aeschylus and Sophocles to the development of Tragedy. Aeschylus first introduced a second actor and diminished the importance and weight of chorus. Sophocles raised the number of characters to three, and added scene painting. Later on the short plot gave place to one of greater compass and the 'iambic' measure was introduced to suit the grand manner of Tragedy.

Aristotle says that the Greek dramatists through trial and error came to the right conclusion that the iambic metre was the most useful for writing dialogues. The language of Tragedy became elevated and dignified to suit the subject of Tragedy. We also find in this chapter Aristotle's penchant for making terse, teasing and brilliant observations. For example, Aristotle states he will not go into the questions whether it (i.e. Tragedy) is to be judged in itself or in relation to itself. This brief remark suggests two totally different attitudes towards literature.

Tracing the origin of Tragedy and Comedy Aristotle says that they arose out of dithyrambs and Phallic songs respectively,

Dithyrambs were the Greek choric hymns. sung in honour of Dionysus or Bacchus. 'Phallic' is derived from phallus, which is an image of the male generative organ, symbolizing the generative power in nature, specially that carried in procession in the Dionysian festivals in ancient Greece.

In chapter V Aristotle discusses the subject matter of comedy. The subject matter or the objects of comedy are the men of 'lower type'. The characters of a lower type does not mean 'bad' characters; Aristotle means the ludicrous which "consists in some defect or ugliness which is not painful or destructive."

The action of tragedy is "Serious", as distinguished from that of comedy. Greek tragedies were serious in tone in contrast to the satire plays and comedies but many of them had happy endings. Tragic plot could move from misery to happiness. One of Aristotle's favourite plays, Iphigenia in Tauris, has a happy ending. The modern concept of tragedy is different as we think of it as a story with an unhappy ending.

The distinction between Epic and Tragedy is obvious. Both imitate men of 'higher type', but Epic is narrative while tragedy is dramatic. Epic admits heroic measure; Tragedy can be written in different metres, "Tragedy endeavours, as far as possible, to confine itself to a single revolution of the sun, or but slightly to exceed this limit; whereas the Epic action has no limits of time though at first the same freedom was admitted in Tragedy as in Epic poetry." All the elements of an Epic poem are found in Tragedy, but all the elements of a Tragedy are not found in the Epic poem. Epic differs from Tragedy in technique but not in the kind of characters represented.

Epic poetry and Tragedy have been contrasted by Aristotle. The similarities between an Epic and a Tragedy are that both are metrical; both are imitations of serious subjects in a grand style; and in both the poets try to idealize the characters. The differences may also be noted. The epic is in narrative form, written in one single kind of verse or metre. Tragedy, on the other hand, is written in a number of metres. An Epic does not observe the unity of time. It may cover many days. Tragedy, on the other hand, observes the unity of time and endeavours to keep within a single circuit of the sun, i.e. one day. Unity of time, Aristotle believes, leads to the unity of action. Tragedy achieves its function "in a shorter length of time" than epic; it gives a kind of pleasure through a more compact action. Tragedy is more unified than epic. It is restricted to a single action and to the avoidance of episodes "outside the plot" A tragedy can better concentrate on a single action, excluding all that is necessary and probable.

So tragedy is superior to epic in having more parts, in having greater compression, and in having greater unity. It still accomplishes its proper pleasure. Epic and tragedy both strive for the same effect, but Tragedy produces it more efficiently than epic. The alleged defects of Tragedy are not essential to it, while its positive merits entitle it to a higher rank than Epic.

After discussing the imitative nature of art in general, Aristotle embarks on a full-length discussion of tragedy. This part of the Poetics is more elaborate than any other part. It deals with a detailed analysis of Tragedy and its component parts. Aristotle starts his discussion of the art of tragedy with a formal definition.

"Tragedy then, is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play; in the form of the action, not of narrative: through pity and fear effecting the Katharsis or the proper purgation of these emotions."

The first part of this definition, consisting of the first three clauses, describes the nature of tragedy and distinguishes it from other forms of poetry. The final clause speaks of the special function performed by tragedy, i.e. the Katharsis of the emotions of pity and fear. Aristotle eleborates the first part dealing with the nature of tragedy in the subsequent chapters, but he doesn't explain the word katharsis. We shall discuss the various meanings and implications of this word later on; let us first dwell on the first part of the definition.

Aristotle states in the beginning that tragedy is an imitation of an action. Hence, "action" is the object of tragedy. By "action" is meant not "activity" or what is done by the performance on the stage. It means something close to "process" — the process of the change that takes place between the beginning and the end of the play. This action should be serious, not trivial or ludicrous as in the case of a comedy. "Complete" refers to the organic unity of the plot. "Magnitude" stands for its proper size. "The proper magnitude," says Aristotle, "is comprised within such limits that the sequence of events, according to the law of probability or necessity, will admit of a change from bad fortune to good, or from good fortune to bad. By this Aristotle means the physical length of the play and not the "importance" or

"person of high status". Tragedy should not be too large or too small, but it should adequately display the hero passing from happiness to misfortune. To secure unity of impression, the tragedy should not exceed the length that can be compressed by the human memory.

The medium of imitation is "language embellished." By embellished language Aristotle means "language into which rhythm, "harmony," and song enter. By the various embellishments in various parts, Aristotle means verse and song. Tragedy imitates through verse in the dialogue and through song in the Choric parts. Verse and song beautify and decorate and give pleasure, but Aristotle does not regard them as essential or indispensable for the success of a tragedy.

The manner of imitation is in the form of action, not narration. It means that it is acted on a stage and not merely told by one voice as in an epic. Aristotle also takes into account spectacular equipment, costume and setting. He does not exclude music and diction for these are also the medium of imitation.

Tragedy then, is the imitation of an action and "action" implies personal agents or dramatis personae. The dramatis personae must necessarily possess certain distinctive qualities of character and thought, for it is these which determine action. The action should be the action of rational human beings who possess the power of thinking and intellect and the ability to choose and react to a given situation.

The incidents selected for the plot of a drama must be such that each leads on to the next, so that they form a coherent whole, such that the removal or transposition of any incident would destroy the coherence. This unity of form is attained by making the content of the story 'universal'. An inborn analyst — Aristotle apparently has no conception of what we call philosophic history — recounts actual events chronologically without showing the nexus of cause and effect. History, in this sense, merely tells us what did happen; tragedy shows us what could, or indeed must, happen. The poet, whether in epic or in drama, shows us what persons of a certain type inevitably or probably do and say and suffer. The truth he tells is of universal application, even though he is telling the story of events which actually happened to real people, for even so he is the 'maker' of the story, because he so selects the incidents as to show how and why they occurred. It is this inevitable sequence of cause and effect which arouses the emotions proper to tragedy. A mere accident does not arouse so much fear and pity as a disaster which we see to be inevitable in the sequence of events.

There is thus in the nature of tragic art no reason why the poet should not invent both names and incidents. The reason why this was so seldom done in Greek tragedy is to be found in its religious origin. Its original object was to retell the old sagas in a new form and with new meaning. It was this which limited the choice of plots. Aristotle, however, makes no allusion to this historical fact. Tragedians, he says, need not rigidly and in detail adhere to the traditional stories but are well advised to keep the historic - or, as we should say, mythical - names, because that helps 'to give artistic verisimilitude to a bald and unconvincing narrative'. "What has happened is manifestly possible, else it would not have come to pass."

The sixth chapter begins with the observation that Aristotle would discuss Comedy and Epic poetry later. But this promise is only partly fulfilled. There is no discussion of Comedy in the later sections of the book. This is one of the reasons for the general assumption that the Poetics is a fragment. Aristotle defines Tragedy as the imitation of an action that is serious, complete and of a certain magnitude. By serious, Aristotle appears to mean an action that is 'significant' and not necessarily an action which ends unhappily. A play with a happy ending can also be called a Tragedy if it imitates an action that is 'serious'. A complete action is that which has a beginning, a middle and an end. As regards magnitude, Aristotle says later in the book that a play should be long enough to permit a convincing change of fortune in the lives of the characters.

Plato, who was more emotional than Aristotle, held that the effect of art on human nature might be a dangerous incontinence of emotion through the deliberate cultivation of violent feelings which ought in the interest of public morality to be discouraged. That, at least, is one of Plato's views on Art. Aristotle, realizing the risks of inhibition, replies that this effect is not only pleasurable but also beneficial. Tragedy is a sort of nervous specific which provides a 'catharsis' - we might say' a good clearance' - of emotions which might otherwise break out inconveniently. It saves us from psychical distress by providing an emotional outlet.

A paraphrase of a passage in Plato's Laws may help to explain this view. 'When babies are restless you don't prescribe quiet for them: you sing to them and rock them to and fro. When Bacchants are restless and frenzied, they cure themselves by singing and dancing. In both cases the external agitation, getting the better of the internal agitation produces peace and calm. The baby goes to sleep: the Bacchant returns to a sound mind.' That agrees with Aristotle's view. The excitement of tragedy provides for our feelings a pleasurable relief. A 'good cry' acts as an emotional aparient. We feel all the better for it and leave the theatre 'in peace of mind, all passion spent.

Tragedy, according to Aristotle, has six parts or elements. They are Plot, Character, Thought, Diction or Language, Melody or Music and Spectacle. Plot, Aristotle insists, is the soul of the Tragedy. The plot is the patterned arrangement of characters in a cumulative sequence of situations which unfold the story of the play. The plot must be a complete whole, i.e. it must have a beginning, middle and end. It should also have logical coherence. The playwright should be careful about the choice of plot, for the subject has to be elevating. The poet's function is to describe not what has actually happened, but what may happen. Poetry naturally becomes more philosophical than history. The plot of a Tragedy, therefore, should deal with ideal or universal truths.

Aristotle states that of all kinds of plots, the episodic is the worst. By 'episodic plot', he means a plot in which events follow each other but not flow out of each other. In a perfect plot, the events are related to each other by the laws of probability and necessity. And in the last paragraph of this section, he discusses how emotions of pity and fear may be aroused. These emotions are 'inspired' when the sudden changes of fortune come 'by surprise', and yet they follow 'cause and effect'. Here, Aristotle unerringly points out the paradoxical effect of tragedy. The action of a tragedy concerns dramatic changes of fortune. But at the same time, there is nothing arbitrary about these changes because they have an air of design.

Plots are generally divided into two types - simple and complex. A simple plot is one without peripeteia and anagnorisis. Peripeteia means the change of fortune; and anagnorisis means discovery, recognition or revelation. A complex plot is one having peripeteia or anagnorisis or both. In Oedipus by Sophocles, for example, the messenger came to cheer Oedipus and relieve him of his misgivings about his mother. But the result, was just the reverse. Oedipus discovered the truth about himself. Here both peripeteia and anagnorisis are involved. The third element in a plot, beside peripeteia and anagnorisis, is tragic suffering, i.e. murder or persecution displayed on the stage.

Aristotle is in favour of avoiding three types of plot. A good man must not be seen passing from happiness to misery, or a bad man from misery to happiness. If a good man is seen passing from happiness to misery, it will be neither piteous nor awe inspiring; it will be rather shocking. If a bad man is seen passing from misery to happiness, it will be morally revolting. It will have no appeal whatever to our feelings. A bad man should not be seen falling from happiness into misery. For it may be morally satisfying, but nevertheless it will not move us to pity or fear.

Aristotle's comparison of the plot of a tragedy to a living creature is significant. As a matter of fact, he conceives of tragedy in organic terms and speaks of its 'organic' wholeness and 'organic' unity. Artistic beauty requires that the relation of the parts to the whole must be symmetrical and proportionate, as in a living organism. Aristotle makes two significant statements. First, that the formal unity cannot be imparted to the plot merely by the story of a single hero's life. Infinitely varied things may happen to the hero: the dramatist must make a proper selection out of these numerous incidents and not introduce all of them. Just as in the other arts, the artist imitates only one object, so also the dramatist must imitate only one action.

Secondly, the unity of plot must be an organic one. Just as in a living organism every part is essential for the life of the organism and cannot be removed without injury to it, in the same way there should be nothing superfluous in the tragic action. There should be no action which can be transposed or removed without damaging the whole

It is only such organic unity of action which Aristotle considers essential; he has not much to say about the so-called unities of Time and Place which were derived from him by later critics.

Unity in the modern sense means unity of action achieved in a play's soundness of structure and story, its total impression of "wholeness" which gathers up plot, character and dialogue within their frame of time and space so as to present a congruous picture.

Aristotle makes it clear that the criteria for deciding the proper length of a play must be concerned with the nature of drama itself. So, he states that 'the limit of length in relation to dramatic competition is not a part of artistic theory.' Elaborating his conception of the proper length of a play, Aristotle says that the play must not be so small that its beauty of magnitude and proportion cannot be seen. Similarly, the plot should not be too long. 'Like a monster a thousand miles long'. These are two criteria which decide the proper length of a play. A perfect plot should have 'a magnitude easily embraced in one view.' That is, a plot should be long enough to be capable of being grasped by a single effort of the imagination. And the proper magnitude in the words of Aristotle, is comprised within such limits that the sequence of events, according to the law of probability or necessity, will admit of a change from bad fortune to good or from good fortune to bad. The plot should be long enough to permit the writer to present a convincing change of fortune in the lives of his characters. Short plays with arbitrary 'denouement' do not conform to the law of probability or necessity. In the sentence quoted above, Aristotle suggests that the change need not be only from happiness to unhappiness. A happy ending is also possible and legitimate in a Tragedy which is an imitation of an action that is serious.

The other important question which Aristotle tried to answer in the Poetics was this: what kind of person ought the chief character (or hero or protagonist) of a tragedy to be? If he is a completely bad man, it is clear that he will not get the sympathy of the reader or spectator: when he suffers or dies we shall not feel pity, but only satisfaction, as we do at the end of a thriller or detective story when the criminal is sent off to prison or the electric chair. If on the other hand he is a completely good man we shall feel shocked and depressed by the thought that there is no justice in the world, and no just God in control of it. It is therefore, difficult to disagree with Aristotle's decision that the protagonist in a tragedy ought to be ' good but not too good' - in other words he should be a person we can admire and like, but his suffering or death should be caused by his own fault, by some weakness in his character, or by some mistake which he himself has made. In Hamlet for example we feel that the young prince has a good character kind, thoughtful, gentle and cultivated - yet in some ways weak and indecisive. It is his weakness and indecision which in the end cause his own death and that of several others. The word which Aristotle used for this kind of fault or weakness in an otherwise good character is hamartia. When he wrote the Poetics he was naturally thinking of Greek tragedy as he had seen it and read it, but his thoughts about catharsis and hamartia are relevant to all tragedy, as the reader will find by thinking carefully about the tragic plays or novels he has read.

Aristotle's thoughts about tragedy are of course those of a highly intelligent and sophisticated man. There is however another and more primitive point of view which helps to explain why we get pleasure from watching or reading about the suffering of others in tragedy.

Anyone with the smallest knowledge of literature and drama before the beginning of the present century must have noticed how undemocratic it is. I said that the chief characters in Greek tragedy were always kings, queens and other people of important: there was no place in it for ordinary people like you or me. This was equally true of the tragedies of Shakespeare and of other great European dramatists. The idea of a tragedy as a moral story to show the falseness of human power and wealth is a very old one. It can be seen not only in the stories of ancient Greece, but also in Christian and Jewish history and legend, where God is sometimes thought of as the great Leveller: 'He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek'. It must be admitted that many of us who are 'humble and meek' get a certain feeling of pleasure from seeing those who are clever and successful brought down to our own level. It is satisfying to think, in the words of John Bunyan's (1628-88) song, 'he that is down need fear no fall'; and to watch safely while heroes and leaders are, as we say, 'cut down to size'. Perhaps this is why so many tragedies have been written on the subject of Julius Caesar, and why in our own time, the substance of all drama is conflict. The conflict generally appears as a simple one, that between good and evil, right and wrong. In tragedy, however, things are less simple: the conflict is between two 'rights'. Antigone was caught between doing the right thing, from a religious point of view, by giving proper burial to her brother, and doing the right thing, from the point of view of the law, by obeying Creon's order. Creon himself was caught between his duty as ruler and protector of the city, and his duty as the uncle and protector of Antigone. Such moral conflicts are a necessary part of life. Tragedy then can almost always be seen as a conflict, not between right and wrong (for that is simply melodrama), but between two opposite rights. This seems quite plain as soon as one begins to think about it, and it is strange that no one seems to have mentioned it until Hegel pointed it out in his Aesthetik.

Literary Terms

(i) **Dialectic:** The word means discourse or discussion. It is primarily the art of debate by question and answer. As conceived by Plato, it is the art of increasing knowledge by questions and answers and – in its final stages – the art of grasping the real nature of things. Plato calls dialectic "the coping-stone of the whole structure of knowledge". It is the highest, because the clearest and hence the ultimate, sort of knowledge.

(ii) **Satyric Drama:** A satyric drama was a play dealing with the grotesque portions of ancient legends or dealing with ancient legends grotesquely. The chorus in these plays were dressed to represent satyrs with horses' tails and ears; the language and gestures were often obscene. Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides all wrote satyric dramas. The satyric drama continued to the Roman period. Rules for it are given by Horace in his Ars Poetica. The metres were varied, the tone vehement and passionate.

(iii) **Dithrambic Poetry:** Aristotle says that tragedy was, in origin, associated with the dithyramb. The word "dithyramb" refers to the Greek choral lyric originally connected with the worship of Dionysus, sung by a choir probably of fifty singers. It is thought that the members of the chorus were dressed as satyrs. The dithyramb was in its origin a revel song led off by the leader of a band of revellers either in traditional or improvised words, and answered by the others in a traditional refrain.

(iv) **Rhythm:** Darwin says that 'the perception if not the enjoyment, of musical cadences and of rhythm is probably common to all animals'. Certainly for human beings there is natural affinity between emotion and rhythm. A rhythm runs on without regular breaks, e.g. the dectylic rhythm of the blacksmith's hammer or the trotting horse. A metre is a species of rhythm, e.g. the one broken up into a regular pattern.

(v) **Melodrama:** Melodrama is related to tragedy as farce is related to comedy. In Greek, the term melodrama was originally applied to all musical plays, including opera. In the early 19th century London, many plays were staged which used musical accompaniment to heighten the emotional tone of the various scenes. In this kind of drama there is generally a sad ending, a pile of corpses or screaming lunatics. The distinction between a tragedy and melodrama is that in the latter the characters are flat types, who are either extremely good or evil. Hence improbable and not realistic. There is also a lack of real psychological thought and the plot revels in sensational and violent action to produce horrors and sensation and great excitements. The credibility of plot and character is sacrificed for violent effect and emotional opportunism. Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus and Christopher Marlowe's The Jew of Malta are the two early examples of melodrama. Now the adjective 'melodrama' is applied to any work or episode that depends on improbable events and sensational action.

(vi) **Philosophy:** Comes from two Greek words: PHILEIN=to love + SOPHIA=wisdom. Philosophy means love of wisdom. So speaks Socrates in Phaedrus of the teachers of mankind: 'Wise I may not call them, for that is a great name which belongs to God alone; lovers of wisdom or philosophers is their modest and befitting title'.

(vii) **Dramatis Personae:** The characters in the play. Frequently a list of the characters, with an indication of their relationships, is printed at the beginning of the play. Characterization is the bringing out of personality by means of setting, physical action, personal appearance, description, action motivation, or by any other means.

(viii) **Denouement:** The donouement deals with that part of a drama when the hero is faced with an inescapable situation and in left with no alternative. Sometimes, however, denonement designates only the final scene in which mysteries are unravelled and misunderstandings set straight. The denouement in the moment when final suspense is satisfied. It is called the untying of the last knot.

Greek Writers of Tragedy

(i) **Aeschylus:** Founder though he was of Greek tragedy, Aeschylus was already heir to traditions which he mastered and adapted to new purposes. The conventions of the primitive Attic dramatic festival, traditional to this, include divinities both Chthonian and Olympic, and religious conceptions that corresponded to them, these were his materials. With Aeschylus even the great gods of tradition are of a grudging, if not malevolent, disposition jealous of their newly-won 'prerogatives, and capable of blinding men to their inevitable fate. Here are already the seeds of tragic

conflict. There is Alastor, the spirit of a murdered man calling for vengeance of expiation, personified or even incarnate in some survivor. There are the Erinyes. also avengers of the murdered and vindicators of curses. There are the familiar means of communication between the gods and men or between the dead and the living. At every point Aeschylus has transformed his inherited materials, pouring new wine into these old bottles. The main tragedies of Aeschylus are Oresteia, Agamemnon, Prometheus, Choephoroi, The Libation Bearers and The Eumenides.

(ii) **Sophocles:** Sophocles, one of the greatest tragic dramatists of antiquity, was born at Colonus near Athens. The exact year of his birth is not certain. Probably it was 496 B.C. or 497 B.C. He was a boy when Persians were defeated at Salamis. Sophocles, at the time, led the chorus, in singing the song of victory and thanksgiving. He belonged to a well-to-do family and received good education. As a boy he won prizes in wrestling and Music. In his early years, he was influenced greatly by Aeschylus, a much older man and the greatest dramatist of the time.

Sophocles was a prolific writer. But only seven tragedies written by him are extant. These seven are Antigone, Oedipus Rex also known as Oedipus Tyrannus, Electra, Ajax, Trachiniae, Philoctetes and Oedipus at Colonus. His plays were adjudged the best during many of the performances in the theatre, he won his first victory in the theatre in 468 B.C. He was a popular dramatist and was loved and honoured universally. He was elected to hold a number of high public offices. He was a friend of the historian Herodotus. Some passages in his plays have their source in the writings of the historian. Sophocles lived a happy and fruitful life and lived upto the ripe old age of ninety one. After his death in the autumn of 406 B.C. he was honoured as a hero and was made a part of the religious life of Athens. Offerings were made each year in honour of this departed soul. He was buried in his ancestral tomb near Athens. The figure of a siren surmounted his tomb.

Sophocles introduced a third actor, and brought scenery to the stage-equipment. His characters were true to nature and her ideal tendencies; they were unrealized ideal of men as they ought to be; and , as such, fitting matter for poetry. Aristotle considered Sophocles's "Oedipus" as his representative tragedy; he refers to it more than once in terms of praise, commending in particular the convincing nature of its "recognition", in which the element of surprise arose naturally out of the incidents themselves, and not out of artificial devices. He is described as "the star of the tragic Muse", famed for "his wise-hearted beauty of diction". These are some of the stray comments one can gather from Aristotle's statements. The student should acquaint himself with the nature and content of Sophocles's work by reading through some of his important plays.

(iii) **Euripides:** Aristotle praises Euripides' characters on the count that they are depicted "as they were" - thus emphasizing on the realistic strain. He is described as the most tragic of poets, unique in his power of arousing pity and fear; and this in virtue of his unhappy endings, which Aristotle declares to be the right endings for tragedy. Euripides most famous play is Medea. Aristotle appears to be making a concession to the practice of Euripides when he approves of the employment of a god to deal with matters outside the play. Apart from this, however, Aristotle's remarks on Euripides *are mainly censorious; and it is no longer on account of the dramatist's immoral influence. What he finds fault with is* Euripides' workmanship, his defective structure and his occasional lapses in matters of characterization.

Short Notes

(i) **Imitation:** Plato assumed that artistic imitation was a kind of copying, and that the excellence of a particular work was to be judged by its fidelity to its "original". Aristotle meant something quite different by imitation. Art is not imitation in the sense in which a camera imitates. A poet imitates things not as they are but as they ought to be. He handles particular events in such a way as to bring out their universal and characteristic elements. Imitation, according to Aristotle, is something equivalent to 'producing' or 'creating' according to a true 'idea'. It is a creative act. He explains 'imitation' in the first three chapters of the Poetics. Epic, tragedy and comedy are forms of imitation, the imitative arts are distinguished according to the medium, object and manner of imitation. The delights in imitation are derived even from piteous spectacles. Every imitative art gives us aesthetic pleasure.

(ii) **Superiority of Poetry Over History:** While speaking about the relationship between poetry and History, Aristotle refutes Plato's notion that poetry is an imitation of an imitation. The poet does not simply imitate particular situations, but handles them artistically, bringing out their universal and characteristic elements. A

historian presents things as they are; a poet presents them as they ought to be. He presents what in terms of human psychology, is more inherently probable. His world is self-sufficient. having its own compelling kind of inevitability. By making use of materials entirely different from the original. the artist creates for us the original so as to make it aesthetically contemplatable.

Aristotle rejects the platonic notion that the poet is a liar. For him, a historical falsehood may be ideal truth and probable impossibility may reflect a more profound reality than improbable possibility. While discussing epic, Aristotle has more to say on the nature of poetic truth. A poet is not to be judged on the basis of his knowledge of particulars, but on the basis of his combination of these particulars into an aesthetically pleasing art work. He can make an error of fact that "is not in the essentials of the poetic art" and does not affect the poetic truth of his work. By distinguishing poetic truth from literal truth he shows Plato's discussion of this matter to be highly misleading.

(iii) **Magnitude:** Magnitude means the proper length of the play. It must be a whole story, not a collection of incidents. And if that whole is to be beautiful, it must be long enough to allow us to appreciate the orderly arrangement of the parts, i.e. the development from an incident, which may reasonably be detached from its antecedent causes and taken as a 'beginning', through the intermediate stages to an end that is inevitable or at any rate probable. On the other hand, it must not be so long that the beginning is forgotten, before the end is reached. Beauty consists in a proper relation between the whole and its parts. Provided that a play is thus well-proportioned and can be readily comprehended as a whole, then the larger the better. In any case it must be long enough to allow room for the sequence of events by which the hero falls from happines into misfortune

Assignment

1. Discuss the Importance of the Poetics
2. Write Short Notes on the following:
    1. Distinction between Epic and Tragedy
    2. Role of "action" in Tragedy.
    3. Complex plot.
    4. Magnitude of Tragedy.

Analysis of the Test Continued

As discussed in the last lesson Aristotle distinguishes one kind of plot as 'episodic', a sub species of the simple plot and explains the terms 'simple' and 'complex'. In a simple plot the hero's fortunes pass direct from happiness to misery or vice versa. In a complex plot there is a climax or turning-point at which some sort of discovery leads directly to the change of fortune, which in such a plot he calls the 'peripety', a sudden reversal of fortune's wheel. The most effective form of peripety is one that is exactly coincident with the discovery of some fact, as in the Oedipus Tyrannus, where Oedipus's fortune is reversed at the point where he discovers his parentage. In Sophocles' Electra, the heroine's fortunes are changed for the better at the point at which she discovers the identity of Orestes.

'Peripety' has often been interpreted to mean the reversal of the agent's intention, i.e. a situation in which the consequence of the hero's action is the opposite of what he intended. This boomerang device is certainly effective and full of tragic irony. It is present in the peripety of the Oedipus and of the Lynceus, which Aristotle uses as illustration. Duncan's murder in Macbeth is another example, since the results were not what Macbeth intended. But that is not the sense in which the word is here used.

Discovery and peripety, as thus explained, are constituent elements of the most effective kind of tragedy. A third element, common to all tragedies is 'suffering', i.e. the tragic incident or calamity.

A perfectly good man must not be shown passing from happiness to misery, for such an action will be disgusting and odius. It will not arouse the emotions of pity and fear. A bad man, passing from misery to happiness is also not suitable for tragedy. Obviously such a situation is not at all tragic. An extremely bad man falling from happiness into misery is equally unfit. His face is well deserved, and pity and fear are aroused by the undeserved suffering of one, like us. An extremely bad man is not, 'like us', for human nature is a mingled yarn of good and bad.

There can also be a fourth situation in which a good man passes from misery to happiness, but Aristotle makes no mention of it.

Having ruled out utter villains and men pre-eminently just and good as heroes proper to tragedy, Aristotle proceeds to lay down the qualification of an ideal hero. In the first place, the hero must be a person of an intermediate kind, neither an utter villain nor a man perfectly good and just. On the whole, he should be a good man but with ordinary human weaknesses and frailties. In this way, he would be like us and our pity and fear would be aroused by his misfortunes. His misfortunes must not be wholly undeserved, they must result from his own actions. Here Aristotle uses the word Hamartia, and this word has given rise to much hair splitting among scholars. The consensus of opinion is that it means an, "error of judgement" or, "miscalculation" rather than any moral weakness or depravity. Secondly, the ideal tragic hero must be a person who enjoys prosperity, name and fame. He must be a person highly placed in society, for the fall of such a person is more likely to excite the tragic emotions than the fall of a person not so eminently placed. He must belong to some great family, as was the convention of the Greek tragedy.

An ideal plot must have a single issue - it must depict the misfortunes of the hero. Aristotle puts in the second rank a tragedy with a double issue, i.e. happiness for the good and misery for the bad. The pleasure in such a case is not a pleasure proper to tragedy. Rather it is proper to comedy. Aristotle thus rules out tragi-comedies, dramas which have double plots - a tragic or serious main plot, and a comic sub-plot.

Angnorisis or Discovery or Recognition 'is a change from ignorance to knowledge, producing love or hate between the persons destined by the poet for good or bad fortune.' For example in Shakespeare's King Lear, Lear begins to realize that he has done something very wrong in giving up his all to his two daughters Goneril and Regan. He never expected that they would treat him ill and so when they treat him ill, he cries out:

Doth any here know me ? This is not Lear:
Doth Lear Walk thus? Speak thus? Where are his eyes
Who is that can tell me who I am ?

And the full Recognition comes when Lear says to Cordelia:

"If you have poison for me, I will drink it,
I know you do not love me, for your sisters
Have, as I do remember, done me wrong;
You have some cause they have not."

And just after this he again says:

"You must bear with me, pray you now,
Forget and forgive ; I am old and foolish."

This recognition, combined with Reversal will produce either pity or fear, and actions producing these effects are those which Tragedy represents.

Two parts, then of the Plot–Reversal situation and Recognition–turn upon surprises. A third part is the scene of suffering "such as death on the stage, bodily agony, wounds and the like."

Aristotle then proceeds to discuss the different types of discovery in a Tragedy. The first is the discovery by means of signs or tokens. These signs may be congenital, for example, birth marks; or they may be acquired, for example, the scars or external objects like necklace. The nurse could identify Ulysses through his scar.

The second type of discovery is the self revelation of a person. Orestes, for example, reveals himself to his sister in Iphigenia in Tauris. The third kind is the discovery through the effect of associations. In the Tale of Aloinous, for example, Ulysses weeps when the minstrel's harp reawakens the past for him. The fourth kind is the discovery as the result of reasoning. In the Choephori, for example, there is a statement. "Someone who is like me has come; no one is like me except Orestes: therefore it is Orestes who has come." The discovery is almost syllogistic. The fifth kind of discovery arises from fallacious reasoning. In Odysseus the False Messenger, for, example, the speaker said that he would know the bow, which he had not seen. It is palpably absurd that a person should recognize a thing hitherto

unknown. The last kind, which is at the same time the best kind of discovery, is that which is brought about by the incidents themselves. It is the natural and logical culmination of the situation.

The tragic emotions of fear and pity should spring from the inner structure of the Plot itself. They may be produced by scenic effects, but that is entirely against the spirit of Tragedy. The tragic situation is best when the tragic incidents occur between those who are near or dear to one another. The tragic effect is heightened if the deed is perpetrated in ignorance, and the discovery made afterwards.

Aristotle admits that pity and fear may be aroused by spectacular effects but he prefers those plays in which they arise from the working of the plot. "For the plot ought to be so constructed that, even without the aid of the eye, he who hears the tale told will thrill with horror and melt to pity at what takes place." With the help of spectacular means the impression on "monstrosity and not tragedy" is produced.

Aristotle then points out those actions that produce tragic effect. He says that actions capable for this effect must happen between persons who are either friends or enemies or indifferent to one another. If 'a brother kills or intends to kill, a brother, a son his father, a mother her son, his mother or any other deed of the kind is done' we are excited with pity and fear.

The action may be done in four ways. It may be done consciously and with knowledge of the persons; it may be done in ignorance; it may be in the knowledge of the persons but not done; the fourth case is when someone is about to do an irreparable deed through ignorance and makes the discovery before it is done. Aristotle prefers the act which should be perpetrated in ignorance and the discovery made afterwards to all other kinds of acts. Thus these four types of tragic action are derived from the inter-relation of two major factors - a tragic deed that is part of plot and lack of knowledge, that is, at least in some degree, a part of character.

After discussing at great length the plot of a perfect tragedy, Aristotle starts discussion of 'thos' or 'character' in the fifteenth chapter of the book. It must be made clear here that Aristotle's views on character are far from being profound. Aristotle believes that character in a tragedy must conform to known human types. He has four criteria which he believes an artist must keep in mind while creating character. Character must be good. Goodness is for the modern critic a very limited and limiting criterion but in Greek tragedy one doesn't find emobodiment of villainy like Barabbas, Iago, Richard III or Macbeth. The characters of Greek tragedy may not be paragons of goodness but they are more good than bad. The tragedy is generally caused by events over which they have no control. Hence goodness is not inappropriate as a term of description of characters in a Greek tragedy. The second criterion is propriety. For example, valour and cleverness are proper for men but not for women, says Aristotle. Thirdly, character must be true to life by which Aristotle appears to mean true to type. The fourth requirement is that character must be consistent. Twenty two centuries later, we can see that these criteria betray Aristotle's limitations as a critic. From Elizabethan drama, we derive the idea of character as something complex, ambiguous, contradictory and full of those bewildering inconsistencies which make it true to life.

Aristotle has a very simple idea of character in tragedy. The artist, he believes, must generalize and not particularize. This is completely contradicted by the practices of many of the great English writers like Shakespeare. Even Milton's Satan is far from being a type.

Aristotle has laid down certain rules for the tragic poet. The poet must visualize the scenes, as he himself is one of the dramatis personae. He should also carry out the appropriate gestures as he writes the play. In other words, the poet himself should pass through the emotional involvements of the characters. A man who is agitated or angry can reproduce similar passions in a play. Hence poetry is produced by one who must have sufficient responsiveness or one who is possessed. The poet is not to be bound by any rules as regards the choice of stories. He may have something readymade or he may even invent the stories. And in either case he must have a general outline of the story to be amplified into a series of episodes. After this, the poet has to supply the proper names and fill in the details.

Continuing with his rules for the practical guidance of dramatists, Aristotle emphasizes the significance of complication and denouement. Denouement is more difficult to manage than complication and a dramatist must be very careful while working out his denouement. Four different kinds of tragedy are then listed, according to the four constituent

elements of a tragedy (i) the complex tragedy with reversals (peripety) and (Anagnorisis) recognitions, (2) the tragedy of suffering. This kind of tragedy depicts painful events, such as wounds, deaths, and the like. It derives its effect from incidents of a pitiable and fearful nature, (3) the tragedy of character, "in which the speeches revealing character are important in themselves rather than as steps toward the final episode." "The sense of forward movement will be weak, and the play will tend to become a series of dramatic monologues". Aristotle's emphasis on the primacy of plot is well-known and though he recognizes a tragedy of character, he tends to regard it as an inferior kind, and (4) lastly, there is the tragedy of Spectacle. It is the tragedy which depends upon sensational effects produced by the actors, the costume designer, and other mechancial and artificial devices. The adventures are fantastic, the figures gigantic, and scene of action is frequently the nether world. Each of the four kinds of tragedies owes its effectiveness to a different element, and the dramatist should try to unite all these varied excellences and interests. Moreover, he should remember that a tragedy is not an epic, and so he must not overload it with a multiplicity of details and actions. Such plurality of action is confusing, and it also weakens the tragic effect. In the end, Aristotle advises the dramatist to make The Chorus an integral part to his action. It should participate in the action like the other characters.

Greek tragedy, as its history indicates, contained two elements, choral and dramatic. The former was expressed in a variety of lyric metres, arranged in strophes and anti strophes, occasionally with epodes added. The chorus was drawn up in a rectangular form (as distinguished from the circular chorus of the dithyramb) and its movements were based on this arrangement. It was accompanied on the flute. Its principal dance was of a dignified character. The number of persons in the chorus was probably twelve in most of the plays of Aeschylus, and was increased to fifteen by Sophocles. Choruses continued to form a part of tragedies through the fifth century and part at least of the fourth century B.C. after choruses in comedy had been discontinued.

The "Chorus" was originally used in ancient Greece to mean a place for dancing and singing. At the festival of Dionysus, the function of the Chorus consisted of singing the praises of the god and his achievements. Later, a separate actor was introduced, with whom the leader of the Chorus carried on a conversation instead of, as before, with his fellow-members. From this the dialogue and, with the addition of a second and third actor, tragedy and comedy proper developed. The role of the Chorus then became subordinate. Twelve or fifteen in number in tragedy, it held the place of an impartial adviser, commenting on the incidents of the play, but taking no part in the action.

There are times when we feel the Chorus to be an encumbrance and wish that it were not there. On the other hand, the dramatists realized the many important uses which the Chorus could be made to serve. It can expound the past, comment on the present, forebode the future. It provides the dramatist with a mouthpiece, and the spectator with a counterpart of himself. It forms a living foreground of common humanity above which the heroes tower, and a living background of pure poetry which turns lamentation into music and horror into peace. It provides a wall separating the drama from the real world, and it serves at the same time as a bridge between the heroic figures of legend, and the average humanity of the audience. For the creation of atmosphere, of contrast, of escape and relief, the Greek Chorus in the hands of its masters was consummately used.

Thought, or the Intellectual element in tragedy includes every effect which has to be produced by speech. "Diction" falls within the domain of the Art of Delivery, rather than of Poetry. As regards Diction, there is the art of delivery and there is the question of language, including enquiries regarding letter, syllable, connecting word, Noun, Verb, Inflexion, Sentence or phrase. It includes what is a command, a prayer, a statement, a threat, a question, an answer and so forth.

Thought expresses itself in the arguments which the characters use to prove or disprove something. They may try to establish their own point of view or refute the arguments advanced by the other characters. Today we tend to separate thought and emotion, but for the classics, emotion was a mode of persuasion, and hence could be considered as a variety of thought. The speaker may introduce into his speech a variety of emotions in order to persuade and convince. "Thought, then, is present both in speeches that involve reasoning and in speeches intended to reveal the emotions of the speaker". Aristotle means that thought is also expressed in speeches which are intended to exaggerate or diminish the importance of anything. Through their speeches the characters may make something look more noble and significant, or more trivial and base than it really is.

About Language or Diction his views are quite elaborate. He also dwells at length on metaphors. Then he proceeds to

analyze the characteristics of a good style. The greatest virtue of style is to be lucid without being commonplace or mean The language abounding in unfamiliar usages has some dignity, for it is lofty. There are two extremes - meanness and extravagance, both of which are to be avoided. The best language must be that lying in the middle between these two extremes. Aristotle thinks metaphors to be merely an ornament, which, therefore, should be used sparingly

Aristotle now discusses some elementary aspects of language: the words the poets use, of metaphor, and finally the perfection of style. Section XX discusses some of the most obvious features of language, like the syllabus, the noun, the verb, the preposition and so on. If it sounds a little too elementary, it must be remembered that Aristotle was writing at a time when grammarians had not yet systematically analyzed the Greek language. Section XXI discusses the poet's use of current words, strange words, the figures of speech, etc. Section XXII defines the perfect style as that which is clear but not 'mean', lofty and elevated but not obscure and artificial. In support of his observation, Aristotle quotes extensively from Greek poetry. These chapters suppose a thorough knowledge of the Greek language and it must be remembered that the Poetics was written for the convenience of the students of Aristotle. However, these chapters are considered by many critics as being too obvious and elementary to demand any explication

The perfection of style is to be clear without being mean. A certain infusion of foreign words, the metaphorical and the ornamental will raise the language above the commonplace and mean and the use of proper words a judicious interfusion of common words will make it perspicuous. But nothing contributes more to produce a clearness of diction that is remote from commonness than the lengthening, contraction and alteration of words. "For by deviating in exceptional cases from the normal idiom, the language will gain distinction; while at the same time, the partial conformity with usage will give perspicuity. .. Even metaphors, strange words or any similar forms would produce the like effect if used without propriety and with the express purpose of ludicrous."

Having examined tragedy in detail, Aristotle now comes to the epic, which narrates in versified language, and does not imitate as tragedy does. The Epic is a narrative in form and employs a single metre. Its plot is constructed on dramatic principles. It should have for its subject a single action, whole and complete, with a beginning, a middle and an end The Epic differs form History. The Epic presents a single action whereas History presents a single period, and all that happened within that period to one person or to many. But there are a number of points of resemblance between the epic and the drama. In epic, as in drama, the unity of the story is a point of capital importance. It is not enough that it should relate the events of a single period or of one man's career. The story must have, 'a beginning, a middle, and an end', the parts must be subordinate and coherent to the whole.

Aristotle once again deals with the relationship between Epic poetry and Tragedy and says Epic poetry must have as many kinds as Tragedy; it must be simple, or complex or ethical or pathetic. Except Song and Spectacle, it requires reversals of the situation, recognitions, and scenes of suffering. The thoughts and the diction must be artistic Epic poetry differs from tragedy in length and in its metre. Epic poetry has capacity for enlarging its dimensions; in Tragedy we cannot imitate several lines of action carried on at one and the same time. In Epic poetry events simultaneously transacted can be presented; in tragedy this cannot be done. Epic poetry has, however, many episodes which may form the subject matter of many tragedies. But the tragedy can imitate only that action which occupies the stage and in which actors are employed. The element of surprise or wonder is necessary in tragedy. "But the Epic poem goes further and admits even the improbable and incredible, from which the highest degree of the surprising results, because there the action is not seen." The Epic poet prefers probable impossibilities to improbable possibilities. The tragic plot must not be composed of irrational parts. As for the metre, the Heroic measure has proved its fitness by the test of experience. If the Epic were composed in any other metre, it would be found incongruous. For, of all measures the heroic is the stateliest and the most massive Iambic is expressive of action; hence suited to Tragedy In the Epic, diction should be elaborated in the pauses of the action where there is no expression of character or thought. Character and thought are obscured by a diction that is over brilliant. Such diction that obscures character and thought is not suited to Tragedy.

Epic poetry is higher than Tragedy because its appeal is to a more cultured audience which does not need the aping vulgar gestures of a Tragedy. But Tragedy is superior to Epic in the sense that it has all the Epic elements, it may even use the metre used in Epic, it makes use of Music and Spectacular effects to provide pleasurable effects.

Although in this chapter Aristotle says that in the unity of his two epic stories, Homer shows his 'marvellous superiority' he admits that the Iliad, with its 'plurality of stories', cannot be ' successfully dramatized, and in Chapter XXVI that less unity is required in an epic than in a drama.

Aristotle also praises Homer for the skill with which he uses episodes to increase the length of his epic, and impart variety to it. Aristotle next takes up the rather unusual topic - 'the critical difficulties'. For example, he says that any error which touches the essentials of the poetic art must be censured. Thus, if the poet describes the impossible or the irrational, he should be censured. But if the impossible or the irrational is justified in terms of art, then the poet should not be said to be true to life, true to myth or legend, or true to the ideals. Similarly, the rightness or wrongness of a statement in a work of art must be judged in terms of the context of the poem. Aristotle says, 'we must also consider by whom it is said or done, to whom by what means or for what end.' Difficulties with regard to language may be solved by reference to usage or the solution may depend upon accepted custom. It may be caused by ambiguity of meaning. Hasty judgement should be avoided. Aristotle appears to be pleading for caution and understanding on the part of critics.

Aristotle says that the poet should aim at the representation of life and there are ways of representation - either as they are, or as they are said to be or seem to be, or as they ought to be. Improbabilities in poetry can be justified as long as the art attains its true end. The appeal may also be made to tradition. Here it may not be the truth, but it represents things as they used to be. Improbabilities may also be justified on the ground that they idealize the reality. They may also be poetically true, though not actually true.

Short Notes

(i) **Tragic Pleasure:** Let us see how this principle of art works in a tragedy. We know that tragedy speaks essentially to the mind and the spirit and its effect is also to be felt there. In its ultimate analysis, the appeal of tragedy is inexplicable as it deals with 'a haunting sense of mystery'. But even then it gives us a pleasure which satisfies our instincts of "imitation" and "harmony" or "rhythm". Why do harmony and rhythm please us? We do not know. We simply know, that they do please us. But the special pleasure that tragedy provides us may be more clearly defined. This is the aesthetic pleasure which comes after seeing the imitation of an action which rouses the passions of pity and fear and then refines them with the help of art.

The nature of this process can be understood by following Aristotle's meaning of the terms 'pity'and 'fear'. Fear, he tells us "is a species of pain or disturbance arising from an impression of impending evil which is destructive or painful in its nature. Similarly, pity is 'a sort of pain at an evident evil of a destructive or painful kind in the case of somebody who does not deserve it, the evil being one which we might expect to happen to ourselves or to some of our friends, and this at a time when it is seen to be near at hand. Thus, both the emotions of fear and pity are forms of pain and are closely linked with each other. The tragic effect depends on their simultaneous presentation. Fear alone will make a tragedy full of terror, and pity alone will make it sentimental and eccentric. Hence there should be a proper balance of these emotions. The fear that tragedy excites is based on an imaginative semblance between the tragic hero and the spectator. The nature of fear is - lest this thing should happen to us if placed in similar circumstances. Empathy evokes pity for the sufferer. Butcher has nicely elaborated this process how fear and pity are awakened by tragedy and how they are transmuted into the impersonal realm of art. He puts it this way:

"The tension of mind, the agonized expectation with which we await the impending catastrophe springs from our sympathy with the hero in whose existence we have for the time merged our own. The events as they pass before us seem almost as if we were directly concerned. We are brought into a mood in which we feel that we too are liable to suffering. Yet the object of dread is not a definite evil threatening us at close quarters. In the spectacle of another's errors or misfortunes, in the shocks and blows of circumstances, we read the doubtful doom of human kind. The vividness with which the imagination pictures unrealized calamity produces the same intensity of impression as if the danger were at hand. The true tragic fear becomes an almost impersonal emotion, attaching itself not so much to this or that particular incident, as to the general course of the action which is for us an image of human destiny. We are thrilled with awe at the greatness of the issues thus unfolded.

and with the moral inevitableness of the result. In this sense of awe the emotions of fear and pity are blended Thus, tragedy speaks to us at the plane of the universal. And therein lies its value function and appeal and its evidence the pleasure peculiar to tragedy.

(ii) **Pity and Fear:** Aristotle calls pity and fear the necessary or characteristic tragic emotions. The tragic poet, he says, should provide pleasure from pity and fear through imitation. In Chapter 13, he says that pity is caused by undeserved misfortune and fear is evoked by the misfortune of one like ourselves. The plot of a tragedy must contain the necessary elements of pity and fear. In Rhetoric, Aristotle defines pity as "sort of pain as an evident evil of a destructive or painful kind in the case of somebody who does not deserve it, the evil being one which we might expect to happen to ourselves or to some of our friends and this at a time when it is said to be near at hand." Then in Chapter V, fear is, defined as "a kind of pain or disturbance due to a mental picture of some destructive or painful evil in the future." So fear springs from the feelings that similar suffering might happen to ourselves. When the good suffer or expect to suffer, we share their pain and fear.

(iii) **Probability and Necessity:** Aristotle maintains that poetic truth consits in 'what is possible according to the law of probability or necessity. 'Even fiction might appear to be natural and inevitable because of the inner consistency of poetry. A poet may exaggerate or accentuate features in the object of imitation, or he may suppress others, deepen the shade or fade the light that is actually in nature, in order to produce a better impression. Because, as Balzac said, "Thus a poet may modify, suppress, or sometimes even invent The only thing, that he has to keep in mind is that "probable impossibilities are to be preferred to improbable possibilities." The probable is that which gains of rational belief. The impossible is that which is physically impossible The artistic law of probability renders even a fiction probable. Hence in poetic imitation Aristotle emphasizes the law of probability or necessity. Aristotle knew that poetic imitation meant artistic creation. It could please only if it was beautiful. And to be beautiful, it need not be a photographic presentation of life. There may be some selection or rejection or addition in order to create a beautiful semblance of life which, withal must be probable in order to be convincing

(iv) **Characters in a tragedy:** As regards the characters in a Tragedy, Aristotle likes the playwright to aim at four things. First, the characters should be good. Secondly, the portrayal should be appropriate. If a character is to be represented as heroic, he must possess manly qualities. If, on the other hand, manly qualities are attributed to a women, it will be a mere travesty of truth. Thirdly, the characters should be life-like, i.e. true to type and equally true to human nature. And lastly, the characters should have consistency. This is with regard to the characters in general

(v) **Complication and Denouement:** Every Tragedy must have its complication and its denouement. Complication means that part of the story from the beginning to the stage immediately before the significant change to good or bad fortune. And by denouement is meant the part from this change to the end of the Tragedy. It is like weaving a texture and then unravelling it. The deepening of the plot is 'complication', and the unravelling of complication is 'denouement'. A master artist is one who knows both the techniques thoroughly well. Aristotle now proceeds to classify Tragedies along different lines. There are four types of Tragedy: complex Tragedy, Tragedy of character Tragedy of suffering and spectacular Tragedy. Complex Tragedy depends exclusively on peripeteia and anagnorsis. Tragedy of suffering deals with the suffering of the hero as in the plays on Ajax; Tragedy of character emphasises the moral character of the hero; and the spectacular Tragedy offers excellent spectacle. as in the Peleus.

Assignment

1. What is the structure of a perfect Tragedy according to Aristotle?
2. Write short notes on the following:
   1) Peripetia 2) Anagnorsis, 3) Hamartia 4) Chorus

A. Concept of Catharsis in Aristotle's *The Poetics*

The principle of catharsis occupies the central position in the literary criticism of Aristotle: it is the pivotal point around which revolves all that Aristotle has to say about poetry. But unfortunately the term which occurs only once in the Poetics has acquired a wide variety of meanings so much so indeed that a student of literature feels simply lost in the maze. The term has been interpreted in the light of various disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, psychology and medical sciences. Each critic has approached it with a set of preconceived ideas which invariably taint his explication

Aristotle must have introduced his Cathartic theory with a view to meeting Plato on his own ground. In the 10th chapter of the Republic, Plato condemns tragic poetry on the ground that it appeals to our faculty for grief and faculty for laughter. And both these faculties are the inferior elements of the soul. Plato wants to uphold the dignity and sovereignty of reason. which demands that we should always exercise self-control. Tragedy and Comedy unfortunately weaken our self-control, and sometimes involuntarily we shed tears, heave sights and burst into laughter; and all this shows that we are the victims of passion. Aristotle has re-interpreted Catharsis and given a fitting answer to Plato's indictment. An ardent supporter of poetry, Aristotle does not set much store by the playing on flute. In his opinion, flute-playing cannot be a part of liberal education. For it is orgiastic or exciting, having no moral or ethical effect. That is why Aristotle suggests in his Politics that flute-playing should be left to the professionals. But the flute should not be completely discarded. Flute should be introduced when the audience need Catharsis rather than instruction. People, who are very much 'enthusiastic', in the Platonic sense of the term can be cured of 'enthusiasm', and restored to calm and peace, should they but listen to music. Those who are easily prone to pity and fear can also have Catharsis or pleasurable relief if they listen to music. Hence Cathartic melodies have a very important social function to discharge.

The traditional exposition of catharsis has been governed by two factors in particular: firstly, that Aristotle was the son of a physician and so well familiar with the contemporary medical science from which the term has been derived and, secondly, that the term meets the accusations of Plato against poetry. Thomson has gone to the very source of the term i.e. contemporary medical science and expounded it in the light of the sociological data. To quote George Thomson:

Aristotle's conception of purgation or purification (Katharsis) is closely allied to the use of that term in medicine. In the doctrine of the Hippocratic school, disease is a disturbance of the bodily humours. leading to a crisis, in which in the event of recovery, the morbid matter is evacuated or expelled, and the physician's aim is to induce the crisis in conditions which will have that result. But Aristotle's statement goes further than that implying that, before the morbid affections can be expelled, they must first be artificially stimulated.

This is the typical medical interpretation of catharsis with moral overtones. The process of treatment delineated here is the Homeopathic process i.e. like curing the like. Thomson shows us how the change in the social set-up brought in by industrialization caused emotional stress in the people which was resolved equally by the orgy of the Dionysiac thiasos, initiation into the Mysteries and tragedy. These people used to come out of the theatre with what Milton has said, "calm of mind all passion spent." This interpretation sounds quite convincing to many as it is borne out by modem psychological theories, particularly Freudian. It is a commonplace of modern psychology that the repression of feelings is unhealthy and makes life uncomfortable. When we repress our feelings we actually do not forget them but only make them stronger and more craving for an outlet. The only way to resolve the mental torture is to bring them to the normal size through satisfaction. The feelings of pity and fear which used to be in excess in the people of Athens were brought to proper size through the performance of tragedy. And this process was in full conformity to the contemporary medical science which prescribed that the symptoms of a disease, in order to be cured, must first be stimulated to the point of crisis.

Most of the critics and commentators of Aristotle agree that tragedy produces a definite moral and elevating effect through the Katharsis of the emotions of pity and fear. But what is the precise nature of that effect and how that effect is produced by tragedy, are some of the questions that have produced heated controversies among his interpreters.

First, there is the pathological theory of the function of tragedy which was widely accepted by the Renaissance critics and later on systematically expounded by Jacob Bernays. Bernays maintained that Katharsis was a medical metaphor, referring to the idea of "purgation". Just as the purgatives purge the body of the dirt and dross, similarly tragedy purges the mind of the unpleasant emotions of pity and fear by first exciting them and then providing them an emotional outlet. The result is a pleasurable relief.

The emotions of pity and terror are actually unpleasant emotions in real life. Sometimes they have a dangerously disturbing and debilitating effect: "Pity", says John Crowe Ransom: "is a wretched business, which not only distracts us from our duties of the moment but incapacitates us, by destroying our animal faith in the goodness of the natural world, and terror is disordering and needs no comment. Aristotle would have the tragic playwright to endeavour to present such situations and incidents as may first excite these unpleasant emotions, and then mitigate them, resulting in a pleasant and healthy relief.

In the neo-classical era, Catharsis was taken to be an allopathic treatment with the unlike curing unlike. In this respect, they followed the lead given by Giraldi Cinthio of 16th century Italy. Thus the arousing of pity and fear was supposed to bring about the purgation or, 'evacuation', of other emotions, like anger, pride, etc. Instead of pity and fear admiration and commiseration were supposed to be the proper tragic emotions. The spectacle of suffering arouses our pity and fear and we are 'purged' of the emotions that caused the suffering. If the suffering is caused by emotions like anger, hatred, or impiety towards the gods, we are 'purged' of such undersirable emotions, because we realize their evil consequences. We learn from the terrible fates of evil men to avoid the vices they manifest.

F. L. Lucas rejects the idea that Katharsis as used by Aristotle is a medical metaphor, and says that, "the theatre is not a hospital". Both F.L. Lucas and Herbert Reed regard it as a kind of safety valve. Pity and fear are aroused, we give free play to these emotions, which we cannot do in real life, and this safe and free outlet of these emotions is followed by emotional relief. In real life they are repressed, and in the theatre the free indulgence in these emotions aroused by the suffering of the hero, is safe and brings relief to our pent up souls.

The relation between the medical catharsis and musical catharsis is obvious enough: the former relates to the physical ailment while the latter to the mental derangement but the nature and process of both are the same. The feeling of enthusiasm referred to above is the 'religious frenzy" by which people were sometimes possessed. The process by which they used to be cured of the frenzy or madness has been well stated by Thomson. In ancient Greece, there were societies credited with magico-medical powers which used to cure madness through "an orgiastic dance to the accompaniment of flutes and drums, which induced in the participants what would be described in modern terminology as a fit of hysteria." The madness was cured through madness induced by music and song. The passage from medical and musical catharsis to the tragic catharsis was easy and simple and critics drew a rather facile parallel between the two. The patient in the medical catharsis, the man possessed by religious frenzy and the audience obsessed by pity and fear were all put together. The process here was Homeopathic i.e. pity and fear curing pity and fear. The belief was that the audience came to the theatre to witness the performance of tragedy with the mind heavy with pity and fear. Pity and fear in themselves are not bad feelings but the excess of them is unhealthy. The tragedy, through the inducement of pity and fear, brought pity and fear in the audience back to normal size.

As W. Hamilton Fyfe has said, Aristotle was an accurate observer and must have noticed the usual result of sitting on a safety valve. He knows that emotion must have an outlet, and assigns to dramatic poetry the moral function of providing such an outlet safely, conveniently, and at regular intervals. If people try to bottle up their feelings, the accumulated surplus may explode in violent and irrational conduct. It is the object of tragedy to produce pleasure. But pleasure itself, as Aristotle tells us in his lectures on moral philosophy is neither good nor bad. It is merely the natural accompaniment of unhindered activity, and as the activity is good or bad, so is pleasure which accompanies it. The peculiar pleasure which it is the aim of tragedy to produce is the accompaniment of a good activity, an activity which provides for our emotions 'a good relief: it releases the surplus which might otherwise dangerously accumulate. As Byron says in one of his letters – using as befits Byron, a metaphor more lofty but less exact than Aristotle's – 'Poetry is the lava of the imagination, whose eruption prevents an earthquake."

Humphry House and Lane Cooper offer yet another interpretation of the term 'catharsis'. Lane Cooper argues that catharsis is not merely a medical metaphor. The tragic purgation is psycho-physiological. Humphry House in his Aristotle's Poetics offers a similar view. He writes, to ask whether 'catharsis' is a metaphor derived from either. He suggested that the concept of catharsis must be interpreted in terms of the Aristotlelian, 'golden mean'. The word 'catharsis' refers not merely to a quantitative evaluation. It is also used to refer to a qualitative change in the body. Thus catharsis refers to a state of health which is the result of the restoration of the proper equilibrium or balance or harmony between the emotions. The Aristotelian "Mean" is synonymous with "harmony" and "balance", and as Prof. House says, "the result of the Catharsis is an emotional balance and equilibrium: and it may well be called a state of emotional health." Tragedy makes us realize that divine law operates in the universe shaping everything for the best. It helps to harden or 'temper' the emotions. "Just as soldiers overcome their fear of death after seeing it frequently on the battlefield, so spectators become hardened to the pitiable and fearful events of life by witnessing them in tragedies."

Not confined to Physiology and Pathology alone, Catharsis has also its importance from the point of view of Psychology.

and Tragedy, as a work of art works on the human mind. As a result of Catharsis there is the stimulation and excitation of the human mind, resulting in the elimination of the morbid thought. Tragic drama can effect this Catharsis. Catharsis, however, cannot bring about a complete moral revolution. Dramatic performances in ancient Greece were not frequent. The moral effect could have heightened if the performances were at more frequent intervals.

Lane Cooper states: "In Aristotle's psychology, the tragic purgation is psycho physiological; the bodily motions are the counterpart of emotions in the soul. It seems to have been his view that nearly all of us, and some in particular, are troubled with latent fear and pity: by bringing these emotions to the surface, and discharging them, tragedy affords a harmless relief, which is all the more pleasant and desirable because at the theatre they are not aroused by actual events, but by an imitation of an action." Humphry House also says: "The peculiar element, therefore, in the pleasure of tragedy as distant from the pleasures given by other forms of art, is that the pleasure is derived from the imitation of emotion and situations which taken in themselves, or taken as they operate in real life, are forms of pain. Thus the term Katharsis, as taken up by Aristotle. "expresses not only a fact of psychology or of pathology, but a principle of art.

Professor Else argues that the general assumption that the catharsis clause, whatever it means, has to do with the emotional reaction of the spectator is 'a deep seated prejudice'. According to Professor Else, catharsis refers not to an emotional effect with which to leave the theatre, but to pity and fear 'as they are incorporated in the structure of the play by the poet.' It is the action of the play which undergoes catharsis and not the spectator. Thus, catharsis is a process and not an end result. It is a process operated by the poet through 'this structure of events. '

In his The Languages of Criticism and Structure of Poetry, Crane has made points which shed tremendous light on Aristotle and his cathartic principle. In the first place, Crane finds no textual evidence to the effect that "The Poetics was intended as a reply to Plato's indictment of poetry in The Republic" and secondly, he considers it a serious error "to read the statements about the catharsis of pity and fear in the Poetics, as logically continuous with the discussion of the cathartic power of poetry and music in Book VIII of the Politics, inasmuch as in the Politics poems are being considered. . . as instruments of education and hence as efficient cause in relation to the good of the citizens, whereas their character in the Poetics is that of final or intrinsic goods in relation to the art of the poet as their efficient cause." On these two points Crane rests his argument that the question of catharsis is an intrinsic rather than extrinsic question that relates to the structure of the tragic plot rather than the emotional response of the audience. Catharsis is the dynamic or the emotional form of the tragedy which governs everything else in it : it is the "first principle of poetic reasoning. The catharsis through pity and fear, says Crane which is the peculiar power of tragedy. . . "is thus a function primarily not of cause in the audience (as in the Poetics) but of how the poet has constructed his tragic plot." Critics have approached Aristotle with the preconceived notion that the aim he has set himself in the Poetics is to meet the charges of Plato with the result that they have found out moral justification of poetry in the Poetics. But Crane would say that this justification one may find in Aristotle's Politics and not in Poetics because the only "good which Poetics aims at and which the poet, in so far as he is an artist, pursues as his immediate end is nothing other than the excellent making of poems as poems in their respective kinds. Thus Crane would have us believe that according to Aristotle the artistic excellence is the primary concern of an artist of which the aesthetic pleasure (Crane would say "cathartic pleasure" or "pleasurable catharsis") is the corollary. This demolishes the moralistic interpretation where pleasure ensuing from the catharsis of pity and fear in the audience is supposed to be the end that Aristotle has set for tragedy.

Crane's interpretation of catharsis is invariably an improvement on that of others in the sense that he shifts the emphasis from the emotional condition of the audience to the emotion aroused by the structure of tragic plot. Nevertheless there are several points in Crane's explication which call for more attention than they have received. Crane has improved on others; that is to say, Crane has not set forth a new interpretation. His contribution consists only in throwing a few significant hints. Crane, like others, believes that a tragedy effects the catharsis of pity and fear in the audience (and sometimes he replaces "audience" by "protagonist") perhaps under the impression that it will mark a departure from the conventional moralistic interpretation.

So long as this interpretation is accepted, the moralistic possibility cannot be ruled out. In the first extract Crane says that the spectator appreciates a tragedy in terms of "the peculiar delight which goes with the catharsis through pity

and fear of such feelings" and in the third extract he almost defines the pleasurable catharsis as "the settling of the soul into its normal state of rest after painful disturbance." To say, as Crane does in the second extract, that Macbeth like tragedy in Aristotle's sense, aims at "the arousal and catharsis of painful emotions for... the protagonist" is to say something which has no evidence in Aristotle's Poetics. Does Crane mean to say that Macbeth himself undergoes the catharsis of pity and fear? The protagonist may feel fearful of his situation but can he feel pity also: if so, does he pity himself or others? The audience pities the protagonist but whom does the protagonist pity?

Moreover, it is not clear from Crane's discussions, whether he equates catharsis with pleasure or takes it only as a process through which pleasure results. In the first extract above, catharsis becomes pleasure that occurs at the end of a process while in the third extract it is a process through which the human soul is brought to its normal condition. Besides, it is difficult to account for the two words arousal' and 'catharsis' - together because arousal is a part of cathartic process.

The metaphorical relation between catharsis in religion or medical science and catharsis in poetry is likely to be misunderstood. Aristotle does not draw a parallel between the patient or the religious fanatic and the individual in the audience. The parallel drawn is between pity and fear, the emotions aroused by the tragic performance and the patient. The catharsis is not the catharsis of the audience but of pity and fear themselves. After all Aristotle does not refer to the audience in his definition of tragedy where the word "catharsis" occurs. He only says, "with incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish the catharsis of such emotions." The issue that he concerns himself with throughout the Poetics is not the catharsis of the audience but the suitable embodiment of pity and fear.

What does the word "catharsis" mean then in the definition of tragedy? The word means simply 'the ideal state'. The catharsis in poetry, as in religion and medical science, is a process through which pity and fear are formulated in their ideal form. Like the fanatic returning to the normal (i.e. ideal) state of mind through the musical performance, pity and fear take on the ideal form in course of the composition of tragedy. Aristotle says that there is a pleasure peculiar to every form of poetry and hence there is no justification for expecting every kind of pleasure from any kind of poetry. Of tragedy he says: "we must not demand of tragedy every kind of pleasure, but only that which is proper to it. And since the pleasure which the poet should afford is that which comes from pity and fear through imitation, it is evident that this quality must be impressed upon the incidents". The pleasure peculiar to tragedy is that which emanates from pity and fear. Fear, if not pity, may be an unpleasant experience in life but imitated in a work of art it affords pleasure. The problem of every writer is how suitably to formulate the pleasure peculiar to a particular genre. The genre is an important factor in the Aristotelian critical programme as it distinguishes one type of work from the other. It is on the pleasure produced that tragedy differs from comedy; the tragic pleasure derives from pity and fear while the comic pleasure stems from the "ridiculous".

The tragic effect depends on the simultaneous presentation of fear and pity. If in a tragedy, fear dominates, it will be nothing, but full of terror; and if pity alone is there in the poem, it will make it sentimental and eccentric. Hence, it is necessary that there should be a proper balance of these emotions of pity and fear. The fear that the tragedy excites is based on the imaginative semblance between the fate of the tragic hero and the fate of the audience. The fear is that the same thing would happen to us, if we are placed in similar circumstances. That evokes pity for the sufferer. Butcher, in his Introduction to Aristotle's Poetics, has beautifully elaborated this process how pity and fear are awakened by tragedy and how they are transmuted into the impersonal realm of art. He says, "The tension of mind, the agonized expectation with which we await the impending catastrophe springs from our sympathy with the hero in whose existence we have for the time merged our own. The events as they pass before us seem almost as if we were directly concerned. We are brought into a mood in which we feel that we too are liable to suffering. Yet the object of dread is not a definite evil threatening us at close quarters. In the spectacle of another's errors or misfortunes, in the shocks and blows of circumstances we read the doubtful doom of human-kind. The vividness with which the imagination pictures unrealized calamity produces the same intensity of impression as if the danger were at hand. The true tragic fear becomes an almost impersonal emotion, attaching itself not so much to this or that particular incident, as to the general course of the action which is for us an image of human destiny. We are thrilled with awe at the greatness of the issues thus unfolded, and with the moral inevitableness of the result. In this sense of awe the emotions of fear and pity are blended."

If tragic pleasure be the ultimate end, caused by Catharsis, then Catharsis is something more than a psychotherapeutic process. It should, however, be remembered that all stories are not tragic enough to arouse the right sort of pity and fear. But Tragedy is not, nor should it be, a mental hospital, where patients suffering from a morbid excess of pity and fear could be cured. A tragic drama, by the nature of its theme, would inevitably rouse pity and fear. In our actual life these emotions have an element of pain. A Tragedy can yield pleasure only by eliminating the element of pain. The pain of Tragedy in real life is to be transformed into the pleasure of art. That is why Abercrombie observes that there is no surer sign of a healthy mind than the enjoyment of Tragedy.

Each work of art has its effect, the effect that is peculiar to the nature of the work and to talk of the emotional effect is not of necessity to indulge in the affective fallacy. The emotional effect tends to become fallacious only when we go too far and take stock of the emotional condition of the audience, his normal or abnormal state of mind, his personal and social circumstances and so on. This is precisely what happens in the moralistic interpretation of catharsis. The effect discussed in the "pleasuristic" interpretation is the general effect, the effect that every work of art leaves on the audience whether it is literature or some other fine art. The problem of the artist is not to produce a work of art which is conducive to a particular state of mind in the audience but only ideally to embody the emotional effect that the work is supposed to produce. If it is tragedy, the emotional effect is of pity and fear.

B. Aristotle's Concept of Imitation

The instinct of imitation is implanted in human beings from childhood. Amongst the living creatures, man is the most imitative and learns his earliest lessons through it. The concept that poetry is, the imitation of life, is not Aristotle's. Aristotle borrowed it from his master Plato, but Plato used the word 'Imitation' in a derogatory sense. He thought that poetry was the imitation of life and that poets did nothing, but represent the original, created by man. He said, "The Muse first of all inspires men herself.. .For all good poets, epic as well as lyric, compose their beautiful poems not by art, but because they are inspired and possessed. And as the Corybantian revellers when they dance are not in their right mind, so the lyric poets are not in their right mind when they are composing their beautiful strains.. .For the poet is a light and winged and holy thing, and there is no invention in him until he has been inspired and is out of his senses, and the mind is no longer in him; when he has not attained to this state, he is powerless and is unable to utter his oracles." Plato criticized the poets and wanted them to be turned out of state, simply because they misrepresented the gods and showed them as revengeful or lustful as cruel or as waging war amongst themselves.

Aristotle accepts Plato's views on imitation as the subject of art and poetry, but he gives it a more concrete significance. For Plato, imitation implied a moving away from reality. He said that the only business worthy of man's mind was his concern with reality. Men should be concerned with things for their reality; and the reality was given to them by the ideas they represented. A painter imitated things, and things represented ideas, and ideas were reality. Painting, therefore, only dealt with reality at third hand, and so did poetry.

Aristotle contradicted this argument and forcefully asserted that instead of taking us away from reality, poetic imitation brought us nearer to it. If reality, as Plato said, consisted in the idea, poetic imitation was equivalent to producing or creating according to a true idea. Thus it is quite clear that poetry is a creation according to a true idea, and is, therefore, nearer to reality.

Plato used the word 'imitation' in the sense of mimicry, and therefore, he regarded poetry as a very inferior type of activity. Aristotle did not agree with him. Of course, he accepted that all arts were imitative by nature, but he held that imitation was the imiginative re-construction of life. When a poet sees an object, it creates an impression on his mind, and evokes an image. When the poet is away from that experience and lies in his couch 'in vacant or in pensive mood', he tries to re-construct the image of that object with the help of the impression created on his mind. Wordsworth did it and his heart danced with the Daffodils that he had seen growing beside a lake. This is the process of poetic imitation. It is a creative faculty that transforms the materials and experiences gathered by man into something beautiful and appealing. Aristotle has, therefore, rightly said, "Objects which in themselves, we view with pain, we delight to contemplate when reproduced with minute fidelity: such as the forms of the most ignoble animals and of dead bodies."

The main argument of Plato against poetic imitation was that it takes us away from reality. Aristotle contradicted this

argument and asserted that instead of taking us away from reality, poetic imitation brings us nearer to it. Reality consists in the Idea (as Plato said), poetic imitation is equivalent to 'producing' or 'creating according to a true idea'. Hence, being a creation according to a true idea, it is nearer to reality. It is this concept of poetic imitation which gives the poet his place in the exalted sphere of philosophy.

"The instinct of imitation", says Aristotle, "is implanted in man from childhood." It is a special human gift that gives us pleasure. The medium through which the poet accomplishes his feat of imitation is language. He has to make use of several linguistic devices in order to create the desired effect. It is with the help of language that he tries to represent an object as it appeals to his sensibility or appears to his senses. And the proper objects of poetic imitation, as Aristotle tells us, are men in action, i.e. "men doing or experiencing things" By "action" he means not mere physical activity but the movement of spirit, of thoughts, feelings and emotions.

Since the object of poetic imitation is to represent men in action, poetry can be classified according to the types of men it represents. These men may possibly be represented in three ways - men either as better than in real life or as worse, or as they are. Tragedy and Epic poetry represent men of a higher type, men as better than in real life. These men are presented on a grand and heroic scale, and they have much impressiveness and dignity about them. Comedy represents men of lower type, men as worse than in real life. These men are presented on a trivial and ludicrous scale, and have an air of meanness about them. Aristotle leaves the third variant as un-discussed. But that precisely means that poetry can also aim at representing men in a naturalistic manner, neither heightened not trivial, but as they actually are. Scott James has rightly observed in this connection that "Aristotle knew nothing of the "realistic" or "the naturalistic" school of fiction - the school of Zola or of Gissing - whose subject might be human being enduring petty hardships, cruel passions and undeserved pain. He had never seen an "intellectual" play like Man and Superman or Justice - though perhaps Euripides came nearest to the type. He knew nothing of the agreeable social sentiments which befit the characters of Somerset Maugham.

Abercrombie looks at the problem of realistic presentation from a different angle. He defends Aristotle for not discussing the third variant. Now, he says, "it is just possible to imagine life exactly as it is, but the exciting thing is to imagine life as it might be, and it is then that imagination becomes an impulse capable of inspiring poetry. This is true even in the case of what we call realism in literature; it is true even when the life imagined was originally an actuality of some highly exciting nature in itself. Imagination may do no more than concentrate the actuality, by dropping out all its insignificant passages. But that will be enough to make the resultant poetry (or literature) something quite different from that copy of the world which Plato's condemnation assumed it to be."

Speaking on the objects to be imitated, Aristotle felt that any object seen or heard was fit to be the subject of poetry. Aristotle appealed to the facts. He thought that art was the mirror of nature but since we could not see nature herself, what did we want with a mirror? If poetry only mirrored nature, it could give us no more than nature give us. But the fact was that we enjoyed poetry precisely because it gives us something which nature did not give us. It gave us nature as it ought to be. When considered carefully, imitation implies the imaginative reconstruction of life. It gives pleasure, It is convincing. It is an idealistic treatment of life. It aims at universal truth. It appeals through the emotions and not through reason. Some of the critics have maintained that a poet is only an imitator, but this is not correct. The poet is a creator or a recreator. He recreates vivid and effective pictures of life and its various faces which he has seen with the help of his imagination and intuition. He uses his artistic skill in the matter. Imitation, therefore, comprises both seeing and showing. If a poet has seen an object or a man in action, but fails to show it to the audience in an effective manner, he does not succeed. An ordinary man sees Daffodils growing beside a lake, or a rainbow in the sky, but he does not show it to the people as Wordsworth does. Wordsworth, therefore, is a poet and the ordinary man is not. Shakespeare sees the court-life in "As you Like It", and also the pastoral life in the Forest of Arden, and he presents it so effectively to the audience that we begin to feel that an escape from the court-life is better, and an escape into the pastoral life should be our aim. Here lies the success of a poet, who produces objects and things beautifully to delight the spectators and the readers.

The poet imitates the creative process of nature, but the objects of his imitation are, "men in action", or the action of men or human life in all its manifestations. Now the 'action' may be, 'external' or it may be 'internal'. It may be the action within the soul caused by all that befalls a man. In this way, he brings human experiences, emotions and

passions - all that happens or is likely to happen to man - within the scope of poetic imitation. As Butcher points out, according to Aristotle's theory, the characteristic moral qualities, the permanent disposition of the mind, the passing and transient emotions and feelings, are all action and so proper objects of poetic imitation. The landscapes, the animals, and the other objects of the external world, are brought in only in so far as they form a background to the inward activity of the soul, and influence it.

Aristotle argues that the arts are different modes of 'mimesis' of life. Thus the essence of artistic activity is that it is a 'mimesis' of life. Aristotle thus distinguishes the poetic activity from other kinds of activity, and art from other disciplines. He states clearly that people do, indeed ascribe the word 'maker' or 'poet' to the name of the metre, and speak of elegiac poets or epic (that is hexametre) poets, as if it were not the imitation that marks the poet, but the verse that entitles them all indiscriminately to the name. This is followed by the arguments regarding all poetry to three causes. Man is imitative by nature, learns through imitation, and finds pleasure in imitation. Thus, the instinct of 'mimesis' or 'imitation' is seen to be the origin of all poetry, and as the characteristic virtue of all the arts.

Aristotle says that an artist imitates because he gets pleasure in imitation and this faculty is an inborn instinct in man. "It is this pleasure in imitation that enables the child to learn his earliest lessons in speech and conduct from those around him. They are imitated by him because there is a pleasure in doing so. A poet or an artist is just a grown-up child indulging in imitation for the pleasure it affords. When Aristotle says that the aim of art is to provide pleasure, he is perhaps laying the foundation of art for art's sake. But for Plato the purpose of a work of art is not to provide pleasure alone, but also to teach us. Art, in his view, has amoral aim, and because of his view he denounced poets as liars and corrupters of mankind. Today this view does not get much support. Lescellas Abercrombie has rightly observed, "Aristotle's way of interpreting poetic limitation is possibly the most valuable of all his contributions to aesthetic theory. At any rate, it puts the theory on perfectly secure and solid foundations."

A careful analysis of the theory of imitation brings to light some inconsistencies. For example, in drama there is an element of mimicry. The actors imitate men in action and the medium of art is also 'men in action' But Aristotle has said that the medium of art is language. He notes that the art he is to discuss has, as regards its medium, properly speaking no name. He gives the word 'poetry' to it. People connect the idea of poetry with a kind of rhythm in language. Yet the nature of poetry is not given by metrical rhythm. Compositions which are meant only to instruct or to inform, may be written in metre. A book on Homeopathy or Cricket may be written in metre, but it will not be poetry. Similarly, a non-metrical composition may be poetic and may be rightly called poetry. Prose can be poetic, and there is poetic prose. Aristotle is the first critic to point out that the essential nature of poetry may often be found in prose and that a verse is no guarantee of poetry.

Aristotle has very clearly laid down that the object of poetic imitation is men in action. By men in action, he does not necessarily mean, men doing things. He means things happening in terms of human-nature, events embodied in human-lives. Poetry, therefore, through the medium of language imitates the men in action. Aristotle means by "imitation" in poetry exactly what we mean by technique. Abercrombie has very well said in this connection. "Poetic imitation, as Aristotle uses the word everywhere in his theory, does not explain the origin of poetry, nor what the connection is between poetry and real things and affairs. Aristotle's "imitation" is confined entirely to the poetic activity within the art itself: it describes the connection between poetic impulse and poetic language. It is his word for the technique by which the poet finally achieves communicable expression of his imaginative inspiration. We say 'finally achieves" : for, whether the word be "technique" or "imitation", more is involved than the mere management of language."

As the Neo-Classic period developed into the Romantic, in which the poet's originality was stressed, the pejorative connotations of the word imitation became more prominent. In our day, the word is largely absent from the vocabulary of criticism or is limited to the Aristotelian sense, in which it is largely synonymous with mimesis. To sum up, Aristotle combines two different ideas: (i) that poetic representation is like life, and yet (ii) it is unlike it as it captures an element above the meaninglessness of chance. Poetry is 'imitative' in this sense. This meaning of the terms becomes clearer when we remember that Aristotle speaks of music as 'the most imitative of the arts, because its movements and melodies correspond to the moods of men's minds'. But at the beginning of his treatise he uses the term in the

sense of mimicry, though elsewhere as a term in a work of art, to convey the meaning of re-creation. In the use of the term, mimesis, as House points out, Aristotle is 'partly naïve, almost childish and partly sophisticated." From the above discussion it implies that imitation is the imaginative reconstruction of life; secondly, it aims at providing pleasure: thirdly, it must be convincing and lifelike; fourthly, it is an idealistic treatment of life through art: fifthly, it appeals through the emotions and not through cold reason.

Thus all the arts imitate human life in some of its manifestations. Imitative art in its highest form, namely, poetry is an expression of the universal element in human life. Art, therefore, in imitating the universal imitates the ideal.

C. Poetic, Truth: Its Universality

Plato speaks of the 'old quarrel between poetry and philosophy', that is, the vigorous onslaught which was launched by the ancient Greek philosophers upon the age-old claim of the poets and their admirers to truth and wisdom. Plato himself, who has been rightly described as the most poetical of the philosophers, took considerable pains to relegate the poets to the category of the mimetic artists, twice removed from reality and embodying souls which have the least glimpse of the heavenly truth in their pre-natal existence.

The aim of poetry is to represent the universal through the particular, to give a concrete and living embodiment of a universal truth. It is essential for poetry that the universal element should be expressed in matter of some sort. The universal is not abstract idea; it is particularized to sense, it comes before the mind clothed in the form of the concrete presented under the appearance of a living organism whose parts are in vital and structural relation to the whole.

For Aristotle, the most fundamental job of the historian is to record what has happened. He does not need to understand why or how events happened; he merely sets them down in chronological order. The true distinction is that the historian writes about "events that have actually happened," while the poet writes about them "as they might possibly occur." This does not mean that the poet must create fictional things that have not happened but might take place some day. It is, rather, a reference to the way the poet presents events. Obviously, an event that has happened is possible. What the poet does is to show how it might have happened in terms of probability and necessity. We might say that the poet places the events in a meaningful context so that instead of being "individual" they become pregnant with significance. Probability and necessity are universals. In one way or another they must be embodied in every literary work if it is to succeed. Since the primary concern of philosophy is universals, we can understand why 'Poetry.. . ..is more philosophical and more significant than history, for poetry is more concerned with the universal.'

The 'probable' is not determined by a numerical average of instances; it is not a condensed expression for what meets us in the common course of things. The incidents of every tragedy worthy of the name, are improbable if measured by the likelihood of their everyday occurrence - improbable in the same degree in which characters capable of great deeds and great passions are rare.

The poet brings out the probable and necessary link-up of various events, both in the development of plot, and also in the internal working of character. The probability which the poet follows is not mere slavish adherence to reality, it is not mere verisimilitude, but something much higher. Butcher rightly emphasizes that, "the rule of 'probability' as also that of 'necessity', refers rather to the internal structure of a poem, it is the inner law which secures the cohesion of the parts." The men and women whom we meet in poetry, the characters of drama, are not average men and women, those of meaner mortals. The probable laws of their conduct cannot be measured from the conduct of average humanity. The higher creations of poetry are not governed by the rules of ordinary experience. What they do and say cannot be judged with reference to their counterparts in actual life. Poetry imitates real men and women but shows them much finer and better. It reveals the ideal possibilities embedded in human nature; tragic heroes, like Othello or Hamlet, Prometheus or Achilles, possess a grandeur, a magnificence of thought, will, and action which at once raises them much above the level of average humanity, and makes contact with them such an enlarging and exhilarating experience. In their actions, they are true to their natures; their actions are the probable and necessary or logical outcome of their respective characters, and of the environment in which they are placed. Besides, what they say and do is the necessary and probable outcome of what they have said and done earlier. The various events which the poet represents cohere not only with each other, but also with the character of the various dramatis personae.

The function of a poet should be not to produce a flower as it is, or to produce an action as it was, but to create such a flower and such an action which may be ideal. Poetry, therefore, is not the function of a vile copyist. It is the art of a poet who uses his imagination to create an ideal which may attract the reader. Thus a poet may modify, suppress or sometimes even invent those things which are acceptable to the readers and which excite them and improve them. The probable is always that which gains of rational belief. The impossible is that which is physically impossible. For example, if we see a man with six fingers, it is not improbable; but a poet should not create a man with six fingers, because in our everyday life it is not accepted. The impossible is that which is not possible physically. In other words, if we find in a poem that a man removed a mountain and took away from India to Ceylon, it is impossible. Similarly, if somebody shows that a man made the ocean dry, it is again not possible. It is therefore, very necessary that probable situations which are possible also must be there in a poem. The artistic law of probability renders even a story or a novel probable. Hence in poetic imitation, Aristotle emphasizes the law of probability or necessity. The poetic truth means that in poetry, truth must be given. Truth is that which is real to life and which is ideal. Poetic truth, therefore, contains ideal action in ideal circumstances, and an ideal image that the poet creates.

The purpose of poetry or art is not pleâsure only, but moral also. It was this basis on which Plato rejected the poets, condemned them and wanted that they should be turned out of the Republic. He thought that the poets were liars and corrupters of man-kind. Value of art lies in changing the society. If art does not aim of changing the ways, manners, behaviour of the people living in society, it is no art. Art and life are linked together. Without a change in life, which is possible only through art, a man's life will be dull. Therefore to speak of intrinsic pleasure, is misleading. Poetic truth, of course, is what is ideal and also real. With the growth and advance of science the Platonic charge was resumed by the scientists who sought to demolish the poetic myths and fictions by presenting truth discovered through observation and experiment and verifiable by demonstration and practical test. The conflict between poetry and science begain to assume a serious aspect in the early years of the 19th century, which witnessed at once the heyday of poetry and the triumph of science. While optimistic poets like William Wordsworth predicted a fruitful partnership between the poet and the scientists in years to come, the majority of the literary artists shared the apprehension of Hazlitt and Keats that the advance of science was going to prove detrimental to the progress and dignity of poetry. Even Coleridge the poet philosopher admitted that the most obvious distinction between science and poetry rested in the fact that the immediate object of the former was to provide knowledge, while that of the latter to yield pleasure. In the present century the distinction has been made more clear-cut by I. A. Richards, for example, in the controversial remark that science is concerned with truth, poetry with pseudo-truth; the statement of the scientists can be verified by a definite external standard, while the poetic statement is evocative of emotional attitude valid in the context of the particular poem and not verifiable by any touchstone outside it.

In the face of this challenge the poets could present only one defense, namely, the poet's capacity to make the abstract truths of philosophy, history, religion and morality more concrete, lovely and effective through its association with the feelings and passions. Sidney's Apologie capitalizes this argument and at a later date Wordsworth lent to it the weight of his own conviction when he distinguished between the truth of science and the truth of poetry, between truth abstract and the truth operative, that is, 'truth carried alive into the heart by passion.'

This line of defense, however, makes poetry dependent upon other disciplines for truths, which it will eventually beautify, transform and make effective. While accepting the force of this contention one is forced to admit the fact that even as the translator of the known truths into artistic terms and expressions, the poet renders a service to society which no reasonable person will deny or minimize. Take for example, our great Hindi epic, the Ram Charit Manas of Goswami Tulsidas, which renders the wisdom of the Vedas and Shastras in a language at once literary and charming, and well within the comprehension of the common people, with the result that thy profound and priceless wisdom hidden in the great Sciptures has become almost the household word. One is reminded, indeed, of the claim of Addison that he would have it said of him that he brought philosophy out of colleges and libraries to dwell in the coffee-houses and on the tea-tables of the ladies of quality.

Even the greatest poets derive their truths from the stock of conventional wisdom, but they express them so well that cold truths become alive and winged, and pass from one heart to another like the 'tongues of fire. The great Shakespeare himself is the most significant illustration of Pope's famous dictum, 'What oft was thought but never so well expressed.

We refer only to a few lines which illustrate the magic of his art in vivifying lifeless and familiar truths of human experience by investing them with the life, beauty and energy of the potent word:

'Beauty provoketh thief sooner than gold';

'For a light wife doth make a heavy husband'; 'Our thoughts are ours, but their ends none of our own' 'There are more things in earth and heaven, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy', 'Plate sin with gold and the lance of justice hurtless breaks; Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce it;'

We are such stuff as dreams are made of

And our little life is rounded with a sleep.

The truth communicated by the poet is in the nature of a felt experience which passes 'redhot' into the heart of the reader and engraves itself upon it in such a way as to change his outlook and the course of life. Tolstoy had this potency of the poetic word in his mind when he propounded his famous theory of 'emotional contagion' which stressed the duty of the poet to make noble truths and moral ideals current among the peoples of the world by charging them with emotional energy and expressive force.

The poet surrenders himself heart and soul to the mystery of an object's life and identity and thereby he captures the whole truth of that object along with its essential beauty and dignity. His is the imaginative approach, the approach of sympathetic identification as contradistinguished from the scientific approach which is marked by objectivity and detachment, like that of a surgeon who dissects a living organism in order to discern the inner constitution of its tissues and their ways of functioning.

Poetry represents a truth which is deeply rooted in the depth of the human heart. Hence, Keats's statement regarding the nightingale - 'thou was not born for death immortal bird/No hungry generations tread thee down' cannot be rejected as a mere illusion devoid of the least grain of fact, because it is an 'illusion' which is a part and parcel of man's incurable habit of aspiring after something quite immune from the touch of change and morality and in a moment of emotional intensity investing an earthly object of profound immediate significance with the substance of the thing he is aspiring after.

Poetic truth is of a much higher order. The poet deals with reality, but with a reality which is shorn of the particular and the non-essential. In this way, poetic truth is permanent and universal. The poet deals with the permanent and universal facts of nature; he idealises reality, but in so doing he still remains true to the principles and laws of nature. By doing away with the accidental and the non-essential, he reveals the laws of nature, laws which govern the course of events, as well as of human conduct. In this way, the poetic world, while basically still true to nature, is more intelligible and comprehensible. It is more philosophical than philosophy itself, for it is more conducive to understanding, as it presents permanent truths in an easy, pleasant, and concrete form. While History deals with the particular and the ephemeral, poetry deals with the permanent and the universal. It is not tied to particular facts as history is, but selects and orders its material, and thus through its imaginative handling of reality reveals the laws of nature, and the laws of our being. Its truth is much higher than that of history, and it has greater organic unity, as the non-essential is eliminated. History deals with what is poetry with what ought to be. Poetry is higher than History, because it deals with the universal and manifests the cause or the first principle of things. The poet seizes and reproduces a concrete fact, but he transfigures it so that the higher truth, the idea of the universal, shines through it."

Assignment

1. Discuss Aristotle's concept of poetry as Imitation of life.
2. Discuss in detail Aristotle's concept of Catharsis.

A. Relative Importance of Plot and Character in Tragedy

Distinctions between 'plot' and 'story' occur widely, but for many critics story is the sequence in which events occur as parts of a happening, and plot is the sequence in which the author arranges, narrates or dramatizes them. The story of Paradise Lost, for example, tells of the rebellion in heaven by Satan and his followers, their defeat at God's hand, their fall, and the consequent revenge they took on God by seducing Adam and Eve. But Milton begins his poem with the

rebellious angels already in hell and later he shows how they arrived there. The plot of Paradise Lost is the narrative structure and arrangement of episodes that Milton presents, but the story is the episodes in chronological order.

Plot is the organization of incidents in a narrative or play. In the Poetics, Aristotle says that a good plot has a beginning, middle, and an end; he says further that it should be so constructed that no incident can be displaced or omitted, without destroying the unit of the whole. The presence of a single hero is not sufficient, he continues, to give unity. A plot which consists of a series of disconnected incidents, even though it may centre around one figure, he calls "episodic" and as inferior. Many writers, however, have deliberately chosen the episodic plot for the freedom and scope which it gives. Whatever its structural arrangement, a plot usually contains conflicts which provides a basis for the action. Characters are thus impelled to move from incident to incident - in the unified plot, the action reaches a climax, whereas in the episodic plots it merely comes to a stop. In the latter, for example, the hero of a picaresque novel, may become heir to a fortune and end his wanderings; in the former, however, the development of a major conflict provides the audience with suspense until all difficulties are resolved. In the plot of Shakespeare's Othello for example, the order of the incidents involving Iago's deception of Othello leads to a crisis, the point at which the Moor decides to kill Desdemona. The conflicts of the play now intensified and heightened, the action moves towards the climax, the discovery that Iago has misled Othello. Following this incident, the denouement contains Othello's remorse and self-punishment, and Iago's capture and condemnation to torture. In the play, the rising action leading to the climax provides the greatest emotional intensity for the audience, while the falling action provides the spectators with relief.

The chief character in a work is called the protagonist or hero, and carries the main thought of the play and if he is pitted against an important opponent, that character is called an antagonist. Thus an antagonist is a character who opposes most directly the protagonist, or main character, and is adversary to the propelling thought of the play. Hamlet is the protagonist and King Claudius the antagonist in Shakespeare's play, and the relation between them is one of conflict. In addition to the conflict between individuals, there may be the conflict of a character against the circumstances intervening between him and a goal he has set himself, and the conflict of opposing tendencies within a single individual's mind. An example of this last type is the inner struggle between Hamlet's desire to avenge his father and his propensity to delay. If any one of the characters sets up a scheme which depends for its success on the ignorance of the person or persons against whom it is directed, it is called an intrigue. Iago intrigues against Othello and Cassio in Shakespeare's Othello. A number of comedies, such as Ben Jonson's Volpone and many Restoration plays, have plots which are primarily concerned with the success or failure of an intrigue.

Aristotle has elaborated the concept of plot in Chapter No. IX of the Poetics. He has laid great stress on plot because of its organic unity in tragedy. Unity is the essential characteristic of all works of art, and of a plot as distinct from a story. That is what he means when he says that "a Tragedy must have a beginning, a middle and an end." The beginning and end are determined by the poet with a view to imparting unity to what he presents. Tragedy, he says, is "the imitation of an action that is complete and whole and of a certain magnitude," "Of a certain magnitude" because it must not be too large to be seen and appreciated as a whole. "The play must not exceed the length that can be compassed by the human memory", - that is, as Humphrey House explains, "it should have the greatest extension and variety that is compatible with unity of impression." Aristotle stresses the need for unity of action in the Epic too. Events in Epics, as in Tragedy, must be bound by the law of probability. Events that have no other connection except that they happen in connection with the hero do not make an Epic. He cites the Iliad and the Odyssey as examples of epics governed by unity of action. In Epic, however, "many events simultaneously transacted can be presented" and the story can be "relieved by varying episodes."

Aristotle's dictum that plot in tragedy is more important than character can be understood only by a reference to what he means by character. Character and action, in his theory of ethics, are inseparable. It is by repeated acts of a certain kind that we acquire a habit or character. "In each individual the character is thus formed by action, is dependent on action for its very being, and has its qualities in virtue of the quality of the actions from which it is derived. In real life, quite apart from drama, character is subordinate to action, because it is a product of action. Further, character is a bent, a tendency, a legacy of past acts, is not fully 'actualized' or 'realized'. It is only fully realized when it is 'in act', as it is not, for instance, when we are asleep. That is the essence of Aristotle's view of

character in the Nicomachean Ethics. In drama, character, as thus viewed, occurs only in action. The mere presentation of 'qualities' divorced from action gives us something less than character. We read in the Poetics, Ch. VI. "All human happiness or misery takes the form of action; the end for which we live is a certain kind of activity, not a quality. Character gives us qualities, but it is in our actions - what we do - that we are happy or the reverse". We see now why Aristotle considers action in tragedy more important than character.

Van Brugh declared that the contrary may be said to be true. "I could show that the chief entertainment as well as the moral lies much more in the Character and the Diction than in the Business and the Event." Victor Hugo states that the men in an audience preferred action and the women emotion, but the thinkers cared for character. The practice of the great English writers from Shakespeare to James Joyce appears to prove that the contrary is true. There is the well known observation that there can be no Hamlet without the prince of Denmark. The leading commentators on Shakespeare, until the beginning of the present century, argued that the chief glory of Shakespeare is his remarkable ability to create complex and unforgettable characters like Falstaff and Richard III.

F. L. Lucas with his characteristic brilliance and classical precision, argues that in the evolution of tragedy in the West there has been 'far more room for the growth of character drawing than plot." He declares, rather poetically, "The book in a woman's eye grows more interesting then the rise of dynasties, the dropping of the handkerchief than the falling of the topless towers of Illium." Aristotle was perhaps an extrovert, speculates F.L. Lucas. Hence Aristotle's emphasis on the importance of activity in life and plot in tragedy.

These remarks of Aristotle have given rise to a great deal of controversy regarding the relative position of plot and character in a tragedy. In the twentieth century specially, with the rise of the stream-of-consciousness concept, the Plot is given a secondary place and character the primary importance in a play or a novel. But before entering into this controversy, let us first try to understand Aristotle's line of argument.

Aristotle approaches the problem with great care and substantiates his theory with some convincing arguments. He assigns the primary place to plot, because he thinks, "it is the first principle, and, as it were, the soul of a tragedy. Character holds the second place." By Plot he means the arrangement and structure of the incidents. He thinks that without incidents there can be no tragedy. One may string together a set of speeches expressive of character, but they will not be able to produce the essential tragic effect, if they are not well-knit in the chain of dramatic incidents. On the other hand, a play which has a plot and artistically constructed incidents may produce a better effect. Moreover, it is the plot which provides the elements of emotional interest in a tragedy. Reversal of Intention or Situation and the Recognition scenes, which awaken and intensify tragic feelings are parts of the plot. Again, it is in the background of a given situation that the character acts, and these situations are provided by the plot. Character is subordinate to action because it is a product of action. Without action we cannot conceive of the very existence of drama for "action is the differentia of drama, and must ever remain the primary and controlling principle.

Dramatic history also justifies the soundness of Aristotle's dictum. There have been successful dramas without character, and dramas without a suitable plot have been failures. Oedipus Tyrannus, Aristotle's ideal play, is a play in which there is a plot but no 'character', in the sense that the fate of the hero is not determined by his own actions. King Oedipus is a man doomed before his birth; in his case, character is not destiny. "In detective plays character tends to be subordinate to intrigue; and this is the first and the most famous of detective plays". On the other hand, a play without plot would be a play in which there is no action, or in which nothing happens. There would be no drama at all.

Modern critics, however, disagree with Aristotle giving importance to plot. They suggest that Aristotle had read only the character tragedies in which man was a puppet in the hands of destiny. In this regard De Quincey said, 'Man being the puppet of fate could not with any effect display what we call a character; for the will which is the central pivot of character was obliterated, thwarted, cancelled by the dark fatalism which brooded over the Grecian stage. Powerful and elaborate character would have been wasted, nay would have been defeated and interrupted by the blind agencies of fate".

The school of the romantics who believe in the importance of the individual have also shifted their interest from plot to character. The dramatists of this school portray the inner conflict of their character and opened up a richer and more varied life of emotions and passions. In Shakespearean tragedies, character is the most important. The greatness

of Shakespeare lies in the portrayal of great characters and also in happy coordination between plot and character. Shakespeare did not permit the dramatized action to be subservient to the portrayal of individual character.

The modem drama, says Professor Butcher, "introduces us into another world of poetic emotion, but in general, the modem introspective habit, the psychological interest felt in character, has produced many dramatic lyrics, but few dramas." The importance of plot, therefore, cannot be ignored. W.K. Wimsatt has rightly said that "there can be no basic consideration of character and action separately. Or, one might say, plot without character is a puzzle, as in a detective story, character without plot is a series of conversations or soliloquies, as in some romantic closet dramas. Henry James has made the mutual relationship of plot and character more clear by saying: "What is character but the determination of incident? What is incident but the illustration of characters."

A number of modem critics, however, have found fault with Aristotle's too much emphasis on plot. They are of the view that the stream of consciousness fiction, for instance, usually has the weakest plot; and of late, there have been novels in which character dominates plot. Probably Aristotle's view of action seems to have been circumscribed only by the Greek tragedies. De Quincey once said that man being the puppet of fate could not wish any effective display of what we call a character for the will which is negated by the dark fatalism which broods over them. The outer and the inner world are here in nearer correspondence than in any other form of poetry. The element of chance is all but eliminated. An inner bond of probability or necessity binds events together. This inevitable sequence of cause and effect is the link that character forges as it expresses itself in action. A man's deeds become external to him; his character dogs and pursues him as a thing apart. The fate that overtakes the hero is no alien thing, but his own self recoiling upon him for good or evil. 'Man's character', as Heraclitus said, 'is his destiny'. To this vital relation between action and character is due the artistically compacted plot, the central unity of a tragedy. If, as Aristotle says, tragedy is a picture of life, it is of life rounded off, more complete, more significant, than any ordinary human life: revealing in itself the eternal law of things, summing up as in a typical example the story of human vicissitudes.

B. The Tragic Hero

Except the definition of tragedy no subject in the 'Poetics' has been so much controversial as the description of the ideal tragic hero. Aristotle deduces the qualities requisite to such a character from the primary fact that the function of tragedy is to produce the catharsis of pity and fear. Pity being felt for a person, who, if not wholly innocent, meets with suffering beyond his deserts; fear being awakened when the sufferer is a man of like nature as ourselves. Tragic character must have capacity of giving full satisfaction to these emotions.

Since the tragic hero is the predominant agent of the tragic action, he must evoke the twin emotions of pity and fear. He must be a man above the average; serious, elevated and dignified, and yet human enough to make us perceive our own misery in his vicissitudes. He should be good, but not too good for perfect, for the fall of a man eminently good undergoing the change from prosperous to adverse fortune awakens neither pity nor fear. It merely shocks us. On Aristotle's principles this would fail to produce the proper tragic effect; for, though in the course of the action we may be profoundly moved by the spectacle of threatened ruin, the total impression is alien to the spirit of tragedy. Similarly, utterly devoid of tragic quality, is the representation of the bad man who experiences the contrary change from distress to prosperity. Pity and fear are here alike wanting. Even the sense of justice is unsatisfied. Nor again, should the downfall of an utter villain be exhibited. A plot of this kind would undoubtedly satisfy the moral sense, but it would inspire neither pity nor fear; for pity is aroused by unmerited misfortune, fear by the misfortune of a man like ourselves.

There remains then the character who morally stands midway between these two extremes - a man who is not 'eminently good and yet whose misfortune is brought about not by vice and depravity, but by some error or frailty. The tragic hero falls because of hamartia or 'miscalculation' on his part. Hamartia is not a moral failing and nor a 'tragic flaw' in the character of the hero, but some error of judgement emanating from ignorance of some material circumstance, or from rashness and impulsiveness of temper. Oedipus, for instance, cannot be said to have owed his ruin to any striking moral defect. He was in a genuine sense the victim of circumstances. In slaying Laius he was probably in some degree morally culpable. But the act was done certainly after provocation, and possibly in self-defence. His life was a chain of errors, the most fatal of all being the marriage with his mother. All minor acts of ignorance culminated

here; and yet it was a purely unconscious offence to which no kind of blame can be attached. In any case as Butcher remarks "a single great error, whether morally culpable or not; a single great defect in a character otherwise noble each and all of these may carry with them the tragic issues of life and death."

Aristotle's doctrine of hamartia, however, underwent wide expansion and modification at the hands of later exponents of tragedy. In the original Greek sense the term implies merely the missing of a mark, some error of judgement, a wrong step blindly taken. The implication of any serious defect is expressly precluded in the definition itself. Shakespeare includes such human flaws as the youthful impetuosity of Romeo, the obdurate pride of Lear, overweening arrogance of Coriolanus and fatal obsession with sensuous love in Antony, which prove self-destructive in the peculiar circumstances in which the heroes are placed. In the modern social plays' hamartia is practically removed from the hero and he becomes a victim of circumstances or the inexorable social forces in whose clutches he is caught and struggles helplessly in vain.

Aristotle deems unfit perfectly blameless character to be a tragic hero because wholly unmerited suffering causes repulsion, not fear or pity. Examined in the light of the later development of drama this concept appears a trifle too narrow and inadequate, for he evolved his ideas of tragedy from the existing specimens of the Greek dramatic compositions which were never designed to be binding upon the future development of literature. Surely, we feel pity for one who is in the highest sense an innocent sufferer like Cordelia and Desdemona. Sometimes such characters, it is alleged, themselves despise the pain of suffering. They enjoy so much inward consolation that they have no need of our sympathy. This appears to be a cynical reflection. The pity we feel for outward misfortune may be sunk in our admiration for the courage with which it is borne. Aristotle too agrees in his 'Rhetoric' that "terror tends to drive away pity". A great tragedy need not discard a virtuous figure from the heroic role. In fact the tragic protagonist should be more inclined towards perfect goodness than to the opposite extreme.

Further utterly devoid of tragic spirit, according to Aristotle, is the representation of the bad man who is raised from adverse to prosperous fortune. Dacier remarks, "there is nothing more opposed to the refining of the passions than the prosperity of the wicked; instead of correcting, it nourishes and strengthens them; for who would take the trouble to get rid of his vices, if they made him happy. Good fortune following upon a course of bad actions is frequent enough in life; nonetheless, it is to be rigorously excluded from tragic art. It certainly awakens no pity but offends the sense of justice. Even granting that art must touch us through our aesthetic sensibility, and has nothing directly to do with the sense of justice, the aesthetic effect itself will be one of pain and disquiet; the doubt and disturbance which arise from the spectacle of real life will be reproduced and perhaps intensified. In the drama our view of the universe needs to be harmonised, not confused; we expect to find the connection of cause and effect in a form that satisfies the rational faculty. To suspend the operation of the moral law by the triumph of wickedness is to introduce the reign of caprice or blind chance.

The overthrow of signal villainy is set aside by Aristotle as unsuited to tragedy. We cannot feel pity when the suffering is deserved. We cannot fear when the sufferer is so far removed in nature from ourselves. The limitation of view emanates from applying a purely ethical instead of an aesthetic standard to dramatic character. Crime as crime has no place in art; it is common, it is repulsive. Wickedness presented on a grand scale, resolute and intellectual, may raise the criminal above the common place and invest him with a sort of dignity. There is something terrible and sublime in mere will power working its evil way, dominating its surroundings with a super human energy. The wreck of such power excites in us a certain tragic sympathy; not indeed the genuine pity which is inspired by unmerited suffering, but a sense of loss and regret over the waste or misuse of gifts so splendid.

It needs, however, the genius of a Shakespeare to portray this potent and commanding villainy. It was a perilous task to concentrate the whole interest of plays round characters such as Richard III and Iago. In Iago we have no heroic criminal, but a conspirator of a meaner order, in whom the faculty of intrigue amounts almost to genius. Richard III equally devoid of moral scruple, and glorifying in his 'naked villainy' is yet a prince with royal purposes and an insight into affairs. Shakespeare's masterpieces of crime are forged by intellect and carried out with artistic finesse and completeness. The moral sense is kept half in abeyance upto the close of such a drama. The badness of the man is almost lost in the sense of power.

The tragic hero, observes Aristotle, is illustrious in rank. He must be one who is highly renowned and prosperous like Oedipus or Orestes and the best tragedies are enacted on the stories of a few famous personages who have won

laurels or suffered terribly. Indeed, this concept of heroic as applied to figures in tragedy was appropriate to the ages when men of noble birth and eminent positions were considered as representative figures of society and their fall created repercussions far and wide like a national catastrophe. But with the gradual spread of the ideals of democracy, the interest has shifted from the nobility to the common figures who are now thought to be more capable of enlisting the spectators' sympathy because "the true heart interest, real relationship, is always between man and man, not between man and king. The nearer the suffering man is to our station in life, the greater is his claim upon our sympathy."

Mazzini conceived the idea of a new drama in which man shall no longer appear as a rebel against the laws of existence or the victim of an external struggle with his own nature, but as the ally of Providence, co-operating with the powers of good in that peculiar conflict whose drama is the history of the world. We may doubt whether such a drama can truly be tragic. The death of the martyr - of the hero who leads a forlorn hope - of the benefactor of mankind who bears suffering achieves moral victory - fills us with emotions of wonder and admiration, but it can hardly produce the thrill of fear or tragic awe, which according to Aristotle is an indespensable factor in real tragedy. Tragedy, in its pure idea, shows us a mortal will engaged in an unequal struggle with destiny. The conflict reaches its tragic issue when the individual perishes, but through his ruin the disturbed order of the world is restored and the moral forces reasserts their sway. The death of the martyr presents to us not the defeat, but the victory of the individual.

Aristotle, however, excludes the highest form of tragedy in which character is destiny. The spectacle of a man struggling with his fate affords ample scope for the display of will power and ethical qualities. The "Oedipus Tyrannus" portrays a tragic conflict none the less moving because the original error which leads to the catastrophe, springs from the necessary blindness and infirmity of human nature. Again, Aristotle fails to take into account the two exceptional types of tragedy - that which exhibits the antagonism between a pure will and a disjointed world, or between a grand but criminal purpose and the higher moral forces with which it is confronted.

C. Unity of Time, Place and Action

It is generally believed that classical drama observed the three unities - the unity of Action, the unity of Time and the unity of Place - and they are spoken of in popular writing as a rule of the Poetics. The observance of the three unities have been insisted upon the high authority of Aristotle but he, nowhere in the Poetics, insisted upon all the three unities. He was only concerned with the unity of Action and for the remaining two he did not care at all. He emphasized upon the unity of Action as a precondition for the unity of plot. In his words, "If you string together a set of speeches expressive of character, and well finished in point of diction and thought, you will not produce the essential tragic effect nearly so well as with play which, however deficient in those respects, yet has a plot and artistically constructed incidents." He did affirm the necessity of unity of plot and he also knew as he observed in the eighth chapter of the Poetics, "Unity of plot does not, as some persons think, consist in the unity of the hero. For infinitely various are the incidents in one man's life which cannot be reduced to unity; and so, too, there are many actions of one man out of which we cannot make one action." The unity can be achieved by unity of action.

According to Aristotle, Unity of tragic action is an organic unity, an inward principle which reveals itself in the form of an outward whole. It is opposed to plurality, but does not oppose the idea of variety. The various parts in which the tragedy is divided must be structurally related in such a fashion that none can be removed, none transposed, without disturbing the organism. They must be bound together by an inward and causal bond - by the law of necessary and probable sequence.

In order to achieve unity, a plot must have a beginning, a middle, and an end. A beginning is that which does not itself follow anything by causal necessity, but after which something naturally is or comes to be. An end on the contrary, is that which itself naturally follows, some other thing, either by necessity, or as a rule, but has nothing following it. A middle is that which follows something as some other thing follows it.

These definitions have been given by Aristotle and they cause some difficulties also. How it is possible that a beginning be causally unconnected with what precedes? Do the opening scenes of a tragedy stand apart from the rest of the hero's career? The answer is simple. They do not. The beginning of a drama is, no doubt the natural sequel of something else. Still it must not carry us back in thought to all that has gone before. A play must begin at some

definite point, and at some definite point it must end. It is for the poet to see that the action is complete in itself. Within the dramatic action, a strict sequence of cause and effect must be maintained; but the causal chain must not be indefinitely extended outwards.

Aristotle's comment on the length of tragedy gave rise during the neo-classical period to the doctrine of Unity of Time. According to this doctrine, which became literally a critical drama in seventeenth-century France and in Restoration England, when Aristotle asserts that, 'tragedy attempts, as far as possible, to remain within one revolution of the sun' he is referring to the time covered by the dramatic action of the play. This interpretation accords with the rationalist bias of neo-classic critics. Spectators, they argued, would not believe in the reality of an action that compressed several days and in the case of Shakespearean drama, several years, into a three hour drama. And if the spectators did not believe in the reality of the action, the tragedy would not have its proper effect. The idea was carried to absurd extremes. In England, Shakespeare and his Elizabethan contemporaries were severely criticized, or even rejected as barbarous, for their indifference to the Unity of Time. In France, the critics began debating in earnest as to whether "one revolution of the sun", meant a twenty-four hour day or the twelve hour period of daylight. Ideally, of course, the neo-classicists believed that there should be an exact correspondence between the time of the dramatic action and the time of the events being imitated, so that a play lasting three hours would depict events that took only three hours to work themselves out. This interpretation accords with the rationalist bias of neo-classic critics. Spectators, they argued, would not believe in the reality of an action that compressed several days or, in the case of Shakespearean drama, several years into a three hour drama. And if the spectators did not believe in the reality of the action, the tragedy would not have its proper effect. The idea was carried to absurd extremes.

About the unity of place, Aristotle asks the poet not to represent an action with a number parts going on simultaneously. Aristotle would not limit the whole action to be presented at one place, for the change of place is quite often required in respect of the nature of the subject. But if the sense moves from Alexandria to Rome, to quote Johnson, the poet should not represent the action simultaneously at the two or more places. This kind of action would blur the view as action from the beginning to the end of the work is to be taken in one view. One is limited, Aristotle says, to the part on the stage and connected with the actors. This disadvantage stays even if the stage is divided and revolving as in a modern theatre. Aristotle's advice to the Greek poets is significant. The Greek plays include 'simultaneous' action. Humphry House quotes an example from Agamemnon of Aeschylus where the cries of Agamemnon being murdered in his bath are heard "from within", with the result that the spectator gets both the murder and the Chorus' response to it. However, Aristotle's concept of the three unities can be better appreciated in relation to their violation by the epic poets. In fact, epic poetry by its limitless possibilities of action emanating from the hero and narrative manner has no sense of unity of action, time and place. It is possible in an epic to describe a number of simultaneous incidents, but a Tragedy cannot afford to sacrifice these unities as these anachronisms are easily detected in a dramatic composition.

It is not to overstress the point that if the unity of action is required, the other two unities are also needed to see the action performed in a given space and time. Otherwise, the unity of action itself would not be achieved. The controversy regarding the observance or otherwise of the unity of time arose mainly in relation to the relevance or otherwise of spectacle to drama. But both sides misunderstood Aristotle. Those who regard spectacle as an essential part of drama think that stage time and the imaginated time taken by the action of the play should coincide. Critics like Johnson, who liberated drama from spectacle, tended to make a dramatic composition tell its story as an epic does without any recourse or the limit of time and place. Aristotle dismissed spectacle as unnecessary because he believed that if a composition is written in dramatic manner, it does duty for spectacle. The reader can see the play acted as he reads it. The same is true of the unity of place. The visual effect of place or places is in-built by the action reported or performed by the characters.

Assignment

Attempt any two of the following questions:

1. Examine Aristotle's concept of the tragic hero.
2. Consider Aristotle's ideas regarding the unity of time, Place and Action.
3. "The plot, then is the first principle, and as it were, the soul of 'tragedy; character holds the second place. Discuss

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Unit-II

Bharatamuni – Natya Shastra

Introduction

If literature can be said to represent and reflect the interplay of human emotions, Bharata, the writer of Natyashastra *has the distinction of writing the most complex discourse on the production, reception, dissemination and significance of 'rasa' (or aesthetic pleasure/ aesthetic emotion/aesthetic experience) that has generally been acknowledged as the basis of Indian literary theory. Bharata propounded the theory of rasa in his* Natyashastra - *a remarkable work on the theory and practice of* Natya *or drama. So pervasive has been the influence of Bharata's* Natyashastra *in Indian tradition of literary theory, that the cardinal concept of* rasa *(aesthetic pleasure) has been extended, with all valid reasons, to cover not only the various kinds of drama but also all forms of literary productions (novel, poetry, short-story etc.). Beginning from Abhinavagupta and Anandavardhana to this day, Bharata's theory of* "rasa" *has been used to critically analyse all sorts of literary texts and explore how literary artha (or meanings) produces 'ananda' (pleasure) in the heart of a* sahradaya *(alert or sensitive reader).*

Structure, Date, Time and Authorship of "Natyashastra"

The complete text of *Natyashastra* of Bharata first appeared in print as the Nirnayasayar edition, Bombay in 1894. Another edition, varying in readings and numbering of verses was published by Chawkhambha edition from Banaras in 1929. The text was also published in four volumes in the Gaekwad's Oriental Series (GOS) from Baroda from 1926 to 1954. The GOS edition was prepared after consulting nearly forty manuscripts and contains the valuable commentary of Abhinavagupta. Later on, Dr. Manmohan Ghosh's text of *Natyashastra* was published with an English translation and a few textual notes from Calcutta in two parts in 1961 and 1967.

The text of *Natyashastra* , as it comes to us through tradition, appears to be a composite one written by a single author, Bharata. It has a 'purana-like' opening with a 'mangala' verse (invocation) and the presentation with Bharata expounding the *natyaveda*, created by Brahma and arranged by him, at the request of the sages who approached him to learn about it. Maybe Bharata's role was that of an editor who collected, collated and put together all the relevant material on dramaturgy and relevant topics adding his valuable commentary and analysis also on the received discourses on drama and dramaturgy.

There are various dates that have been assigned to the *Natyashastra*. What must not be forgotten before the discussion of the date is the fact that several and frequent additions have been made to the *Natyashastra* and there are, therefore, substantial discrepancies in the chapterization and content of the work. Therefore, any analysis of the problem of date has to refer necessarily to a time when the principal structure and chapters of the work had been put up and take notice of the insertion of some verse or verses here and there. Shri Haraprasad Shastri assigned it to the 2nd century B.C. Prof. Levi relying upon the use of such words as 'Swami', 'Sugrahitanamnan' and 'Bhadramukh' in the works on *Natyashastra* as terms of address , tried to establish that the *Natyashastra* of Bharat was composed about the time of the Indo-Scythian Ksatrapas (1st – 2nd C. A.D.) some of whom like Nahapana and Castana are styled as 'swami' and 'bhadramukha' in their inscriptions.

Prof. P.V. Kane in his famous *History of Sanskrit Poetics*[1] argues that "before 300 A.D., there existed a work on *Natyashastra* ascribed to Bharata" that dealt with the rasa theory and dramaturgy in general. Prof. Keith in his *History of Sanskrit Drama* also places it about 3rd century A.D. Even Mr. Manmohan Ghosh who analyzed the issue of the date from several points of view such as linguistic data, the treatment of metres, the mention of only four

1 P.V. Kane , *History of Sanskrit Poetics*, New Delhi, Motilal Banarasidas, *1998* (rpt.). Further cited as *Kane* with page numbers in parentheses

figures of speech, the mythology, the geographical data, come to conclusion that the date of *Natyashastra* might be placed between 100 B.C. to 200 A.D. Prof. P.V. Kane, after considering all these problems of dating the work, comes to an acceptable conclusion:-

> *"The foregoing discussion has made it clear that the Natyashastra cannot be assigned to a later date than about 300 A.D. This does not mean that the extant Natyashastra has come down to us in fact from that data. But what is contended is that before 300 A.D. there existed a work going under the name of Bharata containing the rasa theory and dealing with dramaturgy; this cannot be disputed. As there is no other extant work on the theory of Poetics and allied topics as old as 300 A.D. the Natyashastra must be regarded in the present state of our knowledge as the oldest work on the Alankarashastra" (Kane, p-47)*

Similarly, the authorship of *Natyashastra* is equally contested. Long before Abhinavagupta (940-1015 A.D.), there were scholars who believed that the first six verses of chapter one were composed by a pupil of Bharata and that the questions and answers in the body of the work were also composed by a pupil but the text was authored by Bharata. Contrary to this, Abhinavagupta refutes these conjectures and holds that the whole work is Bharata's as there is no evidence for holding that it is a product of joint authorship and as authors very often use the third person for themselves. Names such as Nandikeshwara (or Nandi), Kohala, Adibharata, Shandilya, Vatsya, and Dantila are frequently invoked as possible contributors to the text of *Natyashastra*. It is interesting to note that in the text itself the word- "Bharata" is used in the sense of an actor. It is, therefore, an arduous task to affirm the real author of *Natyashastra*. What appears to be certain is that the first five chapters were later additions. Prof. P.V. Kane rightly comments:-

> *It is quite that some one who had mastered the traditional lore of the histrionic art and was well-disposed to bharatas (actors) put together most of the present Natyashastra and in order to glorify the tribe of bharatas passed it on as the work of a mythical hero. Such things are common in Sanskrit literature. The whole of the vast purana literature is foisted on Vyasa, but hardly anyone can believe that the 18 Puranas and 18 Upapuranas are the work of a man called Vyasa.*

The Bhavaprakashan narrates a legend about the origin of *Natyaveda*. It states that Shiva ordered Nandikeshwar to teach *Natyaveda* to Brahma before whom appeared Bharata with five pupils, to whom Brahma said- "Bear this *Natyaveda*". Therefore, the first actors were called bharatas and they first enacted a play before Manu who needed some aesthetic pleasure and rest to remove his fatigue arising out of his royal responsibilities as a king.

The Bharatas taking the elements from *Natyaveda* made two epitomes – one in 12,000 verses and the other in 6,000 verses and the latter came to be known after the Bharatas. Needless to say, Bharata's *Natyashastra* remains to this day a huge work that deals with music, dance, some aspects of poetics and rhetoric, prosody, the literary theory of drama and all other aspects of histrionics or dramaturgy connected with the stage representation of drama (theatre). Later theoreticians frequently borrow and use, with some variations, the percepts of Bharata, especially those relating to the composition and representation of drama.

The problematic nature of the critical text (of *Natyashastra*) and its chronology apart, there is little doubt that *Natyashastra,* as we have it, is a fairly comprehensive work dealing with all aspects of play-construction and play-production. It guides and inspires the writer and the play producer, the critic and the judge, the actor and the audience. The contents of its thirty-six chapters (thirty-seven chapters in Gaekwad Oriental Series) may briefly be indicated as follows:-

Chapter 1 : Mythical origin of *Natyaveda* from the four *Vedas* to fulfil the need of a *kridaniyaka* (play-things) for all people including the shudras and women; Atreya and other sages ask questions of Bharata viz. how the *Natyavea* came into existence, for whose sake, what its *angas* (subsidiary matters) are, what are the means for arriving at sure conclusions, how it is to be represented on the stage. The *Vedas* cannot be studied by shudras and so Brahma ordered Bharata to produce a fifth Veda meant for all varnas. Bharata took the matter to be recited in dramas from

the Rigveda, singing from the *Samaveda*, the abhinaya (acting) from the *Yajurveda* and the *Rasas* from the *Atharvaveda*. Thus, the purpose of natya was to provide pleasure and instruction both to a decadent humanity.

Chapter 2: Construction of a playhouse; three kinds of theatres; rectangular, square and triangular; architectural details and arrangement of different parts.

Chapter 3: Worship of deities located in the *natya-veshma*.

Chapter 4: Performance of a play called *Amritamanthan* before the gods and of *Tripuradah* before Mahadeva; definitions and uses of *Karanas* and *angahara* (hand, feet and body positions and movements) necessary for dance-like presentation.

Chapter 5: *Purvaranga* or the ritual and musical preliminaries of play- production.

Chapter 6: Treatment of *Rasa*: Definitions, kinds and their characteristics. Perhaps, the most important part of *Natyashastra*.

Chapter 7: Nature of *Bhavas* and their relation to *Rasa*

Chapter 8-12: Meaning and kinds of *Abhinaya* (acting):

Chapter 8: *Angika abhinaya*: movement of major and minor limbs of body; Glances;

Chapter 9: *Abhinaya* of minor limbs; hand gestures and their uses;

Chapter 10: Foot movements (*Chari*), their characteristics, kinds and uses; Poses;

Chapter 11: Round movements (mandala);

Chapter 12: Gaits of different characters and for various moods.

Chapter 13: Zonal divisions of the stage; *lokadharmi* and *natyadharmi abhinaya*; break in an act; the *Pravrittis*.

Chapter 14-18: *Vachika abhinaya* and literary aspect;

Chapter 14: Vowels and consonants; their places of origin in the mouth; parts of speech, grammatical cases, euphonic combination, compounds etc; Rules of prosody.

Chapter 15: Metres and their employment

Chapter 16: *Lakshana* and *alankaras*; Diction of a play.

Chapter 17: Rules on the use of Languages; Sanskrit and the Prakrits for dramatic characters; Kaku or intonation; Modes of address in dramatic dialogues;

Chapter 18: Patterns of dramatic compositions (*dasharupa*), their definitions and characteristics.

Chapter 19: Structure of drama; Plot and its constitutions; Junctures (*sandhi*) and their parts; Suggestive devices.

Chapter 20: The four *Vrittis* (*Bharati, Kaishiki, Sattvati* and *Arabhati*).

Chapter 21: *Aharya abhinaya; Nepathya*, its kinds, Ornaments, Make-up and Costumes

Chapter 22: *Samanya* or *Sattvika abhinaya: bhava, hava, hela*; *Lila*, grace of expression and movements; classification of women for dramatic presentation; Moods and mental states; eight kinds of *Nayikas* (heroines) in phases of love (*ashta-nayikas*); certain taboos on stage representation.

Chapter 23: *Vaishika* (expert on matters of love) and his characteristics; the female messengers (*dutis*) – their qualities and role.

Chapter 24: Classification of men as dramatic characters, *nayaka* (hero), *nayika*, other dramatic characters like *Shakara, Vidushaka*, Chief queen, men and women in the harem.

Chapter 25: *Chitrabhinaya;* symbolic representation by gestures and facial expression of moods, things happenings like sunrise, sunset, seasons, scene of action etc. which cannot be actually presented on stage; Modes of speech delivery.

Chapter 26: Introduction of animals etc. on stage; men and women as dramatic characters; two kinds of performance; delicate (*sukumar*) and vigorous (*aviddha*).

Chapter 27: Success of dramatic presentation and competition; factors of success; blemishes leading to failure; principles for judging and selection of a panel of judges; judgment and award of merit (*prataka-dana*); expectation from a dramatic performance; Attitude and response of a spectator.

Chapter 28-34: Section on Music and musical instruments;

Chapter 28: *Jati, svara, murcchana*;

Chapter 29: Musical orchestra and preliminaries.

Chapter 30: Lute and its mode of playing;

Chapter 31: Chapter on tala;

Chapter 32: Dhruva songs; their kinds, composition and enjoyments;

Chapter 33: Qualities and defects of singers and of musical instruments;

Chapter 34: Kinds of drums and their playing.

Chapter 35: Selection of actors for dramatic roles, and the duties and responsibilities of producer director.

Chapter 36: Story of curse on actors for redialing the sages; degradation of actors as a class.

Chapter 37: Descent of drama on earth; Importance and greatness of *Natyashastra.*

It may, however, be noted that in some manuscripts of *Natyashastra*, chapters 36 and 37 have been merged – making the total number of chapters thirty six. From the preceding outline of the structure of the *Natyashastra*, it is obvious that its range and scope is truly encyclopedic in nature. It emphatically underlines the secular and democratic character of drama and critically analyzes the source of the aesthetic pleasure that one derives from seeing a performance; it treats of the architecture of the theatre; gives an elaborate treatment of metres to be employed, the postures, movements and gestures of actors and of the mode in which they are to deliver their speeches, of the different kinds of drama, the analysis of the structures of the drama and their styles. It also furnishes directions about the songs to be sung and the musical instruments to be used and describes in detail the musical notes and their combinations. Above all, it foregrounds a high and noble purpose for the drama, forbids indecent behaviour, scenes or language and holds forth before the actors a high spiritual ideal by saying that if the actors dedicate themselves to their work in a spirit of devotion to their art and attain perfection therein, they will be doing a great service to society and will acquire merit for themselves. According to *Natyashastra*, the drama and the actors had degenerated because of their loose character. *Natyashastra* tried to raise the status of both. There is no denying that *Natyashastra* is unique in the world-literature on dramaturgy because of its comprehensiveness, the sweep and the literary and artistic flair.

Critical Summaries and Analysis of the Prescribed Chapters of *Natyashastra* (I, VI, VII, XX, and XXXIV)

Before critically analyzing Bharata's discourse on drama as enshrined in the prescribed chapters (I, VI, VII, XX, XXXIV) of *Natyashastra*[2] it is worthwhile to discuss the meaning and purpose of *Natya* in order to comprehend a number of issues related to drama-in-theory and drama-in-practice.

Origin and Purpose of *Natya*:-

The term '*natya*' is generally considered synonymous with drama. But it should be cautiously used while using it to refer to the contemporary drama-both Indian and western as Bharata's concept of *natya* was in many ways related to the condition of culture and society of Bharatavarsha (India).

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2 For all textual references to *Natyashastra*, the following text has been referred to in this essay:- *Bharata-Natya-Manjari* (ed. G.K. Bhat), Poona, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1975 subsequently cited as *Natya-Manjari* or NM with page numbers in parentheses.

Natya is supposed to have been produced as a fifth Veda by God Brahma, who asked Bharata to put it to actual performance and production. The divine origin of *natya* may well appear to be an attempt to be stow sanctity and authority on drama, if understood critically. The mythical context of the origin of drama does illumine some basic issues related to the conception of drama:-

(i) The *natya* was created by taking some significant details from each of the four Vedas *pathya* or recitative text from the *Rigveda*, song or melody from *Samavedai*, abhinaya or acting from the *Yajurveda* and rasas or sentiments from the *Atharvaveda*. The elements thus borrowed from the four Vedas make it an intertext of the Vedas- called the "fifth Veda" whose principal elements such as recitation (pathya), songs (gita), emotional states (rasas) and theatrical or histrionic representation (abhinaya) make what we know as *natya*. This is consistent with the structure and stage-representation of drama. But Bharata's account of the origin and of the first dramatic performance before an assembly of gods on the slopes of Kailash mountain clearly shows that the production did not have any recitation or spoken dialogue but consisted mainly of mimetic representation of action, dance-like movements and song. What this mythical description foregrounds is the fact that drama, in its early stages of development must naturally have used these elements only, probably adding improvised speeches before the classical writers took it up and gave it a literary character and full dialogue pattern. But song and dance still remained an important aspect of dramatic production. This is obvious from the account of Narada's contribution of *nirgita,* the advice of Shiva to use varies *Karanas* and *angahara*s or graceful dance movements in the production, the earlier elaborate *purvaranga,* the *nandi* and occasional songs, the dhruva songs sung at various moments in the stage performance, the presence of musicians at the back of the stage throughout the performance of a play, the occasional dances introduced in the drama and the *angika abhinaya* which is closely allied to dance technique.

This element of song and dance is a distinguishing feature of the Sanskrit drama production, which differentiates Sanskrit drama from the Western and modern plays. This is a feature of the visual and audible entertainment (*drishya* and *shravya*) which drama is supposed to provide; and it did not change, presumably, even when drama blossomed into a fine literary genre at the hands of the acclaimed classical masters.

(ii) The spiritual or divine process of the creation of dramatic art symbolizes the typical Bharatiya (or Indian) attitude towards all branches of knowledge and art. They (that is, all kinds of knowledges and arts) are a means of propitiation, a dedication, a worship offered unto the divinity which in its turn, is apt to bring about bliss, welfare and beatitude. In course of time, the elaborate worship implicit in *purvaranga* disappeared no doubt. But the *nandi,* as a prayer for divine blessings for successful dramatic presentation persisted as an inevitable feature of dramatic writing and production, and the *bharata-vakya*, which marks the epilogue of all Sanskrit plays, is yet another symbol of the holy wish for *lok-kalyan* (welfare of the people) and *lok-ranjan* (recreation of people).

Along with the aim of pleasure and entertainment, the writers and producers looked upon drama, as it seems, as a dedication and contribution towards the fulfilment of the goals of human life. It may also be stated here that even the Greek drama originated in the religious festivals celebrated to propitiate Greek gods- Dionysius and Apollo. And the aim of tragedy as well as comedy was to restore the mental equipoise or equanimity in human beings for their own welfare and happiness. This should explain, in brief, why Bharata expects drama not only to please and entertain but also influence and uplift the minds of spectators.

(iii) According to *Natyashastra, natya* was created to meet the demand of a *kridaniyaka*, a play-thing, a source of pleasure and diversion to minds weary of the wants and miseries, the fever and fret of daily existence. Any art form including *natya* can induce a temporary state of forgetfulness of one's immediate surroundings and offers an escape into a world of aesthetic pleasure and happiness. That is, precisely, the purpose of natya. *Natya* can perform this socio-existential function more efficiently and more meaningfully than any other genre of art or literature because of its protean visual (*drashya*) and aural (*shravya*) nature. Its impact on the spectators is direct or immediate as the scenes enacted on the stage involve the agency of human beings (actors) like us. Moreover, the creative imagination (*pratibha)* of the playwright manifest in plot, dialogues, songs and music also

contribute to help the audience identify with the action as well as actors. The immediate involvement of human agency (actors and spectators both) makes it (*natya)* a very special, multi-dimensional and live art form. But Bharata is explicit on this point and reiterates that we cannot think of any piece of knowledge or lore, art or craft, design or activity, that will not enter into the composition and stage-production of drama:-

"There is hardly any knowledge, any artist's craft, any lore, any fine art, any design, any activity, that will not be seen in this *natya*". (*NM* ch. I, 116)[3]

Thus, the drama (*natya)* has a wider appeal and attraction for humanity than any other art form-though this space has largely been usurped recently by cinema which is also a powerful visual-aural modern art form that technologically manipulates human images on the screen to produce a similar natya-like effect. Besides, the representation of life on the stage before our eyes makes *natya* a living experience for us. The emphasis is, however, on "Kridaniyaka" (play-thing) in Bharata's discourse on drama- which eventually emphasizes the aesthetic pleasure and diversion that drama must offer. Even when the play attempted serious emotional representations like *karuna* (the compassion ate), the furious (the raudra), or the heroic, the final effect aimed at was always a healthy spiritual entertainment. That's why we will see later on how and why Shanta rasa was added to the already existing eight rasas (aesthetic emotions). This also partly explains why the Sanskrit drama avoids a formal tragedy and death of the hero, although it does not avoid sorrows and sufferings.

Critical Analysis of Chapter I of *Natyashastra*:

The first chapter of *Natyashastra* focuses on the concept, origin and purpose of *natya* or drama. The important verses of the chapter have been given below for the proper critical understanding of the meaning, scope and purpose of *natya* (or drama) in the Indian tradition. It is significant to remember here that the purpose of *natya* can also be extended to cover the purpose of *Kavya* or *sahitya* (literature or art-forms) in the Indian tradition. It was valid at the time of Bharata (2nd century B.C. to 3rd century A.D.) and it is valid even today because Bharata connects literature or *natya* with culture and society in sense of the term: (*NM* pp 4-15). The following are the important verses of chapter I of *Natyashastra.*

Chapter I

Origin of *Natyaveda*

(7) You should all purify yourselves and listen with attentive minds to the *Natya-veda* as created by God Brahma.

(8-11) O Sages, formerly when the Krta Age and the Period of Svayambhuva Manu were over, the Treta Age and Vaivasvata Manu's Period had set in, and when the (whole) world had started indulging in vulgar conduct, going under the sway of passion and greed and being infatuated with jealousy, anger and such things and experiencing (a mixture of) pleasure and pain, when the Jambu Island supervised by the Guardians of the worlds was overpowered by Gods, Demons, Gandharvas, Yaksas, Giants and great Serpents, (at this juncture) the Grand-father (God-Brahma), was addressed, so they say (*kila)*, by the gods with the great Indra as their spokesman: "We desire for a plaything" (they said), "which will be both worth-hearing and worth-seeing".

(12) The words of this (existing body of) Veda are not to be made known by (the process of) hearing among the low castes.Create, therefore, another fifth Veda which will be available to all the castes.

(13) So be it' saying thus to them and having given leave to the king of the gods, the truth-knower (Brahma) resorted to yogic concentration and recalled to memory the four Vedas.

(14-16) 'I am about to produce', he contemplated 'the fifth Veda called *natya*, along with historical tales, which will conduce to piety, wealth and glory, which will contain (proper) exhortation and all the accessory materials (or traditional saying), and will indicate the path for all kinds of actions to the men of the future generation; it will also be rich the import of all Sastras, induce activity of all arts and crafts. The Divine one having resolved thus in mind, keeping up the recollection of all the Vedas, created then the *Natya-Veda*, produced from portions of the four Vedas.

3 The quotes from *Natyashastra* in English have, throughout this essay, been taken from *Bharata- Natya- Majjari* (ed. G.K. Bhat), Poona, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1975, subsequently referred to as *NM* with page numbers in parentheses.

(17) He took from the *Rigveda* the recitative text and song from the *Samaveda*; the modes of histrionics from the *Yajurveda* and, likewise, sentiments (and emotions) from the *Atharvan.*

(18) The *Natya-veda,* bearing a connection with the Vedas and the auxiliary Vedas, was created in this manner by the high-souled, all-knowing divine Brahma.

(19) Having produced the *Natya-veda,* Brahma then spoke to the Lord of the gods thus " I have created the historical tales; use them though the gods.

(20) Such of them as are skilled, cultured and bold and have mastered fatigue, through them should you arrange transmission of this Veda called *natya*".

Nature and Purpose of Natya

(105) When Brahma heard the statement about 'obstacles' he spoke these words: "O demons (you are) blameless. Withhold your resentment and discard distress.

(106) The *Natya-veda* that I have produced is intended to design the (showing of) good and evil of yours as well as of gods and is expected to be connected with the actions and emotions (of you both).

(107) There will be no one-sided communication of emotion in this of yours of gods. The *natya* (in fact) is depiction and communication pertaining to the emotions of the entire triple world:

(108) Occasionally piety, occasionally sport, occasionally wealth, occasionally peace of mind, occasionally laughter, occasionally fighting, occasionally sexual passion, occasionally slaughter;

(109) the pious behavour of those who practise religion, the passion of those who indulge in sexual pleasure, the repression of those who go by a wicked path, the act of (self-) restraint of those who are disciplined;

(110) creating boldness among those who are important, enthusiasm among those who consider themselves brave, comprehension among those who lack understanding, as also wisdom among the learned;

(111) graceful pleasures for those who wield power, steadiness and comfort for such as are afflicted with pain and misery, (the ways of earning) wealth for those who live by money, courage for those whose mind is despondent

(112) Rich with different kinds of emotions, (built on the) stuff of many stages and situations [*avastha*] and imitating the conduct of the world: (that is what) this *natya* (is, which) I have produced.

(113) Based on the actions of men, high, middling and low, (this *natya*) will produce wholesome instruction, create courage, pastime (entertainment) and pleasure.

(114) This *natya* will be instrumental in producing restfulness, at the proper time, for such as are afflicted with misery, fatigue and sorrow and for poor wretches [*tapasvin*].

(115) It will conduce to piety, glory, healthy life; it will be beneficial, promote, intellectual growth. The *natya* (in brief) will be the instrument of instruction for the world.

(116) There is hardly any knowledge, any artist's craft, any lore, any fine art, any design (in which art, lore and emotions are interconnected), any activity, that will not be seen in this *natya.*

(117) So, you should not entertain any sense of resentment towards the gods. The *natya* (I assure you) will be an imitative presentation of (all) the Seven Islands.

(118) The *natya* should be understood to be an indicator of happenings (in the life) of gods, demons, kings, family-men and sages who have spiritual knowledge.

(119) (In fact) the nature and behaviour [*svabhava*] of the world, intimately connected with happiness and misery, as rendered by physical and other forms of acting, is to be called *natya*".

From the above-quoted verses, it can be easily inferred that the sacred origin of *natya* (involving the mytho-religious context), in a sense, serves a secular (or *laukik*) purpose. For example, the need for a play-thing (*kridaniyaka*) was felt only when "the whole world started indulging in vulgar conduct, going under the sway of passion and greed and being infatuated with jealousy, anger" (see *NM*,Ch. 1.8-11). That is to say, the purpose of *natya* was / is to correct a society that has already decayed to a considerable degree. The disturbance in the secular, civil society in which people have become corrupt, dishonest, violent and greedy is sought to be addressed through the agency of *natya* (drama) which is grounded in the sacred or spiritual values. Hence, the oneness or inseparability of the sacred and the secular in the Indian (aesthetic) tradition. Even a student of English literature will appreciate this ethical aspect of *natya* in Indian tradition as he knows that even Shakespeare's great tragedies like *King Lear* and *Hamlet* remind him of spiritual truths- "Ripeness is all" and "Readiness is all"! In short, natya aims at making one a responsible citizen of a civil society. Furthermore, defining the essential nature of drama, Bharata has made the following statements at different places in *Natyashastra*:-

> "The natya in this world will be an imitation (*anukarana*) of the seven islands". (*NS* Ch.1.116).
>
> "*Natya* is a representational statement (anukirtana) of the emotional states of this entire triple world". (*NS*, Ch 1. 117).
>
> "I have made this *natya* as an imitation of the actions and behaviour of the people (*lokvritta*); it is based on the activities of the best, middling and low men; it consists of various conditions (of human life) and is enriched by various emotional states" (*NS* Ch. 1. 112-113).
>
> "The entire nature of human beings as connected with the experiences of happiness and misery, joy and sorrow, when presented through the process of histrionic representation (abhinaya) is to be called natya". (*NS*, Ch 1, 119).

What Bharata stresses here is the essentially mimetic (representational) character of *natya* that is supposed to represent all kinds of emotional states and situations of human (and super human) life transcending the barriers of nation, religion, culture, race, politics, caste, class and creed. If we assess Shakespeare by using the discourse of Bharata, the greatness of Shakespeare as a master dramatist will seem to lie in his range of creation—an Iago is as versatile as an Imogen; a Prospero is as reliable and lovable as a Caliban and a Shylock is as complex a character as an Antonio!! *Drama or Natya*, according to Bharata, creates an alternative reality, which is neither real nor unreal and is supposed to provide to the diseased society- "piety, glory and healthy life", and will promote "beneficial, intellectual growth". *Natya*, thus, will be "the instrument of instruction for the world (*lokopadeshajananam*)". (*NM* , Ch. 1, 115). *Natya*, based on the imitation or representation of the actions of men, high (*uttama*), middling (*madhyama*) and low (*adhama*), will engender "wholesome instruction (*hitopadeshjananam*), create courage, pastime (entertainment) and pleasure". (*NM*, Ch. 1, 113). *Natya*, according to Bharata is supposed to give space to the subalterns (or the most deprived sections) of our society as "fifth Veda" as it may be read as a counter-discourse to the hegemonic, exclusivist ideology that deprived the shudras of the study of the *Vedas*. In fact, *natya* in the Indian tradition is deeply grounded in "loka " (world) and its multifarious concerns – joys, sorrows, sufferings etc. as is manifest in this verse (*NM*, Ch. 1. 119):-

> "(In fact) the nature and behaviour (svabhava) of the world, intimately connected with happiness and misery, as rendered by physical and other forms of acting is to be called *natya*".

Thus, the two key-words in Bharata's discourse on drama are "*anukarana* (imitation)" and the "emotional" states. Even Aristotle in his *Poetics* emphasizes the notion of drama as "imitation" of human life that excites, and then, pacifies the human emotions. Even the later English critics like Matthew Arnold who considered literature as criticism of life or the Marxist critics like Raymond Williams and Terry Eagleton who focused on the socio-cultural context of a literary text find an echo in Bharata's concept of natya. The Indian concept of natya, in theory, is quite democraticinclusive, people-oriented (that is- progressive or *janavadi*) and plural, geared to the attainment of

some of the most desirable goals of human life such as *dharma* (duty or righteousness), *artha* (wealth) and *kama* (desire) and *moksha* (nirvana or liberation) which constitute the four *purusharthas* (cardinal principles of human life in the Indic traditions.

Even the deconstructionist critics of today who proudly parade their discovery of the "deferral of meaning" would do well to know how well Bharata anticipated their critical insights:- *Natya*, according to Bharata produces different kinds of meanings like "graceful pleasures for those who wield power, steadiness and comfort for those who are afflicted with pain and misery, wealth for those who live by money, courage for those whose mind is despondent and fortitude in the conduct of human beings" (*NM*, Ch.1, 111-112).

Critical Analysis of Chapters VI and VII of *Natyashastra*

Chapter VI: Theory of Rasa (Aesthetic Experience):

The sixth chapter of Bharata's *Natyashastra* is the most important part of his discourse on dramaturgy. It deals with the theory of *rasa* (or aesthetic or imaginative experience) which is one of the most significant concepts in Indian aesthetics or literary theory. This is so because Bharata consciously subordinates other elements in the theatre to rasa and explicitly says: "Without rasa no dramatic device is of any importance". (*NS* Ch. VI [illegible]) Hence acquaintance with the actual verses and the technical terms of the sixth chapter[4] (*adhyaya*) is an absolute necessity for any student of classical Sanskrit literature, and in fact for anybody who wishes to understand one of the most sensitive and profound theories of drama ever created. The sixth chapter deals with the definition, basis and manifestation of aesthetic experience or pleasure called *rasa*.

In order to understand not only *rasa* but also *bhavas, vibhavas, sthayibhava, vyabhicharibhava* [illegible] and several issues related to the production, reception and dissemination of rasa through dramatic performance it will be worthwhile to read the sixth chapter in full.

Chapter VI

The Rasadhyaya of the *Natyashastra*

(1) All the great sages, after listening to the rules on the *purvaranga*, spoke again to Bharata the Sage: Please answer for us these five questions.

(2) Theorists speak of "rasas" in drama- please tell us wherein lies the essence of these *rasas*.

(3) What are *bhavas* (emotions), and what do they create (*bhavayanti*)? What really are *samgraha* [illegible] and *nirukta*?

(4) When Bharata the sage heard their request, he gave an answer defining *rasa* and *bhava* [illegible] said

(5) Sages of great asceticism, I will tell you everything you want to know about *samgraha* [illegible] and *nirukta* respectively.

(6) It is of course impossible to deal comprehensively with drama. Why? Because there is so much special knowledge (that is important to understand drama) and because you can never exhaust the subject of the practitioners.

(7) Since it is not possible to exhaustively investigate even one (branch of) knowledge [illegible] how could you ever investigate all of them thoroughly (*arthatativatas*)?

(8) Still I will list the *rasas* and *bhavas* of drama giving very concisely the subject matter [illegible] aphoristic definitions (*sutra*) and their exposition so that (this list) will allow one to infer [illegible] (*anumanaprasadhaka*).

(9) Authorities defines *sangraha* as a concise list of the topics extensively dealt with [illegible]

4 All the quotes from the sixth chapter of *Natyashastra* (in English) have been taken from *Aesthetic Rapture* [illegible] Patrvardhan) Vol. 1, Poona, Deccan College P.G. Research Institute, 1970. Further cited as *AR* with page no. [illegible]

(10) Such a list (of the main subjects of dramatic theory includes) *rasas, bhavas,* acting, conventions (or practice), *vrttis, pravrttis,* success (of the performance), musical notes (*svara*), as well as instrumental music, singing and stage-craft.

(11) Experts say that in a *karika* a subject is briefly (*samasena*) set down, i.e. in a few words (*alpabhidhanena*), and in the manner of an aphorism (*sutratah*), (so that it) explains the essential point (*arthapradarsini*).

(12) A *nirukta* (etymological explaination) is based on the various nominal forms used in the definition, contains (justifications from) dictionaries and grammatical analyses as well as (considerations) of the meanings of the verbal roots and of the syntactic relations involved and takes into account differing views.

(13) When the meaning (of a particular word), which (in turn) throws light on the meaning (of the whole sentence), is established by giving the meaning of the root (from which this particular word is derived), that is called *nirukta* (etymological explanation).

(14) O best of Brahmins, I have given briefly the *sangraha*. Now I will speak of those topics in more details and include *nirukta* and *karikal.*

(15) In a drama there are the following eight *rasas*: erotic (*sringara*), comic (*hasya*), compassionate (*karuna*), furious (*raudra*), heroic (*vira*), terrifying (*bhayanaka*), disgusting (*bihhatsa*) and awesome (*adbhuta*).

(16) For the great Brahma has declared that these are eight *rasas*. Now I will list the *bhavas*- those that are primary (*sthayi*), those that (only) accompany the primary emotions (and are thus transitory) (*sancari*), and those expressions of feeling that stem from a deep-felt emotion (*sattvaja*).

(17) The permanent emotions have been declared to be love (*rati*), amusement (or laughter) (*hasa*), sorrow (*shoka*), anger (*krodha*), dynamic energy (*utsaha*), fear (*bhaya*), disgust (*jugupsa*) and wonder (*vismaya*).

(18-21) The thirty-three accompanying transitory states should be known as : world weariness (*nirveda*), physical weakness (*glani*), anxiety (*shanka*), envy (*asuya*), intoxication (*mada*), fatigue (*shrama*), laziness (alasya), depression (*dainya*), worry (*chinta*), confusion (*moha*), remembrance (*smrti*), peace of mind (*dhrti*), shame (*vrida*), rashness (*chapalata*), joy (*harsha*), panic (*avega*), lifelessness (*jadata*), pride (*garva*), dejection (*vishada*), longing (*autsukya*), sleeping (*nidra*), apoplexy (*apasmara*), dreaming (*supta*), awakening (*vibodha*), resentment (*amarsha*), dissimulation (*avahittha*), violence (*ugrata*), attentiveness (*mati*), sickness (*vyadhi*), insanity (*unmad*), death (*marana*), fright (*trasa*) and perplexity (*vitarka*). They are explained (*samakhyata*) by their name (i.e. they are *anvarthanama*, or "significant").

(22) The eight involuntary states are : paralysis (*stambha*), perspiration (*sveda*), horripilation (goose-flesh)(*romancha*), faltering voice (*svarabhanga*), trembling (*vepathu*), change of color (*vaivarnya*), tears (*ashru*) and fainting (*pralaya*).

(23) In drama there are four kinds of dramatic representation (*abhinaya*): that which uses the body (*angika*), that which uses speech (*vachika*), that which uses costume (*natyadharmi*).

(24-26) Convention (or practice) (*dharmi*) is divided into two kinds: that which obtains in the real world (*lokadharmi*), and that which is peculiar to the drama (*natyadharmi).*

A play is based on the four *vrttis* (styles): *Bharati, Sattvati, Kaishiki* and *Arabhati.*

The *pravrttis* (usages prevalent in a local district) are: *Avanti, Daksinatya, Odramagadhi* and *Panchalamadhyama*. Success (*siddhi*) is of two kinds: divine and human.

(27-30) There are seven *svaras* (in music) such *sadja* etc. which can be sung, or played on a stringed instrument. The four kinds of musical instruments are: Tata, Avanaddha, Ghana and Sushira and here is their explanation (*lakshana*):

Tata is a stringed instrument. Avanaddha is a percussion instrument (such as a drum). Ghana is an instrument like a cymbal and the Sushira is a hollow instrument (such as a flute).

There are five kinds of songs each accompanied by a *dhruva* : that which is sung on (an actor's) entrance (*pravesa*), that which accompanies the transition from one emotion to another (*akshepa*), that which is sung on (an actor's) exit (*niskrama*), that which conveys (the character's) mental mood (*prasadika)*, and that which is sung as the character moves about on the stage (*antara*). A stage is of three kinds : square, rectangular and triangular.

(31) Thus I have given a summary of the dramaturgic topics in a small number of verses. Now I will give the *sutragranthavikalpana,* i.e. an investigation of the definitions of these topics and my comments on these definitions.

Among these topics, we will first of all explain what are *rasas*. For without *rasa* no topic (of drama) can appeal (to the mind of the spectator) (*na hi rasad rte kascid arthahpravartate*- perhaps, "For without *rasa*, there can be no (true) meaning, i.e. no real poetry."). *Rasa comes from a combination of the vibhavas, the anubhavas and the vyabhicaribhavas (vibhavanubhavavyabhicharisamyogad rasanispattih).*

What is a (good) analogy? Here is one: Just as flavour (*rasa*) comes from a combination of many spices, herbs and other substances (*dravya*), so *rasa* (in a drama) comes from the combination (*upagama*) of many *bhavas*. For example, in the same way that beverages such as *shadava* (a combination of the six flavours) are created (*nirvartyante*) from substances such as molasses, spices (*vyanjana*) and herbs (*oshadhi*), the permanent emotions attain the status of *rasa* when they are accompanied (*upagata*) by the various *bhavas*. At this point someone (might) ask: What is it you call *rasa?* The answer is : (It is called *rasa*) because it can be savoured (*asvadyatvat*). How is *rasa* savoured? *As* gourmets (*sumanas*) are able to savor the flavour of food prepared with many spices, and attain pleasure etc., so sensitive spectators (*sumanas*) savor the primary emotions suggested (*abhivyanjita*) by the acting out of the various *bhavas* and presented with the appropriate modulation of the voice, movements of the body and display of involuntary reactions, and attain pleasure etc. Therefore they are called (*abhivyakhyatah*) *natyarasas* (dramatic flavours). On this same subject there are the following two traditional (*anuvamsya*) verses:

(32) As gourmets (*bhaktavit*) savor food prepared with many tasty ingredients (*dravya*) and many spices

(33) So sensitive people (*budha*) enjoy in their minds the permanent emotions presented with different kinds of the acting out of (transient) emotions (and presentation of their causes). This is why (these primary emotions) are known as *natyarasas.*

Now one might ask: Do the *bhavas* come from *rasa,* or does *rasa come* from the *bhavas*. Some hold that they arise from their relation of mutual dependence, but this is not true. Why? Because we find that *rasas* come from the *bhavas,* but *bhavas* do not come from *rasas*. On this point there are the following verses:

(34) Those who stage dramas (*natyayoktr*) should know that the *bhavas* are so called because they give rise to (*bhavayanti*) *rasas* that are related to the various kinds of acting.

(35) As a spicy (flavour) is created from many substances (*dravya*) of different kinds, in the same way the *bhavas* along with (various kinds of) acting, create *rasas*.

(36) (In literature) there is no *rasa* without *bhava,* nor any *bhava* without *rasa*. Their realization in gesture is dependent on their relation of mutual dependence.

(37) As a combination of herbs and spices will bring (*nayet*) food to tastiness (*svadutam*), in the same *bhavas* and *rasa* create (*bhavayanti*) each other.

(38) As a tree arises from a seed, and from the tree a flower and fruit, so all the *rasas* are the roots, and on them are founded the *bhavas.*

Now we will give the origin (utpatti), the colors, the presiding deities, and examples (*nidarshana*) of these *rasas*. There are four (major) *rasas* which give rise to the other four. (The original four are) : The erotic, the wrathful, the heroic and the disgusting. On this point (there are the following verses):

(39) The comic aesthetic experience comes from the erotic. The compassionate comes from the furious. The awesome aesthetic experience comes from the heroic and the terrifying from the disgusting.

(40) An imitation (*anukrti)* of the erotic is known as the comic. The result (karma) of the furious should be known to be an aesthetic experience of compassion.

(41) The result of the heroic (*rasa*) is known as the awesome, and the sight of the disgusting (gives rise to) the terrifying.

Now for the colors:

(42-43) The erotic rasa is a shining dark (*shyama*). The comic is said to be white. The compassionate is a light grey (k*apota*) and the furious is said to be red. The heroic *rasa* should be known to be light green or skin-color (*gaura*) and the terrifying is black. The disgusting is blue and the awesome yellow (*pita*).

Now the presiding deities :

(44) The presiding deity of the erotic *rasa* is Vishnu; of the comic it is Pramatha (the attendants of Shiva); for the furious (rasa) it is Rudra; Yama is the god of the compassionate;

(45) Shiva of the disgusting. The god of time is the presiding deity of the terrifying *rasa;* Indra is the god of the heroic and Brahma of the awesome.

In this manner the origins, the colors and the presiding gods of the *rasas* have been set forth. Now we will explain the definitions and examples (or the *rasas*) with their *anubhavas, vibhavas and vyabhicaribhavas.* And we will bring (*upanesyamah*) the *sthayibhavas* to the status of *rasas.*

Of the various *rasas,* the erotic one arises from the *sthayibhava* love. Whatever in the ordinary world is bright, pure (*medhya*), shining or beautiful, is associated with love. For example, people say that a man who wears beautiful clothes must be in love. As people are given names according to paternal (*gotra*) and maternal (*kula*) descent and their professions on the basis of a reliable tradition (*aptopadesasidha*), so the names of the *rasas, bhavas* and other elements (*artha*) connected with the drama (are given) on the basis of an unbroken tradition according to custom (*achara?*) This is why the erotic *rasa,* because it consists in a charming and beautiful dress is called by a name (namely shring*ara*) which has become established through (conventional) usage. It has for its (*alambana*) *vibhavas* young men and women who are noble-born. It has two major divisions : love in union, and love in separation. To begin with love in union : It arises from (*uddipana*)- *vibhavas* such as a (representation) of the seasons, garlands, ointments, ornaments, people dear to one, objects of the senses, fine homes, love-making (*upabhoga*), going to gardens (and there) experiencing, listening to and seeming, games, sexual play and so forth. It should be acted out by such *anubhavas* as a skilful (use) of the eyes, frowing side-glances. flirtatious movements (*lalita*), gentle bodily movements (*angahara*), and soft speech. The accompanying transitory emotions that do not belong to love are laziness, violence, disgust. As for love in separation, it should be acted out by *anubhavas* such as world-weariness, physical weakness, anxiety, envy, fatigue, worry, longing, dreaming, awakening, sickness, insanity, apoplexy, lifelessness, and death. Now one might ask: If this erotic aesthetic experience arises from love, how can its *bhavas* (i.e. *anubhavas*) (also) belong to the compassionate? The answer is as follow: We have said above that the erotic (*rasa*) is divided into love in union and love in separation. Writers on erotics (*vaisikasastra*) have explained that love has ten stages. We will give these in the chapter on *samanya* acting.

The compassionate (*rasa*), on the other hand, consists in all loss of hope of ever meeting again (*nirapeksabhava*), and arises from suffering due to a curse (*sapaklesa*), a fall in status (*vinipatita*) of one's beloved, his imprisonment, his death or the loss of wealth. Love in separation consists in retaining some hope of meeting again (*sapeksabhava*) and arises from longing and worry. And so the compassionate (*rasa*) is one thing, and love in separation is another. Thus the erotic (*rasa*) is accompanied by all *bhavas*. Moreover:

(46) A man who has a young woman, enjoys the seasons, garlands and the like, and is provided with agreeable things, is said to (experience) love (*srngara*).

There are two Arya stanzas on the same subject as this *sutra:*

(47) An aesthetic experience of love arises from listening to music and poems with one's beloved, and from enjoying the seasons, garlands, ornaments, going to gardens and walking.

(48) It should be acted out by showing a pleasant face and eyes, a smile and pleasant words, mental contentment and delight as well as by graceful body movements.

As for the comic (*rasa*), it consists of (or is based on) the primary emotion of laughter. It arises from such *vibhavas* as wearing clothes and ornaments that belong to someone else or do not fit (*vikrta*), shamelessness (*dharstya*), greed (*laulya*), tickling certain sensitive parts of the body (*kuhaka*), telling fantastic tales (*asatpratapa*), seeing some (comic) deformity (*vyanga*), and describing faults (*dosodahanana*). It should be acted out by puffing out the cheeks, the nose, the lips, widening and contracting one's eyes, sweating, coloring of the face, grabbing one's sides (in laughter) and so forth. The ephemeral emotions (that accompany it) are : dissimulation, laziness, drowsiness (*tandra*), sleep, dreaming, awakening, envy, etc. It is of two kinds: existing in oneself, and existing in another person. When one laughs at one's own, that laughter is said to be existing in oneself. When one causes another person to laugh, then the laughter is said to be existing in another person. On this subject there are the following two traditional Arya stanzas:

(49) One laughs because of misplaced ornaments, eccentric behaviour, language and dress, and other peculiar actions (*arthavishesa*?), and the resulting aesthetic experience is known as the comic (*rasa*)

(50) Because one can make people laugh by eccentric actions, words, and bodily movements and dress, therefore the resulting sentiment (*rasa*) should be known as the comic.

(51) This sentiment is to be found primarily among women and low-class people. It has six varieties which I shall now enumerate:

(52) Smiles, slight laughter, open laughter (*vihasita*), mocking laughter (*upahasita*), loud laughter and excessive laughter. The first two are characteristic of noble characters, the second two of common (*Madhya*) characters, and the last two of the lowest characters.

On this subject (it has been said):

(53) Smiles and slight laughter are characteristic of the best characters, and open laughter and mocking laughter are found among common characters. Loud laughter and excessive laughter belong to the lowest class (of people).

There are (also) the following verses:

(54) In a smile, which is characteristic of noble characters, the cheeks are only a little expanded, and one's glances are elegantly suggestive. The teeth are not visible and the smile is restrained (*dhira*)

(55) In slight laughter the eyes begin to dilate, the cheeks are puffed out, and the mouth is slightly open. The teeth are also partially visible.

Now for the common characters:

(56) In open laughter the eyes are slightly contracted (*akunchita*) and the cheeks fully distended. The sound of the laughter is soft. The laughter is appropriate to the occasions, and the face is colored.

(57) In mocking laughter the nostrils are distended, the eyes squint and the shoulders and head are bent.

Now for the lowest characters:

(58) In loud laugher one laughs out of place, with tears in one's eyes, and the shoulders and head are shaking (with laughter).

(59) In excessive laughter the eyes are swollen and bathed in tears, and there are loud and violent cries and one holds one's sides with one's hands.

(60) Thus one should give expression to (or act out) (*prayojayet*) occasions for laughter that arise in the course of the action, according to whether the characters are highborn, common or low-class.

(61) And one should know that the aesthetic experience of the comic is two-fold in so far as it arises in oneself or in someone else. Its three stages (*avastha*) correspond to the three types of characters.

Now (the *rasa*) known as *karuna* arises from the permanent emotion of sorrow. It proceeds from *vibhavas* such as a curse, affliction (*klesa,* or "affliction of a curse"), separation from those who are dear, (their) downfall, loss of wealth, death and imprisonment, or from contact with misfortune (*vyasana*), destruction (*upaghata*), and calamity (*vidrava*). It should be acted out by tears, laments, drying up of the mouth, change of color, languour in the limbs, sighs, loss of memory etc. Its *vyabhicharibhavas* are: world-weariness, physical weariness, worry, longing panic, mental aberration (*bhrama*), confusion, weariness, fear, dejection, depression, sickness, lifelessness, insanity, apoplexy, fright, laziness, death, paralysis, trembling, change of color, tears, change of voice and the like.

On this subject there are two Arya stanzas :

(62) *Karunarasa* comes into being from certain causes (*bhava* i.e., *vibhava*) such as hearing bad news, or seeing a person one cherishes killed.

(63) *Karunarasa* should be acted out by loud sobbing, fainting, lamenting, wailing, abusing the body violently and beating it.

Now (the *rasa*) called *raudra* has anger for its permanent emotion. Demons, monsters and violent men are its characters. It is caused by battles. It arises (sic) from such *vibhavas* as anger, provocative actions (*adharshana*), insult (*adhikshepa*), lies, assault (*upaghata*), harsh words, oppression (*abhidroha*, or according to Abhinavagupta "murderous intent"), and envy. The appropriate actions that accompany it are : beating, splitting open (*patana*), crushing, ripping open, breaking, brandishing of weapons (*praharanaharana*), hitting so as to inflict a wound (*samprahara*), hitting without inflicting a wound (*sashtrasampata*), drawing of blood, etc.. It should be acted out by red eyes, furrowing of the brows, biting one's lips and grinding one's teeth, puffing out the cheeks, wringing the hands, and similar gestures. Its (*vyabhicari*)- *bhavas* are: correct perception (*asammoha*), dynamic energy (*utsaha*), panic, resentment, rashness, violence, pride, sweat, trembling, horripilation, stuttering (*gadgada*) and so forth. Now (one might) ask: It was said that *raudrarasa* pertains to demons, monsters, etc. Does this mean that it does not apply to others? The reply is that *raudrarasa* applies equally to others as well. However it is predominant (*adhikara*) among these particular creatures. For they are by their very nature violent. Why? Because they have many arms, many mouths, their hair is yellow and lies in a wild mess on their heads, their wide-opened eyes are red and their black bodies are terrifying. Generally they even make love in a violent fashion. Men who imitate them give rise to *raudrarasa* (in the spectator) from blow and battles. On this subject there are the following two traditional (*anuvamsya*) *Arya stanzas.*

(64) *Raudra* is produced by wounding, savage mutilation (*vikrtachchedana*), cutting and striking in battles, by the tumult of war and the like.

(65) It should be acted out by special effects (i.e. tricks ? *arthavishesa*) such as the release of many missiles, and cutting off the head, the trunk or the arms.

(66) Such is *raudrarasa* in which words and actions are terrifying. There is a great deal of armed assault in it, and it consists in cruel actions and deeds.

Now (the *rasa*) called *vira* has (only) noble people for its characters and consists in dynamic energy (*utsaha*). It arises from such *vibhavas* as: correct perception, decisiveness (*adhyavasaya*), political wisdom (*nyaya*), courtesy (*vinaya*), an army (*bala*), bravery skill in battle (*shakti*), might (*pratapa*), eminence (*prabhava*) etc. It should be acted out by such *anubhavas* as firmness, patience, heroism,

(66) Such is *raudrarasa* in which words and actions are terrifying. There is a great deal of armed assault in it and it consists in cruel actions and deeds.

Now (the *rasa*) called *vira* has (only) noble people for its characters and consists in dynamic energy (*utsaha*). It arises from such *vibhavas* as: correct perception, decisiveness (*adhyavasaya*), political wisdom (*nyaya*), courtesy (*vinaya*), an army (*bala*), bravery skill in battle (*shakti*), might (*prabhava*), eminence (*prabhava*) etc. It should be acted out by such *anubhavas* as firmness, patience, heroism generosity and shrewdness (*vaisaradya*). Its (*vyabhicari*)-*bhavas* are happiness, attentiveness, pride, panic, violence, resentment, remembrance, and horripilation. There are the following two Arya stanzas in the *Rasavicaramukha* (on this subject):

(67) *Virarasa* is dynamic energy (*utsaha*) which arises from various causal factors (*arthavisesa*) such as decisiveness, not giving way to depression (*avisada*), not being surprised or confused.

(68) *Virarasa* is properly acted out by firmness, patience, heroism, pride, dynamic energy (*utsaha*), bravery, might, and profound remarks (*akesepakrtavakya*).

Now (the *rasa*) called *bhayanaka* has fear as its permanent emotion. It arises from such *vibhavas* as ghastly noises, seeing supernatural beings (ghosts), fear and panic due to the (cries) of owls (or the howling of) jackals, going to an empty house or to a forest, hearing about, speaking about, or seeing the imprisonment or murder of one's relatives. It should be acted out by such actions as trembling of the hands and feet, darting motions of the eyes, the hair standing on end, changing facial colour (i.e. going white with fear) or stuttering. Its (*vyabhicari*) *bhavas* are : paralysis, sweating, stuttering, horripilation, trembling, a break in the voice, change of color, anxiety, confusion, depression, panic, rashness, lifelessness, fright apoplexy, death and so forth. On this subject there are the following Arya stanzas.

(69) Pretended (*krtaka*) *bhayanaka* results from an offence against a Guru or a king. (Bhayanaka also arises from (hearing) a ghastly noise, seeing a supernatural being, going to battle, to a forest, or to an empty house.

(70) Terror (*bhaya*) (can be acted out?) by violent changes (*bheda*) of the limbs, the face or the eyes, (such as) paralysis of the legs, looking about in panic, collapsing (*sanna*) (on the ground), drying up of the mouth, palpitation of the heart, and horripilation.

(71) The above is genuine (fear). It should be represented as arising from deeply felt emotions (*sattvasamuttha*). Pretended (fear) should be acted out by means of the same *bhavas* (i.e. *anubhavas*), only with milder gestures.

(72) *Bhyanaka* should always be acted out by trembling of the hands and feet, paralysis of the limbs (*sattvasamutta*?) fast beating of the heart, and dryness of the lips, palate and throat.

Now (the *rasa*) known as *bibhatsa* has disgust as its permanent emotion. It arises from such *vibhavas* as discussing, hearing, or seeing what is ugly, unpleasant, unclean (*acosya*) and undesired. It should be acted out by contractions of the whole body (*sarvangasamhara*), facial contractions (*mukhavikunana*), vomiting (*ullekhana*), spitting, violent trembling of the body (*udvejana*), and similar gestures. Its (*vyabhicari*) *bhavas* are apoplexy, agitation (*udvega*), panic, confusion, sickness, death and the like. On this *rasa* there are the following two traditional Arya stanzas:

(73) *Bibhatsarasa* arises from seeing something one doesn't like, from unpleasant smells, tastes, physical contacts words and from many violent tremblings of the body.

(74) It can be well acted out by contortions of the mouth and eyes, holding one's nose, head, and unsteady steps.

Now (the *rasa*) called *adbhuta* has for its permanent emotion wonder. It arises from such *vibhavas* as seeing heavenly beings, gaining one's desired object, going to a temple, a garden (*upavana*) or a meeting place, or (seeing) a flying chariot, a magic show (*maya*), or a juggler's show. It should be acted out by such *anubhavas* as opening one's eyes wide, staring, horripilation, sweat, tears, ecstatic delight, cries of "bravo", the donation of gifts, continuous (*prabandha*) cries of "Oh", "Oh", waving the arms, nodding the head (in agreement and admiration), waving one's clothes or one's fingers. Its (*vyabhicari*)-*bhavas* are paralysis, tears, sweat, stuttering, horripilation, panic, flurry, lifelessness, fainting, etc. On this subject there are the following two traditional Arya stanzas.

(75) One should know that all the following are *vibhavas* of *adbhutarasa* : any speech that contains an unusual idea, any unusual work of art (*shilpa*) or any remarkable act (*karmarupa*).

(76) It should be acted out by such gestures as touching and seizing (parts of one's body) (*sparsagraha?*), shouts of "Oh!" (How wonderful!), and cries of "Bravo!", "Well done!", stuttering, trembling and sweating.

(77) *Shringara* is of three kinds, in so far as it is suggested by speech costume or by action. *Hasya* and *raudra* are also of three kinds, suggested by the body, by costume and by speech.

(78) *Karuna* is traditionally considered three-fold as well, since it arises from obstruction (*upghata?*) of *dharma* (religious observances), from the loss of wealth and from sorrow.

(79) Brahma said that *virarasa* is also of three kinds: heroism in generosity, heroism in religion, and heroism in battle.

(80) *Bhayanaka* is also of three varieties : arising from simulated (fear), deriving from some offence (A : from a thief), and from terror (*vitrasitaka*).

(81) *Bibhatsa* is of two kins: *ksobhaja* (that which arises from agitation) and pure *udvegi* (that which is nauseating). *Udvegi* (*bibhatsarasa*) comes from (seeing) faeces, worm (etc.), and the other comes from (seeing) blood etc.

(82) *Adbhutarasa* has been said to be two-fold: that which is divine and that which is born from joy. The divine (*adbhutarasa*) arises from seeing heavenly sights, and the *adbhutarasa* which is born from joy comes from delight (i.e. the fulfilment of one's desires).

(83) Thus one should understand the eight *rasas* which I have illustrated with definitions. In what follows I will define the *bhavas* as well.

Chapter VII

Bhavas: The Emotional States

In order to fully comprehend the theory of *rasa,* it is in order to read the important verses of the seventh chapter of *Natyashastra*[5] which describes *bhavas, anubhvas, sthayibhavas* and *vyabhicharibhavas* in detail.

We shall now explain the emotional states (*Bhavas*) : One may ask here: why are the *bhavas* so called? Are they so called because they exist, denote existent things (*bhavayanti*), or because, they bring about the existence of something (*bhavayanti*)? We reply: The *bhavas* bring about (i.e. lead to the awareness of) poetic contents (*kavyartha*) through words, physical gestures and movements, and psycho-physical representation; hence, the (name) *bhavas.*

'*Bhu*' is a root denoting instrumentation or causation (*kārana*); it follows that *bhavita* (caused to be made, brought about), *vasita* (made to live), *krta* (caused to be made or produced) are synonyms. Such (expression as the following) is quite well-known even among common folk : 'Oh, all this is *bhavita* (made to possess, infused or pervaded) by this fragrance or juicy taste!' The meaning in such (expressions) is that of 'prevading'.

About this there are some (traditional) verses:

(1) The content which is brought for the by the stimulants (*vibhava*) becomes a matter of awareness (*gamyate*) (to the spectators) by the (manifestation of) the consequents (physical impacts produced, *anubhava*) and by the concentrated acting modes (*sattva-abhinaya*) of words and physical gestures: such content is given the name *bhava* or emotional state.

(2) The *bhava* is so called as it brings about (reveals, *bhavayan*) the inner idea of the poet and makes it pervade (*bhavayan*) (the mind of the spectators) through the (representation of) words, physical gestures, colour or emotional expression of the face, and through the acting (*abhinaya*) which is the result of complete concentration and absorption (*sattva*).

Vibhava

Now, why the term *Vibhava?* This is answered (as follows) : *Vibhava* has the meaning of distinct, specific knowledge. *Vibhava, karana* (cause), *nimitta* (instrument), *hetu* (reason) are synonyms. As words, physical gestures and the psycho-physical acting [connected with the representation of stable and transitory mental

5 Verses from the seventh chapter of *Natyashastra* have been taken from *Bharata- Natyamanjari* (ed. G.K. Bhat); Pune, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1975, pp. 93-109.

states] are specifically determined by this (*vibhavyante*), it is therefore called *Vibhava* Determinant or Stimulant. So that, *vibhavita* has the same meaning as *vijnata* (clearly known, determined)

Here, there is a verse:

(4) As many matters based on verbal and physical acting are determined by this [for the actor, and as many matters arising through the verbal and physical acting are distinctly comprehended by the spectator], this (causative, stimulating or determining factor) is given the name *Vibhava.*

Anubhava

Now, wherefore the name *Anubhava?* The reply is : by it the (particular) acting rendered through words, physical gestures and *sattva* is made to be felt (*anu-bhavyate*) as an after-effect (*anu*) [of the impact of the emotional stimulant].

There is a verse about this:

(5) Since the emotional content (of art, *artha*) is made to be felt by the (particular) acting through words and physical gestures, the term *anubhava* (consequent or physical reactions) is therefore used; it is connected with the flourish of hand-gesture (*sakha*) as well as the gestures of the major and minor limbs of the body.

Vibhava (Emotional States) and Rasa

The emotional States (*bhavas*) are explained in this manner as connected with Determinants or Stimulants (*vibhava*) and Consequents (*anubhava*). These emotional states achieve their existence only thus. Therefore we shall explain the characteristics and examples of these emotional states connected with Determinants and Consequents.

In this connection the Vibhava and the Anubhava are quite familiar among the common people. Besides, as they closely follow human nature their characteristics are not defined; and this is for avoiding verbal prolixity

There is however a verse in this connections:

(6) The wise should know that the Vibhava and the Anubhava are (such matters) in the (art of) acting as are actually created (*sam-siddha*) by human nature and as closely follow the ways of human nature and wordly conduct (*loka-vritta*).

Now in the matter (of emotional states), the Stable or permanent mental states (*sthayinah*) are eight and the Transitory states (*vyabhicarinah*) are thirty two. There is a further separate group of eight Psycho-physical states (*sattvikah*). These fortynine emotional states should thus be recognised as the causal factors for the artistic revelation (*abhivyakti*) of the poetic content (*kavya-rasa* : its charm and relish) From these arise the *rasas by* [i.e. when the presentation acquires] the quality of universality.

The verse in this connection is:

(7) The emotional state pertaining to the art-content (*artha*) which evokes a hearty communion is the source of rasa; by it the body is pervaded as dry wood is enveloped by fire.

A question is asked in this connection : If the *Rasas* are turned out by the forty nine emotional states which are connected with the content of poetic compositions and which are manifested (or suggestively conveyed, *vyanjita*) through the Stimulants and Consequents, and by (the fact of the presentation) acquiring the quality of universality, how is it that the Permanent mental states (*sthayinah bhavah*) alone are said to obtain the status of Rasa (aesthetic charm and relish)? (This) is (to be) said (in reply) : Just as (some particular) human beings, though they have common characteristics, similar hands, feet, bellies and body, and major and minor limbs common (with everyone else), acquire the status of king on account of their excellence (*vichakshanatva*) of birth of family, moral character, learning and (skill in) arts (*karma*) and crafts (*shilpa*), while there (among the human beings) others possessed of limited intellect become attendants of those very beings (who attain kingship) : in a similar manner the Determinants, Consequents and the Transitory states remain under the wing of the Permanent mental states. Being the shelter of many (mental states), the Permanent mental states appear as masters. Like the men who become subordinate (*gunabhutah*) to the human being who occupies

the position of master commanding them (*tadratsthaniya-purusa*) the other emotional states by being subordinate to them (*gunataya*) and on account of their (i.e. of the *Sthayibhavas*) excellence (*gunataya*). The Permanent states attain the status of Rasa. The Transitory emotional states become their retinue.

One may ask: Is there any illustrative example? [Yes] Just as the Lord of men, although surrounded by a retinue of many men, alone gets the name (king), and no one else however great he may be, in a similar manner the Permanent mental state surrounded by Stimulants, Consequents and Transitory states gets the name of Rasa.

There is a verse in this connection:

(8) Just as the king is great among men and the preceptor among the pupils, likewise among all emotional states, in the context of art (*iha*), the Permanent mental state is decidedly (*hi*) great.

V*yabhicari-bhavas*

We will now explain the transient emotional states. One may ask here: wherefore are they called *vyabhicarins?* It may be replied : *vi* and *abhi* are two prepositions; *char* is a root employed in the sense of movement or motion. The *vyabhicarins* are so called because they (the transient emotional states) move (*charanti*) prominently towards (*abhi : abhimukhyena*) (and) in relation to the rhetorical Sentiments (*rasesu*) in a variety of ways (*vi : vividham*). Equipped with the (acting based on) speech, body and concentrated mind, these lead or carry [the spectators], in actual dramatic performance, to the poetic sentiments; hence they are called *vyabhicharins.*

Here one may ask: how do they carry? The reply is : this is a proven matter in the world. Just as (when people say): 'The Sun carries this day or the constellation of stars', it is not meant by that (statement) that these are carried on arms or shoulders. However, this is (a) well-known (saying) among the people of the world. Just as the Sun is supposed to carry the constellation of stars or the day, in the same way these *Vyabhicarins* should be understood [to carry the sentiments, lead the spectators to them].

Sattvika-bhavas

Here one may ask: are these states called *Sattvika*, because others (like V*ibhava, Anubhva, Vyabhicari*) are represented on the stage without *sattva?* The reply is (as follows):

In the context (of our discussion) *sattva* is something that originates in mind. It is so called on account of the equipoised state of mind. When the mind attains perfect concentration *sattva* is produced. Now, whatever its nature manifesting itself as horripilation, tears, loss of colour and the like, according to the association with a particular emotional state, that cannot be represented by one whose mind is state, that cannot be represented by one whose mind is distracted. And *sattva* is desired for *natya* [drama and its performance], as (the latter) imitates human nature.

Any example to illustrate this ? Here the emotional states produced by (the experience of) happiness and misery are set in accordance with theatrical conventions; they should be so rendered with pure *sattva* as to be identical with emotional states [in real-life experience]. Now sorrow or misery is in the main weeping; how could it be acted on the stage by one who is not sorrowful, and happiness which is mainly joy be acted by one who is not happy? This, in fact, is the actor's (*tasya*) *sattva* [engrossment or concentration of mind] that, whether he be [really] sorrowful or happy, he should [be in a position to] show tears and horripilation. Having regard to this [aspect of stage presentation] the emotional states are expounded as *sattvika bhavas.*

A Summing-up

(118) These *sattvika bhavas* which are substantially connected with different kinds of histrionic representation, they are all to be included [lit, understood] in these poetic sentiments by the producers of plays.

(119) A poetic composition cannot ever be supposed to arise out of one sentiment only.

Whether it is an Emotional State, a Sentiment, Dramatic Style or Local Usage (*pravrtti*) : when many of these are assembled together, the one which is represented in many ways that should be considered as the dominating sentiment, the rest as transitory states.

... Those emotional states should be regarded as Transitory (*sancarinah*) which move pointedly illuminating the dominating sentiment; they have reached stability [in the sentiment].

... That which is fully based on the principal plot (of the play, *vastu*), is provided with the Determinants (*vibhava*) and the Consequents (*anubhava*) and is combined with the Transitory states, such as Permanent Mental State (*sthayi*) alone will become an aesthetically relishable experience (*rasa*).

... The dominant or permanent state (of mind) should be represented by the (play-) producers with an exuberance of *sattva;* the transitory state, in mere outline; by which (procedure) the dominant or permanent state will be properly established.

(120) The Dominant or Permanent, Sattvika and Transitory mental states are enriched with various kinds of things (*bhava*) and meaningful ideas (*artha*). The wise should scatter the Sentiments like flowers in their poetic compositions.

Theory of Rasa (Aesthetic Experience)

"Rasa" has generally been considered as a key-word of all Sanskrit literary criticism. It is, in a way, the open sesame of Indian literary theory. The history of the meaning of 'Rasa' during the Vedic period affords an explanation and prepares the ground for its use by writers on literary theory from Bharata downward signify the "aesthetic pleasure" or "aesthetic experience" invariably accompanied by the joy that the audience experiences, while witnessing the skilful enactment of a play rendered highly appealing through excellent poetry, music and action. In the *Rig Veda,* 'Rasa is generally used in the sense of the 'juice' (*Rigveda* IX. 63. 13, IX. 65.15). In *Atharvaveda,* '*rasa*' refers to 'savour' or 'taste' (See. *Atharvaveda* III. 13.15.). In the Upanishadic period, its sense of the 'essential element in plants or grain' loses its particular character and changes into the 'essential elements' or the 'essence' alone (e.g. see *Brihadaranyaka Upanishada.* 1.3.19). In other *Upanishadas,* the term 'rasa' continues to retain its sense of 'savour' or 'taste' (See *Brihadranyakopanishada.* III. 2.4 and *Kathopanishada.* IV.3). In *Prashnopashida, 'rasa*' becomes the base for a denominative verb meaning 'to taste'-... does not taste (*rasayate*) IV. 2. But the most famous usage of *rasa*, which might have inspired the latter-day critics and writers occurs at two places – in the *Taittiriyopanishad* (II. 7.1 – 'Rasa vai sah..." and the *Maitriupanishad* (V. 2. "Tatsatvameritam rasah...") – combining both its senses – "essence" par excellence and "the highest taste or experience" accompanied by a sense of joy. In other words, '*rasa*'[6] for the upanishadic seers, stood for one Supreme Reality of the universe viz, the 'self – luminous Consciousness' to attain which they strove and which, if realized, led to Perennial Bliss or Ananda. It is very likely that the earliest thinkers (like Bharata, Anandavarthana and Abhinavgupta) took advantage of the semiotics of the term "*rasa*" to mean the perfect joy that the sages experience on attaining "self – realization (atma-bodh) or highest truth (Truth) in his meditation and applied it to that "aesthetic pleasure or experience" which a cultured spectator with a sensitive and responsive heart enjoys , when he identifies himself completely with the characters, situations and incidents being represented in a play by the highly talented actors

Bharata has defined '*rasa*' in this manner: "... we will first of all explain what resas are for without *rasa* no topic (or drama) can appeal (to the mind of the spectator). Or perhaps, "... without *rasa*, there can be no (true) meaning i.e no real poetry. *Rasa comes from a combination of the vibhavas the anubhavas and the vyabhicharibhavas:"(A.R* ch. 6.31, p. 46).

Before proceeding further, it is legitimate to explain a few of the technical terms that are continually associated with any discussion of *Rasa*:-

(1) Vibhava is the objective condition producing an emotion. *Vibhava* may be of two kinds (i) Alambana and (ii) Uddipana. Almbana – vibhava means a person or persons with reference to whom the emotion is manifested

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6 It is interesting to note that Latin root of "Real" is "res" (thing) which is close to the meaning of "rasa" as essence in Sanskrit (See *Concise Oxford Dictionary,* Delhi, Oxford. Univ. Press, 1976 p. 929)

Uddipana-vabhava means the circumstances that have excited the emotion. It is easier for a young man to be attracted towards a woman of young age if both of them are thrown alone amidst beautiful natural scenery. Any one of such circumstances that give rise to romantic love may be regarded as *Uddipana-vibhava*, whereas both the man and the woman are *alambana-vibhavas* to each other.

(2) *Anubhava* bodily expression by which the emotion is expressed. Thus, the arch glances of the love-struck lady, her captivating smile, may be regarded as *Anubhava.*

(3) *Vyabhicharibhava* means a series of diverse emotions that feed the dominant emotions. A woman in love anxiously waiting at the rendezvous to meet her lover may feel disappointed that he is not coming, maybe anxious that something might have happened to him, maybe jealous that he might have been courted by another woman, may feel delight in remembering the coaxing, seductive words that he had whispered into her ears, and so on.

The love-struck lady experiences a cavalcade of *vyabhicharibhavas,* in this case, to finally experience the dominant emotion of love. Like fast – moving imag 's in filmic – narrative, emotions of diverse sorts may be passing through the young lady's heart in quick succession and may all at the same time be contributing to the constitution of the same emotion.

The real discussion of *Rasa* was started by Abhinavagupta in his *Abhinavabharati.* It is worthwhile to remember here that both Bharata, and Abhinavagupta also give a psychological explanation of rasa – let alone its spiritual and aesthetic implications. Rasa – theory is based on a particular view of psychology which holds that our personality is constituted of a few primary emotions which lie deep in the subconscious or unconsicuous state of our being. These primary emotions, which are called *sthayibhavas* by Bharata are eight in number – love (rati), amusement laughter (*hasa*), sorrow (*shoka*), anger (*krodha*), dynamic energy (*utsaha*), fear (*bhaya*), disgust (*jugupsa*), and wonder (*vismaya*) (see. *A.R.* Ch. VI, 17, p.44.). Rasa or aesthetic pleasure is generated when these basic human emotions are stirred or sublimated through skilful theatrical performance on the stage.

Thus according to Bharata, eight rasas emerge form eight *sthayibhavas* (*AR*, ch. VI, 33, 34). Bharata rightly says:-

> "In a drama, there are the following eight *rasa*: erotic (*shringara*), comic (*hasya*), compassionate (*karuna*), furious (*raudra*), heroic (*vira*), terrifying (*bhayanaka*), disgusting (*bibhatsa*) and awesome (*adbhuta*)" (A.R, ch. VI, 15. p. 44.)"

Apart from these eight rasas, Anandavardhana and Abhinavagupta added the ninth rasa - *shanta rasa* also (whose *sthayibhyava* is shama or the peaceful). Later on, critics added two more *rasas*, namely, *bhakti* (the devotional) and *vatsalya* (the filial).

These dominant emotional states are not forever stagnant and static-their inner dynamics involves the subtle interplay and interface of different sentiments constantly shooting out and changing like "the flamelets that continually come and go and thereby produce the appearance of the permanent undivided whole of a flame."[7] Thus, *sthayibhavas* denote the emotions deep-seated in human mind. The *vyabhicharibhavas* (or the transient or accompanying emotions) are "those that emerge from *sthayibhavas* and again submerge in them as the waves in an ocean. Their effect is immediate and temporary while that of the *sthayi* is rooted in the character of man" (p. 149, "The *Natyadarpana of Ramachandra Gunachandra', A Critical Study"* by K.H. Trivedi, L.D. Institute of Indology. Ahmedabad, 1966).

It should, however, be noted that no emotion is called *Rasa* unless it is aesthetically excited. When a young man falls in love with a young woman and his whole frame is shaken, we cannot say that he experiences shringar-rasa in this process or when a father cries on seeing the dead body of the his son, we cannot speak of him that he is in the *Karana-rasa. Rasa* is an emotion excited by artistic circumstances or situations. This intricate dynamics between *bhavas* and *rasas* has been tellingly and metaphorically conveyed by Bharata: - (*A.R.* Ch. VI. 34-38).

> "Those who stage dramas should know that bhavas are so called because they give rise to *rasas* that are related to various kinds of acting". (34)

7 Prof. S. N. Dasgupta, "The Theory of Rasa" in *An Introduction of Indian Poetics* (ed. V. Raghavan and Nagendka) Bombay. Macmillan. 1970. p. 37.

"As a spicy flavour is created from many substances of different kinds, in the same way that *bhavas* along with (various kinds of) acting, create rasas." (35)

"(In literature) there is no rasa without *bhava,* nor any *bhava* without *rasa.* Their realization in gesture is dependent on their relation of mutual dependence" (36).

"As combination of herbs and spices will bring food to tastiness, in the same *bhavas* and *rasas* create each other". (37)

"As tree arises from a seed, and from the tree a flower and fruit, so all the rasas are the roots, and on them are founded the bhavas." (38)

A sensitive reader or spectator may well read Shakespeare's *King Lear* as a play that manifests the *karuna rasa* (the compassionate) created by the accompanying emotions (*vyabhicharibhavas*) of disgust, world weariness, sorrow, or *klesha,* longing, dejection, madness, separation etc. involving Lear, Cordelia, Goneril, Regan, Edmund, Edgar and Kent in a dramatic web of tragic relationships. Thus, the vibhavas (causes or sources) of *klesha* separation, downfall, loss of wealth, imprisonment calamity etc. which are shown in *King Lear* in ample measure eventually give rise to *Karuna rasa.* Thus, according to Bharata, the interplay of eight permanent emotions (*sthayibhavas*) thirty three transient ones (*vyabhicharibhavas*) and eight involuntary actions (displaying emotional states) which involves the agency of writer, character actor and spectator eventually give rise to an aesthetic pleasure or rasa in the heart of a sensitive spectator (sahridaya). Bharata also emphasizes the qualities of a sensitive reader or spectator (Ch. XXVII. 42):-

"(True) spectator at a drama are those who, when the character is depressed, become themselves depressed, when the character is in sorrow, are themselves in sorrow".

This may well be the source of Abhinavagupta's *hridayasamvada* (identification of the reader/spectator with the character in a dramatic representation). Thus, a sensitive reader (sahridaya) should be well-versed with arts literature and associated writings and have a receptive heart to experience "tanmayibhava" (identification with drama-which is necessary for the generation of aesthetic pleasure or *rasa.*

Moreover, Abhinavagupta considers aesthetic experience or *rasa-asvadana* as a sort of pure bliss or *ananda* where the subject/object binary gets dissolved into a sort of *advaita.* Abhinavagupta also makes it clear that the world of drama or natya is neither real nor unreal; it is an in-between world where we, as spectator, live in neither in the time or the space of the original characters, nor of the actors. We are in a sense, outside both of time and space altogether. Hence, the *alaukika* (the extra worldly) nature of *natya.* But it must not be forgotten that Bharata accepts the fact the different spectators are differently constituted; they might have different taste for drama as well: (Ch. XXVII, 58-62).

"Young people delight in love (sexual love i.e., scenes presenting love); intellectuals enjoy debates; those concerned with material objects take pleasure in (descriptions or scenes) of wealth; and those who are detached from the world delight in spiritual liberation"

"Heroes delight in *vira* and *raudra,* in hand to hand combat and battles. Old people are constantly pleased with tales about religion and stories from the *puranas*... the wise always take delight in all that concerns the Truth"

Thus, Bharata takes into account the possibility of having different sources of aesthetic experience for differently constituted spectators and readers. That's why the number of *rasa* is eight (or nine including *Shanta rasa*) each of them implying a different dominant emotion. Even the example of films and their popularity may be explained by this insight. *Sholay,* the popular revenge motif film made a powerful appeal to the masses; *Ardhasatya* an art film was liked by only those who were well versed with the nuances of cinematic idiom. Through the universalization or *sadharanikarana* or different situations or conditions of human life that evoke different emotions in characters actors, a skilled playwright creates the text congenial to *rasanubhuti* (experience of aesthetic pleasure). *Rasanubhuti*

implies a state of bliss pervaded by a feeling of spiritual illumination - free from sensual elements. The physical emotions shake off their sordid attributes when they are converted into artistic emotions – they are freed from the limitation of time and space and are universalized. This process is called *sadharanikarana.* Consequently, they cease to be a part of the direct physical experience of the spectator, raise him above the petty mundane experience of the self, refine his sensibility and sublimate his consciousness.

Application of Rasa to Other Genres (Poetry, Novel etc.)

The questions – (1) Is *rasa* only to be found in drama? (2) Can *Rasa*-theory be meaningfully applied to the understanding and enjoyment of other literary genres like novel and poetry?" and (3) Is rasa-theory relevant today in the context of post-modern theories of art?" demand detailed answers. It will, however, be useful to deal with these question, in brief, here.

According to Abhinavagupta, since poetry resembles drama as we see or experience things in a poem as we do in a play. Though the emotions represented in a poem are not acted out, their graphic description and aesthetic transformation may make them quite dramatic or drama-like in nature. Rasa is not only to be found in drama but also in poetry and novel as these genre also represent human emotions and actions that make a sensitive reader experience aesthetic pleasure or rasa. After all, actors in a drama are mere means to evoke aesthetic pleasure – they are called *patra* (vessel) – they make us taste aesthetic pleasure. After all, the eight or nine kinds of *rasas* are present in all kinds of aesthetic or artistic representation. Thus, a novel like *Wuthering Heights* might evoke the emotions of terror, horror, sexual love, separation, longing, sorrow etc. in the same manner as a different kind of novel *Midnight's Children* evokes the emotions of wonder, disgust, sorrow etc. in a sensitive reader's heart. *Wuthering Heights* might be an example of *karuna* rasa; *Midnight's Children* might be an example of *adhbhuta* and *vibhatsa rasa.*

Since Rasa – theory classifies the human emotions quite logically and it rationally analyses a sensitive reader's response to aesthetic representation of different kinds, its relevance has not diminished even today. The anti-aesthetic stance of the postmodern theory of art can be easily subsumed in the *Rasa*-theory. For example, the western absurd drama that co-incides with the rise of post-sturcturalist/ deconstructionist theories of representations can easily be studied as an example of *vibhatsa-rasa.* The Absurd theatre foregrounds the grotesque, (vibhatsa) the terrifying (bhayanaka) and the compassionate (karuna), in such plays as *Waiting for Godot, The Birthday Party, Endgame* or *Rhinoceros.* Secondly, the culmination of *rasa* or aesthetic pleasure is pure ananda or bliss which is beyond words.

In a different way, it can be construed that the *rasanubhuti* cannot be expressed through language or words – which tallies with the postmodern postulate that meaning or artha is indescribable through words. Moreover, the latest theories of psychoanalytic approach to literature (Lacan and Kristeva) can be compared and contrasted with the treatment of emotions and their connectivity to textual interpretation of *rasa* theory. Moreover, the reader – response theory (Hans – Robert – Jauss and Gadamer) bears close resemblance to rasa theory.

Following are the verses of Chapter XX of *Natyashastra* that deal with ten kinds of play:-

Chapter XX

Ten kinds of play

(1) O Brahmins, I will now set the ten division of dramatic composition giving their names, functions and modes of stage-performance.

(2-3) In the matter of defining the characteristic of drama, the ten terms to be known are: *Nataka, Prakarana, Anka, Vyayoga, Bhana, Samavakara, Vithi, Prahasana, Dima* and *Ihamrga.* I shall explain their characteristics in consecutive order.

(4) The Vrttis or Styles are traditionally known as the 'mothers' of all dramatic poems. The ten kinds of play, so far as their production is concerned, have proceeded from these.

(5) Just as musical notes (*savara*), taken with their Jatis and Shrutis, constitute the (various) musical scales (*grama*), in the same way the (varieties of) poetic composition (i.e. plays) are constituted by the varieties of styles.

(6) Just as the two musical scales, the Shadja-grama and Madhyama-grama, are made of complete musical notes, in the same way the tow poetic composition (Nataka and Prakarana) are turned out with all styles.

(7) The *Nataka* and the *Prakarana* are to be known as turned out by all the styles, and the use many different formal structures (bandha).

(8-9) [On the other hand] *Vithi, Samavakara, Ihamrga, Utsrstikanka* (One – Act Play), *Vyayoga, Bhana, Prahasana* and *Dima*: these dramatic constructions are to be made without using *Kausiki Vrtti* (the Graceful Style).

Hereafter I will explain the different formal structures of the plays.

Nataka

(10-11) The name Nataka is given to the type of play whose subject is a well-known plot-material, the hero equally well-know and exalted, which describes the life and work of one born in the family of royal sages, uses episodes connected with the divinities; comprises the (hero's) many dazzling achievements (*vibhuti*) [resulting in realization of the four goals of human life], and also (his) achievements connected with regal and material prosperity (*riddhi*) and with women and pleasure (*vilasa*), as also minor deeds (*guna*, like the harmful opposition of the villain), and is properly equipped with a number of *acts* (*anka*) and linking scenes (*praveshaka*).

(12) The behaviour (*charita*) of kings, (consisting of actions (*chestita*) (*revealing*) varied sentiments and emotional states, and arising out of joys and sorrows in their innumerable aspects (bahudha), becomes what is called *nataka*.

(13) Having properly reviewed the dramatic accomplishment to be achieved (*karya*) which consists of definite stages of development (*avastha*), from the drop (*bindu*) to its expansion, the experts on the principles of natya should build an act, and also in such a manner as to conform to the *requisite number* (*gananvita*)

Anka

(14) *Anka* is a conventional word fixed by usage. As it makes the (poetic) contents climb [i.e. to the heart to] (the heart of the spectator), with the (presentation of) sentiments and emotional states, and as it follow various technical presentations (*nana-vidhana*), it is called an *anka* or act.

(16) What is to be always known as an *anka* of a play is (that presentation) where a (particular stage of) plot (development) is brought to a close, where the seed (relating to the juncture/join this stage and the next) is gathered up, and where the *drop* (*bindu*) remains somehow connected (with the them and the following phases of the dramatic content).

(17-18) But the act which shows different stages of plot-development connected with the destruction and union of the (different kinds of) heroes mentioned and (the actions) of the (chief and other) queens of the hero, elderly persons, family priest, minister and the leader the caravan [i.e. commander-in-chief of the army], and using various sentiments, should not be made too long, this should be clearly understood.

(20) Anger, blessing, sorrow, termination of the (evil effects of a) curse, flight caused by terror, marriage ceremony, birth of a miracle and its actual occurrence should (also) be visibly presented in an act.

(21) Considering the *seed* of the dramatic theme, an act should be made to comprise activities which would fill up one day and which (can be shown) in actual stage-per-formances without hampering the essential activities.

(22) An intelligent (producer or playwright) may try to accomplish several activities through one act; but in such cases the activities should be so organized as not to come in the way of essential things.

(23) (Actors) who enter the stage should perform their actions calculated to fulfil the connection and purpose of the seed (of the dramatic theme) and so as the evoke sentiments appropriate to the content, and then all them are to leave the stage.

(25) One should first know the stage of the day characterized by (proper) moment, watch, auspicious hour and distribute then all of the remaining activities, each separately, in the several acts.

(26) When actions which are to be finished in a day cannot all be fitted an act of a play, one should break the act and show them by means of Interludes (or Linking scenes attached to the following act: *Praveshaka*).

(29) In the case of *prakarana* and *nataka* (types of plays) the (number of) acts shall be from five to ten. And similar (number of) *praveshakas* (are possible) in them in the interval between two *acts*.

(31) Having made a break in an act (i.e. having brought an act to a close), the events which take a month or an year, all that should be shown (in a *proveshaka*), but (not evetns) which have taken more than an year.

(32) When a Dramatic character (purusha) has to go on a long journey on account of some business, the (drama-) experts should bring an act to a close, on this point, as laid down before.

(33) In the case of *prakarana* and *nataka*, a *praveshaka* should be interposed between two acts, referring briefly to the (inter-connection and further development of the) central points (of the dramatic theme, in every act; *bindunam*).

(34) In actual production (*prayoga*) (a *praveshaka*) should not show actions of high or middling men; nor should it contain noble speech; it should (in fact) use common (*prakrta*) speech and common conduct.

(35) A *praveshaka* may have many purposes: It may be intended to stat a matter (artha-abhidhana), the rise and passage of time, an explanation (of mysterious occurrence or action), an event (karya, connected with the main plot), or a theme (vishaya, connected with the next development of the dramatic action).

(36) Events whose execution depends on many persons should be compressed by using interludes or in junctures (*sandhi*)of the play. (A drama) which contains many prose speeches (not in compound expression and not in the Sanskrit language for the most part (*curna-padaih yuktam*) will be tiresome in stage-production.

(37) Where the content of an act cannot be complete because its presentation on the stage will take ling time (*prayoga-bahulyat*), such matter should be expressed by a brief statement of happenings through *praveshaka*-scences.

(38) War or battle, loss of kingdom, death, siege of a city by army are not to be actually shown in an act; they are to be presented through the *praceshakas*.

(39) With reference to a *prakarana* or a *nataka*, the death (its killing) of prosperity-prone hero is not to be shown in the act or the *pravesaka* of a play.

(40) Only (the heor's) removal or flight, capture or peaceful compromise should be arranged by the sentiment (of the play) and by means of varied poetic constructions.

(41) A *nataka* or a prakarana should not be composed to show a very large retinue (surrounding the hero). The actual men of action in the play should only be four or five.

(42) While attempting the formal construction of dramatic action (*karayavandha*) the poetic composition should be made (like) the tip of a cow's tail, and all the exalted emotional states should be arranged at the end.

(43) In the end (lit the *nirvahana sandhi*) of all poetic composition which contain the employment of various sentiments and emotional states, the experts should always use the Marvellous Sentiment

(44) I have duly mentioned in brief the characteristics of the *nataka* so far. I will now explain the *prakarana* with its characteristics.

Prakarana

(45) (The play) in which the poet builds by his own (creative) power the dramatic plot (*vastu*), the elaborate (dramatic) construction (*sarira*) and the hero, so that the composition appears to be inventive (or original, *autpattika*), that is to be know by the wise as the *prakarana*.

(46) The poetic composition not based on the (works of) the ancient sages (*an-arsham*), imaginatively produced (*aharaya*), imaginatively produced (*aharya*), consisting of unprecedented qualities, with the seed and the plot invented, which (a poet) makes is also to be known as *prakarana*

(47) Whatever I said in the context of nataka regarding the dramatic plot, elaborate construction and the varieties of styles, all that with its characteristics is to be used in the prakarana; only these are to be used in all the junctures (*sandhi*) of dramatic construction.

(48) The varied life and conduct of a Brahmin, merchant, counsellor (*sachiva*), domestic priest, accredited minister, leader of caravan, (presented in dramatic form) are to be known as prakarana

(49) A play which has no exalted hero, which does not show the life and conduct of gods nor the love-union of a king, and which contains men from the outside (i.e. servants not associated with royal harem), is to be known by the experts as prakarana.

(50) In a prakarana the poetic construction should comprise servants, *vita*, the chief of the merchant guild, and incident occasioned by the behaviour of a courtesan or the fallen action (*mandavrtta*) of a women of noble family (or the actions of a women of doubtful (*manda*) family).

(51) In (*a prakarana*) where domestic happenings and accomplishments connected with counsellor, head of the merchant-guild, brahmin, domestic priest, minister and leader of caravan are presented no courtesan should be introduced (as a dramatic character).

(52) If it contains a courtesan, union or meetings with a women of noble family will not be shown. On the contrary if it employs a women of noble family, a courtesan should not be present (simultaneously).

(53) If, however, out of some dramatic necessity (*karanayuktya*) a formal meeting (*upacharah*) of a courtesan and a noble lady has to be used (in a scene), the dramatic dialogue there should be used without distortion of language and behaviour.

(54) Here the experts should use a *viskambhaka* or a linking scene in the manner of a *pratimukha*, always with characters of the middling type, concise in content and adopting Sanskrit speech.

(55) The *Vishkambhaka* can be constructed two types: *Suddha* or pure, and *Samkirna* or mixed. It is *pure* when it has middling charactes, *mixed* when low and middling (characters) are used.

(56) In view of proper consideration of actions necessary for dramatic content and purpose (artha-kriya), which comprise compressing the (dramatic junctures and the events, a praveshaka is placed in between two acts (of play).

(57) By a formal combination of these two (drama types, *nataka* and *prakarama*) the producers (playwrights and directors) can work out a distinct type related to *nataka* or *prakarana*, based on well-known (plots) or otherwise (i.e. invented plots).

(58-60) The (type of drama), different form the *nataka* and *prakarava* is to be known as *natika*: It is constructed with invented plot, the hero is a king, (the story) refers to the royal harem, music and a girl. It has many female characters; four acts; its essence is graceful acting; its different (component) parts are smoothly constructed; it has an abundance of dance song and dialogue, and the (pleasure of the) union of love is its soul. It is concerned with the mode and behaviour of a king and has such displays as conciliation, anger and pretence. The hero, his queen, female messenger and the palace attendants (are the dramatic characters in it).

(62) Brahmins, I have briefly mentioned the characteristics of *prakarana* and *nataka*. I will now speak about *Samavakara* stating its characteristics.

Samavakara

(63) Its theme is made from (the conflict of) gods and demons: its hero has to be well-known and exalted; it should have three kinds of deception three kinds flight or excitement and three kinds of love.

(64) It should have twelve leading men and its duration (of performance) is to be eighteen *nadikas*. I will explain the arrangement of the act according to the number of *nadikas* allotted to it.

(65) The first act (of the *Samvakara*) is to have comic laughter, flight or excitement, deception and *vithi*; its dramatic action will run to 12 *nadis*. (1 nadi = 24 minutes).

(66) The second act should be similarly constructed but will have four nadikas: and the third act which is to show the conclusion of the plot will be *nadikas* in duration.

(67) The term nadi (or *nadika*) is to be known as a measure of time and equals half a muhurta. This measure of *nadika* is to be used in the acts as laid down in the rules.

(68) The term nadika which, in the division of time, has been given (as the duration) for dramatic action should be carefully put to practice according to the Sastra rule and with due order (of the three acts and their prescribed duration).

(69) The poetic form should be resorted to and every act (in the Samavakara) should be composed to have different content (or topic). They (the experts) desire the content in the Samavakara to be not closely knit together.

(70) The flight (for excitement) is threefold: (a) arising out of battle or flood (*jala*), (b) caused by storm (*vayu*), fire or the havoc of a lordly elephant and (c) born out of the siege of a city.

(71) The threefold deceipt in this context (*atra*) is to be know as (a) that which has been brought by a calculated plan (*vastu-gata*) and involving (on the part of the innocent victim) worry about the means (*krama*) (for counteracting it); (b) which has been deliberately employed by another (to avenge an offence given), and (c) which occurs due to averse fate (or accident). It causes the advent of happiness or misery.

(72) In this (Samavakara) the experts who know the rules should employ threefold love as connected with different kinds of actions: that in relations to religious duty, that prompted by material gain and that inspired by passion (or sexual desire).

(73) When it become an instrument to achieve, in many ways, one's religious duty and one's own welfare through the practice of (religious) vows, prescribed rules and austerities, it is known as *dharama-srngara.*

(74) The *artha-srngara* results from artha, due to the desire for (acquiring) wealth in many ways. Here the love in matters of union with woman is prompted by the motive of wealth (*artha-hetu*).

(75) The love (*yasya = shringarasya*) which is caused by the seduction of a maiden or which takes a delightful form (*ramyam*) when an man and women meet each other, and (the affair) is carried on either secretly (*nibhrtam*) or with open impetuousness, (that is) *kama-srngara.*

(76) The meters which have an uneven structure like Ushnik, Gayatri etc. are to be used by the poets in the Samavakara.

(77) In this way the experts should construct the Samavakara based on many sentiments.

I will now proceed to define the character of Ihamrga.

Ihamrga

(78) It has for its male character divine beings who come to fight over divine women; its plot is well-arranged and closely knit and it has also to be specially convincing.

(79) It should have an abundance of haughty heroes and its literary form should be composed round the anger of (caused on account of) woman, resulting in great agitation (samksobha), flight and angry tussle (*sampheta*).

(80) Its plot is love dealing with discord among women, their abduction and inflicting punishment (aiamarlana): The Ihamrga is thus to be composed as a well designed literary composition.

(81) What is done in Vyayoga (i.e. about the number of acts) the (number of) male characters, styles and sentiments, all that has to be present in the Ihamrga also only, the connection here is divine women.

(82) Where (in this type), the killing of male characters intent on killing (each other) appears to be imminent some pretext should be used and their fight should be stopped.

(83) Brahmins, I have briefly mentioned the characteristics of Ihamrga. I will explain the characteristics of *Dima*, by again employing the mode of definition.

Dima

(84) The Dima should be constructed on the subject of a well-known plot; its hero should be well-known and of the exalted type; it should have six (rhetorical) sentiments and four acts.

(85) It should avoid *srngara* and *hasya*, but contain all the remaining sentiments. its literary plot (*navya vastu*) should have blazing sentiments and its is to be enriched with varied emotional states.

(86) It should have (for its incidents) thunder and lightning (or earthquake, *nirghasta*), fall of meteors and eclipse of the moon or sun; it should be constructed with fight, personal combat or wrestling, duel (*niyuddha*), and assailing (*adharasana*) and haughty conflict (*sampheta*).

(87) It should be full of magic and jugglery; should contain incidents (*yoga*; lit. arrangement, connection) of vigorous action (*utthana*) on the part of many characters (*bahu-pusta purusa*), and have a mingling of gods, the lord of serpents, raksasas, yaksas, pisacas (goblins).

(88) It should have sixteen principal characters and should be presented in Sattvati (Grand) and Arabhati (Enegetic) styles. The Dima should (thus) be constructed carefyully and should have many emotional states as its base (asraya).

(89) I have mentioned briefly and in keeping with the mode of definition (*laksananugatam*) the characteristic of the Dima. I will now duly explain the characteristics of *Vyayoga*.

Vyagoga

(90) The Vyayoga is to be constructed by the experts on procedures to have for its outline or plot (*sarira*) a well-known hero. It is to have very few female characters and the duration (of its dramatic action it to be one day only.

(91) As in *Samavakara* many men show activity there (in the *Vyayoga*); but it has not the measure of Samavakara; this (Vyayoga) is to be made with only one act.

(92) It should not be made with a divine hero; but it is to be composed with a hero who is a royal sage; and it is to be constructed to have fight, personal combat or wrestling, and attacks and conflict.

(93) The *Vyayoga* is to be made in this manner having for its source (or base) blazing poetry and sentiments.

I will proceed now to explain the characteristics of *Utsrstikanka*.

***Utsrastikanka* (to be read along with)**

(94) It should have for its subject a well-know plot; but sometime it may do if it is not well-known. It should not well-known. It should not have divine male characters but all the rest of men may figure in it.

(95) It should be composed mostly with the Pathetic sentiment. (The men in it) should have retired from fighting and rash attacks. It should abound in the lamentations of women and the speeches in it will be full of despondency.

(96) It shows the bewildered activity (of mourners) many forms, and the Sattvati, Arabhati and Kaishiki styles are not employed in it.

The experts on literary procedures should always construct the *Utsrstikanka* thus.

Prahasana

(101-102) The Prahasana is to be known as having two types- pure and mixed. I will speak with reason about their special characteristics, each separately.

(103-104) The *Prahasana* is to be known as pure (*Suddha*) which is connected with comic discussions by Bhagavad, ascetic, Brahmins and others; and it full of jocular conversation employed by men of low character. The language and behaviour is not to be distorted, and the portion of its story (*pada*) should be moving with particular (transitory) emotional states; its subject and plot are the natural course of events.

(105) The *mixed* (*Sankirna*) *Prahasana* is that which has courtesans, low servants (*cheta*), eunuchs, bohemians (*vita*), rogues (*dhurta*) and harlot (*bandhaki*) (as its characters), whose immodest (amibhrta: lit. quite open) dress, accessories and action are presented.

(106) Some well-known the tale (*varta*) based on the (actual) behaviour of the people, as also incidents of hypocrisy, these should be used in the Prahasana, which should be (further) endowed with vehement (but futile) discussions of rogues.

(107) The Prahasana should be composed to include any aspects of Vithi as are deemed proper.

I will explain the characteristics of *Bhana*.

Bhana

(108) The Bhana is to be known as (a play) acted by one character, and it has a varied basis: (a) that which narrates one's own experiences, and (b) that which particularly describes some one else's.

(109) (And this latter is done) by (conveying) the speech of the other addressed to oneself by means of replies (*prativachana*), connected in (a series of questions and) answers, as (if) they are given by an imaginary person (*akasa-purusa*), and by means of gestures of the limbs and by (other forms of) acting.

(110) The Bhana is to be presented through the (single character of) dhurta or Vita and is to comprise his various conditions. The wise should always construct the Bhana as depicting varied activities but having (only) one act.

(111) The entire character of Bhana has been explained by me as it has come down by tradition (*agama*).

Now, O Brahmins, I will state in due order the whole character of Vithi.

Vithi

(112-113) The Vithi should have one act; it has the character of all the sentiments and it comprises thirteen aspects (lit. limbs); its is to be acted by one or two characters; it may include three kinds of dramatic characters (*prakrti*) high, middling and low.

(113b, 114, 115) The thirteen limbs of the Vithi are stated (as follows): uddhatyaka, avalagita, avaspandita, nali, asat-pralapa, vak-keli, prapanca, mrdava adhibala, chala, trigata, vyahara, ganda.

I have spoken about the Vithi. It will now explain the characteristics of these (thirteen aspects).

(115b-116) When dramatic characters (lit., men) connect words, (uttered) out of die respect (but) not understood in their (correct) meaning, with other words [not intended by the original speaker] the is called Uddhatyaka (Thrusted interpretation).

(116-117) Something connected with another (context) serves to accomplish some other result, that is to be known as *Avalagita* (Transferred connection) by the designers of drama.

(117-118) When a certain matter (artha) which has been stated (aksipta) from which good or evil may arise (unintentionally) is skillfully interpreted to give another meaning, that will be *Avaspandita* (Ominous suggestion).

(118) When a riddle-like (enigmatic) reply is followed by laughter, that is to be known as *Nalika* (or Nali: Riddle and laughter).

(119) That is Asat-pralapa (Incoherent chatter) [where the statement or question and the reply are both inconsistent] – where that statement made by a learned man in the presence of fools, although beneficial, is not accepted.

(120) In this representation (of Vithi), the *Vakkeli* (Sportive speech, Repartee) is a twofold reply.

(120-121) A statement which is untrue but which looks like mutual praise of two, which is intended in the interest of one (of the two), and which evokes laughter, will be *Prapanca* (Comic exposure).

(121-122) When as a result of hot dispute (*vivada*) the merits (of one) are made to look like faults, on the basis of definite cause, or the fault are turned into merits, that is know by the name of Mrdava (Crushing).

(122-123) When the world of another person as well as one's own, in the course of mutual dialogue, lead to the strengthening (qualifying) of the meaning of both (speakers), that should be known by the wise as Adhibala (Special strengthening).

(123) A statement which really carries an altogether different meaning, employed to cause deception laughter and anger, is Chala (Deception, Irony).

(124) The statement in which many meanings are employed by clever means, due to similarity of sounds, that, whether laugh-evoking or not, is to be known as *Trigata* (Triple or Multiple import).

(125) Things (which are to be visualized in the coming future) are spoken as actually taking place: This is *Vyahara* (Varied representation), which is menat to convey amused laughter (*hasya-lesa*).

(125b-126) The theoreticians speak (that to be) Ganda (Dramatic coincidence) which it due to agitation, confusion, quarrel, reviling (apa-vada) and caused by (unexpected) words (lit. tossing, aksepa) (though) the many (connected) words (previously uttered have come to a proper break (*aksepa*).

Thus, the prescription for ten types of drama has been all mentioned by me in accordance with their characteristics. Now we will discuss the dramatic styles called *Vrittis*:-

The Four Styles (Vrittis)

(8b) 'O Brahman! I have created this Bharati in order to accomplish my work.

(9) 'The Bharati (Vrtti) will belong to the speaker and it will consist of words mostly. Hence I kill the two (demons)': these were the words Hari uttered.

(10) He then quickly engaged the two demons in battle who were experts in the mode of fighting with his pure and perfect body-movements and *angaharas*.

(11) At that time due to Hari's perfect poses (*samsthana*) in contact with the ground (bhumi) and due to His placings of the feet, the earth experienced a great weight (bhara, burden): Bhara-ti was created there.

(12) And by the sharp, strikingly blazing, unperturbed bendings (valgita) of the Sarnga bow, which had excess of *Sattva* (inner strength), the *Sattvati* (Vrthi) was created.

(13) And as the Lord (Vishnu) (moving) with various *angaharas*, accompanied with playful grace, tied up the lock of his hair, the *Kaisiki Vrtti* was created.

(14) Then with the various modes of personal combat, full of rush and vehemence, and carried on with many, circular movements (*chari*), the Arabhati was produced.

(22) The name *Vrtti* was given to these: they were closely connected with various emotional states during the (course of) dramatic performances and were the base of poetic composition.

(23-24) And whatever the kind of prayer and praise (japya) that was made in accordance with the particular kinds of exploits (*charita*) of the Lord. the sages fashioned a similar kind of Vrtti- connecting it with recitative texts (dialogues) (based on material) arising from the *Natyaveda*, and essentially of the nature of Verbal and Physical acting: I have included it (Vrtti), at the behest of Brahmadeva. for the purpose of composing (dramatic) poems.

(25) The *Bharati* (Verbal Style) was taken from the Rgveda, *Sattvati* (Grand Style) from the Yajurveda, Kaisiki (Graceful Style) from the Samaveda, and the remaining (*Arabati*, Vigorous Style) from the Atharan.

(26) The Name *Bharati vrtti* is given to that style, used by the actors (*bharata*) under their own, name, which preponderates with spoken words, in texts written in Sanskrit, and delivered by male characters, not female characters.

(41) That which is endowed with the quality of Sattva (spirit), and has also the *nyaya* and (proper) meters, bursting with joy and suppresses the state of sorrow, that *Vrtti* will be *Sattvati*.

(42) *The Sattvati Vrtti* is to be known as making greater use of Sattvika abhinaya (*sattvadhikara*), is related to such poetic composition (*prakarana*) as contain an energetic display (*utthana*) and expression (*vachana*) of spirit or mind, and is carried out by Verbal and Physical acting.

(43) It will have Vira, Adbhuta and Raudra sentiments and will not have much to do with Shringara, Karuna and *nirveda* [the metnal state of renunciation]: It will have mostly bold and arrogant characters and involve mutual challenge and defiance (*adharshana*).

(53) The Vrtti which appears especially colourful or charming (*chitra*) on account of the delicate (*shlakshna*) costumes (and ornaments, worn by dramatic characters), has (mostly) women (characters), uses many songs and dances, and shows behaviour (through the dramatic themes) resulting from love and its enjoyment, that is called as the *Kaishiki Vrtti*.

(64) The style which has mostly the qualities of a haughty person (arabhata), makes use of many frauds and deceptions, and contains words full of pride and falsehood, is known as *Arabhati* (*Vrtti*).

(65) The style in which there always is (the showing of) model work (pusta: in fashioning weapons, armour etc.), falling down, jumping, crossing over, cutting, jugglery made (possible) by magic and various kinds of (or picturesque) fights, such a style is called *Arabhati*.

(72) The vrttis as they are related to drama and its production are thus to be know by the wise. Listen now to my statement about their employment in connection with sentiments:

(73) Kaisiki is described in connection with (composition full of) *Shringara* and *Hasya*; *Sattvati* should be known as the base of *Vira, Adbuta* and *Shama*.

(74) The wise should recognize *Arabhati* in *Raudra* and *Bhayanaka*; and Bharati is prescribed in *Bibhatsa* and *Karuna*

Critical Analysis of Chapter XX of NatyaShastra

Ten kinds of play

Chapter XX of *Natyashastra* may be said to deal with the kinds of natya or drama and the issue of vritti (style) giving a detailed description of various kinds of plays and the dramatic styles which were popular during Bharata's time (2nd century B.C to 3rd century A.D.). Bharata enumerates ten kinds of dramatic composition -

Nataka, Prakarana, Anka, Vyoyaga, Bhana, Samavakara, Vithi, Prahasana, Dima and Ihamrga

Of these, the first two viz. Nataka and *Prakarana* represent most of the dramatic productions. Generally, *nataka* utilizes the mythological, legendary or semi-historical themes (but not always as Bharata admits of exceptions) whereas *prakarana* centres round social personalities and situations drawn from the familiar levels of contemporary life.

(1) *Nataka* The name "nataka" is given to the type of play whose subject is a well-known plot material, the hero equally exalted and well-known, which describes the actions of the hero born in a royal family. Heroes like Rama, Krishna, Udayana, Dushyanta fulfil this requirement. *Nataka*, thus, deals with the behaviour and actions of kings revealing varied emotional states arising out of joys and sorrows in their innumerable aspects. Even Aristotle defined tragedy in the similar fashion because drama was not secularized at that time. But Bharata (in chapter 21) elaborates the qualities of a model play and emphasizes the treatment or dramatization of the complexities of life in a *nataka*:-

"The *nataka* should have in its plot all the various conditions of (rasas) sentiments, deeds and tendencies (ch. 21. 147)

"The *nataka* should be composed only after carefully observing the nature of the people in the world, the strength and weakness of men, their modes of enjoyment and reasoning capacity. (ch. 21. 149)

"In the coming age men are most likely to lack wisdom; and those that shall be, will have an intellect trained only with effort and education" (ch. 21.150.)

As the preceding examples from *Natyashastra* suggest, Bharata was aware of the strong possibility of the secularization of drama (or art because of the changing social contexts).

(2) ***Anka*:- (Individual Act of a play)**

According to Bharata, "anka" is a conventional word fixed by usage. It takes the poetic or dramatic content to the heart of the spectator, with the representation of emotional states following different technical presentations. He also opines that an act while maintaining connection with the previous and following stages of plot – constructions, must also present evolution of the main plot. An 'act' or *anka* should not be overcrowded with deeds, actions and situation as it may digress the reader's spectator's attention from the main theme. For the plot-construction of a play-(of any kind), Bharata advises that the dramatic action should gradually taper down towards the end (like the tip of a cow's tail) and the phases of dramatic

development should show completion at various junctures in different acts, whereas all the exalted emotional states should be arranged at the end. (ch. 20. 42).

(3) ***Prakarana*:-** *Prakarana,* according to Bharata is a more secularized form of drama as it gives a free play to a writer's creative imagination (i.e. it is not based on mythical, legendary, historical figures) in terms of plot-construction, the choice of a hero (may be a Brahmin, a merchant, a counsellor, a domestic priest, a minister, leader of caravan etc.), and the representation of people (on the stage) who exist on the margins of society (i.e. the outsiders, such as servants, fallen women or low – caste women). Most of present day plays may rightly be considered "prakaranas" as they have (anti-) heroes taken from the margins of the society.

(4) ***Samavakara*:-** Its theme is the conflict of gods and demons and its performance– time should not exceed 18 nadikas (i.e. 24 x 18=432 minutes). Etymologically, *samavakara* refers to a play in which plot is not too much but slightly connected. (Sam properly; *ara*-slightly, *kara* – what is made i.e. dramatic action). Interestingly, the first play *Amritamanthana* was a *samavakara* according to Bharata. Another feature of *samavakara* is the depiction of three kinds of love (*shringar*) – *dharma shringar* (love as religious/spiritual duty), artha-shrinagar (love arising out of desire for wealth), *kama-shrinagar* (love as seduction) in the dramatic action. If one were to consider the depiction of love in the popular Hindi (Bollywood) films in accordance with Bharata, one would term most of these romantic films "samavakaras" Even Shakespeare's romantic comedies (*As you Like It, A Mid Summer Night's Dream, Twelfth Night, and The Merchant of Venice)* are the examples of *Shringara rasa* (dramatization of love) enunciated by Bharata.

(5) ***Ihamrga*:-** It has for its male characters divine beings who come to fight over divine women, its plot is well-constructed and closely knit and it has to be specially convincing. Its plot is of love dealing with discord among women, their abduction and punishment.

(6) ***Dima*:-** *Dima* should be constructed on the subject of a well-known plot; the hero should be well-known. It should have six sentiments (six rasas) and four acts. It should avoid *hasya* and *shringara* rasa in the dramatic actions.

(7) ***Vyayoga*:-** It should be based on a well-known hero and have very few female characters. The entire action should take only one act and one day for enactment.

(8) ***Prahasana* (the comic plays):-** *Prahasana* is of two kinds-pure and mixed. Pure *prahasana* has comic discussion by ascetic, Brahmins and other and is full of jowlar conversation employed by men of low character. The mixed *prahasana* is that which has courtesans, low servants, eunuchs, bohemians, rogues, harlots as its characters whose immodest dress, accessories and actions are represented on the stage to produce *hasya* rasa (the comic emotion). Some well-known tales based on the actual behaviour of the people, as also the incidents of hypocrisy should be used for plot-construction in a *prahasana*. It should also have vehement (but futile) discussion of rogues as well. From this point of view, a sensitive reader may well classify *The Rivals,* and *School for Scandal* as examples of *prahasana.*

(9) ***Bhana*:-** According to Bharata, *Bhana* is a play acted by one character (a solo-dramatic performance on the stage – which is fairly common now a–days in modern theatre). It has varied basis – (a) that which narrates one's own experiences (b) that which describes someone else's. It should have only one act.

(10) ***Vithi*:-** According to Bharata, a *vithi* should have only one act. It should be acted should be acted by one or two characters – high middling and low. Some important aspects of vithi-which is primarily enacted to evoke laugher or pleasurable instruction, are *chala* (Deception, Irony), Trigat (Triple or Multiple import) and Ganda (dramatic coincidence). A statement which carries an altogether different meaning, employed to cause deception, laughter and anger is *chala* (deception, irony). statement in which many meanings are employed by clever means, due to similarity of sounds, (like whether laughter – evoking or not, is to be known as *Trigata* (Triple or Multiple import), *Ganda* arises due to agitation, confusion, quarrel, reviling and caused by confusion caused by presently and previously uttered words. It is interesting to note that the contemporary *nukkad* (street theatre) nataka is very close to vithi as it directly addresses social evil or

hypocrisy by using the dramatic techniques employed in *vithi*, irony (*chala*) and *Trigata* (muluple meanings) being the two chief aspects.

It is important to remember here that Bharata's ten patterns of dramatic composition are more related to the delineation of particular emotional content then they are a rigid classification of dramatic types. The general requirement for all plays is that the story is drawn from well-known sources and the hero is equally well-known and noble. The difference therefore appears in the number of acts that are constructed to present the story, and perhaps the kind of emotion that receives prominence. If it is a story of love presented in four acts, it is *natika*. if in five or seven acts, it is *nataka*, if in ten acts it is *prakarana Dima, samavakara* and *vyayoga* are all concerned with themes of fight, they differ in number of acts and the kind of hero or heroes presented in them. The formal differences and the thematic matter should show that the ten types were intended by Bharata as suitable dramatic structures which could be conveniently used and nothing more.

CHAPTER-XXXIV

Pravritti and *Vritti*

The concepts of Prauritti and Vritti as explained in Ch. 34, of Natya Shastra are given below.

Both pravrtti and vritti are related to the communication of dramatic action to the spectators. Knowledge and communication of the different behaviour patterns and modes of different characters in a play is called *pravrtti*. People in this world belong to different places and regions and subscribe to different cultural habits and conventions which account for their difference. On the basis of their existence related differences, Bharata speaks of four pravrittis: Avanti Dakshinya, Panchali and Odha-magadhi-which characterize the people living in four geographical regions of India.

The differential cultural and existential modes of people also affect their speech patterns and modes of communication, their public behaviour. This mode of living and behaviour is called vritti.

Bharata intended drama or *natya* to be an *anukarana* (imitation) of the *lokavritta* of all kinds of people in the seven islands (co-incidently there are seven continents in our world), if it is to be a faithful representation (*vrittantadarshana*) of their actions. In a sense, in Bharata's discourse, *natya* or drama has to be predominantly realistic. In order to produce a realistic form of drama, Bharata advises a playwright to study the local spoken language, the food and dress habits, the manners and customs of the people he intends to represent in his play. Only then, his dramatic representation will be convincing and effective. For example, Bharata notes that the Southerners are very fond of music and dance and love graceful presentation. the people of the Avanti - region and of central India are attracted towards the grand and the graceful, the Eastern regions prefer wordy rhetoric, the people living in Western region are attracted towards the violent and grand action. The Verbal expression or styles corresponding to these dramatic predilections of the people are called *vrittis*.

The four *vrittis* are : Bharati, Sattvati, Kaishiki and Arabhati. They have a mythical origin as they were supposed to come into being during Vishnu's fight with the demons *Madhu* and *Kaitabha*. There is a Vedic connectivity as well. *Bharati* and *pathya* is connected with the *Rigveda; Sattvati* and *abhinaya* with the *Yajurveda, Kaishiki* and melody with the *Samaveda*; *Arabhati* and sentiments with the *Atharvaveda*. Bharata defines *Bharati* as speech which is a verbal mode and makes use of grand and impressive diction; *Kaishiki* is a graceful mode and is concerned with song, dance, music, gestures and movements in dance; *Arabhati* is vigorous and is very appropriate for a drama of passion and action; Sattvati combines the grandeur of diction and the depth of emotion. The *vrittis* really connote verbal, psychological, physical and graceful or charming presentation of art. No work of literary art can be imagined without verbal expression; so that *Bharati* vritti is realy common to all literary compositions. Similarly, a dramatic representation necessarily involves *abhinaya* (acting) of the moods and the movements of the mind. This is *Sattvati vritti* which Bharata rates above all else in histrionic representation. The dramatic performance may be given either in a very energetic and vigorous way or in pleasing, soft, graceful way. The first is *Arabhati vritti* and the second is *Kaishiki vritti*. These two seem to be specially connected with dramatic mode. But, as

Bharata suggests, *vrittis* are not confined to drama alone. They represent the stylistic mode of expression in poetic literature and were developed as *ritis* of writing. A writer must use appropriate style of emotive presentation of his theme, so that an actor can use the appropriate mode of *abhinaya* to render it in stage performance.

List of Long and short answer type Questions based on the Prescribed Textual Portions

Long Answer Type

(A) Critically examine the origin and purpose of natya or drama as described by Bharata in *Natyashastra:* For answer, see pp. 1-5, 9-14, 17-20.

(B) Critically examine the theory of *rasa*. For answer see pp. 47-53.

(C) Explain the relationship between vibhava, vyabhicharibhava and sthayibhava. For answer see pp. 47-53.

(D) Write an essay for ten kinds of plays as described by Bharata. For answer see pp. 75-79

Short – answer type

1) Write a note on *sahridaya.*

2) Explain, in brief, the meaning of rasa.

3) How is rasa produced?

4) Write short notes on the following:-

(a) *rasa* in poetry (b) relevance of *rasa* theory today (c) *shringar rasa* (the erotic) (d) *karuna rasa* (e) *hasya* (the comic) *rasa* (f) *nataka* (g) *vrittis* (style) (h) *prakarana*

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Unit-III

Wordsworth: Preface to Lyrical Ballads

1770	—	William Wordsworth, the second son of John Wordsowrth (1741-83) and his wife Anne (1748-78), born at Cockermouth, Cumberland, April 7.
1775	—	Attends Anne Birkett's infant school at Penrith, Westmorland, while staying with his mother's parents at their mercers' shop there.
1776	—	Dayboy at Cockermouth Grammar School at least until October and may have attended intermittently for two full years. (Much of this time certainly spent with Coakson grandparents at Penrith.)
1778-87	—	At Hawkshead Grammar School, 1778; his father, 1783.
1787-91	—	At St. John's College, Cambridge.
1790	—	First visit to France: Paris (November), Orleans, Blois, Paris (October).
1793	—	An Evening Walk and Descriptive Sketches published. Walking tour by Salisbury, Stonehenge Bristol, and Tintern Abbey to Wales.
1795.	—	Settles with his sister Dorothy at Racedown, Dorset. Meets Coleridge.
1797	—	Visits Coleridge at Nether Stowey, Somerset; leaves Racedown and settle at Affoxden, near Nether Stowey.
1798	—	Lyrical Ballads (September). Visit to Germany (September) 1798-April 1799).
1799	—	Settles at Dove Cottage, Townend, Grasmere (his home till 1808).
1802	—	Visit to Calais (August). Marries Mary Hutchinson at Brompton, near Scarborough, October 4
1803	—	First tour in Scotland. Meets Walter Scott.
1805	—	His sailor brother John drowned at sea.
1806	—	Lives at Coleorton, Leicestershire, from October 1806 to the summer of 1807.
1807	—	Poems in Two Volumes.
1808	—	Moves from Dove Cottage to Allan Bank, Grasmere (his home till 1811).
1809	—	The Convention to Cintra.
1811	—	Moves from Allan Bank to the Rectory, Grasmere) his home till 1813).
1812	—	Death of two of his children.
1813	—	Settles at Rydal Mount, his home for the rest of his life. Apointed Stamp Distributor for Westmorian.
1814.	—	Second tour in Scotland. The Excursion.
1815	—	Poems, two vols. (first collected edition). The White Doe of Rylstone (begun 1807).
1816	—	A Letter to a Friend of Robert Burns. Thanksgiving Ode.
1818	—	Two Addresses to the Freeholders of Westmorland.
1819	—	Peter Bell (Written 1798). The Wagoner (Written 1805).

1820 — The River Duddon, a Series of Sonnets. Miscellaneous Poems, four volumes (second collected edition, revised). The Excursion (second edition, revised). Fifth visit to the Continent: Switzerland, the Italian Lakes, Paris (July-November).

1822. — Memorials of a Tour on the Continent, 1820. Ecclesiastical Sketches) called Sonnets in 1837).

1823 — Sixth visit to the Continent: tour in the Netherlands.

1827 — Poetical Works, five volumes (third collected edition, revised).

1828 — Seventh visit to the Continent: tour up the Rhine.

1829 — Tour in Ireland.

1830 — Rides from Lancaster to Cambridge, 'a solitary equestrian'.

1831 — Third tour in Scotland: visits Scott at Abbotsford.

1832 — Poetical Works, four volumes (fourth collected edition, revised).

1835 — Yarrow Revisited, and other Poems. A Guide through the District of the lakes in the North of England.

1836-37 — Poetical Works, six volumes (fifth collected edition, revised).

1838 — The Sonnets of William Wordsworth, collected in one volume.

1841 — Revisits Alfoxden and Tintern.

1842 — Poems, chiefly of Early and Late Years (called 'Volume VII'). Resigns post of Stamp-Distributor for Westmorland; receives a pension of & 300 from the Civil List.

1843 — Appointed Poet Laureate in succession to Southey. Dictates notes on his poems to Miss Fenwick.

1844 — Kendal and Windermere Railway: Two Letters reprinted from the Morning Post.

1845 — Poems, one volume (sixth collected edition, revised).

1847 — Ode, performed in the Senate-House, Cambridge.

1849-50 — Poetical Works six volumes, giving his final revision of the text.

1850 — Dies at Rydal Mount (April, 23). The Prelude (begun 1799 completed 1805, revised 1839, published posthumously).

Literary Criticism in Romantic Age

When Wordsworth took to writing there flourished in England a school of criticism which is known as Neo-classical or Augustan school of criticism. It is a school which holds "veneration for the Roman classics, thought and way of life," to borrow the expression of George Sherburne from Literary History of England. In other words, Neo-classicism implies a respect for rules and literary principles of Aristotle and other Greek and Roman critics as interpreted and modified first by the Italian critics and then by the French critics. Neo-classicism was a reaction to the excesses of the Metaphysical poets and an outcome of the French influence, which Charles II and his courtiers brought along with them when they returned from France. Besides, the French respect for rules and regulations, which the French Academy framed seriously as an integral part of theory and practice of literature. With the rise of scientific spirit and new philosophy with its emphasis on rationalism and reason in England, these French rules were also imported into England

The chief characteristics of neo-classicism were very clearly laid out and thoroughly followed. Alexander Pope adhered to them so seriously he became their master spokesman and was known as the poet of 'correctness.'

According to these neo- classical critics, the main function of poetry was considered to instruct and delight in other words, poetry had first and foremost a didactic function to perform. Hence, the poetic justice was the most necessary feature where the virtue was rewarded and vice was duly punished. The aesthetic and emotional effects, however important they may be, were secondary.

Another important precept that prevails everywhere is 'to follow nature.' Nature, of course, is a protean term which means different things in different contexts. It stands for the 'external reality' that the poet imitates and works on the principle of 'verisimilitude.' The term 'Nature' also refers to general human nature that means the qualities common to all human beings in all ages and countries. It is something which adds a universal note to poetry; it is not the individual or the particular but the humanity and the universal that is the focus of the poetic works. It also refers to particular or typical qualities of a section of society, class or sex. In other words, the poet is true not to 'token' but to 'type'. Nature means the principal or power that represents order and authority, regulating force and harmony which governs the universe. Besides, to follow Nature means to follow those rules which were discovered by the great ancient masters after the deep study of the world of Nature. These ancients simply 'methodised' nature.

There was a marked distrust in 'originality.' And the poets were supposed to deal with the universal and accepted ideas which should be expressed in the best possible manner. The emphasis was more on the formal perfection than on content. The common words were avoided and diction and style, precisely the language, on the whole was supposed to be noble and elevated. In this way arose the artificial poetic diction, which Wordsworth rejected and attacked in The Preface to Lyrical Ballads. He reacted strongly against these notions and said that there is no essential difference between the language of prose and poetry.

To understand fully the Romantic criticism let us first focus on Romanticism and Romantic Age.

The first thirty years of the nineteenth century form a period marked by certain characteristics which have been permeating all through the literary history but in this period they grew more definite and acquired an extreme intensity. This is called the period of Romanticism in which we witness the realization in all its plenitude of a type of emotional and imaginative literature that has escaped from the constraining forces of sovereign reason and an inner progression the face of the great social and moral upheaval caused by the transformation of industry. After the religious awakening of Methodism and Evangelicalism, the decisive shock to thought comes with the French Revolution.

It is legitimate enough to date, as it is often done, the beginning of the new age in literature from the publication of The Lyrical Ballads in 1798 but English Romanticism is not one artistic principle in conflict with another. It is not exactly as in France an affirmation of an innovatory aesthetic creed opposed to an orthodox art. The cult of the values of Pope and others was still prevailed as, for instance, in Byron; while the effort of Keats and Shelley is directed along the lines which have little in common with the doctrine of Wordsworth and Coleridge.

English Romanticism does not consist in triumph of 'self.' The personality of the writer has a characteristic value in it, because sensibility and imagination are of the very essence of individuality while the intelligence tends to the general. Nor does English Romanticism primarily consist in a return to a national tradition, although in a real sense it is the very thing. It means English Romanticism is not the outcome of foreign influences either. The part played by such

a contagion, at this date, is much less significant in England than in France. The stimulating effect of certain themes, which have emanated from Germany is a recognizable but secondary force in the development of literature from 1790 to 1830.

Romanticism can be defined as the active reawakening, in the larger number of writers, of a creative impulse that has an intimate fusion, the close reciprocal dependence, of sensibility and imagination. The Romantic spirit has an accentuated predominance of emotional life, provoked or directed by the exercise of imaginative vision, and in its turn stimulating or directing such exercise. Precisely, Romanticism can be defined in terms of pure psychology; any other formula alters or limits arbitrarily its very essence. Intense emotion coupled with an intense display of imagery, such is the frame of mind, which supports and feeds the new literature and gives the epoch its distinct character.

Here it is pertinent to note that if the Elizabethan age had already been essentially an age of Romanticism what are the traits, which distinguish the later Romanticism from the earlier?

In the first place there are delicate differences due to the immediate happenings and to near historical influences. No one beating of the moral rhythm ever completely resembles itself. The French Revolution, for instance, is a unique event.

However, the capital difference is of more inward nature. The history of thought is less likely to repeat itself than any other sequence: the reason is that a new state of mind could not possibly be identical with a former one since it adds to it the continuous experience gained in the interval of time, an experience inscribed in the very perception of its intrinsic newness. The central difference lies precisely in this, that the Romanticism of the 1820s knows and feels itself to be a second period of its kind, and not the first. Its consciousness of itself is spontaneously turned to the past; it is wholly permeated with an aspiration, which exalts it towards earlier forms of existence. It is under the influence of the feelings already experienced which memory faintly recaptures that creates the subtle impression of regret mingled with the joy of a discovery. H.D.Irwin and W.D.M. Cinnes aptly observe in their book, A History of English Literature that

> *" .... This recognition of a land at once strange and familiar, where the heart finds itself at home, as it proceeds to explore it, impregnates all the fibres of English Romanticism; and the same spirit is perceptible in French Romanticism, although no doubt in a lesser degree."*

However, the germ of Romanticism, the term of almost illimitable complexity, can be located in the poetic belief that reality is grasped perspectively, by each individual according to his or her own light as Arthur O.Lovejoy put in his article "On the Discriminations of Romanticism." Actually, the breakdown of the neoclassical belief in an objective reality to which all thinking men could subscribe, new guarantees of human value had to be discovered. The beginning of the nineteenth century highlighted a fresh arena of belief, the constructive powers of consciousness itself. For the first time in the history of Western literature, subjectivity, more than other components of reality, stands out, as the hub of value to which all else is relative. Truth was granted through subjectivity and the subjectivity determined man's apprehension of truth. "Every Eye," writes Blake, "sees differently. As the Eye, such the Object." Thus he expresses a standpoint, which all the Romantics acknowledge.

The most significant characteristic of Romanticism emphasizes that it is a probing deeper into the self than through the exercise of pure imagination that the heart's desire is attained. A feeling of nostalgic strangeness is essential to this literature, because consciousness is in quest of a certain mood, which is a thing of the past, and because in an obscure way it grasps the reality of the mood and not a mere image for the fundamental act of meaning-making. Since one of the chief concerns of Romantic reasoning is the integrity of self, the centrality of the "whole man," Romanticism was ever present in the background of even the classical spirit. Its resurrection in the early decades of the nineteenth century is an awakening.

Thus the 'wonder' of the Romanticists is enthralling discovery as it is the progressive lightening –up of an inner horizon which extends beyond the limits of clear consciousness. The domain of remembrances is the favourite realm of mystery and it plays an important part in the romantic poetry. It seems certain that all that Romantic writers imagine and feel is accompanied by a shade of wonder, because they see those emotions and those images rise within themselves with a surprising spontaneousness and they bring with them a disturbing impression of an intimacy of old date. "Romanticism is as a whole, in this respect, a phenomenon of collective 'paramnesia', the reviviscene of a subconscious personality." Moreover, the obsession of distant centuries is the mysterious attraction of the strong

modes of feeling of which the collection memory has preserved a confused recollection, and which [illegible] associates with the remote phases of its experience. These tendencies in the Romanticism of 1820 are [illegible] elements of chance but inevitable and constitutive characteristics as they change the mental environment and [illegible] the moral attitude.

At the time when Romanticism definitely makes its appearance, no sudden change occurs in the movement [illegible] in the exaltation of souls. The society as a whole was full of unrest and of 'a secret want of balance.' As Irwin pointed out:

> *"The bulk of the nation, however, pursues the track of industrial and commercial expansion; its practical standard is that of a utilitarianism which daily becomes more clearly defined. The mal du siecle does not possess in England the character of an almost universal epidemic, in its worst form, it only affects exceptional types; while in average circles of cultivated society it only assumes the mild form of moral disquietude, to which the unsettled condition of the political world contributes as much as, if not more than, the instability in the moral life itself."*

Thus the state of society from 1800 to 1830 is just unable to provide an explanation of Romanticism.

In the political field, this period has a strongly marked and clear outline, the relation of which to the course of literature is as definite as it is simple. English Romanticism is not a homogeneous group of tendencies and writers. Two successive generations held different views and reactions to the dominant social-political situations, especially the Revolutionary ideals related to the French Revolution and Imperial times. The first Romanticism, therefore, arises and sets forth as a reaction against this ideal. The feelings, instincts, and imagination which it brings into play, [illegible] exploits with audacious freedom, are linked up by it with the permanent fund of British originality.

The mysticism upon which the poetical reform of Wordsworth and Coleridge is based thus seeks its justification and its encouraging precedents in a national idealism, where a sympathetic interest in the poor enters as an element but where there is no place for a foreign gospel of the rights of man. And this sympathy is justified, according to these writers, by the moral dignity of a peasant race attached to the soil for years, whose spirit goes back, beyond the century of Reason and Enlightenment, to the faith and patriotism of the bygone ages. In the literary field, the Lake poets claim as their authority the examples of Elizabethan Renaissance; in the social sphere, they lay stress on the noble simplicity of a class in which traditional virtues are still lingering, it is in this light that they view their relationship – which is wholly one of hostility and defence – with the great political turmoil, the shock of which has never, in fact, ceased to produce a fecund bestirring in their souls.

In an atmosphere such as this, the second generation of Romanticists breathes a spirit of moral revolt. Without challenging the authority in art of the Elizabethan models, it refuses to recognize any prestige in the tradition itself, and severely criticizes a present that is overruled by the fear of progress, as by conventional privileges and lies. By the way of the direct transmission or derived influence, this generation receives the heritage of the revolutionary thought; it links up the intensity of thought and its psychological tone with the ideas of liberty and rebellion, with a keen determination to secure independence and realize justice, and with an exclusive cult of the beautiful.

The writers of the first group are in moral harmony with a large majority of the public despite the fact that they run counter to orthodox habits of language and style. They excel their contemporaries by the fullness of their spiritual life. The Romanticism of the Lake poets is a kind of purification and deepening of normal existence; it takes its stand upon the emotions that are common to all, and only seeks, by stimulating them, to idealize them into poetry. The second generation, on the contrary, sets up a decided opposition between the artist and his surroundings. It carries the feelings and imagination to a degree at which the average temperament would seem to perceive an excess threatening the balance of personality; and at the same time, it raises against the established order of things a manifold protestation, haughty sarcasm, or aesthetic detachment. Thus, in the Romantic age literature becomes the literature of social conflict. It appeals to the vital forces of the soul against the rules of interests and cold calculation. Born of a living psychological development, and transposing, as it does, into the domain of art an agitation, an emotional bestirring which society was determined to put an end to, it requires from all minds a sympathy which only a morally liberated elite could grant it. In face of the threats and declining moral norms, it was after all a society which, above all, desired to live.

Despite the fact that Wordsworth had become the adversary [illegible] reform, he remained the apostle that the Revolution

had made him. It is of little consequence that his poetic vocation and art should have developed after the disappointment of his social hopes, and as a reaction against them. The essential initiative that he then takes in art implies an inner certitude, a clearness of vision, which English poetry had been expecting for half a century, and which a writer could find only in the regenerating poet of a great faith. In order to renew so thoroughly the inspiration and language of poetry, to destroy the imperious tradition and to break a spell, the utmost moral courage was required. Wordsworth had this zeal and it is impossible not to see that "the doctrine of the Lyrical Ballads is an aesthetic application of sentimental democracy." Actually, love of liberty is ingrained in the English temperament. Hence they are individualistic. They could not follow the neo-classical rules in a servile manner for long. To their temperamental leaning toward liberalism the events like the French Revolution and the American War of Independence held a natural appeal. Their spirit of free inquiry led to a revived interest in the ancient masters and medievalism and to fresh thinking on the subject of literary appreciation. If under the influence of German idealists there was re-thinking on the nature of beauty and aesthetic appeal, and a new aesthetics was developed, under the influence of Longinus whose essay "On the Sublime" was the first to expound the doctrines on which Romanticism rests. The sublime, that is elevated or lofty, is born out of the grand thoughts, deep passions and flawless technique. Wordsworth and Shelley were particularly susceptible to intimations of the sublime and were profoundly stirred by the mysteries and dynamic forces of Nature. Wordsworth and Coleridge voiced their protest against Neo-classicism and through their critical writings laid the foundations of Romanticism. It is true that they gave a definite programme and consciousness to the Romantic Movement. The under-current of change which was slowly simmering beneath the superficial calm of the 18th century burst into life with the publication of the Preface to the Lyrical Ballads. Thus, the foundation of Romantic Criticism was laid in last decade of the 18th century which marks an end of the Neo-classical creed of authority.

Romantic criticism not only ignores rules whether of the ancients like Aristotle or Horace or of the French, but also refuses to set any fixed and permanent model before the writers. Freedom is the essence and it endeavours to free literature and literary criticism from the bondage of the Neo-classical rules. Romantic criticism discards the theory of Imitation which had been the faith of the critics since the days of Aristotle. Poetry is no more a mode of imitation, but "a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" as Wordsworth said, or "the expression of the imagination" as Shelley believed. According to Romantic criticism all poetry is born of imagination, and the critic's function is to judge and reveal its working imagination and genuine emotion and not the reason or good sense or the set of rules. It is on the basis of impression it produces that the quality of a literary work is to be judged. Inspiration and intuition rather than adherence to rules is the basis of creation.

Romantic criticism deals with fundamental questions, such as, "What is poetry?" "What is its true appeal?" and "Who is a Poet?" It is creative in nature. It is as much the result of imagination as works of literature. The critic endeavours to enter the heart and mind of the poet with sympathy and understanding. He expresses his views after entering imaginatively into the thoughts and feelings of the writer out of which poetry is born.

The immediate end of poetry, as of all art, according to Romantic criticism, is pleasure. Coleridge stated, "If poetry instructs, it does so only through pleasure." Critics since the days of Horace regarded instruction as the primary end of poetry and the delight its secondary aim but the Romantic critics believed that pleasure rather than instruction is the end or function of poetry. Coleridge resolves this controversy by combining both but through pleasure.

Life and Works of Wordsworth

William Wordsworth, who was born at Cockermouth, Cumberland, on April 4, 1770, is known for the creative originality based on his intimate contact with the revolutionary faith and enthusiasm for the brotherhood of mankind. He was the second son of John Wordsworth, attorney -at-law. Outwardly his long and uneventful life divides itself into four periods:

(I) His childhood and youth in Cumberland Hills from 1770 to 1787: His mother confirmed that he was very moody, impulsive and even violent boy. His violent temper is reflected in many episodes of his life. She once remarked that " the only one of her five children about whose future she was anxious was William: and he would be remarkable either for good or for evil." His mother died in 1778 when he was only eight years old but she exerted an influence on him, which lasted all his life. In that very year he was sent to the ancient grammar school of Hawkshead in the beautiful Lake District where he stayed in the village at a cottage, which is still known as "Wordsworth Cottage." He

records the experiences of his stay here in The Prelude, which are the happy memories of childhood in the lap of nature. Wordsworth lost his father five years later. The children were placed under the guardianship of two uncles. Beyond the claims which he had against the Lowther family, his father had left small provision for his children an amount over 4000 pounds. However, at Hawkshead he learned more eagerly from nature- flowers, hills and stars than from his books. There emerge three important things, which consolidate his experiences there: first, Wordsworth never felt lonely with nature; second, in the woods and fields, he felt the presence of a living spirit in nature though unseen and "companionable though silent." He says later on:

I heard among the solitary hills
Low breathings coming after me, and sounds
Of undistinguishable motion.

Such joyful experiences recorded so precisely invariably remind the reader of his own childhood; third, Wordsworth's impressions of nature are delightful and familiar. He reveals through them his own abounding joy of life.

(ii) The second period of his life begins with his university course at Cambridge in 1787: It reveals many storms, stressful and even trivial engagements of life, his travels abroad and Revolutionary experiences. Perhaps the most interesting event in his life at Cambridge was his friendship with the young political enthusiasts, whose spirit is expressed in his remarkable poem on the French revolution. He has already acquired two things by now, first, the habit of verse and second, the temperament of poetry. The third book of The Prelude gives a dispassionate account of his student life including its pleasures and general aimlessness. Wordsworth made two trips to France, in 1790 and 1791.It was with his Cambridge friends specially Robert Jones that he took the walking tour in France and Switzerland which is commemorated in his Descriptive Sketches. In January he took his B.A.degree. Wordsworth developed a keen sympathy with the ideology of the French Revolution and this faith was deepened by his intimate friendship with Michel de Beaupuy, a captain in the Republican Army. As book IX of The Prelude bears witness, his friendship with Beaupuy profoundly influenced his political thought. Wordsworth's poems, written during this period, are full of hopes and ambitions that stirred the whole of Europe then. Wordsworth remained in France till the end of 1792, for the most part in Orleans and Blois. In Orleans he had a passionate love-affair with Marie-Anne Vallon, a girl of a royalist family by whom he had a daughter, Anne-Caroline who was baptized on December 15, 1792.

During this period, Wordsworth wrote the greater part of Descriptive Sketches In isolated passages he expressed his sympathies with the Revolution, his deep moral dejection and even a mood of religious unbelief. Wordsworth was to take religious orders in the approaching winter or spring but he strongly wished to "deter the moment." It confirms that his faith in the religious and moral conviction was deeply shaken by two things rapidly especially the execution of Louis XVI and the second was the rise of Napolean, and the slavish admiration showered upon this dangerous man by France. His coolness soon grew into disgust and opposition as he reveals in his poems but other Romantic poets like Shelley and Byron criticized him for it.

In February 1793, Wordsworth published both Descriptive Sketches and An Evening Walk. Wordsworth's chief interest as a poet was in resolving the conflict between style and substance, which later on becomes the integral part of his theory of poetry. In the same month England declared war upon France, which shook his moral nature earnestly. As expected he was on the side of France. Not only that the publication of Godwin's Political Justice also influenced him. Earlier Wordsworth was influenced by Rousseau's concept of deifying "Nature" but now he began to deify the individual reason as opposed to the collective reason which is another name for "the general will", that is, for tyranny. In the autumn of 1793, he started writing Guilt and Sorrow, his first considerable poem that was finished in 1794. In 1795 - 1796 he wrote The Borderers, A Tragedy in which he seems to be struggling out of Godwin's influence. For two years after returning from France Wordsworth led a life of obscurity but in 1795 his friend Raisley Calvert died and left him with a legacy of nine hundred pounds. This financial assistance gave him the independence to settle with his sister Dorothy at Racedon, Crewkerne where that The Borderers was finished and Margaret or The Ruined Cottage was begun.

It was one of the decisive periods of Wordsworth's life when he started living with Dorothy and Coleridge at Nether Stowey. Wordsworth acknowledges in The Prelude that he felt the signs of the recovery of the moral and ethical nature under the influence of first of his sister and then of Coleridge. When these "three persons and one soul" were united together in Somerset, the Lyrical Ballads was conceived and written. Wordsworth decided to give himself up entirely

as Uptill now he had produced nothing that showed much originality of treatment. Though in this period Wordsworth wrote comparatively little but the idea of a new poetry was simmering in his mind —poetry that was to be a complete revolt from the accepted standards in both matter and manner. When in 1797 he met Coleridge, and put his theories into words, he found a sympathetic supporter of his ideas.

(iii) The third period of his life, 0that is, between 1797 and 1807: This period is commonly known as The Great Decade. It was short but significant phase of his life. In the autumn of 1798 the volume of Lyrical Ballads was published which marks the climax of the Romantic Revolt, not because it was the zenith of the revival of romance but because of its importance as a gesture of revolt Here two important things should be kept in mind: (a) In writing of the Lyrical Ballads, a spiritual division of labour between Wordsworth and Coleridge has been recorded by both of them. (b) It is the famous passage in Coleridge's Biographia Literaria that announces the opening of the two new roads in English poetry:

> *" ... our conversation turned frequently on the two cardinal points of poetry, the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty by modifying colours of imagination. In this idea originated the plan of Lyrical Ballads; in which it was agreed that my endeavours should be directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspe.ısion of disbelief for the moment that constitutes poetic faith. Mr. Wordsworth, on the other hand, was to propose to himself as his object to give charm of novelty to the things of everyday, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural by awakening the mind's attention from the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonder of the world before us."*

However, The *Advertisement* to the *Lyrical Ballads* is concerned only with Wordsworth and says in the opening sentence: 'It is the honourable characteristic of poetry that its materials are to be found in every subject which can interest human mind" and that the poems were an experiment to discover "how far the language of conversation. is adopted to the purposes of poetic pleasure." Wordsworth's contribution to the volume consisted chiefly of lyrical ballads properly so called; but to these he added four delightful lyrics-"It is the Mild Day of March," "I Heard a Thousand Blended Notes," "Expostulation and Reply," "The Table Turned," and a long poem "The Lines Written above Tintern Abbey" the medium of which is neither ballad nor lyric, but an elevated blank verse. It is of course not possible to divide the poems in Lyrical Ballads into two neat groups – ballads and lyrics; the very title of the collection proves this. Basically a ballad is a simple poem with a story told in a popular fashion, whereas a lyric is a short poem of personal feeling. None of the poems is mere list of events, and none of them is an outpouring of vague, highly-colored feeling. The language of Wordsworth's poems included in the Lyrical Ballads is simple, not poetic, artificial or grandiose.

After the publication of Lyrical Ballads, Wordsworth and his sister set sail for Germany and stayed there for six months. It proved to be an agreeable holiday perhaps because it served to throw the poet more exclusively upon his imaginative memories. Certainly the poems he wrote during this time such as "Lucy Gray" and "Ruth" are especially happy in their simplicity and charm. In the poems written during this period there are certain qualities, which were to become more common characteristics of Wordsworth's later poetry. As Margaret Drabble pointed out in her book, Wordsworth,

> *"The most noticeable of these qualities is a new tone of tender personal emotion, at its best pure and strong, and at its worst dangerously near sentimentality. It is quite different emotion from the sense of social, human sympathy with the general lot of men .... With this new tone comes a whole new set of images and references, dealing with flowers, birds, stars and the smaller and prettier details of nature."*

The Lucy poems are not 'nature poems' as some of his later poems are but they do point the way towards later works like "The Daisy," " The Celandine," " The Cuckoo," and "The Daffodils."

On his return from Germany, he and his sister went to live in Grasmere in the Lake District, where he had spent his childhood. Here he spent rest of his life except for occasional tours in Scotland and on the Continent. A new edition of the Lyrical Ballads was brought out in 1800, and this edition was enriched by his famous 'Preface' and by a second

volume of poems, among them are some of his best and the most original pieces. A third edition appeared in 1802 with an appendix on 'Poetic Diction' and fourth in 1805.

In 1802, Wordsworth married Mary Hutchinson of Penrith. It was not a remarkable event in his imaginative life though it was a successful wedding in its own way. She was a good wife and an interesting companion but could not be a literary influence like Dorothy or Coleridge. In the year when the first edition of the Lyrical Ballads appeared, he had already begun working upon The Prelude. When the fourth edition of the Lyrical Ballads appeared he had already finished the latter, which according to A.C. Bradley, "is the greatest long poem after Paradise Lost". The Prelude is Wordsworth's spiritual autobiography that shows "The Growth of a Poet's mind from the earlier childhood down to the date, i.e., 1797 and is a significant document of the romantic revival because it constitutes a handbook of imaginative life unique in subtlety and power. It was intended to be a preparation for "a philosophical poem, containing views of Man, Nature, and Society," of which The Excursion was a part. Of the same poem, another part is the impressive fragment of The Recluse, written in 1800 but published later on. As a form of poem, The Prelude is a class by itself

In 1802-1803, Wordsworth's political interest revived, as the sonnets of that year affirm. Besides, the conditions in France created by the personal despotism of Napoleon who was made Consul for Life earlier and the war on England disillusioned him and broke his faith in political idealism. The stagnant worldliness that he felt in England of that time made it all the more difficult for him to preserve his faith in the revolutionary mission of France. It has become customary to reproach Wordsworth with forsaking his faith but it is unjust. What is deplorable is the fact that he forsook also so many ideals that he should have saved against historical disappointment. In 1807 Wordsworth published the Poems in Two Volumes this collection contains besides the sonnets on "National Independence and Liberty", and "Memorials of a Tour in Scotland," such masterpieces as "Resolution and Independence," "Ode to Duty," and the immortal "Ode on Intimation of Immortality" to mention a few. If the volumes of 1800 and 1807 established him as one of the great inventors of poetical forms, other works like The Prelude, The Recluse fragment, Margaret or The Ruined Cottage etc. constitute a body of poetical works which because of their compass and originality, place him among the greatest English poets.

There is a group of poems, written while he was still at the height of his powers, which seem to forecast his approaching decline and which are full of evidence that he knew what was happening to him as a poet. They are the poems written not with joy, nor about joy, but about the loss of joy. Precisely, they are the poems about the problem of living without joy. The most important poems in this group are "Resolution and Independence,"(written 1802, published 1807), "Ode to Duty," (written 1804, published 1807), "Immortality Ode" (written over a few years, published 1802-4) and "Elegiac Stanzas suggested by a picture of Peele Castle in a Storm," (written 1805, published 1807). These poems, different as they are, share a certain stiff determination to make the best of things, to carry on without complaining, and they all lament the loss of the easy spontaneous joys and passions of early youth. The last of this group of poems about resignation is different from others as it was written not about a vague sense of growing old and loss, but about a specific tragedy. It was written in 1805, as an elegy for Wordsworth's brother John who died that year when his ship was lost at sea. There is in the last line of the poem, something like a note of Christian hope. From this time on, Wordsworth, who had never been an orthodox Christian, was to become a church –goer. This poem gives the final hints of his final total conversion and commitment.

(IV)The last period after 1807: Wordsworth's poetic powers declined and the critics attribute different reasons to it. If the psychoanalysts feel that the decline was due to repressed passion for Annette that troubled his mind, others find that it is not passion but the remembered terrors. Herbert Grierson & J.C. Smith believe that the proximate cause of the withering of his genius was overworked as they stated in the book, A Critical History of English Poetry. Graham Hough tries to discover the cause of this decline stating:

> *" What has happened to bring about this change? Failure of impulse, or the abnegation of the deepest-rooted convictions in favour of a conventionally conservative middle age, are the common explanations. Probably Wordsworth has explained it best himself – in the Immortality Ode and, more clearly, in the Ode to Duty. This dates from 1805; but it already contains within it the germs of Wordsworth's middle age... when this happy self-trust begins to fail, the power of duty must be called in to supply its place. The sense of something lost is as clear as in the Immortality Ode or for*

that matter, in Tintern Abbey).... He did achieve a serenity and control in his middle years that was not achieved by any other romantic poet, and morally this is admirable: but unhappily what has been lost was what produced the poetry."

The total output of this period of decline was, of course, The Excursion, which was a part of the plan that occupied Wordsworth's mind for a great part of his life, but the poem was not all composed at one time. Apart from Book I (which is a revised version of "The Ruined Cottage") and Book II (written in the summer of 1806), most of the poems were composed between 1809 and 1813. It was published in 1814.If a critic named Cox Jeffery did not accept the attempt and said, "This will never do", and Keats thought it "One of the three things to rejoice at in this age." At the end of 1814 Wordsworth wrote two remarkable poems- "Laodamia" and "Dion" in a new style, a classic style, suggested by his re-reading of Virgil but a general decline in his poetic powers is undeniable. He still wrote more poems and in 1815 was published the first collected edition of Wordsworth's works. In the same year appeared the " White Doe of Rylstone" a beautiful but neglected poem in which Wordsworth attempt a sustained romantic narrative. In 1819, "Peter Bell" and "The Wagoner"; in 1820, "The River Duddon" and "Miscellaneous Poems." Though the decline in his poetic powers was visible and he himself was aware of it, it was not totally extinguished till long after. Though a further decline of the poetic powers could be witnessed in the poems written in 1822 such as "Ecclesiastical Sonnets" and "Memorials of a Tour on the Continent," there are the moments when the old poetic power asserted itself as in the poem "Composed on an Evening of Extraordinary Splendour and Beauty." His great voice is heard for the last time in the "Effusion on the Death of James Hogg":

Like clouds that rake the mountain summits,
Or waves that own no curbing hands,
How fast has brother followed brother
From sunshine to the sunless land.

Though many of his best sonnets came from the late period also, for instance, from Evening Voluntaries (1835) when the old greatness flashes out, but after 1835 he published nothing new. Graham Hough has summed up Wordsworth's poetic career thus:

"Beyond The Excursion we need hardly follow him. At this point his ideas were formed and settled. His best poetry had been a product of their development: now that the development is complete the poetry almost stops. Wordsworth wrote great many verses after 1815, and was to live for forty years more, a serene and well-organized existence: but apart from some repetition of earlier lyric themes, and occasional fine sonnets, there is nothing in the remainder of his works that we could not well spare."

The change, however, does not influence our admiration for Wordsworth a great poet, who has given us beautiful poetry out of the familiar experiences of the common world. It is not an exaggeration to state, "We have no poet so entirely original." Lowell rightly calls him "the historian of Wordsworthshire."

Wordsworth's Theory of Poetry

Though poetry remains like all other arts a complex and mysterious art but critics have tried from time to time to explain the process of poetic creation. Wordsworth defines his concept of poetry in his Preface of 1802 edition of the Lyrical Ballads and later developed his theory in the Preface of 1815 edition and a Supplementary Essay. It is not an exaggeration to state that only a few compositions of such a length contain so much of vigorous criticism and valuable reflections as the Preface of 1802. Wordsworth himself closely followed his theory in his practice.

If the publication of Lyrical Ballads marks the climax of the Romantic Revolt, it is because of its importance as a gesture of revolt against the existing poetic practices. In his Preface to the second edition Wordsworth explained in detail what his theories about new poetry were and what was to be looked for in his own poems. The immediate purpose of The Preface was to defend his poems against "the charges of lowness and unpoeticalness that had been made against both their subjects and their diction" to use the words of Graham Hough. The overall intention of Wordsworth was two-fold, that is, to relate poetry as closely as possible to common life, by removing it in the first place from the realm of fantasy, and in the second by changing it from the polite or over-sophisticated amusement to

a serious art. . According to him, poetry should be " the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings, not mere satisfaction of a taste for imagery and ornament. Wordsworth's aim in all this is to show that the poet is a man appealing to the normal interests of mankind, not as a peculiar being appealing to a specialized taste. He says

> *" He is a man speaking to men: a man, it is true, endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind; a man pleased with his own passions and volitions, who rejoices more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him; delighted to contemplate similar volitions and passions as manifested in the goings-on of the Universe and habitually impelled to create them where he does not find them."*

In his Preface Wordsworth made four claims: first, "to choose incidents and situations from common life"; second, "to relate or describe them throughout, as far as was possible in a selection of language really used by men"; third, "to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect"; and, last, "above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature." The greater part of the Preface is devoted to justification of the first two claims, and this has caused too much stress to be laid on them while the fact remains that it is on the last two claims that the greatness of his poetry rests.

The poetic language of the eighteenth century was unreal, and its substance was far from being an interpretation of the universal spirit of man. Wordsworth did inestimable service in insisting on a new and true orientation. But he went too far; he said that rustic life and language were the simplest and purest being elementary, in close touch with nature and unspoiled by social vanity. The fact remains that the rustic has little originality, few ideas, and makes almost no attempt to correlate them. It is also true that Wordsworth proposed to prune it of peculiarities but, as Coleridge observed, this would render it the same as the language of any other section of the community similarly treated. Wordsworth also asserted that the language of poetry differs in no way from that of prose, with the single exception of metre. This is the controversy that still rages and Wordsworth's finest poetry does not show any influence of this idea. Geoffrey H. Crump has stated categorically that "In his greatest poems he forgot his theories, or the poems are great enough to dwarf the theories into insignificance, and in his later works he intentionally discarded them."

Wordsworth was a complete innovator who saw things in a new way. Those who approach his poetry for the first time notice two peculiarities – its austerity and its appearance of triviality. It is so in the case of those who fail to see the quality of really human sympathy. Besides, Wordsworth himself is responsible for inviting this sort of response, as he had no relish for the present. Shelley said about him that "he was hardly a man, but a wandering spirit with strange adventures and no end to them." The triviality of manner is the manner through which he could convey the profoundest truths. While reading Wordsworth's poems, it is impossible not to be struck by two things: (a) " the magical strength of truth" to borrow the words of De Quincey, because "the poet binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth and over all time" to quote Wordsworth himself, and (b) the number of fine phrases that have become the common coin of everyday speech. John F. Danby observed in his book: The Simple Wordsworth that "Words exist not on the page but between people: only people can mean anything." In Wordsworth's poetry it is due partly to his simple people who use simple diction which, though often ineffective, is the most perfect form of utterance when used to express ideas that are imagined with passion. For instance, take such lines as

> *For old, unhappy, far-off things,*
> *And battles long ago*

He received the vivid impression, but the delight came with "emotions recollected in tranquility." The impressions as he records them seem at first sight insignificant, but if we ponder over them they catch something of a wonder and delight He felt that as a poet he had a special responsibility being a human spokesman and his "Poems alter persons." De Quincey quotes the instance of his saying of a cataract seen two miles off that it was "frozen by distance." His effort to convey by the simplest means the impression of intensity does not depend only on the use of ordinary words. As Cazamian pointed out,

> *"one thing more is necessary, namely, the deep-felt tone which reveals their hidden tension, and*

the proper tone may be indicated; Wordsworth makes up for them to a certain extent, thanks to the help of auxiliary devices: the presumption created by the choice of verse as a medium, the prestige of poetry, the rhythm, and the effect of pieces which shed light on one another... He has also to allow for certain turns and expressions of a revealing nature, which imply by their very irregularity a superior degree of emotional tension, and the effect of which is to throw the whole tenor of style on the plane of full-meant intention and subdued eloquence."

Wordsworth believed that the intrinsic relations are those, which the words of the poem entertain between themselves. " Every good poem has a natural cohesiveness; all its parts have dealing with each other and reinforce each other," as Danby stated. " Thus, Wordsworth's poetic style, which is not strictly according to the norms he laid down in his theory of poetry, achieves its artistic success by combining in it the psychological intensity, childlike spontaneousness, depth of feeling and delicate simplicity. T.S.Eliot has rightly summed up that,

"It is "Wordsworth's social interest that inspires his own novelty of form in verse, and backs up his explicit remarks upon poetic diction; and it is really this social interest which (consciously or not) the fuss was all about, It was not so much from lack of thought, as from warmth of feeling that Wordsworth originally wrote the words 'the language of conversation in middle and lower class society.' It was not from any recantation of political principles, but from having had it brought to his attention that, as a general literary principle, this would never do, that he altered them. Where he wrote 'my purpose was to imitate, and as far as possible, to adopt, the very language of men,' he was saying that no serious critic could disapprove.

In other words, "A new standard of actuality in poetry is insisted upon, a new conception of what poets should be, a new understanding of how their words actually work upon their audience. The poet is responsible in a new way to his world, to himself, and to his readers" as Danby stated with precision.

An Outline of the Preface to The Lyrical Ballads

The Preface to the Lyrical Ballads is a seminal piece of writing which contains almost all the thoughts that, according to Wordsworth, covered the most significant aspects of poetry. His primary aim was to generate a new kind poetry and to create a natural taste for it. To achieve this end, he wrote *The Preface* which deals with the following ideas:

Wordsworth begins by commenting on his poems, which were published in the first volume. He puts forth the fundamental device of writing poetry as "fitting to metrical arrangement a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation" so that a " sort of pleasure and quantity of pleasure may be imparted."

The basic purpose for composing was to create "a class of poetry" which could be "adapted to interest mankind permanently." It needed a systematic approach so that a proper moral relationship could be established without making it a matter of debate and discussion. It was essential for him to "treat the subject with clearness and coherence; it would be necessary to give full account of the public taste whether it was "healthy or depraved" and how could it be improved which obviously not possible "without pointing out in what manner language and human mind act and react on each other, and without retracting the revolutions, not of literature alone, but likewise of society itself."

Wordsworth makes it explicitly clear that he had no intention of suddenly obtruding upon the readers without preparing them in advance about the nature and choice of certain ideas and expressions which are to be included while other ideas and expressions would be excluded carefully. It is meant to "gratify known habits of association." Wordsworth says:

"They, who have been accustomed to the gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers, if they persist in reading this book to its conclusion, will, no doubt, frequently have to struggle with the feelings of strangeness and awkwardness; they will look around poetry, and will be induced to inquire by what species of courtesy these attempts can be permitted to assume that title."

Thus, he makes his purpose as well as task explicitly clear. He would not allow any slackness of 'indolence' to deter his 'duty.' He further explains his choice of the themes and manner of associating the ideas in poetry when he observes:

"The principal object, then, proposed in these Poems was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them throughout as far as possible, in a selection of language

really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect: and further, and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly, though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature."

Wordsworth chose to write about the humble and rustic life because in those conditions he felt that "the essential passions of heart find a better soil." These passions in their maturity are under less restraint and speak a plainer and more emphatic language. Hence they can be communicated more forcefully. Elaborating his ideas on the language of poetry which should be free from the social vanities he says:

" Accordingly, such a language, arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language than that which is frequently substituted for it by poets, who think that they are conferring honour themselves and their art in proportion as they separate themselves from the sympathies of men....."

Wordsworth believed that the contemporary poetry was so trivial and mean simply because the poets had no 'worthy purpose' which his poetry invariably had because of his habit of meditation that prompted and regulated his feelings. He states:

"For all good poetry is spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; and though this be true, Poems to which any value can be attached are never produced on any variety of subjects but by a man who, being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought long and deeply"

In other words, the poet believes that the present feelings are directed by the thoughts, which represent our past feelings and thus there is a continuance, which forms a habit of mind. And the understanding of reader of the poetic process " must necessarily be in some degree enlightened, and his affections strengthened and purified." Besides having a clear purpose Wordsworth's poetry is marked by another characteristic, that is, it is the feelings therein developed give importance to action and situation, or vice versa. He could thus assert, "subject is indeed important For the human mind is capable of being excited without the application of gross and violent stimulants." It is the capacity of mind that leads to a perception of beauty and dignity; it is these "indestructible qualities of human mind" which promise the end of evil and the possibility of a better future.

Wordsworth then proceeds to discuss the feature of style. He rejects the mechanical and conventional features of style like personifications etc. and adopts "the very language of common men" to "keep the reader in the company of flesh and blood." Without commenting on the choice of others regarding the language, he prefers to stick to his own choice which he calls "a claim of my own." What he strives most seriously for is to "avoid poetic diction." The subject and the aim of his poetry are to give pleasure by presenting the common in experience in the language of common men. He says:

".. in a poem there should be found a series of lines, or even a single line in which the language, though naturally arranged, and according to the strict laws of metre, does not differ from that of prose"

Many critics call such statements as "prosaisms" and condemn Wordsworth as a critic for being ignorant of his art Wordsworth rejects the canon of criticism commended by them and holds the conviction that "a large portion of language of every good poem can in no respect differ from that of good prose." He observes that " It may be safely affirmed that there neither is, nor can be, any essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition." Elaborating the idea he further says:

" They both speak by and to the same organs; the bodies in which both of them are clothed may be said to be the same substance, their affections are kindred, and almost identical not necessarily differing even in degree; Poetry sheds no tears, 'such as Angels weep,' but natural and human tears she can boast of no celestial Ichor that distinguishes her vital juices from those of Prose the same human blood circulates through the veins of them both."

According to him there are other factors which add distinction to the language of poetry besides rhyme and metrical arrangement and the first and foremost among them is that it is "a selection of the language really spoken by men with "truth and feeling" – something that separates the language from any "vulgarity and meanness."

Wordsworth once again reiterates the significance of the subject because of its high importance for the "taste and moral feelings." It leads the poet to define the poet and his qualities, those of "volitions and passions" which are manifested in "the goings on of the universe." As a result,

> *"whence and from practice, he has acquired a greater readiness and power in expressing what he thinks and feels , and especially those thoughts and feelings which, by his own choice, or from the structure of his own mind, arise in him without immediate external excitement."*

The language that is uttered by men in real life under actual pressure of those passions is still more powerful, lively and truthful than the language that a poet produces. The poet's effort is more mechanical however hard he may try to be real and substantial in his feelings of the situation which he describes because he does so for "a particular purpose, that of giving pleasure."

Wordsworth achieves this end by following 'the principle of selection' as ...guides him to believe that no words suggested by fancy or imagination can ever match the words which are emanations of reality and truth. In other words, according to Wordsworth "it is impossible for the poet to produce upon all occasions language as exquisitely fitted for the passion as that which the real passion itself suggests."

Fully understanding the dignity of the art of poetry, he says, "Poetry is the image of man and nature." The first and foremost responsibility of the poet is to give immediate pleasure to a human being as a 'Man.' He feels that to a great extent the knowledge about man's real nature and of his ordinary life, his ideas and sensations is pleasure: and where he has no knowledge, he has no pleasure. The poet directs his attention to the idea that man and nature are essentially adapted to each other and the mind of man is the mirror that reflects the fairest and most interesting properties of nature and he can converse with nature. Wordsworth draws a distinction between the Man of science and the Poet:

> *"The Man of science seeks truth as a remote and unknown benefactor; he cherishes and loves it in his solitude: the Poet, singing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion. Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge; it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all Science.... Poetry is the first and the last of all knowledge; it is as immortal as the heart of man."*

Wordsworth further adds that if the time ever makes the discoveries of science 'familiar to us' then the poet would employ them in his own art, as sciences then shall be "manifestly and palpably material to us." Not only that "the Poet will lend his divine spirit to aid the transfiguration" of those materials.

The poet speaks through the mouth of his characters as well as in his own person and character. He differs from other men not in kind but in degree. He has "a greater promptness to think and feel" and "a greater power in expressing such thoughts and feelings as are produced in him in that manner. He further goes on to say:

> *" But these passions and thoughts and feelings are the general passions and thoughts and feelings of men. And with what are they connected? Undoubtedly with our moral sentiments and animal sensations and with the causes that excite these.... The poet thinks and feels in the spirit of human passions. How, then, can his language differ in any material degree from all other men who feel vividly and see clearly?"*

Wordsworth takes into account some of the very significant aspects of poetry like metre etc. he says:

> " it may be proper to remind the Reader, the distinction of metre is regular and uniform, and not, like that which is produced by what is usually called POETIC DICTION, arbitrary, and subject to infinite caprices, upon which no circulation whatever can made."

According to Wordsworth, metre, as the ages have testified, heightens and improves the pleasure which co-exists with it. And poetry that deals with the great and universal passions of men and the entire world of nature carries the charm that exists in the metrical language. His specific answer about the use of metre is:

> *" the pleasure given by poetry depends upon the metre, unless it be accompanied with the other artificial distinctions of style with which metre is usually accompanied...and what I wished chiefly to attempt, was to justify myself for having written under the impression of this belief."*

Wordsworth justifies his preference for the metrical arrangement of words in poetry because ultimately "The end poetry is to produce excitement in coexistence with an overbalance of pleasure." He knows that the excitement is not a usual state of mind and hence the danger of over reacting to the emotions of pain and pleasure and it would affect the use of language as well. The state of mind, which is calm and tranquil, would naturally have a greater efficacy and would control and restraint the passion much more effectively while the metre definitely assists the poet to carry the intensities of the pathetic situations, for example take the works of Shakespeare. Wordsworth wishes to offer 'SYSTEMATIC defence' in favour of the use of metre and tries to focus on its causes and finds that the chief cause is "the pleasure which the mind derives from the perception of similitude in dissimilitude. The principle is the great spring of activity of our minds, and all the passions connected with it, take their origin." He connects even metre with this principle as it is enabled to produce much pleasure.

Explaining some of the reasons for writing poetry, Wordsworth said that

> *" Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origins from emotions recollected in tranquility, the emotion is contemplated till by a species of reaction, the tranquility gradually disappears, and an emotion kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this mood successful composition generally begins, and in a mood similar to this it is carried on:"*

Wordsworth concludes The Preface by giving a word of caution to his Reader against the false criticism quoting two examples from Dr. Johnson's poetry. He says, "this is a bad kind of poetry, or, this is not poetry" and wants sense to prevail. He comments: " Why take pains to prove that an ape is not a Newton, when it is self-evident that he is not a man." Wordsworth elaborates his idea of true poetry to improve the taste of his Readers so that they themselves could be saved from the erroneous judgment. He does not deny the fact "the power of any art is unlimited and the same is true of poetry that can "give other enjoyments, of a purer, more lasting, and more exquisite nature

To sum up, using the nobler powers of his mind he wishes to fulfill his purpose. He says: "a species of poetry would be produced which is genuine poetry; in its nature well adopted to interest mankind permanently, and likewise important in the multiplicity and quality of moral relations." He wants his reader to perceive his object and judge whether it was worth attaining.

The Preface: A Critical Appreciation

Wordsworth's The Preface to the Lyrical Ballads is a literary document of a great significance. It was revised a number of times till it attained its present form. The Lyrical Ballads was first published in 1798 and to this edition Wordsworth added a short advertisement or introduction. He pointed out in it that his main aim was to experiment whether themes taken from humble life and composed in the language of real people could create true poetry. He attacked the artificial diction and style of contemporary. To the second edition of The Lyrical Ballads published in 1800, he added a more detailed Preface. Wordsworth's principal object now was to trace in the incidents of common life, the primary laws of human nature as they operate in such circumstances which offer unusual and exciting emotions. He opted for low and rustic life because they invite essential passions of the human heart and those elementary feelings in a state of greater simplicity that characterize the rural life. Not only that such situations also incorporate men with nature with all its beautiful and permanent forms. Wordsworth claims to have used the language of the common man because it makes communication more philosophical and natural. The Preface of 1800 which Wordsworth started writing in the summer and completed by the end of September, is especially remembered for this paradoxical idea about language that " there neither is nor can be any essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition." The Preface is a historical document of great significance. Coleridge claimed in 1802 that it was "half a child of my own brain." No doubt many ideas originated during the discussion between Wordsworth and Coleridge but it was Wordsworth who finally shaped the material according to his own thinking. Coleridge came to disagree with many of his formulations later on.

The Preface of 1800 was thoroughly revised and enlarged for 1802 edition of The Lyrical Ballads. Wordsworth provides here an extensive account of nature, the function of poet showing how he is superior to the man of science and the nature of poetic pleasure. To this edition Wordsworth also added an Appendix on Poetic Diction expanding the

idea of poetic diction and its history. The Preface was constantly revised and improved for each subsequent edition of The Lyrical Ballads but nothing substantial was altered and the basic point of view of the poet remained the same. No significant change was made for the edition of 1805, but for the edition of 1815 this Preface appeared as an Appendix and a new Preface along with an Essay Supplementary to the Preface was added to the volume. Actually The Preface of 1802 and the Essay Supplementary of 1815 are the companion pieces and Appendix on Poetic Diction of 1802 form the core of Wordsworth's important literary criticism.

The immediate purpose of Wordsworth's Preface was not give an elaborate account of his theory of poetry or to make a systematic defence of his point of view but to defend his poems against the charges of 'lowness and unpoeticalness' in their subject matter and diction as Graham Hough opines. He knew that his poems were of new kind and therefore there was a need to introduce them through a Preface as his friends advised him to do. The Preface was a sort of introduction explaining how his poems were different from the popular poetry of his age. In other words, the basic objective in writing the Preface was to convince the reader that every new and original poet has to create a taste by which he is to be read and enjoyed, and creation of such the taste was the aim of the Preface. He speaks therefore of "the gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers." He criticizes "the neglect of the older literature in favour of 'frantic novels' sickly-stupid German tragedies and deluge of idle and extravagant stories in verse". He seeks to bring out drastic changes in taste by revaluation of early poetry so that his own poetry may be appreciated properly. The Preface contains Wordsworth's views on the nature of poetry and the poetic process, the function of poetry, the qualifications of a poet, and the ultimate nature of poetic truth. The poet regards the art of poetry superior to philosophy, history and science. This, however, does not mean that he wished the poets to confine attention to hills and sheep, Michaels and Lucys only and to take into account the urban and scientific would be an anti-Wordsworthian revolution. Though he believes that to incorporate scientific discoveries into man's imaginative life is difficult but he possesses a conception of poetry that goes beyond the temperament of his own age.

Graham Hough goes on to say that Wordsworth defends the subjects of his poetry, that is, the life of the common and humble people, and saves it from the charges of triviality and false simplicity by emphasizing psychological and moral interests. It makes him a different kind of poet from other poets of the rural landscape who seek to focus attention on the peculiarities of special class or district. Wordsworth talks of "the primary laws of nature." Behind the question of poetic diction is the fact that he was inclined towards familiar themes for moral and psychological reasons. Wordsworth's conviction that the fundamental human nature is to be found in "the simple and primary affections and duties" was a part of his revolutionary and democratic sentiment as well as a part of his childhood years among the 'shepherds, dwellers in our valley' that continued to represent essential humanity for him.

However, the theme that Wordsworth pursues most consistently and which dominates The Preface, is the argument against poetic diction. Wordsworth's interest in the language of simple people is a natural result of his choice of subjects from incidents of the life of common and humble people which demanded the use of real human speech. Hence, the immediate objects of his attack were the " gaudiness and inane phraseology" of the contemporary poets. To borrow the expression of F.W.Bateson, Wordsworth was arguing against the "positive theory of poetic diction" current through out the eighteenth century which believed that poetry must have specially suitable, elegant diction while Wordsworth fundamentally objected to such an idea because for him to separate poetry from the language actually used by the common people is to separate it from human life. In other words, Wordsworth's interest in the language of simple life is a natural result of his choice of subject, that is, the incidents in the life of common people. In The Advertisement (1781) to the Lyrical Ballads Wordsworth says that the majority of poems were written "chiefly with a view to ascertain how far the language of conversation in the middle and lower classes of society is adapted to the purposes of poetic pleasure." The Preface later describes the chosen diction as "a selection of language really used by men." In this statement, the class aspect (middle and lower classes of society) disappears, and the word "selection" modifies the original view. Wordsworth's main object is not only to include the vernacular but also to keep out the language that might not be used in ordinary speech. Wordsworth differs in practice from his own theory as his poetry confirms. He does not enrich his language with occasional colloquialisms. According to Graham Hough his real worry is not about common speech but to attack the existing poetic diction and to come to terms with it.

For Wordsworth the real significance of poetry lies in sharing of experience, in the communication of truths 'carried

alive into the heart by passion." He compares poetry with prose and thus emphasizes its communicative power. The view of poetry as communication is not confined to one period or movement; but it has never been so forcefully expressed as in The Preface of 1802. He says: " Poetry sheds no tears, 'such as angles weep,' but natural and human tears: she can boast of no celestial ichors (fluid that distinguishes her vital juices from those of prose); the same human blood circulates through the veins of them both."

Though Wordsworth's argument against poetic diction is forceful and cogent, its terms are often inexact and it irritates his critics including Coleridge who in Chapter xvii and xviii of Biographia Literaria provides the best commentary on Wordsworth's discussion of poetic diction. Coleridge comments on Wordsworth's preposition that there is a large part of poetry, which differs in no way from prose, is not convertible. He argues from the point of view of the effects of metre. "I write in meter because I am going to use a language different from that of prose," says Coleridge and then goes on to show how that there is a neutral style, or one common to both prose and poetry. His argument is more logical than Wordsworth's, but still not wholly convincing. Actually Wordsworth's phrases like "the real language of men" or using the word language for diction, which obscures the fact that language involves the organization as well as the choice of words side-track important questions. Whatever the limitations of the theories of Wordsworth and Coleridge, their effect on English literature has been permanent because their real function was to promote an understanding about what ought to be done in poetry.

Wordsworth's real aim was to find the best soil for the "essential passions." In avoiding the artificial, he looked for simplicity. Keeping in mind his view of the nature and function of poetry and the process of poetic creation he made a deliberate choice of subject from "humble and rustic life." When the poets were engaged in listening to the songs of the nymphs and angles he thought of presenting the 'plaintive anthems' of the village bells and peasants. According to Scott-James Wordsworth was guided by a sound instinct when he said, " avoid poetic diction" but irony is that his principle lessened the range of emotion without deepening the quality of emotion. However, what Wordsworth wrote in 1798 that the materials for poetry "are to be found in every subject which can interest the human mind" underlies the whole Preface. Several revisions of The Preface only amplify this idea. In 1802, Wordsworth extends his own theory of poetry into future in a striking passage which foresees the possible transformation of men's environment by science. Then scientific matters too would be available for the poet's use. Precisely, The Preface does focus on the possibility of science and poetry becoming complementary and remains a forceful plea for simplicity both in subject and its treatment. He believed that the appeal of science is merely to the intellect, poetry complements science by adding feelings to its truth, and by the imaginative treatment of reality it makes people more fully aware of the experience in totally. Hence poetry fulfills its primary function of giving delight.

In 1802 Wordsworth added a long passage to exhibit his view on the nature and character of a poet. According to him the poet is a man speaking to men; he differs from them not in nature bur merely in the degree of his gifts. He is a man of greater sensibility, observation, reflection and imagination, and of greater power of communication. He can therefore comprehend truths more deeply and can see into the "heart of things" and can communicate his understanding to his readers. Thus Wordsworth's purpose is very exalted one. According to A.C. Ward Wordsworth makes two important assertions in the Preface to Lyrical Ballads: (i) that he endeavoured to bring his language near to the real language of men; (ii) that poetry takes its origins from the emotion recollected in tranquility. It is the second notion which is elaborated in the Preface in which he gives a detailed account of the process of poetic creation. His account of poetic creation can be clearly understood through several passages in The Preface and each part needs to be read in its context.

His view that poetry is an expression of emotion recollected in tranquility should not be hastily misunderstood. He points out that the emotion immediately experienced and expressed is raw while a tranquil contemplation of an emotion matures the feelings and sensation and distinguishes genuine emotion from shallow excitement. It combines the classical restraint with a unique sensitivity to respond emotionally which in the case of Wordsworth extends from Nature to man. His memory, which was extraordinarily retentive, acted like a 'catalyst' as Eliot would like to call it. The 'tranquility' added a dream-like quality to his experience which gave to his poems "width, openness and emptiness." However, it would be out of place to apply this expression to the poetry of anyone but Wordsworth because his poetry and poetic process is the outcome of his personal experiences.

Similarly the oft-quoted and misunderstood statement that "all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful

feelings" should not be taken too literally. Wordsworth did not ever equate poetry with a rapid gush of emotion. The statement occurs twice and it describes intense mental as well as emotional activity. For Wordsworth this poetic process begins in a state of calm with the recollection of some past experience which gradually grows in intensity and the poet almost relives the whole experience but with a difference. The present emotion is not identical with the past as it is kindled by the imagination. As Derek Roper observes in his comments on The Lyrical Ballads: "Spontaneous seems to imply both that the shaping process

Can not begun at will and that once begun it is to some extent self-directing." The poet has a conscious control of his active intelligence on 'selecting and composing' the poem. Through these comments in The Preface Wordsworth paved the way for a tradition of serious poetry that remains unchallenged till today.

The Preface is a rich piece of writing which deals with many themes and raises many significant questions. Margaret Drabble, the novelist and critic, makes very perceptive remark in her book, Wordsworth that

> *" It is quite impossible to try to give an account of all the questions raise by The Preface, for in it Wordsworth covers an enormous stretch of ground, throwing out quite effortlessly the most acute observations on the relationship of poetry and science, on the use of metre, on the place of pleasure in art, on Aristotle, on taste and cultivation, and on the history of poetry. It raises, in fact, almost every knotty aesthetic problem one can think of, and deals with it with an amazing confidence and energy. After reading it, one is quite convinced that Wordsworth, at least, had thought long and deeply, and that, as he says at the outset, "indolence" is the last thing he could possibly be accused of. It is a pleasure to read someone who is so sure of his own mind, and who at the same time has nothing dry or opinionated about him. The Preface leaves a final impression of a quite extraordinary combination of creative and critical power, of passion and thought.... It marks the beginning of a new age."*

The Preface, says H.W.Garrod, can be considered as much a defence of the use of metre in poetry as a protest against the use of poetic diction. Though Wordsworth makes a categorical statement that "there neither is, nor can be, any essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition," but employs metre regularly for writing his poems. He discards metre and yet retains it on the plea that metre adds a charm to the verse. In other words, metre is meant to temper and control the excessive excitement and passion and create that harmonious music which make verse a source of pleasure. It is indeed difficult to agree with Wordsworth in this respect but one can understand his intention clearly that he presents metre as a form that regulates the passion of poetry to a desirable "aesthetic distance," to borrow an expression of Graham Hough.

The Preface is marked by certain flaws also. For instance, take the comment by Coleridge who criticized it for unnecessary elaboration and obscurity. He believed that it was *The Preface* which provoked the hostility of the critics since 1802. Garrod remarks that *The Preface* is "a propaganda pamphlet and as such suffers from sin of exaggeration and over-emphasis." He further adds that often "it is inapt in argument and conventional in expression." Likewise, Derek Roper comments that it is not suitable as an introduction to a collection of poems and says:

> *" Forty pages of none-too-easy prose seem as likely to have deterred readers at the outset as Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner", which Wordsworth had just removed from the beginning to the end of Volume I. Those who preserved ran the risk of being alienated either by the extreme form in which Wordsworth states some of his doctrines, or by his failure of tone, which is sometimes pedantic, sometimes arrogant, and sometimes absurdly defensive. Wordsworth makes bold claims for his poems, such as not all of them will bear; declares that to appreciate them, drastic revaluations of earlier poetry will be necessary; and cautions the reader interminably as to how they must or must not be read. Despite this care, the account he gives of the poem is misleading, since they are much more diverse than The Preface suggests."*

However, such limitations of *The Preface* do not reduce its significance as the most important single document in the history of English literary criticism on the one hand and an unofficial manifesto of English Romantic movement on the other as it explains the aims and objectives of the Romanticism. In the book *Literary Critics* Smith aptly points out that

> *" It raised a wall between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; it dated a new era [illegible] make intelligible for ever the dividing line between the two regions in criticism that might otherwise have seemed to flow into one another. We do not have many such dividing walls."*

Thus, The Preface plays a very important role as a piece of literary criticism and provokes many revolutionary and democratic sentiments about the art of poetry especially about the poetic process.

Wordsworth's Achievement As A Critic

Wordsworth is an inspired Romantic critic. It remains a fact that he was primarily a poet who left behind no treatise on criticism. His output as a literary critic consists of The Preface to Lyrical Ballads 1802, Essay supplementary to the Preface 1815, Appendix on Poetic diction, 1802, Three articles on the Epitaph, Notes [illegible] Advertisement to the first edition of The Lyrical Ballads, and a number of casual remarks scattered all [illegible] correspondence. J.A.Chapman makes a very lucid remark when he says though the bulk of his criticism is small the core of his literary criticism is as inspired as his poetry." It could be so because his was deeply involved with poetry in the real sense of the word that whatever he said about it was valuable and true.

In his *Preface* Wordsworth made four claims: first, "to choose incidents and situations from common life", second, "to relate or describe them throughout, as far as possible, in a selection of language really used by men" third, to throw the colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect and, last, above all, "to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature." These claims point out two important aspects of his creative and philosophical mind: (i) democratic sentiments in his poetic theory and (ii) romantic peculiarities of his poetic cult specially about the poetic diction. Wordsworth

Wordsworth's *Preface* to the Lyrical Ballads is an unofficial manifesto of the Romantic Movement as through his practice and suggestions he brought about many changes, which led to the rise of the romantic criticism in the early decades of the nineteenth century. His emphasis on simplicity of the themes and language enlarged the dominion of poetry and criticism and his insistence on the use of emotion and passion and imagination brought back to English poetry that pulsating, throbbing sensations which poetry had lost in the Neo-classical age. As a result, English poetry could breathe in the liberated and free atmosphere and English literary criticism could get rid of the false and cramping personal prejudices. Thus by bringing into poetry a spirit of free inquiry, by stressing the role of imagination, emotion and feeling, by insisting that pleasure rather than instruction or instructing only through pleasure Wordsworth realized poetry as a creative art of independent value. Wordsworth's account of the nature of the creative process makes his contribution to the literary criticism really significant. It is not an exaggeration to say that he changed the [illegible] literary criticism forever.

Wordsworth did inestimable service in insisting on a new and true orientation. Through his literary criticism he demolished the old practices of artificial poetic culture and language. He discarded the "restricted [illegible] century poetry as well as the "gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers." He castigated those poets who cater to the needs of "fickle tastes and fickle appetites" of the chosen few and separate themselves from the general sympathies of men. For him "poet is essentially a man speaking to men... he must study human nature and [illegible] to understand the primary laws of human nature." Consequently, rustic and humble life become the most suitable subject of poetry. However, there was another substantial reason for this choice because in the [illegible] passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature." He believes that in the lowly men nature transfers her "vital feeling" to those who live close to her. The souls are moulded by the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. Wordsworth has been criticized for limiting the scope of poetry to the humble and rustic life when the upper class of society and life could be equally suitable subject for the poetic treatment. He should be to judge him in the historical context and then realize how he has extended the range and new territories of poetry.

Wordsworth's theory of poetic diction shows that he not only rejected the eighteenth century [illegible] others as 'enigmas' and recommended the language of the common man being the purest and [illegible] and unspoiled by the social vanities as the language for poetry. He believed that there is no [illegible] between the language of prose and metrical composition as it is actually based on the principle

selection of language really used by men." Its greatest advantage is that the language is charged with the emotion of human heart; it is a natural language of passions, is more philosophical and offers the highest poetic pleasure. But, he went too far. One can not overlook the fact that the rustic has little originality, few ideas, and makes almost no attempt to correlate them. His language at times is not even pure English; it is inaccurate, inarticulate, seldom beautiful and never emotional. It is frequently coarse and often unintelligible. It is true that Wordsworth proposed to prune it of peculiarities, but as Coleridge observed, this would render it the same as the language of any other section of the community similarly treated. Wordsworth also asserted that the language of poetry differs in no way from the language of prose, with a single exception of metre. Coleridge concludes that there is and must be an essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition. And the use of metre is as artificial as the use of poetic diction, and if one is allowed, it is absurd to forbid the use of the other. Both are equally good sources of the poetic pleasure. T.S.Eliot has exposed many contradictions inherent in Wordsworth's theory of language but without entering into the discussion any further, it is sufficient to say that there is little trace of its influence in the finest poetry of Wordsworth himself.

Wordsworth's concept of the poet is romantic and individualistic but he stresses the essential humanity in him. He lays emphasis on his social function, that is, communication with his fellow beings. He has more lively sensibility, more powerful imagination, more comprehending soul, greater zest for life and sincerity but there is no difference in 'kind'. The only difference is of 'degree.' Thus, Wordsworth traces out higher attributes in a poet without actually segregating him from his fellow beings. In The Preface to The Lyrical Ballads Wordsworth stands in defence of the employment of metre in poetry though he strongly protests against the use of poetic diction. He does not consider metre as essential to poetry but regards it as merely 'pleasure superadded.' It is absolutely correct to state that the defence of metre is the weakest part of The Preface but Wordsworth was conscious of the contradictions inherent in his defence and that is the reason why he offered such an elaborate account to defend the use of metre and assert its power in imparting passions to the words and poetic pleasure. He justifies the use of metre even in the process of poetic creation specially in the act of communication. In other words, metre adds a feeling of delight even to the ordinary and common place.

Wordsworth is the first English criticism to consider the nature of poetry in relation to its creative process. He lays emphasis on spontaneity, imagination intuition and thought and observes, " Poems to which any value can be attached were never produced on any variety of subject but by a man who, being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought long and deeply." According to him there are four stages of the process of poetic creation: first, there is some observation which causes emotional excitement; second, after a considerable passage of time there is a recollection of that emotion in the moments of tranquility; third, the original emotion re-emerges and is revived after a serious contemplation and forth, that emotion finds an expression in poetry or that emotions gets communicated in the lines of poetry – an activity that renders pleasure to the poet which is shared by the reader. That is the end of poetry for Wordsworth. Arthur Clutton-Brock says that "Stepping westward like a grey pilgrim, led on by the sky, and with gleams from it lighting his set face" Wordsworth moves forward with his "mysterious intentness." Likewise Shelley said, " He was hardly a man, but a wondering spirit with strange adventures and no end to them."

Wordsworth's Preface has a historical significance as it played the role of the corrector of taste. What Wordsworth recommended in it as a cult of simplicity in theme and style has become a permanent feature of English poetry and criticism. He literally brought a revolution in the theory of poetry and popularized the trends of new poetry that is romantic poetry. Rene Wellek rightly sums up Wordsworth's position as a critic when he says:

> *" Wordsworth thus holds a position in the history of criticism which must be called ambiguous or transitional. He inherited from neo-classicism a theory of imitation of nature to which he gives, however, a specific twist; he inherits from the 18th century, a view of poetry as a passion and emotion, which again modifies by his description of the poetic process as 'recollection in tranquility'. He takes up rhetorical ideas about the effect of poetry but extends and amplifies them into a theory of social effect of literature, binding society in a spirit of love. But he also adopts, in order to meet the exigencies of his mystical experiences, a theory of poetry in which imagination holds the central place as the power of unification and ultimate insight into the unity of the world. Though Wordsworth left only a small body of criticism, it is rich in survivals, suggestions, anticipations and personal insights."*

Thus, The Preface becomes the hallmark of all great critical works. It has its own limitations but it rises above them and is a significant and important document in the history of English criticism.

Assignments

Note: Attempt the following questions:

1. "Wordsworth's The Preface to the Lyrical Ballads is an epoch-making document in the history of English Romantic Criticism." Discuss the remark.
2. What are Wordsworth's views regarding the subject matter of poetry as revealed in The Preface?
3. Give a lucid summary of the main points of The Preface to the Lyrical Ballads.
4. Discuss briefly Wordsworth's account of the process of poetic creation with special reference to his idea of 'emotion recollected in tranquility.'
5. Write an essay on Wordsworth's views on the language of poetry
   especially examining the merit of his remark that "there is no essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition."
6. Comment on Wordsworth's statement that "poetry is the spontaneous
   overflow of powerful feelings."
7. Justify Wordsworth's remark that "Poet is a Man speaking to men."
8. Elaborate the remark that "Wordsworth's theory of poetry as enunciated in The Preface to the Lyrical Ballads is full of contradictions."
9. What are the qualities of The Preface " as a historical document of abiding importance"?
10. Discuss the limitations of Wordsworth as a critic.
11. "Wordsworth as a critic is "a corrector of taste." Discuss the remark.
12. Write an extended note on Wordsworth's "cult of simplicity" in themes and language of his poetry.

Note: Answer the following questions in about two hundred words.

1. Discuss Wordsworth's views on the function of metre.
2. Write a note on Wordsworth's views on the nature of poetry.
3. Why was Wordsworth dissatisfies with the poetry of the 18th century?
4. What, according to Wordsworth, is the difference between scientific and poetic truth?
5. Write a note on Wordsworth's idea of the poetic diction.
6. What is the main function of poetry according to Wordsworth?
7. Explain briefly Wordsworth's view that "poets do not write for poets alone, but for men."
8. Discuss any two of the claims that Wordsworth makes in The Preface.
9. Why, according to Wordsworth, "a poet should choose incidents and situations from common life?"
10. What does Wordsworth mean when he says that a poet should "throw over them (common situations) a certain colouring of imagination?
11. What are the four stages according to Wordsworth's process of poetic creation.
12. Discuss the most significant glaring of Wordswoth's theory of poeticdiction ?

Books Useful for the Students

Works

Poetry: *The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth* in five volumes, with textual and critical notes by Ernest de Selincourt and Helen Darbishire, Oxford, 1940-9.

The Cornell Wordsworth, Ithaca, N.Y. and Hassocks, Sussex: The Salisbury Plain poems (1975).

Letters

The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth. 2nd edition, Oxford, 1967 (and later volumes).

Critical Studies

W. Raleigh, *Wordsworth*. London, 1903.

G.W. Meyer, *Wordsworth's Formative Years*, Ann Arbor and London, 1943. Valuable in the main, though outdated at some points.

J.C. Smith, *A Study of Wordsworth*, Edinburgh, 1944.

Helen Darbishire, *The Poet Wordsworth*, Oxford, 1950.

Enid Welford, Salisbury Plain, *A Study in the Development of Wordsworth's Mind and Art*, Oxford, 1966.

S.M. Parrish, *The Art of the Lyrical Ballads*, Cambridge, Mass., 1973. Development within an excellent survey of the critical relations between Wordsworth and Coleridge.

More Specialized Studies

W.H. White. *An Examination of the Charge of Apostasy against Wordsworth*, London, 1898.

Elsie Smith, *An Estimate of Wordsworth*, Oxford, 1932. Contemporary views and reviews from 1973 to 1822.

Edith C. Batho, *The Later Wordsworth*, Cambridge, 1933.

B.R. Schneider, *Wordsworth's Cambridge Education*, Cambridge, 1957.

R.M. Todd, *Politics* and *the Poet, A Study of Wordsworth*, London, 1957. . An important study of a vital area of Wordsworth's intellectual life. Todd documents Wordsworth's so-called 'apostasy's and argues that much of the charge was made under the tutelage of his poetic faith.

H. Lindenberger, *On Wordsworth's 'Prelude'*, Princeton, 1963.

Melvyn Rader, Wordsworth *A Philosophical Approach*, Oxford, 1967.

Jonathan Wordsworth, The Music of Humanity, London, 1969. On 'The Ruined Cottage' and ' The Pedlar'.

M.H. Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature, New York and London, 1971. Wordsworth is the principal subject, with parallels from English and German literature and philosophy to denote 'the spirit of the age' after the failure of the French Revolution.

Mary Jacobus, *Tradition and Experiment in Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballads*, Oxford, 1976.

Joseph Warren Beach, *The Concept of Nature in Nineteenth Century English Poetry* (Macmillan, 1936). Like Beatty's book, an important discussion of Wordsworth's eighteenth century dimension.

H.W. Garrod, Wordsworth: Lectures and Essays 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1927). Less valuable now, than it was in its time, for its contribution to knowledge about the composition of The Prelude, and Wordsworth's Godwinist phase. But it remains important as a work of rare sympathy.

Jonathan Wordsworth, The Music of Humanity (Nelson, 1969). This study of 'The Ruined Cottage' is inevitably a study of The Prelude's origins. It sees Wordsworth as a tragic artist, with deep insight into 'emotions not his won'

Mary Moorman, William Wordsworth: A Biography, 2 vols. (Clarendon Press, 1957-65; O.U.P. Paperback, 1968). The writing of The Prelude is naturally a part of Wordsworth's biography, and Mrs. Moorman's books are massively illuminating, both in data and commentary-and a beautiful biography.

Chapters and Essays

Newton P. Stallknecht, 'Wordsworth and the Quality of Man',

Josephine Miles, 'Wordsworth and the Mind's Excursive Power'. Both in Major English Romantic Poets: A Symposium in Reappraisal, ed. C.D. Thorpe, C. baker and B. Weaver (Carbondale, III, 1957). Stallknecht discusses Wordsworth as an source of democratic feeling, linking his influence with Haldane, Bergson, Pascal, Santayana, Schweitzer, Whitehead, Alexander and Sartre. Josephine Miles writes of the philosophical suppleness of Wordsworth's blank verse and diction.

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Two publications of particular interest appeared as the first impression of this Casebook went to Press

M.H. Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature (O.U.P., 1971) makes The Prelude the centre of a major study of Romanticism's secularisation of belief.

J.C. Maxwell (ed.), The Prelude: A Parallel Text (Penguin, 1971) is a handy reading text which incorporates a number of corrections of the still standard 1959 edition.

Unit IV

Coleridge – Biographia Literaria

A Samuel Taylor Coleridge Chronology

1772 born (Oct. 21) at Ottery St. Mary's, Devonshire.
1781 father dies.
1782-91 at Christ's Hospital (school).
1789 reads *Bowles's Sonnets*.
1790-91 brother Luke and sister Ann die.
1791-94 at Cambridge.
1793 in love with Mary Evans; enlists in the 15th Dragoons.
1794 returns to Cambridge; meets Southey. Engaged to Sara Fricker. Meets Godwin. STC and Southey plan a "Pantisocracy."
1795 meets Wordsworth. Marries Sara Fricker.
1796 Poems on Various Subjects. Son Hartley born. Coleridge moves to Nether Stowey. First takes opium.
1796-97 preaching at various Unitarian chapels.
1797 with Wordsworth at Nether Stowey. Begins The Ancient Mariner.
1798 Lyrical Ballads, with Wordsworth. Wedgewoods give Coleridge £150 annuity. Visits Germany with Wordsworth Writes "Kubla Khan."
1799 meets Sara Hutchinson. Tours the Lake district.
1799-1802 writes political leaders for **Morning Post**.
1801 health breaks down; opium again.
1802 "Dejection, an Ode." Daughter Sara born.
1803 tours Scotland with W. & Dorothy Wordsworth.
1804 in Malta and Sicily. Private secretary to Alex. Ball, High Commissioner at Malta.
1805 appointed Acting Public Secretary in Malta.
1806 returns to England; D. Wordsworth "shocked" at his condition.
1808 separates from wife.
1809-10 *The Friend*.
1810 quarrel with Wordsworth. Heavily addicted to opium.
1811 Josiah Wedgewood withdraws half STC's annuity.
1811-12 Lectures on Shakespeare.
1812 reconciled to Wordsworth.
1812-13 lectures on Belles Lettres.
1814 in the care of Dr. Daniel for opium addiction. Lectures in Bristol. Turns from Unitarianism to Anglicanism.
1814-16 financial difficulties.
1816 settles at Highgate with Dr. James Gilman. Christabel and Kubla Khan.
1817 Biographia Literaria and **Lay Sermons**.
1819 more **Lectures on Shakespeare**.
1825 Aids to Reflection. Appointed Associate of the Royal Society of Literature, begins receiving £125 annuity.
1826-34 "Highgate Thursdays."
1828 continental tour with Wordsworth.
1830 Constitution of Church and State.
1834 dies July 25.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Life and Career

His forehead was broad and high, light as if built of ivory, with large projecting eyebrows, and his eyes rolling beneath them like a sea with darkened lustre. . . . His mouth was gross, voluptuous, open, eloquent, his chin good-humoured and round; but his nose, the rudder of the face, the index of the will, was small, feeble, nothing—like what he has done. **William Hazlitt (On Coleridge).**

Samuel Taylor Coleridge was one of the most brilliant, versatile, and influential figures in the English Romantic Movement. His father, a vicar of a parish and master of a grammar school, married twice and had fourteen children. Samuel Taylor Coleridge was the youngest of the ten children of John Coleridge, clergyman and schoolmaster of Ottery St Mary in Devonshire. He was born in Ottery St. Mary, Devonshire on October 21, 1772. The youngest child in the family, Coleridge was a student at his father's school and an avid reader. He was a singularly precocious and imaginative child, who read the 'Arabian Nights' before he was five, and preferred daydreaming to playing games with other children. As a child Coleridge was already a prodigious reader, and he immersed himself to the point of morbid fascination in romances and Eastern tales. He recounts: "At six years old I remember to have read Belisarius, Robinson Crusoe, and Philip Quarll - and then I found the Arabian Nights' entertainments - one tale of which (the tale of a man who was compelled to seek for a pure virgin) made so deep an impression on me (I had read it in the evening while my mother was mending stockings) that I was haunted by spectres whenever I was in the dark - and I distinctly remember the anxious and fearful eagerness with which I used to watch the window in which the books lay - and whenever the sun lay upon them, I would seize it, carry it by the wall, and bask, and read."His father died in 1781 just before Coleridge was to celebrate his ninth birthday. After his father's death Coleridge was sent away to Christ's Hospital School in London, where he met lifelong friend Charles Lamb. At Christ's Hospital, as a charity scholar, he amazed everyone by expounding Plotinus, and reciting Homer in the original Greek. He was famously described by Charles Lamb as 'the inspired charity-boy'. He dabbled in medicine, metaphysics and poetry and was always ready to argue with any chance passer-by in the streets. His abstraction from reality could lead him into embarrassing situations. In one of his daydreams, while walking in the street, his hands came into contact with a gentleman's clothes. On being challenged as a pickpocket, he explained that he was Leander swimming the Hellespont. He incurred permanent injuries to his health by swimming in a river without undressing and neglecting to change his clothes afterwards. He spent much of his seventeenth and eighteenth year in the school's sick ward with jaundice and rheumatic fever.

A brilliant student, he went up to Jesus College, Cambridge, in 1791, on a small allowance provided by his brother George. At both school and university he continued to read voraciously, particularly in works of imagination and visionary philosophy, and he was remembered by his schoolmates for his eloquence and prodigious memory. Although he won a college medal in his first year for a long poem in Greek and was one of four finalists for a scholarship in his second, he was at the same time going through an adolescent crisis, experimenting with alcohol, opium, and sex, and falling in love with Mary Evans, the sister of a friend. Coleridge's father had always wanted his son to be a clergyman, so when Coleridge entered Jesus College, University of Cambridge in 1791, he focused on a future in the Church of England. His period at Jesus College coincided with the aftermath of the French Revolution, and he threw himself into the politics of the day on the revolutionary side. In May 1793 William Frend, a fellow of Jesus College, was tried in the vice-chancellor's court at Cambridge for a pamphlet attacking the monarchy and the Church of England. Coleridge enthusiastically took his side and incurred some risk by applauding Frend at his trial. After various legal proceedings, Frend was eventually banished from the college and the university. Meanwhile, Coleridge had got himself further into trouble by running up debts and fleeing to London at the end of 1793. He joined in the reformist movement stimulated by the French Revolution, and abandoned his studies in 1793. After an unhappy love-affair and pressed by debt he in desperation enlisted in the 15th Light Dragoons under the name of Silas Tomkin Comberbache. Soon he realized that he was unfit for an army career and he was bailed out under 'insanity' clause by his brother, Captain James Coleridge who convinced him to return to Cambridge. He returned to Jesus College, but went down without taking his degree at the end of 1794. His name was 'taken off the boards' on 14 June 1795.

In Cambridge Coleridge met the radical, future poet laureate Robert Southey who shared his political and social idealism, in 1794. Coleridge moved with him to Bristol to establish a utopian community, "Pantisocracy" (equal government by all) to be established on the banks of the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania. Coleridge and Southey envisioned the men sharing the workload, a great library, philosophical discussions, and freedom of religious and political beliefs. After finally visiting Wales, Coleridge returned to England to find that Southey had become engaged to a woman named Edith Fricker. The plan required that each participant be married, and Southey married Edith Fricker and Coleridge married her younger sister Sara whom he did not really love. Coleridge's marriage was unhappy and he spent much of it apart from his wife. During that period, Coleridge and Southey collaborated on a play titled

The Fall of Robespierre (1795). While the pantisocracy was still in the planning stages, Southey abandoned the project to pursue his legacy in law. Southey defection from the pantisocratic scheme, left Coleridge married to a woman whom he did not really love. In a sense his career never fully recovered from this blow: if there is a makeshift quality about many of its later events, one explanation can be found in his constant need to reconcile his intellectual aspirations with the financial needs of his family. During this period, however, Coleridge's intellect flowered in an extraordinary manner, as he embarked on an investigation of the nature of the human mind. Left without an alternative plan, Coleridge spent the next few years beginning his career as a writer. He never returned to Cambridge to finish his degree. In 1795 Coleridge befriended William Wordsworth, who greatly influenced Coleridge's verse. Together they entered upon one of the most influential creative periods of English literature. Coleridge's intellectual ebullience and his belief in the existence of a powerful "life consciousness" in all individuals rescued Wordsworth from the depression into which recent events had cast him and made possible the new approach to nature that characterized his contributions to *Lyrical Ballads* (which was to be published in 1798).

Coleridge, meanwhile, was developing a new, informal mode of poetry in which he could use a conversational tone and rhythm to give unity to a poem. Of these poems, the most successful is "Frost at Midnight," which begins with the description of a silent frosty night in Somerset and proceeds through a meditation on the relationship between the quiet work of frost and the quiet breathing of the sleeping baby at the poet's side, to conclude in a resolve that his child shall be brought up as a "child of nature," so that the sympathies that the poet has come to detect may be reinforced throughout the child's education. At the climax of the poem, he touches another theme, which lies at the root of his philosophical attitude:

> *. . . so shalt thou see and hear*
> *The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible*
> *Of that eternal language, which thy God*
> *Utters, who from eternity doth teach*
> *Himself in all, and all things in himself.*

Coleridge's attempts to learn this "language" and trace it through the ancient traditions of mankind also led him during this period to return to the visionary interests of his schooldays: as he ransacked works of comparative religion and mythology, he was exploring the possibility that all religions and mythical traditions, with their general agreement on the unity of God and the immortality of the soul, sprang from a universal life consciousness, which was expressed particularly through the phenomena of human genius.

While these speculations were at their most intense, he retired to a lonely farmhouse near Culbone, Somersetshire, and, according to his own account, composed under the influence of laudanum the mysterious poetic fragment known as "Kubla Khan." The exotic imagery and rhythmic chant of this poem have led many critics to conclude that it should be read as a "meaningless reverie" and enjoyed merely for its vivid and sensuous qualities. An examination of the poem in the light of Coleridge's psychological and mythological interests, however, suggests that it has, after all, a complex structure of meaning and is basically a poem about the nature of human genius. The first two stanzas show the two sides of what Coleridge elsewhere calls "commanding genius": its creative aspirations in time of peace as symbolized in the projected pleasure dome and gardens of the first stanza; and its destructive power in time of turbulence as symbolized in the wailing woman, the destructive fountain, and the voices prophesying war of the second stanza. In the final stanza the poet writes of a state of "absolute genius" in which, if inspired by a visionary "Abyssinian maid," he would become endowed with the creative, divine power of a sun god—an Apollo or Osiris subduing all around him to harmony by the fascination of his spell.

Coleridge was enabled to explore the same range of themes less egotistically in "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," composed during the autumn and winter of 1797–98. For this, his most famous poem, he drew upon the ballad form. The main narrative tells how a sailor who has committed a crime against the life principle by slaying an albatross suffers from torments, physical and mental, in which the nature of his crime is made known to him. The underlying life power against which he has transgressed is envisaged as a power corresponding to the influx of the sun's energy into all living creatures, thereby binding them together in a joyful communion. By killing the bird that hovered near the ship, the mariner has destroyed one of the links in this process. His own consciousness is consequently affected: the sun, previously glorious, is seen as a bloody sun, and the energies of the deep are seen as corrupt.

> *All in a hot and copper sky,*
> *The bloody Sun, at noon,*
> *Right up above the mast did stand,*
> *No bigger than the Moon.*
> . . . . . .
> *The very deep did rot; O Christ!*
> *That ever this should be!*

Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.
Only at night do these energies display a sinister beauty.
About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue and white.

After the death of his shipmates, alone and becalmed, devoid of a sense of movement or even of time passing, the mariner is in a hell created by the absence of any link with life. Eventually, however, a chance sight of water snakes flashing like golden fire in the darkness, answered by an outpouring of love from his heart, reinitiates the creative process: he is given a brief vision of the inner unity of the universe, in which all living things hymn their source in an interchange of harmonies. Restored to his native land, he remains haunted by what he has experienced but is at least delivered from nightmare, able to see the ordinary processes of human life with a new sense of their wonder and mercifulness. These last qualities are reflected in the poem's attractive combination of vividness and sensitivity. The placing of it at the beginning of Lyrical Ballads was evidently intended to provide a context for the sense of wonder in common life that marks many of Wordsworth's contributions. While this volume was going through the press, Coleridge began a complementary poem, a Gothic ballad entitled "Christabel," in which he aimed to show how naked energy might be redeemed through contact with a spirit of innocent love.

The two spent much time discussing poetry, politics, and philosophy. Coleridge, whose early work was celebratory and conventional, began writing in a more natural style. In his "conversation poems," such as "The Eolian Harp" and "This Lime-Tree Bower My Prison," Coleridge used his intimate friends and their experiences as subjects. The following year, Coleridge published his first volume of poetry, *Poems on Various Subjects*, and began the first of ten issues of a liberal political publication entitled *The Watchman*. From 1797 to 1798 he lived near Wordsworth and his sister, Dorothy, in Somersetshire. This rich personal and intellectual association bore significant fruit as the two decided to collaborate on a volume of poems intended to revolutionize the practice of contemporary poetry. Called *Lyrical Ballads*, which was published by Joseph Cottle in September 1798. It was first published as a single volume in 1798, then greatly expanded and published in two volumes, with a now famous preface written by Wordsworth, in 1800. Coleridge's powerful representation of psychological obsession and remorse, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* was the poem chosen to open the *Lyrical Ballads*. In 1798 the two men collaborated on a joint volume of poetry entitled *Lyrical Ballads*. The collection is considered the first great work of the Romantic school of poetry and contains Coleridge's famous poem, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner." That autumn the two poets traveled to the Continent together. He started for Hamburg in September 1798, in the company of the Wordsworths, where they visited the poet Klopstock. Coleridge settled with a protestant pastor at Ratzeburg and set about learning German. In January 1799, he moved to Gottingen, where he attended lectures and made the acquaintance of Immanuel Kant. In May 1799, he went on a walking tour through the Hartz Mountains and wrote the poem 'Lines on ascending the Brocken'. In June he returned to England and was back in Nether Stowey in August 1799.

Coleridge spent most of the trip in Germany, studying the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, Jakob Boehme, and G.E. Lessing. While there he mastered the German language and began translating. The main fruit of Coleridge's German trip was his translation of Schiller's play Wallenstein, which was published by Longman in 1800. He also embarked on a second attempt at journalism, as a contributor to the 'Morning Post', and had some success with political articles, on the subjects of Pitt and Napoleon, and a couple of poems when he returned to England in 1800, he settled with family and friends at Keswick.

Supported by a £150 annuity from Josiah and Thomas Wedgwood, Coleridge was freed from the need to support himself financially, and, commencing in September 1798, he joined the Wordsworths for a long tour of Germany. Disenchanted with political developments in France, Coleridge visited Germany in 1798-99 with Dorothy and William Wordsworth, and became interested in the works of Immanuel Kant. He studied philosophy at Göttingen University and mastered the German language becoming quickly fluent in the language and acquainted himself with many developments in German philosophy and scholarship that were as yet little known in England.. However, he considered his translations of Friedrich von Schiller's plays from the trilogy Wallenstein distasteful.

When he returned to England in July of **1799**, Coleridge fell in love with Sara Hutchinson, the sister of Wordsworth's future wife. The domestic trouble this occasioned is evident in the despondent tone of "Dejection: An Ode" (1802). Over the next two decades Coleridge lectured on literature and philosophy, wrote about religious and political theory, and lived off of financial donations and grants. This doomed romantic attachment and Coleridge's failing health, doubtless exacerbated by his increasing dependence on laudanum, an elixir of opium, led him to accept a post in the warmer climate of Malta as secretary to the acting governor from 1804 to 1806, Supplied with an ounce of opium and nine ounces of laudanum, he wrote in his journal: "O dear God! give me strength of soul to make one thorough Trial - If I land at Malta / spite of all horrors to go through one month of unstimulated nature..." . In Malta he made the acquaintance of the governor, Sir Alexander Bell, who offered him the vacant post of his secretary. Coleridge accepted, and filled the post for several months, despite suffering from chronic ill health. He left Malta, on the arrival of a new secretary, in Sepember. 1805, and visited Sicily, Naples and Rome. At Rome, he was warned by the German

writer Wilhelm von Humboldt, then Prussian Minister at Rome, that Napoleon had taken personal umbrage at some of the articles that Coleridge had written for the 'Morning Post', and that, in consequence, he was a marked man. He fled Italy in an American ship, which sailed from Leghorn. It is said that a French cruiser pursued the American ship and, attempting to conceal his identity, Coleridge threw his papers overboard, thus losing all the literary labours he had been engaged in during his stay in Rome (6). It may seem hard to believe that Napoleon should pursue a vendetta against an English provincial journalist, but apparently he blamed Coleridge's articles for the renewal of the war against France.

His health, however, did not improve, nor did his peace of mind. On his return he separated from his wife and lived with the Wordsworths, leaving Edith and Robert Southey to care for his family and generally dividing his time between London and the Wordsworth's house in Grasmere. This is a period of professional uncertainty for Coleridge, split between giving public lectures on literature and, from June 1809 to March 1810, attempting to cultivate a larger audience through a periodical edited with Sara Hutchinson dealing with literary and political issues he called *The Friend*. However in the winter of 1810-11 Coleridge gave lectures on Shakespeare, Milton and other poets, which excited considerable public interest. He was also much in demand in society because of the extraordinary fascination of his conversation. Indeed, Lord Byron wrote that Coleridge 'is a kind of rage at present'.

In 1810, after permanently settling in London, Coleridge became estranged from Wordsworth, who disapproved of the irresponsible way in which he handled his family obligations. In his first years in London Coleridge suffered from chronic illness and from his dependence on opium to ameliorate it. Coleridge lectured on Shakespeare and Milton again, in Bristol, during the summer of 1812 and the beginning of 1813, although his attendance at the lectures became increasingly unpredictable. Once, on his way to Bristol, a sudden impulse in the coach induced him to escort a lady to Wales and therefore to miss his appointment. When he arrived in Bristol, Joseph Cottle and other old friends were shocked by his appearance and he confessed to them his abject dependence on opium. Indeed, Coleridge himself declared that his best chance of being saved was to be placed in a private lunatic asylum. He remained highly active, however, as a literary figure, delivering a well-attended course of lectures on Shakespeare, and seeing to the production of a successful drama of his own, *Remorse*, in 1813 (a revision of a drama called *Osorio* he had written years before, in the late 1790s). Not long after this, Coleridge experienced a religious conversion: his reading of the seventeenth-century Anglican divine, Robert Leighton, led him to abandon the Unitarianism he had practiced and to embrace instead the Church of England and its orthodoxies.

Beginning in 1815, Coleridge sought to consolidate his literary reputation. Although he continued to involve himself in essentially minor original projects, such as his play *Zapolya* (which appeared in 1817) Coleridge's major endeavor at this time was to restore his reputation as a significant poet of the age. This he accomplished through publishing two successive volumes of verse, *Christabel; Kubla Khan, a Vision; The Pains of Sleep* in 1816, and *Sibylline Leaves: A Collection of Poems* in 1817. Meanwhile, the biographical preface he had contemplated for the latter volume so grew under his retrospective thinking that it eventuated in a lengthy, two-volume project, his most influential work in prose, that he called *Biographia Literaria*, which was published in tandem with *Sybilline Leaves*. This work aspires to be a combination of literary criticism, autobiography, and philosophical speculation, tracing Coleridge's life through childhood, through his fascination and later disillusionment with the associationist philosophy of David Hartley, and his collaboration with Wordsworth. Among its most famous parts are those passages in which he describes his notion of the imagination and critiques Wordsworth's poetry with analytical acuity.

From this point on, however, Coleridge's productions fell off. In 1824 he was elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, which entitled him to an annuity of £105. Another work of criticism, *Aids to Reflection*, appeared in 1825. His last prose work, *On the Constitution of the Church and State* ostensibly a contribution to the debate over Catholic Emancipation, appeared in 1830, a year after the law was enacted. A third edition of his *Poetical Works* appeared in 1834 shortly before his death on 25 July in Highgate, near London.

Coleridge's achievement has been given more widely varying assessments than that of any other English literary artist, though there is broad agreement that his enormous potential was never fully realized in his works. His stature as a poet has never been in doubt; in "Kubla Khan" and "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" he wrote two of the greatest poems in English literature and perfected a mode of sensuous lyricism that is often echoed by later poets. But he also has a reputation as one of the most important of all English literary critics, largely on the basis of his *Biographia Literaria*. In Coleridge's view, the essential element of literature was a union of emotion and thought that he described as imagination. He especially stressed poetry's capacity for integrating the universal and the particular, the objective and the subjective, the generic and the individual. The function of criticism for Coleridge was to discern these elements and to lift them into conscious awareness, rather than merely to prescribe or to describe rules or forms.

In all his roles, as poet, social critic, literary critic, theologian, and psychologist, Coleridge expressed a profound concern with elucidating an underlying creative principle that is fundamental to both human beings and the universe as a whole. To Coleridge, imagination is the archetype of this unifying force because it represents the means by which the twin human capacities for intuitive, non-rational understanding and for organizing and discriminating thought concerning the material world are reconciled. It was by means of this sort of reconciliation of opposites that Coleridge attempted, with considerable success, to combine a sense of the universal and ideal with an acute observation of the particular and sensory in his own poetry and in his criticism.

Coleridge's Career

Biograhia Literaria, My Life and Opinions

Coleridge worked for many years on his Biographia Literaria (1817), containing accounts of his literary life and critical essays on philosophical and literary subjects. It presents Coleridge's theories of the creative imagination but its debt to other writers, notably the German idealist philosophers, is often so heavy that the line between legitimate borrowing and plagiarism becomes blurred. This borrowing tendency, evident also in some of his poetry, together with Coleridge's notorious inability to finish projects—and his proposal of impractical ones—made him a problematic figure.

For the general reader Biographia Literaria is a misleading volume, since it moves bewilderingly between autobiography, abstruse philosophical discussion, and literary criticism. It has, however, an internal coherence of its own. The book's individual components—first an entertaining account of Coleridge's early life, then an account of the ways in which he became dissatisfied with the associationist theories of David Hartley and other 18th-century philosophers, then a reasoned critique of Wordsworth's poems—are fascinating. Over the whole work hovers Coleridge's veneration for the power of imagination: once this key is grasped, the unity of the work becomes evident.

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Troubled years

Early in 1798 Coleridge had again found himself preoccupied with political issues. The French Revolutionary government had suppressed the states of the Swiss Confederation, and Coleridge expressed his bitterness at this betrayal of the principles of the Revolution in a poem entitled "France: An Ode."

At this time the brothers Josiah and Thomas Wedgwood, who were impressed by Coleridge's intelligence and promise, offered him in 1798 an annuity of £150 as a means of subsistence while he pursued his intellectual concerns. He used his new independence to visit Germany with Wordsworth and Wordsworth's sister, Dorothy. While there Coleridge attended lectures on physiology and biblical criticism at Göttingen. He thus became aware of developments in German scholarship that were little-known in England until many years later.

On his return to England, the tensions of his marriage were exacerbated when he fell in love with Sara Hutchinson, the sister of Wordsworth's future wife, at the end of 1799. His devotion to the Wordsworths in general did little to help matters, and for some years afterward Coleridge was troubled by domestic strife, accompanied by the worsening of his health and by his increasing dependence on opium. His main literary achievements during the period included another section of "Christabel." In 1802 Coleridge's domestic unhappiness gave rise to "Dejection: An Ode," originally a longer verse letter sent to Sara Hutchinson in which he lamented the corrosive effect of his intellectual activities when undertaken as a refuge from the lovelessness of his family life. The poem employs the technique of his conversational poems; the sensitive rhythms and phrasing that he had learned to use in them are here masterfully deployed to represent his own depressed state of mind.

Although Coleridge hoped to combine a platonic love for Sara with fidelity to his wife and children and to draw sustenance from the Wordsworth household, his hopes were not realized, and his health deteriorated further. He therefore resolved to spend some time in a warmer climate and, late in 1804, accepted a post in Malta as secretary to the acting governor. Later he spent a long time journeying across Italy, but, despite his hopes, his health did not improve during his time abroad. The time spent in Malta had been a time of personal reappraisal, however. Brought into direct contact with men accustomed to handling affairs of state, he had found himself lacking an equal forcefulness and felt that in consequence he often forfeited the respect of others. On his return to England he resolved to become

more manly and decisive. Within a few months he had finally decided to separate from his wife and to live for the time being with the Wordsworths. Southey atoned for his disastrous youthful advice by exercising a general oversight of Coleridge's family for the rest of his days.

Coleridge published a periodical, The Friend, from June 1809 to March 1810 and ceased only when Sara Hutchinson, who had been acting as amanuensis, found the strain of the relationship too much for her and retired to her brother's farm in Wales. Coleridge, resentful that Wordsworth should apparently have encouraged his sister-in-law's withdrawal, resolved shortly afterward to terminate his working relationship with William and Dorothy Wordsworth and to settle in London again. The period immediately following was the darkest of his life. His disappointment with Wordsworth was followed by anguish when a wounding remark of Wordsworth's was carelessly reported to him. For some time he remained in London, nursing his grievances and producing little. Opium retained its powerful hold on him, and the writings that survive from this period are redolent of unhappiness, with self-dramatization veering toward self-pity.

In spite of this, however, there also appear signs of a slow revival, principally because for the first time Coleridge knew what it was to be a fashionable figure. A course of lectures he delivered during the winter of 1811–12 attracted a large audience; for many years Coleridge had been fascinated by William Shakespeare's achievement, and his psychological interpretations of the chief characters were new and exciting to his contemporaries. During this period, Coleridge's play Osorio, written many years before, was produced at Drury Lane with the title Remorse in January 1813.

Late life and works.

In the end, consolation came from an unexpected source. In dejection, unable to produce extended work or break the opium habit, he spent a long period with friends in Wiltshire, where he was introduced to Archbishop Robert Leighton's commentary on the First Letter of Peter. In the writings of this 17th-century divine, he found a combination of tenderness and sanctity that appealed deeply to him and seemed to offer an attitude to life that he himself could fall back on. The discovery marks an important shift of balance in his intellectual attitudes. Christianity, hitherto one point of reference for him, now became his "official" creed. By aligning himself with the Anglican church of the 17th century at its best, he hoped to find a firm point of reference that would both keep him in communication with orthodox Christians of his time (thus giving him the social approval he always needed, even if only from a small group of friends) and enable him to pursue his former intellectual explorations in the hope of reaching a Christian synthesis that might help to revitalize the English church both intellectually and emotionally. One effect of the adoption of this basis for his intellectual and emotional life was a sense of liberation and an ability to produce large works again. He drew together a collection of his poems (published in 1817 as Sibylline Leaves) and wrote Biographia Literaria (1817), a rambling and discursive but highly stimulating and influential work in which he outlined the evolution of his thought and developed an extended critique of Wordsworth's poems.

A new dramatic piece, Zapolya, was also published in 1817. In the same year, Coleridge became associated for a time with the new Encyclopaedia Metropolitana, for which he planned a novel system of organization, outlined in his Prospectus. These were more settled years for Coleridge. Since 1816 he had lived in the house of James Gillman, a surgeon at Highgate, north of London. His election as a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 1824 brought him an annuity of £105 and a sense of recognition. In 1830 he joined the controversy that had arisen around the issue of Catholic Emancipation by writing his last prose work, On the Constitution of the Church and State. The third edition of Coleridge's Poetical Works appeared in time for him to see it before his final illness and death in 1834.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge's Age

It is in the 'new and intense faith in the imagination', as Douglas Bush has remarked, that we find the common denominator of the greatest poets' of the Romantic period. The term "Romanticism" has been used in varying contexts and has come to mean different things to different people. Romanticism is a movement in art and literature in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the European continent that revolted against the Neoclassicism of the previous centuries. The credit for first using the term romantic to describe literature first goes to German poet Friedrich Schlegel who defined it as "literature depicting emotional matter in an imaginative form." Victor Hugo summed it up in an apt phrase "liberalism in literature" Imagination, emotion, and freedom are the focal points of debates on romanticism. The idea of understanding the nature of romanticism has to deal with a list terms now often used in discussion of literature subjectivity and an emphasis on individualism; spontaneity; freedom from rules; solitary life rather than life in society; the beliefs that imagination is superior to reason and devotion to beauty, love of and worship of nature; and fascination with the past, especially the myths and mysticism of the middle ages. Romanticism is a period of innovations in poetics and remains a watershed in modern thinking on these topics. It influenced the discussion of art and literature in a significant way by bringing into currency critical concepts like "organic" "spontaneous", "expressive", "impersonal", "imagination" etc. The ideas, which we take for granted in our times were passionately discussed in the Romantic period.

Characterised by volatility, the British Romantic period (roughly 1785-1832) irrevocably altered ways of thinking politically, culturally, intellectually, psychologically, aesthetically. It also produced some of the most fascinating and controversial figures in literary history. Many of these writers' imaginations were sparked by the raging debate over the French Revolution; to varying degrees they declared literary independence, metaphorically rattling or throwing off the universal Great Chain of Being so revered by their Augustan predecessors. Though Romantic writers approached their art in diverse ways and the movement was far from monolithic, certain key developments may be identified as 'Romantic'. Drawing from the work of both canonical and lesser known writers, one can investigate Romanticism thematically by exploring some of their preoccupations: personal freedom and individual subjectivity, Nature and the creative Imagination, Gothic horrors and psychological landscapes, popular culture and 'the real language of men' sensibility and the culturally 'feminine', and personal constructions of the historical past.

Among the six major Romantic poets, Coleridge was the only one who sustained conventional religious beliefs. Coleridge, for his part, had a mind always in flux. He was eclectic, a polymath, irresolute, distracted, and undisciplined. His eloquence kept him in conversation and away from his desk; his interests overtook one another with astonishing rapidity; those intellectual tasks that he did attend to were frequently stopgaps to keep him from larger and more ambitious projects such as the philosophical epic provisionally entitled "The Brook" and the august synthesis of Christian doctrine and German idealism that Coleridge thought of, portentously and therefore inhibitingly, as the magnum opus.

In 1832, at the end of what is now called the Romantic age, Samuel Taylor Coleridge described "three silent revolutions in England: 1. When the Professions fell off from the Church; 2. When Literature fell off from the Professions. When the Press fell off from Literature" (*Table Talk* 1:285). These fallings were, so to speak, "revolutions within the revolution—the larger revolution of capitalist modernity from the seventeenth to the early nineteenth century. For Coleridge and other Romantic theorists, the emergence of the "professions," "literature," and the "press" mirrored the political revolutions of England (1642), the North American colonies (1775), and France (1789). In his "Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*" of 1800, William Wordsworth had similarly proposed a transformation of poetry that would correspond to the "revolutions not of literature alone, but likewise of society itself" (121). Such thinking presupposed an already formed separation between the categories of politics and literature by the end of the eighteenth century. The Romantics were not the first to separate literature from politics, but they were the first to confront self-consciously the modern separation between these realms and to attempt to meditate it.

Literary history has commonly recognized Wordsworth's preface of 1800 as the first text of English Romantic criticism, but Wordsworth was hardly alone, in the last years of the eighteenth century, in making the attempt to

confront the political and cultural crisis of Europe in the 1790s with claims for new, transformative kinds of cultural production. Three years before the appearance of the preface, William Godwin (1757-1836) and Joanna Baillie (1762-1851) had each attempted to rethink the progressive political ideas and rhetorics of the radical Enlightenment within the complicating genres of narrative and dramatic representation. Baillie, a Scottish playwright and poet, appealed in her "Introductory Discourse" to Plays on the Passions (1798) to an analytic, revisionist mode of tragedy that would reconstruct the tragic, "tyrannical passions" from the little, unremembered gestures of everyday life. A rare example of female literary theory in this period, Baillie's "Discourse" was an ideological critique of tragedy's claim to represent a universal human nature, which she countered by tracing the human passions through their genealogy from domestic life to the torrential, officially "tragic" visitations in which (to put it more simply than Baillie does) angry educated men flog and humiliate women, children, and finally one another, as surrogates for themselves. By displacing tragedy from the realm of the state to the domestic spheres of civil society, Baillie also tried to make the latter, gender-defined arena a basis for criticizing the public world, where, in traditional tragedy, the "tragic passions" had been made to appear transhistorical rather than specifically masculine and contextually linked to the larger "tyranny" of England's own ancien régime. In this way, Baillie's theory of tragedy was less an attempt to privatize and domesticate formerly public and political controversy than an effort to rethink the mode of dramatic representation as a discourse capable of making explicit the political restaging of private life.

Meanwhile, Godwin's essay "Of History and Romance" (1797) began to rethink the English novel as an inquiry into the private, secretive, and politically formative moments of individual lives. This unpublished essay belonged to Godwin's larger campaign, conducted in The Enquirer (1797), to build a progressive British intelligentsia through literary, educational, and canon-organizing means, since it was becoming clear in the late 1790s that British radical discourse was now failing to be sustained by the community of radical discussion and dissent (Philp). In "Of History and Romance" Godwin took up old and unresolved problems of modern fictional narrative, the problems of truth, skepticism, fiction, and virtue that belong to the early history and institutionalizing of the English novel (McKeon). Here Godwin grasped earlier conservative arguments for the novel's self-conscious removal from historical truth or progressive political aims as a new opportunity for progressive discourse. He proposed the novel as a mode of investigation into the secret folds and darkened closets of its characters' otherwise public lives, aiming to uncover the hidden truth behind universal history's ideological commitment to a law-governed history that will happen the same way in the future as it has happened in the past.

Seventeen years before Walter Scott's Waverley, Godwin imagined a historical novel capable of rivaling Enlightenment historiography as a mode of truth-telling. Yet he also recognized, near the end of a sophisticated argument on narrative epistemologies, that his case for the progressive historical romancer threatened to reintroduce the figure of a divine artificer into what had been meant as a wholly secular and highly skeptical argument for narrative knowledge. In the only materialist conclusion drawn by a Romantic critical thinker, Godwin averted that quasi-theological outcome by referring both historiography and novel-writing to the unfinished narratives of natural history being told by modern English science.

The year 1797-98 was a crucial turning point for British criticism, however; Godwin's brilliant meditation on the politics of historical romance never saw print in the projected second volume of The Enquirer. Instead, T. J. Mathias's (1754-1835) Pursuits of Literature, published in parts from 1794 to 1798, became one of the most widely read books of literary reflection in the early 1800s. Mathias's book was one-tenth "satirical poem," nine-tenths literary and political criticism loaded into a byzantine system of footnotes. Published alongside Thomas Malthus's Essay on Population (1798) and the periodical essay The Anti-Jacobin (1797-98), Mathias's Pursuits was read as a kind of Malthusian poetics, a manual of British literary population-politics for the nineteenth century. England's literary intellectuals read and loathed Mathias, as they did Malthus, for saying too crudely and publicly what many now had come to suspect privately: "Literature, well or ill conducted, is the great engine by which all civilized States must ultimately be supported or overthrown" (244). "Our peasantry," Mathias insisted, "now read the Rights of Man on mountains and moors. . . . Our unsexed female writers now instruct, or confuse, us and themselves in the labyrinth of politics, or turn us wild with Gallic frenzy." The surge of political and sexual frenzy animating Mathias's own critical

prose spilled over in pages devoted to denouncing M. G. Lewis's The Monk—"lewd and systematic seduction" and Godwin's Enquirer, which Mathias read as the cultural extension of Political Justice (244-53, 388-97). Much maligned by those young literary intellectuals who had said it was "Bliss to be alive" at the dawn of the French Revolution, Mathias's book indeed helped furnish the social and political topoi of English Romantic criticism for the next generation. Often, what Mathias announced none too subtly in 1797 would henceforth travel within the political allegories of Romantic criticism, or as Coleridge put it, "a disguised system of Morals & Politics" (*Collected Letters* 632).

Wordsworth's 1800 preface was written against some of Mathias's own antagonists—Gothic fiction and its female readerships, the Enlightenment politics of Thomas Paine and Godwin. Yet from 1800 to 1815 the preface was often greeted as itself an "experiment" in Jacobin poetics, seeming to promote the "real language of men" as a demotic, quasi-political standard of public verse. Unlike Godwin, Baillie, or even Mathias before him, Wordsworth had in fact broken with political theory as a framework for literary theory. William Hazlitt, who seemed to admire Wordsworth's demotic poetics in *The Spirit of the Age* (1825), also suspected the deep ambivalence of Wordsworth's "levelling Muse." "The secret of the Jacobin poetry and the anti-Jacobin politics of this writer are the same," Hazlitt charged in 1816; "his lyrical poetry was a cant of humanity about the commonest people to level the great with the small; and his political poetry is a cant of loyalty to level Bonaparte with kings and hereditary imbecility" (7:144). In the contradiction between Wordsworth's "lyrical poetry" and his "political poetry," Hazlitt understood how Wordsworth had deepened rather than healed the separation between civil society and the state, how he had reproduced within his own texts the division between literature and politics Wordsworth's preface had promised to overcome.

Coleridge also changed his mind about Wordsworth's proposal to remodel the "real language" of civil society by means of poetry. By 1817 Coleridge was redefining the powers of poetry, "derived from reflection on the acts of the mind itself" (Biographia 2:54), so that they would resonate with Schiller's sense that the aesthetic "play drive" works reflexively on the conscious will embodied in the national state. This is why Coleridge, unlike Wordsworth, increasingly devoted his writing to institutional theory and historical accounts of the ways literature had "fallen" from the church, the professions, and the public discourse of the press. In The Statesman's Manual (1816), the Friend (1818), and On the Constitution of Church and State (1830) Coleridge completed a long, complex meditation on the transmission of symbolic meanings from a special body of intellectuals (or "clerisy") to the lay publics of civil society. Coleridge's theory formed yet another allegorical account of how literature, by means of criticism or symbolic interpretation, might restabilize the fractural, highly unstable relation of the British state to the social groups and classes of the early nineteenth century. Hence, Coleridge's works of political and institutional theory formed essential armatures to the more visibly "literary" theory of the Biographia Literaria (1817) and the literary lectures of 1808-19 (Klancher; Leask).

Coleridge, therefore, understood the emerging British culture industry—the realm of book publication, the periodical press, and the new scientific and literary lecturing institutions—as a crucial arena of political and social definition. These cultural institutions were demarcating the new reading audiences of the nineteenth century, and Coleridge's acute sense of the commodification of British reading and writing often sharpened the difference between a commercially organized and an institutionally directed form of the national culture. In The Statesman's Manual he complained: "I would that the greater part of our publications could be thus directed, each to its appropriate class of Readers" (Lay Sermons 36), a plea made to an audience of economically and culturally distinguished readers whom Coleridge believed should themselves begin assuming such directive institutional powers. Yet Hazlitt, writing in the Edinburgh Review, replied to the Statesman's Manual with a question: "Do not publications generally find their way there, without a direction?" (16:105n). Hazlitt assumed a coherent, market-organized world of cultural communication that had no need of "direction" from above but instead was proving to be a substantial basis for criticizing the institutions of state and church. In this way, Hazlitt allied himself with the cultural marketplace in order to fend off the larger counterrevolution that had been launched in England since the coming of The Anti-Jacobin (1797-98) and Godwin's abortive effort to remake a progressive British intelligentsia in those critical years.

Hazlitt's own critical career was generally secured by the periodical industry, his essays appearing in the liberal Examiner, the Yellow Dwarf, the New Monthly Magazine, or the Edinburgh Review, and by the newly built world of the scientific and literary lecturing institutions, where Hazlitt delivered his series of talks later published as Lectures

on the English Poets and other programs at the Surrey and Russell institutions for an audience of Quakers and Dissenters. This is one reason why we do not find bitter criticism of the commercialization of British culture in Hazlitt's writing as we find it in Coleridge's; the emerging culture industry seems rather to have been a foundation for Hazlitt's liberal distinction between political matters for the public realm and aesthetic matters for the private realm. In his essays on art, for instance, Hazlitt discredited the public English art institutions (all state-sponsored in this period) while enlarging the pleasures of personal aesthetic contemplation (Barrell). Hazlitt's unyielding reproaches to the British state, or to the Romantic conservative critics who would connive with it in their aesthetics, were matched in his critical practice by a defence of private aesthetic responses that distinguished "common" or "vulgar" from sensitive, discriminating tastes. The latter were not only separate from but a guarantee against the incursions of political and public institutional authority, but they fit wholly into what Hazlitt saw as the diverse mechanisms and protections of the cultural marketplace.

This is also why Hazlitt's canonizing activity was inimical to Coleridge's Romantic allegorizing of politics in poetics and his secularizing of sacred meanings in symbolic interpretation. Hazlitt's collection Select British Poets (1824) belonged to the market-driven canonizing process that had stimulated British cultural selectivity since the landmark Becket v. Donaldson copyright decision of 1774; it joined such earlier anthologies as John Bell's Poets of Great Britain (1776-82), Vicesimus Knox's Elegant Extracts (1784), Robert Anderson's Poets of Great Britain (1792-95). Alexander Chalmers's Works of the English Poets (1810), and Anna Barbauld's British Novelists (1810) (Bonnell; Patey). His Lectures on the English Poets as well as his lectures on the English comic writers or the characters of Shakespeare's plays can be read as intricate commentaries on an emerging British literary canon selected and circulated by these economically rather than theologically inspired procedures.

One can easily locate key tendencies in Coleridge's thought that can be attributed to the age in which he was writing. There is the attempt to synthesize the Romantic faith in poetic creation with the tenets of orthodox Christianity. Although he claimed to trust in God for spiritual guidance, he at times affirmed a subjective idealism so radical that it left the poet-perceiver with no resources to rely on but his own. The many tensions that inform Coleridge's thinking are manifest in his critical style, a style largely both unprecedented and unimitated. The passage on the poetic imagination is more lucid and available than most of Coleridge's speculative writing, which tends, even when it is celebrating the "esemplastic" (that is, unifying) powers of the mind, to be unfocused in its argument and irregular in rhythm, clotted and sprawling by turns. After Coleridge, criticism is a genre in which one can entertain—or demystify—questions of ultimate importance. After Coleridge, too, criticism has license to be abstract and difficult. It can become the province of an elite. Coleridge's commitment to unconfined speculation, to philosophy, and to an elite audience did a great deal to lay the groundwork for academic literary criticism in its current (elitist, sophisticated, speculative) form.

At the centre of Coleridge's intellectual concerns was a problem bequeathed to him chiefly by Kant- the nature of the relations between the human subject and his or her objects of perception. Kant had posited a necessary gap between the experiencing subject and the thing in itself, the noumenon. Perception gave access to phenomena, entities mediated and accordingly transformed by the senses and the mental faculties, but not to objects in their authentic being. Encountering this rift in Rene Descartes and Kant, and being disposed, at least overtly, against all unnecessary dualisms, Coleridge sought a solution within literature. To Coleridge the longed-for synthesis of subject and object took place through the exercise of the poetic imagination. Thus it was the poet who created harmony where the philosophers had been forced to acknowledge an alienating gap. "No man," Coleridge wrote in the Biographia, "was ever yet a great poet, without being at the same time a profound philosopher".

Samuel Taylor Coleridge Coleridge Original Cotribution

Coleridge is the most influential of the English romantic critics. He has been much criticised by the critics who cannot find him rudderless. In the beginning of the 20th century it was quite easy to find fault with his achievements. He was identified with a tragic waste of talent. Whereas William Wordsworth did not concern in his preface to Lyrical Ballad with how a poet's aim affected his way of writing and how a poem differs from other forms of expression. Samuel Taylor Coleridge focused on the old problem of the relation of form and content. Coleridge has had a role in shaping almost every aspect of contemporary academic criticism.

Coleridge's faith in genius has also been undermined. Critics at present frequently argue that "great" literary works may derive at least some of their status from appealing to the interests of socially dominant groups: that they are, in other words, wish-fulfillments of the master classes.

"Coleridge's theory of the imagination is both a development of associationist ideas and a strong reaction against them. He shows that Hartley's theories reduce the human mind to a passive victim of a mechanical process. He also rejected the Addisonian view of imaginative experience: beauty is not simply an effect in the mind of an external stimulus. In describing Wordsworth's poetry he assmes that the poet's mind is more active and creative. The imaginative faculty actually adds its own 'tone' and 'atmosphere' to the observations of sense experience. Coleridge's distinction between imagination and fancy enables him to argue the god-like creativity of imagination. By combining English associationism with German 'organic' philosophy (especially Scheling) he heightened the imagination's vital and shaping function. He reserved the term 'fancy' for the older, mechanical, associationist account: fancy is just a version of memory 'it must receive all its materials ready made from the law of association'. The art of rearranging these materials is a poetic function but is not enough to account for genius. Imagination does not simply reshuffle the cards of experience; it 'dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to recreate', Coleridge seems to have in mind God's dissolution of chaos and creation of universe. By way of demonstration Coleridge can do no more than quote passages of great writing which the reader is assumed to acknowledge as truly imaginative.

Coleridge's notions of organic unity and imaginative power strongly influenced the New Criticism and the intuitive approach of modern criticism. I.A. Richard' work, which itself deeply influenced the New Criticism, combined and updated mechanical psychology with Coleridge's stress upon unification and the imagination's harmonizing power. If we remove neuro-psychology from I.A.Richards theory we are left with Coleridgean organic theory: the imagination has the power to organize and unify the 'welter of disconnected impulses' which assails us. Richards accepts Coleridge's distinction between imagination and fancy but reinterprets it as one between degrees of complexity: imaginative complexity is greater, but not necessarily valuable."

But no matter how much the consensus of contemporary literary criticism departs from Coleridge, it continues to focus on the questions that mattered to him, even as it has come to ignore many of the issues that absorbed Johnson and Hazlitt. Questions about the provenance of the literary work, the nature of the poetic image, the tensions between words and their referents, the social utility of criticism, the function of intellectual elites, the relations between poetry and philosophy, and the existence of a properly literary language are all, in a certain sense, Coleridgean questions. Even in disagreeing with Coleridge, critics often have recourse to terms he introduced or redefined. It is also probably the case that Coleridge's peculiar personality has, however subtly, helped to shape many critical personalities after him: his vast curiosity, his speculative disposition, his attractions to nuance and to the minutiae of learning, along with the odd combination of timidity and daring that informs his writing, manifest themselves frequently in critics who have followed him. Coleridge is, for the AngloAmerican academic critic, an inescapable presence. Anyone who wishes to undermine that presence must first understand how much of Coleridge he or she already contains.

Intellectual Debts

Samuel Taylor Coleridge's greatest intellectual debts were first to William Godwin's Political Justice, especially during his Pantisocratic period, and to David Hartley's Observations on Man, which is the source of the psychology which we find in "Frost at Midnight." Hartley argued that we become aware of sensory events as impressions, and that "ideas" are derived by noticing similarities and differences between impressions and then by naming them. Connections resulting from the coincidence of impressions create linkages, so that the occurrence of one impression triggers those links and calls up the memory of those ideas with which it is associated. But far more important than native British influences was his trip to Germany in 1798-99, where he encountered the work of Kant, Schiller, Lessing, Schelling, and A.W. Schlegel. Many of the points made in his Lectures on Shakespeare first appeared in the works of Lessing and Schlegel, and the important Chapter 13 of the Biographia Literaria is substantially indebted to Kant, Fichte, and especially Schelling, whom he has been accused of plagiarizing. In any case, Coleridge is the point of contact between the English and continental Romantic movements.

Most of Coleridge's key terms and distinctions are derived from Germany. The general aesthetic position-the view of the relation between art and nature, the reconciliation of opposites, the whole dialectical scheme-comes from Schelling. The distinction between symbol and allegory can be found in Schelling and Goethe, the distinction between genius and talent in Kant, the distinctions between organic and mechanical, classical and modern, statuesque and picturesque in A.W.Schlegel. Coleridge's particular use of the term "Idea" comes from the Germans, and the way in which he links imagination with the process of cognition is also clearly derived from Fichte and Schelling. Though these ideas are present in tradition and Plato is aware of the presence of Plato, Plotinus, Cudworth, Henry More, and others, but still he draws on the Germans, for only they use the same dialectical method as he, the same epistemology and the same critical vocabulary. The neo-Platonists remained essentially scholastic mystics. Coleridge could not have been known to Schopenhauer, Hegel, De Sanctis, or Belinsky, and still most of the concepts, theories, and ideas which in the English-speaking world are today ascribed to Coleridge can be found in them. In Germany there was a large body of aesthetic thought which slowly radiated to France, Italy, Spain, and Russia. In England Coleridge stood quite alone, sharply distinct even from his close associates, Wordsworth, Lamb, and Hazlitt, who had only very slight German contacts. The vocabulary, the dialectical scheme, the whole intellectual atmosphere sets Coleridge apart. The difference is explainable only by Coleridge's adaptation and importation of the Germans. This in itself constituted an important historical merit which should not be minimized. Coleridge was the main source, in this respect, not only for a long line of English critics but also for the American transcendentalists and for Poe, and thus indirectly for the French symbolists.

Critical Analysis and Notes of the Prescribed Chapters of Biographia Literaria

Chapter IV

Coleridge in this chapter introduces the distinction between imagination and fancy, gives a historical account of the association of ideas, and compares Aristotle's theory with Hartley's. Here Coleridge gives an account of his response to Wordsworth's poetry. And attributes this attraction to Wordswoerth's poetry due to "the union of deep feeling with profound thought" in them. Herein lies the seed of fancy imagination distinction as Coleridge appreciates his estimate of Wordsworth, he comments : "This excellence, which in all Mr. Wordsworth's writings is more or less predominant, and which constitutes the character of his mind, I no sooner felt, than I sought to understand. Repeated meditations led me first to suspect,—(and a more intimate analysis of the human faculties, their appropriate marks, functions, and effects matured my conjecture into full conviction,)—that Fancy and Imagination were two distinct and widely different faculties, instead of being, according to the general belief, either two names with one meaning, or, at furthest, the lower and higher degree of one and the same power. It is not, I own, easy to conceive a more apposite translation of the Greek phantasia than the Latin imaginatio; but it is equally true that in all societies there exists an instinct of growth, a certain collective, unconscious good sense working progressively to desynonymize [22] those words originally of the same meaning, which the conflux of dialects supplied to the more homogeneous languages, as the Greek and German and which the same cause, joined with accidents of translation from original works of different countries, occasion in mixed languages like our own."

Coleridge finds fault with the tradition especially the neoclassical understanding of fancy and imagination where the distinction does not exist. In sheer desperation, he says: "The first and most important point to be proved is, that two conceptions perfectly distinct are confused under one and the same word, and—this done—to appropriate that word exclusively to the one meaning, and the synonyme, should there be one, to the other. But if,—(as will be often the case in the arts and sciences,)—no synonyme exists, we must either invent or borrow a word." And then Coleridge expresses his objective of investigating "the seminal principle" and explains the difference in objective from Wordsworth thus: "*It was Mr. Wordsworth's purpose to consider the influences of fancy and imagination as they are manifested in poetry, and from the different effects to conclude their diversity in kind; while it is my object to investigate the seminal principle, and then from the kind to deduce the degree. My friend has drawn a masterly sketch of the branches with their poetic fruitage. I wish to add the trunk, and even the roots as far as they lift themselves above ground, and are visible to the naked eye of our common consciousness*".

Chapter XIII

In this Chapter of Biograhia Literaria Coleridge launches into the main thesis. He defines Imagination as the 'esemplastic power. Here he briefly discusses imagination (primary and secondary) and fancy. This brief discussion has been called by Thomas Mcfarland "perhaps the most famous single prose passage in all of English literature, yet also one of the most baffling." Though imagination and fancy are mentioned several times in previous chapters but never defined until Chapter XIII. And now when he defines them, Coleridge leaves many questions in the mind of the reader. Though the definition is articulated but appears to be entirely unsupported. Critics are of the view that the main problem of unsubstantiated definitions lies in Chapter XIII with the intrusion of the famous letter from "a friend". The "two forces" Coleridge describes are abstract, multi-dimensional forces which have neither source nor end; they are "two contrary forces, the one of which tends top expand infinitely, while the other strives to apprehend or find itself in its infinity"

"The Imagination then I consider either as primary, or secondary. The primary Imagination I hold to be the living power and prime agent of all human perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM. The secondary Imagination I consider as an echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the kind of its agency, and differing only in degree, and in the mode of its operation It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to recreate: or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still at all events

it struggles to idealize and to unify. It is essentially vital, even as all objects (as objects) are essentially fixed and dead."

J. Shawcross sees that the distinction drawn here is evidently "between the imagination as universally active in consciousness and the same faculty in a heightened power as creative in a poetic sense." In other words, adopting the two levels at which imagination functions in Schelling, the ordinary and the extraordinary, or poetic, Shawcross makes the primary imagination the common property of all men, whereby they differentiate themselves, by an unconscious process, from the external world of objects. The secondary imagination he appropriates exclusively to poets.

"FANCY, on the contrary, has no other counters to play with, but fixities and definites. The fancy is indeed no other than a mode of memory emancipated from the order of time and space; while it is blended with, and modified by that empirical phaenomenon of the will, which we express by the word Choice. But equally with the ordinary memory the Fancy must receive all its materials ready made from the law of association."

Chapter XIV

The chapter aims at describing the common aims that Wordsworth and Coleridge set before them in composing Lyrical Ballads. Here Coleridge argues for Wordsworth poetic abilities and finds no problem with Wordsworth writing a preface to a work wherein the bulk of the contributions came from him. He begins with explaining that the function of 'philosophical disquisition' (enquiry) as analysis first and synthesis after, and states his proposition:

If the object is said to be memorizing, as in the nursery rhyme about the number of days in the months, where metre is used for this purpose, one may say that metre distinguishes a poem from prose. But no one will say that anything in metrical form is a poem. A proper definition of a poem would be a composition that proposes pleasure as its immediate end, and to distinguish it from novels and similar compositions one might say that this pleasure from the whole is compatible with pleasure from the parts. Coleridge then goes on to enunciate his organic theory of a poem, namely the interdependence of the parts. This excludes a sequence of distichs(couplets) like the compositions of the eighteenth century poets, where each distichs is detachable and autonomous. Coleridge puts forward an organic, as opposed to a mechanical, theory of poetry. A mere narrative interest which hurries a reader to the conclusion out of curiosity to find out what it is, does not give unity to a poem. The reader must feel free to go back and forward at his own pace, pausing to enjoy a passage and then proceeding to next lines. Coleridge then says what poetry is as distinct from a poem, and here he makes no distinction between prose and metrical works (like Sidney before Shelley and after him). The question what poetry is, he says, is almost the same as what is a poet. Any product of the secondary imagination from those who possess it is poetry. He ends with a conceit in which good sense is the body of poetic genius, fancy the drapery, 'motion' (emotion) the life and imagination the soul.

Chapter XIV

Word-Meanings and Explanatory Notes (for notes C.A.Sheppard, J.Shawcross and D.J.Enright are consulted)

The interesting of the affections by the dramatic truth of such emotions as would naturally accompany such situations: The 'affections' are the reader's feelings; the emotions are, roughly, the feelings portrayed in the poem. Coleridge attempted to make the supernatural plausible by treating it dramatically, i.e. objectively, in narrative poems.

Under supernatural agency: in the presence of ghosts or supernatural phenomena.

In this idea originated the plan of the Lyrical Ballads: A single poem was to be written by the two poets Wordsworth and Coleridge to defray the expense of a tour to Linton in 1798. Coleridge was to deal with 'persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient o procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith', whereas Wordsworth was 'to give the charm of novelty to things of every day, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind's attention from the lethargy of custom...'

The number of his poems so much greater: Of the twenty-three poems in the first edition of the Lyrical Ballads only four were contributed by Coleridge.

Mr Wordsworth added two or three poems written in his own character: e.g. Tintern Abbey, which is neither a lyric, strictly speaking, nor a ballad.

Were presented by him, as an experiment: Lyrical Ballads' issue in 'advertisement' 'written chiefly with a view to ascertain how far the language of conversation in the lower and middle classes of society is adapted to the purposes of poetic pleasure.'

The conjunction of perceived power with supposed heresy: The 'heresy' was that all poetry should be written in the colloquial language of 'lower and middle classes'. It was apparent, from the second edition(1800) of Lyrical Ballads, that Wordsworth had poetical power(genius), as even his detractors unconsciously recognized, so they stubbornly, and in some cases bitterly, attacked him.

With many parts of this preface, in the sense attributed to them ... I never concurred: Coleridge referred to the enlarged preface in one of his letter to Southey as 'half a child of my own brain' and said that it 'arose out of conversations so frequent that, with few exceptions, we could scarcely either of us, perhaps, positively say which first started any particular thought ... yet I am far from going all lengths with Wordsworth... I rather suspect that there is a radical difference in our theoretical opinions respecting poetry.' Again Coleridge adds in another of his letter to Southey 'it was at first intended that the preface should be written by me. And it is likewise true that I warmly accord with Wordsworth in his abhorrence of these poetic licences, as they are called, which are indeed mere tricks of convenience and laziness...'

degraded this prefatory disquisition: Wordsworth's reason was that 'when the collection was much enlarged and diversified, this Preface was transferred to the end of the volumes as having no special application to the contents' (Note prefixed to the Preface in 1849).

Blest indeed is that state of society...from disgust and aversion! Coleridge uses a reductio ad absurdum mode of argument to assert that pleasure can be obtained from a poem even when moral or intellectual truth is not the ultimate end. It would be a fortunate state of society, moral and intellectual, if its citizens could not enjoy an ode by Anacreon or a pastoral poem by Virgil, in spite of its excellent diction and imagery, only because of its streaks of obscenity or moral laxity. In other words in a society of saints or sages immorality or lack of inteelectual height might prevent some of Virgil's bucolic poems or Anacreon's odes from giving pleasure; but no such society exists.

Bathyllus: a character in one of Anacreon's Odes.

Anacreon: a Greek lyric poet of Teos in Ionia in the 6th century B.C. whose melodious verse were on the theme of love and wine.

Alexis: a shepherd in Virgil's Ecologue II.

Virgil: was a Roman poet (70-19 B.C.)

Would, then, the mere superaddition of metre, with or without rhyme, entitle these to the name of the poet... Coleridge's closely-knit logic is worth taking note of. If a novel or romance is presented in the metrical form does it become a poem? It does not, because metre would not suit all the parts of it, and 'nothing can permanently please which does not contain in itself the reason why it is so, and not otherwise.'

The perpetual and distinct attention to each part, which an exact correspondent recurrence of accent and sound are calculated to excite: Metre and rhyme perpetually call attention to the parts of a poem, making it different, in this respect, from other species of literary composition.

It must be one the parts of which mutually support and explain each other: This is Coleridge' famous theory of organic structure of a poem, adopted by the Imagists.

The epithet liber here balances the preceding verb: The Latin quotation is from Petronius Arbiter's Satyricon CXVIII: 'the free spirit of genius must plunge head-long'. 'Liber' meaning 'free' balances 'must plunge headlong'.

We have still to seek for a definition of poetry: 'Elsewhere Coleridge does not make this distinction of "poem" and "poetry" ...And it is doubtful whether the distinction, as here drawn, makes for clearness, or indeed whether it can fairly be drawn at all'. (J. Shawcross)

Plato: c.427-348 B.C. famous philosopher and a disciple of Socrates whose teachings he has recorded in his Dialogues and Symposium.

Bishop Taylor: Jeremy Taylor (1613-67), is best known for his *Holy Living* and *Holy Dying* and his *Eniantos,* a series of sermons for the Christian year.

The Theoria Sacra of Burnet: *Telluris Theoria Sacra* by Thomas Burnet, D.D. (1635-1715) gives a 'fanciful theory of the earth's structure, which aroused much controversy at that time'(J.Shawcross).

Whatever specific import we attach to the word poetry: whatever special meaning.

A poem of any length neither can be, nor ought to be, all poetry: Another of Coleridge's dicta supporting the Imagist stand.

the remaining parts must be preserved in keeping with the poetry: in other words the non-poetical material must be susceptible of poetical treatment, and this is made possible by 'a studied selection and artificial arrangement, as will partake of one though not a peculiar property of poetry', i.e. metre, 'the property of exciting a more continuous and equal attention than the language of prose aims at...'

What is poetry? Is so nearly the same question with, what is a poet? The two question involve the nature of poetic genius, as Coleridge proceeds to explain; and poetic genius is a question of the secondary imagination, whether it creates a 'poem' or 'poetry'. It is the ability to organize, to reconcile, dissimilars, and achieve harmony out of diversity. In the next paragraph Coleridge lists the categories of contraries with which the secondary (or esemplastic) imagination is concerned.

Laxis effertur habenis: 'probably adapted from Virgil's Georgics II, 354: "is carried onwards with loosened reins"

Sir John Davies(1565-1618): poet and writing master. The quotation is from his poem *On the Soul of Man,* Section IV.

Chapter XV

This chapter of Coleridge's Biograhia Literaria is an exercise in practical criticism. His chief interest is to discover the qualities in a poem which may be understood as "promises and specific symptoms of poetic power". In his scheme of things the act of the will is important and creation of a poem involves some deliberation. To do so he focuses his attention on the earliest works of Shakespeare, a true genius in Coleridge's eyes. Shakespeare's 'Venus and Adonis' and 'Lucrece' are understood by Coleridge as expressing "strong promises of the strength, and yet obvious proofs of the immaturity, of his genius". From these poems Coleridge extracts the characteristics of original poetic genius.

Coleridge then discusses characteristics of a true genius one by one. First he focuses his attention on music in poetry and he has this to say: "the first and most obvious excellence is the perfect sweetness of the versification; its adaptation to the subject; and the power displayed in varying the march of the words without passing into a loftier and more majestic rhythm than was demanded by the thoughts, or permitted by the propriety of preserving a sense of melody predominant. The delight in richness and sweetness of sound, even to a faulty excess, if it be evidently original, and not the result of an easily imitable mechanism, I regard as a highly favourable promise in the compositions of a young man. The man that hath not music in his soul can indeed never be a genuine poet".

Coleridge suggests that imagery can be acquired as a trade by a man of talent and reading but music in poetry is not easy to acquire. Only a true genius can afford to bring in music in his composition as it depends on possessing Imagination. He adds: "the sense of musical delight, with the power of producing it, is a gift of imagination; and this together with the power of reducing multitude into unity of effect, and modifying a series of thoughts by some one predominant thought or feeling, may be cultivated and improved, but can never be learned. It is in these that "poeta nascitur non fit."

The second promise of genius has to do with "the choice of subjects very remote from the private interests and circumstances of the writer himself." In Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis this power exists even to excess. Thirdly images in themselves do not make a poet great. According to Coleridge images "become proofs of original genius only as far as they are modified by a predominant passion; or by associated thoughts or images awakened by that passion; or when they have the effect of reducing multitude to unity, or succession to an instant; or lastly, when a human and intellectual life is transferred to them from the poet's own spirit." Imagery becomes more significant when "it moulds and colours itself to the circumstances, passion, or character, present and foremost in the mind". The fourth and final

important characteristic of a genius is "depth, and energy of thought". Coleridges writes. "No man was ever yet a great poet, without being at the same time a profound philosopher. For poetry is the blossom and the fragrancy of all human knowledge, human thoughts, human passions, emotions, language."

Word-Meanings and Explanatory Notes

Our myriad-minded Shakespeare: *hyperbole from Naucratius' panegyric of Theodorus Chersites*

The perfect sweetness of versification: The man that hath not music, & c.: Merchant of Venice, Act V, sc. I. Here 'his soul' read 'himself'. Coleridge's misquotation is a common one.

The sense of musical delight: Coleridge defines the 'chief requisite' of a poet 'as deep feeling and exquisite sense of beauty, both as exhibited to the eye in the combinations of form, and to the ear in sweet and appropriate melody.

The choice of subjects very remote, & c.: 'There is no greater or more common vice in dramatic writers than draw out of themselves. How I - alone and in the self-sufficiency of my study, as all men are apt to be proud in their dreams – should like to be talking king! Shakespeare in composing had no I, but the I representative.

Shakespeare has here represented, &c. Cp. The Morning Post report of the fourth lecture of 1811-12 which gives this passage in almost identical language.

It has been before observed: *the third characteristic of poetic genius, which is now discussed, is imagination in the various aspects of its activity.*

Which shoots its being through earth, sea, and air: Altered from France:An Ode, l.100

Of the wide world: the two lines that follow run thus

> Can yet the lease of my true love control
> Supposed as forfeit to a confined doom.

Coleridge omits them, as disturbing the imaginative sequence.

Look! How a bright star: in the Lectures the same passage is quoted in illustration of the tranquil and purely pleasurable operation of the imagination, in which 'it acts chiefly by creating out of many things, as they would have appeared in the description of any ordinary mind detailed in unimpassioned succession, a oneness, even as nature, the greatest of poets, acts upon us, when we open our eyes upon an extended prospect'. The whole passage, which deals with the various activities of the imagination, should be studied.

Depth, and Energy of thought: Lectures 'finally in this poem Shakespeare gave ample proof of his possessing a most profound, energetic, and philosophic mind, without which he might have pleased, but could not have been a great poet.' And Coleridge to Southey : 'You will agree with me that a great poet must be, implicite if not explicit, a profound metaphysician.

No automaton of genius: this prejudice with regard to Shakespeare is denounced in the Lectures, passim. How long Coleridge himself had realized the unreasonableness of the popular view cannot be safely determined; but it is hardly conceivable that Lessing was the first to open his eyes. In 1802 he writes : 'Great injury has resulted from the supposed incompatibility of one talent with another, judgment with imagination and taste, good sense with strong feeling etc. If it be false, as assuredly it is, the opinion has deprived us of a test which every man might apply.

All things and modes of action: For a similar comparison see Table Talk for May 12, 1830: 'Shakespeare is the Spinozistic deity – an omnipresent creativeness. Milton is the deity of prescience: he stands abextra.' &c.. and a profound note on Milton in A.P.(Oct. 1819).

Chapter XVI

In this chapter Coleridge briefly engages with difference between the poets of his own age with the poets of fifteenth and sixteenth century. He identifies the most striking difference is: "Abstracted from the degrees and peculiarities of individual genius, the properties common to the good writers of each period seem to establish one striking point of difference between the poetry of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and that of the present age." And Coleridge then explains what is this difference, he adds "In the present age the poet ...seems to propose to himself as his main object, and as that which is the most characteristic of his art, new and striking images; with incidents that interest the

affections or excite the curiosity. Both his characters and his descriptions he renders, as much as possible, specific and individual, even to a degree of portraiture. In his diction and metre, on the other hand, he is comparatively careless. The measure is either constructed on no previous system, and acknowledges no justifying principle but that of the writer's convenience; or else some mechanical movement is adopted, of which one couplet or stanza is so far an adequate specimen, as that the occasional differences appear evidently to arise from accident, or the qualities of the language itself, not from meditation and an intelligent purpose."

Coleridge praises those who have guarded the purity of native tongue and refers to Dante who declared that first duty of the poet is to guard the native tongue. Coleridge says : "language is the armoury of the human mind; and at once contains the trophies of its past, and the weapons of its future conquests." Coleridge identifies that the poets of the past aimed at an "excellence" that "consisted in the exquisite polish of the diction, combined with perfect simplicity. This their prime object they attained by the avoidance of every word, which a gentleman would not use in dignified conversation, and of every word and phrase, which none but a learned man would use; by the studied position of words and phrases, so that not only each part should be melodious in itself, but contribute to the harmony of the whole, each note referring and conducting to the melody of all the foregoing and following words of the same period or stanza; and lastly with equal labour, the greater because unbetrayed, by the variation and various harmonies of their metrical movement." Coleridge then expresses his wish of union of the characteristic merits of both i.e. the poets of his own age and those belonging to 15th and 16th century. He exhorts: "A lasting and enviable reputation awaits that man of genius, who should attempt and realize a union;—who should recall the high finish, the appropriateness, the facility, the delicate proportion, and above all, the perfusive and omnipresent grace, which have preserved, as in a shrine of precious amber, the Sparrow of Catullus, the Swallow, the Grasshopper, and all the other little loves of Anacreon; and which, with bright, though diminished glories, revisited the youth and early manhood of Christian Europe, in the vales of [63] Arno, and the groves of Isis and of Cam; and who with these should combine the keener interest, deeper pathos, manlier reflection, and the fresher and more various imagery, which give a value and a name that will not pass away to the poets who have done honour to our own times, and to those of our immediate predecessors."

Word-Meanings and Explanatory Notes

Pope's 'Translations': it is worthy of notice that whenever Coleridge and Wordsworth attack Pope's diction, it is the diction of his 'Translation', and not of his original writings, which they have in view.

Darwin's 'Temple of Nature'. First published in 1803.

His tract 'De la nobile volgare eloquenza'. 'The spirit breathing in this Fragment may justify what Mr. Coleridge says: but Dante does not appear to have used the expression attributed to him in the text'.

Animadverte: from the *Examinatio et Emendatio Mathematicae hodiernae,* Dial. II vol. Iv, p.83.

Sat vero: From the chapter De nominibus novis Paracelsi, p.193(Works, Leyden, 1676). Sara Coleridge, who gives the reference, also points out several additions to, and omissions from the original.

Hence novelty of subject: we may compare the passage in which Hegel upholds the Dutch genre-painters for their choice of subject – a point on which they have been attacked, among others, by Ruskin.

In opposition to the present age: Cp. Biog. Lit. i.15, where the distinction is somewhat distinctly conceived.

Such as have been attempted of late in the Alonzo and Imogen': of this metre we may quote Sara Coleridge the following instance from the poem:

A warrior so bold and a virgin so bright
Conversed as they sat on the green:
They gazed on each other with tender delight,
Alonzo the brave was the name of the knight,
The maid's was the fair Imogene.

The same metre was, as she adds, employed by Southey in his ballad, 'Mary the Maid of the Inn.' From Coleridge's language it might be gathered that this metre too was imported from Germany, but this is erroneous.

The Madrigals of Giovambatista Strozzi: E.H.Coleridge's comment on the note 'Words and Things', tells us that 'this note follows an essay on Giambattista Strozzi's Madrigals, together with a transcription of twenty-five specimens. The substance of the essay is embodied in the text of Chapter XVI of the Biographia Literaria and a long foot-note.

An artist, whose writings : See the second of Sir Joshua Reynolds' Discourses. Wordsworth alludes to this dictum in the advertisement to the first edition of the Lyrical Ballads.

Harris of Salisbury: James Harris (1709-80). He wrote two treatises on art in the manner of the Platonic Dialogues entitled respectively 'Art' and 'Music, Paining, and Poetry'(1744).

Chapter XVII

This chapter deals with a lengthy discussion of Wordsworth's critics and his growing popularity. Coleridge here is particularly interested in Wordsworth's services in condemning poetic dictioni.e., the use of stock cliches and threadbare words and phrases as substitutes for natural turns of expression (e.g. 'nymph' for 'girl', 'swain' for 'rustic' and 'finny tribe' for 'fish'). Coleridge then states the main point of disagreement between him and Wordsworth namely that proper diction...' Coleridge maintains that this rule applies only to certain classes of poetry in a sense which is self-evident, and that as a general rule it is useless if not dangerous. Coleridge then gives us the reasons that a poet may have for choosing rustic and low life as the province of his poetry. He says that none of these were Wordsworth' and quotes from the Preface the statement that in the conditions in which rustics and other humble people live the essential... forms of nature'.

Coleridge questions whether the heroic character in the Brothers, Michael, Ruth and similar poems are rustics. Their excellence is not due to their rusticity but to factors which operate equally in towns and cities. Coleridge's point is that one cannot argue from a small group of privileged rustics to the conditions of rustics as a whole, and that Aristotle's view that poetry is essentially ideal in that it deals with the general (or generic), not with the exceptional is a sound guiding principle. Taking Michael and the Brothers as representatives of a class of rustics (not a typical rustics) they have 'all the verisimilitude and representative quality, that the purposes of poetry can require. On the other hand in such poems as Harry Gill and The Idiot Boy the rustics who are represented are quite unimpressive. The poems succeed, in so far as they do so, because they are located 'in the vicinity of interesting images' which Wordsworth has the credit for drawing on. As for The idiot Boy Coleridge is inclined to agree with the two charges brought against it: that the representation of the boy's idiocy is disagreeably realistic and that there is little to choose between the mother's silly indiscretion and the boy's idiocy.

He next considers The Thorn which Wordsworth intended to present as narrated by a garrulous retired seaman, or similar person, one with leisure to go gossiping round the countryside, and who would naturally have a longwinded way of retailing facts. But longwindedness is a defect in any narrative poem, perhaps in any kind of poetry. The successful example of Juliet's nurse in dramatic poetry, i.e. in Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, prevents Coleridge from making this generalization. Summing up the first part of the discussion Coleridge feels compelled to call in question Wordsworth's choice of rustic character a priori (i.e. on theoretical and argumentative grounds) and with reference to cases where he tried to practise his theory.

He next controverts the view that the language of the rustics purified 'from all provincialism and grossness (dialectical ugliness and bad grammar) is the best for poetry 'because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived...' Coleridge claims that these men cannot 'communicate', for this word implies that an object is 'discriminately reflected on'. The 'purified' rustic language will not differ from that of any man of common sense except in being inferior because it will lack that training and thinking which enables an educated man to pass from facts in isolation to general inferences, bringing them within its sweep. Moreover the rustic's vocabulary is a small collection of terms pertaining to his primary needs, and this situation is not very different from that of the calls which birds and animals use: 'the best part of human language....uneducated men.

In other words it is the terms and expressions coined, while exercising the thinking faculty at higher levels, which constitute the most efficient and expressive part of a language. It may happen that the rustics sometimes use the words of educated speech, but this is because they have parroted them from the pulpit and from other learned sources

with which they accidentally come into touch. When Wordsworth offers the rustic language in a 'purified' form as 'a far more philosophical language' than the 'arbitrary and capricious' languages of poets, he confuses the journalistic correctness of Tom Brown and Roger L'Estrange with the simple but profound and original prose of Hooker and Bacon.

Re-stating his objection from another angle Coleridge focuses his attention on the word 'real' in Wordsworth's claim that poetry should be written in 'a selection of the real language of men' and challenges the statement that 'Between the language of prose and that of metrical composition, there neither is, nor can be any essential difference.' Coleridge then tries to get to the meaning of 'real' and affirms that there are three concentric areas of language. The outermost is what all users have in common, the inner is the language one shares with one's class, profession, etc. the innermost is the circle of one's personal and unique use of language. It distinguishes a great writer from a mediocre one. The outermost band is the poorest, the *lingua communis*, and this is the only area that Wordsworth's 'real language' can refer to: the poorest, and least productive of poetry.

Word-Meanings and Explanatory Notes

The resemblances between that state into which the reader's mind is thrown by the pleasurable confusion of thought from an unaccustomed train of words and images; and that state which is induced by the natural language of impassioned feeling: Poetic diction, or the high-sounding dead clichés do-poetical pleasure arising from the strange words and images employed. This vice developed out of imitation of great Augustan poets like Poe to whom expressions with classical echoes and connotations came aptly though artificially. On the other hand Wordsworth contented for a simple, spontaneous, natural style which would express emotion sincerely and give authentic poetical pleasure. *they may have won for them a more permanent and practical result:* 'these errors of defect or exaggeration' may have won for them ('the accompanying truths') a permanent and practical effect on the poetry of the age.

He will abandon little by little his weakest posts, till at length he seems to forget that they had ever belonged to him: The metaphor is that of an army in retreat abandoning its most vulnerable and least useful points of defence. The opponent begins to feel that they were never maintained by him because they now seem negligible or 'at most as accidental and "petty annexments",' slight adjoining fortifications that can be cheaply abandoned. The phrase, quoted from Hamlet, Act IV, has a different sense. Guildenstern compares kingship to 'a massy wheel' on a high mountain, with the minor fortunes of lesser men attached to it, and involved I its ruin when it hurtles to its destruction.

A happy imitation: a successful 'mimesis' or imaginatively modified version of reality.

The naturalness, in fact, of the things represented: the photographic exactness of the copy.

The essential passions... our elementary feelings: The two phrases mean about the same thing. Wordsworth's claim is that in 'low and rustic life' the basic emotions of human nature develop to their fullest and are more plainly manifested. Moreover, they 'coexistin a state of greater simplicity': they are not confusingly mixed as in the complicated situations of urban life. Therefore they can be accurately contemplated and forcibly expressed.

...the sentiments and language... are attributable to causes and circumstances not necessarily connected with 'their occupations and abode': The heroism(greatness) of such characters as Michael, Ruth and Mad Mother is not the product of their natural environment or of their rustic callings or ay of life. It is due to other factors 'which will and do produce the same results in every state of life, whether in town or country.'

A more winning and commanding rhetoric: a more persuasive, impressive language. 'Rhetoric' here is matery in the use of language.

negations: the absence of certain factors e.g. education or original sensibility(l.469), inborn cleverness, mother-wit.

The Poor Laws: Laws requiring the people of a locality to pay local taxes for the maintenance of the workhouse and other institutions intended to assist the poor.

A particular mode of pastoral life: Mountains in themselves have nothing to do with human character

pictures to the blind and music to the deaf: Quoted from Wordsworth's Michael. To the old shepherd of Greenhead Ghyll, grazing his sheep on the mountains, the scenes and sounds around him were not like pictures to a blind man or music to a deaf one. He was sensitively responsive to all that nature had to say(unlike the mountain-dwellers of North Wales).

I adopt with full faith the principle of Aristotle: By the ideal, with which poetry is concerned, Aristotle means the general, the generic(unlike Plato for whom the ideal meant ideas, the imaginative perfection of imperfect forms of matter). Poetry, for Aristotle, should deal with a type of life and a person representing it, not with exceptionally favoured members of the type. From this point of view Michael is not a typical rustic; he is typical, however, of one class of rustics, and to that extent a poetically well-drawn character in Coleridge's view.

If my promises are right...the swains of Theocritus and those of an imaginary golden age: This is perhaps the most problematic passage in the selections because of Coleridge's logical agility. His 'premises', or initial assumption, is that poetry should be ideal in the sense of dealing with the general, not the exceptional, the class, not the particular person. Therefore 'there can be no poetic medium', no middle way, between the Aristotelian ideal and the purely fantastic picture of what never existed: the Golden Age, in Greek mythology, when gods moved freely among men. Theocritus, with Virgil after him, created the conventions of pastoral poetry.

In the poems which are pitched at a lower note...the feelings are those of human nature in general: The feelings are not peculiar to rustic conditions of life: the grasping nature of Harry Gill who, in a dog-in-the-manger spirit, grudged the old woman Goody Blake the dry sticks she collected on his premises, is met with in townspeople as well. Betty Foy's risking the safety of her idiot son to send him to fetch the doctor for a neighbour who was about to have a baby, is the sort of rash good will also met with outside rustic life.

Impersonation of an instinct abandoned by judgement: personification of the instinct of neighbourliness ungoverned by discretion.

anile: feminine gender of 'senile' hardly used now.

Not only a priori, from grounds of reason, but both from the few instances in which the poet himself is to be supposed to have been governed by it, and from the comparative inferiority of those instances: Coleridge challenges Wordsworth's theory not only on logical grounds but with reference to his practice of it in a few poems which are inferior when compared to his other compositions.

Those connections of things, or those relative bearings of fact to fact, from which some more or less general law is deducible: An educated man is not interested in isolated facts but in abstract inferences, generalizations, to which they lead up when taken consecutively or in combination. These abstract notions are 'the indwelling law, which is the true being(essence) of things, the sole solution(answer) of their modes of existence'.

A voluntary appropriation of fixed symbols to internal acts, to process and results of imagination: the deliberate creation of new, meaningful words as symbols for mental acts.

Arbitrary and capricious habits of expression: This is Wordsworth's way of describing what is usually known as eighteenth-century poetic diction: stereotyped usage employed without reason by inferior poets according to their whims (e.g. 'swain' for a lover, 'nymph' for his beloved, 'murdering tube' for a gun).

Hooker: Richard Hooker(1554-1600) is famous for his *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, a defence of the church of England as established in Queen Elizabeth's reign.

Bacon: Francis Bacon (1561-1626), a great philosopher.

Tom Brown(1663-1704) was a satirist, hack writer and translator.

Sir Roger L'Estrange (1616-1704) was a journalist and pamphleteer.

The language of Algeron Sidney etc: was the author of Discourses Concerning Government. The distinction of three concentric areas of language that Coleridge makes here is cogent and useful. The innermost circle comprises individualities or idiosyncrasies in the use of language, which mark off the genius from the common writer. The second

area comprises the language of the class or profession to which the user of the language belongs. The outermost third and largest part of a person's language is that which he shares in common with all the users of language. This is the lingua communis which is what Wordsworth's 'real language' must mean (though he did not intend this).

The language is so highly extolled by Mr Wordsworth varies in every county, nay in every village: there is no uniform rustic language but different dialects.

Pro bono publico: 'for the public good' a sobriquet used by persons writing to the newspapers who do not want to reveal their identity.

Anterior to cultivation: before it is developed (i.e. a common language).

Apparent tautologies: evident repetitions.

The song of Deborah: She was one of the judges of Israel in the days before the country had kings. Deborah's song is about the patriotic Jewess Jael and her killing of the Philistine general Sisera.

Chapter XVIII

In this chapter Coleridge denies Wordsworth's claims and refutes Wordsworth's assertion that the language of poetry and that of prose are not different. Colredige in this chapter not only refutes Wordsworth but indulges in a sly vein of humour as a critic. Wordsworth's statement could be regarded as a platitude(a pompous 'paradox', or strange statement, which turns out to be trivial) if we take him to mean that 'mere words, as materials common to all styles of writing' are common to prose and poetry, and not as suggesting that the style of poetry should be the same as that of prose. Coleridge observes that the eyes of a cat in the dark are mistaken for flames, and similarly, grandiloquent 'paradoxes' have been regarded as wise pronouncements and have turned out to be inanities. But Wordsworth, Coleridge declares, is not the type of person who deals in paradoxes, in pretentious, empty statements. Therefore, his dictum has to be examined for a deeper meaning, and the crux of his statement is in the words 'essential difference".

Coleridge fixes attention on 'essential', a derivative of 'essence'. Coleridge then says that this word can have two meanings.. Essence can mean 'the principle of individuation', the uniqueness of a thing, corresponding to Plato's idea: the abstract conception of which a thing is the material form, or manifestation. This, obviously is not Wordsworth's meaning. On the other hand 'essential' may refer to the common ground of contradistinction between two objects of essentially the same basis: 'modifications of the same substance or subject'. Wordsworth's claim must, therefore, be that there cannot be a different organization of language of prose and poetry, whereas Coleridge contends that there must be a difference because of the special conditions under which poetry is composed.

"Things identical", Coleridge infers, "must be convertible," and therefore it is not enough for Wordsworth to say that certain passages in great poetry are equally good as prose. He has to prove that all poetry would be equally good as prose and that all prose is convertible into poetry. This Coleridge thinks is impossible since metre is an essential ingredient of poetry. Metre is both a spontaneous and a voluntary process: natural and artificial. Coleridge explains it through Shakespeare's The Winter's Tale. The second argument is drawn from the effects of metre which acts "by the quick reciprocations of curiosity still gratified and still re-excited" though the particular moments of curiosity and gratification are too instantaneous to be discernible. Only the total effect is felt, like the accumulated effect of alcohol or a medicated Turkish bath. When metre is added to unsuitable material the effect is like that of stretching out one's foot in the dark on a staircase in anticipation of a step and finding that one has reached the landing. Coleridge complains that Wordsworth, in his Preface, does not consider metre in isolation but seems to comment on it in its connexion with other elements of poetry. Metre, like yeast, is worthless but gives a sparkle and vivacity to the elements with which it is combined.

On the function of metre Colerdige calls it "simply a stimulant of the attention' and the attention is to be stimulated 'because I am about to use a language different from that of prose. Besides, where the language is not such, how interesting soever the reflections are...the metre itself must often become feeble.'

Coleridge then invokes "all the causes elsewhere assigned, which render metre the proper form of poetry, and poetry imperfect and defective without metre." Poetry always implies passion, says Coleridge, quoting Wordsworth, and passion is "an excited state of the feelings and faculties", which calls for "a correspondent difference of language".

Coleridge then further argues that metre helps to effect this adjustment of the less poetical to the essentially poetical

parts of a composition and thus conduces to harmony, or unity. And lastly he appeals to the universal use of a different language for a poem from that of a prose work.

Word-Meanings and Explanatory Notes

The attempt is impracticable: Coleridge is continuing the discussion of Wordsworth's contention about 'a selection of the real language of men' in previous chapter.

In distant countries etc.: the first stanza of 'The Last of the Flock'(LB1798).

The sublime prayer and hymn of praise, which Milton...presents as a fair specimen of common extemporaneous (extempore) devotion: Shawcross remarks 'I cannot trace this reference in Milton's prose works,' and comes to the conclusion that Coleridge was 'probably thinking partly of the prayer of Adam and Eve (Paradise Lost V. 153) of the lines introducing which Professor Masson writes that they contain 'more than a hint of Milton's sympathy with the Puritans in their objections to Liturgies' – and partly of passages in the prose works, in which Milton states his reasons for that sympathy.' (with the Puritan dislike of liturgical or set prayers and preference for extempore ones)

The vision etc.: from Wordsworth's Excursion

Unless therefore the difference denied be that of the mere words: Coleridge speaks as if there were little or no question of Wordsworth having extended his denial of a difference not merely to words, but to all that we include under the term 'style'. But as a matter of fact there is not a single passage in the Preface which justifies such a conclusion. The assumption against which Wordsworth throughout protests is that poetry has, and must have, a different vocabulary from that of prose. And if this seems to us a small thing for him to insist on so strenuously, we must remember that the adoption of a specific vocabulary was the peculiar vice of the class of writers, with Pope the Pope of the 'Translation' – at their head, at whom Wordsworth is aiming in the Preface. It is true that Wordsworth has not insisted enough upon the differences which actually do exist; but this does not justify Coleridge's assumption. Probably Wordsworth took it for granted that nobody would credit him with denying that in other respects differences did and must exist between the style of poetry and prose – least of all, that Coleridge should do so. And there are private utterances of Coleridge on the subject, which if interpreted as illiberally as he himself has taken Wordsworth's statement in the Preface, would lay him open to the very criticisms to which he has subjected Wordsworth.

Truisms: platitudes, self-evident facts.

The true question must be etc.: Shawcross is of the view that Wordsworth does not, in the Preface, deny the differences for which Coleridge here contends.

And first from the origin of metre: in a letter to Sotheby Coleridge says that 'Metre itself implies a passion, and though I stated this to Wordsworth, and he has in some sort stated it in his Preface, yet he has not done justice to it

This balance of antagonists became organized into metre: The contrary forces are 'the workings of passion'(emotion) and 'spontaneous effort which strives to hold in check the workings of passion' This tension 'became organized into metre...by a supervening act of the will and judgement, consciously and for the foreseen purpose of pleasure'(which is the 'immediate' object of a poem, as Coleridge says in Chapter XIV.) Thus, there are two kinds of activity involved, one spontaneous (or unconscious), the other voluntary (deliberate, willed, conscious)

Again, this union can be manifested only in a frequency of forms and figures of speech...greater than would be desired or endured where the emotion is not voluntarily encouraged and kept up for the sake of the pleasure: Coleridge's point is that this union of unconscious and conscious mental activity, of spontaneous feeling and conscious control of it for the sake of giving pleasure, is shown in frequent metaphors and unusual turns of expression.

A previous and well understood, though tacit compact between the poet and his reader. Referring back to Chapter XIV we have Coleridge's statement that a poem's immediate aim is to give pleasure, so there is a contract between the poet and the reader, unwritten but understood, that he must give, and the reader must receive, pleasure.

The answer of Polixenes in The Winter's Tale, to Perdita's neglect of the streaked gily-flowers In IV iii, the famous scene of the sheep-shearers' festival, Perdita receives her guests with flowers appropriate to their ages In the play Polixenes, king of Bohemia, comes to spy on his son Florizel who has fallen in love with a shepherdess.

Perdita, who, in fact, is a princess and the daughter of his old friend Leontes, king of Sicily. Perdita, brought up by an old shepherd, and the mistress of his home, his wife being dead, has no autumnal flowers to suit the age of the stranger-guests, middle-aged men in the autumn of life. Polixens then asks Perdita why she does not grow carnations, autumn flowers(flowers that grow all the year round). She objects that they are 'bastards', because different varities can be created by cross-pollination. In cross-pollination the hand of man meddles with the processes of nature, and Perdita therefore thinks that streaked (multicoloured) carnations are the bastard offspring of man and plants. Polixenes explains, in the quoted passage, that 'The art itself is nature': that horticultural processes guided by man are not unnatural because nature herself is at work throughout. Similarly spontaneous passion generates a poem, and metre, though an artificial interposition, has nothing to do with the creation of the poem.

Poor Smart's distich: Christopher Smart (1722-71) is best remembered for his poem Song to David. He was a friend of Dr. Johnson's and latter became insane. A distich is a couplet.

Cadwallader: the last king of the Britons, and a Welshman, who reigned in the seventh century.

Tell me, thou son etc.: The couplet, misquoted here, is 'Thou valiant son of great Cadwallader, Hast thou a hare, or hast thou swallow'd her?'(Christopher Smart, To the Rev. Mr P).

Gaudy and technical ornament: Wordsworth referred to the 'gaudy and inane phraseology', or poetic diction, of the Augustans.

Would have been more delightful to me in prose: 'Coleridge fails to ask himself the question why would these poems delight me more in prose'(J.Shawcross). they are prosaic not because of their language but because their thoughts and images are dull. 'This error underlies much of Coleridge's criticism,'(J. Shawcross).

I write in metre etc.: But this explanation reduces metre to 'an accidental factor in poetry' and coincides with Wordsworth's view, which Coleridge sets out to rebut, namely, that metre is 'a superadded ornament'.

The simplest, and the most familiar things etc.: Altered from the description of Night-Mair in the Remorse. Remorse is a blank verse tragedy by Coleridge. The passage is from IV, i.

Thirdly, I deduce the position from all the causes elsewhere assigned, etc: Coleridge seems to refer to the distinguishing features of a poem indicated in Chapter XIV (i.e. its immediate end is pleasure, pleasure from the parts consistent with pleasure from the whole, etc.).

An intermedium of affinity: a medium between the substance of the lines and the metre imposed on it. There should be at least something quasi-poetical about the subject matter even if this is better suited to treatment in prose than metrical form; and this 'something' will be an intermedium, giving the subject matter an affinity (or relationship) with 'the superadded metre'.

Its proper pulse: its proper throb or tempo, excited and quick, or slow and sad or solemn.

But where there exists that degree of genius and talent... excitement: This is Coleridge's circumlocutory way of saying 'If the writer is a genuine poet...'

The very act of composition itself is ... an unusual state of ecitement, which of course justifies and demands a corresponding difference of language: Writing a poem does not require, I such cases, a source of passion, to begin with, but itself generates the required passion.

The wheels take fire etc.: A good example of vivid but homely imagery in Coleridge. A poet like Donne or Dryden has only to start writing and he generates poetical passion in himself. The swift motion of his thoughts throws off sparks of passion just as the friction between the wheels of a swift carriage and the road does.

I adduce the high spiritual instinct of the human being impelling us to seek unity by harmonious adjustment: Coleridge brings forward, as proof that the language of a poem must be different from that of prose, the instinctive urge, in human nature, to look for unity in diversity through adjustment of the various elements, or features, of the material dealt with. This is an important artistic principle – the inter-relating and integrating of the various components of the poetical composition (as, for example, in Paradise Lost). We are reminded of Chapter XIV where Coleridge refers to the interdependence of the parts of a poem and how they mutually support each other.

The imitative *arts* : Coleridge alludes to Aristotle's mimesis in his theory of art, mimesis, or imitation, meaning a generalized picture presented in a particular one. Poetry, painting, sculpture, are the mimetic arts.

The interfusion of the same throughout the radically different, or of the different throughout a base radically the same: Coleridge's philosophical fastidiousness makes him distinguish between the two ways in which unity in diversity manifests itself. Sometimes unrelated things are co-ordinated and become parts of the same entity. Sometimes

things of the same sort are shown to be different among themselves although they are commonly viewed as alike.
Videlicet: the full form of the common 'vide', meaning 'namely'.
The particular word smiling is hackneyed and ... not quite congruous with the common and material attribute of shining: Coleridge is over-scruplous about language here. We often speak of a sunny look or smile, e.g. a verse in Thomas Moore, the Irish lyrist:

As a beam on the face of the waters may glow,
While the tide runs in darkness and coldness below,
So the cheek may be tinged with a warm sunny smile
Though the heart be in coldness and darkness the while.

This adjunction of epithets... would be noticed as giving a poetic cast to a man's conversation: The first line of the sonnet by Gray, quoted in full in Wordsworth's Preface is 'In vain to me the smiling mornings shine'. The adjunction, or adjoining – standing together- of epithets is 'the smiling mornings shine'. 'Cast' means 'shape'
Fancied erasures: imagined deletions. Coleridge is thinking of a line of poets in the strict sense of the word, particularly epic poets, and of a line of dramatists writing in verse.
Reasons grounded in the essence of human nature: not theoretical, abstract reasons, but ones related to the way men essentially respond to poetry.
It conveys incongruous images: The sun is treated simultaneously as a person, a god (Phoebus Apollo) and as a mass of fire. It cannot, logically speaking, be both at the same time.
When the torch of ancient learning was re-kindled: this was at the time of the Renaissance when the interest in the classical(Greek and Latin) languages and literatures was revived.
Accredited machinery: supernatural beings belief in whom was authorized. Poets could not deal with the Christian supernatural world with a free hand.
So far sympathize with them: i.e. agree with the classical writers, the writers of ancient Greece and ancient Rome.
Petrarch(1304-74) creator of the sonnet, and a famous Italian lyrical poet.
Invidious: praising one thing by dispraising another.
I put my hat upon my head etc.: Dr. Johnson's parody of ballad poetry, quoted by Wordsworth disapprovingly in his Preface. Johnson was parodying Thomas Percy's The Hermit of Warkworth: a Northumberland Ballad. Wordsworth quoted the parody in the Preface in contrast to a stanza in Babes in the Wood.
An ape is not a Newton: quoted from the Preface.
The Civil Wars if *Daniel:* Samuel Daniel(1562-1619), a court poet of Shakespare's time, wrote Polybion, a history of England in verse, the longest poem in English literature. He wrote a sequence of sonnets, Delia. His Civil Wars, published in 1595, is a poem in about nine hundred eight-line stanzas, about the War of Roses, between the Lancastrians and the Yorkists.
By merely restoring one or two words to their proper places: Coleridge's footnotes illustrates this. For, 'I wish you a good morning, sir! Thank you, sir, and I wish you the same', one can have 'two blank-verse heroics': "To you a morning good, good sir! I wish," "You, sir! I thank: to you the same wish I."
Euphonic: musical.
Phantast: one who deals in fantasy (fancy).
The ultimate end of criticism is much more to establish the principles of writing than to furnish rules how to pass judgement on what has been written by others: This is one of those pearls of critical wisdom that drop from Coleridge's lips from time to time. Criticism, as a branch of literature, should theorize, and not be concerned with censure.
Wake: the festivities on the eve of an important church festival; a vigil.
If it have: in modern English 'if it has'.
The all in each: the general truth.
Genial discrimination: normal, healthy, cheerful critical power.
The two Suttons commencing with 'Introduction, heavenly maid! Descend!: Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, wife of the English ambassador to Turkey (the poet Pope's sometime friend and then his inveterate enemy), first brought the idea of inoculation (of giving protection to a person from small-pox by a mild attack of small pox, by inserting germs of cowpox into his system). The practice of imoculation, which is usually associated with the name of Dr. Edward Jenner was known, in theory, from the time of Lady Montagu, who brought it from Turkey. Daniel and Robert Sutton, about 1760, first published a poem on Lady Montagu's proposal of inoculation in The Gentleman's Magazine(October 1783).
Traduction: slander (here, 'perversion').
Theban Eagle: Pindar. The Eagle is the king of the birds, and the bird of Zeus, king of Gods. One of Pindar's odes chanted by Greek slaves in Thebes, induced Alexander the Great to spare the city, in his campaign of conquest.
The figures: metaphors, and other adornments of a poem.

Coleridge's Key Concepts
Characteristic of Poetic Language

Lyrical Ballads appeared as a joint venture of Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge in 1798 and expressed their disagreement with the neoclassical poetic theory. In 1800 Wordsworth appended a preface, now famous 'Preface to Lyrical Ballads', to Lyrical Ballads and there he attempted to liberate the idea of poetic diction from the shackles of neoclassical understanding of it. Coleridge found himself disagreeing with Wordsworth's contentions and after reading the published preface Coleridge discovered that he had radical differences with his friend about metre and poetic diction.

Coleridge's first objection is against the language taken from the mouth of men in real life. He says, "In any sense this rule is applicable only to certain classes of poetry, secondly that even to these classes it is not applicable, except in such a sense as hath never by any other (as far as I know or have read) been denied or doubted, and lastly that as far as, and in that degree in which it is practicable, yet as a rule it is useless, if not injurious, and therefore either need not, or ought not to be practised." The pleasure afforded by the choice of low and rustic life may be traced to three exciting causes. The first is the naturalness of things represented. The second is the naturalness of the treatment or representation elevated and marked by the poet's knowledge. The third cause may be the conscious feeling of superiority on the part of the reader awakened by the contrast presented to him. Coleridge, then, cites the examples of some of Wordsworth's poems like, 'The Brothers', 'Michael', 'Ruth', 'The Mad Mother', etc. in which figure persons by no means taken from low or rustic life. And the language and sentiments also of these persons are not connected with their occupations and abode. "The thoughts, feelings, language and manners of the shepherd-farmers in the vales of Cumberland and Westmoreland, as far as they are actually adopted in those poem, may be accounted for from causes, which will and do produce the same results in every state of life, whether in town or country." Independence of life and solid religious education from Bible or hymn book may be the principal causes for giving these shepherds "a more winning and commanding rhetoric than those that are learned." Negations are as much of obstacles to the formation of healthy feelings as sophistication and vicious society may be. Some special mental equipment is necessary for the improvement of the soul in life. "It is not every man that is likely to be improved by a country life or country labours. Education or original sensibility, or both, must pre-exist, if the changes, forms, and incidents of nature are to prove a sufficient stimulant. And where these are not sufficient, the mind contracts and hardens by want of stimulants, and the man becomes selfish, sensual, gross, and hard-hearted." Opinions would vary widely about the desirable influences of low and rustic life in and for itself. Swiss mountaineers, praised highly for their winning manners, cannot be cited as beneficiaries of rustic life because they are better educated and greater readers than people of the same rank in urban society. But to illiterate peasantry of North Wales the glories of nature are "pictures to the blind and music to the deaf." Coleridge objects to Wordsworth's introducing characters from low life as recommendation of equality among men, because it violates the existing state of association and thus substitutes truth for pleasure Coleridge gives an elaborate rebuttal on the point of low and rustic life being the source of the language of poetry for to him "here seems to be the point to which all lines of difference converge as to their source and centre." He has full faith in Aristotle's principle that "poetry as poetry is essentially ideal, that it avoids and exudes all accident, that its apparent individualities of rank, character or occupation must be representative of a class: not with such as one gifted individual might possibly possess, but such as from his situation it is most probable before hand that he would possess." Coleridge feels if his premises are right and deductions legitimate then "there can be no poetic medium between the swains of Theocritus and those of an imaginary golden age."

Coleridge observes that the characters of 'The Brothers', and 'Michael' have versimilitude and representative quality, but 'Harry Gill' and 'Idiot Boy' do not have characters who are real and native product of a "situation where the essential passions of the heart find a better soil, in which they can attain their maturity and speak a plainer and more emphatic language." The image of an ordinary morbid idiocy balanced by the folly of the mother only presents a laughable burlesque to the readers. 'Thorn' fares no better: it is an instance of bathos, a sudden fall from a height.

Then again a rustic's language purified of its provincialism and grossness, and consistent with rules of grammar will not differ from that of any other man of common sense however learned or refined. Of course the notions of the rustic may be fewer and more indiscriminate. The rustic with more imperfect faculties and lack of cultivation will convey only 'insulated facts' of his 'scanty experience or his traditional belief'. And the cultivated and "the educated man chiefly seeks to discover and express those connections of things, or those relative bearings of fact to fact, from which some more or less general law is deducible. For facts are valuable to a wise man, chiefly as they lead to the discovery of the indwelling law, which is the true being of things, the sole solution of their modes of existence and in the knowledge of which consists our dignity and our power."

Coleridge cannot admit that the rustic can communicate with the best objects of nature, and therefore his is the best language. "For first, if to communicate with an object implies such an acquaintance with it, as renders it capable of being discriminately reflected on, the distinct knowledge of an uneducated rustic would furnish a very scanty vocabulary. The few things, and modes of action, requisite for his bodily conveniences, would alone be expressed by a small number of confused general terms. Secondly, I deny that the words and combination of words derived from the objects, with which the rustic is familiar whether with distinct or confused knowledge, can be justly said to form the best part of language. It is more than probable, that many classes of the brute creation possess discriminating sounds, by which they can convey to each other notices of such objects as cover their food, shelter or safety. Yet we hesitate to call the aggregate of such sounds a language, otherwise than metaphorically." What then is the best language' Coleridge affirms that the best part of the human language is born when the human mind reflects upon its own acts "It is formed by a voluntary appropriation of fixed symbols to internal acts, to processes and results of imagination, the greater part of which have no place in the consciousness of uneducated man, though in civilized society, by imitation and passive remembrance of what they hear from their religious instructors or their superiors, the most uneducated share in the harvest which they neither sowed or reaped". Society it would be found that the peasants have imbibed large number of phrases of learned society from speeches of the clergy. The uncivilized tribes which are very much more in hourly communication with the best and beauteous forms and objects of nature than the peasants of Cumberland do not have facilities and phrases in their so-called language whereby even the simplest moral and intellectual processes can be communicated to them by our adroit and enthusiastic missionaries. Therefore it may be asserted that the language which Wordsworth attributes to rustics cannot be theirs any more than the style of Hooker, Bacon to Tom Brown or Sir Roger L'Estrange. If the peculiarity of each is omitted, the resultant style and language must be the same. "Further, that the poet who uses an illogical diction or a style fitted to excite only the low and changeable opleasure of wonder by means of groundless novelty, substitutes a language of folly and vanity, not for that of the rustic, but for that of good sense and natural feelings."

William Wordsworth had proposed to write in "a selection of the *real language* of man" – "the language of these men", "I propose to myself to imitate and as far as possible, to adopt the very language of men" (Preface to LB) Coleridge objects to the word "Real" for its equivocation. The language of every man differs from that of the other according to his knowledge, activity of his faculty and profundity and rapidity of his feelings. The language of every man is marked by its individualities, class, and universality. The language of Wordsworth's homeliest composition does have a marked difference with that of a common shepherd or peasant. Therefore Coleridge would like to substitute "ordinary" or "lingua communis" for "real". The language of every county and village differs according to the character and qualification of the clergyman or the existence or absence of schools or the circulation of weekly newspapers. "Anterior to cultivation the lingua communis of every country, as Dante has well observed, exists everywhere in parts, and no where as a whole." Withal, Wordsworth's case does not become more tenable by the phrase "in a state of excitement" for "the property of passion is not to create, but to set in increased activity." Coleridge therefore concludes that Wordsworth's "attempt is impracticable, and that, were it not impracticable, it would still be useless. For the very power of making the selection implies the previous possession of the language selected."

Coleridge then takes up the order and arrangement of words in Wordsworth's own poems and shows by various example that Wordsworth's rustic could not have placed words in the order in which the poet has done it because in the rustic 'there is a want of that prospectiveness of mind, that surview, which enables a man to foresee the whole of what

he is to convey, appertaining to any point, and by this means so to subordinate and arrange the different parts according to their relative importance, as to convey it at once, and as an organized whole." Coleridge is happy that a "mere theory though of his own workmanship" interferes very little with the practice of Wordsworth, a man of true genius, if ever there was one. A literal adherence to this theory would have erased at least two-thirds of the marked beauties of his poetry.

Coleridge then argues that as reading differs from talking, "prose itself at least in all argumentative and consecutive works differs and ought to differ from the language of conversation." "Unless, therefore, the difference denied be that of the mere words, as materials common to all styles of writing, and not of the style itself in the universally admitted sense of the term, it might be naturally presumed that there exist a still greater between the ordnance of poetic composition and that of prose from ordinary conversation." It may be said that the edifice of Westminister Abbey is architecturally different in style from that of St. Paul's though both of them were built with blocks identical form procured from the same quarry. Words used in poetry and prose may be and sometimes are the same, but their arrangement and order are different. Similarly there are passages which suit prose and not poetry and some suit poetry and not prose. In Wordsworth's argument Coleridge finds a tinge of sophism and says that the language of prose may sometimes be identical with that of poetry but not convertible. The real question should, according to Coleridge, be, "whether there are not modes of expression, a construction, and an order of sentences, which are in their fit and natural place in a serious prose composition, but would be disproportionate and heterogeneous in metrical poetry, and vice versa whether in the language of a serious poem there may not be an arrangement both of words and sentences, and a use and selection of (what are called) figures of speech, both as to their kind, their frequency, and their occasions, which on a subject of equal weight would be vicious and alien in correct and manly prose. I contend that in both cases this unfitness of each for the place of the other frequently will and ought to exist."

In Coleridge's view Wordsworth erroneously thought of metre as a superadded charm. Metre has its origin, according to Coleridge, in "the balance in mind effected by that spontaneous effort which strives to hold in check the workings of passion." There is a 'salutary antagonism' which has to be balanced and organized consciously into metre by an act of will and judgement for the sake of pleasure. Secondly by a conscious act these elements artificially should be formed into metre to provide a merger or delight and emotion in such a manner as to make discernible the volitional act. These two conditions must be united. Coleridge says that there must be "an interpenetration of passion and of will, of spontaneous impulse and of voluntary purpose." This union tends to produce a more picturesque language. This will be a marriage of " a gentler scyon to the widest stock" – of art to nature, which is mended by an art which itself is nature. Metre in its operation accentuates the attention and increases the sensitivity of general feelings. There is a continued excitement of surprise and gratification of curiosity and its re-excitement which in their totality wield a great influence. Coleridge adds, "As a medicated atmosphere, or as wine during animated conversation, they act powerfully, though themselves unnoticed."

Coleridge asserts that the metre is "the proper form of poetry, and poetry (is) imperfect and defective without metre." Coleridge further observes that "for any poetic purposes, metre... resembles...yeast, worthless or disagreeable by itself, but giving vivacity and spirit to the liquor with which it is proportionately combined." From the practice of the best poets of all countries and ages a final assertion can be made that "there may be, is, and ought to be an essential difference between the language of prose and of metrical composition." Coleridge finally rebuts Wordsworth saying, "I write in metre, because I am about to use a language different from that of prose."

Rene Wellek remarks: "Coleridge speaks of Poetry as an art of "articulate language" and attempts to determine its difference from other forms of discourse. He tries to distinguish it from science and morality in terms of its end and function. The immediate end of poetry is pleasure, "immediate" implying the lack of practical interest. "The poet must always aim at pleasure as his specific means"; he must not aim at the useful and good directly, but through pleasure aim at these only as an ultimate end. This end is, on occasion, defined as that of "cultivating and predisposing the heart of the reader," of "moralizing" the reader. In theory Coleridge holds firmly to this distinction, as he also engages himself in trying hard to strike a balance between truth and pleasure."

Imagination in Neoclassical Theory

In Neoclassical period the meaning of the term imagination is determined by its association with empirical philosophers like Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Hartley and others. These philosophers do not distinguish between Imagination and Fancy and attribute it a two-fold function 1) a mode of memory 2) the power by which originally distinct impressions are welded together to form images of things that have no existence in the sense. Imagination in this sense performed the function of fabrication in combining distinct sensations and mythological grotesques such as chimeras, satyrs etc. were accounted for through imagination. Neoclassical theory tended to look at Imagination as a faculty for combining and associating ideas – a mechanical power, 'aggregative and associative'. In the neoclassical period Imagination was not a central concept in literary theory. In the writings of Dryden, Pope, and Johnson the term had a limited significance. They approved of fancy so far it is controlled by their idea of 'judgement'.

In the poetic theory of the 18th century imagination was not a cardinal point. It was imitation of nature, by which was meant not 'dead nature' or still-life or out-door landscape but facts and ideas having a universal appeal or 'general nature', as it was often termed. Allied to the concept of imitation was the concept of imagination and fancy. Aristotleam idea of imitation were extensively borrowed by the neo-classicals. Dryden believes that the artist does not aim at a mere carbon copy, but at making "a beautiful resemblance of the whole." Dryden thinks that the artist adds something to the facts of nature or life. It is in the workmanship that imagination comes into play. But Dryden does not make distinction between imagination and fancy. "Imagination" says Dryden, "participates of reason", and where fiction is concerned 'reason suffers itself to be hoodwinked that it may better enjoy the pleasure of fiction."

Addison gave a limited meaning to Imagination and made it dependent on the sense of sight. "it is this sense which furnishes the imagination with its ideas, so that by the pleasure of imagination or fancy(which I shall use promiscuously) I here mean such as arise from visible objects, either when we call up their ideas into our minds by paintings, statues, descriptions or any the like occasion." Addison applies the term imagination to the perception of visible objects as well as to the secondary ideas which flow from them. "By the pleasures of imagination," he says, " I mean only such pleasures as arise originally from sight; and I divide these pleasures into two kinds: My design being first of all to discourse of those primary pleasures of imagination, which entirely proceed from such objects as are before our eyes, and in the next place to speak of those secondary pleasures of the imagination which flow from the ideas of the visible objects, when the objects are not actually before the eye, but are called up into our memories or formed into agreeable visions of things that are either absent or fictitious."

Burke recognises that the subject-matter of imagination is not confined to the representation of sensible objects, it includes much that comes "within the province of judgement which is improved by attention, and by the habit of reasoning." He raises the all important question of taste in art and is influenced to some extent by Longinus. Samuel Johnson showed little interest in the metaphysics of imagination or the new theory of creative imagination. Invention, imagination, and judgement are the three things a poet needs. In the 18th century imagination was taken to be the faculty of visualizing absent things. Johnson says: "Imagination selects ideas from the treasures of remembrance and produces novelty only by varied combinations." Imagination is accepted by Johnson as an important part of the poet's equipment, but by this term he merely meant the power of representation. The term 'Invention' comes closer to our modern meaning of imagination. The essence of poetry, he declares, is invention; such invention as by producing something unexpected, surprises and delights. Johnson, however, rejected the "luxury of vain imagination" or "idle sports of imagination", in other words imagination which was not informed or regulated by reason. He held that imagination had to be counter-balanced by knowledge and rational control. His disgust was primarily ethical as he thought of imagination as a "licentious and vagrant faculty unsusceptible of limitations and impatient of restraint."

Thus the men of the letters in 18th century used the two terms imagination and fancy promiscuously and thought of them as interchangeable. They, of course canvassed quite thoroughly about creative power known by various names such as wit, fancy, imagination, judgement, and invention, but imagination did not form a cardinal element in their theory of poetry. It had a limited significance and was considered dependable only when it was curbed by "judgement" The poet's work was that of an interpreter rather than that of a creator.

Romantics on the other claim for imagination a high pedestal. They consider Imagination to be a truly creative faculty – a shaping and ordering power, a modifying power which colours objects of sense with the mind's own light.

Imagination is a vital and organic faculty which permits the mind to see beneath the transitory surface of the material world – to see into the life of things and to perceive the intimate relationship between the perceiving mind and the object of its contemplation.

Romantics believe imagination as basic to poetry. Whereas neoclassical criticism tended to think of imagination as a faculty for combining and associating ideas, the Romantic poets and theorists are unanimous in claiming for it a much more exalted position. For them, the imagination is a truly creative faculty; rather than simply rearranging materials fed to it by the senses and the memory, the imagination is a shaping and ordering power, a 'modifying' power which colours objects of sense with the mind's own light.

Wordsworth & Coleridge

The French and American Revolutions stand in the political background of early romantic thinkers like Wordsworth and Coleridge. The aristocracies that had previously controlled Europe were falling, the middle class was growing, and power was increasingly falling to the common people. It makes perfect sense, then, that Wordsworth's poetry, and his criticism of poetry, should be aimed at the common man, rather than at educated aristocrats.

For Wordsworth and Coleridge both, this meant a turn away from elevated language and subject matter, and a turning toward spontaneity and emotion. Like *Longinus,* the Romantics believed that a poet was born with a Great Soul, but unlike him, they believed that ordinary language was the proper vehicle for the communication of that soul, for a poet was "a man speaking to men." For Wordsworth, this meant rural and pastoral language, for he believed that the most important knowledge came from communing with nature. For Coleridge, it simply meant the language spoken by most people at ordinary times.

Another major shift took place in what people considered the aim of poetry. Previous ages had considered poetry to exist in order to change people's behaviour. The Romantics threw that out the window. According to them, poetry existed purely as a form of expression, particularly the expression of intense emotion, hence Wordsworth's classic definition of poetry as "emotion recollected in tranquillity."

The last big chunk of neoclassicism to go out the window was the mechanistic model of composition. Appropriately, considering the emphasis on nature, the Romantics believed that a poem should contain (and present) and organic unity and balance, rather than one based on a mechanical model. The Romantics continued to use sonnets and elegies and other set forms, but they also wrote a lot in blank verse and even free verse, further breaking "the rules" as determined by the neoclassicists.

Coleridge's major contention with Wordsworth is over the questions of poetic diction and the appropriate subject matter for poetry, and the dispute is not so minor or arbitrary as it might first seem. Coleridge is critical of Wordsworth's view that at least at the moment when he is writing, the true language of poetry is the language of simple persons leading simple lives, the language of rustics, and that country people are the best subject for poetry because they exhibit the essential passions of the heart in a way that more sophisticated figures do not. Coleridge argues at some length that rustic diction is too limited for poetry and that country people as they actually exist lack the scope and refinement of character that can make them representative, rather than merely particular, figures. Coleridge claims that his bias is Aristotelian: he looks to poetry for the ideal, which Wordsworth, despite his doctrines, actually provides in his best work.

Overtly, *Coleridge's objective is to point out the gap between Wordsworth's aesthetic doctrines and his actual achievements.* But there are other stakes in the controversy as well. Hazlitt, in his brilliant lecture on his poetic contemporaries, had associated Romantic poetry with the French Revolution: it was a levelling poetry demanding that "all was to be natural and new" and that "nothing that was established was to be tolerated". Coleridge's turn against simplicity in poetic diction and subject matter should probably be understood as a turn against the populist allegiances of early Romantic poetry, his own included. The argument with Wordsworth's "Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*," then, qualifies as an effort to change the political image of Romanticism. For if Romantic art really had little to do with the people per se, then it could not be associated with the Revolution, or with threats to the established order.

Conception of an Ideal Poet

"The poet, described in *ideal* perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other, according to their relative worth and dignity. He diffuses a tone, and spirit of unity, that blends, and (as it were) fuses, each into each, by that synthetic and magical power, to which we have exclusively appropriated the name of imagination. This power, first put in action by the will and understanding, and retained under their irremissive, though gentle and unnoticed, controul *(laxis effertur habenis)* reveals itself in the balance or reconcilation of opposite or discordant qualities: of sameness with difference; of the general, with the concrete: the idea with the image; the individual , with the representative; the sense of novelty and freshness, with old and familiar objects: a more than usual state of emotion, with more than usual order; judgement ever awake and steady self-possession, with enthusiasm and feeling profound or vehement; and while it blends and harmonizes the natural and the artificial, still subordinates art to nature; the manner to the matter; and our admiration of the poet to our sympathy with the poetry." (*Biographia Literaria, vol. 2, chapter 14*)

"No man was ever yet a great poet, without being at the same time a profound philosopher".

Poem Distinguished from a Work of Science

A poem differs from a work of scientific prose in having as its immediate object pleasure and not truth, and it differs from other kinds of writing which have pleasure and not truth as their immediate object by the fact that in a poem the pleasure we take from the whole work is comparable with and even led up to by the pleasure we take in each component part.

Concept of a Legitimate Poem

We can call anything in rhyme or in meter or in both a poem, but a legitimate poem is a composition in which the rhyme and the meter bear an organic relation to the total work.

"But if the definition sought for be that of a *legitimate* poem, I answer, it must be one, the parts of which mutually support and explain each other; all in their proportion harmonizing with, and supporting the purpose and known influences of metrical arrangement." (*Biographia Literaria*, vol. 2, chapter 14)

Poet

Coleridge does not distinguish between poet and his poetry. He at times tries to reduce the problem of defining poetry to that of describing the poet. He says that "the most general and distinctive character of a poem originates in the poetic genius itself" and that a just definition of poetry is possible "only so far as the distinction still results from the poetic genius, which sustains and modifies the emotions, thoughts, and vivid representations of a poem by the energy without the effort of the poet's own mind."

W.W is praised for being a most original poet because "he is himself". He calls W.W. – "the only man who has effected a compleat and constant synthesis of Thought and Feeeling and combined them with poetic forms, with the music of pleasurable passion and with imagination or the modifying power in that highest sense of the word in which I have ventured to oppose it to Fancy, or the *aggregating power* – in that sense in which it is a dim Analogue of Creation, not all that we can believe but all that we can conceive of creation." (Letter to Sharp)

"The power (which belongs only to a great poet) of so carrying on the Eye of the Reader as to make him almost lose the consciousness of words – to make him see everything - & this without exciting any painful or laborious attention, without any *anatomy* of description, (a fault not uncommon in descriptive poetry) but with the sweetness & easy movement of natrure - ." (Coleridge's Notebooks)

Poetry

"A poem contains the same elements as a prose composition; the difference therefore must consist in a different combination of them, in consequence of a different object being proposed. According to the difference of the object will be the difference of the combination. It is possible, that the object may be merely to facilitate the recollection of

any given facts or observations by artificial arrangement; and the composition will be a poem, merely because it is distinguished from prose by metre, or by rhyme, or by both conjointly. The reader should be carried forward, not merely or chiefly by the mechanical impulse of curiosity, or by a restless desire to arrive at the final solution; but by the pleasureable activity of mind excited by the attractions of the journey itself." "poetry of the highest kind may exist without metre, and even without the contradistringuishing objects of a poem.whatever specific import we attach to the word, Poetry, there will be found involved in it, as a necessary consequence, that a poem of any length neither can be, nor ought to be, all poetry. a peculiar property of poetry. And this again can be no other than the property of exciting a more continuous and equal attention than the language of prose aims at, whether colloquial or written."

What is poetry?

In Coleridge's argument a definition of poetry turns into a description of the poet which in turn becomes a discussion of Imagination. Coleridge extends the term "poetry" to all the arts and even to all human creativity. Rene Wellek says that in Coleridge's cheme of things poetry is "an all-inclusive, all conquering, all-absorbing term". Poetry for Coleridge is a wider category than that of a "poem"; that is, poetry is a kind of activity, which can be engaged in by painters or philosophers or scientists and is not confined to those who employ metrical language, or even to those who employ language of any kind. Poetry, in this larger sense, brings 'the whole soul of man" into activity, with each faculty playing its proper part according to its "relative worth and dignity." This takes place whenever "secondary imagination" comes into operation. We can only understand what poetry in this large sense really is, if we appreciate the way in which the human faculties are employed together in its production. Coleridge defines poetry through an account of how the poet works: the poet works through the exercise of imagination.

Wellek suggests that "usually Coleridge speaks of poetry as an art of 'articulate language' and attempts to determine its differentia from other forms of discourse. He tries to distinguish it from science and morality in terms of its end and function."

Coleridge "poetry" is a wider category than "poem" and is to be explained in terms of the way the imagination functions.

"—is so nearly the same question with, what is a poet?—that the answer to the one is involved in the solution of the other. For it is a distinction resulting from the poetic genius itself, which sustains and modifies the images, thoughts, and emotions of the poet's own mind."

"No man was ever yet a great poet, without being at the same time a profound philosopher. For poetry is the blossom and the fragrancy of all human knowledge, human thoughts, human passions, emotions, language."

True genius

Colredige made a distinction between the terms "genius" and "talent". He considered the qualities of intellect of individuals and countries under four kinds – genius, talent, sense and cleverness. By genius he means the faculty which by new ideas adds something to the accumulated fund of human knowledge and power. He defines genius as "originality in intellectual construction, the moral accompaniment and actuating principle of which consists, perhaps, in the carrying on of the freshness and feelings of childhood into the powers of manhood." The character of the genius is to endow the strength of man with the simplicity and wonder of a child. It apparels the old and the stale and the familiar in a new light and represents them in such a manner as to evoke in the minds of others a freshness and intensity of sensation and most "modest questionings of a self-discovered and intelligent ignorance". The working of genius is described by citing Burns' description of snow-fall upon water:

The snow-fall in the river,
A moment white-then melts forever!

It "produces the strongest impressions of novelty, while it rescues the stalest and most admitted truths from the impotence caused by the very circumstances of their universal admission." Genius resurrects, glorifies, and refreshes the most awful and mysterious truths of universal interests which have lost all their force and beauty and lie "bedridden in the dormitory of the soul, side by side with the most despised and exploded errors."

Genius is an innate celestial endowment. In genius the means and ends are identical as in morality and religion, but the

same is not true of talent. The man of genius often has a predominance of impulse over his motive and may be hostile to prudence and throw it to the winds. His virtue is without a guide or guardian and his benevolence is often squandered away thoughtlessly. Genius has a desultoriness, extremes and exhaustion and often ends in chagrin and madness. Genius flows like a sacred river in the unknown, impenetrable, dynamic depths of the unconscious within the two banks of honesty and purity. All great and immortal literature and art grows out of these deeps of unconscious genius. In Colredige's words, "to make the external internal, the internal external, to make nature thought and thought nature, - that is the mystery of genius in the fine arts. Dare I add that genius must act on the feeling, that body is but a striving to become mind- that is the mind in its essence... in every work of art there is a reconcilement of the external with the internal; the conscious is so impressed on the unconscious as to appear in it ... he who combines the two is the man of genius; and for that reason he must partake of both. Hence there is in genius itself an unconscious activity, nay that is the genius in the man of genius."

Genius is the vehicle for the expression of creative nature. It is inscrutable and immune from rules imposed from without. It creates works for which there exist no prototypes. The performance of genius is above judgement; it does not abide questionings, it is free and unshackled like the mountain winds. The work of genius are always unconventional, unpremeditated, involuntary, impulsive, and instinctive and brook no interference. Genius acts under its own laws. Genius is its own light and evidence as truth is. It has an innate ability to distinguish the genuine from the spurious, the pure from the meretricious, the durable and immortal from the fashionable and transitory.

Coleridge declared that the divinity of genius should be helped by art, and that the superior powers work hand in hand with the inferior ones. "Genius must have talent as its complement and implement, just as, in like manner, imagination must have fancy. In fact the higher intellectual powers can only act through a corresponding energy of the lower." He endeavoured to discover the sources of genius from his study of Shakespare's early works. He found the manifestation of genius in 1) the sense of musical delight, 2) objectivity and aloofness in the choice and treatment of the subject-matter, 3) the shaping and modifying power, and 4) the depth and energy of thought. The first is described by Coleridge in the following words: "the first and most obvious excellence is the perfect sweetness of the versification; its adaptation to the subject; and the power displayed in varying the march of the words without passing into a loftier and more majestic rhythm than was demanded by the thoughts, or permitted by the propriety of preserving a sense of melody predominant. The delight in richness and sweetness of sound, even to a faulty excess, if it be evidently original, and not the result of an easily imitable mechanism, I regard as a highly favourable promise in the compositions of a young man." Coleridge further adds: "The man that hath not music in his soul can indeed never be a genuine poet. But the sense of musical delight, with the power of producing it, is a gift of imagination; and this together with the power of reducing multitude into unity of effect, and modifying a series of thoughts by some one predominant thought or feeling, may be cultivated and improved, but can never be learned. It is in these that "poeta nascitur non fit."

The second "promise of genius is the choice of subjects very remote from the private interests and circumstances of the writer himself."

Thirdly, "Images ... become proofs of original genius only as far as they are modified by a predominant passion, or by associated thoughts or images awakened by that passion; or when they have the effect of reducing multitude to unity, or succession to an instant; or lastly, when a human and intellectual life is transferred to them from the poet's own spirit..." Coleridge observes that the "genius of the highest kind implies an unusual intensity of the modifying power which detached from the discriminating power, might conjure a platted straw into a royal diadem; but it would be at least as true that great genius is most alien from madness- yet, divided from it by an impassable mountain." Genius brings into sharp focus the obscure and dormant quality of an object. "Like the moisture or the polish on a pebble, genius neither distorts nor false-colours it objects, but on the contrary brings out many a vein and many a tint, which escape the eye of common observation, thus raising to the rank of gems what had been often kicked away by the hurrying foot of the traveller on the dusty high road of custom." A genius adds "a dignity and a passion to the objects which he presents."

Fourth feature is depth, and energy of thought. Genius is a supernatural afflatus, beyond explanation and comprehension. It can snatch and create " a grace beyond the reach of art" which a "master hand alone can reach." Genius is inspiration and has no reflection or conscious purpose. It is like an almighty god within – "the beautiful and beauty-

making power... cloud at once and shower." It is creative and self-sufficient power; vital and indwelling power – unifying, idealizing and reconciling like the esemplastic imagination.

To Coleridge, the archetype of all geniuses was Shakespeare, in whose work he found what he took to be the four "characteristics of poetic genius in general." Shakespeare provides the "sense of musical delight"; exhibits the power of annulling his own identity and entering into the minds and spirits of others; modifies all poetic perceptions by submitting them to one or another "predominant passion," thus giving his imagery "a human and intellectual life"; and exhibits "depth and energy of thought." For all of its variety, Shakespeare's mind is also a splendid unity: "He becomes all things, yet for ever remaining himself."

Coleridge believed (rather surprisingly, perhaps) that Wordsworth's poetry lacked empathy: Wordsworth can feel for others but not with them. But Wordsworth's virtues are many: his poems possess an "austere purity of language," a purity proven by the fact that they will not suffer paraphrase "without injury to the meaning." His poetic sentiments are fresh and are gleaned not chiefly from reading but from sane observation of nature.

"Good Sense is the Body of poetic genius, Fancy its Drapery, Motion its Life, and Imagination the Soul that is everywhere, and in each; and forms all into one graceful and intelligent whole."

Organic Form

The general effect of the organic conception has been to move away from narrow classicism in the direction of what may be named romanticism. Through their use in literary criticism organic concepts have gained wide currency in modern writing of all kinds. The great representative of organicism in England, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, speaks in The Friend (1818) of "the Aristotelian maxim, with respect to all just reasoning, that the whole is of necessity prior to its parts" (Part II, Essay 10). More specifically in his Philosophical Lectures (1819) he enjoins: "Depend on it, whatever is truly organic and living, the whole is prior to the parts." It is the a priori of the whole that makes its unity intrinsic, as opposed to the extrinsic aggregation of parts. To quote Coleridge again, "the distinction, or rather the essential difference, betwixt the shaping skill of mechanical talent, and the creative, productive life-power of inspired genius; in the former, each part separately conceived and then by succeeding act put together." The principle of organic form is a vital element of romanticism and Coleridge's theory of imagination. Coleridge's thought had an impress of Schelling's lecture "On the Relation of Plastic Arts to Nature." "The principle of organic form, the specifically romantic principle as I shall call it, rests on one of the most fundamental distinctions known to philosophy – variously expressed as the distinction between essence and existence, universals and particulars, natura naturans and natura naturata." It is only through art that man, "a mere specimen of natura naturata" becomes aware of natura naturans. Art links the soul with nature and essence with existence. It gives a body to the nature of being. It does not merely imitate the existing phenomena: it is the eternally creative elemental power producing all things out of itself.

Meanwhile the brothers Schlegel had carried the concept of organic form into literary criticism. In August Schlegel's Lectures of 1801 organic concepts prevail, as well as in the more famous Vienna lectures on the drama (1810). There he gave the final blow to the neo-classical depreciation of Shakespeare, whose tragedies, being devoid of the classical dramatic unities, were claimed to be without form. But the unities, he showed, are a purely mechanical form, applied externally to a subject; while real art possesses organic form which is inborn and develops from within, producing an outward arrangement dictated by the nature of the subject. This was immediately taken up by Coleridge in his English lectures, and became the foundation of a new, positive interpretation of Shakespearean tragedy—an interpretation which has borne fruit ever since. Coleridge is the main representative of organicism in English criticism. In his most formal definition of Beauty he started from Plotinus: "the indivisible unity which appears in the many" (Enneads, I. VI. 3) and then stated that "the sense of beauty consists in the simultaneous intuition of the relation of parts, each to each, and of all to the whole" ("On the Principles of Genial Criticism Concerning the Fine Arts," III [1814]). "Unity in multiplicity" is Coleridge's favorite aesthetic formula, which he repeats in many guises ("unity in multeity," il più nell'uno, etc.). In his definition of the Imagination, this unity becomes a unity of disparates, or even of contraries, thus converging into another speculative doctrine dear to the idealists: the unity of opposites. It may even be suggested that this unity is the only one close enough to act as the unifying power of the Imagination, the "esemplastic" power of which Coleridge theorized.

Coleridge's term "esemplastic" was based on Schellling's "bildenden" – from "bilden" meaning to form, to shape, to fashion. Creative power or esemplastic power shows itself in practical activity. The Romantics always believed that form springs out of the intuitive experience of the artist. Form is an organic event, and is realized in the intuition when the artist breaks the outer crust of appearances and delves deeper into the world of essence. This form, which is the unique medium of expression has two possible extremes of its being. Coleridge makes a distinction between "form as proceeding" and "shape as superinduced." The latter, a ready-made container having a prior existence, imprisons or strangles the essence of the thing and the former is its "self witnessing and self-effected sphere of agency." The shape which is superinduced is the mechanical form, belonging to the realm of existence and existing independently as an unalterable pattern. Such a pattern is irrelevant to artistic expression and acts only as an ugly impediment to its natural spontaneity. Contrasted with this is the "form as proceeding", which is an internal, intuitive, and spontaneous growth and is, therefore, an organic form. Form grows out of the spirit it embodies, and only the genius of the successful artist knows the secret of abstracting form out of the spirit of essence. Schelling's words are apt, "form cannot exist without essence... essence certainly outgrows form... ; only by the consummation of form can form be destroyed, and this, of course, is the final goal of art in the characteristic."

The organic form is never fixed, nor finite, nor final. It is a perpetual progression, a constantly growing and developing entity. Coleridge observes that " the fullness of nature is without character", but it is "the object of art to give the whole ad hominem; hence each step of nature hath its ideal, and hence the possibility of a climax up to the perfect form of a harmonised chaos." The product of a harmonised chaos is the perfect form, which is the object and ideal of the poetic method. Organic form always struggles towards perfection and unity. It subordinates and controls and conquers the dissenting elements, details, and parts of a whole. It is not accumulation but harmony. It fixes the parts to their proper places and contexts, subordinating and harmonising them to the spirit and character of the whole. Imagination is the constitutive of the entire creative activity; the organic form is regulative of the actual expression or composition. The entire theory of imagination of Coleridge is essentially an organic theory. Coleridge was quite dissatisfied with the current and contemporary connotation of the term "Imagination" and added the epithet "esemplastic" to it to make it a plastic and shaping power – a coadunating idealizing and beautifying power.

The only difference between Schelling and Coleridge is that while Schelling talks of impersonal forces and abstract form, Coleridge introduces the human dimension everywhere because in his view forms are only significant when they are related to human beings. The whole purpose is teleological. The aim of the art is to give the whole ad hominem. Out of the chaos of perception art creates harmony and organic form. In the emotion of the artist resides the form. It is born out of the apprehension of the external nature or internal states of mind and expresses itself through a symbol. There cannot be a ready-made formula for expressing this apprehension for such an imposition of a generalized shape, emotion or intuition may ultimately produce an artificial form and insincere feeling.

Organic form presents a highly suggestive expression giving us glimpses of the reality. The artist conveys his meaning through symbols. The perfection of the organic form is determined by the world of symbols. The idea gives birth to organic form. The idea is the creative imagination and the "indwelling power", and the soul and source of expression. Both the content and the form are evolved from imagination and become one through it. Imagination in its self-exposition evolves itself as organic form. Such a form is not superimposed from without but springs out of the original indwelling power. Both content and form realize their identity in the perfection of the organic form.

The concept of organic unity raises some basic questions: (1) Is it possible to divide an organic work of art into parts? (2) If it is possible, is it necessary so to divide it? What purpose is served by the division? (3) If it is both possible and necessary to divide, what procedure should be followed in this division? How do we divide the work into parts that are vital and not artificial? The first question implies the more general problem of the divisibility of any unit, which has been debated by several philosophers. Into this debate we cannot enter here, but we indicate that there is such a problem. Assuming (1) that the work admits of division, we ask: (2) What purpose is achieved by doing so? Precisely to show the necessary unity of the whole by observing the relation of the parts to each other and to the whole.

The problem of form is inextricably linked with Coleridge's theories regarding the universal, the idea, and the symbol. Only the true form makes organic progression possible which in its turn transforms multeity into unity, or

chaos into beauty. The form that proceeds directly and intrinsically from this multeity is the organic form. The exterior of this form becomes, "the physiognomy of the being within, its true image reflected and thrown out from the concave mirror." When imaginative activity in its self-exposition appears with a determinate character, its form becomes organic to what is revealed. The organic form is related to human consciousness which with its help brings unity and harmony to the chaos of perception. Yet the organic form cannot be called stable. "the organic form is innate; it shapes as it develops itself from within, and the fullness of its development is one and the same with the perfection of its outward form. Such as the life is, such is the form." Coleridge means to say that the same work of art viewed from two different points appears as content as well as form. The two are not inseparable. They are two aspects of the same whole: they are one and the same. It is in this light that Coleridge asserts that "Poetry is the regulative idea of all fine arts." Wherever there is organic form embodying a content, there is the spirit of poetry. Poetry is opposed to science for science has understanding but not the organic form. Metre is an indispensable aspect of the organic form which results from method and good sense.

The differentiating quality of a poem is its special kind of form. A term used by Samuel Taylor Coleridge to describe the form that results when imagination — a superior mental faculty that "dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to recreate" — generates a work of art. According to Coleridge, organic form "is innate; it shapes as it develops from within, and the fullness of its development is one and the same with the perfection of its outward form." The development of a poem, then, is seen to be analogous with the growth of a plant, whose evolutionary energy is drawn from within until, finally, it achieves organic unity or perfect form.

a work of art may be compared to a living organism, so that the relation between the parts of a work is neither arbitrary nor factitious, but as close and intimate as that between the organs of a living body. The classic formula for this relation is double: (1) the parts of the work are in keeping with each other and with the whole, and (2) alteration of a part will bring with it the alteration of the whole. By means of this formula the closest unity between the parts of a work of art is predicated or, alternatively, the formula provides the closest way of conceiving aesthetic unity.

Organicism may also be embodied in the concept of Organic Form in contrast to Mechanical Form: the latter is imposed from the outside on something which is alien to it, while the former develops spontaneously "from within," i.e., from the subject matter itself and not from external rules or prescribed models, and becomes its appropriate conformation. Sometimes organic form has been termed "inner Form", in contrast to external or mechanical form, the latter being an attempt to fashion mechanically a composition from the outside.

Form

Form lies at the heart of Being. Similarly, in considering the nature of consciousness, Coleridge claims that "self-consciousness [. . .] is the Form and indispensable Mark of [. . .] Individuality." He goes on to comment: "Only [. . .] be aware of the full import of "Form" as here applied—Consciousness is not an impressed Shape, as the Seal on the wax, or as the Pyriformity on a Marble Pear—nor can it be compared even to the characteristic Type, or distinctive Shape, resulting from the formative power of Life, in the natural fruit, or in each animal. No! It is Form, as the correlative of Essence—distinct but even in thought inseparable, and co-inherent". (Notebooks 4:5377)

Form, then, is somehow related to consciousness, which in turn is the "correlative of Essence" (or Being).

Form is clearly fundamental in Coleridge's system. Coleridge is consistent, and from very early on, in his view that a form is not the same as a "mould" (Notebooks 1:1433; August 1803), for while he speaks in "Dejection: An Ode" of "outward forms," he is careful to emphasize there that the "passion and the life" are "within" (45-46). Similarly, in Notebooks 2:2444 (February 1805) Coleridge distinguishes between form ab intra and form ab extra, a distinction reflected in Notebooks 2:2453, which speaks of "the spirit not the [outer] form."

But this talk of "form ab intra" is still not wholly clear, for it does not fully characterise the relation between the inner and the outer spheres. One way to do so is in terms of limitation. In Notebooks 1:1561 (October 1803), Coleridge describes form as "by its very essence limited—determinate—definite," a view which at first sight seems to reduce form to a product of deeper forces which limit one another. This either echoes or anticipates Schelling's view that the

existence of the self and of the world can only be accounted for in terms of the limitation of a primary, outward-looking act by a second, equal and opposite, inward-looking act, and may derive more generally from neoplatonic sources like Proclus, who identifies the limiting bound as "the form and morphe" of the power behind the act of generation (Proclus 196).[8] Notebooks 2:2402 (January 1805) continues in an even more Schellingian mode, claiming that forms are "limited things"—or indeed that form "[exerts] its main agency [. . .] in individualizing the Thing, making it this, & that."

Thus where Coleridge often later distinguishes between forma formans (the inner principle) and forma formata (the outward form), he is careful (in the immediately preceding quotations, for instance) to avoid thinking of the inner principle as formless. Both inner and outer are formal reflections of one another, and in neither case can their formalness be removed.

Notebooks 2:2223 reads: "There is in Form (says Harrington) something which is not elementary but divine. The contemplation of Form is astonishing to Man and has a kind of Trouble or Impulse accompanying it, which exalts his Soul to God. As the Form of a Man is the Image of God, so [. . .]."

And in Notebooks 4:4818 : "form, a shape, or figure must all things have, and to remove all shape from a thing is the same as to annihilate it. But still it is not the Shape [i.e. form ab extra] that brings forth the Being, but it is the Being that in all cases assumes a Shape, as the condition of its existence."

Critics tend to view Coleridge's claims about form merely as rhetorical tropes, moments in inherently unstable texts which are licensed, if at all, by the thought that Coleridge's universe is a "symbolic" one and that expressions like "form" and "organic form" belong within the broader valence of that term. Moreover, criticism in the last thirty years has tended to focus on "symbol" and has wanted to co-opt Coleridge in one way or another within a more contemporary and linguistic understanding. This has perhaps preserved for Coleridge at least a nominal place in the critical canon at a time when Coleridge's broader aesthetic concepts, like organicism and imagination, have lost favour.

Form is the single most important concept in Coleridge's thinking. But the broader problem is that Coleridge only rarely explains his concept of form, which is perhaps why its central place in his thought has not been fully realised.

Primary Imagination

In Biographia Literaria Coleridge defines two kinds of imagination in addition to fancy. The appearance of primary and secondary imagination in Coleridge's Biographia is problematical. Though he announces his intention to find out the 'seminal principle' of Wordsworth's imagination-fancy distinction, no mention was made of a further division. Critics of the view that the problem of unsubstantiated definitions is due the intrusion of the famous letter from "a friend" in Chapter XIII. Still others believe that the seeds of distinction are present earlier in Chapter VII where Coleridge speaks of imagination in philosophical terms, and then contrasts it with imagination as applied to poetry. The primary-secondary distinction is made explicit in Chapter XIII.

The primary imagination is the philosophic imagination of Coleridge available in earlier chapters. Primary imagination is symbolically expressed as the tertium aliquid, both finite and infinite which keeps separate yet interpenetrates the two forces of infinite opposition; it makes meaning possible. It is the essence of meaning. Less metaphorically expressed, primary imagination is the absolute self-consciousness which is God, human self-consciousness received from God, and the principle upon which all knowledge and meaning is founded. He defines primary imagination: "The Primary imagination I hold to be the living Power and prime Agent of all human Perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM"(Ch.XIII).

In Coleridge's definition of the primary imagination there is a certain oracular sublimity which many people may be inclined to dismiss as metaphysical babble. But it contains a weight of thought; indeed a whole philosophy lies beneath each phrase. Coleridge is here summarizing the great struggle and victory of his life – his triumph over the old traditions of Locke and Hartley, which had assumed that the mind in perception was wholly passive, 'a lazy looker-on on an external world'. After having over-thrown the Associationistic theory of the mind Colerdige now replaces it with Plotininan doctrine that the mind is essentially active and creative. The mind, according to Coleridge, is not

dormant but operates very actively in the act of perception. Not by passive reception but by its own energy and under its own forms the mind knows its objects. In fact it not only knows objects as objects, but knows itself in the objects. Coleridge says:"If the mind be not passive, if it be indeed made in God's image, and that too, in the sublimest sense, the Image of the Creator, there is ground for suspicion that any system built on the passiveness of the mind must be false as a system."

Primary imagination is the main faculty of all human perception in everyday life. To use Basil Willey's words, "in the commonest everyday acts of perception we are making our own world. We make it, indeed, not ex nihilo, but out of the influxes proceeding from Nature, or as Coleridge preferred to say, 'the infinite I am'. Whatever we perceive is what we have made in response to these stimuli; perception is an activity of the mind, not a merely mechanical registering of impressions." The "infinite I am" – that is God – is eternally transmitting infinitely various messages which the finite mind of the ordinary man catches and decodes into meaning. The "Infinite I am" conceives, the finite mind of the man perceives. God creates; the poet recreates. The normal man beholds the external world through the primary imagination. The primary imagination is normal perception that produces the usual world of senses,

That inanimate cold world allowed
To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,

The world of motor-buses, beef-steaks, and acquaintances, the framework of things and events within which we maintain our everyday existence, the world of routine satisfaction of our minimum exigencies.

The primary imagination is thus normal perception producing the usual world of the senses for the common man who is more concerned with the problems of everyday existence than with the higher values of life. Coleridge once observed: "That which we find in ourselves is gradu mutato the substance and the life of all our knowledge. Without this latent presence of the "I am" all modes of existence in the external world would fit before us as coloured shadows". The "I am" in his opinion is the same as spirit, self, self-consciousness. The primary imagination is present in the most elementary acts of perception in daily life. It is that form of the creative power which gives individuality to the rational insight. The individuality it offers to universals gives them a value too. Thus primary imagination repeats the eternal act of creation. It is creative in the sense that it makes the external world visible to the self. Through primary imagination we exercise our powers unconsciously. It is called "the living power and prime agent of all human perception" because without it no perception is possible. All other mental activities flow from the primary imagination which is the basic condition of the world of experience. Primary imagination is constructive; we have will and choice here. It bridges the gap between the perceptual and conceptual worlds.

Primary imagination points to the origin of self-consciousness. The unconscious spirit merely exists. It fails to recognize opposites; it fails to see itself either as its own subject or object. In order for the spirit to become self-conscious it must recognise itself as both, for subject and object logically presuppose each other. Thus in the move from unconscious to self-consciousness, there is a movement from identity of subject and object to a recognition of antithesis. Self-consciousness for Coleridge is by its nature antithetical. The movement of self-consciousness requires an act of free will. By this act, the spirit "dissolves" the identity of the subject and object which formerly reigned, becomes conscious of both subject and object within itself, and finally reconciles them in self-consciousness. Primary imagination, then, is an act of free will that dissolves identity, recognizes opposite and discordant qualities, and reconciles them as a necessary precondition for all perception and knowledge. It is the nature of God and the essential nature of humans. Primary imagination is a self-duplicating power, as our self-consciousness is the product of God's duplication. Our reconciliation of finite and infinite is essential: "in the existence, in the reconciliating, and the recurrence of this contradiction consists the process and mystery of production and life" (Chapter VIII).

Primary imagination thus represents the most basic kind of reconciliation of opposites that underlies all others. Coleridge conceives of primary imagination when he locates contradiction to be inherently present in philosophical systems. The primary imagination gives a form, a shape, an individuality to the varied impressions. It elevates the "word" into "thing", and destroys the old-antithesis, the old dualism between the two. In the activity of fancy the images are unrelated and have no necessary origination from the poetic imagination. They exist only at the level of the primary imagination. Thus in a way fancy also belongs to the primary imagination.

Secondary Imagination

The primary imagination of God duplicates itself in the self-consciousness of the individual. How, then, does the individual self-consciousness duplicates itself, as it must if it partially shares the creative power of God? To account for this, Coleridge developed his theory of secondary imagination:

"The primary Imagination I hold to be the living power and prime agent of all human perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM. The secondary Imagination I consider as an echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the kind of its agency, and differing only in degree, and in the mode of its operation. It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to recreate; or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still at all events it struggles to idealize and to unify. It is essentially vital, even as all objects (as objects) are essentially fixed and dead."(Chapter XIII)

Coleridge understands perception of the common man and that of the artist as different. Artist's imagination is secondary or the esemplastic imagination which is a "dissolvement of the utilitarian world of the primary, and a recreation at a level of contemplative interest; it is always a struggle to 'idealize and unify'" Coleridge's definition of the secondary imagination implies a reconciliation of opposites which is one of his fundamental contribution to critical theory. His theory of imagination hinges on his theory of the act of knowledge or of consciousness, or as he prefers to call it "the coincidence or coalescence of an object with a subject." The understanding of these two terms and their coalescence is absolutely essential to deal with his theory of imagination. For him "All knowledge rests on the coincidence of an object with a subject... For we can know that only which is True: and the truth is universally placed in the coincidence of the thought with the thing, of the representation with the object represented."

It is the chief characteristic of secondary imagination to achieve the miraculous and break down the barriers between the matter and the mind. "To make the external internal, the internal external, to make nature thought, and thought nature – this is the mystery of genius in fine art. Dare I add that genius must act in the feeling, that body is but a striving to become mind – that it is mind in its essence".

The secondary imagination does not work involuntarily but is dependent on the human will. With the active cooperation of human volition it works on the phenomena furnished by the primary imagination. In order to re-synthesize sense impression arising from objective reality on the principle of beauty it has to break up existing barriers and remove the "crust of familiarity" from things. It dissolves, diffuses, and dissipates and even destroys the old patterns and the inanimate cold world of the primary imagination in order to recreate. It simply means that artistic creation is possible only after the existing ugliness and staleness have been eliminated, and the intractable material has been controlled and reshaped. The secondary imagination belongs to a fortunate few. It renders it possible for the artist to lend a new charm to objective reality. "the ordinary world is brazen", the secondary imagination delivers it golden. It has Midas-touch. The three main functions of secondary imagination are, Idealization, Recreation, and Unification. It sees all things as one, and one in all things. It works by bringing about the "balance or reconcilement of opposite or discordant qualities". The discordant qualities to be reconciled are : 1) sameness with difference, 2) the general with the concrete, 3) the idea with the image, 4) the individual with the representative, 5) the sense of novelty and freshness with old and familiar objects, 6) a more than usual state of emotion with more than usual order, 7) judgement ever awake and steady self-possession with enthusiasm and feeling profound and vehement, 8) the natural with the artificial.

W.H.Auden said that "the secondary imagination is of another character and mental level. It is active and not passive, and its categories are not the sacred and the profane, but the beautiful and the ugly...beauty and ugliness pertain to form, not to Being ...The secondary imagination recognizes both beautiful and ugly forms. To the secondary imagination a beautiful form is as ought to be, an ugly form as it ought not to be. Observing the beautiful, it has feelings of satisfaction, pleasure, absence of conflict; observing the ugly, the contrary feelings. It does not desire the beautiful, but an ugly form arouses in it a desire that its ugliness be corrected and made beautiful. It does not worship the beautiful, it approves of it and can give reasons of its approval. The secondary imagination, has, one might say, a bourgeois nature. It approves of regularity, of spatial symmetry, and temporal repetition, of law and order; it disapproves of loose ends, irrelevance and mess." To put it straight, the secondary imagination creates Beauty.

Primary/Secondary Imagination

All other reconciliations follow as part of the self-duplicating process of secondary imagination. They are different in "degree" from primary imagination: they do not produce self-consciousness but they do produce individual acts of meaning similar in "kind" to the essence of meaning residing in the I AM. Secondary imagination brings together apparently discordant elements and fuses them into meaningful thoughts, symbols, metaphors, images. It lies at the heart of language process. Like primary imagination, it is an act of will and also, like the primary, it "dissolves" identity in order to create anew through reconciliation of opposites.

Secondary imagination, for all its similarity with the primary, differs "in the mode of its operation' on three points. First, it operates by "conscious will" rather than by the mysterious "living" or free will of the primary. As Coleridge differentiates the poetic imagination from the philosophic imagination saying that poetic imagination involves "superior voluntary control". Second, secondary imagination has a deconstructive component, it not only dissolves the apparent identity of opposites, it also diffuses and dissipates the elements with which it is involved, something which the human primary imagination did only with the elements of subject and object within the self. Third, the secondary imagination struggles to idealize and unify, to bring order from contradiction, wherever it may be found.

Imagination

Coleridge's definition of the imagination finds the central place in his discussion of the poetic process. Though he regarded the mind as a single organism, he also made use of six faculties of mental activity in setting forth his description of the poetic process: Will, Reason, Imagination, Rapture, Imitative power and Taste. Imagination however is responsible for the transference of the fusions achieved by all the faculties and by the Inner Sense. Imagination is the mediator between the Reason of the poet and the understanding of the reader. Imagination is suggested to have two functions. It functions as a faculty in its own right and achieves the fusion of the concrete with the general and of the idea with the image. This is the task cut out for Primary Imagination the Secondary Imagination performs 'esemplastic' role assigned to it by the Inner Sense. In this capacity it is made to preside over the birth of a work of art and is endowed with an additional shaping and modifying or 'synthetic and magical power'. It is in its 'esemplastic' role that Imagination transforms all the 'insights' or 'fusions' into 'reconcilements'.

Here are the important quotations from Coleridge that shed light on the concept of Imagination:

> "Modifying and co-adunating Faculty". (letters)
>
> "imagination is the greatest faculty of human mind – both passionate and tranquil- in its tranquil and purely pleasurable operation it acts chiefly by producing out of many things, as it would have appeared in the description of an ordinary mind, described slowly and in unimpassioned succession, a oneness/ even as Nature, the greatest of Poets, acts upon us when we open our eyes upon an extended prospect – many images and feelings are brought together without effort and without discord".
>
> "The completing power which unites clearness with depth, the plenitude of the sense with the comprehensibility of the understanding, is the Imagination, impregnated with which the understanding itself becomes intuitive, and a living power". (The Statesman's Manual)
>
> "Finally, Good Sense is the Body of poetic genius, Fancy its drapery, Motion its life, and Imagination the Soul that is everywhere, and in each; and forms all into one graceful and intelligent whole".
>
> (Ch. XIV)
>
> "The IMAGINATION then I consider either as primary, or secondary. The primary IMAGINATION I hold to be the living Power and prime Agent of all human Perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM. The secondary I consider as an echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the kind of its agency, and differing only in degree, and in the mode of its operation. It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to re-create; or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still at all events it struggles to idealize and to unify. It is essentially vital, even as all objects (as objects) are essentially fixed and dead. This power, first put in action by the will and

> understanding, and retained under their irremissive, though gentle and unnoticed, control, laxis effertur habenis, reveals "itself in the balance or reconcilement of opposite or discordant" qualities: of sameness, with difference; of the general with the concrete; the idea with the image; the individual with the representative; the sense of novelty and freshness with old and familiar objects; a more than usual state of emotion with more than usual order; judgment ever awake and steady self-possession with enthusiasm and feeling profound or vehement: and while it blends and harmonizes the natural and the artificial, still subordinates art to nature; the manner to the matter; and our admiration of the poet to our sympathy with the poetry".
>
> The imagination synthesises disparate elements in order to generate a new reality. It is not, as it was for neoclassical critics, a mechanical power('aggregative and associative'); it is rather a vital and organic faculty which permits the mind to see beneath the transitory surface of the material world – to see, that is, into the life of things and to perceive the intimate relationship between the perceiving mind and the objects of its contemplation.

The passage illustrates a number of the key tendencies in Coleridge's thinking. There is, first of all, the attempt to synthesize the Romantic faith in poetic creation with the tenets of orthodox Christianity. (Among the six major Romantic poets, Coleridge was the only one who sustained conventional religious beliefs.) The actions of the secondary, or poetic, imagination are modeled on those of the primary, human imagination, the faculty that gives form to immediate sense perceptions. It is with the primary imagination that a human being repeats, and in repeating gives thanks for, the ongoing act of creation by which God, as St. Augustine and others affirmed, perpetuates the being of the world. To love something, Augustine thought, is actively to will its existence and thus to experience at one remove the supreme creator's joy in creation.

Coleridge proposes that poetic invention takes this pious activity one step further. The poetic imagination is continuous in kind, different only in mode and degree from the actions of the pious (and commonplace) mind. In saying as much, Coleridge seeks both to exalt and to constrain the Romantic shaping power: it is God-like but subordinate. He seems to arrive at a comprehensive synthesis, the state in which he wished all of his thinking to culminate. It was this addiction to comprehensive knowledge and inclusive conceptual models that John Keats had in mind when he wrote in the letter on negative capability that Coleridge "would let go by a fine isolated verisimilitude caught from the Penetralium of mystery, from being incapable of remaining content with half knowledge"

Yet in the *Biographia passage* on imagination, another tendency in Coleridge's thought is active as well. For this "pious" secondary imagination possesses a rather violent will to disruption. "It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates." That is to say, the poetic imagination is prone to turn against what is given to it by the "infinite I AM." It finds created nature inadequate to its desires for fresh and vitalizing experience. This visionary restlessness is, presumably, the condition of the Ancient Mariner, at least until he is chastened and becomes an apostle of the primary imagination.

The many tensions that inform Coleridge's thinking are manifest in his critical style, a style largely both unprecedented and unimitated. The passage on the poetic imagination is more lucid and available than most of Coleridge's speculative writing, which tends, even when it is celebrating the "esemplastic" (that is, unifying) powers of the mind, to be unfocused in its argument and irregular in rhythm, clotted and sprawling by turns. Coleridge thinks that dead world may be brought to life by the imagination.

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Fancy

Whereas the 18th century writers considered Imagination and Fancy to be synonymous terms and believed imagination to be a form of visualization, Coleridge being a romantic theorist maintained the distinction between Imagination and fancy and explained this distinction as resulting from two types of philosophy. Coleridge, made a distinction between

the conceivable and the picturable, spurned the 'despotism of the eye' and the 'tyranny of the senses' and called it a delusive notion 'that what is not imageable is likewise not conceivable'. Imagination in Coleridge's theory does not exist independent of the senses. In fact both the fancy and the imagination need the activity of the senses and of reason. What the 18th century writers understood by imagination, Coleridge designated fancy and desynonymised the two terms distinctly and emphatically. The idea of distinction originates after listening to a recitation of a manuscript poem of Wordsworth. Coleridge expressed that what had struck him in the poem was 'the union of deep feeling with profound thought; the fine balance of truth in observing, with imaginative faculty in modifying the objects observed; and above all the original gift of spreading the tone, the atmosphere, and with it the depth and height of the ideal world around forms, incidents and situations, of which, for the common view, custom had bedimmed all the lustre, had dried up the sparkle and the dew drops.'

He further expressed what he had thought and felt keenly 'Repeated meditations led me first to suspect, that fancy and imagination were two distinct and widely different faculties, instead of being, according to the general belief, either two names with one meaning, or, at furthest, the lower and higher degree of one and the same power.' Coleridge's meaning can be pieced together from his marginalia, foot-notes, table-talks and scattered passages. He describes the distinction through examples from the English literary tradition. For instance he suggests: 'Milton had a highly imaginative mind, Cowley a very fanciful mind'. For fancy we are provided with an example,

Full gently now she takes him by the hand,
A lily prison'd in gaol of snow,
Or ivory in an alabaster band,
Society white a friend engirts so white a foe.

I.A.Richards analysed these lines and concluded that two middle lines show the play of fancy most clearly and that there is 'an absence of interaction between the parts of comparison'. The link between the images is accidental and contributes nothing to the action. It is obvious that 'the commonest characteristic effect of fancy is the coolness and disengagement with which we are invited to attend to what is taking place'.

Coleridge finally defines fancy: "FANCY, on the contrary, has no other counters to play with, but fixities and definites. The Fancy is indeed no other than a mode of Memory emancipated from the order of time and space; and blended with, and modified by that empirical phenomenon of the will, which we express by the word Choice. But equally with the ordinary memory it must receive all its materials ready made from the law of association." (*Biographia Literaria,* vol. 1, chapter 13)

So in fancy are involved a 'choice'(which is an empirical phenomenon of the will) cool and calculating, a selection, a preference, and an arrangement. It is a mode of memory but it is on a higher level than mere memory or perception because of its selections and preferences from the store-house of sensations. It is inferior to imagination because instead of producing new things, it merely shuffles and reshuffles into patterns ready made materials, 'fixities and definites'. It is an aggregative quality of the mind. It juxtaposes images without fusing them into an inseparable entity. Its operation is practically independent of the artist's emotional state. It creates, 'merely a world of lifeless forms, unconnected and devoid of motive power.' Fancy is passive, associative, mechanical, barren, superficial, allegorical, and shallow. Its deliverances are subjective. It merely amuses and titiliates. The images of fancy, says Coleridge, "have no connection, natural or moral, but are yoked together by the poet by means of some accidental coincidence'. Conceits of metaphysical poets are good examples of Fancy.

Fancy is the product of talent and depends primarily on memory. Coldness, brittleness, and frolic are associated with it. It brings together, in Coleridge's words, 'images dissimilar in the main by some one point or more of likeness.' Coleridge described to C. Robinson the nature of fancy, "Fancy is the arbitrary bringing together of things that lie remote and orming them into a unity. The materials lie ready formed for the mind and the fancy acts only by a sort of juxtaposition. On the other hand the imagination under excitement, generates and produces a form of its own.' Fancy is the mechanism of the reproduction of sense impression: it is passive and associated with mechanical memory. 'Fancy is memory without judgement.' Fancy, says Coleridge, does not hold 'that place in the chart of the mind which imagination holds.'

Professor Baker says: 'Operation of Fancy was like that of a shunting engine in a freight yard: it could combine the cars with oil-tankers, could couple and uncouple; could shunt cars in numerous combinations, but it could not create anything, that was not already there, on the rails of memory.'

Fancy-the associative power- is a part of the passive powers of the mind, imagination being the active power. Opposed to the mechanist theory of the mind Coleridge could only admit Hartley's law of association as part of the receptive and an aid to cool superficial fancy. Association is the governing principle of Fancy which depends upon the succession of events in time and which combines these events in such a way that they retain their original character. Fancy consists of an association of feelings with one another. It does not concern itself with the essence or the inner character of any feeling or entity like understanding. It is too much dependent on the given. It has its origin in certain physical sensations and feelings. In dreaming we have the operation of Fancy, which produces novel and wonderful imagery. This novelty arises from the combination, not from the mutual interactions, of images. What it combines has ceased to grow and has no dynamism of its own. It abstracts the events and objects from the context to which they normally belong and seek to represent anything as independent of the rest.

Fancy is not Imagination. It is "the aggregating faculty of the mind".(letters)

Imagination /Fancy Distinction

The distinction between fancy and imagination is a key element in Coleridge's theory of poetry, as well as in his general theory of mental processes. Coleridge maintains a difference in his discussion of the two terms. The traditional understanding of fancy and imagination led one to believe as if the two terms synonymously denote a faculty of mind, which is distinguished from "reason", "judgement", and "memory", in that it receives "images" that have been perceived by the senses and reorders them into new combinations.

Fancy takes the horse to the pond and its work finishes there and then, whereas imagination takes the horse to the pond and also makes it drink. Fancy is intellectual and associative; Imagination is emotional and unconscious. Fancy makes patch work screen with fixed photographs from the store of memory; imagination like a lesser deity says 'Let there be delight, and there is delight.' New things are created by Imagination. Fancy collects bright and solid objects and weaves patterns out of them arranging and rearranging them, the objects remaining unchanged in themselves. Fancy brings about issueless marriages, whereas imagination blesses marriage with new births. Fancy produces a physical and mechanical mixture whereas Imagination creates a new compound which is a complete, unified whole. "The essential difference is that imagination modifies the things it combines and that is a process of living growth. Thus the gummy buds of a chestnut tree that uncurl their tight fists and open up their leaves candles are a modification as imagination modifies. Fancy, on the other hand, can combine and recombine, as we do with checkers and dominoes, but the objects it plays with are 'fixities and definites,' and all objects are essentially fixed and dead. Fancy can shake up the counters but not transform them." The distinction between fancy and imagination also depends on a criterion of value. Imagination, as Coleridge uses it, is, of course, very often a term implying higher values than Fancy. The conception was devised as a means of describing the wider and deeper powers of some poetry. It is a descriptive psychological term in the sense that it points to facts which explain certain works. Fancy involves images or impressions; imagination deals with insights and intuitions and emotions. Fancy is conscious and willing and free activity of our choice: imagination deals with the conscious. Fancy relies on the passive 'laws' of association – 'submarine marriages of ideas that occur in the deep well.' Its operations have no universality as mechanistic or associationistic principle. Imagination is a recreative, dynamic, and idealistic process. Coleridge explains the distinction: "You may conceive the difference in kind between the Fancy and the Imagination in such a way, that if the check of the senses and reason were withdrawn, the first would become delirium, and the last madness. The Fancy brings together images which have no connexion natural or moral, but are yoked together by the poet by means of some accidental coincidence; ... the imagination modifies images, and gives unity to variety. It sees all things in one, *il piu nell' uno.* There is the epic imagination, the perfection of which is in Milton; and the dramatic

of which Shakespeare is the absolute master." (The Table Talk) There is no coherence, no connection, relevance or sequence in delirium – no unifying principle except the law of association. The same is the nature of fancy which only juxtaposes superficially attractive images without effecting a full fusion among them. The mind in mania, on the other hand, is haunted by a fixed idea and all other things are seen and interpreted in direct relationship to that fixed idea, so even in sickness it has the power of unification. Imagination is similar to mania in its operation, and it 'dissolves, diffuses, dissipates in order to recreate.'

Coleridge included fancy as one of the powers of imagination. Fancy is not totally passive but compared to over-dynamic imagination it is passive. Imagination is a higher faculty than fancy. I.A. Richards to emphasized this point and said: 'Coleridge often insisted – and would have insisted still more often had he been a better judge of his readers' capacity for misunderstanding – that fancy and imagination are not exclusive of or inimical to one another.' Coleridge commented on Wordsworth's confusion of the two terms, 'I am disposed to conjecture, that he has mistaken the copresence of fancy and imagination for the operation of the latter singly. A man may work with two different tools at the same moment; each has its share in the work, but the work effected by each is very different.'

The distinction Coleridge focused on was not just geared to explain and comment on literature. It had a bearing on philosophy too. The real distinction between fancy and imagination(in either of its forms), is that the one links ideas by means it chooses, while the other only operates by his "seminal principle" of reconciliation of opposites.

Symbol

Clearly Coleridge had raised the stakes in literary-critical writing beyond Byron's sense of due proportion. After Coleridge, criticism is a genre in which one can entertain—or demystify—questions of ultimate importance. After Coleridge, too, criticism has license to be abstract and difficult. It can become the province of an elite. Byron, a proud man but a popular writer, had reason to disparage such developments, as have others. Whatever the justice of their criticisms, it is worth remembering that Coleridge's commitment to unconfined speculation, to philosophy, and to an elite audience did a great deal to lay the groundwork for academic literary criticism in its current (elitist, sophisticated, speculative) form.

At the center of Coleridge's intellectual concerns was a problem bequeathed to him chiefly by Kant- the nature of the relations between the human subject and his or her objects of perception. Kant had posited a necessary gap between the experiencing subject and the thing in itself, the noumenon. Perception gave access to phenomena, entities mediated and accordingly transformed by the senses and the mental faculties, but not to objects in their authentic being. Encountering this rift in René Descartes and Kant, and being disposed, at least overtly, against all unnecessary dualisms, Coleridge sought a solution within literature. To Coleridge the longed-for synthesis of subject and object took place through the exercise of the poetic imagination. Thus it was the poet who created harmony where the philosophers had been forced to acknowledge an alienating gap. "No man," Coleridge wrote in the *Biographia,* "was ever yet a great poet, without being at the same time a profound philosopher" (2:25-26).

Coleridge associated the synthesizing power of the poetic mind with the symbol, which he affirmed at the expense of allegory. In a well-known passage from *The Statesman's Manual* he observes that

> "A Symbol is characterized by a translucence of the Special in the Individual or of the General in the Especial or of the Universal in the General. Above all by the translucence of the Eternal through and in the Temporal. It always partakes of the Reality which it renders intelligible; and while it enunciates the whole, abides itself as a living part in that Unity, of which it is the representative."

In view of Rene Wellek, Coleridge does not appreciate the symbolist view. Wellek finds Coleridge "most disappointing on the question of imagery and symbolization". He further adds: "Coleridge understands one part of the symbolic, linguistic point of view. He realizes that the emphasis, inherited from the 18th century, on "imagination" as purely visual realization is mistaken. He quotes Kant in his support of his distinction between the conceivable and picturable; he protests against the 'despotism of the eye' and the 'delusive notion that what is not imageable is likewise not conceivable.' Yet he rarely draws the consequences from these insights. Rather he emphasizes imagery which might be called 'animating', the kind of figure which Ruskin was later to condemn as 'pathetic fallacy'. He says that some images are poetic only, 'when a human and intellectual life is transferred to them from the poet's own spirit,' and he illustrates this by adding to lines about a row of pines the idea of their 'fleeing from the fierce sea-blast'. Imagery serves largely to corroborate the view that man is identical with nature. 'A poet's heart and intellect should be combined, intimately combined and unified with the great appearances of nature.' Coleridge thus accomplishes a justification of romantic anthropomorphism but fails to see the uses of the symbolic view as a justification of other types of metaphoric expression." Coleridge associated the synthesizing power of the poetic mind with the symbol, which he affirmed at the expense of allegory.

Opposite Or Discordant Qualities

The external world is an apparition of lifeless objects which only the poet's vitalizing intellect can bring to life by endowing it with what Coleridge called 'the depth and height of the ideal world'. Raman Selden suggests "Coleridge's philosophy and criticism transmit German theories into British culture. He refuses to grant absolute priority in the process of cognition either to mind or to nature. He argues that all the principles of intelligence are inherent in nature before the act of consciousness arises, and that the act of intellectual apprehension involves the focusing of the images which impinge upon our consciousness. These images are full of potential intellectual meaning, but without the act of mental organization, the images remain inert and dissociated in nature. The mind does not simply impose an order upon nature, but rather discovers an order in nature, an order which he recognizes as an approximation the order is at once a mental construct and 'that which is within the thing'. The poet's task is to effect a reconciliation between a thought and a thing".

Discussing the nature of imitation in 'On Poesy or Art' Coleridge introduces the concept of reconciliation. He says "in all imitation two elements must coexist, and not only coexist, but must be perceived as coexisting. These two constituent elements are likeness and unlikeness, or sameness and difference, and in all genuine creations of art there must be a union of these disparates. The artist may take his point of view where he pleases, provided that the desired effect be perceptibly produced, - that there be likeness in the difference, difference in the likeness, and a reconciliation of both in one." Coleridge considers the poetic process as static as well as dynamic. Coleridge suggests that when a object kindles passion in a poet there and then arises in the poet a consciousness to keep in check the workings of passion. This results in a tension between passion and will. This 'balance of antagonists' is assisted by the very state in counteracts. Passion, checked by will, culminates in what Coleridge calls an act of the realizing intuition. Again while discussing metre, Coleridge speaks of "how this balance of antagonists became organised into metre, by a supervening act of the will and judgment consciously and for the foreseen purpose of pleasure." The poet seeks this fulfilment for his own delight and, however subconsciously, for the delight of others. The poet has a tendency towards it, aided by his passion and practical reason. The passion itself has been kindled by an object, event or thought. He then prepares for the descent of this vision, on the other side of the triangle into another object or event - a work of art. The 'balance' gets organised into metre or poetry under the 'supervening act', of the Will and Good Sense. Coleridge says in another context that the Imagination is first put in action by the Will and Understanding and retained under their control. Imagination plays its role in achieving the act of the realizing intuition. It uses all the synthetic and magical power which it has received from the Inner Sense, in fulfilling this creative task. It is able to transform this complex content of the fusions achieved by the Inner Sense and the higher subjective faculties into balances or reconcilements of those qualities which should be present in a work of art, but which are opposite and discordant. The esemplastic role or power of imagination "reveals itself in the balance or reconcilement". Imagination itself is not responsible for all the fusions. It is responsible for only two of them, as a higher subjective faculty. But as an esemplastic power, it is responsible for the transformation of all the fusions into reconcilements of the opposite and discordant qualities that will figure in the work of art that is being born.

The qualities in a work of art are: multitude; unity; sameness; difference; idea; image; emotion; order; judgment; *enthusiasm; the sense of novelty and freshness; the sense of familiarity; the natural; the artificial; the general; the* concrete; the individual and the representative. Coleridge himself calls them 'qualities'. Imagination, in its esemplastic role, *achieves their balance or reconcilement. It is able to do this because the soul and the higher faculties have made* available to it the 'fusions' or 'insights' that were achieved or released by them in the moment of vision or in the state of static aesthesis. The 'insights' or glimpses afforded by the Inner Sense are responsible for reconcilements like the reduction of multitude to unity and the infusion of the sense of novelty and freshness into old and familiar objects. The tone and spirit of unity and the revealing flash of the Inner Sense make these reconcilements possible. Inner Sense also effects fusion of Passion and Reason. It is possible because contraries like Passion and Reason can be harmonised when the realizing intuition opens up a level of consciousness on which being, knowing, doing and feeling are least to be distinguished; on which there is an integral awareness. Coleridge frequently makes reference to the quality of poetry and identifies it to be present whenever he seems to have a liking for a poet. For instance, what drew him to Wordsworth was "the union of deep feeling with profound thought; the fine balance of truth in observing with the imaginative faculty in modifying the objects observed". Again he singles out for praise Wordsworth's "union of deep and subtle thought with sensibility".

Coleridge's series of 'reconcilements' begins with the reconcilement of "sameness with difference". This may at first be thought to refer to the co-existence of fancy and judgment in poetry. Fancy is the aggregative and associative power and judgment the discriminating and dissociative power. The activities of both these powers are reconciled in poetry. The one exists in some of its imagery and the other in its meaning.

Select Literacy Criticism

- 'a handful of golden poems, an emptiness in the hearts of a few friends, and a will-o'-the- wisp light for bemused thinkers.'
  (E.K.Chambers, STC:A Biographical Study 1938)
- "hooded eagle among blinking owls." (Shelley)
- "His style (Coleridge's) is not succinct, but incumbered with a train of words and images that have no practical, and only a possible relation to one another—that add to its stateliness, but impede its march. One of his sentences winds its 'forlorn way obscure' over the page like a patriarchal procession with camels laden, wreathed turbans, household wealth, the whole riches of the author's mind poured out upon the barren waste of his subject. The palm-tree spreads its sterile branches overhead, and the land of promise is seen in the distance."

William Hazlitt

From *Coleridge's Table Talks*

My system, if I may venture to give it so fine a name, is the only attempt I know ever made to reduce all knowledges into harmony. It opposes no other system, but shows what was true in each; and how that which was true in the particular, in each of them became error, because it was only half the truth. I have endeavoured to unite the insulated fragments of truth, and therewith to frame a perfect mirror. I show to each system that I fully understand and rightly appreciate what that system means; but then I lift up that system to a higher point of view, from which I enable it to see its former position, where it was, indeed, but under another light and with different relations; so that the fragment of truth is not only acknowledged, but explained.

From **L. C. Knights' Coleridge as Critic**

- It is true that he (Coleridge) regards poetry as a product of the secondary imagination, but since this differs only in degree from the primary, it remains clear that for Coleridge the imagination is of first importance because it partakes of the creative activity of God.
- Coleridge, too, gave much thought to the imagination and devoted to it some distinguished chapters of his Biographia Literaria. With him it is not always easy to disentangle theories which he formed in later life from the assumptions upon which he acted almost instinctively before his creative faculties began to fail. At times he seems to be still too aware of the sensationalist philosophy of his youth. From it he inherits a conception of a world of facts, an 'inanimate cold world', in which 'objects, as objects, are essentially fixed and dead'. But as a poet he transcended this idea, or turned it to an unexpected conclusion. Just because the external world is like this, the poet's task is to transform it by imagination. Just as 'accidents of light and shade' may transmute 'a known and familiar landscape', so this dead world may be brought to life by the imagination. Coleridge justified this by a bold paradox: 'Dare I add that genius must act of the feeling that body is but a striving to become mind – that is mind in its essence'. What really counted with him was his own deep trust in the imagination as something which gives a shape to life... Coleridge does not go so far as Blake in the claims he makes for the imagination. He is still a little hampered by the presence of an external world and feels that in some way he must conform to it.
- Coleridge's literary criticism is related to deep personal needs: it is not just 'literary criticism' as that phrase is only too often understood. Coleridge as critic is not simply the man of letters whose basic assumptions about life are more or less taken for granted, so that they can be kept outside his discussion of particular literary problems, as Dryden, for example, urbanely and intelligently but without moral resonance, discusses the problems of his craft... His criticism is immethodical, not always of the same high standard, and it can be sadly off the point. But at its best it is of great and permanent value because the question it asks is, How does it make for life? To what extent is this an expression of the imagination? And behind this, What is imagination, and why is it so important that we should cultivate it? In other words, Coleridge's literary criticism springs from the same source as his thinking about education, psychology, religion, politics. It is part of his total confrontation of human experience, and is connected with the life of feeling and intuitive perception that it is the poet's special task to bring to expression. Coleridge's attempt to define imagination began when he tried to make clear to himself the distinctive qualities of Wordsworth's poetry. But what invigorates and directs his criticism and, beyond that, his general thought, is not only the experience of an uncommonly sensitive reader of poetry, it is his own experience as a poet.
  Coleridge was a first – class practical critic... Again and again a sure personal judgement – disciplined and sustained, not dissipated, by a remarkable range of reading – goes straight to the mark. Coleridge's criticism, however, is valuable not only for the particular perceptions that show him coming to grips with and illuminating

what is actually there in front of him, but because it constantly circles round and refers to certain principles or 'organising insights'. Of thes the most important are the conceptions of poetry as a form of energy the vigour with 'a substrate of profound feeling' that he calls attention to in distinguishing Donne from Cowley and the belief that in good poetry 'the poet's ever active mind' is answered by a corresponding 'activity of attention' required on the part of the reader'. Coleridge's principles not only emerge from his own direct experience of literature – both as maker and critic – they help us, once we have grasped them, to organise our thinking about literature. and much else besides...

From J. Shawcross' **edition of Biographia Literaria**

- As connected by the fancy, objects are viewed in their limitations and particularity; they are 'fixed and dead' in the sense that their connexion is mechanical and not organic. The law, indeed, which governs it is derived from the mind itself, but the links are supplied by the individual properties of the objects. Fancy is, in fact, the faculty of mere images or impressions, as imagination is the faculty of intuitions. It is in this sense that Coleridge sees in their opposition an emblem of the wider contrast between the mechanical philosophy and the dynamic, the false and the true

From **Basil Willey Nineteenth Century Studies**

- For Coleridge the imagination was an active power. Independent of the fixed associations of memory and experience and it was also a unifying power. His hatred of passive association and his hatred of the disconnected ('The universe seems a heap of little things', he shudders once), made him take a very special interest in this particular piece of desynonymization, since, if he exaggerated the distinction between the two terms, he would be provided with a purer Imaginative activity, which could be freed of any suggestion of mechanical work by a judicious use of the waste-bin of Fancy. The fixed patterns of association must play some part in aesthetic creation. but he refused to admit that Imagination had any responsibility for this part. Not all the processes of writing a poem can be explained as unifying processes, so he leaves the little disconnected things to the scapegoat of Fancy. and finds in Imagination the sign or symbol of universal unity... the Imagination modifies its material because it organizes them into unity, and they have to be adapted to each other and to the total poetic effect. In other words, the imagination has to make good neighbours of dramatic characters or poetic images so that no 'unit' disturbs the unity

From **Andrew Sanders' A History of English Literature**

- Biographia Literaria is a loosely shaped, digressive series of meditations on poetry, poets and above all, the nature of the poetic imagination. Its complex philosophy draws both from Coleridge's fruitful relationship with Wordsworth and from a wide range of European thinkers; it is both original and plagiaristic, prophetic and profoundly indebted to tradition, at once a personal apologia and a public discourse on metaphysics. Its most influential attempts at definition concern the distinction which Coleridge carefully draws in the thirteenth chapter between 'Fancy' which merely assembles and juxtaposes images and impressions without fusing them, and 'Imagination', which actively moulds, transforms, and strives to bring into unity what it perceives.

From **Peter Conrad's The Everyman History of English Literature**

- Biographia Literaria is a combination of Tristram Shandy and the Gothic novel. Its narrative cannot or stubbornly will not utter itself, and this reluctance, which is its Gothic mystery, has to do with its dread of the very imagination so secretly ashamed and infectious, whose truths it supposedly exists to propound. Incompleteness is Coleridge's safeguard. He will forsake or deface the text rather than permit it to testify against him... Biographia Literaria is about the invidious business of book-making, touting subscriptions to periodicals, coping with the perishability of paper (a maid sets the fire with one of Coleridge's productions), filling up space left blank by a printer's miscalculation; beneath its comic mayhem there is a tragic self-accusation.

From **Raman Selden's The Theory Of Criticism**

- "Coleridge's theory of the imagination is both a development of associationist ideas and a strong reaction against them. He shows that Hartley's theories reduce the human mind to a passive victim of a mechanical process. He also rejected the Addisonian view of imaginative experience: beauty is not simply an effect in the mind of an external stimulus. In describing Wordsworth's poetry he assmes that the poet's mind is more active and creative The imaginative faculty actually adds its own 'tone' and 'atmosphere' to the observations of sense experience Coleridge's distinction between imagination and fancy enables him to argue the god-like creativity of imagination By combining English associationism with German 'organic' philosophy (especially Scheling) he heightened the imagination's vital and shaping function. He reserved the term 'fancy' for the older, mechanical, associationist account: fancy is just a version of memory 'it must receive all its materials ready made from the law of association' The art of rearranging these materials is a poetic function but is not enough to account for genius. Imagination does not simply reshuffle the cards of experience; it 'dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to recreate', Coleridge seems

to have in mind God's dissolution of chaos and creation of universe. By way of demonstration Coleridge can do no more than quote passages of great writing which the reader is assumed to acknowledge as truly imaginative.

- Coleridge's notions of organic unity and imaginative power strongly influenced the New Criticism and the intuitive approach of modern criticism. I.A. Richard' work, which itself deeply influenced the New Criticism, combined and updated mechanical psychology with Coleridge's stress upon unification and the imagination's harmonizing power. If we remove neuro-psychology from I.A.Richards theory we are left with Coleridgean organic theory: the imagination has the power to organize and unify the 'welter of disconnected impulses' which assails us. Richards accepts Coleridge's distinction between imagination and fancy but reinterprets it as one between degrees of complexity: imaginative complexity is greater, but not necessarily valuable."
- Coleridge's philosophy and criticism transmit German theories into British culture. He refuses to grant absolute priority in the process of cognition either to mind or to nature. He argues that all the principles of intelligence are inherent in nature before the act of consciousness arises, and that the act of intellectual apprehension involves the focusing of the images which impinge upon our consciousness. These images are full of potential intellectual meaning, but without the act of mental organization, the images remain inert and dissociated in nature. The mind does not simply impose an order upon nature, but rather discovers an order in nature, an order which he recognizes as an approximation: the order is at once a mental construct and 'that which is within the thing'. The poet's task is to effect a reconciliation between a thought and a thing. He argues further that the ultimate source of those rays of intellect mirrored in natural objects and focused in the human mind is the Divine itself. This philosophical(and theological) background lies behind his theory of the organic vitality of the poetic imagination which gives life to otherwise lifeless natural objects.

From Rene Wellek **A History Of Modern Criticism: Romantic Age**

- Coleridge differs from almost all preceding English writers by his claim to an epistemology and metaphysics from which he derives his aesthetics and finally his literary theory and critical principles. He aimed at complete systematic unity and continuity even though in practice he left wide gaps. But he made an attempt and he insisted rightly on the significance of the attempt. He sometimes speaks of his "disease of totalising and perfecting" and tells a story about his fanciful impulse to complete the perishable architecture of some smouldering pieces of wood in a fireplace, late at night. But usually he states earnestly and with conviction that the "end and purpose of all reason is unity and system," that the "ultimate end of human thought and human feeling is unity." We must aim at "fixed canons of criticism, previously established and deduced from the nature of man," at a "science of reasoning and judging concerning the productions of literature." Method is Coleridge's constant watchword: it inspired his interests in encyclopaedias and the classification of all knowledge. Method means "unity with progression," "that which unites, and makes many things one in the mind of man," the "keynote", the initiative."
- Most of Coleridge's key terms and distinctions are derived from Germany. The general aesthetic position-the view of the relation between art and nature, the reconciliation of opposites, the whole dialectical scheme-comes from Schelling. The distinction between symbol and allegory can be found in Schelling and Goethe, the distinction between genius and talent in Kant, the distinctions between organic and mechanical, classical and modern, statuesque and picturesque in A.W.Schlegel. Coleridge's particular use of the term "Idea" comes from the Germans, and the way in which he links imagination with the process of cognition is also clearly derived from Fichte and Schelling. Though these ideas are present in tradition and Plato is aware of the presence of Plato, Plotinus, Cudworth, Henry More, and others, but still he draws on the Germans, for only they use the same dialectical method as he, the same epistemology and the same critical vocabulary. The neo-Platonists remained essentially scholastic mystics. Coleridge could not have been known to Schopenhauer, Hegel, De Sanctis, or Belinsky, and still most of the concepts, theories, and ideas which in the English-speaking world are today ascribed to Coleridge can be found in them. In Germany there was a large body of aesthetic thought which slowly radiated to France, Italy, Spain, and Russia. In England Coleridge stood quite alone, sharply distinct even from his close associates, Wordsworth, Lamb, and Hazlitt, who had only very slight German contacts. The vocabulary, the dialectical scheme, the whole intellectual atmosphere sets Coleridge apart. The difference is explainable only by Coleridge's adaptation and importation of the Germans. This in itself constituted an important historical merit which should not be minimized. Coleridge was the main source, in this respect, not only for a long line of English critics but also for the American transcendentalists and for Poe, and thus indirectly for the French symbolists.

From **F.L.Lucas's The Decline and Fall of The Romantic Ideal**

- There seems to me a certain divergence between Coleridge and his modern interpreter. For Coleridge what mattered was the emotional unity that imagination produced from multiplicity, as moonlight, he said, transfigures a whole landscape; dr Richards, I suspect, is much more delighted intellectually by the multiplicity out of which

that unity is produced. I doubt if Coleridge would have shared all this enthusiasm for ambiguities and "numerous connections", or felt reassured by being told they need not be consciously noted. Coleridge, in other words, is pleased by the process which can reduce so many odd pence to a single pound; his commentator Richards by counting over how many pence that pound contains.

- To pass from Johnson to Coleridge is, indeed, to see in little, I think, what critics gained and lost with the coming of Romanticism. They became far more sensitive, more enthusiastic, less hide-bound by rules – in practical criticism the advance is plain; but they tended also to become gushing, bardolatrous, muddle-headed, and mysterious with a fondness for windy and cloudy theories that we are still plagued with to this day. Neo-classic criticism doubtless had too much "reality-principle"; but their Romantic successors stagger terribly at times from the lack of it

From Thomas Macfarland's **Coleridge And The Pantheist Tradition**

- What in fact Coleridge mean by 'imagination'? To this the answer is clear: he means exactly what we all mean in ordinary language by the word imagination. By 'imagination' Coleridge means what Descartes means by imaginatio; Kant means by 'Einbildungskraft'; what Wordsworth means by 'imagination'; what Fichte, and Schelling, and Hegel and the Schlegels, and all others, mean wherever they refer to the imaging faculty. For 'imagination' is a given experience, not the property, nor the terminological construct, of a special phiosopher. 'imaginatio', as Spinoza says precisely 'the idea wherewith the mind contemplates a thing as present'. The differences in the formulation of the nature of imagination are dictated by differing conceptions of the faculty's function in a systematic view of reality

From David Daiches' **Critical Approaches To Literature**

- Poetry for Coleridge is a wider category than that of "poem"; that is, poetry is a kind of activity which can be engaged in by painters or philosophers or scientists and is not confined to those who employ metrical language or even to those who employ language of any kind. Poetry, in this larger sense, brings "the whole soul of man" into activity, with each faculty playing its proper part according to its "relative worth and dignity." This takes place whenever the "secondary imagination" comes into operation. We can only understand what poetry in this large sense really is, if we appreciate the way in which the human faculties are employed together in its production. Thus Coleridge (like Wordsworth in his method, though differing from him in premises and conclusions) defines poetry through an account of how the poet works:; the poet works through the exercise of imagination. Whenever the synthesizing, the integrating, powers of what Coleridge calls the secondary imagination are at work, bringing all aspects of a subject into a complex unity, then poetry in this large sense results. Poetry in the narrower sense – that is, a poem – may well use the same elements as a work of poetry in the larger sense but it differs from the work of poetry in the larger sense by combining its elements in a different way, "in consequence of a different object" being proposed." That different object is the immediate communication of pleasure. But since a poem is also poetry the communication of pleasure may be its immediate object but is not its whole function. A poem is distinguished from the other arts(which also have as their immediate object the communication of pleasure) by the fact that its medium is language; it is distinguished from works of literature that are not poems "by proposing to itself such delight from the whole, as is compatible with a distinct gratification from each component part." But though a poem is to be distinguished from science, from the non-literary arts, and from other kinds of literature, and its uniqueness can be seen only when we have made these distinctions, it is, like other kinds of poetry (in the larger sense), a product of the secondary imagination, of the "esemplastic power," the unifying power which enables all the faculties to be brought into play simultaneously, each playing its proper part, to produce a complex synthesis of comprehension

From M.H. Abrams' **The Mirror And The Lamp**

- In Coleridge's criticism, accordingly, the imaginative synthesis of discordant or antithetic qualities replaces Wordsworth's 'nature' as the criterion of highest poetic value; and this on grounds inherent in Coleridge's world view. Neo-classic critics, as we know, had often posed the aesthetic norm in terms of a mean, or a proper combination, of extremes. Many of these extremes reappear in Coleridge's list of the kinds of contraries reconciled in poetry, but converted into the new triadic rhythm of thesis-antithesis-synthesis. The imaginative reconciliation is 'of sameness, with difference; of the general, with the concrete; the idea, with the image; the individual, with the representative; the sense of novelty and freshness, with old and familiar objects; a more than usual state of emotion with more than usual order...'(Biographia Literaria). Among other things (and this brings us back to the crux of Coleridge's debate with Wordsworth), the greatest poetry reconciles the opposites of nature and art, and 'while it blends and harmonizes the natural and the artificial, still subordinates art to nature.'... In sum, Coleridge holds that the greatest poetry is, indeed, the product of spontaneous feeling, but feeling which, by a productive tension with the impulse for order, sets in motion the assimilative imagination and (balanced by its antagonists, purpose and judgement and supplemented by the emotion inherent in the act of composition itself) organizes itself into a conventional medium in which the parts and the whole are adapted both to each other and to the purpose of effecting pleasure

Questions

1. Coleridge argues that the parts of a true poem "mutually support and explain each other." Do you think this is true of the words in a good poem, namely, that the meaning of any single word or phrase depends significantly upon the surrounding words, upon the context? Are the meanings of words in a poetic context significantly transformed by that context? Can you give instances of such transformations? Is this a special or unique characteristic of poetic language?
2. How does Coleridge's conception of the ideal poet compare to Wordsworth's?
3. In what respects might Coleridge's statements on poetry and poets constitute a refutation of the Neoclassical (as in Dryden and Pope) doctrine of poetic rules?

Biographia Literaria

1. On what, according to Coleridge, does all knowledge rest?
2. According to Coleridge, "[t]he highest perfection of natural philosophy would consist in the perfect spiritualization of all the laws of nature into laws of intuition and intellect." Explain.
3. What does Coleridge identify as the "true and original realism?"
4. What Coleridge calls, in Chapter XIII, the "secondary imagination," is the creative imagination of the artist. How does he describe the relationship of this power to the world of objects? What characterizes all objects as objects, and how does the secondary imagination differ? What does it do to the world of objects?
5. How is a poem distinguished from a work of science? What is the special nature of poetic pleasure?
6. What is the relationship of parts to parts in a "legitimate poem?" How does a genuinely satisfactory poem engaged the reader's attention with respect to its parts? With respect to the whole?
7. What is the "synthetic and magical power?" In what special activity does this power reveal itself?
8. What are some of the "opposite or discordant qualities" balanced or reconciled by imagination?
9. What is the necessary relationship between the "spirit of poetry" and the "rules?" Are these rules imposed from without, in mechanical imitation of the ancients?
10. Is true genius formless? Lawless? What sort of power defines genius?
11. How is a literary work like a "living body?" What characterizes the organization of a literary work (i.e., an embodiment of the creative "spirit of poetry")?
12. How does Coleridge describe mechanical form? How does he describe organic form?

From *Biographia Literaria,* Chapter (IV)

1. Why S.T.Coleridge praises William Wordsworth?
2. Why does Coleridge think that a distinction be maintained between fancy and imagination?
3. How does S.T.Coleridge respond to Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballads in Chapter IV?

From *Biographia Literaria,* Chapter 13 (XIII)

1. What Coleridge calls, in Chapter XIII, the "secondary imagination" is the creative imagination of the artist. How does he describe the relationship of this power to the world of objects? What characterizes all objects as objects, and how does the secondary imagination differ? What does it do to the world of objects?

From *Biographia Literaria,* Chapter 14 (XIV)

1. *What distinguishes a poem from a work of science or ordinary prose? How does Coleridge further define* poetry?
2. What is the relationship of parts to parts in a "legitimate poem"? How does a genuinely satisfactory poem engage the reader's attention with respect to its parts? With respect to the whole?
3. *What does the poet* do? *What comment, in other words, does Coleridge offer about the value of poets to their fellow human beings?*
4. What is the "synthetic and magical power"? In what special activity does this power reveal itself?
5. What are some of the "opposite or discordant qualities" balanced or reconciled by imagination?

From* Biographia Literaria, *Chapter 15 (XV)

1. What are the characteristics of original poetic genius according to S.T.Coleridge?
2. What attributes of poetic genius Coleridge locates in Shakespare?

From* Biographia Literaria, *Chapter 16 (XVI)

3. What are the striking differences between the poets of past and the poets of Coleridge's time?

From *Biographia Literaria,* Chapter 17 (XVII)

1. Coleridge has his disagreements with Wordsworth about poetic language. What reasons does he give for disagreeing, and what are his own views about the matter?
2. How does Coleridge explain the conversion of Wordsworth's opponents to the views expressed in the Preface?
3. What three-fold objection has Coleridge to Wordsworth's view that the proper language of poetry is 'language taken...from the mouths of men in real life'?
4. What does Coleridge mean when he says that he is compelled to doubt Wordsworth's theory not only a priori but 'from the few instances in which the poet himself need be supposed to have been governed by it'?
5. What does Coleridge believe to be the origin of the best part of language?

From *Biographia Literaria*, Chapter 18 (XVIII)

1. How is the rustic's language different from that of an educated person, apart from the vocabulary
2. What is Coleridge's immediate reply to Wordsworth's assertion that there neither is nor ought to be any essential difference between the language of prose and that of metrical composition?
3. Explain the origin of metre in relation to the spontaneous passion of a poet about to write a poem.
4. How does Coleridge explain the effects of metre?
5. What defect does Coleridge point out in Wordsworth's discussion of metre?

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CRITICAL THEORY

Paper-VI

Section C, D & E

M.A. English (Final)

Directorate of Distance Education
Maharshi Dayanand University
ROHTAK – 124 001

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M.A. English (Final)
PAPER-VI
SECTION C, D & E
CRITICAL THEORY

Max. Marks : 100
Time : 3 Hours

Note: *Candidate will be required to attempt five questions in all, choosing one question from each of the five sections. Questions will be based on the prescribed texts with internal choice i.e., one question with internal choice on each of the units.*

SECTION C
NEW CRITICISM

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FEMINIST CRITICISM AND POST COLONIAL THEORY

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T. S. Eliot Unit-V

(a) Tradition & Individual Talent

(b) Function Of Criticism

Chronology of T.S.Eliot
(1888 - 1965)

1660s	Andrew Eliot emigrated from East Coker, Somerset, England, to Beverly, Massachusetts
1834	The reverend William Green leaf Eliot graduated from Harvard; moved to St.Louis.
1888-1905	T.S. Eliot born in 1888, Lived in St. Louis; spent summer in New England; attended Miss Lockwood's Primary School and Smith Academy; wrote "Byronic" first poems.
1905-1906	Attended Milton Academy, Massachusetts.
1906-1910	Harvard undergraduate and then graduate student (class of 1910); *Harvard Advocate* poems; met Emily Hale.
1910-1911	Paris year; studied at Sorbonne; visited Munich August 1911.
1911-1914	Continued graduate studies at Harvard in Philosophy and taught as an assistant; president, Harvard Philosophy Society; became student (and friend) of Bertrand Russell.
1914	Travelling fellowship to Germany (especially Marburg) interrupted by World War I; moved to Merton College, Oxford ; began close association with Ezra Pound, whose help and sponsorship led to Eliot's early publications and to various reviewing, writing, and editing assignments.
1915	Married Vivien Haigh-Wood
1915-1916	Taught in school at High Wycombe and Highgate; completed thesis on F.H.Bradley.
1917	*Prufrock and Other Observations*; assistant editor of the *Egoist* (to 1919); worked in Foreign Department of Lloyds Bank (to 1923).
1919	Death of his father, Henry Ware Eliot.
1920	*Poems* 1919; *Ara Vos prec; The Sacred Wood*
1921	Summer visit by his mother and sister Marian; health problems and enforced rest; writing of *The Waste Land* at Marburg and Lausanne
1922	Founded the *Criterion*, which he edited with distinction until 1939; *The Waste Land* published; won $2,000 *Dial* award; sent early verse and *The Waste Land* manuscript to John Quinn.
1924	Homage to John Dryden.
1924-1927	First published attempts at drama: Sweeney fragments.
1925	Joined publishing firm of Faber and Gwyer (after 1929 Faber and Faber), of which he was a director until his death in 1965; *Poems 1909- 1925.*
1926	Clark Lecturer, Trinity College Cambridge.
1927	Became British citizen and member of Anglican Church. *Journey of the Magi*; *Shakespeare and Stoicism of Seneca;* "Salutation."
1928	For Lancelot Andrewes; A Song for Simeon; Perch'io non-spero.
1929	*Animula; Dante; Al som de l'escalina;* death of his mother.
1930	*Ash-Wednesday; Marina;* St.J. Perse's *Anabase* (translation).
1931	*Triumphal March*; *Thoughts After Lambeth*; *Charles Whibley: A Memoir*
1932	Sweeney Agonistes: Fragments of an Aristophanic Melodrama;
1933	*The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism* (Norton Lectures) Page–Barbour Lecturer, University of Virginia; Honorary degree (hereafter h.d.) Columbia University.
1934	*The Rock; After Strange Gods: A Primer of Modern Heresay* (Page-Barbour Lectures); "A Dialogue on Drama"; *Elizabethan Essays.*

1935 Major dramatic success: *Murder in the Cathedral; Words for Music; Two Poems* (*Cape Ann* and *Usk*).

1936 *Collected Poems 1909-1935* (included *Burnt Norton); Essays Ancient and Modern.*

1937 H.d. Edinburgh

1938 H.d. Cambridge and Bristol

1939 *The Family Reunion; The idea of a Christian Society; Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats;* discontinuance of *The Criterion*; h.d. Leeds.

1940 *East Coker*

1941 The Dry Salvages; Points of View.

1942 Little Gidding; The Music of Poetry; The Classics and the Man of Letters.

1943 Four Quartets; Reunion of Destruction.

1947 Death of Vivien Haigh-Wood Eliot, after years of illness; h.d. Yale, Princeton, Harvard.

1948 Nobel Prize; Order of merit; French Legion of Honor; resident member of Princeton University Institute for Advanced Studies; From Poe to Valery; h.d. Aix-en-Provence, Oxford.

1949 *Notes Towards the definition of Culture; the Aims of Poetic Drama; the Undergraduate Poems* (unauthorized) *The Cocktail Party.*

1950 *Poems Written in Early Youth* (private printing); h.d. London.

1951 *Poetry and Drama.*

1954 Hanseatic Goethe Prize; *The Confidential Clerk.*

1956 Lectured to audience of about 14,000 at University of Minnesota.

1957 Married Valerie Flecher; *On Poetry and Poets.*

1958 Member of Psalter revision commission.

1959 *The Elder Statesman;* Dante medal (Florence); German Order of Merit; by this time he had received many other honours, including h.d.'s from Washington, St. Andrews, Rome, Munich, Rennes, Paris.

1963 British Museum exhibit in tribute to him.

1964 *Knowledge and Experience in the Philosophy of F.H. Bradley* ; United States Medal of Freedom.

1965 January 4, died in London; burial in East Coker; *To Criticize the Critic and Other Writings;* Kent University college named for him.

1967 Westminster Abbey Poet's Corner memorial unveiled; *Poems Written in Early Youth.*

1968 Missing *Waste Land* manuscript found

1969 *The Complete Poems and Plays of T.S. Eliot* (London only); Browne's The Making of T.S. Eliot's Plays publishes much new material; Gallup's *Bibliography* updated.

1971 Publication of Valerie Eliot's edition of *Waste Land* facsimile and transcript.

1972 Martin's secondary bibliography A *Half–Century of Eliot Criticism.*

1974 Maxwell and Bagchee's *T.S.Eliot Newsletter* (later *T.S.Eliot Review (1978)* and then *Yeats Eliot Review* (1978 -) first published.

1977 Gordon's *Eliot Early Years* publishes important bibliographical materials; *T.S.Eliot Review* publishes Frank, Frank, and Jochum's supplement to Martin's bibliography.

1978 Gardner's *The Composition of Four Quartets* publishes important draft, letter, and biographical materials.

Thòmas Stearns Eliot
(1888 – 1965)

T.S.Eliot and His Age

The twentieth century in its critical theories is not less than a battlefield where the claims of various disciplines, aesthetics and ethics are contested, where men of letters and philosophers are violently disagreeing only to agree secretly. It seems that in thought and technique the ideas of the turmoil and order are chasing each other and none seems to be winning or losing the battle. It is true that with the end of Queen Victoria's reign there came a complete break down of the total life style and patterns of thought and values. Increasing urbanization and industrial revolution brought in their wake their own problems, which led to shattering of the value systems. The effects of the changes in the total atmosphere created the problems of the crowded, smoky and ugly cities, increase in vices and crimes, steep fall in the standards of personal life and sexual morality, and ennui and boredom of city life, its agonizing loneliness and loosening of sex taboos and all that is comprised in *The Waste Land* – the epic of the twentieth century.

As the new century ushered in moral decadence and social unrest on the one hand and the scientific spirit and rationalism on the other gave rise to skepticism and agnosticism. The traditional beliefs were questioned and 'new beliefs' were yet to be born. The very basis of the existing order was passing through a period of uncertainty and contradictions. As James Scott stated " The 20th century has, for its characteristic, to put everything, in every sphere of life, to question and secondly, in the light of this skepticism, to reform, reconstruct, - to accept the new age as new, and attempt to mould it by conscious, purposeful effort."

As Eliot believed that "a great poet in writing of himself writes his age, " it becomes necessary first to understand oneself which means one's emotional needs and perplexities, conduct and motives that are governed by the inner impulses and forces that make Frost say that "it is inside in where you have got to go," only then one can understand the wider unit of place and time called society and age. The complexity of human situation and human behaviour enhanced the significance of the study of psychology since the advent of Freud who emphasized that the power of the unconscious affects our conduct and creativity. Carl Jung and Bergson have carried Freud's formulations to their logical conclusion. The study of the unconscious and the neurosis has had a profound influence on 20th century moral attitudes specially in the matters of sex. Freud and his successors have shown conclusively that suppressed desires and instincts are the root of many neurotic disorders and other behavioural abnormalities. Freud's theory of "the Oedipus Complex" has caused a sensation among the scholars and writers of the 20th century and it is being exploited freely. The study of the subconscious and unconscious is the most recurrent theme of the modern literature. Feelings and intuition has taken the place of the intellect. It has changed the patterns of human relationships as, for example, in the novels of D.H. Lawrence. There are attempts to re-orientate the human relationships but none can overlook its harrowing conscibusness of this phénomenon of the 20th century life, for instance, in Eliot's *The Waste Land*.

If the First World War shattered the faith in socio-cultural patterns, the Second World War smashed the possibility of reorganizing such values. As a result, the sense of family and authority and other manifestations of positive relationships came under the shadow of questioning and revolt. The post-war generation was so skeptical and disillusioned with the power and authority that is became for them a symbol of corruption, as the popular dictum "power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely" shows. The great Depression, unemployment, shortage of all kinds of sources increased the hardships of life, and are responsible for the changing temper of the age that gave man the image of being 'introverted and 'anti- hero.' Even in literature of this period the hero is a person whom things happen, for example take Prufrock of Eliot's poem "Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," who is under the stress and strain, and is an 'anti-hero.' neurotic and crippled emotionally. In that poem the poet projects the same atmosphere which prevails everywhere - an atmosphere full of moral uneasiness and uncertainty having no faith in the given set of values and accepted patterns of human relationship

The gradual weakening of the religious faith lead to the collapse of traditional moral and ethical values which ultimately generated despair and pessimism. New value patterns emerge simultaneously but they were of more secular nature like equality in economic and political systems and cosmopolitanism. They served the global society as they advocated

the relationships between the individuals as well as nations based on the principle equality but there was something still missing, " something which made us weak" as Frost put it in "The Gift Outright." It was obviously the lack of faith and beliefs that sustain us from within. Hence, the writers of the

age were forced to seek refuge from this uncertainty and confusion by building their own , personal system of beliefs and ideals. D.H. Lawrence created a "mystic religion of blood" while W.B. Yeats built up a personal system "out of magic and occultism." T.S. Eliot tried to discover some patterns in the close similarities between myths and religions of different races and European literary tradition. Authoritarianism found its new voice in Marxism based on the concept of economic determinism, which promised a new society, that would replace the existing crumbling set up in the near future. Thus it became the symbol of hope in the early 20th century.

It is an irony that there has been a stupendous rise in the literary output in this age but a visible decline in the quality of life and literature can be easily discerned. The human relationship has been so coarse and commercialized that it appears as if man is no more capable of fine and subtle emotional responses. The writers in their works are extremely conscious of two factors: the social milieu and the need for cultural continuity but in the actual life they seem to be of spurious importance. The proof of which is the constant lowering of taste in personal, social and literary matters.

The persistent spirit of enquiry and questioning has made Twentieth century essentially an age of a bewildering variety of critical theories and practice. Critics like I.A. Richards, F.R Leavis, William Empson and T.S.Eliot have provided unprecedented insights and interpretations of the old writers and thus established their significance anew. There were two important trends in literary criticism: (a) Intellectual, abstract or scientific criticism of Arnold and (b) Impressionistic criticism of Pater, which recommended 'art for art's sake.' Though the critical tradition of Arnold became an all-pervasive force, which assigns a cultural role to literature in the Twentieth century, Pater too has been a source of inspiration for the Bloomsbury group of critics such as E.M.Forster, Virginia Woolf, Lytton Strachey and Cive Bell who believed that the art must be free from the shackles of morality and it should impart delight. These two traditions continued in the early decades of the twentieth century but there emerged another group of the academic critics like George Saintsbury, Edward Dowden, A.C. Bradley, W.B. Ker and W.J. Courthope, to name a few, who laid down the foundation of scholarly criticism by collecting biographical, historical, and socio-cultural information about the author to evaluate the writings of a particular author in the light of the collected facts. Among them, T.E.Hulme was conspicuous champion of the classical virtues. He left a considerable influence on T.S.Eliot. Hulme's point of view is religious, classical, which means being anti-romantic and anti-humanistic. Like the existentialists, he believes that tragedy is the central fact of human life. He advocates the need of order and discipline and pointed out that poetry should express the fleeting impressions of the mind of the poet that can only be done by flexible verse form i.e. *verse libre* or 'free verse.' He also recommended the use of clear, concrete and well-defined images and thus became the major influence on the *Imagistic School* of poetry.

As the social milieu had changed, it appeared that the mankind was facing a tough time in terms of the class struggle and class conflict Karl Marx devoted himself to the study of society in terms of dialectic trends and economic determinism. He became the major influence on the critics like David Daiches and Christopher Caudwell who evaluated many writers such as Shakespeare, Milton, Coleridge and other romantics against the background of the socio-economic changes.

Among other schools of literary criticism, which dominated the scene, was Benedetto Corce's *Expressionistic* theory. He was an Italian philosopher according to whom expression is the formation of a complete image in the mind artist of what he intuits. "Every true intuition or representation," says Corce, " is also expression. That which does not objectify itself in expression is not intuition or representation, but sensation or naturality." In other words, the aesthetic fact consists in the creation, *within the mind,* of a form. For Corce there is only one reality, viz, that which exists within the mind. This is known as *Expressionism.* Such writings are bound to be fragmentary and vaguely sensational because there is no attempt to organize them and they are presented through the consciousness of the poet. Corce had a far-reaching impact on creative and literary activity in England. The theory of *Surrealism* is closely allied with *Expressionism.* This movement originated in France in the 1920s and was a development of *Dadaism.* The surrealists attempted to express in art and literature the workings of the unconscious mind and to synthesize these workings with the conscious mind. The surrealist allows its work to develop non-logically rather than illogically so that the results

represent the operations of the unconscious. Briefly, they explore the territories of the conscious and semi-conscious mind by delving deep into and exploring the private chaos, the individual hell. In doing so they have often experimented with stream of consciousness technique.

As mentioned earlier, the most noteworthy critical development of the twentieth century has been the New Criticism. The most prominent exponent of this school of criticism, which developed in America, were T.S.Eliot J.C.Ransom Kenneth Burke, Allen Tate, Cleanth Brooks, Yvor Winters and R.P.Blackmur. The New Criticism concentrates exclusively on the work of art and directs its focus for analysis and judgment on the text itself. As Walter Sutton affirms

> *"Besides their practice of close textual analysis, the members of this group have been bound by conservatism of their literary, social and political views. They have been hostile toward the physical and social sciences and have avoided ideas and terms from these disciplines, depending rather upon traditional rhetorical and literary sources and their own coinage."*

They believe that the truth or knowledge which poetry or imaginative literature provides is different from that supplied by science. Hence the truth of poetry or art "is apprehended immediately through the contemplation of the aesthetic symbol or icon." Briefly, these critics are conservative in temper and traditional in form. Eliot, who described himself poetically as an "aged eagle", was the most important early influence upon the theory and practice of the New Critics

T.S.Eliot: His Life and Works

T.S.Eliot was English first by descent and then by choice because his maternal ancestry goes back to Isaac Stearns who "had come from England with John Winthrop in 1630 as one of the original settlers of the Bay Colony" and both families were influential participants in what is called "New England aristocracy of ministers and merchants."

In 1834, the Reverend William Greenleaf Eliot, D.D. (1811 – 87), the poet's grandfather, graduated from Harvard and moved to St. Louis, where he founded the first Unitarian church in that city. He also helped found Washington University and in 1872 became its chancellor. He firmly opposed slavery and helped keep Missouri in the Union. He wrote many sermons of considerable repute. Emerson called him a preacher of really good sermons. His contribution to philosophy and the arts is acknowledged across the continent.

Henry Ware Eliot (1841 – 1919), the poet's father, was a man of conservative tastes. He had some talent for painting. In politics he was staunchly Republican, and in all matters conservative. It was hard for him to conceive of a life devoted to experimenting with words. The poet's mother, a woman of keen intellectual interests, was also deeply involved in St. Louis social service. She was largely responsible in reorganizing the juvenile court system of not only the city but also the state. He did not enter the Church but took the brick-trade at St. Louis in which he was very successful. He also wrote poems from time to time which were published and also experimented with "shapes of stanzas and the management of metrics and rhyme" with musical form, with the amalgamation of poetry and religion.

Thomas Stearns Eliot, youngest of seven children, was born on September 26, 1888 at Louis, Missouri, an industrial city in the centre of the U.S.A. The early years of Eliot were spent in following the beliefs of his grandfather and parents, which he found at times 'indigestible.' He was brought up, as wrote to Bertrand Russell in 1927 " outside the Christian Fold." As a graduate student he characterized the Unitarian Code in the phrase "outward and upward forever." When he was a boy of six his Catholic nurse at least once discussed with him about the "existence of God." Thus it is clear that Eliot's grandfather and his mother contributed a lot to his development as a writer, specially as a religious poet. From his father he inherited the business ability, which led him to the bank, and later on to be a successful head of a publishing firm. Eliot's many-sided personality was the outcome of a number of inherited factors.

When he was seven or eight, according to T.S. Matthews, Eliot was sent to school where he proved precocious. His next school was Smith Academy, a private preparatory school where he studied till 1905. He published his first poem "A Fable for Feasters" in the February issue of the *Smith Academy Record,* which his friend John Hayward called a "Byronic exercise." Then he published an arch, light hearted, oral poem and two other poems: "A Lyric" and "At

Graduation" which was recited by the poet on his Graduation Day. In addition, Eliot had three pieces of prose in 1905 issues of *Smith Academy Record*: "The Birds of Prey," " Tale of a Whale," and "The Man Who was King."
At the age of seventeen Eliot was sent to the large campus of Milton Academy at Milton, Massachusetts. Charted in 1798, Milton has long been a proper prep school for Harvard University. Eliot was invited to Milton to deliver the academy's seventeenth War Memorial Lecture later on after winning the Nobel Prize and he was a 'hit' and had 'a Milton cheer for him." In 1897, his father built a holiday resort at Eastern Point, near Cape Ann, in New England, and here the poet passed his school vacations. It was here that the poet became an expert Yachtsman, and consequently sailing images are frequently seen in his works. Near Eastern Point there are three locks known as The Dry Salvages, and a part of *The Four Quartets* derives its title from them.

On his eighteenth birthday, September26, 1906, Eliot's Harvard undergraduate studies began. He remained there till 1910 and pursued a wide-ranging course of studies in language and literature. : the Classics – Greek and Latin, German, French and English literature. In 1937, as Kristian Smidt pointed out, Eliot called Harvard professors Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer More "the two wisest men that I have known." The former influenced him profoundly and gave him a sense of tradition. George Santayana also influenced his *ars poetica*. Among many unpublished poems, there are seven published poems that appeared in the *Harvard Advocate* of which Eliot became the Editor in 1909. In the year 1908, he read Arthur Symon's book *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* and this stimulated his interest in the poetry of the French Symbolists, especially Laforgue. In the same year he met Conrad Aiken, one year behind him at Harvard and they became fast friends.

Eliot graduated from Harvard in 1910, and prompted by his interest in the French symbolists, he went to France and spent a year at the Sorbonne University at Paris, studying particularly contemporary writers. In 1911, from Paris Eliot went to Bavaria, Germany, where he came into contact with important German writers and read their works. He returned to Harvard in the fall of 1911 and studied philosophy, Sanskrit, Pali, and the metaphysics of Patanjali. For the 1912-13 and 1913-14 school years, Eliot was appointed as assistant in philosophy. Though he returned to Harvard to complete his graduate studies in philosophy, his urge to live and write in Europe had been alive and growing for some time. Eliot was a brilliant student and won a gold medal for Latin. In 1913, he was elected the President of the Harvard Philosophical Club. However the very next year took another trip to Germany to continue his philosophical studies.

With the outbreak of the First World War, Eliot had to leave Germany. He came to England and continued his studies at Oxford till 1915. Financial constraint compelled him to take up a teaching job at a school in 1914. From England he submitted his thesis on the philosophy of Bradley for the doctorate degree, but he never returned to Harvard to take the degree. He met Ezra Pound in London in the same year and got introduced through him to the lively literary circles of the London of that time. One of the several reasons of his settling down in London was his marriage to an English girl called Vivienne Haigh in July 1915. She was the daughter of an ex-portrait painter and has been described as "fresh innocent, a chatter-box, pretty." She had a history of illness and "nerves" The marriage proved to be a complete failure. Both Eliot and Vivienne suffered terribly in the process.

In 1917, Eliot gave up teaching and entered the foreign department of Lloyds Bank where he worked till 1925, dealing with "documentary bills, acceptances and foreign exchange." During this period he kept writing also and fell ill due to over- work. In 1918, he registered for the U.S. Navy but was rejected due to his poor health. In 1917-18 he became the assistant Editor of *The Egoist* and contributed frequently to *The Athenaeum*. One of the important assignments of Eliot during his literary life was his editorship of the literary periodical called *The Criterion,* which he continued to edit until 1939, that is the time when the Second World War broke out. He published *The Waste Land* in 1922, which attracted interest for its theme as well as technique. It was widely imitated consciously or unconsciously. In 1925, he had joined the new publishing firm, Faber and Faber, of which he soon became the Director and worked in this concern till the end of his life. In 1927 Eliot became the British citizen, and also joined the British Church, the event marks an epoch in his poetic career. The poems written after that such as "The Journey of Magi" and "Ash Wednesday" are more religious in tone. They reflect his state of mind and thinking about religion. Eliot's reputation as a poet continued to grow. He paid a short visit to Harvard in 1933 to lecture as a visiting Professor. Eliot was deeply interested in drama with a view to reaching wider audience through the theatre. The result was that he wrote the great masterpieces of poetic drama: *The Murder in the Cathedra, The Family Reunion, The Confidential Clerk,*

The Cocktail Party etc. After 1935 his poetry continues to be religious but not so apparently Christian as was the poetry of the earlier period. His last major poetic work is *The Four Quartets.* In the 1930s Eliot became a recognized authoritative figure both as a poet as well as critic. He visited the U.S.A. several times as a visiting professor and continued to publish articles and essays till the last days of his life. His most significant critical writings, which cover the whole range of his creative life, are contained in the following volumes:

(1) The Sacred Wood (1920)
(2) Homage to Dryden (1924)
(3) The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism (1933)
(4) After Strange Gods (1934)
(5) Selected Essays, Third Edition (1951)
(6) On Poetry and Poets (1957)
(7) To Criticize the Critic (1965)

Eliot received a global recognition for his genius when he got The Order of Merit' and 'The Nobel Prize for Literature in 1948. He became an established literary personality of the twentieth century.

Eliot's wife had died in 1947 after prolonged illness. He got married to Valerie Fletcher, his devoted private secretary for several years in 1957. The second marriage was exceptionally successful and happy which brought a transformation in Eliot. The last phase of his literary career is represented by four plays but none of which left an imprint in the history of English drama.

Eliot fell ill in 1964 and his wife was the most affectionate companion of his last days and nursed him tenderly. He died on 4th January 1965 in London leaving a void in the literary world. He was cremated and his ashes were buried in the little village of *East Coker* in Somerset from where his ancestor, Andrew Eliot had migrated to America in the 17 century.

T.S.Eliot as a Critic

T.S.Eliot is a pioneer in modern criticism. He stands in the line of those poet-critics who know the mystery of their own art and can speak with force and conviction about it. Such poet-critics are Sidney, Dryden. Johnson. Coleridge and Arnold. Eliot's rare gift of crystallizing his thought in striking, trenchant phrases has gained for him a wide popularity and appeal. Eliot once remarked that "a great poet in writing of himself writes of his age" and this remark is not applicable to anyone else more suitably than to Eliot himself for his poetry as well as literary criticism which depict the controlling ideas of the mind of the writer in relation to a panorama of the futility and anarchy of the contemporary civilization.

Acknowledging both the merits and limitations of his own literary criticism, Eliot calls it "workshop criticism": the prolongation of the thinking that has gone into the formation of his own verse. His criticism, he says, has the obvious limitation of being primarily relevant to the critic's own poetry. Nevertheless, it is faithful to what Eliot believes to be the function of criticism, which is to promote the understanding and enjoyment of literature. To understand a poem, he explains, it is necessary to "endeavour to grasp what the poem is aiming to be." Eliot acknowledges two preoccupations which, since the writings of Coleridge, have extended the frontiers of literary criticism: the preoccupation with the origins of the poem, and the preoccupation with an intense analysis of its text. His cautious response is to warn us of the misuse of these enthusiasms, and to point out that speculations about a poem's origins or about the intent of its author are likely to put off an understanding of the poem in its own term. The idea to understand a poem "in its own term" led to the most noteworthy critical development of the twentieth century, which is called the 'New Criticism.' The term the New criticism had been used by Joel Spingarn in 1910 and later on by J.C.Ransom in his essay 'Wanted an Ontological Critic,"(1941) in which he announces, " I think it is time to identify a powerful intellectual movement that deserves to be called a new criticism." The New Criticism is devoted to close textual analysis rather than historical scholarship, and it strengths its position by focusing on the theories of poetic language and structure. T.S.Eliot was the most important early influence on the theory and practice of the New Critics. His name was often linked with Ransom, Tate, and their associates during the Twenties and the 1930s.

Eliot is undoubtedly the most commanding figure of the twentieth century criticism in the English- speaking world. He is deeply influenced by the New Humanist tradition presented by his Harvard professor, Irving Babbitt, and from the

imagist school with its varied sources; but other influences also conditioned his thinking. When Ransom said in his book *The World's Body* (1938) that he desired a programme that would be " in manners, aristocratic; in religion, ritualistic; in art, traditional," he was echoing, in Southern Agrarian terms, Eliot's description of himself as "classicist in literature, royalist in politics, and Anglo-Catholic in religion."

Eliot's literary convictions cannot be said to have evolved in any striking sense. Over the decades overlapping notions kept emerging. Approximately his five hundred essays, reviews and published lectures fall conveniently in to three periods:

(a) The pre-Christian decades (1919 – 28) when he was mainly preoccupied with sixteen and seventeenth century dramatists and poets. They appear in his first collection, *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism* (1920) which is a sufficiently unified book partly because the central issues and questions that engage Eliot's mind recur from one essay to another, partly because it illustrates the skill in assembling a collection of fragments to form a coherent whole. The essays of this volume fall into three groups: first, those on criticism, culminating in "Tradition and Individual Talent"; second, those on poetic drama – a subject that was to interest him all his life; and finally, three essays on poets who were significant for him at that time. "His Homage to Dryden: Three essays" (1924) and "For Lancelot Andrews" (1928) are also included here.

(b) The decade of social and religious criticism (1929 – 39) when he got converted to Anglican faith and finally broke away with modernism This period of criticism opens with "Dante" (1929) which is an enthusiastic introduction to the Italian poet. "Thoughts after Lambeth" (1931) is a sensible and moderate comment on the Anglican conference of 1930 but it sets its face firmly against humanism in its conclusion because it attempts to form a civilized but non-Christian mentality. *After Strange Gods* (1934), a collection of three lectures, is the oddest of Eliot's books and certainly the most difficult to justify as it is an attack on the current fashionable society. It shows Eliot's complete break with the dominant impulses of his age.

(c) The post-war Olympian period, which marks a certain renewal of interest in critical, especially dramatic issues, was deeply anti-climatic. *"Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* (1949) reflects a pre-war concern for intellectual values in a stable society. *Poetry and Drama* (1951) and *Three Voices of Poetry* (1953) suggest a spark of enthusiasm, which has its roots in the early essays of *The Sacred Wood.* The dominant tone of Eliot's last essays and lectures is sarcastic and irritable, and the target is usually the very criticism which his own example created though he disclaims the responsibility: " I fail to see any critical movement which can be said to derive from myself." There is not much in twentieth century criticism which does not stand condemned by Eliot in this mood of despair.

Precisely, in these three periods of Eliot as a critic confirm that the whole critical tradition of English-speaking world underwent a mysterious and indefinable change under the influence of T.S.Eliot's writings. Of these phases: first phase is of early exploratory enthusiasm which shows an ideal balance between poetical and critical activity, second phase is where he carries his social and religious advocacy in serious causes and third phase shows a confident and bold assertion of his early creative urge which somehow does not work out and ends in a sense of desperation. The vast critical intelligence that he reveals through his precepts and practice, specially in his twenties, can not be easily codified. He certainly makes literary criticism look different as he offered a new range of rhetorical possibilities. He affirms that historical processes and cultural changes may reshape its notions of a particular period but he distrusts all that goes against his moralistic and authoritarian tone. Eliot invariably relates his critical insights to his aspirations as a poet. It at the same time would be fruitless to look into his poetry for the direct traces of all of his critical thoughts. When he writes that, "a degree of heterogeneity of material compelled into unity by the operation of the poet's mind is omnipresent in poetry," he has in mind the basic assumption of *The Waste Land.* It is the poet's mind that possesses the mysterious unifying force. He repeats in his essay on the metaphysical poets that, " a poet's mind is constantly amalgamating disparate experience. And because of the immense variety and complexity of experience in the modern world, it appears likely that poets in our civilization, as it exists at present, must be difficult."

Thus, Eliot as a critic, whose authoritative statements achieved great currency in the academic circles in his time seemed to give a definite shape to his thinking on the subject of poetry and drama. He took a firm position on most of the writers he dealt with and was largely responsible for the change of taste towards the pots of the seventeenth

century such as Donne, Herbert and Marvell who suffered neglect since Dr. Johnson criticized them unfavourably Eliot had "a gift of phrasing" to use the words of Clive Bell which seem to contain a special idea which made him "a great irritant of thought" - something which gave a new direction to the literary criticism of the 20th century.

In opposition to Spingarn's belief that criticism may be creative, Eliot brought it back to a position ancillary to literature by declaring that it is not an autotelic art. Its end, he added, seems to be the interpretation of works of art and the correction of taste. Its work can be pursued only in collaboration with other studies, especially ethics and theology. Literary standards are adequate to determine whether a work is literature and its greatness, as literature must be measured by other standards. Its function as a corrector of taste, as Eliot told a Paris audience in 1945, includes guardianship of language. As John Paul Prichard rightly says in his book, Criticism *in America, for* Eliot "Literary criticism is a means toward rounded, integrated life, not merely *ancilla theologiae, but ancilla vitae.*"

Eliot's Critical Concepts and Their Practice

Eliot as a critic reacted against the extremes of impressionism and moralism of the nineteenth century literature and criticism, which appeared to be stagnant because it was mainly interested in the immediate moral, social and religious, uses of literature. Besides, its romantic basis was now outmoded. There was an urgent need and desire for revolt in nearly all the critical camps against academic overemphasis upon the background and environment of literature and concentration upon the author instead of the work. Hence Eliot and other intellectual writers of the time declared an allegiance to the idea of tradition and certain fundamental beliefs. In his first collection entitled *The Sacred Wood Essays on Poetry and Criticism,* he reveals certain outstanding features and ideas, which have a great relevance to Eliot as well to those who were influenced by them. In his essay "The Perfect Critic" he sets forth the idea that a fine mind tends to perceive a work in structural terms. "Criticism is the statement in language of this structure; it is a development of sensibility." Two essays in *The Sacred Wood* have been especially influential. " Tradition and the Individual Talent" develops Eliot's idea of past literature as a historical order and that a poet's work must be judged by standards from the past. This should not be mistaken for the application of older canons of criticism; it means that a poet's worth will be determined by the degree to which it fits into tradition. The criticism is directed upon poetry, not upon the poet. The essay sketches the outline of his impersonal theory of art. According to its theory, which is "classical" in its reaction against romantic subjectivism, an individual poem must be judged, not on its own terms, as a unique expression, but by the standards of the "tradition" in which it takes place. The poem is not a "self-expression," the direct statement of the personal emotion of the writer, but rather an impersonal formulation of common feelings and emotions. In this process, emotions, which the poet has never experienced "will serve his turn as well as those familiar to him." Poetry is thus " not turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality but an escape from personality." The art of poetry, according to Eliot, demands a continual surrender to something beyond the individual as he is at the moment. The interaction between the tradition and the individual is the dynamic source of creative writing. Eliot believed that no writer and no critic could in fact work independent of the tradition into which he was born and in which he was educated. The pattern of the literature of the past was an established fact, which the young writer inherited. But it changed with each work of an individual writer: "The existing order is complete before the new work arrives; for order to persist after the supervening of novelty the whole existing order must be, ever so slightly, altered; and so the relations, the proportions, values of each work of art towards the whole are re-adjusted; and this is the conformity between old and new." This attitude is characteristic of Eliot's sense of belonging to an order that has relevance to the immediate scene of action of an individual also.

Consistent with these ideas is Eliot's preference for dramatic rather than lyric poetry. Many of his early essays deal appreciatively with the Renaissance dramatists, while the romantic poets, especially the rebellious and atheistic Shelley, are given short shrift.

In his essay "Hamlet and his Problem" he introduces a term that was to become widely adopted by the supporters of impersonal theory. He says,

> *"The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an 'objective correlative'; in other words, a set of objectives, a situation, a chain*

of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; such as when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked."

For example, Eliot refers to *Macbeth* and says that the dramatist has to convey the mental agony of Lady Macbeth in "sleep-walking scene", and not through an unconscious repetition of her past action. Her mental agony has been made objective so that it can as well be seen by the eyes as felt by the heart. Thus, the external situation is adequate to convey the emotions, the agony of Lady Macbeth. Instead of communicating the emotions directly to the reader, the dramatist has embodied them in the situation or a chain of events, which suitably communicate the emotions to the reader. Similarly the dramatist could devise in *Othello* a situation which is a suitable 'objective correlative ' for the emotion of the hero. According to Eliot *Hamlet* is 'artistic failure' for here the external situation does not suitably embody the effect of a mother's guilt on her son. "The disgust of Hamlet is in excess of the facts as presented in the drama."

The phrase "objective correlative" has gained such wide popularity that Wimsatt and Brooks write, " the phrase objective correlative has gained a currency probably far beyond anything that the other could not have expected or intended." In this essay Eliot, writing criticism, invents poetic metaphors describing the process leading to the production of a poem, and measuring in such a way that it relates the new work of art to the works of the past tradition. Eliot refers to what he calls "the mechanism of the poetic inevitability – the scientific precision of the process.

This phrase has been discussed threadbare by a number of critics and most divergent views have been expressed. For Cleanth Brooks the phrase means "organic Metaphor", for Elises Vevas it is a "vehicle of expression for poet's emotion," and for Austin, ' it is the poetic content to be conveyed by verbal expression." What Eliot exactly means is hard to determine but it is certainly a way of conveying emotion, without direct verbal expression, by resenting certain situations and events which arouse a similar emotion in the readers. It is the way through which a poet, like Eliot, depersonalizes his emotion. In other words, Eliot is adding another dimension to the already existing idea of complicated chain of communication between the artist and his audience. Eliot means that like the words on the page, the objective things involved must act as a sort of code for rendering emotion, imagined by the artist from his imagination to the readers.

In his essay on "The Metaphysical Poets" Eliot has used a phrase that has become the popular cliché. The phrase is "dissociation of sensibility" which is opposite of "unification of sensibility" by which Eliot means "a fusion of thought and feeling," or "a recreation of thought into feeling," or a "direct sensuous apprehension of thought." In other words, it is connected with the idea of "felt thought." The phrase has obtained an importance somewhat beyond the intention of its original context. Talking about Donne, Eliot says: "A thought to Donne was an experience; it modifies his sensibility. When a poet's mind is perfectly equipped for its work it is constantly amalgamating disparate experience; the ordinary mind's experience is chaotic irregular, fragmentary." In the same essay he raises the idea into a theory which is rather less satisfactory. He says:

" The poets of the seventeenth century, the successors of the dramatists of the sixteenth century, possessed a mechanism of sensibility which could devour any kind of experience .... In the seventeenth century a dissociation of sensibility set in from which we have never recovered."

He believes that there was a split between thought and feeling and indicated that this inability to "devour any kind of experience " was due to the influence of Dryden and Milton who in his eyes were below the metaphysical poets and they diverted English poetry from its proper channel.

This general theory is not easy to apply in practice to a number of writers from Donne to the present day though his observation about Donne's unified sensibility is valuable. Eliot himself accepts later in his essay that his theory was "too brief to carry conviction."

Another important critical concept of Eliot, which emerged in his essay on Dante published 1929, is regarding the revival of medievalism. His attention to Dante's letter to Can Grande della Scala about the interpretation of the *Divina Commedia* has added impetus to current interest in the hierarchical principle and allegorical interpretation. During the 1930s he became increasingly preoccupied with social problems, and in 1939, on the eve of the Second World War, he issued *The Idea of a Christian Society*, a tract advocating a return to a class-stratified social order monitored by the hierarchy of an established church.

Eliot has at various times considered the relation between literature and religious dogma and the extent to which belief is involved in criticism. In "Poetry and Propaganda" Eliot distinguishes among "responsible propagandists" like Dante and "Irresponsible propagandist" like Milton, whose viewpoint is that of an eccentric heretic; and a poet like Shakespeare who affects his reader's views, but in such diverse ways that he can hardly be thought of as propagandizing. He rejects more strongly the purist idea or the ideal of 'pure' reaction as I.A.Richards put it. Although he rejects the idea of poetry as knowledge, Eliot concludes that the quality of a poet's belief or philosophy is a factor in the criticism of his work: "We can hardly doubt that the 'truest' philosophy is the best material for the greatest poet; so that a poet must be rated in the end both by the philosophy he realizes in poetry and by the fullness and adequacy of the realization."

In his essay "Religion and Literature" (1935) he treats this subject unequivocally by insisting that orthodox Christian standards be applied in criticism. The essay begins with several proposition elaborated by dogmatic assertions:

> *"Literary criticism should be completed by criticism from a definite ethical and theological standpoint. In so far as in any age there is common agreement on ethical and theological matters, so far can literary criticism be substantive. In ages like our own, when there is no such common agreement, it is the more necessary for Christian readers to scrutinize their reading, especially of works of the imagination, with explicit ethical and theological standards, although we must remember that whether it is literature or not can be determined only by literary standards."*

Eliot suggests that while aesthetic or technical analysis is necessary foundation of criticism, it is not sufficient for final judgment of a work – a final judgment, which would approve or censor its ideas and values on the basis of their conformity to orthodox Christian ethics and beliefs. A problem arises, however, when one considers that even within the Christian faith there is considerable range of opinion on these matters, involving such important questions as the freedom of will and man's moral nature. Though Eliot does not say so explicitly but his standards would undoubtedly be the doctrine of the Church of England. However, those who are not orthodox believe that our "greatest" Western literature derives power and interest from the ways in which it reacts against orthodoxy and generally accepted conventions. Walter Sutton makes a very perceptive remark in his book *Modern American Criticism* that if a "common agreement on ethical and theological matters could be achieved, there would be little occasion for literature as a free inquiry into the conditions of human life."

Briefly, in his critical concepts Eliot's tone is that of a moralist and authoritarian; so is his belief that only Christian elite could be responsible for the moral regeneration of society. And he is so hostile to modern literature, which he considers is "corrupted" by "secularism" — a conviction that human life can be decisively improved through social and economic changes. Eliot rejects Marxism and also shows distrust of science, industrialism.

Nature of T.S. Eliot's Development as a Critic

In his essay "Ezra Pound: His Metric and Poetry," which was included in *To Criticize the Critic*, Eliot wrote in 1917 that " Any poet, if he is to survive as a writer beyond his twenty-fifth year, must alter; he must seek new literary influences; he will have different emotion to express." He has stressed the importance of a writer's development time and again. The primary need is that he has to grow to survive and the secondly if he does so, his works too will have an organic relationship between themselves. As in the case of Shakespeare's plays a distinct pattern of design emerges because he continued to grow. Each play sheds light in two different direction: first the depth of its own text and second on the total corpus of the writer which he calls the writer's "carpet." In "What is minor Poetry" from *Poets on Poetry* he elucidates his idea thus: " I could not say just why I think I understand Comus better for having read *Paradise Lost* or *Paradise Lost* better for having read *Samson Agonistes*, but I am sure that this is so." Like

a poet the development of the critic is also significant. In his own case his development as a critic has not got its due attention. If some critics try to establish continuity in his criticism, others notice a complete break between the early and later criticism. The former group believes that his later critical ideas had their roots in the early criticism. Consequently they are unable to notice the shift in Eliot's criticism from the artistic to theological aspects of literature. However two critics – Vincent Buckley and Fei-Pai Lu – emphasize that when Eliot spoke about the tradition and impersonality they were definitely related to the ethical and theological aspect in literature. Buckley says in his book *Poetry and Morality* that " Eliot's moral interest and sense have not increased; it is only his explicit – and rather disproportionate – emphasis on them that has done so." Here two things deserve especial mention: first the fact that in the early criticism the influence was of Irving Babbitt which is more humanistic than Christian, the second that in the later phase the influence was that of T.E.Hulme which was ethical, moral and even theological.

Studying the development of Eliot's mind, John D. Margolis quotes from Eliot's "Oxford University Extension Lectures" in 1916 roughly around the time he wrote "Tradition and Individual Talent" that

> *"The beginning of the Twentieth century has witnessed a return to the ideals of classicism. These may roughly be characterized as form and restraint in art, discipline and authority in religion, centralization in government.... The classical point of view has been defined as essentially a belief in Original Sin – the necessity for austere discipline. It must be remembered that the French mind is highly theoretical – directed by theories – and that no theory ever remains a merely a theory of art or a theory of religion or a theory of politics. Any theory, which commences in one of these spheres, inevitably extends to the others... The present-day movement is partly a return to the ideals of the seventeenth century. A classicist in art and literature will therefore be likely to adhere to a monarchical form of government, and to the Catholic Church. But there are many cross-currents. Our best procedure is to sketch briefly the relation of politics, literature and religion, and then consider the work of a few representatives of these three interest."*

Eliot, no doubt, had written widely on extra-literary matters before the publication of *The Sacred Wood* but in the first volume of essays he avoided such matters and insisted on their exclusion from literary criticism. However, there is a shift in the degree of importance attached to the morality and ethics in the early and later criticism. Besides, morality and orthodoxy in the earlier criticism are humanistic, or at the most Unitarian, where as in the later criticism they are Christian. Morality for the later Eliot does not mean much unless it has behind it Christian sanctions. In other words, Eliot's later criticism lays emphasis on the Christian experience while "Traditional and Individual Talent" focuses on literary excellence. The later Eliot does not denounce his early critical doctrines but combines them with Christian values. It is in this assimilation of the later Christian preoccupation to the early criticism that one finds continuity in his ideas. Hence it is stated that "Eliot's criticism looked upon as a whole reveals a singular continuity in mutation" to borrow the words of a renowned critic. By which he means that '"Tradition,' ' Impersonality,' and 'dissociation of sensibility,' which are purely literary concepts of the earlier phase of his critical writings take on Christian meanings in the later phase. Hence 'the continuity in mutation' and the continuity as well as mutations both are equally significant. Among the writers who find continuity in Eliot's poetry are R.P.Blackmur, Helen Gardner and Vincent Buckley though there are subtle differences in their approach and meaning. In this connection Stephen Spender makes a subtle observation that continuity does not imply sameness and that continuity is not thematic only. Continuity implies that there is some link between different stages of a writer's development. And the development is not restricted to theme only but includes in its technique also. Spender adds that in his poetry Eliot develops from anthropology to Christianity. Maxwell is also in accord with this idea. Eliot adopts the mythical method on the anthropological structure of *The Waste Land* to work out the underlying theme of the poem, that is, the theme of regeneration of the barren land. Eliot's interest in anthropology was due to his Unitarian background. It is a well -known fact that Eliot drew heavily on miss Jessie L. Weston's *From Ritual to Romance* for which she confesses her indebtedness to Sir J.G.Frazer's *The Golden Bough*. Frazer's attitude to religion is explicitly stated in his chapter on "Oriental Religions in the West." For an anthropologist, Christianity is the continuation of Paganism, though Frazer goes even beyond this parallel and collates Christ and the Budda.

However, the mistake that the Eliot critics have made is to take the Christian myths in Eliot's early poetry as Christian dogmas. They think that every reference to Christ points in this direction of the later Eliot, without realizing that it does not suggest any more than a reference to Paganism, Hinduism or Buddhism. When there is an allusion to Pagan ritual, it is taken as a myth, but when there is a reference to Christ it is taken as a dogma by the critics trying to prove that early Eliot is a Christian, just as the allusions to Hinduism and Buddhism are taken as dogmas by the critics interpreting the early critic as a Hindu or a Buddhist poet. But if we make an attempt to understand the early Eliot through the perspective of an anthropologist, it would become clear that there is no difference for him between one religion and another, and that there are no religious dogmas but only religious myths in his early poetry. Briefly, the Christianity in early poetry is Christian mythology and not Christianity as a religious institution.

The critics like Helen Gardner and Vincent Buckley and Cleanth Brooks look upon *The Waste Land* as covertly Christian poem, Brooks even intimates that "the Christian material is at the centre, but the poet never deals with it directly." Likewise John Holloway, after examining the Hindu allusions *The Waste Land* makes a pronouncement that when Eliot wrote this poem he "was not an English poet and he was not drawing on anything that English culture had given him." Both Harold McCarthy and Craige Raine attach great importance to the Buddhist element in Eliot's poetry and find it "peculiarly illuminating." To conclude the argument it can be said that it is not a Hindu or a Buddhist or a Christian poem as there are no religious dogmas but only myths from various religions employed for evocative purposes. *The Waste Land* is not a religious poem at all, unless Unitarianism or humanism is considered to be a religion.

Eliot's Christian poetry begins after *The Waste Land*. His development as a poet and critic is not from the covertly Christian to overtly Christian but from Unitarianism or humanism to Christianity. If the early poetry uses religious myths, the later poetry deals with religious dogmas. As David Ward remarks in his book, T.S.Eliot, *Between Two Worlds* that "There is a real continuity between his later Christianity and his earlier humanism" and there is no opposition between them. In fact they have many points in common though they cannot be identified as one. Eliot believed that

> *"Every vital development in language is a development of feeling well... An involved style should follow the involutions of a mode of perceiving, registering and digesting impressions which is also involved. For he unified sensibility, which is the medium of personality in the poet, one of the surest of tests is the way in which a poet borrows. The good poet welds his theft into a whole feeling which is unique, utterly different from that from which it was taken. Thus the whole of the feeling into which the good poet welds his theft shows how the emotional pressure of the artistic process dominates its materials. For tradition the use of other poets is intended not to preserve their meaning but to make it contemporary*

This sort of assimilation makes Eliot a poet –critic of the first order who tried to build a wholly adequate system of thought and style that rendered him a much deeper understanding of the nature of art and its value for the society.

Critical Analysis of "Tradition and Individual Talent"

The essay "Traditional and Individual Talent" was first published in 1919 in *The Times Literary Supplement* as a critical article. It is perhaps the most famous of Eliot's essays, which is regarded as an unofficial manifesto of his critical creed, because it contains all those critical principles from which he derived his literary theory. In the later years, he regarded it as an immature expression of his views but none can deny that it retains the vital ideas which have become critical commonplaces for the generations of critics. Though the critic like F.R. Leavis has condemned this essay for "its ambiguities, its logical inconsequences, its pseudo-precisions, its fallaciousness, and the aplomb of its specious cogency," F.W. Bateson regards this essay as " a classic of our criticism, one comparable to Chapter 14 of the *Biographia Literaria* or to Arnold's "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time." Bateson recommends that the essay must be seen in its original text. Eliot's stress on the impersonal theory, which so much offended Leavis, was an inevitable reaction against the pervasive literary climate of subjectivism, inspiration, and self-expression. It appears that Eliot was writing in the minority tradition of modernist tradition then. The metaphorical nature of the term 'tradition' as used by Eliot (for it can be applied to any number of subjects) has not gone unnoticed by the critics like Buckley and Leavis who himself applies the metaphor of tradition to English studies. He argues that "it is only from

the present, out of the present, in the present that you can approach the literature of the past. To put it in another way, it is only in the present that the past lives." Like Leavis, Buckley treats tradition as a metaphor that takes on extra-literary implications in Eliot's later criticism, as is evident from the assertion that "the centre of attention is not now (in the later essays) an objectively existing literary order ('Tradition"), but an equally objective cultural order on which literature depends." It is evident that neither Leavis nor Buckley brings out the complexity of the term "tradition." Eliot begins his essay, which is divided into three parts, by pointing out in the first part itself, that the word "tradition" is generally regarded as a word of censure. The word itself is disagreeable and "vaguely approbative" to English ears. When the English praise a poet, they praise him for those qualities of his work, which are 'individual' and original. As Eliot points out, "Certainly the word is not likely to appear in our appreciations of living or dead writers." This undue stress on the individuality shows that they "pretend to find ... what is the peculiar essence of the man." It shows hand that the English have an uncritical bent of mind; if they endeavour to realize they would feel that the best and the most individual part of the poet's work is that the influence of the writers of the past. To quote his own words: " Whereas if we approach a poet without this prejudice, we shall often find that not only the best, but the most individual parts of his work may be those in which the dead poets, his ancestors assert their immortality most vigorously."

In the book *The Use of Poetry*, Eliot writes about the literary tradition:

> *"From time to time, every hundred years or so, it is desirable that some critic shall appear to review the past of our literature, and set the poets and the poems in a new order... each generation, like each individual, brings to the contemplation of art its own categories of appreciation, makes its own demands upon art, and has its own uses for art."*

It is the same interaction between the past and the present that Eliot has emphasized in this essay. Not only that, it brings Eliot to a consideration of the value and significance of tradition because the production of literature demands much more than talent and merely the desire to produce it. To write a poem one must first try to know about the poems, which have already been written. In the cultural environment in which Eliot was writing, originality had become a norm and there was no general feeling that the work of a poet would anyway alter the existing body of literature. Against this sort of individualistic attitude, he asserted the importance of tradition. But Eliot made it clear that tradition is not an inert academic canon and it does not mean adherence blindly to the ways of the previous generation or generations. It should not be misunderstood as a slavish imitation or passive repetition of what others have done already because "novelty is better than repetition." For Eliot, tradition is a matter of much wider significance. It cannot be 'inherited' and must be obtained by 'great labour.' This labour is of knowing the past and sifting critically the good from the bad. It requires, in first place, 'the historical sense' which involves a perception,

> *"not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence; the historical sense compels a man to write not only with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order. This historical sense, which is a sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal and of timeless and of the temporal together, is what makes a writer traditional. And it is at the same time what makes a writer most acutely conscious of his place in time, of his own contemporaneity."*

This sense of tradition implies three important factors: (a) recognition of the continuity of literature; (b) a critical judgment as to who among the writers of the past continue to be significant in the present; and (c) a knowledge of these writers through hard labour. Thus, tradition represents the accumulated wisdom and experiences of ages and hence it is essential for any great or noble achievement in the field of creative writing. Eliot recommends this as "a principle of aesthetic, not merely historical criticism."

The source of Eliot's theory of tradition has been traced to various writers and critics. They include Gourmont and F.H.Bradeley on the one hand and Arnold, Babbitt, Hulme and Pound on the other. A literary source for the idea of the 'simultaneous order' can be found in Dante also who was for Eliot an embodiment of what he called the 'mind of Europe' and cultural universality. The influence of Arnold is so prominent that he set him like Babbitt against the

Romantics. Besides, there are two common points between Arnold and Eliot: (i) the idea of European tradition and (ii) the idea of external authority to which an individual writer submits in such a way that not merely is he affected by the tradition but the tradition, too, is in turn affected by him. Pound's impact on Eliot was not less decisive as regards the importance of tradition. Both postulate that it is tradition in true sense and not originality that a writer should aim at. However, it is the subtle interaction between tradition and the individual talent that Eliot has advocated throughout his criticism. This in no way means that a new author is to be judged by the standards of the past. The comparison is meant for the purpose of analysis, for forming a better understanding of the new. Actually there are two types of tradition; first, the literary tradition comprehending the entire literary history and second, the tradition evolved by an individual writer. Eliot makes it clear that "The poet must be very conscious of the main current, which does not at all flow invariably through the most distinguished reputation." Which means that even less significant or less explored poets too are the part of the main current and should not be ignored.

Eliot emphasizes further the value of tradition believing firmly that no writer or poet can have any value in isolation and says that the necessity to conform to tradition is not one sided because when a new work of art is created, "something happens simultaneously to all the works of art that preceded it." Therefore, the whole existing order undergoes a change when a new work arrives. And the relations and values of each work of art towards the whole are readjusted. It means the past is also altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past. Thus, Eliot's concept of tradition is dynamic because tradition also keeps changing and growing and altering as the past and the present modify each other. Here it is pertinent to note that if a new work on art merely conforms, it ceases to be new and if it does not conform it loses its value. It has to retain both the qualities of newness as well as adherence to tradition. The great poets like Virgil, Dante or Shakespeare added to and assimilated from the literary tradition and could thus contribute significantly to future poetry.

A serious study of Eliot's metaphor of tradition makes it explicit that the relationship between the past and the present, or, in other words, between the tradition and contemporaneity is the relationship between the whole and the parts. Eliot idealizes this organic relationship that Coleridge had already popularized in his basic concept of organic unity. Eliot implies the unity of the whole and the part as a living organism. The whole, that is tradition, is the organic whole in which each part, that is the individual, is doubly related to the whole as well as to other parts in the whole. As an inevitable corollary of the introduction of a new part to the whole, not only is the whole altered but also the relationship among various parts in the whole undergo a change. Eliot becomes increasingly conscious of organic unity that is employed frequently in the discussions of extra-literary subjects in his later criticism.

Eliot further says that the poet "must be aware that art never improves, but the material of art is never quite the same. He must be aware that the mind of Europe – the mind of his own country – is a mind, which changes.' But this change does not affect the greatness of the writers like Shakespeare or Homer. They retain their significance for there is no qualitative improvement in art.

T.S.Eliot is conscious of the opposition that his theory of tradition may meet.

The objection may be raised even on the ground that it demands a ridiculous amount of erudition or a desirable amount of knowledge before absorbing and understanding the concept of tradition. Then he himself offers an answer that "Shakespeare acquired more essential history from Plutarch than most men could from the whole British Museum." All that is required is to understand that it is the duty to "develop or procure the consciousness of the past" throughout his career. Such an awareness sharpens his sharpens his mind and adds value to his poet creation.

The second part of the essay suggests that an artist must surrender himself to something, which is more valuable than himself, i.e., the literary tradition. In this sense , according to Eliot, "The progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality." Then he goes on to suggest that a poet must undergo the "process of depersonalization and its relation to the sense of tradition." It would help him to acquire greater and greater degree of objectivity that would depersonalize his emotions and passions as is the condition in a scientific study. In other words, it is not the personality of the poet but a sense of tradition that has to be the soul of a poem. This would establish the relation of one poem to other poems by the same poet on the one hand and the elation of the poem to its author on the other.

Eliot defines the process of depersonalization through a scientific, suggestive analogy of the action which takes place when

a bit of finely filiated platinum is introduced into a chamber containing oxygen and sulphur dioxide. The experiences, which enter the poetic processes, are of two kinds; they are human emotions and feelings - the elements that get transformed in the presence of mind, which is the "transforming catalyst" and the personality of the poet is a medium. He says:

> *"The poet's mind is in fact a receptacle for seizing and storing up numberless feelings, phrases, images, which remain there until all particles which can unite to form a new compound are present there..... For it is not the 'greatness,' the intensity of the emotions, the components, but the intensity of the artistic process, the pressure, so to speak, under which the fusion takes place, that counts."*

Thus, the mind of the poet is like the catalyst agent that remains inert, neutral and unaffected; it does not undergo any change during the process of poetic combination. The mind of the poet is constantly forming emotions and experiences into new combinations, but these combinations do not contain any trace of the poet's mind just as the newly formed sulphurous acid does not contain any trace of platinum. In the case of a young and immature poet, his mind and personal emotions may find an outlet in his composition but "the more perfect the artist, the more completely separate in him will be the man who suffers and the mind which creates." Two aspects of human personality, that is, of a man who actively gathers experiences and of an artist who consciously uses those experiences for the artistic creation, combine their roles in the process of creativity. It is interesting to observe that those experiences, which were so crucial and important for a man, may only be negligible for the artist and vice versa. Hence, "the poet has, not a 'personality' to express, but a particular medium, which is only a medium and not a personality, in which impressions and experiences combine in peculiar and unexpected way."

It is, thus, the organization of those experiences, which were chaotic till the artist united them in a new form that makes a poem, and more than the emotions and feelings it is the "intensity of the process of poetic composition" that adds real quality to a poem. "The difference between art and the event is always absolute." Hence, Eliot totally rejects romantic subjectivism.

Eliot makes it clear that the emotion of poetry is different from personal emotions provoked by particular events in life. Even though a poet's personal emotion may be simple or crude, the emotion of his poetry may be complex and refined. When the emotion in his poetry is complex, still it is different from the complexity of emotion of the people. It is a mistaken idea that the poet should seek new human emotions to express as it leads to eccentricity in poetry. Eliot points out that,

> *"The business of the poet is not to find new emotions, but to use the ordinary ones and, in working them up into poetry, to express feelings which are not in actual emotions at all."*

It means that he may express only ordinary emotions, but he must impart to them a new significance and a new meaning. Besides, these emotions need not be personal. Even those emotions, which he has never experienced, will serve the purpose of poetry. Eliot rejects Wordsworth's theory of poetry having "its origin in emotion recollected in tranquility" because it is an 'inexact formula.' In the process of poetic composition there is neither emotion, nor recollection, nor tranquility; there is "concentration, and a new thing resulting from concentration, of a very great number of experiences ...it is a concentration which does not happen consciously or of deliberation." Eliot admits that there is a great deal in poetry which is conscious and deliberate. "The difference between a good and a bad poet is that a bad poet is usually unconscious where he ought to be conscious, and conscious where he ought to be unconscious." Both errors make the poet 'personal.' It is the consciousness of the wrong kind that makes the poem personal, whereas mature poet has the right kind of poise and is impersonal. The poet concludes the argument stating:

> *" Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion, it is not an expression of personality, but an escape from personality. But, of course, only those who have personality and emotions know what it means to want to escape from these things."*

Eliot does not deny personality or emotion to the poet. The only thing he recommends is depersonalization of emotion as a process of creativity.

In the third part of the essay, which is a conclusion, he sums up the discussion. The extinction of personality or

impersonality can be achieved only when poet surrenders himself completely to the work to be done. He says, "To divert interest from the poet to the poetry is a laudable aim: for it would conduce to a juster estimate of the poetry, good or bad." He reaffirms the idea in the end:

> *"The emotion of art is impersonal. And the poet cannot reach this impersonality without surrendering himself wholly to the work to be done. And he is not likely to know what is to be done unless he believes in what is not merely the present, but the present moment of the past, unless he is conscious, not of what is dead, but of what is already living.*

Though the essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent" is marked by an authoritative tone and [illegible] discussion or debate, but the critics have examined its contents and questioned its central beliefs with [illegible] validity. Eliot has been extremely demanding as a critic and the concept of "the historical sense" [illegible] it is the historical sense that denies chronology and conceives of the past as both "the timeless and the [illegible] critics say that it perhaps would have been more precise to call it 'anti-historical sense.' Similarly, [illegible] impersonality has given offence for suggesting that the creative process is a passive and semi-automatic [illegible] argument at the end of the first part of the essay conveys showing how the mind of the poet [illegible] scientific accuracy of the 'catalyst' has been questioned; the mechanical implications of the phrase [illegible] 'receptacle' have been objected to. It appears that Eliot was perhaps intentionally provocative [illegible] public opinion that held the notion of poetic inspiration. He does make his stand clear when he discusses [illegible] view related to the "metaphysical theory of the substantial unity of the soul." However, right at the [illegible] *Strange Gods* Eliot writes, referring to "Tradition and the Individual Talent," that

> *"I do not repudiate what I wrote in that essay any more fully than I should expect to after such a lapse of time. The problem, naturally, does not seem to me so simple as it seemed then, nor could I treat it now as a purely literary one."*

In the light of Eliot's poetic beliefs the essay is significant and insightful.

Critical Analysis of "The Function of Criticism"

The essay "The Function of Criticism," which appeared in 1923, arose out of a controversy [illegible] challenged the opinion of Eliot expressed in "Tradition and Individual Talent" published a few [illegible] an essay entitled "Romanticism and the Tradition." The present essay is Eliot's reply to Murry [illegible] essay Eliot gives in brief the opinions expressed by him in "Tradition and Individual Talent," [illegible] summarizes of the views of Middleton Murry; in the third part, these views of Murry are politely [illegible] concluding forth part, Eliot examines the different aspects of the nature and function of criticism.

Eliot begins his essay, "Function of Criticism," by referring to certain details of the previous essay, "Tradition and Individual Talent," which dealt with the subject of the relation between the new and the old, the present and the past in the world of literature. He feels that the views, which he formulated then, are still relevant and the present paper is an application of the principle they express. In "Tradition and Individual Talent" he says:

> *"The existing monuments form an ideal order among themselves, which is modified by the introduction of the new (the really new) work of art among them. The existing order is complete before the new work arrives; for order to persist after the supervention of novelty the whole existing order must be, if ever so slightly, altered; and so the relations, proportions, values of each work of art towards the whole are readjusted; and this is conformity between the old and the new. Whoever has approved this idea of order, of form and relation in European English literature, will not find it preposterous that the past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past."*

The past works of literature which form an ideal order, "an organic whole" but this order is disturbed when [illegible] work of art appears. There is a readjustment of values, because literary tradition is always changing [illegible] different from age to age. Here Eliot is divided between the view that literature provides its own [illegible] view there are values outside it to be applied. Eliot believes that "A common inheritance and [illegible]

artists consciously or unconsciously; it must be admitted that the union is mostly unconscious." According to him, literary tradition is the outside authority to which an artist in the present must owe allegiance. He must constantly surrender to "something outside' himself in order to have meaning and "to obtain his unique position." It is urgently needed because the artists of all the times are united by the common cause and common inheritance. Only a second rate artist exerts his individuality because his identity lies in the difference and not in similarity with others, the true artist knows the value of conformity and tries to conform; he can afford to forget himself in his work in order "to collaborate, to exchange, to contribute."

Eliot's views on art and tradition directly influence his views on criticism. He attempts to define criticism as " the commentation and exposition of works of art by means of written words." Criticism can never be "an autotelic activity." Art may serve ends beyond itself but the art is not always aware of these ends, while criticism must always profess an end in view and as Matthew Arnold pointed out; these ends may be moral, religious, cultural or social. However, one end is definitely there, that is, "the elucidation of work of art and the correction of taste." In another essay "The Frontiers of Criticism " he elaborates his the aim and purpose of criticism and says " The promotion of understanding and enjoyment of literature." The critic should extends the range of the understanding of a piece of writing rising above personal prejudices and promote the cause of "the common pursuit of the true judgment." The critic should establish a set of principles to decide what kind of books should be preserved, what aims and methods of criticism should be followed. Thus, in the first part of the essay Eliot discusses the problem of establishing the standards of judgment to be applied to literature. He feels that there is a need of co-operation and conformity to certain rules and regulation for the true evaluation of a piece of writing.

The second part of the essay ascertains that there is an undeniable relation of one work of art with another or of 'criticism to criticism'. He discusses Middleton Murry's views on Romanticism and Classicism. Murry takes a definite position and makes clear the distinction between the two. Murry shows that there are at least two attitudes towards literature and towards everything and one can not be classical and romantic at the same time. In this matter Eliot praises Murry but disagrees with him when the former relates the issues to a nation or a race. Murry further says: "Catholicism stands for the principle of unquestioned spiritual authority outside the individual; that is also the principle of Classicism in literature."

According to him both believe in tradition, in discipline, in obedience to objective authority outside the individual. On the other hand, romanticism and Protestantism are related for they have full faith in the inner voice. Murry says,

> *" The English writer, the English divine, the English statesman, inherit no rules from their forebears; they inherit only this: a sense that in the last resort they must depend upon the inner voice. "*

Eliot does not agree with Murry's views. First of all he challenges his authority about the difference between Romanticism and Classicism. For Eliot "the difference seems to me rather the difference between the complete and the fragmentary, the adult and the immature, the orderly and the chaotic." Speaking about the concept of the inner voice he says: " the inner voice, in fact, sounds remarkably like an old principle which has been formulated by an elder critic (Matthew Arnold) in now familiar phrase of 'doing as one like' which is a sign of vanity, fear and lust. Eliot does not support Murry's views that "Classicism is not English" or that English as a nation are romantics and so "humorous" and "nonconformists while "French are *naturally* classical."

The third part of the essay once again begins with the discussion on 'Outside Authority' verses 'Inner Voice' Eliot ironically criticizes those who want "not principles, but men." Such individuals are not interested to find any common principles for the pursuit of criticism. Eliot totally disapproves of the demands of the inner voice and says in a bantering tone: "It is a voice to which, for convenience, we may give a name: and the name is Whiggery." He rejects them for they are not concerned with the 'perfection' in art at all, for they do not want to give any obedience to law, to any authority outside himself or to tradition that represents the accumulated wisdom and experiences of the ages.

The essay which seems to be striving hard to arrive at some principles of judgment for literature enters into the fourth part in which he comments on the terms 'critical' and 'creative. Eliot criticizes Matthew Arnold for having distinguished 'far too bluntly" between these "two activities." Eliot says:

> *"he overlooks the capital importance of criticism in the work of creation itself. Probably, indeed, the larger part of the labour of sifting, combining, constructing, expunging, correcting, testing: this frightful toil is as much critical as creative."*

Eliot further adds that if a creative writer employs criticism on his own work, it would be most vital and the right kind of criticism. Not only that, he believes that "some creative writers are superior to others solely because the critical faculty is superior." Eliot calls such criticism "workshop criticism." Answering the question 'Is [illegible] writing' really 'creative'? he says:

> *"there is no equation. I have assumed as axiomatic that a creation, a work of art, is autotelic; and that criticism by definition, is* about *something other than itself. Hence you cannot fuse creation with criticism as you can fuse criticism with creation. The critical activity finds its highest, its true fulfillment in a kind of union with creation in the labour of the artist."*

He does not recommend any general rule but it cannot be denied that a poet, who knows from personal experience the mysteries of creative process, is in better position to write about it than those who have no such knowledge. He criticizes those "who decry this critical toil of the artist." He calls this tendency as "whiggery tendency." Eliot holds the view that the great artist is an unconscious artist and he conforms to tradition instead of relaying on the 'inner voice.'

Eliot poses a question: "If so large a part of creation is really criticism, is not a large part of what is called 'criticism' really creative?" He then answers it himself convincingly stating: "The critical activity finds its highest, its true fulfillment in a kind of union with creation in the labour of the artist." In other words, he finds it wrong to separate critical and creative activities though it is not possible to fuse creation with criticism exactly the same way we can fuse critics with creation. No writer is self–sufficient and not many writers have a critical activity while other have creative impulse.

Eliot expresses his point of view thus: " the *only* critics worth reading were the critics who practice, and practice well, the art of which they wrote." He then proceeds to consider the most significant qualifications of a critic. The foremost quality, which a critic must have, is "a highly developed sense of fact," which is a rare gift. Eliot believes that "a sense of fact is something very slow to develop, and its complete development means perhaps the very point of civilization." One of the values of the practitioner's criticism, which means that of the poet's own art, lies in the fact that a practitioner has clarified and reduced to a state of fact all the feelings. In his poetry he deals with the facts which he understands and so he can help understand them. Eliot's own criticism is such "workshop criticism" as he terms it elsewhere, and he is all praise for this kind of criticism. In a large part of critical writings there is an attempt to 'interpret' an author, a work. If such interpretation is based on an understanding of a particular creative writer, it is possible to communicate in a true and illuminating sense. Eliot faces another problem and says that it is difficult to confirm the value of such attempt till it is supported by external evidence. The critic gives only his impression of the work, his views, which can be false and misleading. Eliot says: "Who is to prove his skill?....Instead of interpretation we have fiction." Eliot dismisses such impressionistic criticism.

Eliot advances in his views on the fact when he assesses that 'interpretation' is fairly certain when "it is not interpretation at all, but merely putting the reader in possession of facts which he would otherwise have missed. A true critic, he says, knows "the facts about a work of art – its conditions, its setting , its genesis" and puts them before the reader in a simple and easy manner. Thus, it is evident that by 'facts' Eliot means the various technical aspects of the work of art.

According to Eliot "comparison and analysis" are the chief tools of a critic. These tools are to be handled with taste and intelligence, as a critic must know what to compare and what to analyse. He must know the facts about the work of art – the technical aspects like structure, content and theme – and "the fact can never corrupt the taste which opinions and fancy do. Eliot believes that the method of comparison and analysis are superior to the impressionistic methods even though use injudiciously for 'interpretation.'

Eliot's approach of suggesting comparison and analysis as the tools of criticism is meant primarily to oppose impressionistic criticism like that of Coleridge and Goethe who provide opinion or fancy. He believes that the function of criticism is to educate the taste of the reader and to promote enjoyment and understanding.

Facts, however trivial, can never corrupt taste. Eliot also rejects the cult of finding such fact as Shakespeare's laundry bill because they cannot be of any use. He cautions that to be a slave to the fact finding practice is not criticism. Similarly, he warns us against the vicious taste for reading indiscriminately about the work of art instead of reading the work itself. Here Eliot recommends like his successors, the New Critics, the textual criticism.

Precisely, Eliot in his essay "The Function of Criticism" recommends that the criticism should be impersonal and objective based on the facts. In this way criticism can become a "cooperative activity" and "with the further possibility of arriving at something outside of ourselves, which may provisionally be called truth." Such truths are provisional because the truths of one age are modified, corrected and even altered by the truths of another age. Hence Eliot leaves fact, truth or reality undefined. His purpose in this essay is to discover "the possibility of co-operative activity" in the field of criticism. He wishes to extend "further possibility of arriving at something outside of ourselves which may provisionally be called truth." Eliot knows that the realization of truth is always tentative and it is meant only to be used open-mindedly to "find a scheme" which would enhance the possibility of objective and scientific criticism.

Eliot's Critical Achievement

T.S.Eliot is one of the long lines of poet-critics extending from Sir Philip Sidney to the present day and including such names as Ben Jonson, Dryden, Dr. Johnson, Wordsworth, Coleridge and Arnold. Eliot holds a unique position because of his contribution in terms of bulk and quality of his critical writings. He wrote approximately five hundred essays, articles and critical reviews, which have literally changed the course of literary criticism in the English-speaking world. His critics hold a common consensus that despite all contradictions and limitations his statements and practices which mark his development as a critics, he made "English criticism look different" to use the expression of George Watson from his book, *Great Literary Critics.*

He published his first collection of critical essays, *The Sacred Wood* in 1920 and since then he has been the most widely read and discussed critic all over the world. Before one arrives at a conclusion about the development and contribution of his critical career, and showers an unqualified praise at him or disapproves him mindlessly, it is necessary to focus on his weaknesses as well as qualities as a critic.

The main weakness of Eliot as a critic is his attitude; he is pontifical and assumes the role of an authority or a judge who pronounces a verdict on the lesser ones instead of being sympathetic or understanding of other's works. Often his personal prejudices or religious orthodoxy influence his critical opinions and spoil his honest and impartial estimate. In this respect he fails to live up to his own critical theory of impersonality and objectivity. For instance, consider his rejection of Milton or Shelley, which can hardly be termed as sound and insightful literary criticism. When he condemns Arnold as an over-worked inspector of school, he openly indulges in personal vindictiveness. Moreover, his scale of measuring the worth of a critic also changes from writer to writer. In other words, he does not apply the same standards of criticism to all the works under discussion. For Dante he states that the knowledge of the ideas or beliefs of a poet is not essential for an appreciation or evaluation of his poetry while for Shelley he holds contempt for his "repellent ideas."

Another serious problem with Eliot's criticism is his inability to strike a proper balance between art and morality, the kind of balance that has been attained by critics like Matthew Arnold and F.R.Leavis. In his early phase he is preoccupied with technique, and his critical concepts are essentially achievements on the technical level, while in the later phase he devotes himself primarily to focusing on the Christian orthodoxy. Thus, the balance between art and morality is disrupted at one stage by the technical preoccupation and at the other by the religious preoccupation. No doubt art should have some sort of moral vision and concept of morality or moral values. They should be mature and given proper artistic form so that they add strength to a work of art, but when they are introduced as an element of didacticism where the moral elements are directly stated as in his later essays it becomes a blemish. With the passage of time his critical faculties were exercised more on the social problems and on the religious issues. Eliot's religious criterion in *After Strange Gods* is puerile if only because he isolates it completely from the technical excellence. One of the leading critics has rightly observed that,

> *" What one expects a mature critic like Eliot to do is to apply a critical standard which rests on a proper balance of experience and expression. The separation of the two in the*

> *case of Eliot is most conspicuous in his discussion of Ezra Pound who is Eliot's ideal by the early aesthetic standards, and the object of severe attack by the later Christian standards*

The critical attitude of T.S.Eliot has been a matter of controversy among the critics, M.C Bradbrook [illegible] article " Eliot's Critical Method" which appeared in a volume of essays edited by a famous critic B. Rajan that [illegible] early criticism Eliot displays "nervous stiffness and defensive irony while the later criticism exhibits rather [illegible] humility." C.L.Barber in his chapter entitled "The Power of Development," which is included in F.O.Matt[illegible] book, *The Achievement of T.S.Eliot* points out the difference between Eliot's early and later criticism [illegible] former is what Eliot himself calls "a by product of my private poetry workshop," while the latter "has rarely been [illegible] this kind." In his criticism since the later thirties, says Barber, Eliot " returns in several of his pieces to figures who have *not* been sympathetic to him, such as Byron, Milton, Kipling, doing justice, discovering qualities he had missed, with wonderful perceptivity but without the excitement of adding to a whole developing view of poetry." What Barber finds in Eliot's later criticism, Bradbrook discovers in the whole of Eliot. Barber maintains the Eliot is capable of getting over his personal taste in order to appreciate the writers, except for a few, who are very different from himself, and that this capacity is not marred by the progress of his poetry and criticism. This capacity, says Bradbrook, "to appreciate the virtues of writers who are personally uncongenial guarantees his integrity." Eliot continues in his later criticism to look upon poetry and criticism in the light of his own poetry that is later poetry, though at the same he can demonstrate virtues in writers who are very much unlike himself. Thus, it is a mixed attitude that dominated his later criticism, which has vital links with his later poetry, since in both there is a marked religious note.

However, Eliot's limitations do not detract the reader from his greatness as a critic as his criticism offers both a reaction and a reassessment. Through his practical criticism, he has brought out a revaluation of the great literary figures of the past three centuries. This is particularly true of his essays on Metaphysical poets of the 17th century that has resulted in the recognition and revival of the Metaphysical poets in the 20th century; the credit for the renewed interest in the Metaphysical and Jacobean dramatists must go to Eliot. Similarly he has restored Dryden and other Augustan poets to their rightful place in the hierarchy of English writers, In On *Poetry and Poets*, consider for illustration, his essay on "Johnson as Critic and Poet." In his discussion and assessment of Johnson's criticism and poetry he evolves a historical attitude and seeks to explicate Johnson by putting him n the 18th century scenario. Recounting his approach to Johnson in "To Criticize the Critic" published in his volume of the same title in 1969 Eliot writes:

> " *In a lecture on Johnson's* Lives of the Poets *published in one of my collections of essays and addresses* (On Poetry and Poets), *I made the point that in appraising the judgements of any critic of the past age, one needed to see him in the context of that age, to try to place himself at the writer's point of view.* "

Eliot's attempt to place himself at the writer's point of view to do justice to his work is characteristic of the book, *On Poetry and Poets*. In his essay on Byron he says: " It is sometimes desirable to approach the work of a poet completely out of favour, by an unfamiliar avenues." There are writers like Byron, Kipling and Goethe with whom he has not much in common and still he appreciates their virtues by getting over his personal predilections. Eliot praised Byron for his skill as a writer of narrative verse, Kipling for unique position as the writer of verse, and Goethe for achieving a rare combination of spiritual wisdom and poetic excellence. Eliot's essay on Dante resulted not only in a greater appreciation of the Italian poet, but also aroused keen interest and enthusiasm for the latter middle ages. It may not possible to agree with his views in toto, but none can deny that Eliot is highly original and thought provoking. His perfect linguistic command and novelty of thought and expression startles and catches the attention of the reader. According to Eliot the aim and end of criticism is to bring about a readjustment between the old and the new, and his own criticism performs this function effectively. He says, " From time to time it is desirable that some critic shall appear to review the past of our literature, and set the poets and the poems in a new order." He believes that Matthew Arnold and before him Dryden, Johnson and Coleridge were such critics. Eliot's reassessment of the dramatists and the poets of the 17th century remains unparalleled in the history of English criticism. The attempt on his part to place himself at the writer's point of view indicates his critical maturity. The business of a critic is to see what the writer is about in a particular work, and how far he has succeeded in achieving the aim he has set for himself. He should not as the early Eliot frequently does, impose his preconceived notions on the writers under evaluation.

Eliot took a stand against the romantic and Victorian criticism and laid down well-defined norms for the critical assessment. He called himself "a classicist in literature" and his important contribution lays in reaction against romanticism and humanism, which led to the romantic view of the perfectibility of the individual, a faith in the 'inner voice' of man and other secular tendencies. Actually, it was T.E. Hulme who stared this reaction which Eliot carried on. He made it a force to bring about a classical revival in literature, art and criticism. His emphasis upon the 'generalizing power' and upon the critic's need to objectify gives the clue to his special kind of classicism. Eliot wanted the writer to conform to a sense of tradition, a respect for order and so that criticism could be corrective instead of being impressionistic. He rejected the approach of contemporary abstract and intellectual school of criticism also. Eliot believed that a critic must have a highly developed sense of fact and he must judge on the basis of these facts practicing perfect objectivity, impartiality and detachment. He not only raised the standards of criticism but also made it scientific and classical at the same time. By recommending the method of 'comparison and analysis' Eliot contributed significantly to the New Criticism.

Eliot's views on the nature of poetic process are revolutionary in many ways. For instance, take in essay "Tradition and Individual Talent" in which recommends the theory of impersonality and puts forth his revolutionary doctrine that poetry is not an expression of subjective emotions but an escape of emotion, not an expression of personality but an escape from personality. Wimsatt rightly points out in *Literary Criticism: A Short History* that

> *"Such as 'impersonal' conception of art is almost belligerently 'anti-romantic.' It focuses attention 'not upon the poet but upon the poetry.' It thus emphasizes the art object as such. It represents a return to something like Aristotelian theory. Hardly since the 17th century had a critic writing in English so resolutely transposed poetic theory from the axis of pleasure versus pain to that of unity versus multiplicity."*

The relation among the parts that make up the work of art become for him the important matter of investigation. The relationship is conceived to be complex. Eliot even suggests that the work of art is to be regarded as an 'organism,' alive with a life of its own. In the introduction to the 1928 edition of *The Sacred Wood, he* writes:

> *"We can only say that a poem, in some sense, has its own life; that its parts form something quite different from a body of neatly ordered biographical data; that the feeling, or emotion, or vision, resulting from the poem is something different from the feeling or emotion or vision in the mind of the poet."*

Poetry for him is not 'inspiration' but an 'organization.' Likewise, in his essay on Metaphysical Poets he elaborately describes the poetic process thus: "When a poet's mind is perfectly equipped for its work, it is constantly amalgamating disparate experiences; the ordinary man's mind is chaotic, irregular, fragmentary but in the mind of the poet varied experiences are always forming new whole." Perfect poetry grows out of the 'unification of sensibility' instead of 'dissociation of sensibility.' Emotional, intellectual, critical and creative faculties work in unison to produce a great work of art. Eliot attributes a serious purpose to poetry, that is, to elevate the moral vision of man.

Eliot's especial gift of phrasing has helped him to formulate a number of critical concepts, which have been extremely popular in the history of literary criticism. Some of the concepts are of serious critical debates where the critic like Eliseo Vivas feels that Eliot's 'critical approach' can have "devastating" consequences especially his theory of 'objective correlative ' with which he disagrees in his book *Creation and Discovery.* And Yvor Winters objects to Eliot's approach because he makes "the poet merely an automaton." He further says in his book, *Primitivism and Decadence* that "Eliot was too often content merely to reflect the disorder and incoherence of the age. Instead of mastering his experience and judging it, he simply mirrors it. To do this is to fall into what Winters called the "fallacy of expressive or imitative, forms; the procedure in which the form succumbs to the raw material of the poem." Winters may be only partly right in a certain sense so one does not have to endorse to him fully. Among his three critical concepts: the theory of tradition, the theory of impersonality and the theory of 'dissociation of sensibility' the

third has especially gained currency and exercised a far-reaching influence on criticism ever since. The theory of 'dissociation of sensibility' has the soundest footing and invites the attention of the students of literature more intensely than the other two concepts. It is so because his theories of tradition and impersonality are not his original contributions as they were pioneered by Babbitt and Pound. Moreover, tradition and impersonality are important but not the essential qualities of great poetry. The theory of 'dissociation of sensibility' does embody the secret of great poetry because a great poetry is the product of the unified sensibility and can never exist without the fusion of thought and emotion. Eliot has proved through his poetry how the two components can be unified. Hence, it can be said that Eliot's most significant achievement as a critic is his theory of the 'dissociation of sensibility' because it has caused much critical re-valuation and re-thinking. In the words of Frank Kermode, the poet henceforth began "to charge their thinking with passion, to restore to poetry a truth independent of the presumptuous intellect."

Despite the minor disagreements, it remains a fact the Eliot has exerted an all-pervasive and continuing influence on the writers and readers of literature. He corrected and educated their taste and coaxed them to revise their thinking about the nature and function of poetry. It is by prompting rethinking that he has managed to invite reconsideration and revitalization of the poet process on the one hand and reassessment of the poetry of the past on the other. In these areas of criticism Eliot has given new directions, new critical insights and new critical tools, which have made literary criticism objective and scientific in approach and fruitful and inspiring in effect. John Hayward says: "No critic indeed, since Coleridge has shown more clearly the use of poetry and the use of criticism." Precisely Eliot offered a new range of rhetorical possibilities and conceptual ideas brilliantly and is a distinguished critic. His comments on the nature of poetic drama and the relation between poetry and drama have contributed significantly to bring about the revival of Poetic drama in the modern age. Maturity of language, maturity of mind and originality of a creative individual are, according to Eliot, the living secrets of achieving the critical balance. Eliot has made criticism "look different though not in the simple sense ' to borrow the expression of George Watson. Eliot, no doubt, is the most widely read and appreciated critic of the 20th century.

Assignments

Note: Attempt the following questions.

1. What are the major influences on T.S.Eliot's life and works?
2. Examine critically Eliot's concept of 'Tradition.'
3. Why has Eliot's essay "Tradition and Individual Talent" become an epoch-making essay in literary criticism?
4. Discuss Eliot's views on 'impersonality in art."
5. What, according to Eliot, is the function of criticism as elucidated in his essay of the same title?
6. Discuss the aims and methods of criticism as discussed in the essay "Function of Criticism."
7. Write an essay on Eliot as a critic in the light of essays prescribed in the course.
8. Discuss the merits and demerits of Eliot as critics.
9. Write a critical note on "Function of Criticism" showing how it has contributed to 20th century literary criticism.
10. What, according to Eliot, are the major qualities of a critic? Illustrate your answer from the essays prescribed in the course.
11. "In the essay 'The Function of Criticism' Eliot points out that the function of criticism is "elucidation the work of art and correction of taste." Do you agree? Substantiate your answer.
12. " Eliot's concept of tradition is dynamic." Examine the statement and illustrate your answer from the essay, "Tradition and Individual Talent."

Assignments

Note: Answer the following questions in about *two hundred words.*

1. Discuss any two qualities of Eliot as a critic.
2. What do you understand by the phrase "objective Co-relative"?
3. Write a note on Eliot's doctrine of 'impersonality.'
4. Why does Eliot reject the notion of 'inner voice' in creative writing?
5. In his essay "Tradition and Individual Talent" Eliot speaks about "a continual extinction of personality." What do you understand about it?
6. Why should, according to Eliot, a writer have "a highly developed sense of fact." How does it contribute to the critical activity?
7. Discuss briefly Eliot's statement that "Criticism is not an autotelic activity."
8. Why is T.S.Eliot called 'a classicist'? Discuss.
9. Point out any two functions of criticism as suggested by Eliot.
10. What is "dissociation of sensibility" and in which critical essay of Eliot does the term appear?
11. How does Eliot influence the New Critics?
12. Why does Eliot refer to his criticism as "workshop criticism"? What are its qualities?

A Comprehensive List of Books and Articles useful for the Students on T.S.Eliot

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Cleanth Brooks Unit-VI

(a) The Language of Paradox

(b) Irony as a Principle of Structure

Critical Trends before New Criticism

Any literary act presumably has three key players: the author, the text and the reader. M.H Abrams, however adds one more, and that is 'universe' within which these three actors perform and operate. In the first place, according to Abrams, the general orientation of critical theories was **mimetic** .i.e., the explanation of work of art as essentially an imitation of aspects of the universe. Imitation continued to be the prominent term in the critical vocabulary for a long time after Aristotle – all the way through the eighteenth century in fact. The systematic importance given to the term differed greatly from critic to critic; those objects in universe that art imitates or should imitate were variously conceived as either actual or in some sense ideal. As critical debate intensified, the focus shifted from art's relationship with universe to art's effect on audience – effect not as much in psych-analytical terms as in quasi didactic terms of teaching and delight. Abrams terms theories related to the discussion of art as a means to some end as **pragmatic theories** – theories that look at the work of art chiefly as a means to an end, an instrument getting something done. These theories tend to judge the value of art in terms of its success it achieves towards the attainment of its pragmatic ends. With the arrival of what Abrams terms as **'expressive theories'**, the focus of critical interest shifts from audience to artist – artist himself becomes the major element generating both the artistic product and the criteria by which it is to be judged. The exploitation of literature as an index to the personality of the author manifests first in the early nineteenth century. It is in the fourth type of critical orientation – named as **'objective orientation'** – that the work of art is seen in isolation from all the external points of reference, a work is analyzed as self-sufficient entity constituted by its part in their internal relations. The objective theories mark the arrival of what is commonly known as **New Criticism**.

In general, in the traditional phase of literary criticism, the emphasis of critical inquiry was more on author, his biography, his race, his milieu than on the text, its aesthetics, its form or structure. More important than the text was its background, its author's history, the moral imperatives of the age in which it was written. To understand in simpler terms the possible reasons for the arrival of New Criticism on the critical scene, another topology of traditional criticism – different from that of Abrams – is suggested here. This is a conventional frame and is far more elaborative that of Abrams, mentioned above. New Criticism a whole set of approaches often termed as traditional approaches.

Instead of grouping various traditional critical approaches, under four heads – mimetic, pragmatic, expressive and objective – there is another far less overarching frame that suggests about eight to ten approaches that were in vogue prior to the arrival of 'new criticism'. **Philosophic criticism** held that poetry is highest form and knowledge and the sole purpose of criticism is to substantiate and announce this miracle that abides in poetry. The major exponents of this type of criticism were Philip Sidney, Wordsworth, Arnold and F.R.Leavis. **Classical criticism** insisted on looking in poetry the sublimity and restraint of great classical poets like Homer and Virgil. A code or poetics was imposed on the literary work to measure its stature vis-à-vis a classical work. Such criticism was not only authoritarian and closed, it underplayed, which a hard-care neo-classic Johnson later on had to concede, " appeal to nature" as the driving impulse of genuine literature.

Historical criticism located the text invariably in a historical context. Its creative dynamics were determined by this context. Also genetic approach to literary study forms a part of historical approach. Bibliographical approach also forms a part of historical estimate. Historical method found an entrance into literary study through early modern attempts at writing. Literary chronicles – early nationalistic inclinations to look back over certain centuries and to catalogue authors, manuscripts, or printed books, as in the bibliographies of English Literature compiled by Leland, c.1545, Bale 1548 and 1557, Tanner 1748 etc. Hippolus Taine, in his *History of English Literature*, 1864 maintains. "The aim of literary study is to uncover the environmental causes of literature – and these are conceived as taking

under the now famous three heads of "race, moment and milieu". He adds, "What is your first remark on turning over the great, stiff leaves of a folio, the yellow sheets of a manuscript, — a poem, a code of laws, a declaration of faith? This, you say, was not created alone. It is but a mould, like a fossil shell, an imprint, like one of those shapes embossed in stone by an animal, and behind the document there was a man."

Historical Approach subsumes biographical approach to literature. Under this approach the emphasis was more on the biography of the author than on his literary work under study. **Biographical criticism** probes into the life of the poet to search for an explanation of his genius of the distinctive qualities of his poetic achievement. Biography included not just the life story of the writer, but an access to his diaries his letters and other documents written by him in different contexts. The inherent belief behind this criticism was that there is always an authorial presence in whatever he writes, and unless that presence is understood through a first hand study of the author, the work cannot be appreciated in its entirety. Romantic poetry, particularly the poetry of Wordsworth, Keats and other poets, can be approached more meaningfully through an awareness of the life-stories of the poets.

Impressionistic criticism was the most arbitrary form of approaching a work of art. T.S. Eliot took Middleton Murray to task for approaching the literary works on the basis of some vague impressions that he harboured about them, without any logical basis. He took strong exception to Murray's the use of so-called "inner voice" as a critical strategy of appreciating a work of art. Under this approach, the decision for a critic whether a poem is worth examining rests on his first impressions. and then he would care to go into details of the poem. In **moralistic criticism** more than aesthetics, ethics play the decisive role in determining the quality of a work of art. Moral values espoused by work take precedence in the critical analysis of the work. Mere genius or creativity of an artist is of no use unless it combines aesthetics with morality.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Traditional Approaches

The traditional approaches overall had **some advantages** which can be enumerated as below:

1. **Critical free-wheeling is checkmated**. The reader is tied to contain his reading in the context of the historical setting in which the work is created. The text is approached in terms of authorial intensions and larger objective historical contexts, and such a rigorous contextualization of the text does not allow the readers the unwarranted freedom of reading the texts in their own whimsical ways.
2. Such an approach tends to **search for the 'original meaning'** – that is, it tends to track down the immediate source of creative impulse. Since the truth of the text has a topical foregrounding, its true meaning lies in the exploration of the topical parameters of the text. Such an exploration entails a thorough probe into the possible sources of the text. The meaning of the text discovered or arrived at without any reference to the possible sources of its inspiration can be rather arbitrary and therefore totally unintended.
3. The **chances of mis-reading become less**. It has been often seen that some rather inventive readers happen to discover meanings of a text which the author never intended. In the post-structural hermeneutics, reader is given the privilege to create his own text which is taken as no less authentic than the so-called authorly text. The readerly text is designated as co-text. A text can have as many co-texts as it has reader-responses. The value assigned to co-text as no-less a text than the text itself promotes mis-reading. Mis-reading is also accepted as valid approach to reading, it is also heralded as the most fertile way of reading as well. Traditional approaches with their special thrust on a text's contextualization in historical, philosophical and moral terms put a spanner on the arbitrary reading mis-adventures of the postmodern reader. Without a proper historical context, the reading may take directions totally unwarranted in terms of author's intentions.
4. Such an approach fixes **the author's responsibility** to his age and times. The authenticity of the work is measured or adjudged in given space-time frame of which it is a product. The work under study is given a definite context that exists outside it. The external context controls its meaning. The author as writer of secular literature bears the responsibility of what he writes. Only when it comes to sacred or scriptural literature that authorship becomes secondary. Literature being the discourse of the secular domain of human existence must have authorship as an important function of controlling or even owning meaning.
5. Such approaches save literature from pure aestheticism. The **text is placed in a positivist frame** of values

and cultural preferences. Traditional approaches do not approve of the paradigm of art for art sake. art for life sake is a more responsible way of looking at the work of art. Impartial ways of looking at work of only encourage evasion of responsibility. Objectivity in critical response is appreciated only if it is directed towards the reinforcement of normative social behaviour.

6. Since the reader is expected to probe deeper into the historical causes of a text, the whole act of reading becomes scholarly. Therefore the traditional historical approach to a work does **encourage scholarship**. Reading is not an act of arbitrary meaning-making. The exploration of meaning is a scholarly enterprise, which goes beyond the even the micro level close reading of the text. The reader as critic is supposed to undertake a rigorous field work to locate the exact historical circumstances within which a particular work comes into play
7. Instead of measuring the strength of a text in terms of its aesthetic merit or potential, such an approach involves an understanding of other subjects like sociology, politics and history. The approach therefore **promotes inter-disciplinary reading** of the text. Since the 'origin' of text in terms of its historical, sociological, cultural, economic and other such circumstantial factors, reading becomes a multi-lateral discipline – an exercise that goes beyond mere aesthetic pleasure.
8. It is a **pursuit with purpose**. Reading of a text or the act of its interpretation is directed towards the social ends. Reading for the sake of pleasure or aesthetic delight is of no social good. A work of art must contribute in tangible terms to the ethical evolution of society.

But its advantages were far outweighed by its disadvantages. The **disadvantages** of criticism before New Criticism could be listed as below:

1. **Text's autonomy is denied or under-played**. Text is reduced to mere an illustration of a historical happening. The text in itself could be an event is beyond the scope of traditional mindset. Autonomy as a concept is heretical to a traditional thinker, for it entails an independent space – a space which can challenge and subvert the authority of the canon.
2. The critical imagination of **reader is denied its freedom**. In fact there is no faith in the reader's capabilities to understand the text in terms of the text itself. Traditional approaches are so heavily author-centric that neither text nor reader can have any existence of their own. Reader as a player in the literary act has no say, no volition of his own. Author's authority is supreme and final.
3. **Extra-textual concerns overtake** the consideration of aesthetics. Extra-textual concerns would include the religious background of the author, even his physical appearance, his political leanings and class status, the message value of the text, the philosophical truth it contains etc. Ethical imperatives are invoked to run down the aesthetics of the work. The matter becomes more important than the manner. Text is rated high if it is instructive enough and works within the normative limits of the time and space in which it is written. Any text that tends to transgress the given imperatives, howsoever, aesthetically well- construed it is liable to be dismissed or run down in traditional critical parleys.
4. **Text's growth as an organic entity is foreclosed**. If the text is to be studied invariably in the given historical context of its birth, or if it is to be tied eternally to the apron strings of its author, it can never acquire newer significations. It remains frozen in time. Text is invariably dependent on its author; it does not have its will. The traditional approaches never assign an independent growth to the text.
5. Literary text becomes a secondary source of history. **Literary truth is only derivative of the historical truth**. History is believed to be more authentic and tangible than literature. Traditional approaches do not offer us a pure literary analysis of the work. The tendency is to assign literature a sub-ordinate place vis-à-vis history, philosophy, law and ethics.
6. Extra-literary sources are invoked to approach a work of art; therefore traditional approaches are **extraneous to literary merits of the work**. The main disadvantage of traditional approaches is that the scope of reading of a text in terms of the text itself is ruled out altogether. The emphasis is more on the background of the text, than on the text itself
7. 'Old' criticism takes a **monologic view of history, ethics and philosophy**. The contradictions and

within these disciplines are ignored and neglected so as to situate the text in the linear frame. History as we have come to know now is far more problematic than traditional critics could ever imagine, and that contextualization of a text in the history is a far tricky affair than it was ever anticipated. History is not mere background, and that text is more a process than a product o history.

8. There is **no attempt to make an in-depth analysis** of the work. The text is reduced for the purposes of illustration of some historical or biographical truth. Traditional criticism in this sense only promotes a surface-level reading. Instead of dealing with the micro level intricacies of style and artistic manner, the work is reduced to braid theme.
9. The charge of **foundationalism and determinism** is quite valid against traditional approaches as they tend to locater the text in a frame which is already very closed. If morality, for instance, is what literature is read and written for, what is the value of it is style of expression? Traditional criticism is foundational in the sense that it is very determinate and works within a set of principles which are more ethical than aesthetic. The fact that text can inhere opposite forces is beyond the scope of traditional approaches.
10. Traditional approaches tend to be **conservative and backward-looking**. Instead of exploring the alternative truths that a literary work may posit these approaches pin down the quality of the work to its slavish approximation to traditional ideals. The idea that a text can have its own truth, an autonomous status is simply heretical according to traditional standards.

Evolution of New Criticism as a School of Literary Criticism

The origins of New Criticism as a full-fledged movement are diverse. Some of them can be listed as below:

1. First no doubt there was **wide dissatisfaction in America and England**, at the beginning of the twentieth century with the prevailing literary situation. The lack of fulfillment of the great expectations that writers had had for the new century may have contributed to this literary unrest. To many thinkers, literature and criticism appeared to be stagnant amid unparalleled scientific advances and equally significant social changes.
2. Defenders of **imagism also prepared the way of the New Criticism**. Among them Ezra Pound was one of the earliest to indicate the direction of the new study of poetry. Pound insisted that American poets must look at poetry as an art whose techniques are constantly developing. The poets, Pound urged, must study the technical aspects of poetry if they expected their craft to survive and flourish.
3. ***Fugitive*** – a literary journal started in 1920 under the leadership of John Crowe Ransom laid down the foundation of New Criticism as an independent school of literary criticism. The Fugitives were practicing poets. To begin it was a journal devoted to the publication of their poetry alone, and it included critical discussion on the kind of poems these poets were writing. The emphasis was to take a poem and analyze without resorting to generalities. Criticism was their second priority, the primary concern was the publication of 'original' poetry. The 'Fugitive' started showing interest in critical speculations only from its third issue onwards. Ransom's critical review of Robert Graves's *On English Poetry* in the third issue of 'Fugitive' in 1922 set the ball rolling. The contributors to this journal did not pay much attention to general theorizing, as they focused on particular poems with special accent on imagery, technique, style and other such formal tropes of poetry.
4. The remarkable aspect of the 'Fugitive' experiment is that Fugitives who later on came to known as New Critics, came to criticism through poetry, to generalizations in the theory of criticism through their microscopic analysis of the particular poems. The Fugitives had considerable difference of opinion on the future and practice of modern poetry. Particularly the reception of T.S.Eliot's *The Waste Land* was quite ambiguous. Ransom did not like the poem for its overt intellectual padding, Allen Tate on the other hand was quite overwhelmed by it. The publication of poetry in Fugitive was a long-drawn out process – a process of rigorous criticism within the group on the technical finesse of the poem in particular. This is how Davidson – a Fugitive spells out the process: "First we gave strict attention, the beginning to the form of poetry. The very nature of our meetings facilitated and intensified such attentions and probably influenced Fugitive habit of composition. Every poem was read aloud by the poet himself, while the members of the group had before them typed copies of the poem. The reading aloud might be followed by a murmur of compliments, but often enough there was a period of ruminative

silence before any one said a word. The discussion began and it was ruthless in its exposure of any technical weakness as to rhyme, metre, imagery, metaphor and was often minute in analysis of details . . . It was understood that our examination would be skeptical. A poem had to prove its strength, if possible, its perfection in all its parts . . . Any inequality in technical performance was sure to be detected."

5. By focusing their light upon the work itself, New Critics sought to escape from the unlovely aspects of the times in which they were living. Some of the leaders of the **movement belonged to the Southern agrarian group**, who had combated without success the urbanized, manufacturing life of the times. Opposed they were to escapist literature, they nevertheless consciously found relief in sailing with Yeats to Byzantium or speculating with Kant upon aesthetic knowledge.

New Criticism: A General Introduction

From the thirties to the sixties, New Criticism was the dominant activity of university literature departments all across Europe and America. The approach was non-historical, as it dismissed author's intentions and biographical matters as unknowable and/or irrelevant. It brought an armoury of sharp analytical tools to bear on what the poem precisely said to a contemporary reader. Its presiding genius was T.S. Eliot, but the founding fathers were I.A. Richards and William Empson. Richards argued for analysis in the cool, strictly-defined and well-supported language of the sciences. Empson looked into the complexity of literary language, and suggested that poems were often successful by deploying meanings at different levels. Behind lines and phrases lurked many ambiguities and paradoxes, which held the poem together in creative tensions. Further developed by K. Burke, J.C. Ransom, R.P. Warren and Cleanth Brooks. New Criticism looked for three characteristics from poetry. First was self-sufficiency — the poem should be independent of biography, historical content or effect on the reader (which were called the intentional, historical and affective fallacies). Second was unity: the poem should be a coherent whole — a very traditional view. Third was complexity — which was sometimes, though not always, held to be the central element of poetry.

New Criticism advocates the procedures of the descriptive sciences — i.e. be objective, provide evidence and argument. Detailed analysis and scrupulous explication are the hallmarks of proper literary criticism. New Critics maintained that we cannot know the emotion or intention behind a poem' s creation, and it would not help us if we could. All we have is the poem on the page. Social background, literary attitudes and contemporary preoccupations throw interesting sidelights, but do not count towards literary merit. The ' meaning' of a poem is the total linguistic activity of its words — their organization, complex integration, levels of usage, tone, ambiguities, etc. Such meaning is not the meaning of any prose equivalent (paraphrase) and is not to be judged as such. Poems are a special use of language. Their emotive expression cannot be fully distinguished from their apparent expression of facts and opinions. Form is integrated with content: poems have an organic unity, an autonomy that resolves contending aspects, opposite forces within the text. As New Critics, first we look for autonomy, the ability of a poem to stand on its own feet, without the scaffolding of theory, social or historical context, author's intentions or preoccupations. There is not desire to hunt for a work's forbears. The forté of New Criticism was the short lyric in the humanist tradition, and its achievements were always vulnerable to the charge of intellectual ingenuity.

Basic Features

1. New Criticism **privileges the text** over its author. The author used to preside over the text as totalitarian patriarch. Text was invariably approached through its author. The text can have al life of its own was the basic tenet of New Criticism. All attention should be paid to the text, with special accent on its the inner structures which control its from within. A poem can be read and critically approached without even being aware of its writer is and when it was written. The text constitutes its own independent truth.

2. New Critics take **text as an autotelic** artifact – a work that tells everything about itself. Text is a structure in its own right and not being as statement about anything else. It does not require any extra-textual source to appreciate or understand it. No reader has right to read it the way he/ she likes to. Yvor Winters's (1947) significant observation on the autonomy of the text thus: "A poem, on the contrary, be conceived as a new movement of its own, an autonomous movement, which should be rendered as purely and as impersonal

possible. The reader has no more right to revise the rhythms in the interests of what he considers an effective presentation, . . .A poem once set in motion should appear to move of its own momentum.".

3. The formalists try to resist tainting the aesthetic dimension by moralism, didacticism or intellectualism. **A poem is first and foremost a piece of art and aesthetics**. It is not a sermon laced with message. More than the ethical content which the poem may possibly have, the emphasis shifts to the arrangement of ideas and emotions in the poem. The quality of the text should not be tied to its moral value, or didactic intentions. The critical attention, New Critics vehemently argue, should be singularly devoted to the relationship of parts of the text with the whole.
4. Text is an organic entity in which parts are inseparably linked to the whole. **The whole is more important than the parts.** The parts do not have independent existence; they have to merge into the whole. Each part is so intricately involved in the making of the text that it cannot be substituted, altered or even removed from the whole. The relationship between parts and their whole is that of organic bondage, a slight change in the part would affect the entire structure, even may generate an altogether new structure.
5. **Text is autonomous**, and is independent of its author. New Critics therefore isolate text from biographical and other trappings of traditions of all kinds. The author is unwanted third between the reader and the text. Once that text comes into play it goes out of the control of the author, and assumes its own independent organic character. The author and the text he creates become two beings, independent of each other. The authorial intervention is not given extra premium; rather it is seen as an unwarranted interference in the evolution of the text.
6. Text, even a short lyric is seen as a site of **dramatic play of forces**. There is always an internal drama, a plot being staged inside a text, whatever, be the genre of the text is. R.P Blackmur endorses Aristotle's insistence on mastering the plot, as the core structure of a literary artifact thus: "Aristotle was everlastingly right when he observed that evidently the plot was the hardest thing to master, that details were much easier". According to Blackmur, again, "plot . . .is the great non-poetic agent in poetry, and it must be welded (not riveted) into the poem." The plot in New Criticism is not just a frame of a text; it is the core principle of its very being. Crane underlines the organic significance of plot thus: ". . . , that the plot considered formally, of any imitative works, in relation to the work as a whole, not simply a means – a 'framework' or 'mere mechanism' – but rather the final end which everything in the work , if that is to be felt as a whole, must be made, directly or indirectly , to serve".
7. There is emphasis on **close reading** or microscopic analysis. Since New Critics did not rely upon extraneous sources for the elucidation and appreciation, they insisted on looking at the text microscopically. But Ransom rejected this idea of close reading as it is meant only to extract meaning out of the poem is concerned. The closed reading should help in the understanding of the structure and form of the poem.
8. There is an extraordinary concentration on the **text as linguistic construct**. In his article, "Miss Emily and the Bibliographer", Allen Tate countered the scholars by attacking the very definition of 'criticism as an affair of subjective impressions opposed to certifiable facts'. His objection was that such a position limits the study of literature to historical information. The study of literary texts, he argued, could have little validity so long as reading was defined merely as a matter of the subjective response of individuals. The concentration on the text as linguistic construct was offered as a basis for assessing the validity and significance of specific readings. This concentration on the linguistic aspect of a text allowed Tate to distinguish the literary text from its background. He argued that it was not the text which had no meaning except as a transparent expression of its historical background, but that its background only had meaning for literary study in so far as it informed the process of literary production.
9. **Literary truth is higher** than historical truth. Privileging of literature over other discourses. Here Allen Tate's views on the present function of criticism hold an immediate significance. Tate's basic contention is "that the high forms of literature offer us the only complete, and thus the most responsible versions of our experience." The final sentence of his "The Present Function of Criticism", reads thus: "Literature is the complete knowledge of man's experience, and by knowledge I mean the unique and formed intelligence of the world of which man alone is capable." Tate warns us against the intellectual movements like logical positivism, pragmatism, instrumentalism etc. These movements discourage independent thinking and pose a threat to literature and art.

"The function of criticism should have been, in our time, as in all times, to maintain and to demonstrate the special, unique and complete knowledge which the great forms of literature afford us." Of course, here knowledge does not mean historical documentation or information. It cannot be looked as merely one among many forms of social and political expression. Tate criticizes I.A.Richards for using analogies from science to explain his theory of criticism. This he observes is one instance of logical positivism corrupting even I.A.Richards. Of course, Richards later revised his stance and discovered an ordering principle in poetry which science had failed to bequeath to twentieth century human being. Still later Richards goes a step higher and holds that poetry far from being a desperate remedy is an independent form of knowledge, a kind of cognition, equal to the knowledge of sciences at least, perhaps superior. Tate then discusses the role of the Doctrine of Relevance and the attempts to view literature as mere "representations" by historians and social scientists. The essays concludes with typical new critical resolve that "Literature is the complete knowledge of man's experience, and by knowledge I mean that unique and formed intelligence of the world of which man alone is capable."

10. **Language of poetry is different** from the language of prose. The fundamental language unit of science is the concept, and the fundamental unit of poetry is the image. It has been asserted by a number of New Critics that words of poetry differ from those of plain prose or scientific statement in being primarily "emotive", or evocative of attitudes and feelings, rather than directly referential. In William Empson's sense, the essence of poetic speech is not clarity but ambiguity, that the expression in poetry tend to be "opaque" rather than "transparent", and that the statemtns of poetry aim at a "synthetic" unity achieved by fusing , whereas the statements of prose are typically "analytic" , syllogistic reference. "Poetry," we are told in Cleanth Brooks' and Robert Penn Warren's *Understanding Poetry*, "is a form of speech, or discourse, written or spoken"; "like all discourse, [it] is a communication- the saying of something by one person to another person"; but it differs from scientific discourse in being a communication not of objective facts but of "attitudes, feelings, and interpretations" and from such practical discourse as deals with these things in aiming at a superior "clarity and precision of statement." For Professor Pottle, similarly, poetry is "language" or a "kind of speech." It is, he says, "language that expresses the qualities of experience, as distinguished from language that indicates its use." In this strict and theoretical sense, poetry is coextensive with language, but in the ordinary or popular sense of the term, poetry occurs "when the concentration of the expressive element of speech becomes so great that we distinctly feel it to predominate over that other element which we have called the practical or scientific." The general critical position of Ransom is rather different from that of Brooks and Warren, and is explicitly set in opposition to the position of Winters, but he approaches the task of formulating the nature of poetry in essentially the same way. "A poem," he writes, "differentiates itself for us, very quickly and convincingly, from a prose discourse"- the difficulty, however, is to know precisely what the differentia is. It is not "moralism," he says, not "emotionalism, sensibility, or expression," and not "structure proper," since this is "the prose of the poem, being a logical discourse of almost any kind, and dealing with almost any content suited to a logical discourse"; it is rather the "order of content" which distinguishes the "irrelevant local texture" of the poem from its "logical structure", and he concludes by suggesting that the differentia of poetry as discourse is "an ontological one." Poetry "treats an order of existence, a grade of objectivity, which cannot be treated in scientific discourse." And much the same general assumption provides the point of departure for Rene Wellek and Austin Warren in their *Theory of Literature,* in which they characterize the literary work of art as "a whole system of signs, or structure of signs, serving a specific aesthetic purpose," and find that this structure is made up of "several strata, each implying its own subordinate group," from the basic "sound-stratum," through the individual and composite meanings of the words, to the objects represented in the poem and, finally, to its total "philosophical meaning." I.A.Richards denied to poetry any truth of reference and argued that "truth' as applied to a work of art could mean only the "internal necessity" or "rightness" of the work of art; that is whereas scientific truth has to do with correspondence to the nature of reality, artistic truth is a matter of inner coherence. In poetry the endeavour is to create a language of 'absence' rather than of presence – a language in which words negate their objects instead of designating them.

11. **Poetry is the most refined form of expression.** Not only poetry is superior to science and history, it is better than other forms of art as well. R.P.Blackmur while holding poetry to be the "the meaning of meaning", underlines

the wholesomeness of poetic discourse thus: "The words [in poetry] sound with music, make images which are visual, seem solid like sculpture and spacious like architecture, repeat themselves like the movements of dance, call for a kind of mummery in the voice, when read, and turn upon themselves like nothing but written word." According to Allen Tate, "Of all the arts, poetry has a medium the most complex and the least reducible to any one set of correlations, be they historical, or economic, or theological, or moral."

12. **Poetry has a cognitive value.** In other it means that literature is valid and authentic source of knowledge and it may not give us information or factual knowledge, yet it offers us insights and experiences that make us aware of complexities of life. "The poet is merely the scientist who achieves completeness," says Tate. The scientist gives us exact description and observation of the external world. The poet adds to it a description of man's inner life – "a realm that the positivist would never be so bold to invade". The poet's advantages are twofold. Not only does he have access to inner world, he also has the resource of figurative language and also the power of rhetoric. Poetry is "thought and art in one". Poetry and literature bequeath us knowledge, and not, what Tate terms as, "historical documentation and information".

13. **Poetry cannot be paraphrased.** The basic premise of Brooks is that language of poetry is distinct from that of prose for the simple reason that it cannot be paraphrased. Any criticism that begins with the paraphrase of the poem is self-defeating as poetic structure is not a field of plane rationality. Poetic truth rests on the metaphor and the metre—the two components which cannot be reduced to plane statement. Poetry cannot be subjected to logical coherences; instead it is all about what he terms as "imaginative coherences". The unity or coherence in a poem is achieved by a dramatic process which involves a tense juxtaposition of forces through propositions, metaphors, irony and paradox; the unity of a poem is never logical; it rather represents an equilibrium of forces, not a just a formula. Poem is thus seen as a field of forces and stress which as it evolves tries to seek a resolution, a harmonization of these forces. Such is the intricate play of these forces that they cannot be explained or approached in neat clinical terms. What lends unity to the diverse forces in a text is the oneness of experience that governs the total structure of the poem. Any study of poem in parts or in terms of some punch-lines is detrimental to the organic aesthetics of the poem as a whole. So paraphrasing a poem is a heretical act from the angle of aesthetics as well as experience.

14. ***The form is more important*** *than content. Rather form informs and even augments the content.* "Complexity of form is sophistication of content", says W.K.Wimsatt. Method and sensibility are not two disparate things rather method is seen as the very agent of sensibility: "Method and sensibility ought never, in the consideration of a poet, to be kept long separate, since the one is but the agent of growth and the recoding instrument of the other. It is impossible to ascertain the stress of sensibility within the individual and it is an injustice to make the attempt; but it is possible to make at least indications of the sensibility informing that objective thing a body of poetry." (R.P.Blackmur).R.S Crane, more a critic of Chicago School than an exponent of New Criticism, underlines the importance of form in more measured and restrained terms thus: "It is not one of our presuppositions that 'form' in poetry is 'meaning'; we should hold, rather, that meaning is something involved in poems as a necessary, but not sufficient condition of existence in them of poetic form, and hence that the recovery of meaning is an essential prerequisite to the discovery of form though not in itself such a discovery."

15. ***New Critics give more emphasis to organic form than the mere external one.*** *Prior to New Criticism* the word form generally meant 'external form'. For instance, a poem was studied in terms of the use of meter, stanza-formation, rhyme scheme etc. The formalist critic has only a moderate interest in such external parameters of form. He would study external details of the form only if it contributes to the making of the meaning in the poem. The process of formalistic analysis is complete only when everything in the work has been accounted for in terms of its overall form. Organic form is a particular concept important to the New Critics, inherited as it is from the English Romanticism. In the Romantics we find the emphasis on organicism not just in literary forms but in a broader, philosophical context, where the world itself is organic.; objects within it are organisms that interact with each other in a larger organic pantheism, or what some thought to be pantheism, where a breeze in nature may awaken within the persona of the *Prelude* a "correspondent breeze". In the New Critical frame, the

assumption is that a given literary experience takes a shape proper to itself, or at least that the shape and the experience are functions of each other.

16. **Technique alone objectifies the materials of art**. Here Mark Schorer's views on the role of technique in modern novel are indeed pertinent. While countering H.G Wells on his dismissal technique as mere outer formal requirement (The exact words of Wells are: "Literature is not jewelry, it has quite other aims than perfection and the more one thinks of 'how it is done', the less one gets it done. These critical indulgences lead along a fatal path, away from every natural interest towards a preposterous emptiness of technical effort, a monumental egotism of artistry, . . .), Schorer underlines the seminal role that technique plays in the fiction – from Henry James down Joyce and Conrad, thus: " Under the 'immense artistic preoccupations' of James and Conrad and Joyce, the form of the novel changed, and with the technical change, analogous changes took place in substance, in point of view, in the whole conception of fiction. And the final lesson of the modern novel is that technique is not the secondary thing that it seemed to Wells, some external machination, a mechanical affair, but a deep and primary operation; not only the technique contains intellectual and moral implications, but that its discovers them". Technique thus becomes as important as the content is. The content gains novelty only though the mediation of technique

17. More than scientific knowledge of a thing/ situation/ phenomenon, what is more important is its realization, and the realization comes not through reason, but through sensibility. **Sensibility** is the faculty for perceiving what is not reducible to purely intellectual terms – the whole range of man's relationship with his experience. Allen Tate would underline the importance of 'sensibility' thus: "Sensibility keeps us in the world; sensation locks us into the self, feeding upon the disintegration of its objects and absorbing them into the void of the ego"

18. Emphasis on **objectivity** in criticism and impersonality in creativity. M.H.Abrams while giving a synoptic review of critical theories available to us puts various theoretical propositions made by New Critics under the broad category of 'Objective theories'. These theories, he observes, "regard(s) the work of art in isolation from all these external points of reference, analyses it as a self-sufficient entity constituted by its parts in their internal relations, and set(s) out to judge it solely by criteria intrinsic to its own mode of being".

19. Instead of looking for the scientific or rational plausibility of work, the emphasis is on its unified meaning, which some term as its 'total meaning'. Mere scientific truthfulness of a work is no guarantee of good art. In fact **the debate of science versus arts** over their respective claims to the representation of life forms the crux of much of the new critical debate. Ransom, for instance while privileging art over science writes, "Science gratifies a rational or practical impulse and exhibits the minimum of perception. Art gratifies a perceptual impulse and exhibits minimum of reason.". The impulse to abstraction the New Critics saw as the scientific impulse; the impulse to concretion they claimed for poetry. Ransom insists: "the sciences deal almost entirely with structures which are scientific structures; but poetic structures differ radically from these, and it is that difference which defines them. The ontological materials are different, and are such as to fall outside the possible range of science". He further writes that "art deals essentially, though not exclusively, in iconic signs" I.A. Richards also makes a distinction between scientific statement and emotive utterance thus. "it will be admitted – by those who distinguish between scientific statement, where truth is ultimately a matter of verification as this understood in the laboratory, and emotive utterance, where, "truth" is primarily acceptability by some attitude, and more remotely is acceptability of this attitude itself – that it is not the poet's business to make scientific statements." Literary image is supposed to be the very opposite of a scientific illustration or a diagram. Image is at once individualized and immediately expressive of the universals it is created to evoke.

20. Instead of logic and reason, the terms which matter most for the new critics are **'experience', 'sensibility', 'perception' and 'attitude'**. "Logic only comes in, if at all, in subordination, as a servant to our emotional response", says I.A..Richards. Allen Tate's statement in this context is equally pertinent: "The recognition of the action of the unified meaning is the gift of experience, of culture, of, if you will, our humanism. Our powers of discrimination are not deductive powers, though they may be aided by them: they wait rather upon the cultivation of our total human powers." The key words in the statement are 'experience', 'humanism' and 'total human powers'.

21. In many ways **New Criticism is a 'context'-based theory of meaning**. Meaning which for too long was taken to be literal and lexical, under the close gaze of New Critics gathers new dimensions. Words begin to acquire ambiguity, a double-edgedness a rare connotation. The context in formalist criticism lies within the text. In other words 'text' becomes its context, or text and context collapse into each other. Such a 'context'-based theory of meaning has many consequences. First words inter-animate one another. They are qualified by the whole context. Second the problem of meaning –especially the meaning of a poem or drama or piece of fiction – is seen to be matter not easily and summarily determined. It is not enough to seize upon one or two 'statements' as indicating the entire thesis of the text and relegate everything else to the role of ornament or detailed illustration. Statements such as 'Beauty as truth' or 'Ripeness is all' may indeed bear importantly upon the meaning of the whole work and may in some instance summarize that meaning, but not necessarily: they are subject to all pulls and pressures and attractions of the other elements of the work. Third the poet necessarily tailor-makes his language as he explores his meaning. He does not (and cannot) build up the meaning of his sentences as a mosaic is put together of discrete independent tiles. The senses of the author's words are not such 'fixed factors'. Instead what we call the meanings of his words are "resultants which we arrive at only through the interplay of the interpretive possibilities of the whole utterance" (IA Richards, *Philosophy of Rhetoric*).

Process of New Critical Reading

1. Primary input of any literary work is the use of words. New Critics begin their literary probe from this basic constituent of a literary structure. They first read the words in terms of their dictionary meaning. Denotative reading is the first step forward to the connotative interpretation of the work.
2. Second step involves a study of word-groups or what are generally known as phrases. The meaning is gathered at the literal level only.
3. Obviously in a poem or any literary work for that matter, the reading at the literal level does not yield any plausible meaning.Third step involves suspending temporarily the process of individual references until the entire pattern of internal references comes into play.
4. The meaning-relationship is completed only by the simultaneous perception in space of words/ word-groups that have no comprehensible relation to each other when read consecutively in time. Instead of time-logic, it is the space-logic that operates in a literary work. The whole of the text is taken as a space in which words gather meaning not in syntax imposed by the writer, but in very dynamic fluid way. A word or an image thrown or suggested in the beginning may gather meaning towards the end; similarly the last words of a poem may gather meaning in retrospect.
5. New Critics then move on to discover the play of oppositions in the text. The text is seen in terms of the play of binaries which hold the text in a tense frame. These binaries could be binaries of time and timelessness, death and life, silence and sound, darkness and light etc. The common term for such a play of binaries is juxtaposition. New Critics believe that a text is web of juxtapositions that provide the centripetal and centrifugal frame of tension so necessary for its dynamic structure.

Important New Critics and Their Concepts/Critical Tools

Allen Tate:

Tension: Good poems have "one single quality" called "tension". To explicate this term "tension", Tate begins with the proposition that "good poetry is a unity of all the meanings from the furthest extremes of intension and extension." Tension is not used as general metaphor that derives from the lopping the prefixes off the logical terms ex-tension and in-tension. Intension is Tate's metaphor of denotative language, and extension, a metaphor of connotations. Extension is "irresponsible denotations of words"; it is a vague grasp of the 'real' world. Towards the end of eighteenth century a fallacy began to dominate which made poets give up "the language of denotation to the scientists, and kept for themselves a continually thinning flux of peripheral connotations". Good poetry is neither intension nor extension, neither denotation nor connotation; rather it is the tension that these two meanings generate goes into the making of

good poetry. He observes, "The remotest figurative significance that we can derive does not invalidate the extensions of the literal statement. Or we may begin with the literal statement and by stages develop the complications of metaphor: at every stage we may pause to state the meanings so far apprehended, and at every stage the meaning will be different." Clearly Tate does not want poetry to give up denotative meaning altogether because all subsequent interpretations of a given poem take off from this literal meaning. A unity of the literal and the connotative is hallmark of good poetry. According to Tate the state of tension will be produced when the 'extension; and the 'intension exactly balance each other; in other words when the poet uses language in such a way literal sense and the metaphorical sense have equal claims on our sensibility. It is in this kind of use of language that the poetic knowledge is revealed

T.S.Eliot:

Objective Correlative: *Eliot's thoughts about an impersonal art arrived at their most celebrated formulation in an* essay entitled "Hamlet and his Problems". In the essay Eliot made a seminal statement: "The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an 'objective correlative'; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experiences, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked". The phrase 'objective correlative' has gained a critical currency over the years. The very notion of 'objective correlative' puts emphasis on the structural aspects of the literary representation of personal emotions/attitudes. It is through the mediation of a parallel situation either from myth, nature or history that the author provides order to his rather personal and private feelings. The very term –objective correlative — signifies universalization of a personal idea/emotion through a correlated situation. It is through the shared objective correlative that the author and the reader communicate and transact. It is through the objective correlative that the author objectifies his ideas. In this sense, it becomes a technique of indirection. Clearly the terms stresses the role of craftsmanship in literature and in a way proves to be the very poetics of anti-romantic doctrine of impersonality.

John Crowe Ransom

Texture: Ransom drew a crucial distinction between *the texture* and *the structure* of a poem. The texture of a poem is constituted of its rich local values, the quality of things in their "thinginess". The structure is the "argument" of the poem. It gives the poem such shape as it has; it regulates the assemblage of sensory data, providing order and direction. Science has properly speaking, no texture; it is content with pure structure and exhibits no such particularity. A poem, on the other hand, has a texture and a structure. Though the texture is strictly irrelevant to the logic of the poem, yet it does after all-effect the shape of the poem; it does so by impeding the argument. The very irrelevance of the texture is thus important. Because of its presence we get, not a streamlined argument, but an argument that has been complicated through having been hindered, and diverted, and having thus had its very success threatened. In the end we have our logic, but only after a lively reminder of the aspects of reality with which logic cannot cope.

W. K. Wimsatt:

Intentional Fallacy: Wimsatt is associated with two allied terms 'intentional fallacy' and 'affective fallacy'. While explicating the term 'intentional fallacy', Wimsatt underlines the fallacy of approaching a work of art in terms the intention of its author. He argues that "the design or intention of the author is neither available nor desirable as a standard for the success of a work of literary art". "To insist on," Wimsatt, argues, "the designing intellect as a cause of a poem is not to grant the design or intention as a standard by which the critic is to judge the worth of the poet's performance." The emphasis is on evaluating a text in terms of the art of the text itself. The poem, once it is born, is detached from the author at birth and goes about the world beyond his power to intend about it or control it. The poem is public statement. It belongs to the public. It is embodied in language, the peculiar possession of the public, and it is about the human being, an object of public knowledge.

Affective Fallacy: If 'intentional fallacy' is confusion between the poem and its origins, the 'affective fallacy' is confusion between the poem and its results. If 'intentional fallacy' confuses the poem with the intentions of the author, 'affective fallacy' tends to confuse the success or merit of the poem with the emotional and psychological effects it leaves on the reader. In both the cases, the claims of poem as an autonomous artistic text are compromised and even sidelined. More than the intensity of emotions that a poem arouses in its readers, it is the patterning of

various emotions in the poem that matters. In poetry, the emotions are not communicated to the reader like "in infection or disease, not inflicted mechanically like a bullet or knife wound, not administered like a poison", rather they are "presented in their objects and contemplated as a pattern of knowledge". So the thrust of Wimsatt is clearly on the way emotions configure in the poem, it is on the way these emotions objectify themselves.

I.A.Richards:

Two Uses of Language: Most of the New Critics insist on differentiating the language of poetry from that of prose. In this essay I.A. Richards brings forth his theory of "two totally distinct uses of language" by way of explaining the dialectical relationship between the references and the emotions/ appetites/ desires. As long as references remain undistorted by appetites and desires, they constitute a stable language. This is called scientific use of language. "It is merely to assert that so far as any body of references is undistorted it belongs to Science." If reference is interfered with by needs and desires, language thus generated would be emotive. The difference in the references leads to the failure of scientific language. The relations of references must be logical. "They must not get in one another's way," says Richards.

Pseudo-statements: Poetry also makes statements, but these statements do not stand the rigours of scientific probe. Poetic statements, Richards would say, "are the consequences which arise through our emotional organization". Plain logic cannot unfold the complexities of such statements. From a purely empirical perspective, the poetic truth borders on falsehood. The poetic statements therefore are mischievously termed as pseudo-statements. There is fundamental disparity between pseudo-statements as they occur in poetry and statements as they occur in science. According to Richards, "A pseudo-statement is a form of words which is justified by its effect in releasing or organizing our impulses and attitudes; a statement on the other hand is justified by its truth, i.e., its correspondence in a highly technical sense with the fact to which it points".

Synaesthesis: The element constant to all experiences that have the characteristic of beauty , observes Richards , is synaesthesis – a harmony and equilibrium of reader's impulses. Any experience must involve the arousal and interplay of various impulses, but in the experience of beauty Richards contends that our impulses are organized in a peculiar way. In this peculiar organization which constitutes synaesthesis, the rivalry of conflicting impulses is avoided, not by our suppressing impulses, but paradoxically by our giving them free rein. Richards says, "Not all impulses . . . are naturally harmonious, for conflict is possible and common. A complete systematization must take the form of such an adjustment as will preserve free play to every impulse, with entire avoidance of frustration. In any equilibrium of this kind, however momentary, we are experiencing beauty." Synaesthesis is not oscillation but harmonization; the competing impulses sustain not two states of mind but one. In the experience of the synaesthesis, the interest of the reader is not canalized in one direction; rather there is sense of detachment and disinterest. And this disinterest does not stand for withdrawal but it rather entails more involvement. By the equilibrium of synaethesis Richards evidently would suggest not the lifeless balance of deadlock, but the vibrant poise of the completely co-ordinated personality.

Cleanth Brooks:

Heresy of Paraphrase: The basic premise of Brooks is that language of poetry is distinct from prose for the simple reason that it cannot be paraphrased. Any criticism that begins with the paraphrase of the poem is self-defeating as poetic structure is not a field of plane rationality. Poetic truth rests on the metaphor and the metre—the two component which cannot be reduced to plane statement. Poetry cannot be subjected to logical coherences; instead it is all about what he terms as "imaginative coherences". The unity or coherence in a poem is achieved by a dramatic process which involves a tense juxtaposition of forces through propositions, metaphors, irony and paradox; the unity of a poem is never logical; it rather represents an equilibrium of forces, not a just a formula. Poem is thus seen as a field of forces and stress which as it evolves tries to seek a resolution, a harmonization of these forces. Such is the intricate play of these forces that they cannot be explained or approached in neat clinical terms. What lends unity to the diverse forces in a text is the oneness of experience that governs the total structure of the poem. Any study of poem in parts or in terms of some punch-lines is detrimental to the organic aesthetics of the poem as a whole. So paraphrasing a poem is a heretical act from the angle of aesthetics as well as experience.

William Empson:

Seven Types of Ambiguity: Empson discovers the possibility of seven types of ambiguity on following counts:

1. When a word, or a syntax or a grammatical structure, while making only one statement, is effective in several ways at once.
2. When two or more meanings add to the single meaning of the author.
3. When two ideas, which are connected only by being both relevant in the text can be given in one word simultaneously.
4. When two or more meanings of a statement do not agree among themselves, but combine to make clear a more complicated state of mind in the author.
5. When the author is discovering his idea in the act of writing, and not holding it all in his mind at once depends on gradual and slow revelation of the meaning to himself, and let the reader share the adventure of discovery with himself.
6. Tautologous or mutually contradictory or irrelevant statements, so that the reader is forced to invent statements of his own which may be liable to conflict with one another.
7. When the two meanings of the word, the two values of the ambiguity are the two opposite meanings defined by the context, so that the total effect is to show a fundamental division in the writer's mind.

Because the term "ambiguity" connotes puzzlement, Philip Wheelwright has argued that we need a more positive term, and one that will suggest richness of meaning. He proposes "plurisignation" as a positive alternative of "ambiguity"

Advantages/ Contribution of New Criticism

1. **Criticism becomes more scientific**. Criticism does no longer remain a matter of personal choice or eccentricities. Not only the vocabulary from structural physics and botany was employed freely to underline in some measure the proximity of criticism to sciences, the entire exercise of ascertaining the literary merits of a work was done with all the sophistication of an experiment done in the laboratory.
2. Literary criticism acquires respectability. In fact over the years starting from the days of new Criticism, **criticism has evolved into a discipline** with has outclassed all other components of literary learning. Proliferation of literary departments and fellowships is the direct fall out of advances made in the field of literary criticism and literary theory. The take off point remains to be the credo of New Criticism. Almost all New Critics write an essay or two on the function of criticism at present or in future. Such **singular attention on criticism** was rare. Allen Tate in his short essay "The present Function of Criticism" spells out the function of criticism thus "The function of criticism should have been, in our time as in all times, to maintain and to demonstrate the special and unique, and complete knowledge which the great forms of literature afford us."
3. New Criticism marks **the beginning of Practical Criticism** in the field of literary criticism. The essays written by New Critics in practical criticism are always rewarding in the reading for illumination of the poet or poem under discussion, and more than that, for penetrating and illuminating observations on the nature of poetry and criticism. There is matter of thought and something of a fresh viewpoint in these observations and so even if we fail to agree with their critical assessment of a particular poet, our reading is never likely to be futile, because it brings for us matter for thought for many a vacant hour.
4. **Text is liberated from the pressures of external contextualization.** Such a freedom ensures a continuous after-life for the text, as it is not read or tied down within the context of its historical or authorial origins.
5. New Critics while freeing the text from the external context did not allow for its free-for-all kind of reading. Reading had to be responsible to the text. New Critics taught that **literature requires and deserves responsible reading and readable response**.
6. New criticism **liberated reading from the unnecessary burden of scholarship**. The new critics resent the way scholarly critics abandon their quest just where the proper function of true literary criticism should begin. The scholarly critics spend a great deal of their energies in determining the dates of composition, the authenticity of texts, the possible influences on the author a text etc. The new critics instead brought focus of critical analysis back to the text, and its appreciation in terms of its own distribution of and play of forces.
7. Perhaps **the most important legacy of the New Criticism is pedagogical**. It made English courses the

principal vehicle for teaching the average American college student how to read and think critically. It established not only the pedagogical methods by which students were trained, but also the criteria by which members of the profession were evaluated. It provided the lower and middle class students who began to flood higher education in the fifties and sixties (among whom I number myself) with the opportunity for intellectual and imaginative cultivation. It is hard to conceive of a more democratic form of elitism.

8. The New Criticism that Brooks championed seems to have been **a means of coming to terms with the literary modernism** that emerged in the early twentieth century in the writings of Eliot, Yeats, Pound, and Joyce, and in their successors. The criticism of T. S. Eliot, in particular, sought a critical and historical justification for his own difficult and obscure poetry in the French symbolists and the English metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century, and Eliot's revaluation of these poets implied a revision of literary history-or of the literary canon, to put it in contemporary terms. Brooks' achievement was to apply the method of close reading, with its emphasis on poetic tension, or paradox, or irony, to virtually the entire English and American literary tradition, including prose fiction and drama as well as nondramatic verse. His early critical works like *Modern Poetry and the Tradition* (1939) and, especially, *The Well Wrought Urn* (1947) were very influential in this development; but undoubtedly his most enduring contribution to literary education arises from the anthologies he edited for college students in freshman composition and introductory literature courses: *Understanding Poetry* (1938), *Understanding Fiction* (1943) with Robert Penn Warren, and *Understanding Drama* (1945) with Robert B. Heilman. These textbooks all went through more than one edition and influenced the way in which literature was taught for decades. It is important to recall that they were conceived and composed not at Yale but at Louisiana State

9. The most major and seminal contribution of New Criticism is **the resurrection of Donne** as a frontline poet. Metaphysical poetry which was at sidelines of history of English poetry is suddenly catapulted to the centre-stage. Almost all New Critics illustrate heavily from Donne. They favour his poetry as the most accomplished and modern poetry for future generations to emulate and model. Allen Tate in his "A Note on Donne" writes that "For the first time he is being felt as a contemporary". John Crowe Ransom goes all out to assert the originality of metaphysical poetry in terms which are unprecedented: "Metaphysics or miraculism informs a poetry which is the most original and exciting and intellectually perhaps the most seasoned, that we know in out literature, and very probably it has few equivalents in other literatures". Ransom further adds that "the intention of Metaphysical poetry is to complement science, and improve discourse."

10. New Criticism lends **rare structural value to metaphor**. A metaphor is no longer seen as device of outer embellishment or what Wimsatt terms as "mere vividness". metaphor is seen to be more than a mere 'comparison' that illustrates a point, or recommends a doctrine by lending it an attractive colouring. A metaphor is the linchpin joining two contexts, contexts which may be quite far apart and, in conventional discourse at least utterly unrelated. The meaning achieved by a metaphor – and certainly, by the most vigorous and powerful metaphor – is not simply, a prettified version of an already stated meaning, but a new meaning in which imagination pushes itself forward and occupies new ground. "The traditional theory," notes IA Richards, made metaphor seem to be only "a shifting and displacement of words," whereas "fundamentally it is a borrowing between and intercourse of thoughts, a transaction between contexts". Metaphor is not merely a "grace or ornament or added power of language"; it is its "constitutive form".

11. Perhaps the most significant contribution of New Criticism has been that it offers a **simultaneous critique of both scientific positivism and literary scholasticism.** The unprecedented focus of New Critics on the wholeness of the work rejected any critical enterprise which tended to reduce literature into a scientific formula or a piece of historical information. Both scientific positivism and literary scholasticism suppressed not only the autonomy of the text they also suppressed the materiality and productivity of language. Furthermore New Critics in their belief on the autonomy of the text not only asserted the distinct character of knowledge generated from the literary text, but also underlined the limited nature of knowledge generated by the form knowledge associated with positivism.

12. Another significant contribution of New Criticism was it brought in **a new wave of poet-critics**. Most of the New Critics were poets too. R.P Warren, Allen Tate, TS Eliot, RP Blackmur and many more were practicing

poets and in the beginning they had started as commentators on each others poetry. T S Eliot coins the term 'workshop criticism' for this kind of critical enterprise. Workshop criticism is that type of criticism which a poet offers as theoretical perspective to his own poetry in the form of extended prefaces, after-notes or separate essays. Though it would be wrong to assume that the arrival of poet-critics happened only under the spell of New Critics, earlier poets like Coleridge, Wordsworth, Keats, Dryden, Matthew Arnold were also critics in their own right, but New Criticism certainly encouraged this phenomenon because after 1920s there were hardly poets who were not critics. Modern poets often write long introductory notes in their poetic collections, which attain the status of independent critical statements later on.

Cleanth Brooks: General Introduction

Of the younger New Critics the most widely known is Cleanth Brooks, who since 1935 has been publishing critical articles productive of spirited controversy. Brooks sounded his first note for metaphor as the prime characteristic of poetry in 1935. Modern conceits, he charged, are accurate, subtle, not sublimely vague like those used in the nineteenth century and they are intellectual, not merely rapturous. *Understanding Poetry* (1938), by Brooks and Robert Penn Warren, is a landmark in modern poetic study. Though written for undergraduates, its clear, concise expression has stated for critics also the authors' view of the proper approach to poetry. The poem, they assert, must be grasped as a literary object before it can be otherwise considered. Though paraphrase, biographical study, and inspirational or didactic interpretation may be means to its understanding, they do not singly or together reach the whole poem. Nor does the scientific view of objects explain poetry, for literature treats of materials different from those of science. It aims at precise statement of attitudes, feelings, and interpretations that ordinary viewing of objects at best vaguely suggests. A poem proves itself by its effect, and its effect arises not out of the things used but from the poet's use of them.

Irony as a Principle of Structure
A Critical Exposition

Right in the very opening line of the essay, Cleanth Brooks makes a very strong statement in favour of the metaphor. He says: "One can sum up modern poetic technique by calling it the rediscovery of metaphor and the full commitment to metaphor." The term "rediscovery of metaphor" calls for explanation. Clearly "metaphor" earlier practiced as mere accessory to the poetic experience as a whole is not what Brooks wants to revive or restore. The emphasis is on the 'rediscovery' of this conventional device of figurative expression. Rediscovery is not just uncritical revival. The process of rediscovery is far more creative and innovative. Metaphor which was shunned by the modern critical mind for its arbitrary and overarching semantics, becomes crucial to Brooks as a key frame to understand and approach the entire modern poetic edifice. The rediscovered metaphor is called upon to serve larger functional purpose in the poetic articulation. It has to be the integral inner part of the poetic form. Brooks insists on "the full commitment to metaphor". This implies that metaphor as a device is to be internalized and not just imposed on the poetic experience from outside. "Full commitment" means no half-hearted or mechanically engineered attempt at the deployment of metaphor in a poem. Such a commitment entails total merger of form with experience. Metaphor stands rediscovered it effects this merger of the form with the content. It goes into the very making or structuring of the experience. Without metaphor, the experience can collapse, and without experience, metaphor cannot come into play.

Another significant aspect of this statement is Brooks's categorical assertion that 'metaphor' is the sum total of 'modern' poetic technique. Is metaphor 'modern' or can it be 'modern'? Modernity is least figurative. 'Un-rediscovered' Metaphor oversimplifies reality, modernity is all about complexity. Metaphor is discovering similarities in things dissimilar, modernity is discovering things dissimilar in things similar. Metaphor and modernity therefore are two incompatible forms/ experiences, and if the former has to become the poetics of the latter, it has to undergo transformations. Re-discovered metaphor is transformed metaphor – a metaphor which instead of reducing complex reality into simple analogical perceptions unleashes new significations in the expression. Metaphor becomes a befitting poetic of modernity if it rises to the subtle textuality of the experience without compromise.

What really redeems the disapproved metaphor is its capacity to concretize the experience. Metaphor with its tangible details makes the expression of the universal and the abstract humanly possible. The poets have the tendency to

plunge directly into the zone of the nebulous universal. Metaphors, this worldly as they are, pin down the poetic fancy to a level which is real and human. The universal has to be attained through the particular and the specific. Rather the universal must issue forth from the particular. Arriving at the abstract involves an encounter with the real and the concrete. Brooks endorses metaphor for its capacity to particularize the poetic experience. The effort of the poet must be directed towards the working out of the metaphor. Message should not precede metaphor, rather it must emanate from it. Ideally there should not be any gap or lag between meaning and form, syntax and semantics. Brooks deliberately employs the metaphysical term 'realization' in relation to the working out of the details of the metaphor. Obviously, discovering metaphor is not a mechanical enterprise, it is a quasi-spiritual exercise. Details are to be 'realized'. Brooks uses another metaphysical term 'attain' to describe the process of meaning to form. This kind of terminology is usually invoked to account for divine experiences. This once again proves that in New Criticism, the poetic process is a process no less than a spiritual exercise for it demands an organic relationship between message and metaphor.

The poetic process covers four phases: i. establishing the concrete details of experience, ii. abiding by the details, iii. realizing the details, and finally attaining the general meaning. A discernible critic/reader consequently has to locate or decipher the meaning of a poem at all these four levels. Meaning is not a one-time event in a poem, it flows and evolves in the text. The poetic process thus becomes a frame for critical process too. The meaning or what Brooks calls 'general meaning' has to be arrived at dynamically through a process, it is not stated explicitly or is never available in a poem in the form of a statement. New Critics always make a distinction between 'meaning as product' and 'meaning as process'. The former operates in prose, the latter belongs to the domain of poetry. The language of poetry therefore is not the same as that of prose. The language of prose is stable, concrete and definite; the language of poetry is dynamic and ever-evolving.

A text is a site of play of forces, which counterbalance each other within its body so as to make it functional and dynamic from within. Metaphor pulls down the high-flying paper fancies of the poet thus engendering a necessary balance within the entire experience or its expression, lest it is crazily blown around in the wind. This tension between idea and its form, matter and its manner, content and its structure constitutes the basic frame of forces within a text. Brooks gives the analogy of kite and its tail. A kite cannot take off unless it is pulled downwards by a long tail. 'Kite' stands for abstract idea and 'tail' stands for its downward concrete pull. This kind of usage of analogies is very common in New Criticism. A textual experience is an analogical experience. Analogy, they believe, lends impersonality and objectivity in description.

Despite its downward pulling thrust, it is tail that facilitates the kite to ascend and float in the sky. Brooks assigns the role of tail to a metaphor in a poetic expression. Metaphor with its anchoring in the concrete does not let the poetic ideas go astray. Like tail in the kite, metaphor is a functional unit of the poetic whole. If tail gets unwieldy and too disproportionate to the size of kite, it is very much possible that it would not let the kite take off at all. Similarly, if metaphors are not carefully established, they might mar or obscure the poetic experience altogether. Yet, Brooks would like to the poets to take the risk of employing metaphors. Saying partially is any day a better proposition than saying nothing. Instead of making abstract statement, it is better to articulate them through metaphors. Metaphors though work contrary to the upward nature of the idea, yet they are perceived to be vitally functional to the poetic expression. Metaphor redeems the poetry from lapsing into direct statemen

Metaphor ensures necessary indirection in meaning. The indirection is not mere a twist in meaning. It is rather the controlling and the co-ordinating structure of the meaning. Metaphor as an instrument of indirection is not mere a decorative attribute of the poem. It is the poem, its meaning and form as a whole. Brooks employs yet another very interesting analogy to underscore the functional significance of metaphor in the poem. The poem is not a bouquet in which an assortment of flowers is arranged in a particular setting. In other words a poem is not an arrangement of ideas, or an assembly of various components. Brooks invokes yet another contrasting analogy through which a poem is compared to a tree on which flowers grow and blossom organically. This is quite akin to the position of the romanticists who hold the poetic process as organic as that of leaves coming to a tree. Metaphor or the indirection realized through it must stem from the roots of the experience. A poem is a tree in its entirety, it is not mere flowers, it is roots, stalk, leaves – every component has to participate organically in the experience.

Brooks employs yet another analogy, this time from the field of literature itself. He compares a poem to a little drama wherein various emotions come into play to resolve ultimately into a wholesome effect. The comparison has deep ramifications for one it engenders element of dialogism in the art of poetry, it also dissolves differences between genres. Poetry, hitherto, is taken as a monologic statement, it is perceived as a monologue, a one-sided personalized account of an event/ emotion. It is widely believed that poetry cannot entertain opposing impulses. Brooks thus redeems poetry by way of locating a mini-drama within its text. A poem becomes the very site of action and counter-action. Be it a poem or a drama, the bottom-line of New Critical practice is to approach a text in terms of play of contradictory forces/ emotions that evolve towards their delicate synthesis as artistic climax.

The all-important issue of context (of the text) is to be understood in the context of the dialogic potential of a text. Prior to New Criticism, the context of the text existed outside the text. A poem or for that matter any text used to be studied in the context or background of history, society or author's biography. In such a critical exercise, the text was denied its independence. It was either seen as a figment of the biography of the author, a medium of moral message, an offshoot of a historical event. A text has it own context, and nothing extra-literary should be invoked to understand it – this was the battle cry of the New Critics. The singular achievement of New Criticism has been to effect this complete lapse of the context in the text. A text is its own context.

New Critics insist on exploring the meaning of a text not in parts or segments. To say that there is a metaphor towards the end of the poem, or that there is an irony in the last line, or that there is a paradox in the opening line of a story all such statements are meaningless critical exercises. Brooks believes that nothing in a text exists in an isolated manner. Even the famous lines which become quotable quotes later on derive their poetic quality from their relation to a particular context – the context as supplied by the text itself. Quoting the famous repetition of simple word like 'never' five time in the Shakespearian play *King Lear*, Brooks underlines the significance of the context of the text. A simple word attains most serious and poignant connotations in the context of the text. The context modifies and extends the meaning of each and every word in the text. The context is the centre of the text, around which everything revolves. In simple words it is the central of a text, its essential meaning. The context of the text thus is nothing but its essential meaning. Even a simple unpoetic statement gathers philosophic import in a context. The context thus 'loads' the words in a text with connotative meanings. In a context, a simple image acquires the depth of a symbol, ordinary statements get charged enough to appear as powerful poetic utterances. The context thus engenders a new meaning to the text, this new meaning is different from its literal meaning. The gap between the literal and the contextual meaning constitutes the locus and space of literary composition.

The most "obvious warping" of a statement, according to Brooks, is presenting it in the form of irony. Irony is reversal of the literal meaning. It can be effected by the context as well as by the tone of voice. For example the passage quoted below from Thomas Gray's Elegy, is quite rhetorical, but in terms of its tone it is more a dirge on the mortality of man

> *Can storied urn or animated bust*
> *Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?*
> *Can Honour's voice the silent dust,*
> *Or Flatt'ry soothe the dull cold ear of death?*

The form is that of a question, but manner in which this has been raised, shows it is its answer too. When a statement becomes both a question and its answer too, it is irony at its best. Form and content bear a relationship of juxtaposition. Answer becomes question, and question becomes answer.

Sometimes 'irony' is too overt and obvious. In the poems of Hardy or Houseman, the operation of irony as a conscious strategy of reversal is quite conspicuous. Irony, in their poetry borders, on being 'sardonic' or pessimistic. Brooks reminds that irony has many conventionally recognized forms viz. 'tragic irony', 'self-irony', 'gentle irony' etc. Such forms of irony can be seen in operation in *King Lear* and other texts of such nature. The essay does not aim at presenting a detailed topography of irony as it operates in different literatures. In fact, Brooks is not interested in 'irony' that is consciously called into play, rather he wants us to realize the subtlety of its presence in literature which is normally perceived as non-ironic and monologic. He insists on the ubiquitous nature of irony as the very principle of aesthetic structure. Irony is not to be seen as a device of engineering reversal in meaning, irony must be acknowledged

as the very form and content of poetic experience. The whole idea of treating metaphor or irony as mere techniques is done away with as Brooks assigns a functional role to them in the making up of the entire poetic edifice.

Can there be statements wholly devoid of irony? By 'irony' Brooks means a statement undergoes semantic mutations or modifications undergoes the pressures of a context. A modified statement at the level of meaning is ironical. Irony does mean total reversal of meaning. It stands for meaning different from the literal one. One can cite plain mathematical statements like 'two plus two is equal of four' or 'two negatives make one positive' etc. These statements carry meaning outside the context too. That is they are not context-bound. Such statements are properly abstract statements and their terms are pure denotations. The denotations are stable signs with linear meanings. Abstract statements with stable and well-defined denotations do not form the stuff of poetry. One way to estimate the aesthetic maturity of a work is to see whether it contains statements that are context-bound or context-free. Context-free statements do not form good poetry. A mature work of art according to New Critics is one in which everything is so intrinsically inter-related, that a minor alteration in the structure brings about its total collapse. A poem that contains epigrammatic lines is not rated very high aesthetically as compared to a poem that builds up an image as correlative of an idea. A poem as an image, whole and complete, is what the New Critics look for.

A poem cannot entertain statements that remain un-effected by its context. In other words, the power of context is so much that any abstract or philosophical statement made in the course of a poem looses its literal meaning to gain another context-bound meaning. Brooks stretches the meaning of irony to include any meaning that is context-bound. Irony is meaning contextualized, and different from the literal and the abstract. Irony becomes more a signifier of oblique or indirect expression, than an expression for a sardonic or sarcastic message, as is usually understood by the commoners. Irony thus becomes a device of semantics as well syntax. Irony is syntax as well as meaning. Such an enlargement of 'irony' both along the horizontal axis as well as the vertical one allows Brooks to use it as frame of aesthetics.

The importance of the term 'irony' in modern criticism needs to be comprehended in a larger frame. Brooks does not set out to justify its overuse in modern criticism. His concern is to place the term in a functional frame whereby it is seen as integral to the creative vision. Irony becomes the very condition of creativity, for it paves way for the 'another meaning' of the text. To be creative is to be ironical. Of course irony does not mean subversion, it is not a nihilistic stance. Irony in Brooks's scheme is not just a poetics of modern doubt or ambivalence. In modern literature where doubt comes to the fore as central dialectics, the use of irony to structure modern fragmented experience is quite handy and obvious. But what Brooks insists on is the far more ubiquitous application of irony in literature on the whole, even in literature pre-modern.

Brooks takes up the famous poem of Matthew Arnold, entitled "Dover Beach" to illustrate his 'theory of irony' as structural principle of the poem. The poem makes a very powerful statement which says that the world "which seems to lie before us like a land of dreams . . . hath really neither joy nor love nor light . . ." On the surface it appears a simple pessimistic statement, a mere truism. To appreciate its 'indirect meaning', Brooks would like the reader to know the context of the statement within the poem. Let it be made very clear that under the rubric of New Criticism, the context of the poem lies within the poem, and not outside it. The truth of the statement made within a poem has to be verified from within the poem. No sociological explanation or philosophical analysis can help us understand the connotations of the statement. Brooks provides a detailed context of Arnold's statement thus: The speaker of the statement is standing beside his loved one, looking out of the window on the calm sea, listening to the long withdrawn roar of the ebbing tide . . . so on and so forth. It is the context that informs the reader about the truthfulness of the statement made in the poem. Is statement a mere sentimental outburst? Is it an oversimplification of reality outside? Is it a detached perspective of life? – all such questions need be answered in the context of the poem. A statement is 'true' if it emerges organically from the context of the poem, otherwise it is mere rhetoric without depth. What Brooks insists on is the organic relationship of each part of the poem to the poetic whole.

According to New Criticism, a good poem is one that combines opposite impulses and emotions in a poetic whole leaving nothing outside it. A poem has to live and negotiate with what is discordant and irrelevant to its dominant mood. Art never deals with exclusive emotions or ideas that are linear and non-dialectical. Brooks refer to I.A.Richards

concept of 'poetry of synthesis' that stands for poetry which synthesizes emotions even hostile to its dominant mood. Poetry is coming to terms with discordant emotions, it is not leaving them out of the poetic whole. Since poetry is play of opposite forces, irony becomes its logical structure. Only irony with its capacity to carry two meanings simultaneously – one the dominant, and other opposite to it – has the flexibility to cohere the divergent emotions. Till New Criticism as theory of literary criticism, divergence of emotions was understood in terms of binaries, i.e., play of opposites. Divergent was in a way synonymous with dual.

The stability of the poem is compared to that of an arch in tension. It is held from within by internal pressures and pulls, which mutually work together to lend tautness to its outward structure. Stability is not a signifier of static and inert state. Stability within a text is result of multiple forces that balance each other. The structure of a poem, in the New Critical context then, is a dynamic one, it flows in each and every part of the poem. It is not an outward arrangement; it is governed internally. A work of art would simply collapse into splinters if it is not held together by the forces form within. In a play, the powerful hero would fail miserably in the absence of an equally powerful villain. A Satan must counter-match the all-powerful divine, otherwise, the poem would lapse into a sermon. What redeems art from sermonizing or mere propaganda is this 'presence of the opposite' within its fold.

Any statement that grows out of a context is ironical, only matter-of-fact prosaic statements do not require the support of the context. Poetical statements draw their validity from a contex; the statements of prose are context free and are equally true in any possible context. In many poems the irony is too visible. Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress" or Raleigh's "Nymph's Reply" or even Gray's "Elegy", the irony is not difficult to discover. But Brooks holds that irony is the very structure of poetic expression. In poems that are not overtly ironical or poems which are too lyrical, there is the pressure of the context, and since these 'plain' poems also work under the pull of context, they too have an ironical structure.

Brooks takes up an extended analysis of Shakerspeare's song "Who is Silvia: . . ." which on the surface level looks like a lyrical characterization of the persona of Silvia. The song is sung in praise of Silvia: "Then to Silvia let us sing, That Silvia is excelling;/ She excels each mortal thing/ Upon the dull earth dwelling". Thus Silvia is portrayed almost angelic, heaven's darling. Brooks on a close reading of the poem, discovers that instead of plain one-sided eulogization of Silvia, the song has in-built tension. The poem juxtaposes Christian and pagan values rather subtly. On the hand, Silvia is presented in strict Christian terms of "Holy, fair and wise", one the other, she is the very incarnation of pagan god Cupid ("Love doth to her eyes repair,. To help him of his blindness."). Brooks concludes that "there is lyric grace, but the tone is complex, nonetheless. According to Brooks it does not matter whether the poet consciously builds this kind of tension in the poem, or it just comes in the poem unconsciously. The whole act of writing creatively is implicated in the play of ironies.

Another poem, once again lyrical, and overtly one-sided, this time from Wordsworth is taken up for strengthening the uncanny position of irony even in most romantic outbursts. In one of his Lucy poems, Wordsworth describes her thus

> *A violet by a mossy stone*
> *Half-hidden from the eye!*
> *Fair as a star, when only one*
> *Is shining in the sky.*

The violet flower "hidden from the eye" is counter-balanced by a star "shining in the sky". Lucy from the view point of the world is shy and unnoticed; but from the stand point of her lover, she is single star that shines arrogantly like the sun. The poem is thus clearly structured along carefully thought out contrasts.

It is such contrasts which are developed by John Donne where the lovers happen to be nothing in the eyes of the world, yet they become in their own eyes, each other's world. It is significant to note that John Donne is the poet master according to the practitioners of New Criticism. Wordsworth or Shakespeare despite their overpowering lyricism, do have an element of ironic play of motifs and images – something so violently visible in the conceits of the poetry of John Donne. T.S.Eliot, a New Critic praised Donne for his for what he termed as 'Unified Sensibility' through which the poet juxtaposed emotion with reason in organic whole. What Brooks insists is that John Donne's poetry is an accentuated form of the poetry of Wordsworth and Shakespeare in terms of its dramatic play of images

impulses. Donne very much like Shakespeare brings in dissimilar objects into a comparative whole, with the difference that in his poetry the dissimilarity is too pronounced and difficult to reconcile.

By positing 'irony' as the very structure of creativity, Brooks does not intend to reduce poetry into one simple formula. The irony varies in degree and kind from poet to poet, and therein lies the scope for the variety of poetic expressions. In the poetry of Wordsworth for instance, Brooks does not find a radical form of ironic contrast; there is only simple juxtaposition of images. The poet's "A slumber did my spirit seal" is discussed at length to underscore the subtle play of opposites in the poem. In the poem in the slumber of the lover, the beloved attains immortality; she transcends earthly binds. The very opening is witty and ambiguous – the two attributes normally associated with the so-called modern 'ironic' poetry. Slumber is not a signifier of active passionate state of mind, the lover therefore is denied any action, yet he is feverishly yearning agelessness for his beloved. The transformation of a human being into a cosmic entity itself is no less overarching.

Brooks compares the poetry of Wordsworth with that of Donne in terms of the distinct play of irony in the two poetic discourses. He acknowledges that Wordsworth's poetry is delicate and 'admirable' and Donne with all his known skill for ironic juxtapositions could not have surpassed Wordsworth. The fact remains that since both Wordsworth and Donne use language in a dynamic context, and in the poetry of the two each part is organically interrelated to the poetic whole, the meaning does not remain mere lexical. The principle of thrust and counter-thrust operates in the poetry of both the poets, though in case of Donne it is more violent and visible, in case of Wordsworth it is rather subdued and simple. Such is the dynamic play of signifiers in the poems of both the poets that each poem, and within poem each part is modified by the whole. This modification of each part of the poem, howsoever small it may be, constitutes the play of irony in a poem. Irony stands for a meaning that is transgressive, i..e., meaning which has more to say than what dictionary might suggest, or mere paraphrasing might suggest.

Next Brooks raises a very tricky question: are the terms *simple* and *ironical* mutually exclusive? Or in other words can a poet professedly be spontaneous and ironical at the same time? Since irony implies a reversal of meaning, can simple and spontaneous expressions entertain such semantic complexity? The quality of good poetry, Brooks would believe, lies in retaining simplicity while being complex. In other words, he does not see any contradiction in a poem being complex and simple at the same time. Seemingly a poem might appear simple and spontaneous, but on a deeper probe, one gathers the complexity of meaning behind simple utterances. In fact, Brooks avers, complex poems often possess the quality of looking simple at surface level. Wordsworth's poetry c an be taken as simple and spontaneous, but this does not imply that it lacks complexities of existence. The so-called simple poems therefore are not necessarily bereft of irony. In fact the basic logic of Brooks is that irony is an essential structure of any poetic statement, its presence is in simple poetry is all the more subtle and intrinsic.

Irony is ubiquitous in poetry, of every type and every age. Even in the lyrical poetry – presumably a kind of poetry of easy and 'non-ironic' emotions – cannot escape the internal play of forces that holds it together. Irony becomes more conspicuous in modern poetry, for it is consciously employed by the modern poet as a befitting poetic device to capture the ambivalences, duplicities and confusions of modern life. Irony, in other words, emerges as a conscious strategy, and not mere a matter of organic structural presence. In poetry of periods prior to modern age, irony is never intellectually brought into the texture of the poem, in the poetry of modern age, irony however, is a technique, a device that engenders complexity both in the idiom and the structure of the poem.

Brooks identifies three compelling reasons that make the modern writer consciously go for irony as device of replenishing the tired language. Old and conventional symbols have already been exhausted, and there is no creative scope left in reusing them any further. Metaphors and myths have been recycled many times over, and with such monotonous regularity that they do not enamour the reader any more. The over-use of language, courtesy, mass media and advertisement, has drained language of its meaning. Language is employed for hype and sensation so much that in the process it loses its hold over meaning. Language, in other words, is used more for effects, to be more precise, for sound effects, that a meaning medium of communication, it has outlived itself. The collapse of universals has also generated confusion in the mind of modern man. Linear structures fail to arrest the ambivalences of the age. Structures have to have some kind of double-edgedness so as to contain the skeptical modern outlook. Language with its stable structures and set semantics cannot articulate the tentative and provisional character of modern age.

Modern poet, in order to be creative, has to re-invent language; he has to re-discover it with a perspective which is capable enough of expressing the complexity of the times. Brooks terms this process of re-invention in rather mild terms as the task of qualifying and modifying the stale and bore language. Irony in this context becomes a tool of recharging language with some semantic valance; irony engenders a rare freshness in the language which has already been exhausted through its overuse. Modern poets frequently resort to ironic expression for the complexities of modern life cannot be expressed otherwise. Ironic expressions, while working within the conventional structures, try to invert them from within. Irony thus becomes the very poetics of opposition as it stems from within the same structure

The Language of Paradox
A Critical Exposition

"The Language of Paradox" was first published in 1942. Later on, in a revised form it became the first chapter of Brooks's much acclaimed work *The Well-Wrought Urn: Studies in the Structure of Poetry*. This essay is a typical example of New Critical theory and practice as it endeavours to strike a formula or category with which to identify and label the special character of literary language. By bringing "paradox' as the key to very making of literary imagination, Books also strengthens the New Critical claim of literary language as the special medium of special kind of knowledge, not accessible to science or history. Also characteristic of the New Criticism is the way Brooks develops his generalizations out of close and subtle analysis of poetry , and his choice of a metaphysical lyric for the most elaborate and exemplary treatment. The approach is antihistorical to the extent that it supposes the existence of some absolute quality in great poetry that transcends the conditions of particular cultural contexts.

Right at the outset Brooks makes the seminal statement – ". . .the language of poetry is the language of paradox. He is fully aware that such a stance is not acceptable to many for the simple reason that 'paradox' has never been accorded such a serious attention before. Paradox is at best the strategy of wit, and consequently the poetry of paradox is nothing more than a poetry of wit – wit which in itself is very brittle and momentary. Paradox is invoked to engender intellectual complexity in things simple and straight. Poetry, which is hitherto regarded as an emotional and quasi-spiritual enterprise, many believe, cannot be sustained through the ephemeral effects of paradox. In short Brooks confronts those who discount paradox and deny it any possibility of its being the very structure of poetic expression. The prejudice that paradox is not capable of expressing profound emotional truth is fiercely counter-debated in the beginning of the essay.

As is the usual tendency among New Critics, Brooks brings into focus the language of science to assert the specificity of poetic expression through comparison and contrast. Science states truths which cannot entertain any ambivalence, for the rigorous empiricism of the discipline forbids employment of any expression which can have more than one interpretation. Scientific language, Brooks maintains, has to have no room for paradoxes; whereas, poetic truth complex and connotative as it is, can be approached only in terms of the paradox. Such a comparison is though loud and overstated, yet it makes a very provocative proposition for further debate and analysis.

Brooks, as per his earlier practice also, to stretch his argument in favour of paradox as the very language of poetry, would discover paradox in poems which are overtly lyrical and do not seem to have any complexity of emotions. He begins by citing the example of Wordsworth's poetry, which, given the stance of the poet to be simple and spontaneous, one hardly expects too be paradoxical. The celebrated lines of a typical Wordsworth's poem – "It is beauteous evening, calm and free/ The holy time is quiet as a Nun/ Breathless with adoration . . ."— according to Brooks constitute a paradoxical situation. The poem presumably addressed to the girl walking beside the poet-persona is not interested in this kind of 'sacred' personification of 'evening as Nun'. The girl, as the next lines tell us "If that you appear untouched by solemn thought" — remains indifferent to the poet's overt spiritualization of the evening. She has her notions of nature's divinity. For her nature need not possess the grim look of a Nun, it is beautiful in its multiple aspects – serious as well as non-serious, big and small, pleasant as well as unpleasant. Her unconscious sympathy with nature constitutes her unconscious worship of nature. The contrast between the attitudes of the poet and the girl contribute to the making of a paradoxical situation in the poem. The girl is in perfect communion with nature; her very upbringing has been in the lap of nature; the poet on the other hand does not seem to have such a sustained kind of

relationship with nature. His reaction is "sporadic and momentary". Moreover the poem is build around the contrast of Nun's grim outlook with that of girl's careless innocence. The girl stands for nature unaffected and pure; Nun reminds us of institutionalized religion.

In Romantic poetry, paradox enables the poets to introduce an element of wonder and surprise in things stale and lifeless. Brooks using Coleridge's phraseology accords paradox the value of an agency that brings "the charm of novelty to things of every day" and that brings about an "awakening of the mind". The revelatory potential of paradox enables the Romantic poet to explore and approach the familiar world in a new light. Wordsworth's famous and very successful sonnet "Composed upon Westminster Bridge", though seemingly is a poem that seems to celebrate the beauty of city in the morning light, without actually presenting to the reader the graphic details of the experience. All that the poet reiterates is that the city is beautiful in the morning light and that is awfully still." Beyond this underlined message the poem does not have realistic touches; the reader is provided with a rather blurred impression of London in the morning our thus: " . . . silent, bare,/ Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie/ Open unto the fields . . ." The reader discovers "the pointed roofs and pinnacles along the skyline, twinkling [with rare brilliance] in the morning light." There are no paradoxical twists and turns, the structure is seemingly flat and simple and the comparisons are all too-well-known.

If the poem is flat and is devoid of any complexity, the question that Brooks asks is: What makes the poem so successful? Where does the poem get its power? The success comes from the paradoxical situation out of which the poem arises. Against the normal bias of city life as mechanical and dehumanized, the poet happens to discover the beauties of this very damned life. The poet is "honestly surprised" by the calm and soothing morning sight of an otherwise grimy and feverish London. The poem thus derives its basic structural impetus from a paradoxical situation: city-life as the very hub of nature's beauty. The scene of sun-rise across the skyline of London enamours the poet so much that he finds it much more enchanting than the experience of sunrise in valleys and hills: "Never did sun more beautifully steep/ In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill . . ." The very oddity of city life basking under the glory of morning light generates the desired tension in the poem, a counter-structure which though is not described rather graphically, operates silently by way of implication. The central dynamics of the poem stem from the paradox of city as site of nature's glory. The man-made London too has its moments of natural glory. Moreover there is river too, that glides "at his own sweet will" right through the city. The gliding river in the morning calm of London is no less enchanting than a dancing daffodil out in the open fields. It marks the throbbing presence of nature in the very hub of urbanized living.

In the morning hour, London appears to be one with nature. The sleeping houses – a metaphor not so uncommon — gather fresh energy and life. No longer condemned as dead dwellings of the dehumanized citizens, they are seen as part and parcel of natural scenery. The houses too merge in the grand morning landscape. City otherwise associated with planted life style, all of a sudden begins to appear as nature's playfield. The poem, on the whole, may lack the explicit imagery of hectic London life, yet the very wonder it arouses in the reader is a testimony enough of some paradoxical structure that governs it from below. The poem is built around the paradox of 'city as site of organic beauty'.

While using Wordsworth's poems for the purposes of illustration, Brooks makes it clear that it is not necessary that Wordsworth is indeed conscious of deployment of paradoxical situations: what he assets, however, is that in his own prefatory remarks in his very famous *Lyrical Ballads,* Wordsworth does feel the necessity of treating 'ordinary things' in their unusual aspects. Coleridge also underlines this typical tendency of Wordsworth when he writes that Wordsworth "give(s) charm of novelty to things of every day", and "excite(s) a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind's attention from the lethargy of custom . . . to the loveliness and wonders of the world before us . . ." According to Brooks, Wordsworth poetry though lyrical and spontaneous essentially, derives a lot of its creative spark from the inherent paradoxical situations that are so necessary for the wonder-effect.

Extending his logic further, Brooks cites examples from the neo-classical poetry as well. The language of paradox is not just peculiar to romantic poetry alone, it is a general principle and it holds good for all kinds of poetry. For illustration, Brooks picks up lines from Pope's very famous poem *The Essay of Man,* wherein the poet uses ironic expressions such as "Born to die, and reasoning but to err", "Great Lord of all things, yet a Prey to all" etc. In case of Pope, Brooks concedes, there is more an accent on irony that paradox, yet this irony has an element of "certain awed wonder". Paradox is more a poetics of wonder and revelation, or sudden awakening of meaning. Pope also

bestows new light to things ordinary and everyday. In fact in the poetry Pope, Brooks seems to resolve wonder and irony merge together, as they merge in the poetry of Blake or Coleridge as well. In the poetry of Thomas Gra Brooks discovers the poetic revelation more ironic than startling one, but such microscopic details do not form the focus of his thesis here. Realizing the critical complexity in differentiating between various shades of irony and paradox and their possible overlapping, Brooks simply avoids the exercise of enumerating possible variations. His sole concern is to argue in favour of a paradoxical idiom that governs the poetic expression. Paradoxes, he maintains, spring from the very connotative nature of poetic language. Connotations do not add a frill to the denotative, the mere external, rather at times they subvert, challenge and even displace the denotations. He goes a step ahead, and says that a poet has to exceed all notations, and has to create a distinct language of poetry, of course within certain limits.

Quoting TS Eliot on the "perpetual slight alteration of language" that occurs in poetry, Brooks advances his argument with greater confidence. Eliot's proposition that "words [are] perpetually juxtaposed in new and sudden combination" in the domain of poetry comes quite handy to Brooks in universalizing his argument that paradox is invariably the language of poetry, and that it cannot be kept of poetry. In science, the meaning of words is stable and concrete, it is well-defined and fixed; in poetry the meaning is fluid and tentative as it is arrived through juxtapositions and disruptions. Poetry is eternally an exercise in exceeding the literal. Such an enterprise entails perpetual violation of the ordinary language. Although Eliot uses a rather mild adjective "slight", Brooks uses a rather violent adjective "disruptive" when it comes to alteration of meaning in poetic expression, signaling thereby the overstated nature of his argument. Already Brooks has supplied us a host of terms which are semantically not very different from "paradox". The terms are: "contrast", "juxtaposition", and of course, "irony". What is juxtaposition in Eliot, becomes 'paradox' in Brooks.

In poetry, words modify each other, transgressing their dictionary meanings in the process. This process of modification is realized through a subtle network of juxtapositions that the poet brings into play. In the poem cited earlier, Wordsworth invokes host of terms/words to capture the evening in terms as varied as *beauteous, calm, free, holy, quiet, breathless*. The adjective 'breathless' suggests excitement and unrest, yet the evening is quiet and calm. There is no such contradiction between an evening being breathless and calm, but the two terms modify each other. The poet could have used some polysyllabic terms that could have accounted for both breathless and calm, yet the two terms retained in the poem do trigger off a play of contradictions which is so necessary for the poetic impulse.

In order to avoid such a play of opposites, the poet could have used a comprehensive metaphor, or any befitting analogy that can possibly account for the complexity or subtlety of the evening. I.A.Richards advocated in favour of employing analogies in case the emotions are too subtle and complex to be expressed in direct terms. Brooks however maintains analogies do not correspond to the actual emotions, there are bound to be discrepancies or what he terms as "continual tilting of planes". Analogies correspond as much they as they contradict. Even the most direct and simple poet has to use analogies, which create a fertile ground for paradoxical situations. The gap between the analogy and the experience it seeks to correspond is the space of paradox.

Analogies, Brooks argues, do not necessarily defeat the poetic purpose of reaching at the subtlety of poetic emotion. Also there is no intention to underplay the difficulties involved in the art of poetry. The method of art, Brooks puts it quite categorically, "is always indirect", but this does not mean that the poet has no sense of reality. The very fact that the poet explores the direct through the indirect is a paradox that he cannot help. Paradox is the predicament of poetry. It would be simply naïve to knock off this element of indirections from the poetic argument.

Some poets, Brooks points out, indulge in inventing indirections rather consciously; they impose their forged inventions on the poetic argument to gain some kind of poetic effect. To forge some kind of paradoxical brevity, these poets consciously employ the method of indirection. Such a tendency has its perils. It makes their poetry shallow and facile. The poetic argument borders on what Brooks terms as "intellectual sophistry". The indirect method or the paradoxical language should come organically to the poetic structure as such; paradox should be an integral part and parcel of the poet's natural and normal language. Paradox is not just a technique of embellishment, it is the very edifice of the poem itself. A poem, if it is a poem in the true sense, has to have a paradoxical structure; otherwise it is a statement of facts bereft of any textual richness. What Brooks insists on is that paradox constitutes the central dialectics of a poetic structure, it s the very locus and logic of any poem.

To strengthen his argument, Brooks takes up Donne's *Canonization* for illustration. This is a typical New Critical practice. Most of the New Critics go back to metaphysical poetry of either Donne or Marvel to fortify their theoretical premises. Metaphysical poetry is their first choice; romantic or neo-classical poetry is also taken up for illustration, but most often the poems of the romantics and the neo-classics are referred to universalize their critical findings which are most tenable in case of the metaphysical poetry only. New Critics labour hard to stretch out their argument to poetry other than the metaphysical poetry. Such an effort has not only redeemed metaphysical poetry in general, but also has projected this poetry to be the poetry of future as well. Though Brooks is quite aware of the loudness of metaphysical poets, yet it is metaphysical poetry which offers the most "concrete" examples of New Critical theorems and propositions.

In Donne's *Canonization*, the central paradox that governs the poem is that of profane love masquerading as divine love. The poet seeks to canonize the fleshy lover, much against the expectations raised from the holy title of the poem. Instead of celebrating the renunciation or penance of holy seekers, the poet undertakes the daunting task of canonizing the passionate lovers. The lovers in their moments of intense passion do renounce the world, but their renunciation is cunningly argued. The poem becomes a kind of parody of Christian sainthood. The love of the two honest and innocent lovers, though fleshy and this worldly it is, is a scared occasion for the poet. The beauty of the paradox is that it never one-sided. It becomes very difficult to say whether Donne is endorsing sensual love at the cost of sacred love, or *vive versa*, or perhaps both. Paradox retains double-edgedness of a very complex kind. There is no easy choice for the reader. To say that Donne has no respect for Christian sainthood would be too lop-sided for in a way he is ultimately urging for canonization of human love. The way Donne yokes together, the profane with the profound, the secular with the sacred, and the religious with the pagan through his clever syllogism and ratiocination speaks volume about the in-built paradoxical situation that forms the warp and woof of the poem.

A close reading of the poem would inform us that Donne takes together both and religion without compromising on either of the two. There is an element of cynicism and celebration both. Paradox in this sense combines the serious with the non-serious, the ludicrous with the sublime. It becomes the instrument of dialogue and exchange between two opposite stances. The exchange is too dynamic to be deciphered in definite ways. Paradox holds a tension that cannot decoded in neat mechanical terms.

To hammer his point microscopically, Brooks undertakes an extended textual analysis of *Canonization*. The strength of new Critics is that they do not simply theorize or put things in abstract manner; they give us practical demonstrations. They illustrate heavily from the text. They are fierce champions of what is often termed as practical criticism. Text is the sole springboard of their critical enterprise. The language of paradox, as it operates in poetry, is worked out in fine detail through a close reading of the poem. Each word is scrutinized very carefully in the context of the poem. It is very significant to add that New Critics do not import context from outside the poem, the poem offers its own context.

In the poem, the poet Donne begins on a very dramatic note: "For Godsake hold your tongue, and let me love, . . ." Presumably the poem is addressed to someone identified as "you" in the poem. New Critics have the tendency to discover a dramatic structure even in a lyric. This poem, however, clearly provides the dramatic situation. Who is this you? Is he lover? Or is he a representative of church? Or is he just any other human being of the ordinary world. The dramatic opening, which in New Critical idiom, can also be called 'abrupt', suggests that this "you" is someone who is obstructing the poet-persona in his act of love-making. This "you" is man from the practical world who regards 'love as a silly affectation'.

The maverick and naughty poet-persona as lover offers a host of choices to the external "you" to bother about his other diseases and inconveniences. Love is his private matter, and he does not any advice on the matter. The imagery of disease invoked here from conventional standard is most unwarranted. But in paradoxical situations, the unsavoury opposites are often brought in. This is to highlight the compelling urgency of love. Love by implication becomes the supreme affectation which the poet-persona would cherish at any cost.

"You", the external other, is asked to instruct or guide or even indict the poet-persona on all kinds of other diseases (except the disease of love) he suffers from. The poet-persona rather asks this "You" to do whatever he can do for his own material prospects and other worldly honours. "You" is free to win favours from the King, or hoard coins that bear the stamp of King's face. By juxtaposing 'love' with other mundane and material pursuits, Donne has already elevated human love to a sacred pedestal. King and coins are the markers of secular authority. The poet-persona is

so passionately involved in love-making that he would let all other worldly desires go unattended. Rather he is ready to renounce all desires other than love. So clearly love is demarcated as something higher and noble than all other human desires that ensure health, wealth and honour. Love is the most pressing concern at the moment. The dialogue with "You" sets the tone for a sustained play of juxtapositions. The style is informal yet very persuasive. Paradoxes tend to be overarching and so swift that they do not normally let the reader dissect the poetic impulse clinically.

The poem is carefully built around a conflict: the demands of this world *versus* the demands of love, the so-called real world of disease, misery and pain *versus* the unreal world of love beyond the fears the mortality. Donne takes forward his argument quite paradoxically. He would argue that his love has not caused any disaster anywhere. The sighs of the lovers are not responsible for the drowning of any merchant ships, not their tears have caused any floods. The cold which the lover suffers from has not altered the season cycle; the hot blood that runs through the veins of the lovers has not brought about tropical conditions ripe for epidemic like that of plague. The tempestuous potentials of love so often exaggerated in romantic poetry are de-mystified and subverted, and yet Donne though the strategic deployment of paradox is able to assert the supremacy of love over all other ephemeral emotion.

Instead of invoking romantic metaphors of violet flowers or distant stars, Donne chooses for his lovers the rather ghastly metaphor of flies and tapers. The tone of defiance however continues without any compromise. But instead of being frivolous and naughty, it tends to attain a serious character. The sustained paradox as it advances further tends to attain a serious character, forfeiting in the process its initial potential of laughter and fun. The virtue of paradox is that it retains the dialogics of seriousness. The serious metaphor of phoenix is used to account for the mysteriousness of love. Like the mythical bird the lovers together form a complete whole, and even while they die in the process, they live all the more in the imagination of future generations. Death in love is gateway to immortality another paradox that crops up almost as a natural corollary to earlier paradoxes.

A series of paradoxes are unleashed – "'we two being one", "We dye and rise the same", "We can dye by it, if not live by love" etc. Love strangely enough becomes the emotion of death, than life. But this death promises an afterlife. It may not become a fit material for the historians to accord any place to, it may even not receive a ceremonial burial but in verse and sonnets, their love shall sustain and outlive death. The ashes of the lovers put in an urn would be as memorable as the tomb built over acres of land. The lovers would stand canonized by the strength of their love. The sonnets written on their loves would become hymns. The beauty of paradox is that it brings together the sacred with the profane, the mundane with the sublime, the sensual with the spiritual. "Canonized by love" in itself is a paradoxical phrase for it not only subverts all notions of religious canonizations, it also lends a rare religious value to the passionate love.

By undertaking an extended analysis of Donne's poem, Brooks proves his basic thesis that poetry can operate through paradoxes only, and that simple statement of facts cannot express the whole experience. The play of opposites does not necessarily create confusion and contradiction in expression, to the contrary, it adds rare richness in the expression and opens up the poetic impulse in its entirety. Depriving the poem its peculiar characteristic of paradoxical language, amounts to robbing the poem of its connotative strengths. It is paradox that saves poetry from lapsing into set of statements without any organic relationship. Brooks therefore asks very pertinently: "What happens to Donne's lovers if we consider them 'scientifically' without benefit of the supernaturalism which the poet confers on them?" Paradox it would in a way also mean engenders some kind of supernaturalism in the poetic expression. It transcends the mere rational and the scientific. Paradox illuminates, it is no less that a magic. It brings element of wonder and invention in the poem. The essay ends on a note of some quotes and illustrations from Coleridge and Shakespeare that buttress Brooks's view point that paradox is integral part of poetic imagination. If unity of experience is what constitutes the end of poetic truth, paradox is best bet.

Critique of Brooks

1. The major problem with Brooks theory of irony as principle of structure is that a text is reduced to neat and clinical structure in which opposite forces balance each other. Yvor Winters, a *betenoire* of most of the New Critics, while objecting to the structural obsessions of Brooks writes: ". . . he (Brooks) seems to see poetry purely as structure — it is a kind of balance between thematic opposites – and not as a definable method of understanding

human experience and judging it. . . . .he is aware of any one principle of structure and that one inadequate. . . he makes a serious attempt to explore the possibilities of his principle in the analysis of a good many poems, he does not seem to be aware of the primary function of criticism is evaluation." Clearly the emphasis is on the human experience as against the structure of a text from within. **Human experience cannot be reduced to a formula**; it is too rich and polysemic to be accounted for in terms such as 'irony' or 'paradox'.

2. The most sustained and extended criticism of Brook's use of irony as a principle of structure comes from R.S. Crane, who takes Brooks to task for reducing the richness of the text to what he terms as **'critical monism'**. In his essay "The Critical Monism of Cleanth Brooks", Crane while acknowledging Brooks contribution to the "enlargement of the term 'irony' as the very structure of a literary text, questions the flat and unqualified use of 'irony' as a structural key to poems of all kinds. Irony becomes the one unique cause of many poems written in different ways. According to Crane, it is not Brooks alone who evinces this tendency toward a monistic reduction of critical concepts, the same tendency is manifest is Allen Tate's doctrine of 'tension', in John Crowe Ransom's principle of 'texture', in Robert Penn Warren's obsession with symbols etc.

3. According to Crane, the emphasis in Brooks' essay is on structure, instead of imagination; 'structure' as a term is not only too formulaic but also does not have the organic intensity which a term like 'imagination' connotes. Brooks asserts 'the primacy of the pattern', as he insists on reading poetry "in terms of structure". However, he maintains a distinction between structure and form, for him 'structure' in poetry is certainly not 'form' in the conventional sense in which we think of from as a kind of envelope which contains the content. The structure in poetry is neither a logical structure, nor a rational meaning which can be apprehended adequately by paraphrasing it in prose. Structure in poetry is not arrangement of various elements into "homogenous groupings, paring like with like"; rather it "unites the like with the unlike". Crane quotes from Coleridge's *Biographia literaria* lines which bear similarity with much of what Brooks says on 'structure'. Coleridge also describes the operation of a "synthetic and magical power" that is so uniquely constitutive of poetic genius, but his term for this power is 'imagination'. Coleridge defines 'imagination' in terms are not very different from Brooks' 'irony' thus: "This power first put in action by the will and understanding, and retained under their irremissive, though gentle and unnoticed, control . . . reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities: of sameness with difference; of the general, with the concrete, the idea, with the image; the individual with the representative. . ." The quote clearly demonstrates that ideas of Brooks are at best derivative in nature, and that his efforts to equate 'irony' with 'imagination' are too reductive. **'Imagination' as a term/ concept is far more flexible, organic and comprehensive, than mere 'irony' or 'paradox'.**

4. Brooks's critical postulates do help us in as much as they offer us valuable insights when they are applied with skill and discretion to individual works. Also that such postulates when applied to poem, have given us significant statements about poetic elements and poetic structures. The problems occur on two counts. One, Brooks's controlling aim is the differentiation of poetry as poetry from other things, but in this process of differentiation, we are left with a fairly homogenized view of poetry. **The differences among various poetic forms are neglected**. One wonders whether there are indeed general principles of poetic structure that can be applied significantly to texts as varied as a lyric, a drama, an epic like *Odyssey*, or long poem like *The Waste Land*. Also the kind of poetic structures which Brooks accounts for in terms like 'irony' or 'paradox' can be found in texts which are not poetical. For instance, Plato's dialogues or Dryden's *An Essay on Dramatic Poesy* too have their inner tension and dialogic structure.

5. Far from being a constant characteristic of good poetry, irony signifies for John Crowe Ransom a failure to unify. "In a pointed form of irony," he writes, "the oppositions produce an indecisive effect, just as in tragedy there is an opposition with a negative effect." IA Richards had been careful to distinguish the poetry of "harmonious equilibrium" of which irony is so constantly a characteristic from mere "irresolution". Ransom's argument is that **ironic poetry can represent only irresolution**, that is, the oppositions "produce an indecisive effect." Ransom dismisses the entire logic of resolution of oppositions in either irony or paradox thus: " My belief is that opposites can never be said to be resolved or reconciled merely because they have been got into the same poem.

or got into the same complex of affective experience to create a kind of "tension: that there is a resolution and it must be a logical resolution; that when there is no resolution we have a poem without a structural unity and this is precisely the intension of irony, which therefore is something very special, and ought to be occasional

6. IA Richards has almost similar ideas on irony and paradox. Richards's insistence that irony is constantly a characteristic of the highest order of poetry reminds one of Brooks's central thesis that irony is the very principle of structure in a literary representation. In fact Richards maintains a distinction between a poetry of "exclusion" and a poetry of "inclusion". Poetry of 'inclusion' is very much akin to Brooks's idea of poetry as paradoxical statement. The **poetry of inclusion** systematically draws upon 'larger contexts': it makes peace with the recalcitrant and the contradictory.
7. Brooks's ideas on irony and paradox also call for **comparison with TS Eliot**'s notion that function of wit is to provide an "internal equilibrium" for the poem in which it occurs. If Richards's irony is not made to provide the stability of experience, it is at least symptomatic of the stability. Eliot's notion about wit seems to be the complement of Nietzsche's conception of a "harmony" that is "rung out of every discord:" For in saying that witty poetry implies "in the expression of every experience" the recognition of the fact that "other kinds of experience are possible," Eliot is saying that wit calls to out attention the potentially discordant; that is, the unity of the witty poem is not a unity easily won by glossing over the discordant elements of human experience
8. Critics like RP Warren question the presence of irony in all kinds of poetry. **Is 'irony' mandatory to all types of poetry**? Why Warren asks, should a love poem, for instance, include in its make-up "self-contradiction, irony, realism – all things which call us back to the world of prose and imperfection?" Warren's question is extremely pertinent for if irony becomes equally pronounced in all poetic articulations, it would make poetry highly homogenous
9. Donald Stauffer also questions the rationale of holding irony as the most sacrosanct principle of literary criticism Critics who insist upon the complexity of poetry demand that all poems be paradoxical or witty **This amounts to disparaging verses written "with simplicity and sentiment"**. Stauffer asks what these critics would do with the simple lyrics of a Wordsworth or a Blake? Or with the simple eloquence of the Psalms?
10. Brooks does not make **distinction between an implied irony and intended irony**. The irony employed in modern poetry is very different from what it is in earlier poetry. In modern poetry, even if one were to accept Brooks's passionate plea for irony as ubiquitous principle of literature, irony is more in the nature of device than structure

Critique of New Criticism in General

The New Criticism did not go uncontested. The Marxist critics felt that literary criticism ought to be a history of man's ideas and imaginings in the (economic) setting which shaped them. The Christian apologists felt that the art had a civilizing mission, and deprecated the subversive attitudes of many Modernist writers. And the historicists sought a continuity between western industrial societies and the medieval past. Divisions between the schools were not clear cut, and there was little of the acrimony and technical elaboration that now characterizes literary criticism But academic criticism did become more specialized and remote, and to cater for a self-educating middle class there sprang up literary journalism, which continues to the present, though perhaps with less grace and intelligence New Critics were more writers than philosophers, and the radical critics of the sixties pounced on the shortcomings New Criticism was not literary analysis, but often the justification of a small canon of works arbitrarily selected for study and admiration. The psychology was shaky: there are far easier ways of balancing emotional tensions than writing poems. Critics are not detached reporters, but approach their work with allegiances, preconceptions and cultural heritages. Communities maintain the very concept of literature, and these communities have common expectations Poems are cultural artifacts, and only make full sense if studied in their social context. The new radicalism should have been liberating. The content of a poem was important again, as were the outlooks, experiences and social values of their creators. Literature was not the preserve of universities or gentlemen scholars, but rejoined everyday life. All writing — and indeed a good deal of other cultural/social expression — could now be called a text, and explored from linguistic, sociological, political and/or philosophic positions. But the cure proved painful. Radical criticism was no less technical than the New Criticism, and made vexatious reading. Many poets rejected standards altogether. Arguing

that verse was restrictive, and had been superseded by the founders of Modernism. Argument, shaping and grammar were seen as imperialistic, imposed by an unfair educational system. Even suspect was a love of poetry, as this too reflected indoctrination by a white, middle class society.

Here are some of the drawbacks of New Critical practices:

1. **Pure aestheticism**: To analyze a text in terms of its architectonics without verifying its historical authenticity or antecedents could be utterly misleading. Aesthetics cannot be valorized as an end in itself. A literary work has to operate at many levels. Besides being aesthetically enjoyable, it should be morally acceptable and scientifically true. In the postcolonial context, a pure textual analysis without an inquiry into the cultural variables and political manipulations that go into the making of a work could be dangerously fallacious. Postcolonial condition demands a political reading of the text. A text without its social, historical and ethical obligations may not survive test of time. Any critical analysis oblivious of the power-politics that predates and post-dates the text in terms of its production site and constituency of reception is at best partial.
2. New Criticism is **more suitable for poetry** or shorter fiction: Since New Criticism demands a close microscopic scrutiny of the text in terms of the pulls and pressures that work flow within the text, the approach comes quite handy in analyzing the shorter texts. But in a longer text, say a novel or an epic, it becomes difficult to keep track of the play of various textual forces. No wonder, most of the exponents of New Criticism rely on illustrations from poetry. And the examples they pick up are very often repetitive. It is very strange that in their critical theory, New Critics tend to discover drama or play as the basic inherent form in all kinds of literature, but their favourite case studies are with regard to poetry only.
3. An **addiction to irresponsible analogizing.** Cleanth Brooks uses the image of kite and tail to define the dialectics of poetic structure; T.S.Eliot uses the metaphor of the catalyst platinum in the production of H_2So_4 as a metaphor of poet's unaffected, but participatory self in the creative process; in I.A. Richards's *The Principles of Literary Criticism* there is a hocus-pocus of impulses, stimuli, and responses along with elaborate charts of nerves and nerve systems that purport to show that poetry at last is laboratory science. The enthusiasm for the analogy is clearly visible in these lines of R.P.Blackmur, which he writes while accounting for the use of analogies in TS Eliot's *Four Quartets* : " The analogy is because the things of experience do not pass out of themselves but into different phases of themselves, and not always at different times, but sometimes together and sometimes disparately, sometimes converging and concentrating, sometimes diverging and dissipating; and because it by analogy alone, or almost alone, that words record the drift and the shift, the sequence and the leap, from phase to phase, which seem the substance of our experience , moving us where we are moved; in our imitation of which is our one act of creation, our means of expressing something more than was *already* in ourselves." Analogy is a trope of some sort of discovery a semi-spiritual invention for the New Critics.
4. New Criticism suffers from what is often termed as **critical monism**: Each one of the major new critics is so much obsessed with a particular item of poetic technique as the chief structural impulse of a poem that they have collectively been charged with being committed to some sort of critical monism. Allen Tate stresses on 'tension;, Ransom thinks it is 'texture', Blackmur singles out 'structure' and Cleanth Brooks focuses his attention on paradox and 'irony'. The charge against them is that in looking for one specific quality in a poem, they develop blind spots for other qualities and therefore their analysis misses out the complexities of the poetic structure. The charge of critical monism is leveled at three more levels – (i.) in terms of its approach to reading, the approach is so monochromatic that it shuts itself off from other approaches. A poem, for instance, may be discussed from historical, sociological, psychological, philosophical points of view, but New Critics commits itself to contextual approach and thus willfully deprives itself of the benefits of other approaches; (ii) another kind of monism comes into play as New Critics isolate a particular poem from the rest of the work of the same author. Obviously such a monistic attitude forecloses a holistic view of the text under study; (iii) New Critics tend to ignore the theme, the imagery, character-building etc. at the cost of linguistic analysis of the work. Critical monism as it operates a many levels in New Criticism delimits the scope of the new critical inquiry into the architectonics of a work.

5. New Criticism suffers from what is often described as "**an extreme form of aesthetic atomism**". Each poem, autonomous as it is, is treated and evaluated differently. There is no general theory that can possibly account for the whole of literature. Northrop Frye terms this criticism as 'centripetal criticism' – a criticism which is too text-centric and does not offer us a centrifugal perspective of literature as such. Against this aesthetic atomism, Frye offers what could be termed as theory of balancing principle, according to which criticism should be centripetal as well as centrifugal at the same time.

6. There is an **undue preference for metaphorical** over literal statement. Metaphorical is seen to be more capable of articulating the higher truths of life. In postmodern criticism, metaphor is taken as device that obfuscates expression, or it is taken as device that brings unnecessary illogic in the poetic experience. While citing example of on of Wordsworth's Lucy poems, Stuart Hall, a postmodernist critic wonders that how come a girl child is compared with a violet flower and a distant star at the same time in a single poem. So metaphors, the critics of New Criticism believe mislead and misdirect the poetic truth. Metaphors are arbitrary interventions in the articulation of truth.

7. There is a marked propensity to unnecessarily employ **mysterious and esoteric terms** like structure, texture, tone, texture to approach a text. Not having anything really profound to say about the poem, the New Critics often resorted to such terms to over-awe the reader with their baggage of terminology. The contemporary malaise of critical language attaining a jargonistic character begins from New Criticism only. A time comes when jargon overtakes the genuine critical response. Esoteric language of New Criticism becomes an end in itself, thus defeating its noble purposes of studying the text in terms of the text itself.

8. There is an uncanny **propensity to 'totalize' the meaning.** Almost without exception, New Critics are fond of talking about "total meanings", "total assertions" and "total responses". 'Total' is the most abused word in New Critical writings. The frequency with which it is used in way reveals the uncritical nature of New Criticism. Total is word that belongs to the domain of metaphysics and spirituality, Criticism as a science should desist from such metaphysical deployment of language. In critical theory, meanings are always partially recoverable, any clam to total meaning is plane arrogance. Post-structuralist undid the mistake of 'totalitarian' and somewhat 'essentialist' New Critics by way of highlighting the multiplicity of meanings in a given text, and no meaning is complete unto itself. By assigning 'totality' to a poem or a critical act, New Critics ignore what the text misses out in the processes of its own production.

9. New Criticism suffers from **Aristotelian determinism.** The findings of Aristotle with regard to tragedy are applied rather mindlessly to other genres as well. No wonder most of the New Critics tend to locate mini-tragedy or a short drama inside the short lyric. Of all the critics even R.S. Crane posits that even a lyric has "something analogous to a plot in the sense of a specific form which synthesizes into a definite emotional whole what is said or done in the poem and conditions the necessities and probabilities which the poet must embody somehow in his lines. Crane, again, goes on to assign the status of "productive science" to Aristotle's *Poetics*. It is a science, he adds, "of which the end is the making of products that have beauty of some sort as their distinguishing characteristic, being things to which we attribute value for the intrinsic excellence of their making rather than for any further utility that they may be made to serve". Clearly, the entire New Critical enterprise lapses into some kind of Aristotelianism, wherein *Poetics* become the springboard (in Blackmur's terms the "sacred book") of its structural/ formal investigations. Elder Olson actually makes out a case for a plot in Yeats's lyrical poem "Sailing to Byzantium". While analyzing a poem of Donne, Allen Tate literally invokes Aristotelian thesis of "action" and the movement involved in a plot from ignorance to knowledge thus: "the full linguistic body of the poem which ultimately resists our analysis, is the action, the trope, the 'turning' from one thing to another; from darkness to light, from ignorance to knowledge, from sight to insight. This tropological motion is the final cause of the poem, that towards which it moves, on account of which its logical definition, its formulable essence as such." The point is that the entire critical idiom as well as method is so typically Aristotelian that sometimes New Criticism is also described as Neo-Aristotelian school of criticism.

10. New Criticism is often called **'boring'** because it is tied to one interpretation. It takes micro level close analysis of

even commas and full stops in the poem that at times it appears that reading becomes quite strenuous. And it discourages students who do not perceive or care about a 'right reading' or the processes of responsible reading.

11. It is **caught in the binaries**. Tate uses the binary of "extension" vs "intension", Cleanth Brooks employs binary terms like "irony" and "paradox"; I.A.Richards talks in terms of "synthesis" or "an equilibrium of opposing impulses", Yvor Winters sees poetry as a fusion of "logical argument" with "irrelevant texture", T.S. Eliot coins his term "unified sensibility". In their effort to define poetry, they use a negative method of comparing it with what is non-poetry. In other words, New Critics compulsively get into the game of binaries or what R.S.Crane terms as "a process of dichotomous division". In the table of contraries thus established, one column could be headed under 'poetry, and the other column 'non-poetry'. Literature is a complex discourse, and such binary frames reduce its complexity. To divide literature into prose and poetry to the exclusion of each other, or divide literature into the categories of the classical and the romantic to the exclusion of each other is polemical. Binaries tend to be formulaic which do not let the full range of possibilities come alive.

12. By its aversion to extrinsic or extra-textual references, this approach **closes the possibilities of alternative readings of the text.** Text is denied its whole range of textuality which in a way prevents the text its after-life. If a text is read eternally within its own context, it would yield same meaning. This would prevent the growth of text in terms of its capabilities accruing shifting meanings with the passage of time. More than the biography of the author, there could as well be the biography of the text in terms of the responses it evokes in different eras and periods of history.

13. The author is relegated to the background but the **reader too is denied free participation** in the making of the meaning. It does not allow for the creativity of the reader. Text is both a boundary and a perspective within which the reader has to operate. In fact, reader as an autonomous entity does not take off in the tight text-based regime of New Criticism. Only if the text is allowed to be fiddled according to the biases and inclinations of the readers, the possibility of readerly responses can arise. By privileging text over the reader and the author both, New Critics reduced the scope of human intervention n the making of the meaning. The man who writes and reader who reads are the true loci of meaning, text is only a medium.

14. New Critics tend to dismiss romantic poetry as poetry of escape and idealism. According to Ransom all the so-called **romantic poetry is the pathological** outcome of a mental, moral and spiritual disease. New Critics do not even endorse the classical didactic poetry for it seeks to 'improve' the world. The only kind of poetry that seems to find favour with the new critics is modern poetry written in the metaphysical mode. This in way would mean that New Criticism as a school is more applicable to the modern poetry and whatever suits modern poetry is generalized in terms which could be discovered partly in poetry other than the modern one. The theories or concepts which New Critics find very close even particular to the practice of modern poetry are forced on to Romantic poetry so that their findings could be generalized. Cleanth Brooks appears to struggle hard that too rather unconvincingly when he applies his concept of irony as principle of structure to the lyrics of Wordsworth or Coleridge. In order to legitimize their own brand of poetry, they either discovered modernist tendencies in romantic and classical poetry or found them wanting utterly to be approved of poetries at all.

15. New Critics have the habit of invoking terms from science as they try hard to lend some technical character to their critical analysis. At times their entire enterprise borders on some kind of **a "retreat into technical problems".** More than the content and the subject matter, it is the technique which is reckoned as the very locus of discovery. Art as 'achieved content' is possible through the mediation of technique. The quote from Mark Schorer's famous essay "Technique as Discovery" is a testimony enough of New Criticism's obsession with technique: "When we speak of technique, then, we speak of nearly everything. For technique is the means by which the writer's experience which is the subject matter, compels him to attend it; technique is the only means he has of discovering, exploring, developing his subject, of conveying its meaning, and, finally of evaluating it. And surely it follows that certain techniques are sharper tools than other, and will discover more; that the writer capable of the most exacting technical scrutiny of his subject matter will produce works with the most satisfying content, works with thickness and resonance; works which reverberate, works with maximum meaning."

16. New criticism suffers from what is termed as "**new critical orthodoxy**" either of doctrine or of method. The criticism of New Critics is governed not as much by practical expediency, as by doctrinal conviction. This implies that they are committed, first and foremost to a particular philosophic dogma the nature of which has been defined variously as Aritotelianism, or neo- Aritotelianism, as Croceanism, as a confusion of Croceanism and moral or logical positivism, as naturalism, scholasticism, nominalism, relativism etc. Similarly most of the New Critics are often carried away by their respective methods, so much so that they either miss the obvious or find out something which is absent. Even Chicago critics acknowledge the need of having a critical method. but method unto itself should not become the end of critical exercise. In case of most of the New Critics, method begins to overtake the genuine critical enquiry.
17. New criticism is **averse to scholarship**. It is made out that new critics are mere charlatans who never having submitted to the discipline of scholarship depend merely on their ingenuity of performing hat tricks and throwing up startling discoveries about the poem under critical scrutiny. R.S.Crane observes that New Critics suffer from the spirit of exclusive pragmatism to the extent that they refuse to learn and take help from other disciplines. By forging some esoteric structure as an underling form of the poem under study, the critics would escape the field work required to elucidate the work. Why should scholarship be dismissed as extraneous to literary evaluation? New Critics at times are so overtaken by their aversion to scholarship that necessary inputs of scholarship are also played down. Most of the New Critics did not like the notes given towards the end of the poem *The Wasteland*. and in fact went ahead to discover the structure of the poem without any reference to its rich inter-textual frame.
18. It is sometimes seen that New Critics in their critical practice **do not conform to their own critical theory**. Although the central dictum of New Criticism is "The poem is the thing" so well propounded by Cleanth Brooks in his essay "Poem, Poet and the reader", very often New Critics feel the suffocation of their self-imposed limitation and are forced to go beyond the mere boundaries of the text to the author's biography and other critical works. Blackmur's explication of Yeats's "The Second Coming" is a good example of the violation of the condition laid down by his school. He finds that the meaning of the poem cannot be fully understood without copious references from Yeats's prose treatises *Michael Robartes* and *The Vision*. Yeats's beliefs grounded in his esoteric occultism which provide the texture and the structure of the poem have first to be grasped before the poem can be tackled and the understanding of those beliefs has to come from a probe into these extra-textual references. Similarly Allen Tate's treatment of "Ancient Mariner" derives a lot of critical impetus from Coleridge's *Biographia literaria*. Allen Tate's following critical estimate of Hart Crane is too author-centric and biographical: "He [Hart Crane] came to New York at seventeen equipped with an hysterical and disorderly family, almost no formal education, and the cultural inheritance of a middle-western small town: his religious training has been in Christian Science. By the time he was twenty-five, before The Bridge had scarcely been conceived, he had written a body of lyric poetry which for originality, distinction, and power remains the great poetic achievement of his generation."
19. **Dissentions among leading exponents of New Criticism** also in way generated a powerful critique of the movement, and at times weakened its claims to being cohesive and cogent. For instance. Crowe Ransom is opposed to close reading of a text under study while all other New Critics insist on it. Though differences among the New Critique should have ideally made it stronger, yet at times these differences were so fundamental in nature that they seemed to rip apart the entire creed of so-called New Criticism.

After New Criticism: The Arrival of Chicago School

The **Chicago critics study literature as part of a larger problem** connected with the well-known concern of their university in humane education for the present age. They concentrate upon literary criticism as one of the four humanistic arts: linguistics, analysis of ideas, literary and artistic criticism, and history. In higher education, they believe that all four should have adequate representation. Although they do not lose sight of the other three arts, the business of the Chicago Critics is literary criticism.

The study of criticism as they envisage it is not designed to develop new or particular critical method, but to examine

and evaluate those approaches to literature which have been or currently are being used for its interpretation and judgment. Their work includes therefore **the criticism of criticism**. Criticism of criticism can help us raise questions about the comparative efficacy of one method over another, one type of dogmatism over other. As Elder Olson and others of their group have stated, they stand opposed to the dogmatic assumption by any critic that his position and method are alone correct. R.S. Crane's attack upon Cleanth Brooks as stalking horse for the New Critics is an onslaught upon the critical monism quite in harmony with the pluralistic approach if these critics. Criticism being the philosophy, Olson, writes, the number of possible philosophical positions may be brought to bear upon any work.

Since criticism is to the Chicago Critics a reasoned discourse, **the Aristotelian approach to literature is basic to their method**. They work inductively and concentrate upon the structure of the object under consideration. From the internal nature of the poem, they seek to discover whether it is a finely constructed whole, and they judge each poem upon its intrinsic merits. So far they conform to the procedures of New Criticism, as they recognize the value of concentration upon the poem as a poem and not another thing. They do not, however, willingly accept the label of 'neo-Aristotelian' which has been affixed to them. In particular they oppose the New Critical practice of extending Aristotle's words on tragedy to other literary genres. The search, for example, for some quality in lyric poetry analogous to plot in tragedy seems to them based upon a mistaken assumption that it must exist. Each literary genre has its own principles of construction, and poems achieve wholeness by conforming to the principles of their genres. It is Aristotelian method, not perverted use of Aristotelian principles which they consider basic to their work.

Far from proclaiming any new critical panacea, the Chicago Critics urge **the application to literature of varied critical procedures**. Their purpose being to understand the work of art, they bring to bear upon it whatever they believe will serve to elucidate it, no mater whence it may be derived. Critical principles, Crane observes, are neither doctrinal, nor historically necessitated shibboleths; they are simply instruments of inquiry and analysis. Obviously the emphasis of Chicago critics was more on elucidation and enunciation of the work under study; New Critics were more aestheticians.

The basic motto of Chicago Critics is **to forge the multiplicity of critical languages** for a fuller exploration of a text under study. R.S. Crane writes very pertinently that "the best hope for criticism in the future, indeed, lies in the perpetuation of this multiplicity." With the critical monism of New Criticism in his mind, he warns: "Nothing could be more damaging than the practical success of any effort to define authoritatively the frontiers and problems of our subject or to assign to each of its variant languages a determinate place in a single hierarchy of critical modes." The multiplicity which the Chicago critics preach and espouse for is not the same kind of multiplicity which post-structuralists later on pressed for. The multiplicity of Chicago critics is backed up by the ideology of liberal humanism, the multiplicity of post-structuralists is anti-liberal humanism. Despite their concern for multiplicity of critical approaches, Chicago critics never opened the axes of race, gender and nation in their criticism.

Since the Chicago Critics are concerned with **exploring all practicable avenues to literary understanding**, they do not hesitate to study the literary tradition. "A plurality of approaches is not only inevitable but desirable in itself, both because the prosperity of the humanities depends on keeping all aspects of humanistic objects in view," observes. R.S.Crane. Chicago critics are clearly more open-minded than New Critics for they simply do not restrict their evaluation to the mere aesthetics of the work, but for their overall humanistic perspective. They are in favour of liberal humanities as a whole.

New Criticism Today

Criticism as a discipline has come a long way since the days of New Criticism. In fact all the subsequent schools of criticism -- from Russian Formalism to New Historicism, to Cultural Studies have veered a great deal away from the basic foundations of New Criticism, yet for all these schools the take off point remains paradoxically enough New Criticism only. Towards the end of this note it would be extremely relevant for the students to know the present status of New Criticism in terms of its usability in contemporary critical practices.

The first reaction against New Criticism in the forties and fifties comes not from theoreticians or philosophers, but from the academics themselves. It comes from Chicago School of critics who as explained above urged for multiplicity of critical approaches against the critical monism of New Criticism. The Chicago Aristotelians with their emphasis on

theme, plot and genre rather than language, metaphor and close-analysis caused a major set back to the limited area of New Criticism. Russian formalist also in way did not approve the New Critical practice of restricting the focus of study to a single text to the total exclusion of other works by the same author, or other works being written in same time/space. Russian Formalism flourished in 1915-30 and it was preoccupied, very much like New Criticism with the language of literature, and also sought to build a science of literature, but it differed from New Criticism on these counts – i. critical attention should not be confined to a single text, all other writings of the same author must be read as an enabling context to the text under focus, ii. all the writings of the same period should also be studied along; iii all the writings of the same genre could also be studied along with, iv. All the writings that have preceded the text under focus, or simultaneous with it should be used as contrastive/comparative purposes. The basic focus of Russian Formalist was to build topologies and models of genres across a range of writings. So, despite their focus on the formal study of the work, they naturally differed with New Critics in having their focus on the close-reading of a single text.

But the most powerful challenge to New Criticism came though Northrop Frye. The New Critics had discredited the historical dimension of a work of art and emphasized its uniqueness and timelessness. Frye on the other hand argued that every work has its archetype and the critic's concern is not so much with its uniqueness or originality as its relationship with its archetype. Frye's basic premise that Bible is the grammar of all literature in way dismissed New Critics' thesis of uniqueness that used to attribute to a work of art. The mythical criticism of Frye extended criticism beyond the boundaries of the single literary text to the total universe of literature itself. Frye provided a transition from New Criticism to structuralism though his archetypal criticism.

Structuralists, as the very name suggests, continued to explore the structure and form the text, but unlike New Critics, in doing so they went beyond the text. They contested the very idea of text as having its own context. Words mean only because they are located in system of conventions which precede arrival of a text. Their main endeavour was to explore these conventions and evolve a general grammar of literature which will be only partially visible in any individual work. Their basic premise was that text can have contexts outside the text too, and its form therefore is determined more by external factors than mere internal one. A work is more a product of *langue* than *parole*. In fact structuralists while asserting the role of form being influenced and informed by the external centres did not undermine the intrinsic structural aspects of the work. So New Criticism was in a way subsumed by the structuralist exercise of formal research into the architectonics of the work. Their major contribution was that instead of one centre (i.e. the centre provided by the text's own context), there could be many centres of a text which exist outside it

Instead of concentrating on the work singularly in a synchronic frame, they also insist on locating the text in a diachronic frame. Such a study enables to understand the formal variations in the text in a historical context, also the inter-texts that a text inheres consciously or unconsciously, would come into light in such a frame. New Criticism is utterly silent about the inter-textual ramifications of a work. The fact that language creates its own truth does not necessarily mean that it is the higher truth. Structuralists insist on the game that language plays with the presentation of so-called truth. The New Critical position of assigning higher value to literary truth over other forms of knowledges or representations is strongly contested by the structuralists who believe that text is only a construction which is always mediated by a language which is already there. Since language mediates our efforts to reach the truth, it can help us know only a derived truth. Language is an unwanted third between the truth and its representation. So the entire focus of New Criticism on linguistic construction of the work, as the high point of approaching the 'original' literary truth becomes quite questionable under structuralism.

The New Critical concern with the unity of the text, or the struggle for meaning is replaced by a deconstructionist view of textuality as a perpetual process in which unity and meaning are impossible. In fact the search for these forms is seen as a thing of the past, something to be rejected and the literary text comes to be valued for its inability to commit itself. The text announces its own disunity, its lack of reference, its refusal of meaning. In this way as against the 'total' meaning of a text under the New Critical regime, 'undecidability' becomes the distinctive feature of postmodern criticism.

Both New Criticism and deconstruction in a way underplayed the foregrounding of the work in the historical context in one way or the other. If New Criticism privileged the textual truth as the sole and ultimate truth, deconstruction

enterprise demolished all hierarchies between truths; the importance of historical context as a significant presence in the truth of representation was undermined. So the critical trajectory shifts to New Historicism. So from 'old' historicism', criticism shifts to New Historicism through various phases such as New Criticism, Structuralism and Post-structuralism (also known as Deconstruction). The unity of meaning which the New Criticism sought to assert, and the undecidability of meaning which the post-structuralist sought to celebrate, was in a way brought within the all important frame of history with a difference. Unlike conventional historicism, New Historicism seeks to connect literature with history in a relationship which is dialectical and dynamic. History is not a mere background to the text, it is the very process of it, similarly text is not just a product of history, it is the very participant of history. History informs and is informed by text. Text is history and history is text. In simple terms, New Critical emphasis on decontextualization of work particularly from its possible historical contexts is overturned in New Historical phase of criticism with the difference that now history is not seen as linear field of closed meanings and constructions. New Historicism, thus, not only restored history as an important constituent of literary truth, it also corrected the lop-sidedness of New Critical endeavour of dehistoricizing the literary representation.

New Historicism as a theory of literature lapses into cultural materialism and later on cultural studies. Under cultural materialism, instead of history, the focus shifts to all material aspects of culture that go into the making of the meaning. The New Left insisted on bringing besides history, the materiality of culture as an important input into the construction of any work. New Criticism in this process is accepted as long it provides some preliminary ideas about the structure of the text, for an overall involvement and participation of the text in the processes of culture, Cultural Studies as a project of critical theory overtakes New Criticism. The role of culture in the shaping of the text, and the role of text in the shaping of the culture thus become two mutually complimentary concerns of contemporary criticism.

Without the arrival of New Criticism in 1930s, it is difficult to map out or even imagine the state of literary theory which it is in, today. The sudden shifts towards history and culture as two dominant aspects of meaning-construction, can be understood in terms of their awful neglect under the regime of New Criticism. Culture and history make a comeback as New Criticism and later on structuralism had eclipsed them from critical purview for quite a long time. Today politics of culture is seminal to the understanding of the text, mere textual analysis, despite all its close-ups. would remain silent on the material conditions of meaning- formation — such as gender, race and nationality -- that inevitably go into the making of the text. The text is now seen as the very site of culture. The text is not just a witness to eternal power play which communities wage against each other, it is participant too. Mere aesthetic play of forces that reach to some wishful equilibrium is not what contemporary critical theory aspires/ looks for. It is more interested in exposing the politics that goes into forging the so-called aesthetic harmony of the work.

Saussure

(a) Nature of Linguistic Sign

Barthes

(b) Death of the Author

Saussure & Barthes Unit-VII

Dear Students,

This lesson is going to introduce you to some of the main ideas of Structuralism as formulated by the Linguist Ferdinand de Saussure. Section-I contains an explanation of the following concepts: (i) Langue and Parole (ii) Synchronic vs. Diachronic Study of Language, (iii) Syntagmatic Structures vs. Paradigmatic Structures, (iv) Signified and Signifier, (v) Linguistic Value, (vi) Signification and Value, (vii) The Notion of 'difference'.

Section-II is a description of the influence of Structuralism in various spheres. This sections contains the ideas of some key Structuralist thinkers like; Edward Sapir, Claude Levi Strauss, The Prague School, Victor Shklovsky, V.I. Propp, Roman Jackobson and A.J. Greimas.

Section-III is a section on Semiotics. It describes the relationship between Structuralism and Semiotics. It contains the ideas of C.S. Peirce, Claude Levi Strauss, Ferdinand de Saussure, Roman Jackobson and Roland Barthes

Section-IV is an elaborate and critical explanation of the essay "The Nature of the Linguistic Sign" by Ferdinand de Saussure.

Section-V is an introduction to Roland Barthes and his important works.

Section-VI is an elaborate and critical explanation of the essay "The Death of the Author" by Roland Barthes

The text of the two essays prescribed in your syllabus are to be found in 'Modern Criticism and Theory - A Reader' edited by David Lodge (London and New York: Longman, 1988).

Section-I

An Introduction to Structuralism

Structuralism is general is a philosophical stance or worldview. Structuralists are interested in the interrelationship between units and rules – which are the ways that units can be put together. Let us take the example of a tinkertoy set, which has various coloured rods of different lengths, various kinds of connectors, wheels and attachments. These are the so-called 'units' in the box and the rules of tinkertoy construction are that rods must go into holes. Everything that can be made out of tinkertoys (i.e. a building, a racecar, a windmill etc.) can be made by using the units according to the rules. A structuralist analysis of tinkertoys would not look at what one has made but only at the structure governing every possible combination of tinkertoy elements. The structure is that rods go into holes.

Every structuralist analysis looks at the units of a system and the rules that make that system work without concern for any specific content. In language, for structuralists like Ferdinand Mongin de Saussure, the units are words (or the 36 phonemes, which make all the sounds of words in English) and the rules are the forms of grammar, which order words. In various languages the grammar rules are different, as are the words, but the structure is still the same in all languages words are put together within a grammatical system to make meaning. If a student in a language class is asked to give examples for various nouns, adjectives, verbs, proper names and exclamations and put them into a story; she may very well to do so but the net result could be a very silly narrative. The parts of speech may be appropriately or rightly placed and yet the sentences may not yield any rational sense. For example in the sentence, "My pencil ate my bat" : there is no meaning generated although the parts of speech are all in the right places. The mistake is that the proper words have not been combined with each other in the sentence to make it meaningful. We shall came to this a little later

In a literature class, if students are given three characters: princess, stepmother and prince and asked to narrate a story; some might say "Cindrella" and others could give the title of "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" and other fairy tale titles too. From a structuralist point of view, Cindrella is the same story as Snow White and many other Disney stories: a princess is punished by a stepmother and rescued and married by a prince. The 'units' here are the characters, and the 'rules' are: stepmothers are evil, princesses are victims and princes and princesses have to marry. Whatever details or added elements one may supply, the basic structure of the story is always the same. That is exactly what structuralist analyses of literature (or myth or other forms of narrative) are analyzing.

Structuralists believe that the underlying structures, which organize units and rules into meaningful systems, are generated by the human mind itself and not experienced through the senses. They believe that the mind is itself a structuring machine, which looks through units and files them according to rules. This is important, because it means that, for structuralists, the order that we see in the world is not already existing in the world, but is a product of our minds. So structuralism sees itself as a science of humankind, and works to uncover all the structures that underlie all the things that humans do, think, perceive, and feel—in mathematics, biology, linguistics, religion, psychology, and literature.

The base of structuralist analysis is that every human mind, in every culture at every point in history has used some sort of structuring principle to organize and understand cultural phenomena. For instance, every human culture has some sort of language, which has the basic structure of all language: words/phonemes (i.e. sounds of a particular language) are combined according to a grammar of rules to produce meaning. Every human culture similarly has some sort of social organization (like a kind of government), some sort of system for who can marry whom (usually referred to as a kinship system), and some sort of system for exchanging goods (usually referred to as an economic system). All of these organizations are governed, according to structuralist analyses, by structures, which are universal.

A more formal definition of structure is that it is any conceptual system that has the following three properties:

- **Wholeness:** This means that the system functions as a whole not just as a collection of independent parts. With the tinkertoy set, it is hard to play with just the individual items; you need the whole set, with all the rods and holes, and the rules they follow, in order to make something like a building or a racing car.
- **Transformation:** This means that the system is not static (i.e. stationary). but capable of change. New units can enter the system, but when they do they are governed by the rules of the system. With the tinkertoys, you can substitute a blue wheel for a yellow one, or an orange rod for a purple one, but rods still go into holes in order to create something. With tinkertoys, you could add any rods (of the right thickness) and any holes and the system still works. Another example is the word 'office' which normally is a noun, but a TV advertisement has made it a verb, as in "a new way to office." The commercial creates a new word, "to office," and we know what it means because the structure it fits into has not changed.
- **Self-Regulation:** This is related to the idea of transformation. You can add elements to the system, but you can't change the basic structure of the system no matter what you add to it. The transformations of a system never lead to anything outside the system. We can add things to the tinkertoy set and never alter the fundamental rule that rods go into holes.

Many of the concepts now central to structuralism were first fully developed in connection with the modern study of language, linguistics and with the modern study of man: anthropology. Saussure, as a structuralist, is interested in language as a system or structure. His ideas apply to any language—English, French, Farsi, computer languages—and to anything we can call a "signifying system". A system, which functions with the help of signs, for example traffic signals, operates as a signifying system. Language to a signifying system as the words function as signs by standing for or a being substitute for something else. Saussure describes the structures within any language, which make meaning possible, but he's not interested in what particular meanings get created. Like all structuralists, he's not interested in the details of what fills up the structure, the specifics of speech or writing, but only in the design of the

ntribution lay in recognising that language as a total system is complete at every
hanged in it a moment before. Let us now understand some concepts,
udy of language, i.e., linguistics.

Langue and Parole

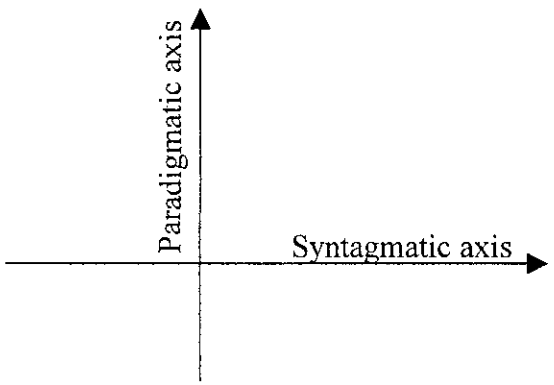
Ferdinand de Saussure distinguishes between language as a system, a machine that human beings use and the use itself: the difference between language and speech. Each act of speaking is an individual's willful act, assisted by specific necessities of the communication situation. While saying the word 'pin', as long as you manage to keep your 'p' different form 'f' and 'b', people will understand what you are saying. Let us take another example. In the English language, we have the word 'cot' for bed but in Marathi and Hindi the words used for bed are 'Kaat' and 'Khaat'. This allows us to see that the status of 'k' in Marathi and Hindi is very different from the one in English. This makes us realize that the system of sounds is different for Hindi, Marathi and English. In a speech situation whichever way you pronounce your sounds, so long as they are different from other sounds - especially sounds pronounced in similar ways – your pronunciation is understandable. The system of sounds retains its identity whatever be the speech situation. This system, which is not merely of sounds but also of grammatical categories and other linguistic features is what Saussure calls 'langue' and the level of speech he calls the 'parole'. It is a well-known fact that Saussure emphasised the study of 'langue' more than 'parole'. The difference between 'langue' and 'parole' is more or less that which exists between the abstract language system which in English we simply call language and the individual utterances (speech acts) made by speakers of language in every day situations known as speech. As far as Saussure is concerned, changes and variations at the level of parole is not really the object of study in linguistics. As linguists, we are much more interested in the whole system itself. Saussure explains the difference between 'langue' and 'parole' by giving an example of the game of chess. 'Langue' can be compared to the set of rules according to which the game is played and 'parole' can be compared to the actual manner according to which it is played by various people in the world. The actual manner would of course be different for different people. The rules of chess exist above and beyond each individual game and yet they only acquire exact form in the relationships that develop between the pieces in individual games. As is pointed out in the book – A Course in General Linguistics, Langue is therefore "both a social product of the faculty of speech and a collection of necessary conventions that have been adopted by a social body to permit individuals to exercise that faculty." Saussure is simply trying to emphasise that the system of language is created by the society – it is a social product and it is a social community, which sets up the relations between any particular sound image and any particular concept. Thus the system or structure of language and the conventions that rule and govern speech is 'langue'. The actual utterance in the social context is 'parole'. In order to make sense of an utterance (parole) one should be aware of the underlying system at work (langue). This relationship between a communal and shared root (language and the conventions of language) and an individual practice (the act of speaking or expression) was at the root of all cultural practice for Saussure.

Synchronic vs. Diachronic Study of Language:

The concepts of langue and parole are related to the other far-reaching contribution that Saussure makes the concepts of synchronic and diachronic linguistics. The synchronic study of language – study of language at one time considering the whole system of language, whereas diachronic approaches study language as it changes through time. It is quite clear that the concept of 'parole' is related more to diachronic study and the concept of 'langue' to the synchronic study of language. The concept of system, of a machine, of a structure is fundamentally a synchronic concept whereas the concept of the use of the system, of the process of use of the machine is fundamentally a diachronic concept. Historical linguistics is deeply diachronic whereas structural linguistics is deeply synchronic. The identification of the various features of language can be done only in a synchronic study because it is only when we stop the flow of changes in language that we can think of it as a whole and identify its basic compounds. It is only at the synchronic level of structural analysis that a system reveals its components. At the diachronic level, everything is forever changing and there are very few things that we could study and moreover we too would be changing along with the object of study.

Syntagmatic vs. Paradigmatic: Another pair of concepts that Saussure introduced was the pair of association and combination, also known as the syntagmatic axis and the paradigmatic axis. The paradigmatic axis is not really a linear axis but rather a pool or a collection of words, which are consciously or unconsciously associated with each other. The syntagmatic axis is more linear, in which by using rules of combination, we combine words in to sentences

Most language use can be described by mapping it onto these two axes which are shown below:



Let us take the utterance: "Thirty sails crossed the sea" and map it on the two axes. It would look something like this:

Twenty ships went across the blue ocean.
One hundred vessels ploughed the clam waters.
Thirty sails crossed the sea.
One boat bridged the shores.
Three barks unwound across the watery gap.

It now becomes clear that the horizontal relations amongst words are combinational or syntagmatic relations. They occur between words in a straight line. The pool of words which are associated with each other – 'ships, vessels, sails, boat, barks'; 'went, ploughed, crossed, bridged, unwound'; 'ocean, waters, sea shores' – form the vertical axis of association or the paradigmatic relations. The words given in each row show that one word can be substituted for another because of their associative relations. By associative relations, we mean that the other words might be synonyms, antonyms, words of similar sound or of the same grammatical function (e.g. the preposition 'the' used above) which form the inner storehouse of each speaker's language. The associations amongst words are not always associations of meaning but often are associations of sounds: 'ship' may bring to mind 'sheep' that in turn remind us of 'fleece'. The paradigmatic pool of words is also called a lexical set – a set of words, which are semantically or phonetically related to each other, e.g., 'pen', 'ink', 'paper' belong to a certain set of words and are members of a lexical set. Since language is a self-contained structure, the absence of certain words partly creates and certainly refines the meanings of those that are present. In a sentence such as 'the girl kicked the boy' part of the meaning of 'kicked' derives from the fact that it turns out not to be 'kissed' or 'killed'. This realization of association is also a relation 'in absentia'. It is an extremely important realization that words that are absent in the sentence are also contributing to its meaning. On the syntagmatic level, there is a sequential movement of language (i.e. one word comes after another). Each word has a linear or 'horizontal' relationship with the words that precede (come before) and succeed it (come after) and this is also taken to be the 'diachronic aspect' of language because of its commitment to the passage of time.

Signified and Signifier: The most well known concept that Saussure generated was the concept of the sign. It is to this concept that a large part of structuralism and semiology (the science of signs) owe their existence. Saussure gave the idea that words are signs of a particular type and went on to discuss the dual nature of the word, i.e., a word has sound and meaning. When we speak the word 'cat' we are letting out three sounds 'c', 'a' and 't'. This sound series becomes meaningful only when these three sounds are joined together and not any other series such as 'tat'. Thus if there are sounds which are not attached to meanings, they will be meaningless and will not qualify to become words. If there is an idea or thought in your mind and no sounds are attached to it, it will remain unexpressed. What follows therefore is that words are the unity of sound and thought or meaning. The unity of the two is called a linguistic sign. According to Saussure the sound part is to be called the 'signifier', the meaning part is to be called the 'signified' and the unity of sound and meaning is to be called the 'sign'. A detailed explanation of the nature of the

linguistic sign is given in an elaborate summary of the essay prescribed for your syllabus. It is important to mention here that there are two significant ideas about Saussure's description of the sign – the first is the idea that signs are arbitrary and the other is that of value'. The first idea means that the bond or the union between the Signifier and Signified has no natural or logical relation. There is no reason or argument to prove that the sounds in the word 'school' should mean 'a building or an institution where education is imparted to children.' The word 'school' could also mean 'a group of people especially writers, sharing the same ideas' or 'a style, approach or method of a specified character'. This means that one signifier or word can have many meanings. Moreover any other combination of sounds could be used instead of 's', 'c', 'h', 'o', 'o', 'l'. In languages like French or German, the idea of 'school' is clarified by a different sound –series. This makes it possible to separate the signifier and the signified or to change the relation between them. As seen in the previous example, the idea of a single signifier or word could be associated with more than one signified (i.e. the word 'school' has more than one meaning). The reverse is also true because the concept or idea of a school has a different signifier or expression with respect to every language. This means that a single meaning or idea can have various signifiers. This is a brief introduction to the arbitrary nature of the sign whereas a detailed note is provided in an explanation of the essay "The Nature of the Linguistic Sign".

Linguistic Value: The value of a sign or the total meaning of the unity of the signifier and the signified is determined by the place it has in the paradigmatic pool of associated signs. This can be better explained by taking two signs from two different languages, which signify the same thing. Consider the word 'mother' in English and 'maa' in Hindi. These words derive from the same Indo-European root. However the values that these words have in the two languages are quite different. Hindi has many other words for family relations which belong to the same pool as does 'maa' but words for family relations being different, the value of 'mother' also changes accordingly. What needs to be clearly understood is that the value of a sign is determined by its relations to words or signs, which are, absent. Thus in 'English' the word 'mother' gains value from the fact that the sign used is not 'mother-in-law' or elder sister or brother. This has already been clarified in an explanation of syntagmatic and Paradigmatic relations. These relations, plotted or shown on the paradigmatic axis are relations of difference. The value of a sign is determined not by what signifiers get linked to what particular signifieds (i.e. meanings) but rather by the whole system of signs used within a community. An individual cannot fix value for any signifier/signified combination. Anybody can make his/her private language but no one else would understand it. For communication or understanding to take place, two or more people have to agree on what signifiers go with what signifieds. Value can thus be defined as the collective meaning assigned to signs, to the connections between signifiers and signifieds. Value is the product of a system or structure (LANGUE) and not the result of individual utterances or signifier – signified relations (PAROLE).

Signification and Value

Saussure distinguishes between value and Signification. Signification is what we commonly think of as 'meaning', the relationship established between a signifier and a signified. Value, by contrast is the relation between various signs within the signifying system. While discussing the notion of linguistic value, Saussure makes two important points, which are paradoxical. Value is always composed of two kinds of comparisons among elements in a system. The first is that dissimilar things can be compared and exchanged and the second is that similar things can be compared and exchanged. This can be better understood with the help of language. A word can be exchanged for something dissimilar, e.g. an idea; a word can be compared with something of the same nature, i.e., another word. The value of a word is therefore not fixed so long as one simply states that it can be 'exchanged' for a given concept, i.e., that it has this or that meaning. One must also compare it with similar values, with other words that stand in opposition to it. Its content is really fixed only by the concurrence (i.e. common agreement) of everything that exists outside it. Thus what Saussure is trying to explain is that a word can be 'exchanged' for something similar – another word, a synonym or for something dissimilar – an idea, for example. In both cases, it is the system itself, which creates value and sets up the ways that exchanges can be made. A signifier, when considered alone, has only a limited relation to its own signified; when considered as part of a system, that signifier has multiple relations to other signifiers in the system.

The Notion of 'difference'

The most important relation between signifiers in a system, the relation that creates value is the idea of difference (as

already explained). The word 'cat' has meaning, not because of the animal it is associated with but because that word is not 'hat' or 'bat' or 'car' or 'cut'. This notion of 'difference' is also described in terms of phonemes or the sounds used in a particular language. The sound 't-t-t' made with the tip of the tongue against the teeth, is represented in English with the symbol 'T'. Since the connection between sound and concept, or signifier and signified is arbitrary, the sound 't-t-t' could easily have been represented by another symbol such as 'D'. Moreover, within the English alphabet, 'T' has meaning because it is not 'A' or 'B'. Saussure explains that this is negative value, wherein something has meaning or value because it is not something else within a system. A positive value is however established in the signifier/signified connection – a sign has positive value in and of itself because of the connection of its constituent parts, i.e., of sound image and meaning. A sign has negative value within a signifying system because the system of linguistic units depends on the idea of difference. A linguistic unit has value within the system because it is not some other unit within the system. Another good example of this is the digital languages recognized by computers, which consist of two switch positions, off and on, or 0 and 1. 0 has meaning because it is not 1 and 1 has meaning because it is not 0. As this example shows, the idea of difference depends upon the idea of Binary opposites. To find out what a word or sign is not, you compare it some other word or sign. Since language exists in time and space, you can only do this comparison one word at a time, hence always forming binary pairs or pairs of two. A binary pair shows the idea of difference as what gives any word value, e.g. in the pair hat/hats, the difference is the 's'. To take another example just/unjust, the difference is the 'un', which makes the second word the opposite of the first. Thus what makes each word distinct is its difference from the other word.

Section-II

Having examined the concepts or ideas of the structuralist way of thinking, let us now examine how the ideas of structuralism influenced various spheres of life in both America and Europe. The primary influence of structuralism was on Anthropology (the study of man) and on literature. First let us examine how some of the principles of Saussure influenced the anthropologist Claude Levi Strauss and the publication of his book 'Structural Anthropology'. Later we will study the influence of structuralism on the Formalists.

Edward Sapir

In America, it was Edward Sapir's book "Language" which marked a significant beginning, for in it he records his growing awareness that language operates by some kind of natural structuring principle. Like Saussure, Sapir too discovered that the phonetic difference between any two sounds only becomes meaningful to the native speaker when it coincides with the phonemic structure or the sound pattern of a particular language. That structure has a considerable effect on the native speaker's perception of his own language. American Structural linguistics, always closely linked with anthropology made progress in another area — it established a relationship between language and the cultural setting in which the same language occurred,. In fact when linguists such as Sapir and the influential B.L. Whorf applied the structures of language into other fields of social behaviour, the conclusion they reached was that the 'shape' of a culture or a total way of life of a community was determined by or clearly 'structured' in the same way as that culture's language. In fact the world of space and time is in fact divided up by language and encoded in accordance with its own particular structure. In short, a culture and the entire field of social behaviour constituting that culture represent an act of 'encoding' on the model of language. In fact a culture itself is considered to be a language

Claude Levi Strauss

Many anthropologists during and after the Second World War felt that a culture could be studied like a language and that many of the ideas of linguistics could be applied to an analysis of culture too. Prominent amongst them is the name of Claude Levi Strauss– a French anthropologist who has applied the principles of structuralism to 'a general science of man' in his book "Structural Anthropology"(S.A). The concern of Levi Strauss was to utilize the methods of modern linguistics in his analysis of non-linguistic data, i.e., cultural phenomena or whatever constitutes cultural behaviour such as ceremonies, rites, kinship relations, marriage laws etc. These are to be studied not as separate entities or things but in terms of the contrastive relationships they have with each other, making their structures similar to the phonemic or the sound patterns of a particular language. Strauss therefore writes in his book S.A. that "... like

phonemes, kinship terms are elements of meaning; like phonemes, they acquire meaning only if they are integrated into systems." Just as any two sounds like 'p' and 'k' become meaningful when they function as a part of a certain language, similarly kinship terms like brother, sister, father and son acquire meaning with respect to a particular culture such as Hinduism or Christianity. The analysis of any particular culture is done on the pattern of the analysis of its language. Moreover each system, that is, kinship, food, political ideology, marriage ritual, cooking etc constitutes a partial expression of the total culture, conceived ultimately as a single gigantic language. Even the cuisine of a society (i.e. its styles or methods of cooking) may be analysed into constituent elements, which acquire meaning by being organised according to certain structures of opposition and correlation. A better understanding will be possible with a structural analysis of the systems of kinship.

Let us first understood what a 'kinship' system is. All societies have 'kinship' systems– that is sets of rules and a who may and who may not marry whom and secondly they prescribe the nature of relationships within a family. Levi-Strauss proposes that such systems may be having the same structure of the language of the society. In other words what Levi-Strauss is trying to say is that Kinship and language are different types of communication systems in the same societies and yet they may be produced by 'identical unconscious structures.' Let us see how Levi-Strauss examines kinship relations in a new light. While analysing certain primitive societies, it is not enough to study the correlation of attitudes between father/son and uncle/sister's/son. This correlation is only one aspect of a global system containing four types of relationships, which are linked to each other, namely: brother/sister, husband/wife, father/son and mother's, brother's/sister's son. The point emphasised by Strauss is that if we know one pair of relations, it is always possible to infer the other. In order to understand the role of uncles in primitive societies (i.e. the relation between maternal uncle and nephew) we must treat it as one relationship within a system whose structure rests upon four terms (brother, sister, father and son). This elementary structure is the product of defined relations involving four terms and is the true atom of kinship. Nothing can be thought of beyond the fundamental requirements of its structure and in addition it is the sole building block of more complex systems. The kinship system emerges clearly as a language – a structured and structuring system of signs whose mode is symbolic, self-regulating and self-sufficient and this it can converge with the most highly developed of social sciences, i.e., linguistics.

The relationship between language and myth occupies a central position in Levi-Strauss's view of the 'savage' mind and his argument is that the nature of that mind reveals in the structures of its myths as much as in the structure of its language. As in the case of kinship relations, the 'unconscious' structure of myth yields itself to a 'phonemic' analysis of its phenomena. Levi-Strauss is making the point that the extremely large number of myths in the world can be reduced to a manageable number of recurrent elements (i.e. elements which frequently occur) and it is these elements which have structural significance. Moreover myth has obvious connections with language itself for in order to become known, myth has to be told and retold hence it becomes a part of human speech. Thus the analysis of myth can properly aim to be 'the extension, to another field, of structural linguistics' (Structural Anthropology 2[illegible]). Myth however cannot simply be treated as language because in order to preserve its individual nature we must be able to show that it is both the same thing as language and also something different from it. This 'sameness and difference' is partly provided for by Saussure's distinguishing between langue and parole. The comparison becomes clear when we realize that the individual version of each myth is its parole and every different version of myth derives from and contributes to the fundamental structure of its langue (i.e. the original myth). This can be better understood with the help of an example. The Greek play 'Oedipus Rex' by Sophocles is a part of the total Oedipus myth. It derives its 'parole' from the 'langue' of the total Oedipus myth.

A myth has another structural quality – it always refers to events supposed to have happened a long time ago. Its [illegible] is located in time. Yet each time the myth is told again, the specific pattern or structure of events described is bound to be timeless, linking in an explanatory mode the present with both past and future while it is being retold. The point to be understood is that the power of the original myth can never be affected by the manner in which any particular version of its is recounted. Myths do not get transformed by 'translation' and even the poorest linguistic expressions are adequate to transmit the 'mythical value' of the myth. Levi-Strauss makes the point very clear "Its substance does not lie in its style, its original music, or its syntax but in the story which it tells" (SA:210).

Levi Strauss is trying to make the point that no matter in what way a myth is told, we sense behind the individual telling or 'parole' and behind the 'langue' or the original myth from which that parole derives; a kind of 'super-langue' which gives a fundamental message. It is this fundamental or universal message with which we are concerned.

Structuralism and Literature

Our study of the various ideas of structuralism should have made clear the point that a concern with form ranked as one of the chief concerns of structuralism. The ideas of Ferdinand de Saussure had a great impact in France and there developed a school of literary criticism whose members belonged to the 'Russian Formalist' movement. This school imbibed many of the ideas of structuralism and it was in 1965 that Tzvetan Todorov translated into French the forty-year-old writings of a group of Russian critics under the title of 'Théorie de la Littératuré'. The formalist school flourished in Russia just before and during the 1920s. Its members were both linguists and literary historians such as Boris Eichenbaum, Viktor Shklovsky, Roman Jacobson, Boris Tomasjevsky and Juri Tynyanov. The linguists were associated with the Moscow linguistic circle and the literary historians were associated with the Petrograd. Society for the study of Poetic language or OPOYAZ. This name struck to the formalist school.

The Prague School

The Prague School of linguistics, inaugurated in 1926 as the Prague Linguistic Circle (PLC), was constituted by Roman Jackobson (who moved from Russia to Prague and eventually the USA), Jan Kukarovsky, Felix Vodicka and others. In the 1930s critics like Rene Wellek and Josef Vachek joined them. The P.L.C. represented the "transition stage" (as Terry Eagleton terms it) between Russian Formalism and the later structuralism. Essentially functionalistic in their view of language, the Prague School, saw poems as 'functional structures' in which the signifiers and signifieds are governed by a set of relations. The Prague critics argued that these signs must be analysed in and as themselves, without relating them to any external reality. They insisted on the structural nature of a work, where the poem or novel must be seen as a dynamic whole. Each text has one "dominant" level that influences and affects other levels. They also distinguished between the ordinary reader and the seasoned or experienced reader of literary texts. They sought to combine Saussure's synchrony and diachrony in their commitment to literary history. In this latter focus, the Prague School adopted the model of literary communication with the three factors of writer, literary work and reader. A very important figure in the Prague School linguistics is that of Roman Jakobson.

The formalists shared a lot of ideas with the 'structural' linguists and also with the 'structural' anthropologists of the future. The formalists were fundamentally concerned with literary structure or an objective description of the special techniques designed to make the literary work a piece of art. It follows that those distinguishing or special features would be found within the literary work itself and not in its author or its social background. Such features were to be located or discovered in the special or different use of language in the literary work. They were not to be found in any particular topic or theme of the work. According to the formalists, poetry was made out of words and not 'poetic' subjects. This however does not mean that the formalists insisted on the use of flowery or figurative language, metaphors and symbols.They felt that similes and metaphors could be used in ordinary language as well and their concern was with those features of language, which restructured or gave a new form to our ordinary perception of reality.The aim of the poet is to enable us to see the world in a new light, to 'creatively deform' the usual and the normal and create a new, childlike vision in us. By reaching at the end of a poem, we as readers should have designed a 'new' reality to replace the one we have become already used to.

It now becomes clear that 'making strange' or unfamiliar became the chief purpose of formalist analyses of literature. Such analyses also distinguished literature from other modes and manners of linguistic communication. By comparing literary language with ordinary language, it is literary language, which is strange. Poetic language constantly draws our attention because it is extremely different from normal or everyday language. According to the formalists, the medium or the language of poetry is much more important than the message it contains. As a result, words in poetry are not simply carriers of ideas or meanings but objects in their own right. To borrow the terms of the structuralist Ferdinand de Saussure, words cease to be 'signifiers' or expressions and become 'signifieds' through the devices of 'rhythm', 'rhyme', 'meter' etc. Later formalist theory realized that the meaning carried by words could never be fully separated from the words themselves because no word has one simple meaning. Poetry in fact does not separate a

word from its meaning but increases or multiplies the range of meanings available to it. A 'poetic' use of a word makes ambiguity (more than one meaning) a notable feature of its performance and it is this factor that changes its structural role from that of signifier to that of signified. Patterns of rhyme and rhythm also contribute to the range of meanings available. Thus all the devices employed in the poem generate and so constitute its range of meaning. The formula of the formalists was – the poem is its devices, it is its form. Thus a poem was to be understood only through its language.

The formula of literature transforming the familiar into the unfamiliar was also applied to the lyric and the novel. In the lyric, which operates on static objects and institutions, words were made to look strange on the associative or the paradigmatic mode whereas in the novel this formula works on the syntagmatic or horizontal mode. Since the novel is committed to narrative, to movement in and through time; sequencing or ordering of the events (i.e. which event is to come first and which later); is the material on which the structuralist works. Let us now examine the work of a structuralist in the field of narrative.

Victor Shklovsky

Shklovsky's concern is therefore with the plot, which represents the special way in which the 'story' is creatively deformed and defamiliarized. Plot is seen as an organic element of form in the novel as rhyme or rhythm is in the lyric. Shklovsky's theories constitute one of the first attempts at a 'poetics' of fiction and their focus is on the basic aim of the novel – the act of narrating or story telling. Shklovsky considers Sterne's 'Tristram Shandy' as the most typical novel in world literature since its main concern is the business of story telling. Its plot is about the transformation of its own story into its own plot; thus it is a novel about itself. The intention of the formalists was to suspend the prevailing view about a work of art as possessing or having content and to substitute the idea that a work of art is to be understood through its form only. Content is not to be considered as separate from literary form, in fact the content or the subject matter is to be understood through the formal devices of a literary work. An important point is that the process of 'defamiliarization' requires the existence of a body of 'familiar' material which seems to have 'content'. The absence of a familiar norm or 'control' robs the process of any distinction. Thus a work of fiction can only speak of its own coming into being against a background of speaking of something else. V.I. Propp's "Morphology of the folk-tale" remains one of the major formalist contributions and an important step towards a theory of fiction.

V.I. Propp

Propp's concern is with the 'norms' or the standards by which narrative structures work and what are the 'units' of meaning in a novel. The formalist regarded the fairy tale as the primary model for all narrative. The fairy tale gives a structure to the narrative on the horizontal or syntagmatic plane and the elements of structure are the functions performed by various characters in the plot. His analysis reveals that the fairy tale gives identical functions to various characters. Although the number of characters is extremely large, the number of functions is extremely small because two or more characters may perform the same function. Propp came to the conclusion that all fairy tales have the same structure and they reveal the following basic principles:

1. The functions of characters are the constant elements in a tale, independent of how and by whom they are fulfilled. They constitute the fundamental components of a tale.
2. The number of functions known to the fairy tale is limited (Prop lists thirty-one functions).
3. The sequence of functions is always identical.
4. All fairy tales are of one type in regard to their structure.

Propp divides the thirty-one functions into seven 'spheres of action corresponding to their respective performers' such as the villain, the donor (provider), the helper, the princess and her father, the hero and the false hero. In a specific fairy tale, one character may be involved in several spheres of action and several characters may be involved in the same sphere of action. The important point to be understood is that in the fairy tale we are dealing with uniformly repeated structures and they have implications for all narrative.

Roman Jakobson

One of the most distinguished thinkers in linguistics, philology and aesthetics, Jakobson was responsible for the development of semiotics as a critical practice. Since his work is extremely wide ranging in scope, Jakobson's contribution to semiotics and structuralism alone are discussed here.

In the Jakobson model of communication (either oral or written) the following six constituent elements play pivotal roles:

Context
Referential
Message
Poetic

Addresser.....Addressee
Emotive Conative

Contact
Phatic
Code
Metalingual

1. A message is sent by an addresser to an addressee. To facilitate this, they need to use a common code, a channel of communication, and the same frame of reference. Each of these elements has a corresponding function in the communicative act.
2. Language seen from the addresser's point of view is emotive (expressing a state of the mind). Seen from the addressee's perspective language is conative (seeking an 'effect').
3. If communication concerns itself with the context, it is referential (which privileges the information content of any utterance) if the communication is oriented towards the code of communication it is metalinguistic (the query 'do you understand me?' typifies this nature).
4. When the message focuses on the words of the message itself, that is when the communication draws attention to itself, it is poetic.
5. And finally, when the communication focuses on the act of contact it is phatic.
6. Jakobson's work with aphasics (people with a particular kind of speech disorder) resulted in his analysis of figurative language. Adopting the two distinct uses of language namely selection and combination, Jakobson elaborated the terms metaphor and metonymy.
   (a) In metaphor one sign is substituted for another, entailing a transfer of meaning between two unrelated domains or areas. An example would be the use of the words 'jealous' and 'green'. Here to 'go green' commonly implies the state of being jealous. However, there is no logical or semantic link between the two. That is, the two words/ideas of the emotive state and the colour are actually unrelated.
   (b) In metonymy one sign is associated with another, where it utilises a term that is a property of the key word, or is related to it contiguously (example: 'sail' for 'ship', since sail is a part of the ship). In poetry the metaphor is used more often than metonymy because the stress in poetry is on similarity and/or striking opposition. Metaphor therefore involves a transfer of sense, whereas metonymy involves only a transfer of reference (part for a whole, but not a totally unrelated term/domain). Selection and substitution constitutes the metaphoric pole and combination and contextualisation the metonymic pole.
7. 'Poeticity' or the poetic function is a necessary part of the study of language because language and reality (or, in Saussurean terms, sign and referent) do not coincide.

What then is Jakobson's assessment of Structuralism ? His contribution lies in drawing our attention to the poetic or the aesthetic function of language whose primary concern is to draw attention to its own nature, its own sound-patterns, diction, syntax etc. and not to refer to a 'reality' beyond itself. Jakobson's views thus undermine any

'transparent' connection between signifier and signified, sign and object. This view of literary art however seeks to re-integrate form and content and to present the work not as the container of a message but as an intrinsic, self generating, self-regulating and ultimately self-regarding whole. A literary work, in itself, is a structure In its formulation of a comprehensive theory of language and communication in which literature has an integral part. Jakobson's work emerges as the bridge linking formalism and structuralism. Jakobson's efforts were made to apply structural linguistics to the analysis of poetry and let us now assess the work of Propp and French Structuralist critics in the field of fiction

For Jakobson and other formalists' whose work has been briefly discussed, the chief quality of literariness lies in the special use of language by the poet. The language of poetry is a specially intensified language in which signifiers or sound images do not point to a reality or a meaning outside the poem but derive their meaning from within the poem Formal features such as rhyme, alliteration (words beginning with the same sound) and metre do not have reference to a reality beyond the poem but create their own reality or meaning from the special use of language made within the poem. Literature too is seen as a special kind of activity which like language has its own structure and is to be understood in terms of itself (i.e. it is self-regulating) and yet capable of transformation. New forms or styles emerge in revolt against the old not in protest but as a result of the reorganization of permanent elements. Literature while renewing itself periodically redraws its own boundaries so as to include elements, which were not a part of its mainstream. In fact literature in any age is defined by its structural role of opposing the non-literature of that age.

Formalist literary criticism is clearly linked to the structural developments in linguistics and anthropology because it treats literature as a system, which has its own laws and is therefore self-regulating. The individual work of art stands as a sort of 'parole' in relation to its parent 'langue' (i.e. literature) and each one is explained by the other. To put it simply and to conclude, it is conventionality or social practices which act as the structural rules in the understanding of literary art

A.J. Greimas

His 'structuralist' approach to the matter of meaning has produced two influential books, "Semantique Structurale" in 1966 and DuSens in 1970. In his first book he writes "we perceive differences and thanks to that perception the world "takes shape" in front of us, and for our purposes.' The perception of oppositions underlies the elementary structure of signification (i.e. meaning) on which his semantic theories rest. The 'elementary structure' involves recognition and distinction of two aspects of an entity: its opposite and its negation. Thus, dark is defined principally by our sense of its opposition to 'light' and 'up' by our sense of its opposition to 'down'. The same binary patterning manifests itself in concepts such as male: female, vertical: horizontal, human: animal etc. Man is the Talking Animal, he is homo loquens. (So, the fundamental structures of his language inform and shape the fundamental structures of his stories. Even though the stories seem different on the surface, a 'structural' analysis reveals that they spring from a common grammar or to make use of the term used by Greimas 'enunciation spectacle'.) He explains it thus "the content of the actions changes, all the time, the actors vary, but the enunciation-spectacle remains always the same for its permanence is guaranteed by the fixed distribution of the roles'. The structure of the enunciation spectacle is revealed through the various 'actants' or actors. An 'actant' may embody itself in a particular character or it may reside in the function of more than one character in respect of their common role in the story's underlying structure. In short, the deep structure of the narrative generates and defines its actants at a level beyond that of the story's surface content. For example, in "King Lear", the separate characters of Cordelia and The Fool in fact embody the same theme (intuitive innocence set against Lear's rational corruption) and so function as the same actant. The account of how Lear by finally embracing their 'foolish' principles becomes an aspect of the same actant, is in fact the story of the play

The structuralist approach to literature thus pushes the privileged 'linguistic dimensions into the foreground and emphasises the study of language in the study of literature. The linguistic dimension relates to two connected issues the relation of pieces of writing to other pieces of writing and the relation of a piece of writing to the act which it presupposes and which 'completes' it: the act of reading. All writing takes place in the light of other writing, and represents a response to the 'world' of writing that pre-exists.... Each new novel is not only generated by the pre-existing notion of what a novel is, but it can also change that notion, and also itself generate a modified one. The genre is therefore not altogether a prescriptive concept.

As Jonathan Culler points out the concept of genre offers a 'norm or expectation to guide the reader in his encounter

with the text.' A genre-word, 'novel', 'poem', 'tragedy' placed on the cover of a book 'programmes' our reading of it and reduces its complexity by giving it a knowable shape. Thus tragedy and comedy exist because they demand *different 'readings' from us and are 'programmed' to demand such readings.*

Todorov's account of reading in "Poetique de la Prose" represents an attempt to give prominence to an activity, which *is generally ignored. The prevailing critical orthodoxies either look 'through' the text to something beyond it: the* author, or 'society' or they seek to explain it by a process of commentary which is like a paraphrase. Reading sees the individual work as an autonomous system, avoids the 'sticking-to-the-text' aspect which limits it to mere commentary because it is aware of the text's status as a system and of its relation to a larger system.

A reader will not look for 'hidden' meanings but will be concerned with the relationship between the various levels of meanings, which the text as a system enjoys. A reader will perform operations such as 'super position' and 'figuration' which see a text or a group of texts as agreeing to a certain 'figure' or structure which can be discovered at various levels. Todorov's own reading of Henry James's short stories reveals that the stories repeatedly reveal 'an essential secret' which itself gives rise to their essential organizing structure 'based on the quest for an absolute and absent cause'. *The secret turns out to be the existence of a secret manifested at a variety of levels, never losing its unifying* identity. Thus a literary text does not merely exhibit the characteristic forms of the language, which contains it, it also extends and modifies that language. Thus "literature is, inside language, what destroys the metaphysics inherent in every language. The essence of a literary discourse is to go beyond language...."

Section III

Structuralism and Semiotics

After having studied the contribution of both American and European linguistics to the field of structuralism, let us now come to a very related field, i.e. of Semiotics. It was Saussure who said "Linguistics is only a part of the general science of semiology; the laws discovered by semiology will be applicable to linguistics...." The notion of a 'science of signs' has become one of the most fruitful concepts derived from the ideas of structuralism and not easily differentiated from it. The terms 'semiology' and 'semiotics' are both used to refer to this science, the only difference being that semiology is preferred by Europeans as a mark of respect to Saussure and 'semiotics' is preferred by English speakers out of respect for the American, Charles Sanders Peirce. The field of semiotics is very large and it includes the study of the communicative behaviour of animals, the analysis of such signifying systems as human bodily communication, olfactory signs (the 'code of scents'), aesthetic theory and rhetoric (the art of effective speech). The boundaries of semiotics and structuralism are more or less the same and in the long run both ought properly to be included within a third discipline, i.e., of communication. In such a context, structuralism would emerge as a method of analysis linking the fields of linguistics, anthropology and semiotics.

Let us now understand what semiotics is and what kind of signs does it include? In human societies, language clearly plays a commanding role and is taken to be the chief means of communication. It is also clear that human beings communicate by non-verbal means and in ways, which stretch or widen our concept of language to include non-verbal areas. To make it more clear let us understand that nobody just talks. Every speech-act includes the transmission of messages through the 'languages' of gesture, posture, clothing, hairstyle, perfume, accent, social context etc. Through all these things, one conveys a lot, sometimes even more than with what words actually say. Even when we are not speaking or being spoken to, messages from other objects with which we interact, fill our minds, e.g., horns hoot, lights flash, smells attract or repel, tastes delight or disgust. The feel of objects systematically communicates something meaningful to us. Man's role in the world is thus essentially of communication. He is, as A.J. Greimas argues, a receiver and sender of messages, he gathers and spreads information. Roman Jakobson gives us some general principles of sign systems: "Every message is made of signs: correspondingly, the science of signs termed semiotics deals with those general principles which underlie the structure of all signs whatever, and with the character of their utilization within messages,..." ('Language in relation to other communication systems" selected writings Vol. II, p. 698).

The study of sign systems derives from a very ancient perception that a sign has two aspects: 'an immediately perceptible signans and an inferable, apprehensible signatum'. This does not differ much from the distinction between

signifier and signified as recorded by Saussure. Both elements function as aspects of the 'indissoluble [illegible] sign and the various relations between them form the basis of semiotic structures.

The American founder of semiotics, the philosopher C.S. Peirce proposed a complex classification of signs [illegible] the different relationships between signans and signatum or signifier and signified. Peirce worked on [illegible] semiotics, frequently linking the two. A sign or 'representamen' is 'something which stands to somebody for [illegible] in some respect or capacity'. A sign thus stands for something (its object); it stands for something to somebody (its interpretant); and finally it stands for something to somebody in some respect (this respect is called its ground). The terms 'representamen', 'object', 'interpretant' and 'ground' refer to the means by which the sign signifies, and the relationship between them determines the precise nature of the process of 'semiosis'.

C.S. Peirce argued that signs are the vehicles for thoughts as well as the articulation of logical forms. Peirce differs from Saussure in an important way. His semiotics is based not on the word-as-sign but on the idea that signs [illegible] they stand for something else, can be understood. The theory of signs is a theory of the production of meaning, and [illegible] a theory of language. A sign, for Peirce is what represents something for someone. A sign function can be shown as follows: Sign A denotes a fact or object B to a reader C.

A sign always has three aspects. It is an example of firstness, its object – of secondness and the interpretant (the mediating element) – of thirdness. The first is therefore a quality, a feeling or possibility.

The second is an individual who interacts with the environment and who may actualise the possibility. The [illegible] general term, a rule or law that represents the determinate quality of a regularity or principle. The interpretant is the indispensable element needed to link the sign with its particular object. That is, the presence of C is necessary for A to stand for, or represent B. Without C the connection between the sign A and the object referent B is incomplete. Here Peirce is suggesting the role of the reader as the medium that produces meaning in her/his act of interpretation. But a sign 'STOP' may indicate an intersection, a main road, or a dead end. The interpretant may thus extend the sign to make it mean something else. This is the 'unlimited semiosis' of Peirce.

Peirce's proposed nine types of signs and their various combinations would yield ten classes of sign. For our purposes it is sufficient to look at the second 'triad' or class of signs, which includes icon, index and symbol. In the icon the relationship between sign and object, or signifier and signified shows a similarity or 'fitness' of resemblance provided by the sign, as seen by the receiver. For example, a diagram or a painting of something has an iconic relationship to its subject in so far as it resembles it. Secondly, if we take a portrait as a sign, its qualities are assumed to be the same as the qualities of the object represented. In the index, the relationship is concrete. actual usually of a causal kind. The pointing finger is a signifier whose relationship to its signified is indexical in mode. A knock on the door [illegible] someone's presence and the sound of a car's horn is a sign of the car's presence in the same mode. Smoke is an index of fire. A weathercock is an index of the direction of the wind. In the symbol the relationship between signifier and signified is arbitrary. The active presence of the interpretant is required to make the signifying connection and arrive at the meaning. The major systematic manifestation of signs in this mode occurs in language. Thus when your observation of a leaf could be said to be an index of a tree, your painting of a tree constitutes an icon of the tree, the utterance of the word 'tree' is a symbol of the tree because there is no necessary 'tree-like' quality in that signifier. Its relationship to an actual tree remains fundamentally arbitrary, sustained only by the structure of the language in which it occurs and which is understood by its interpretant.

According to Roman Jakobson the nature of a sign's ultimately dominant mode will depend finally on its context (e.g. a car's horn is used in films to indicate relief, safety rather than danger, disaster etc.). A traffic signal may be said to combine index (pointing to a situation and calling for immediate, causally related action) and symbol (red in our culture signals danger, stop; green signals the opposite, and these arbitrarily related colours are binarily opposed by the traffic signalling system, as symbols). Peirce's analysis thus tells us a lot about the kinds of signs that exist, about the ways signs work and the use we make of them. The range of his writings means that the significance of his contribution to semiotic theory must be recognised.

Since the essay "Nature of the linguistic sign" is prescribed in your syllabus, it is important to understand the nature and function of signs. One of Ferdinand de Saussure's most powerful interpreters in the matter of semiotics has been

Roland Barthes. Barthes states that any semiotic analysis must present a relationship between the two terms signifier and signified which is one of 'equivalence'. What is important in their relationship is not how one term leads to another but the correlation which unites them. In respect of language this 'structural relationship' between sound image (signifier) and concept (signified) constitutes what Saussure calls the linguistic sign. While talking of non-linguistic systems, Barthes calls this 'associative total' of signifier and signified as the sign. He explains it clearly by giving the example of a bunch of roses, which can be used to signify passion. When it does so, the bunch of roses is the signifier and the passion is the signified. The relationship between the two and their associative total produces the third term, the bunch of roses as a sign. As a sign, the bunch of roses can also be a horticultural entity whereas as a signifier it is quite a different thing. What fills the signifier with signification or meaning is a combination of your intent (intention) and the nature of society's conventional modes which offer you a range of vehicles (i.e. ideas) for the purpose. The range is wide but fixed by society and it offers a complex system of ways of signifying. Roland Barthes in his book "Mythologies' gives the example of a black pebble which can signify several things but when provided with a definite signified (for example, a death sentence), it will become a sign.

Roland Barthes argues that in case of a myth we again have the signifier, the signified and their product the sign. However myth differs from literature. Barthes calls language as the first order or signification where the relation of signifier to signified generates the sign (the example of the bunch of roses). Myth is the second order of signification because it takes a previously established sign (full of meaning) and drains it until it becomes an empty signifier. This can be better understood by explaining to you the two terms: 'denotation' and 'connotation'. 'Denotation' is normally taken to be the use of language to mean what it says and 'connotation' means the use of language to mean something other than what is said. It is connotation, which is central to literary or the aesthetic use of language. Thus, connotation takes place when the sign resulting from a previous signifier – signified relationship becomes the signifier of a further one. Let us understand this in relation to 'fashion'. The function of clothes is to cover oneself, to protect oneself from wind and sun and cold. But clothes also have connotations: a silk kurta or a heavily embroidered one signifies wealth. This second order signification, the connotation completely does away with the denotation or the meaning of the word as found in the dictionary. The connotation or the second order of meaning is that we buy clothes not with protection in mind but in order to create a certain image of ourselves. The next point is where do we learn about what is fashionable and what is not? This can be done from friends but above all from male and female models whose pictures tell us about what is fashionable and what is not. 'Fashion' then has this discourse about fashion as its meta-language. Thus it is that a 'myth' of the fashion-world is created. This analysis given above is itself a meta-language about the relationship between a meta-language (i.e. discourse on fashion) between an object language (clothes and their connotation). When the sign of a prior signifier-signified relationship becomes the signified of a further one; the second order system becomes a meta-language. Thus it is literature which is one of the numbers of 'second order signifying systems' which we superimpose upon the 'first-order' system of language.

The work of Lévi-Strauss and other semioticians indicates that any aspect of human activity carries the potential for serving as or becoming a sign. As Umberto Eco says, a sign is anything that can be taken as 'significantly substituting for something else'. Eco is fact proceeds from the Peircean assumption of 'unlimited semiosis'. Thus nothing in the human world can be merely utilitarian (designed to be useful or practical). Even the most ordinary buildings organize space in various ways and in so doing they signify and issue some kind of message about the preferences of the society concerning human nature, politics and economics. All the five senses of smell, touch, taste, hearing, sight, can function in the process of semiosis, that is, as sign producers or sign receivers. The uses of perfume, of the texture of a fabric in clothing, the ways in which the tastes produced by cooking signal status, location and identity are manifold. Taking the example of cooking, the semiotician will say that there is a 'langue' (an over-all system) of cooking of which each meal is a 'parole' and in connection with that meal, taste and smell also have their role. There is no doubt a 'langue' of perfume and of 'fashion' and of writing about fashion at large. However, as Roman Jackobson says, it is evident that 'the most socialized, abundant and pertinent sign systems in human society are based on sight and hearing'.

Signs based on hearing, i.e., auditory signs are different in character from visual signs. Auditory signs use time, not space as a major structuring agent. Visual signs use space rather than time. Auditory signs belong to the major forms of spoken language and music. Visual signs belong to the art forms of painting, sculpture, architecture etc. Signs may

be produced organically by the body and it is language, which is the most 'pure' organic semiotic system. Every aspect of language signifies and it is produced solely by means of the body.

Language, which is normally auditory in tone, is made 'visual' when it is written down or given printed form. As already discussed, the auditory sign is committed to time as its structuring agent whereas the visual sign is committed to space. Writing imposes on language linearity and sequencing(organizing) in space which speech does not have. Moreover auditory 'temporal' signs tend to be symbolic in character whereas visual 'spatial' signs tend to be iconic in character. In writing, both kinds of signs will always be present and capable of signification.

A very useful insight that semiotics makes into the nature of literature is that all writings in books appear to reflect not the real physical world but a world reduced to other dimensions; to the shape and structures of the activity of writing the world as a text. However the education system in the west continues to promote the idea that the world presented in literature is real or life like or in other words the 'literary' version of the world in 'real'. However semiotics questioned the dominance of the literary mode because the written sign was discovered to have structural properties of its own. One of the most interesting arguments concerning this aspect of the semiotics of writing has been offered by Jacques Derrida, who proposes a 'science' of the written sign. called grammatology. In his three books published in 1967 Derrida calls for a reassessment of the nature and status of writing and also to do away with the traditional idea of writing as the external 'dress' of speech. Derrida also questions the traditional commitment to the voice in literature as the primary communicative instrument. This makes us live in an illusion that we are able to come face to face with some objective, unmediated 'real' world. The belief that writing acts simply as a transparent window on to an established 'reality' broke up with the new ideas on semiotics by Roland Barthes and Derrida. The world was no longer limited to an inherited pattern of meanings, a traditional word/meaning grid. The break-up of this world resulted in the break-up of European man's inherited system of signifier-signified links. The questioning of the ideas of Saussure led to a new importance being given to the nature of the written or printed word. In place of the traditional notion of the written word, Derrida introduces a concept deriving from an identity of what (in French) he terms différence and différance.

Différence which means differentiation in English, represents the principle by which language works. the process of 'binary opposition or the perception of phonemic differences between sounds'. Saussure had said that in language there are only differences whereas Derrida argues that to differ or differentiate is also to defer (i.e. to postpone or hold back). Thus while referring to a word. one is engaged in referring to many other words thereby constantly postponing the meaning of that word. Because of the difference between signifiers, it is difficult to pin down their meanings. A signifier contrasts with other signifiers while its signified or meaning is not fixed. Signifiers have so many and unlimited contrastive relationships with one another that they enter into a state of 'free play' with one another. In this process their signifieds are displaced and become less definite. One signifier being understood in terms of difference from another defers its meaning from one to another and to the next, so that the signified or the meaning is never reached, it is always deferred.

The deferring process in which writing appears to be involved in fact applies to the spoken word itself. Speech, like writing cannot be treated as a direct or transparent conveyer of meaning/intention. Speech is as 'impure' and as 'secondary' as any sign-system. Thus, when you say 'tree', you are as distant from the actual physical entity growing in the earth as you are when you write 'tree'.

Finally, the character of writing also generates a permanent gap between any text and any unitary 'meaning'. If the text and its 'meaning' are not one and the same thing because of the 'deferring' nature of writing, then a text can have no ultimate, final meaning. Thus it is in the nature of writing and of language not to be confined to specific structures of meaning.

We have been trying to arrive at the point that this different view of writing and of language (different from Saussure) frees the sign from its subordination to that 'reality' (or presence) which it was supposed to serve. Writing does not 'reproduce' a reality beyond itself, nor does it 'reduce' that reality. In fact it can be seen to cause a new reality to come into being. This philosophy of writing could naturally begin only with the written sign. the graphic mark on paper, and the 'grapheme' or to use the Greek word, the 'gramme'. The philosophy then would be called a 'grammatology'. 'Grammatology' says Derrida, would be the science of the written sign and its terms and its

conditions are not those of a dominant oral version of language but those of writing itself. A grammatology would not really give a theory but it could only be a reading of earlier theories. But this reading is a little different from the kind of reading undertaken to 'grasp' some meanings. This different type of reading could only 'open' books for further readings. It would keep the book before us throughout. A small introduction to Grammatology and to Derrida would enable you to understand the essay 'The Death of the Author' in a better manner.

Section-IV

An Elaborate Explanation of 'The Nature of the Linguistic Sign'

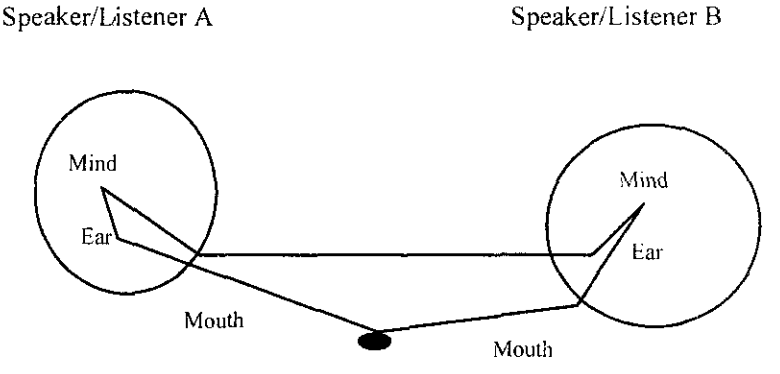
The essay is attributed to the Swiss Linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), credited with being the 'father of modern linguistics'. The ideas of this early twentieth century linguist are contained in the 'Course in General Linguistics'. This book is a collection of class lecture notes taken down by his students and colleagues and published after his death in the year 1916. When we are studying Saussure, we discard the assumptions of liberal humanism, which laid stress on man as the subject and object of understanding; and begin our new conception of how literature works through language. Saussure as a structuralist, is interested in language as a system or structure. His ideas apply to any language, which makes meaning possible, but he's not interested in what particular meanings get created. Like all structuralists, he's not interested in the details of what fills up the structure, the specifics of speech or writing, but only in the design of the structure itself. In the present essay, Saussure talks about a very important element of language- what constitutes the linguistic sign, the arbitrary nature of signs, the linear nature of the Signifier and two objections against the arbitrary nature of the linguistic sign. You have already read about linguistic as well as non-linguistic signs in the introduction. Here is a detailed, elaborate and self-explanatory summary of the essay:

Some people think that language is based on a naming process and that it supplies us with a list of names corresponding to a list of things. Thus the Latin names 'Arbor' and 'Equus' will be best understood if accompanied by a drawing or a picture of a 'tree' and a 'horse'. Such a view has some assumptions, which were later to be removed by the brilliant linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure. The first one is that the idea of any word, for example that of a 'hat' or a 'cat' already exists in the mind because everytime a speaker utters words, the pictures of a 'hat' or a 'cat' are not shown. Moreover such a concept, (i.e. view) does not clarify whether a 'name' or 'word' is a series of sounds (i.e. vocal) or a picture of a thing existing in the mind (i.e. psychological). In the nineteenth century people had taken it for granted that words stand for ideas, or things or both. However, the business of a word 'standing for something' had not been carefully analyzed and it was considered that the link between a name and a thing is quite unproblematic. This simplistic viewpoint had one positive element in regarding the linguistic sign as made up of two things – sounds and ideas. Saussure corrected this nineteenth century viewpoint by proposing that words are signs of a particular type, and went on to describe the sign as it exists in language. A word is actually a sound-series that stands in for a meaning. There is the more physical world of sounds and their production and there is the mental region of meaning, ideas, thoughts etc. The physical sounds are merely the form in which meanings appear. If there are sounds, which are not attached to meanings, these sounds will be meaningless. If there is meaning, which is not attached to sounds, it will remain a purely mental unexpressed phenomenon. It follows that words are the unity of sound and thought or meaning. The unity of sound and meaning according to Saussure is the 'sign' as it exists in language. Language is the unity of the region of sounds and the region of ideas: they do not operate without each other, as far as signs are concerned. A sound is itself a complex auditory articulatory unit, i.e., we experience sounds when we hear them or when we produce them while speaking. A sound in turn combines with an idea to form another complex unit called the linguistic sign.

A linguistic sign is a link between a concept (an idea) and a sound pattern. The sound pattern is not actually a sound (which is a physical utterance involving a number of movements) but it is actually the impression of a sound as experienced by his/her senses. .According to Saussure: 'A sound pattern is the hearer's psychological impression of a sound ,as given to him by the evidence of his senses.' A good example of this is that while talking to yourself – you do not make any sounds but have an impression or feeling of what you are saying to yourself. Saussure therefore says in the essay "The psychological nature of our sound patterns becomes clear when we consider our own linguistic

activity". This sound pattern is the representation or the actualisation of the impression of our senses [illegible] sound image. This sound image is not composed of speech sounds. Saussure is sensitive to the observed fact that by the time a word is heard the actual physical sounds have more or less disappeared but we retain an image of them and is this image perhaps which is the signifier. Consider for example the word 'unhappily'. By the time you say the last 'ly' part, the 'un' has disappeared but you retain an image of it as being a part of the whole word i.e. the concept of happily. The sound pattern or more precisely the sound image is to be distinguished from the other element associated with it in a linguistic sign – the concept. The concept too is an image because it is an entirely mental thing a thing of ideas, a thing not of the physical world of senses but of the world of thoughts. At many places in the 'Course in General linguistics", the concept is referred to as the signified or the meaning. The sound pattern is to be regarded as the more concrete and physical element of the linguistic sign and it differs from the concept which belongs to the world of thought.

It becomes quite clear that the linguistic sign is a two-sided psychological entity. The associations between sound patterning and ideas that go to make up the linguistic sign are realities positioned in the brain. The two elements are closely linked to each other and any one can lead to the other. This can be better understood by an explanation of what takes place in the individual act of speech or the speech circuit. It is a model of communication involving minimally two persons who are speakers and listeners of the same language. It is pictured in the diagram given below:



Suppose that the opening of the circuit is in A's brain, where mental facts (concepts) are associated with representations of the linguistic sounds (sound-images) that are used for their expression. A given concept (idea) unlocks a corresponding sound image in the brain, this purely mental phenomenon is followed in turn by a bodily process: the brain transmits an instant idea corresponding to the image to the organs used in producing sounds. Then the sound waves travel from the mouth of A to the ear of B: a purely physical process. Next, the circuit continues in B, but the order is reversed from the ear to the brain, the physiological transmission of the sound-images; in the brain, the psychological association of the image with the corresponding concept. If B then speaks, the new act will follow – from his brain to A's exactly the same course as the first act and pass through the same successive phases...

The above description reveals that first there is the psychological activity (activity carried out in the brain) then the physiological (bodily processes where the brain sends a quick message to the organs of speech) and then the physical which involves the sending of sound waves to another person. The psychological activity of associating concepts/ideas with sound images is carried out in the brain and it belongs to the 'Langue' or the system of language. It is here that Saussure talks of language as a social fact because while hearing a language we do not know, we perceive such sounds but fail to understand it. It is only when we can fully identify the sum of word-images stored in the minds of all individuals that we can enter the social bond that constitutes language. A linguistic sign is a link between a concept (an idea) and a sound pattern because for Saussure the sound pattern is not a physical sound (what your mouth makes and your ear hears) but rather the psychological imprint of the sound, a sound-image stored in the brain. A good example of this is that while talking to yourself you are just having an impression of what you are saying.

The union between a concept and a sound-images is a close one, as one part will instantly conjure the other as shown in the second diagram of the text of the essay. Saussure cites the example of the Latin word 'arbor' which designates

the concept 'tree' and clarifies that for a speaker of a different language, the sound image for tree in that language will automatically flash up the concept 'tree'. The meaning of any sign is found in the association created between the sound image and the concept: hence the sounds 'tree' in English mean the thing 'tree'. Saussure says 'sound-image' rather than sound because it is in the very nature of sounds to disappear but we retain an image of them, and it is this image which is the 'signifier' (another term for sound-image).

Meanings can and do vary widely, but only those meanings, which are agreed upon and sanctioned within a particular language, will appear to name reality. Thus it is social agreement which fixes the meaning between a sound image and a concept. Saussurean terminology is explicit about the sign being a combination of a concept and a sound pattern but is doubtful about the current usage of the term 'sign' which generally refers to the sound pattern alone. However a word is called a sign only because it carries with it a concept or an image as already clarified. Saussure proposes to keep the term 'sign' to describe or designate the sum of concept plus sound pattern. However for reasons of clarity, he replaces 'concept' and 'sound pattern' respectively by 'signification' and 'signal'. Saussure again points to the error of the 19th century in confusing sign with only the sound pattern or the form of the word. A word is a sign only because the sound series carries with it a 'concept' or an 'idea'. The terms are not only different from each other but also from their sum which is the term 'sign' and has not better alternative.

Sign, Signal and Signification

The sign, the signifier and the signified are concepts of the school of thought known as Structuralism, founded by Ferdinand de Saussure, during lectures he gave between 1907 and 1911 at the University of Geneva. Saussure uses at least two other terms for signifier and signified.

Signifier	=	signal	=	signifiant
Signified	=	signification	=	signifie

In the present essay, the uses of the terms 'signal' and 'signification' in fact correspond to signifier (i.e. sound pattern or the sound image) and the signified (i.e. concept or thought or meaning). In Saussure's theory of linguistics, the signifier is the sound and the signified is the thought. A sign is composed of a signifier (a sound image or its graphic equivalent, i.e. marks on paper) and a signified (the concept or meaning). A word composed of the letters p-e-a-r functions as a signifier by producing in the mind of English speakers the concept (signified) of a certain kind of rosaceous (plant of the rose family) fruit that grows on trees, viz., a pear. The linguistic sign is neither conceptual nor phonic, neither thought nor sound. Rather, it is the whole of the link that unites sound and ideas, signifier and signified. Therefore Saussure clearly states: "We propose to keep the term 'sign' to designate the whole ... current usage suggests no alternative by which it might be replaced." This unity of thought and sound is emphasised in the famous lines from 'A Course in General Linguistics' translated by Wade Baskin in 1959. "Language can ... be compared with a sheet of paper; thought is the front and sound the back; one cannot cut the front without cutting the back at the same time...." It should be however clear the Saussure does not equate language and thought, language and mind and following the changes in philological tradition in the 19th century thinks of language mainly in terms of sound and not in terms of grammatical categories or writing. Saussure must be credited with stating the fundamental and perhaps undeniable link between sound and meaning, between language and thought, between signifier and signified. As Saussure puts in the 'Course in General Linguistics': "Language might be called the domain of articulations ... Each linguistic term is a member, an articulus in which an idea is fixed in a sound and a sound becomes the sign of an idea."

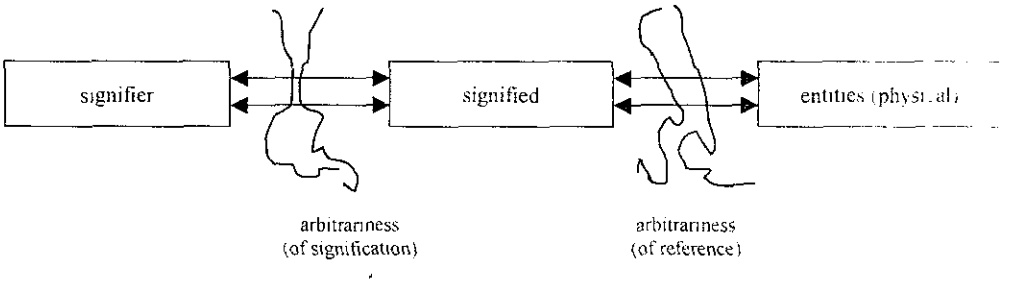
The linguistic sign as union of a signifier (i.e. signal or sound image) and signified (i.e. its meaning) has two main characteristics. The first one is that the bond between the signifier (SFR) and signified (SFD) is arbitrary. There is nothing in either the thing or the word that makes the two go together. There is no natural, intrinsic or logical relation between a particular sound image and a concept. An example of this is the fact that there are different words, in different languages, for the same thing. A dog is 'dog' in English, 'perro' in Spanish, 'Chien' in French and 'Hund' in German. The principle dominates all ideas about the structure of language.

This point is clarified in the essay by the example of the French sequence of sounds s – o – r, which act as a signal or a signifier for the idea 'sister' (i.e. its signified or meaning). The same idea could

have been represented by any other sequence of sounds. There is no natural connection or resemblance between the signifier and the signified. The point becomes clearer when we understand that the connection between the signifier and the signified is due to a contingent (dependent) historical convention. It is not a matter of an individual's psychological choice to associate a particular sound-image of his or her choice with a concept and this is due to the fact that language is a social entity and activity. An individual cannot change language though he or she may use it differently. What can be changed is the pronunciation of a certain word, use of certain words but the language as a system or 'Langue' remains invariant or unchangeable. As already stated in the example of the world 'pear', the word 'peer' 'wint' or even apple would have worked just as well in associating a word with the concept 'pear'. Since the word 'pear' has came to signify the concept 'pear' in English, no one has the power to simply change it at will. In other words, the relationship between a word and a concept is arbitrary in one sense (in terms of its origin) but not in another sense (in terms of its use).

The second point that Saussure makes about the arbitrariness of the sign is that the relation between the sign itself (signifier/signified pair) and what it refers to (the referent) is also arbitrary. Taking the 'pear' example again one might think that the concept in the mind of the speaker is formed, either directly or indirectly by actual pears. As language users, we might expect that the characteristics of pears produce in our mind the concept of a pear either directly through experience with pears or indirectly through pictures of pears, descriptions, or some such thing.

The 'arbitrariness of the sign' can be understood to mean two kinds of arbitrariness: arbitrariness of signification (there is no logical relation between a word and its meaning) and arbitrariness of reference (there is no causal link between a word and the thing it refers to). This is shown in the diagram below:



The above discussion makes it quite clear that Saussure sees language not as a relation between word and a thing (i.e. referent) but between sound and meaning. Saussure left out of his investigation any concern with the actual material objects (referents) to which signs are presumably related. It is equally important to see that all matters of relation are matters of form and not content. It is because of this emphasis on form that Saussure's theory of language can be called 'formal'. As a scientist Saussure limited his investigation to the formal structure of language (Langue) setting aside the way that language is employed in actual speech(parole). This leaving out of the referent enabled him to study the way a thing (language and meaning) is experienced in the mind of a speaker.

Another important aspect of the linguistic sign is that it gets its meaning only because of its difference from every other sign. The word 'pear' has no meaning in itself or in the intention of the speaker, but only due to the way it differs from other possible graphic images such as p-e-e-r, p-e-a-k, f-e-a-r, b-e-a-r etc. To put it differently, it does not matter how the form of the signifier varies, as long as it is different from all the other signifiers in the system (Langue). For the structuralist, meaning arises from the functional difference between the elements (signs) within the system (Langue). In this section, we have elaborately discussed the arbitrary nature of the sign and some of the consequences resulting from this fundamental principle. The next section will deal with how linguistic serves as a model for semiology.

Linguistics as a Model for Semiology

The first question that arises in our mind is 'What is semiology?' Is Saussure the founder of Semiology? How does linguistics as the science of language exemplify the principles of semiology? Most of these questions have already been taken up in the previous section. An answer to these questions will be found in the present section too.

Saussure argued in lectures that have come down to us through students' notes that since language was a system of signs, linguistics ought to be part of a larger science of signs, 'a science which would study the life of signs within society.... We call it semiology from the Greek semeion ('sign').'

It would teach us what signs consist of, what laws govern them. Since it does not yet exist we cannot say what it will be, but it has a right to existence; its place is insured in advance. Any system of signs, made up of signifiers and signifieds, is a semiotic or signifying system. Examples of various signifying systems are football referee signals, baseball signs, astrological signs etc. Any time we make up a secret code or a set of signals, we are making our own signifying system.

Various disciplines had taken structural linguistics as a model so that it became evident that the semiology Saussure postulated had begun to develop. As Jonathan Culler writes in his book "The Pursuit of Signs"; Saussure having taken the linguistic sign as the norm "... argues that all signs are arbitrary, involving a purely conventional association of conventionally delimited signifiers and the signifieds; and he extends this principle to domains such as etiquette, arguing that however natural or motivated signs may seem to those who use them, they are always determined by social rule, semiotic convention" (Culler: 26-7). Saussure is emphasising that all signs are arbitrary and that the link and the limits of the signifier and signified are determined by the social practices or the conventions of a society. Thus it is social practice which determines both natural and motivated signs. Both Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce (said to be the founder of Semiotics who attempted to construct an autonomous discipline) agree that it is the task of semiotics to describe those conventions that underlie even the most 'natural' modes of behaviour and representation.

There may be some signs that seem less arbitrary than others e.g. Pantomime, sign language, gestures etc. They seem to have a logical relation to what they represent. In the present essay, Saussure wonders whether natural modes of expression such as the mime (dramatic technique suggesting action, character or emotion without words by using gesture and movement) or signs of politeness fall within the scope of semiology? By signs of politeness, Saussure is referring to the Chinese custom of falling flat nine times on the ground to greet an emperor. Any means of expression accepted by members of a society is based upon a collective habit and any signs expressing natural gestures such as greetings, taking leave of someone or bidding farewell are fixed by social rule. It is this rule, which makes signs standing for or representing natural expressions a matter of compulsion. Thus signs, which are not based on any reason or system, i.e. entirely arbitrary, such as found in human languages, are an example of the manner of the semiological process. The semiological process has come to mean generally the study of any cultural product (e.g. a text) as a formal system of signs. Semiotics however is not limited to linguistics since virtually anything (e.g. gesture, clothing, and toys) can function as a sign. Saussure has come under increasing attack from various sectors of the humanities and social sciences for neglecting consideration of concepts or meaning of language. Many semioticians now look to the American philosopher, C.S. Peirce as a new source of intellectual inspiration. It was Peirce who said that the meaning of a linguistic sign comes from language users' forming ideas or thoughts of their extra linguistic life (i.e. beyond language) experience which is then integrated into a formal structure for the sake of easy communication. Such a view places the "word" at the center of our linguistic investigation and not the phoneme (the smallest unit of sound in an abstract system). It is the word, which provides a vital connection between language and the world and thus it functions as a 'living' sign. Many semioticians have criticised Saussure because he talks of the linguistic sign generating meaning through its difference from other signs within a system but leaves out the relationship between a sign and a thing of which it is a sign. He does not say much about the relationship between words and things because he merely sees language as a relation between sound and meaning and all matters of relation are matters of form and not of content. Thus Saussure's concept of semiology as it would be is based on relations of difference ,leaving out the relation between words and entities (thing they refer to in the world).

Can Symbol be used for Signal or Signifier?

According to Saussure the word symbol is sometimes used instead of the terms 'linguistic sign'. This however is strange because the term 'symbol' implies motivation whereas the linguistics sign is totally arbitrary. The use of symbols in literature implies that there is some natural connection between the symbol and its meaning. Saussure quotes the example of the 'scales' being a symbol of justice and that any other thing such as a 'chariot' or a 'wheel' could not replace it. Take for instance the symbol 'wheel' for fortune, which cannot be replaced by scales because only the turning of the wheel implies the fickle or unpredictable nature of fortune.

The word 'symbol' cannot be used to designate the signal or signifier because as Saussure maintains virtually all signs have meanings which no logical connection with their signals (i.e. meaningful series of sounds such as 'hat' 'mat' 'cat' etc.). The arbitrary nature of the sign does not imply that a signal depends on the free choice of the speaker because the relation between a signal and its signification it always based on social practice or convention. No individual can alter a sign once it has become established by social consent in a linguistic community.

Saussure however mentions two objections against the principle that linguistics signs are arbitrary. He dismisses onomatopoeia (words that sound like what they mean, like 'pop' or 'buzz') as still conventional, agreed upon approximations of certain sounds. Moreover such words are never organic elements of a linguistic system. Take for example the sounds attributed to animals. While all cocks crow in the same way, the sound is transcribed in English as "Cock-a-doodle-do" and in Spanish as "cocorico". Saussure cites the example of a French dog's 'ouaoua' and a German dog's 'wauwau'. The fact remains that most onomatopoeic words too are based on a linguistic community's mutual consent and take on the arbitrary nature of the linguistic sign (i.e. it is arbitrary and unmotivated).

Saussure also points out the case of exclamations which people tend to regard as natural or spontaneous expressions of sudden outbursts of feeling like joy, anger, surprises etc. In a majority of the cases it is difficult to see the necessary link between the signal (i.e. the signifier) and its meaning. For example, the English exclamation 'Hurrah' Used to express joy or approval has hardly any connection with its meaning. Moreover exclamation are different with every language. The French exclamation 'aie', meaning 'ouch' in English has in German the equivalent 'au'. All the three exclamatory words express the idea of 'pain' but the signifiers being different for every language brings home the point that the linguistic sign is arbitrary. Saussure concludes this point by saying that onomatopoeic and exclamatory words are marginal cases and even then their symbolic origin is questionable. It remains a matter of dispute

The second characteristic of the sign is that the signifier (means here the spoken word or auditory signifier) exists in time and that time can be measured as linear (progressing from one stage to another in a single series of steps, i.e. sequential). One cannot say two words at one time; one has to say one and then the next in a linear fashion. The same is also true for written language, as an individual can only write one word at a time though there are instances of overwriting (writing over an already written word). Moreover, whatever words are written. are generally written in a straight line. The easiest example of this is a sentence where the words come one at a time and in a line, one after the other and that too in a particular order (for example in English the word order is usually that of subject + verb + object). This word order is however different with respect to different languages. It is because of this that the words are connected to each other to make the sentence meaningful. The same is also true of spoken language. Spoken language too operates as a linear sequence and all the elements of a particular sequence form a chain

Section-V

Roland Barthes

Introduction and Important Works: Roland Barthes was a French semiologist, critic and essayist whose productive career lasted for a period of four decades. His importance as a critic arises from the fact that he is central to the structuralist as well as to the post-structuralist projects. He is thus considered to be a writer largely on the margins of the academic scene. He played an important role in introducing the theoretical approaches of semiology (science of signs) and post-structuralism to a wide audience through a number of articles and essays in newspapers and magazines.

Barthes felt that none of us could claim access to an objective experience of a 'real', permanently existing world. Rather, we invent the world we inhabit: we modify and reconstruct what is given. Another radical idea of Barthes is that it is when history is denied, that it is most unmistakably at work. By a radical integration of the reader in the production of a text, his literary criticism opposed the traditional notion of authors as producers and readers as consumers. He proclaimed 'the death of the author' and questioned the function of writing as an imitation of life or a representation of reality. He felt that writing was no longer a 'dress to thought'.

It is common to divide the works of Roland Barthes into an 'early' structuralist phase and a 'late' post-structuralist phase. However, according to Bjϕrnar Olsen in his article "Roland Barthes: From Sign to Text"; a more detailed

evaluation of his writing as it developed from early 1950's till 1980; suggests four-partly overlapping phases:

The first of these phases is marked by his 'committed' writings in the 1950s, which were clearly influenced by Marxism and Sartrean existentialism. This phase includes his two earliest works "Writing Degree Zero" written in 1953 in French and translated in 1967 by A. Layers and C. Smith. This book, in subsequent references, will be referred to as WDZ. The second is MPL whose French title is Michelet paur lui-même in 1954 (not translated into English). These books consider the relationship between writing, history and society, as well as his intensive study of modem myths, referred to as M.

Writing Degree Zero : Barthes, in WDZ gives a description of the bourgeois (i.e. the middle class) style of writing and the crisis it ran into around the middle of the nineteenth century. The writers of the classical French style of writing regarded themselves as 'witnesses to universal truth' and saw their own writing as an innocent reflection of reality. The realist or a classical style was not thought of as a style at all, but as the only right and rational way of farming a written discourse, suitable for all times and places. Barthes sees this process as a part of a grand design or plan whereby all features of bourgeois life silently acquire the same air of naturalness, of rightness and universality. The point to be understood is that French classical writing is not innocent. It does not simply reflect reality. In fact, it shapes reality in its own image acting as the encoder of the bourgeois way of life and its values. To respond to such writing is to agree to those values, to confirm and to reinforce the nature of that way of life. With the disintegration of this way of life in 1848 after the third French Revolution, the style that supported it no longer had any importance. It fell into disuse. Writers began to look for a different style or to abandon style altogether. Since 1850, the self-consciousness about style led to various efforts towards a 'zero degree' of style, a 'style-less', blank transparent way of writing (e.g. Camus, Hemingway). However, a style-less or 'colourless' way of writing is quite impossible to achieve and quickly becomes a noticeable style in itself.

Barthes's major argument as a structuralist critic is that writing is all style, that 'white writing' or transparent writing does not and cannot exist. According to the French critic in WDZ, "writing is in no way an instrument for communication, it is not an open route through which there passes only the intention to speak... In actual fact, clarity is a purely rhetorical attribute, not a quality of language in general which is possible at all times and in all places." Barthes was in fact revealing the design of an aggressive bourgeoisie, anxious to reduce all human experience to fit the shape of its own particular view of the world, which it promotes as 'natural' and 'normal', refusing to recognise what it cannot so classify.

As a replacement, Barthes offers the notion of literature as a highly 'conventionalised activity'. In it, the Saussuarean signifier-signified relationship is complicated by 'another type of signification or meaning which bears on the nature of the code itself.' Fredric Jameson explains what Barthes means by the duplicity or dual nature of literature. In Jameson's words, "each literary work, above and beyond, its own determinate content, also signifies literature in general... identifies itself for us as a literary product." It announces that we are in the presence of 'literariness'. It involves us in that particular and historical social activity which is the consumption of literature. Each literary work through its 'tone', its use of particular items of vocabulary and of particular stylistic devices indicates its literariness and also its social class through the projection of its worldview. It presumes that such a worldview is acceptable to that exclusive group of consumers.

The transaction between writer and reader emerges as a complex social, political and even economic affair and Barthes's later theory developed the notion that the process involves a no less complex structure of codes. The codes act as agencies which modify and generate meaning in a manner very much closer to the complicated ways in which language imposes its own shaping pattern on what is thought of as an objective world. This notion of Barthes resembles Todorov's view of the text yielding a multiplicity of meaning.

Mythologies (M) published in French in 1957 and translated into English in 1970 is Barthes' collection of demystifying essays to which is added a lengthy theoretical essay called 'Myth today'. In 'M', he undertakes to show how modem society applies myths to naturalize socially determined meanings and thereby to eternalise the present state of the world in the interests of the bourgeois. Everything, which claims to be universal and natural, turns out to be cultural and historical. Myth is to be found unexpectedly even in striptease, wrestling, the new Citroen Car, Soap-powder and

in the brain of Einstein. By social usage the most innocent, natural and utilitarian object achieves a second, reflected meaning. Wine is not only good to drink, it is also 'good to think' as a totem drink to the French. Barthes's analysis of the myth of fashion has been already explained in the section on 'Semiotics and Structuralism'.

Myth universalizes the world as immediate, self-evident and without contradictions, whereby the dominant order is presented as the natural order. Differences and social conflicts are just superficial features, which reveal an essential human nature: Essential Man. This ideological content of myth is well displayed in one of Barthes' essays on an exhibition of photographs entitled "The Great Family of Man' which proclaims that all humanity should be conceived as one great family where diversity is restricted to exterior features of human morphology. To create this image of the unity of humanity, the exhibition utilizes universal features such as birth, death and work. The mythical function of this exhibition is to mark the shocking differences in social and economic conditions, under which people are born, live and die; and eventually the political causes of these conditions, beneath the smooth surface of humanism. The very principle of the myth is that it has emptied reality of history and has filled it with nature, "it has removed from things their human meaning so as to make them signify human insignificance" (M: 142-143)

In the theoretical postscript to 'Myths', Barthes defined it as part of Saussure's project 'semiology', and this text is the first one where Barthes makes explicit use of concepts drawn from structural linguistics. The myth was conceived as a semiological system, a system of signs with their signifiers and signifieds. The student should recall from an account of Saussure's ideas that the signifier refers to an expressive level (signifier) and a content level (signified). The latter is an ideological construction of the referent and the relationship between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary. Barthes claimed myth to be "a second order semiological system." The sign in the first system i.e. language becomes a mere signifier in the second. In terms of Saussure's terminology, myth has been called a connotative second order language. In simple language, denotation is the direct or literal meaning, while connotation is the mythical or symbolic meaning. Barthes cites the example of a cover illustration of a French magazine, a picture of a young black soldier saluting the French flag. The direct, denotative meaning of this sign is just this reproduction of a black soldier and a French flag. But the denotative meaning is taken over by a second-order system of meaning: "...that France is a great empire, that all her sons without colour discrimination, faithfully serve under her flag, and that there is no better answer to the detractors of an alleged colonialism than the zeal shown by this Negro in serving his so-called oppressors...." Mythical production is characterised by the insistent imposition of given connotations upon denotative signs. Lavers calls this a superimposition of a 'natural' layer on what is already justified culturally. The effect is to make the arbitrary relation between expression and ideological content into a 'natural' unity, something obvious beyond human explanation and interpretation.

The common and subtle principle of all myths is that they hide nothing, their function is to distort, not to make things disappear. Forced between a lie and a confession, myth finds a third way out: it naturalizes the social and historically determined appearance. The function of this principle is to legitimate and preserve the status quo of present day society in favour of the ruling interests.

The Second Phase: The second phase initiated the semiological and structuralist project of the 1960s. This project which he later described as a 'euphoric dream of scientificity' was partly manifested in his works on literary criticism: OR, (stands for On Racine, published 1963), CV (stands for Critique et Verite, published in 1966, not translated) and CE (Critical Essays, published in 1964). In these works, Barthes proposed a structuralist science of literature based on discoveries in structural linguistics from Saussure onwards. It is however most clear in his semiological studies of non-linguistic sign systems, EOS (stands for Elements of Semiology, published in 1964) and FS (The Fashion System, published in 1967). FS represents the culmination or completion of the semiological project initiated in Mythologies.

EOS or The Semiology of the World: This book was a systematic presentation of some central concepts acquired from Ferdinand de Saussure (langue/parole, signifier/signified, syntagmatic/paradigmatic and diachrony/synchrony) and Louis Hjelmslev (denotation/connotation/meta-language). These concepts from structural linguistics were applied to non-linguistic sign systems such as garments, food, furniture and architecture. According to Barthes "Semiology — aims to take in any system of signs, whatever their substance and limits; images, gestures, musical sounds, objects, and the complex associations of all these,... these constitute, if not languages, at least systems of signification." (EOS 77)

Barthes distinguishes many semiological systems like clothes and food, whose origin is utilization and functional and not to signify. He proposes to call these semiological signs, and the sign function is the very site where the technical and the significant are woven together. For example, a fur-coat protects from the cold (denotation) while simultaneously signifying high social status (connotation). It is marked by an interplay between denotation and connotation, a double movement, which Barthes termed a 'semiological paradox'. In 'EOS' and 'FS' Barthes inverted Saussure's classical formulation that linguistics was a part of a general science of signs (semiology), rather it is semiology which is a part of linguistics (FS : 79).

FS or The Fashion System : In this book Barthes postulated that in present day society, objects as clothes only signified through their written or spoken meta-languages. As he said in an interview "Fashion exists only through the discourse of it". In his book 'FS', Barthes writes "...In order to blunt the buyer's calculating consciousness, a veil must be drawn around the object — a veil of images, of reasons, of meanings..." In short, it is not the object but the name that creates desire. The concept of meta-language is of central concern to Barthes in these semiotic studies. The meta-language speaks about another language or system. Archaeology, for example, is a meta-language of the past (while a study of archaeology itself would be a meta-archeology).

In his analysis of fashion as a rhetorical system he starts with the 'real' world (clothing/fashion/objects) with its signifiers and signifieds. This object world is taken over by a meta-language (fashion writing) which creates a simulacrum of the real object. This meta-language itself becomes the denotative level of a connotative (second order or mythical) system, making it into the rhetorical expression (signifier) of its ideological content (signified). The analyst constructs a meta-language in which fashion as a rhetorical and mythical system is analysed.

Later, the ideological implications of the concept of the sign made Barthes join Derrida and Kristeva in the critique of the sign. Referring to his earlier strategy of 'demythification', he later proposed a semioclasm', 'it is no longer the myths which need to be unmasked... it is the sign itself which must be shaken; the problem is not to reveal the (latent) meaning... to change or purify the symbols but to challenge the symbolic itself.'

The Third Phase: This phase marks a shift from structuralism to post-structuralism influenced by the writings of Derrida and Kristeva. SZ rejects parts of the structuralist project by proposing a discourse formation to be the product of a structuration according to various codes rather than a manifestation of an underlying grammar or structure.

More ambiguous representatives of this phase are PT (The Pleasure of the Text, published 1973), where he undertakes to write a theory of textual pleasure and SFL (Sade/Fourier/Loyola) where he develops the psychoanalytic approach initiated in OR (On Racine). In both these works, he develops his concern with textual plurality by showing how meaning explodes by integrating the reader and the moment of reading in the text being read.

The Fourth and Final Phase : ES (Empire of Signs) is his travel account on Japan where Barthes gives his immediate reflections on different aspects of Japanese culture such as puppet—theatres, haiku faces, food and gift-wrapping. Like the Japanese practice of elaborate gift-wrapping it is not what is inside, the content, which counts, but the wrapping. In Japanese culture, Barthes found the ideal of 'the absence of all sign'.

RB — Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes is his rather unorthodox autobiography. It was published in 1975.

LD — A Lover's **Discourse** was published in 1977 and gives expression to his rhetoric of love. This book exemplifies the pleasure of reading discussed theoretically in PT.

CL — Camera Lucida : Reflections on Photography -(CL) is described as his only novel and can be read both as a love-story to his mother and as a series of theoretical reflections on photographs and history. This phase is often referred to as the 'hedonist phase'. The technical complexity which characterised his writings of the 1960's is now no longer there. In his inaugural lecture at the College de France Barthes foresaw the age of a new experience – that of unlearning or forgetting. He called this experience 'Sapientia': 'no power, a little knowledge, a little wisdom and as much flavour as possible'.

Evaluating the work of Roland Barthes and thus looking for a lasting commitment to particular projects is to call for disappointment. Barthes's refusal to be tied down to one particular movement is articulated in his repeated shifts and by his mocking his own previous procedures. Thus there is no distinctive 'Barthesian' approach but rather many (semiology, structuralism, mythology, post-structuralism, pleasure etc.) to which his name has been attached.

Having given a brief account of the life and works of Roland Barthes, let us, now discuss the essay "The Death of the Author" in the light of these ideas. What follows is a critical and elaborate explanation of the essay.

Section VI

A Critical Summary of "The Death of the Author"

This famous essay has been taken from a compilation of essays entitled "Image-Music-Text" by Roland Barthes and translated by Stephen Heath. Written in 1968, when Barthes was partly under the influence of Derrida and Lacan the essay reveals the importance of the process of reading in the production of meaning. The essay makes a very surprising remark, "the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author." This assertion strikes at the very roots of traditional literary studies and has remained one of the most controversial ideas of post-structuralism. Let us examine the radical ideas of Roland Barthes as he puts them across in his essay.

The opening sentence of the essay refers to a sentence in Balzac's short story 'Sarrasine'. The sentence is about a male singer who was castrated (removal of sexual organs in order to have the highest signing voice) and presently disguised as a woman. The sentence by the French writer Balzac reads like this: "This was woman herself, with her sudden fears, her irrational whims, her instinctive worries, her impetuous boldness, her fussings, and her delicious sensibility." The sentence describes the behaviour of the disguised singer dressed up as a woman to be unreasonable, fussy and having a thoughtless boldness. Barthes is not interested in the meaning of the sentence because his focus is on the question 'Who is speaking thus?' Roland Barthes dismisses the thematic content or subject matter of the sentence only to repeatedly question about the identity of the voice, the presence of a character, the writer as an individual in the story or the author Balzac himself. We as readers of this sentence do not know whose words these are in the story 'Sarassine'. Roland Barthes makes the assertion that we shall never know about the origin of that voice because "... writing is the destruction of every voice, of every point of origin. Writing is that neutral, composite, oblique space where our subject slips away, the negative where all identity is lost, starting with the very identity of the body writing." These are undoubtedly complex statements which are new for you and which need to be understood. Let us systematically analyse them point by point. First, why is it that writing destroys every voice? Why is the subject removed in writing? Why is all identity lost in writing?

Let us attempt to find an answer to these difficult questions, which are all, concerned with the nature of writing. A very important point about Structuralism and semiotics (about which you have just read) is that no writing is considered 'transparent' or 'innocent'. We have always thought that a work of art, a poem or a novel, is a window to an outside world. It reflects life as it is lived in the world by men and women. It has been believed that through words and images, artists or writers want to express what lies beyond words and images. To put it simply, a work of art was supposed to reflect reality, to have accuracy of description and thus to be original. The moment we consider that a book is not a reflection of the real world but it is a world determined by the shape and structures of the activity of writing; we begin to think differently.

One of the most interesting arguments concerning this aspect has been offered by Jacques Derrida who proposes a 'science' of the written sign called grammatology. In his three books published in 1967 Derrida is trying to reassess the nature and status of writing. He wants us to do away with the traditional idea that writing is the external dress of speech and that in writing we should give importance to some speaking voice (of a character or author) as the primary instrument of communication. Derrida explains this further by telling us that to look for the 'presence' of a voice in writing leads us to the false impression that we are able ultimately to 'come face to face once and for all with objects' (Jameson: The Prison – House of Language, p. 173). This means that the 'voice' finally leads us to some objective, real world about man. Derrida argues that this humanist view of the world with Man as its centre is no longer true. The break up of the world has resulted in the break up of European Man's inherited system of the signifier-signified relationship. The world is no longer determined by an inherited pattern of meanings, a traditional relationship of words and their meanings. There is no ultimate meaning about human nature and about Man's role in the world. This extension about the potential of meaning can only be understood through an analysis of the new and extended character of writing. Thus a very important point that we have arrived at is that writing is no longer a substitute for something else that lies beyond it and it is no longer a secondary element for ever acting as the 'dress' of a primary 'presence'. Thus the 'new' character of writing in which there is no final meaning and no ultimate

reality destroys or rather does not recognise the presence of any voice. Writing is to be identified as a sign-system in its own right with its own properties and its own distinct character. An answer to the first and the third questions has been given. You now know that since writing as a system of signs does not attach importance to any presence or speaking voice (of a character or the writer), it destroys the identity of every voice in writing.

Let us come to the second question, 'Why is the subject removed in writing?' Philosophy and human sciences had always registered the study of man or the subject as the necessary beginning and end of all knowledge. However in the 1960s there was a change in western thought with the study of language and semiology, the science of writing, gaining importance. This led to the undermining or the losing of importance by the subject-centred philosophies. As Michel Foucault, a theorist and critic writes that man as the subject and object of his own knowledge "... is in the process of perishing as the being of language continues to shine ever brighter upon our horizon". A new era of theory had emerged in which language is 'the destroyer of all subject" according to Roland Barthes. For Barthes, Foucault and Derrida(the three poststructuralist thinkers) the expulsion or removal of the subject from the space of language questions the very idea that man can properly possess any degree of knowledge or consciousness. If man the subject is not given any space or shelter within discourse then man as the subject of knowledge is completely displaced and also removed. Man can no longer be thought of as the subject of his own works because to be the subject of a text is to assume that we are studying something exterior to or outside of language. We thus arrive at another very important point that the removal of the voice or the presence of the author must connect with the removal of the subject or a general death of man.

Let us now proceed to understand the second paragraph of the essay. Barthes then goes on to talk of the manner of narration – transitive or intransitive. The transitive mode of narration means that facts are narrated to perform some function, i.e., to relate to the outside world whereas the intransitive manner of narration concentrates on the symbols or words on the page and does not have any other motive. It is during the course of the intransitive narration that the disconnection between the literary work and its author takes place. The relation between the two having broken up. "... the voice loses its origin, the author enters into his death, writing begins." For a moment the statement seems very strange. You may wonder whether Roland Barthes is referring to the physical death of the author or is the phrase, "... enters into his own death" a metaphorical use? Let us seek an answer to this question. Roland Barthes is not obviously referring to the physical death of any author or authors. He is referring to the author as a theoretical object and a term coined in traditional literary criticism, which was related to the world outside in order to fix meaning. The tone of the essay suggests that a great change was taking place in Western values. It was the institution of authors, which was dying. The title 'The Death of the Author' has a clear reference to 'The Death of God' as announced by the Madman in Nietzsche's 'The Joyful Wisdom'. The death of the author might be said to fulfil the same function, as did the death of God for late nineteenth century thought. Both the metaphorical or symbolic deaths are significant as they point to a number of common features – not believing in authority, presence, intention, omniscience and creativity. We shall come a litter later to this point of comparison of the author with God.

Let us understand the difference between the transitive and the intransitive manner of narration. Barthes explains the difference in one of his essays "Authors and Writers". Those writers who use language as an instrument to write something are called 'ecrivants' and those who rather write are called 'ecrivains'. According to Barthes there are writers who write about other things and for whom the activity of writing is transitive, leading to other things. It is the writer who writes for an ulterior (intentionally hidden) purpose and who wants the readers to move from his writing to the world beyond it. Such a writer exists in traditional literary criticism as someone who is involved in the production of meaning, making it something finished, preconceived and objectified. The writer believes that every signifier or expression has a definite signified or meaning. For the author, on the other hand, 'to write' is an intransitive verb because his central concern is not to take us 'through' his writing to a world beyond it but to produce writing and concentrate on its signifiers. The author does not look through language as a window to the world. The author identifies himself with language and loses all claims to truth. It is unreasonable to ask an author for commitment because he participates in two structures simultaneously – the structure of the text and the structure of language. Barthes is drawing to a certain extent on the principles of Russian formalism while making a difference between writers (ecrivants) and authors (ecrivains). The writer is engaged in the 'referential' function of language whereas

the author is involved in the 'aesthetic' function; where the writer writes something, the author just writes, referring to writing as their art which is an end in itself

Another very important aspect, which Barthes takes up in the second paragraph, is the question - 'Who is an author and what has been his status in different ages or at various points of time?' In societies with their respective cultures, habits and customs which depended on the oral mode of narrating, it was the excellence of the narrative code (i.e. the way of telling) which was admired but not the 'genius' of the narrator. Barthes declares that the author is not a very ancient figure but is in fact a product of our modern times starting from the middle ages. At a time when importance was being given to man as the subject and object of his knowledge, a lot of emphasis was placed on discovering the prestige of the individual. Since the capitalist ideology (i.e. way of thinking) too laid stress on an individual's progress, this positive thinking about man as an individual created a great deal of importance for the study of the author as a person. The image of the author thus became very powerful. A lot of space was devoted to a description of an author's personal life in histories of literature. Many biographies (life history of person written by somebody else) of famous writers appeared in the market and the focus of many interviews and magazines was on the individual life of an author. The personality of the writer and his work were thoroughly linked or rather united by means of a study of their diaries and memoirs (an autobiography or a written account of one's memory of certain events or people). Roland Barthes puts the whole idea in almost a language of protest: "The image of literature to be found in ordinary culture is tyrannically centred on the author, his life, his tastes, his passions...." Thus the study of literature or a literary text was actually reduced to the study of a single voice, i.e., of the author and his personal life. Literary critics in the nineteenth century went a step further by relating the author with features outside the literary text, i.e., the society or the world in which the author lived. Since the study of the author and his life dominated the literary scene for such a long time, there were bound to be protests against it. The rise of linguistics (the scientific study of language) as a result of structuralism opened up various possibilities for many thinkers. In what was to become the slogan of the decade for the France of the 1960s, Levi-Strauss declared: 'the goal of the human sciences is not to constitute man, but to dissolve him.' Post structuralism took the form of a movement, which wanted to push the structuralist renewal of language towards the dissolution of subjectivity. Let us see what this movement did to the field of literature. Earlier movements against the author took the form of reactions or protests against biographical positivism. In order to remove or sideline the author, New Criticism wanted the focus of the reader to be on 'the words on the page'. As we have already seen in our study of Russian formalism, the focus of Roman Jackobson and others was on the poetic function of language which meant studying language for its own sake and not as a means to an end. Barthes, Foucault and Derrida were not satisfied with simply sidelining the author as subject as was done in early formalist theory. They had realized that the subject was too powerful a concept to be simply left out. The three post-structuralist thinkers called for completely doing away with subjectivity and that the death of the authorial subject must connect with a general death of man. Thus neither the author nor man as the subject of literary studies was to be the focus of critical study. The focus was to shift to language, which is the destroyer of all subjects.

In the third paragraph of the essay, Roland Barthes talks about his precursors (people who came before him) who made efforts to shake the enviable position of the author and to loosen the strings of his power. The three post structuralists, Barthes, Foucault and Derrida eagerly accepted the French symbolist poet Stéphane Mallarme as the precursor of their ideas on the 'demise' or disappearance of the author. Mallarme while making some remarks on compositional aesthetics reveals some of the themes evoked by anti-authorial discourses: "The pure work implies the disappearance of the poet-speaker who yields the initiative to words animated by the inequality revealed in their collision with one another... The structure of a book of verse must arise throughout from internal necessity - in this way both chance and the author will be excluded... some symmetry, which will arise from the relation of lines within the poem and poems within the volume, will reach out beyond the volume to other poets..." (Crises in Verse)

What Stephen Mallarme in trying to pinpoint in this significant passage are more things than one. First, he talks of the disappearance of the writer, then the independent status of writing as a system in itself and also the power of language to organise itself without any subjective interference at all. When Stephen Mallarme talks about lines of a poem being related to other poems within the volume, he is making clear the idea of the intertextualism of all

literature. Roland Barthes acknowledges his gratefulness to his precursor Mallarme who could not only see but foresee the necessity to substitute language for the 'supposed' owner of a literary work, i.e., the author. The post structuralist critic in a straightforward manner puts the matter of supremacy of language in the following words. "For him, for us too, it is language which speaks, not the author; to write is, through a prerequisite impersonality...to reach that point where only language acts, 'performs' and not 'me'." Mallarme's viewpoint is clearly an anti-authorial position, which gives importance to the power of language – the sole performing agency on the page and to completely leave out any concern with the author. Another important point being made by Mallarme here is that writing is an impersonal act and this at once reminds us of artists like Flaubert, Eliot and Joyce who put forward the idea of 'the impersonalist aesthetic'. While these writers did not favour the presence of the author anywhere in the text yet they assigned the highest degree of control to a writer who is like a creator presiding over the whole of his creation. However what Mallarme is trying to emphasize is that the writer loses his very personality in the act of writing in which the structures of language take away the control from his hands thereby making the writer a non-performer. This removal of the author from the literary scene in the entire poetics of Mallarme was done to restore the place of the reader.

Roland Barthes describes the origins of anti-authorialism as stretching from Mallarmé, through Valéry, Proust and the Surrealists. While writing about his precursor Paul Valery, a French poet and critic, Barthes acknowledges that Valery laid emphasis on the linguistic aspect of literature and strongly favoured the study of literature as language, thereby closing all paths for criticism, which led to the writer's personal life and his tastes. Any means of reaching to the writer's life history was as bad as being superstitious. Thus Valery openly expressed a strong dislike for any author centred criticism and made the very concept of author a matter of ridicule.

The French writer Marcel Proust too had radical views regarding the institution of authors. He was engaged in the task of removing any links or relations that could exist between a writer and the character produced by him. Proust's new and strange description of a narrator runs like this: "... he who is going to write (the young man in the novel – but, in fact, how old is he and who is he? – wants to write but cannot; the novel ends when writing at last becomes possible), Proust gave modern writing its epic." What is indeed a very striking statement for all of you is that the writer wants to write, but cannot and the novel comes to an end when writing at last becomes possible. Proust undoubtedly is referring to the reader who in his reconstruction and recreation of the literary world begins to understand the novel only when the novel is nearing its end. It is only when the novel or any literary text, which begins to be understood that writing at last becomes possible. It is significant here to mention what Barthes says about the writerly or the (scriptable) text. The writerly text is 'ourselves' writing, 'ourselves' producing meaning; it is not a finished product ready for consumption. As Barthes says "every text is eternally written here and now". Let us be more clear about the difference between readerly texts and writerly texts a little later in the course of the discussion.

Coming back to the contents of the essay, Barthes gives us yet another radical idea of Marcel Proust. It has been believed by most of us that characters in fiction are modeled on real, life-like, actually living men and women. Proust inverts the idea by telling us that his friend in real life, the Count Robert de Montesquiou is actually modelled on the fictional character 'The Baron de Charlus'. This indeed is a very strange idea, which suggests that the fictional character is 'richer' in experience and better than the living character, Count Robert de Montesquiou. The idea behind this strange comparison is that the fictional character is 'recreated' by every fresh reading of the novel and thus it is the numerous readers who make the fictional character better or worse than the life-like one. The point to be understood is that the actual character is only a small fragment or portion of the fictional character who has been 'enriched' by numerous readings. Thus it is not the author but the readers who by reconstructing literature give it a new life. This idea is a reversal of the idea that art imitates life as laid down by Aristotle.

Roland Barthes while giving us a prehistory of modernity says that even Surrealism contributed to the "desacrilization of the image of the Author...." First of all, what is Surrealism? It is a twentieth century avant-garde (new and experimental) movement in art and literature, which was strongly influenced by Sigmund Freud's ideas on psychoanalysis. The followers of this believed that the creative potential of the unconscious mind could be seen in language by the irrational juxtaposition (placing together) of images. This led the reader being given certain jolts of meaning as his

expectations met with disappointment. Barthes however feels that jouissance (bliss, ecstasy even sexual delight) comes from a sense of breakdown or interruption. In his book, 'The Pleasure of the Text', Barthes agrees with the psychoanalysts and says, "Is not the most erotic portion of a body where the garment gapes? . . it is intermittence the intermittence of skin flashing between two articles of clothing...." We can understand this better by putting it into literary terms. Barthes says that pleasure is present in the obvious linguistic ordering imposed by the 'readerly' text on its material. Bliss or real joy is experienced in 'writerly' texts when the usual ordering of language breaks down. Such a text discomforts, it "unsettles the reader's historical, cultural, psychological assumptions, the consistency of his tastes, values, memories bring to a crisis his relation with language." (The Pleasure of the Text). Our creative responses to the texts of bliss or the writerly texts turn us into ecstatic (joyful) ecrivains or authors as we read. The point to be understood from Barthes reference to the Surrealist movement is that real joy is to be found when there are interruptions in the text and usual expectations of readers are not met with. Barthes accepts the surrealist principle and 'the experience of several people writing together." Thus in a literary text where the normal ordering of language is broken down or subverted, the readers as numerous ecrivains or authors are engaged simultaneously in filling up the gaps in the text.

Towards the end of the third paragraph, Barthes uses the services of linguistics for giving an explanation to the destruction of the Author. Since the science of language recognises all words as just signs, the author too is reduced to a mere sign and mark on the page of a book. As Barthes states towards the end of the third paragraph: "Linguistically, the author is never more than the instance writing, just as I is nothing other than the instance saying I: language knows a subject, not a 'person', and the subject... suffices to make language 'hold together'...." The post-structuralist critic says that the term or the sign Author can continue for there is no need for this expression "to be filled with the person" of the person actually writing the text, i.e., the interlocutor or the speaker of the text. Thus the author is just an empty subject,whose existence on paper is there to make the language 'hold together'. In simple words, Barthes is trying to tell us that the signifier Author is an empty one, as it is not related to any signified or meaning. The signifier 'Author' has been emptied of its content and thereby reduced to a mere mark on the page.

In the fourth paragraph of the essay, Roland Barthes tells us how the modern text has been transformed because of the removal of the author. Barthes makes use of an appropriate simile to convey this idea. If literature is like a stage then the figure of the author is losing its importance as it is no longer in the forefront and seems to be a figure only in the background. With the decreasing importance of the author, the literary text is read in a new way making the author absent at all its levels. During the times when the author was considered important, it was believed that the was the past of his/her book. If the relationship between the author and the book were to be plotted on a single line, it would show something like this.

Since the author is the originator or creator of his/her book, he/she naturally comes much before the book, "he exists before it, thinks, suffers, lives for it, is in the same relation of antecedence to his work as a father to his child" Barthes is trying to explain that it is the author, who like a father thinks and suffers for the sake of his child.

$$\frac{\text{Author} \longrightarrow \text{Book}}{\text{Before} \longrightarrow \text{After}}$$

i.e., his book. The author is in a position of authority and influence and this point has been already clarified when Barthes compares the author with bourgeoisie man himself and says, "the epitome and culmination of capitalist ideology ...which has attached the greatest importance to the person of the author." The comparison of the author with the capitalist and also the capitalisation's ('sway of the Author', 'Author diminishing', 'reign of the Author') show the over importance being given to this figure which now needed to the reduced considerably.

The author having disappeared into the background of the literary stage, a natural question that arises in our minds is about who has taken the place of the author. Roland Barthes writes in the essay "...the modern scriptor is born

simultaneously with the text..., is not the subject with the book as predicate... and every text is eternally written here and now." This is a very significant statement in post-structuralist criticism, therefore let us try and understand it. What Barthes really means to say is that the modern writer is born as soon as a literary text begins to be read. It is none other than the reader who in his involvement with the text recreates it and thus rewrites it. It is the reader who is therefore the modern scriptor. He is not as the author was a subject and the book produced by him his predicate. Consider the sentence "Mark Twain wrote Huckleberry Finn." In this sentence 'Mark Twain' functions as the subject of the sentence whereas the predicate part of the sentence is 'wrote Huckleberry Finn.' The predicate part of the sentence shows that the book was written in the past, once and for all and it can never be rewritten in the present. However, with the removal of the author from the literary scene, "every text is eternally written, here and now." The point to be understood is that every literary text continues to be written again and again in the present. The 'writing' of this text never stops because every reader is a scriptor who writes the text according to his/her liking.

The modern scriptor who writes the writerly or scriptable text is actually "...ourselves writing, ourselves producing meaning; it is not a finished product ready for consumption." Such texts invite the reader to 'join in' and offer us some kind of 'co-authorship'. The writerly text, according to Barthes "... is a galaxy of signifiers, not a structure of signifieds. it has no beginning, it is reversible, we gain access to it by several entrances, none of which can be authoritatively claimed to be the main one" (SZ). The writerly text forces us to focus on the various aspects of the language by making a start from any one of them. Let us understood in greater detail the difference between readerly and writerly texts.

Readerly texts (usually classics) are static and they virtually 'read themselves' by perpetuating an 'established' view of reality and an 'establishment' scheme of values. They are frozen in time and yet continue to serve as an out-of-date model for our world. 'Writerly' texts require us to look at the nature of language itself and not through it at a preordained (already established) 'real world'. They thus involve us in the dangerous, exhilarating activity of creating our world now, together with the author, as we go along. Readerly texts presuppose and depend upon the unquestioned relationship between signifier and signified, saying 'this is what the world is like and always will be like'. In his book tour de force, S/z (1970) Barthes says that readerly texts render the reader idle or redundant, 'left with no more than the poor freedom either to accept or reject the text'. The reader is reduced to an impotent symbol of the bourgeois world, an inert consumer to the author's role as producer. On the other hand, writerly texts presume nothing and do not allow for any easy passage from signifier to signified. In readerly texts the signifiers march whereas in writerly texts they dance. Surprisingly, where readerly texts (which require no real reading) are often what we call 'readable', writerly texts (which demand strenuous reading) are often called 'unreadable'.

Barthes then further goes on to tell us that with the birth of the modern scriptor or writer, the character of writing too undergoes a change. With the removal of the author as being no longer the past and the nourisher of his book; it is language which comes before and also determines the subjects of its writing. Writing no longer possesses the qualities it did in the past. It no longer is a process of recording ideas or thoughts, it no longer is a process of noting down certain things and nor is it any longer involved in the description or portrayal of someone or something in a particular way. The modern writer or scriptor who replaces the author is involved in what linguists call a peformative which attaches importance only to the very act of writing and is not at all concerned with the constative (what he is writing about). The very act of putting down words or signifiers on the page assumes so much of importance that the hand which puts down the marks on the page is not linked to any thought or any voice and the only origin of writing is in language. It is indeed a paradox that language, though the origin of writing, constantly questions all origins or beginnings. It is important to note here what Barthes says in his book 'Sade Fourier Loyola' written after 'The Death of the Author'. All the three, are manifestations of the scriptor: 'operators' of the writing machine, assemblers and rearrangers of codes. They are subjects who have fully surrendered themselves to language and have allowed it to unravel anonymously (not under their names) in their texts. This is exactly what Barthes wants the modern scriptor to do. Barthes describes these three characters as 'founders of language' or 'logothetes'. They are initiators of writing and founders of closed languages. Like the Author, the logothete 'nourishes' the book but at the same he achieves a linguistic break because he is responsible for the growth of a truly closed and original writing practice. This small note

on 'Sade Fourier Loyola' has been given to show the growth of Barthes's own ideas after the writing of the said essay 'The Death of the Author'.

In the fifth paragraph of the essay, the post-structuralist critic compares the author of a book to God and the text "a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning". What Barthes is trying to tell us is that the author is to the text as God is to his world. The author is "...the unitary cause, source and master to whom the chain of textual effects must be traced...." writes Sean Burke in her book "The Death and Return of the Author". The text is seen as theologians (experts studying the nature of God and religious belief) read nature for marks of design or signs purpose. Where there is design, there must be a designer and where meaning appears, there surely is the intention (i.e. of the author). The author also acquires the further divine quality of omnipresence since at every stage of textual meaning it is assumed that his designs are incarnate. Thus the Author-God is "... he who precedes, directs and exceeds the writing that bears his name" (Sean Burke: 24).

Once freed from this Author-God, the text becomes "a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash." The death of the author is the first and sufficient step towards refusing to give the text, a 'secret' or an ultimate meaning. It is important here to note that Roland Barthes is here referring to the post structuralist ideas of différance as given by Jacques Derrida and the notion of 'inter-text' as adopted from Julia Kristeva. Barthes is here trying to tell us that a literary text can never yield any original meaning, as it is a combination of a variety of writings. Even in his work SZ, Barthes did not treat his work as the manifestation of an underlying structure or system for his real task was to explore the text's 'difference'. The concept of 'difference' is central to an understanding of the plurality of the text. A text's 'difference' does not refer to its individuality but to the difference existing within the text itself. Thus a literary text does not differ from other literary texts but it is made out of fragments (pieces) which may be quotations from other texts or even from other languages. 'Difference' is what makes the totality and closure of a text impossible.

As noted by Johnson: "It is not a difference between, but a difference within. Far from constituting the text's unique identity, it is that which subverts the very idea of identity, infinitely deferring the possibility of adding up the sum of a text's parts or meanings and reaching a totalized integrated whole."

The notion of 'inter-text' adopted from Julia Kristeva refers to the transportation of one text into another within the matrix of all texts (not only written ones). Every text is thus itself the inter-text of another text, and cannot be identified with an origin or source. Inter-textuality brings about a radical integration of the readers in the production of the text. The reader accounts for a considerable degree of transportation of textual material between various signifying systems. They translate their lives and experiences (former readings) into the text they read and as they do this they establish legions of ties to other texts. In fact parts of the reader's past enter into the present reading and give it a physically present character.

Textual plurality can also be perceived in the act of re-reading, a process different from the commercial and ideological habits of our society which persuades us to 'throw away' the story once it has been consumed. Re-reading makes possible the discovery of textual plurality; each word or group brings to our minds similar and other uses, opening out to limitless voices from other texts and other codes. (SZ: 12) Re- reading is a way of deconstructing the text's unity not at destroying the text. If it destroys anything, it is the text's unity and 'naturalness', and the claim to be the single voice of an author-god. Deconstrutive reading does not consist of finding a hidden original meaning, but of revealing the many levels of meaning of the text. To read a text is like peeling an onion, Barthes writes, "a superimposed construction of skins (of Layers, of levels, of systems) whose volume contains, finally, no heart, no core, no secret, no irreducible principle, nothing but the very infinity of its envelopes — which envelop nothing other than the totality of its surfaces." (ROL: 49) Therefore Barthes admits in the essay that "in the multiplicity of writing, everything is to be disentangled, nothing deciphered..."

The idea of 'inter-text' is to be understood in yet another way. Barthes treats the collective works of an author as an ever-present inter- text, in which the reader can move forwards and backwards without regard for any sequ

The complete work of an author becomes an inter-text in which themes, passages, ideas twist round upon each other in the manner of leitmotivs (i.e. themes reoccurring in a literary composition). Thus a reader has the freedom to traffic or move between an author's works, a freedom, which was denied in traditional or customary reading.

Having given the reader a very important place, i.e., of recreating or rewriting the text as a scriptor; Barthes again talks of the writer who is totally lacking in originality because he "...can only imitate a gesture that is always anterior, never original." What the writer is engaged in is an imitation or a copying of what has already been written before and the writer's power lies in just mixing all earlier writings in a manner as not to favour any one of them. If the writer ever wished to express himself in an original way then the writer ought to know that his inner ideas are a part of an already formed dictionary from which he is constantly picking up words, which refer to other words. The modern scriptor thus is not giving expression to his passions, feelings or impressions but referring to the immense dictionary of all his earlier readings. The scriptor realises that literature is no longer an imitation of life but it is life which now imitates the book or in general terms literature. Thus the whole concept of Aristotle's theory of mimesis or imitation has been reversed. When life imitates the book, it is a never-ending process, never yielding any ultimate meaning because the book is a collection of signs, words that constantly refer to other words, thus involving the reader in a never-ending process.

In the sixth paragraph of the essay, Barthes claim is that if the author as institution is dead, then the claim to understand a text becomes quite useless. If a text has an author, it means that a limit is being imposed on the text because the text is then supposed to yield a final meaning. This makes the task of the critic as very simple because to discover an author or the factors associated with him-his way of thinking, the social-setup to which he belonged and the history of that period is in fact to arrive at an explanation of the work. The critic by relating the author to factors outside the text felt that the work's meaning had been arrived at. Thus "... when the author has been found, the text is 'explained' – victory to the critic". The importance of the critic and the value of criticism lay in an elaborate explanation of the author. Barthes compares criticism to theological activity, which meant an understanding of God and his beliefs. It was criticism, which gave the status of God to the Author thus making him the unitary cause, source and master to whom the chain of textual effects must be traced. The text began to be read as interpreters of scriptures read nature for marks of design and signs of purpose. Thus at every stage of textual meaning, the author's authority was considered final. All aspects of meaning, thematic or related to style were explained with reference to the author. However, with the dethroning of the author from his position of power, writing has taken on an entirely different character. As Barthes writes in his essay "In the multiplicity of writing, everything is to be disentangled, nothing deciphered, the structure can be followed, 'run' (like the thread of a stocking) at every point and at every level, but there is nothing beneath." These famous lines should be understood in relation to what Barthes had earlier said about the literary text being a space in which a variety of writings blend and clash with each other. Since there is nothing original to be found in a literary text and meaning is being constantly postponed; the reader is all the time disentangling or opening up the text, which can never be opened. Just as one peels an onion and continues to peel layer after layer similarly a literary text is opened up layer by layer by the reader who realizes that at the end there is nothing to be found. The text being "a tissue of signs", the reader does not succeed in interpreting or identifying something as the final meaning. Meaning is being constantly deferred or postponed as one sign (word) leads to another and another. The process of discovering meaning is thus an endless one, engaging the reader at every level and not revealing anything definite to him. This liberates literature from an activity whose aim was to fix meaning. This refusal to fix meaning is a revolutionary activity, which denies the very existence of God and also the realities underlying life – reason, science and law. Thus to deny any meaning as absolute and fixed is to deny God and the organising systems governing human life. Thus the pursuit of meaning, no matter how hard and confusing it is, leads to nothing.

Let us now come to the last paragraph of the essay in which the most significant sentence comes at the end: "...we

know that to give writing its future, it is necessary to overthrow the myth: the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author." The Author-God having faded into insignificance and the discipline of criticism having lost its importance; the literary text is now only focussed on the reader. The author is thus no longer regarded as the only entrance to a qualified interpretation of the text and the critic is no longer engaged in the discovery of this figure 'beneath' the work. Thus writing is no longer a communication of the author's preconceived meaning and interpretation is longer an attempt to recover that meaning. Coming back to the opening sentence from Balzac's 'Sarrasine' Barthes comes to the conclusion that its origin is not a single person in the writing (i.e. its author) but its source lies in its readers who bring several voices to the text. Barthes gives yet another example of Greek tragedy to prove his point. The Greek tragedy has many words with double meanings, which the characters in it do not understand fully. It is only the reader or the listener who understands the various meanings of each word and in addition "...hears the very deafness of the characters speaking in front of him...." Barthes is here trying to explain that even silence on the part of the characters can be a source of ambiguity, which can be interpreted only by readers in various ways.

Barthes then goes on to explain the true nature of writing "...a text is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader not, as was hiterto said, the author." As has already been explained in the summary, the text is no longer a unified whole but it is a joining together of various fragments (pieces) which belong to different cultures and which enter into various relationships with each other. It is extremely difficult to understand these multiple pieces of writings as being the 'voices' of various authors. It is the reader who transforms the literary text by bringing to it other voices, which transform this area of meaning far beyond the author's intention. The reader reads into the text ideas, which the author did not even know about and transforms the text to a product in the present. The reader translates into the text the intervening history of theoretical and socio-cultural development. A literary text thus becomes 'decontextualised' or liberated from the historical moment of creation as it continuously interacts with new readers in altered historical situations. It is only the material signifier that remains constant whereas the signifieds or the meanings are repeatedly created and lost through the historical act of re-reading. It is exactly this process of re-reading which makes possible the 'opening' of the polyvalence (i.e. various functions) of the text.

By creating ties to both preceding and succeeding texts, we reverse the linear conception of communication into a kind of zigzag history. These various ties and quotations drawn from innumerable sources are gathered in one place only, the reader. The reader carries in herself all alone the megalithic 'difference'. The reader is an inter-textual construct of other and already-read texts (SZ: 10). These texts may consist of different signifying materials written, spoken memories, emotions, etc. Inter-textuality as defined by Kristeva (1986: 111) 'denotes the transportation of one (or several) sign-system(s) into another'. As a consequence we stop hunting for a preconceived signified before and outside the text, and concentrate more on the signifiers and how these have stimulated thinking on various subjects. Thus reading is a matter of translation rather than recovering. As readers, we translate into the text former readings, establishing connections to a vast number of past and present texts.

Barthes makes another very important point, which reminds us of the post-structuralist critic, Jacques Derrida. While talking about the destination of the text, Barthes says that the reader is "...simply that someone who holds together in a single field all the traces by which the written text is constituted." The written text is made up of signifiers and these signifiers retain 'traces' or sediments of their earlier use. Barthes is trying to give the idea that the words used in a literary text have been used many times and at various places before the present use. The words retain part of meaning of their earlier use in different contexts. This makes it all the more difficult for the reader to unravel or understand the text. Thus though the literary text is focussed on the reader yet meaning is not at all within easy reach. It remains a far cry because the reader is continuously engaged in unwinding or opening up the literary text like the thread of a stocking. The thread continues to unwind itself and the reader discovers that there is nothing in the end. Thus the reader continues to open up the text and never arrives at any ultimate signified or meaning.

Questions for Self Assessment

1. Write short notes on the following concepts which describe language as a structure:
   a) Langue vs. Parole
   b) Syntagmatic vs. Paradigmatic
   c) Signified vs. Signifier
   d) Poetic function of Language
2. What is the traditional view of language that Saussure criticizes?
3. What are the components of the linguistic sign? How do they differ from names and things?
4. What effects did Structuralism have on the study of literature? Explain by giving examples.
5. Explain the functions of the components of the linguistic sign.
6. What does Saussure call the new field of the study of signs? How are its principles related to the principles of structuralism?
7. What does Saussure mean by the arbitrariness of the linguistic sign?
8. Why are onomatopoeia and interjections not exceptions to language's arbitrariness?
9. a) What do you understand by the radical concept of the 'death' of the author?
   b) If the author is 'dead', then who has taken his place? Explain.
10. "The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture." Explain the concept of textual plurality.
11. What is the difference between 'ecrivains' and 'ecrivaints'?
12. How is the modern scriptor born simultaneously with the text?
13. Explain the post-structuralist ideas of 'différance' and 'inter-text'? How do they contribute to the meaning of a literary text?
14. How has writing acquired new characteristics in the post-structuralist age?
15. What does Barthes mean by jouissance?

Suggested Reading

1. 'Structuralism and Semiotics' by Terence Hawkes (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1985).
2. 'Simplifications – An Introduction to Structuralism and Post-Structuralism' by Aniket Jaaware (Hyderabad: Orient Longman Ltd., 2001).
3. 'The Death and Return Of The Author – Criticism and Subjectivity in Barthes, Foucault and Derrida' by Seán Burke 2nd Edition (London: Edinburgh University Press, 1998).
4. 'Reading Material Culture' edited by Christopher Tilley (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1991).
5. 'Literary Theory Today' by Pramod K. Nayar (New Delhi: Asia Book Club, 2002).
6. 'The Pursuit of Signs' by Jonathan Culler (London: Routledge Publications, 1981).
7. 'Modern Criticism and Theory – A Reader' edited by David Lodge (London and New York: Longman, 1988).
8. 'A Society of Signs?' by David Harris (London and New York: Routledge Publications, 1996).

Derrida & Foucault Unit-VIII

Derrida

(a) "On Differance" from Margins of Philosophy

Foucault

(b) The Order of Discourse

Unit –VIII (a)

I. Jacques Derrida: On "Differance"

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1. Writer and His Age : Jacques Derrida

Jacques Derrida (born–1930-), the French philosopher whose work originated the school of deconstruction, a strategy of analysis that has been applied to literature, linguistics, philosophy, anthropology, law and architecture. In 196 he published his three famous books *Speech and Phenomena, Of Grammatology* and *Writing and Difference* which ushered in the deconstructive approach to reading texts. Derrida was born in El-Biar, Algeria. In 1952, he began studying philosophy at Ecole Normale Superieure in Paris – where he taught from 1965 to 1984. From 1960 to 1964 he taught at the Sorbonne in Paris. Since the early 1970's he has divided his time between Paris and USA - where he has taught at various universities such as Johns Hopkins, Yale and the University of California. His other works include *Glas* (1974), *La Dissemination* (Dissemination) (1972), *Positions* (1972), *Margins of Philosophy* (1972), *The Postcard* (1980), and *Monolingualism* of *the other : or The Prosthesis of Origin* (1998).

Derrida's work focuses on language. He contends that the traditional or metaphysical way of reading makes a number of false assumptions about the nature of texts and meanings. A traditional reader believes that language is capable of expressing ideas without changing them, that in the hierarchy of language writing is secondary to speech and that the author of a text is the source of its meaning.

Derrida's deconstructive style of reading subverts these assumptions and challenges the idea that a text has an unchanging, unified meaning. In this context, Derrida may justifiably be credited with a new mode of reading and interpretation and an accompanying theory of the nature of texts. He is the harbinger of a critical movement that encompasses both- structuralism and post-structuralism.

Derrida is one of a group of avant-garde, innovative French thinkers- Claude Levi Strauss, Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan and Derrida who can be loosely labeled 'structuralist and post-structuralist' and whose efforts in a variety of disciplines (from 1950's onwards) have created if not a movement, at least a force. The work of each has foregrounded the problems of language and structure and the cumulative effect, even of their disagreements, has been a powerful impetus to a certain style of thought and set of concerns. But precisely because structuralism and its aftermath constitute not a unified theory but a complex network of writings interacting in various ways, it is extremely difficult to map and interpret them.

As a philosopher, as a reader of philosophical texts, Derrida has shown the persistence in the western philosophical tradition of what he calls 'logocentrism' or the 'metaphysics of presence'. He candidly argues that the different theories and theses of philosophy are versions of a single system, and though we cannot hope to escape this system, we can at best identify the conditions of thought it imposes by attending to that which it seeks to repress. Though we cannot imagine or bring about the end of metaphysics, we can undertake a critique of it from within by identifying and reversing the hierarchies it has established. In his dealings with the philosophical texts, Derrida has produced a powerful and critical account of western thought.

Moreover, Derrida is an alert reader, a *sahridaya*, an interpreter. His readings of variety of texts-Rousseau, Saussure, Freud, Plato, Genet, Hegel, Mallarme, Husserl, J.L. Austen, Kant, Marx- have become, for those who are sensitive to the adventures of intellect, exemplary analyses, models of a new practice of interpretation. Derrida is sensitive to the ways in which the texts overtly or covertly criticize and undermine the philosophies or ideologies in which they are implicated. He adopts a double mode of reading, showing the text to be a field of inherently related yet different signifiers. This new practice of reading and writing has made deep impact in the realm of literary theory today.

1.1: Major Themes and Works of the Writer

Derrida's, as a trained philosopher, produced his first work- "*L'Origine de la geometrie*" in 1962. It consists of a 170- page introduction to a paper by Edmund Husserl on the origin of geometry. Derrida's subtle analysis of Husserl's argument shows that though language is being offered as a solution, it contains within itself the problems it is supposed to solve. These problems, related to the connection between event and structure, the empirical and the ideal, system and origin, and speech and writing have become the subject of Derrida's later work.

Shortly afterwards, Derrida started publishing critical/ philosophical essays in French periodicals- and in 1967, he published three famous Books–*Of Grammatology*, *Writing and Difference*, and *Speech and Phenomena*. *Of Grammatology* is perhaps Derrida's best-known work. It focuses on the way in which those who write about language have always valorized speech over writing and the implications of this hierarchization. Derrida attempts to invert the hierarchy and orients a theory of language based not on speech but on a generalized writing. Derrida critiques Saussure and Rousseau in connection with his analysis of the science of writing (meaning of "grammatology").

Writing and Difference is his collection of essays on major contemporary thinkers such as Jean Rousset, Michel Foucault, Edmond Jobes, Emmanuel Levinas, Husserl, Artaud, Freud, Georges Bataille and Claude Levi Strauss against the backdrop of structuralist and post – structuralist debates going on in the French academic circles. It was Derrida's essay on Levi Strauss written for a conference at Johns Hopkins University in 1966 and translated into English, that made him known in the English-speaking world. Re-interpreting Levi Strauss's ideas and methods, Derrida concludes by contrasting two views – one retrospective which attempts to reconstruct an original meaning or truth, the other prospective, which explicitly welcomes the indeterminacy of meaning – and though he says that we are not able to chose between these alternatives, he was generally understood as opting for the second and was thus viewed as an aspostle of free play.

His other work – *Speech and Phenomena* analyzes Husserl's theory of signs and the role and status in phenomenology of the notions of voice and presence. According to Husserl, signs are derivative and dependent indication of meanings, which in turn, is seen as what is present in consciousness at the moment of utterance. Derrida shows that going by Husserl's own account of time, meaning can never be a simple presence but is always part of a system of traces and contrasts which exceeds any present instant. Derrida's novel method of analysis is now called "deconstruction" of Husserl's text.

In 1972, Derrida published three more books which demonstrated the paradoxes of structuralist position. These books are *Margins of Philosophy*, *Le Dissemination* and *Position Margins of Philosophy* is a collection of ten essays – "Difference" (prescribed), "Signature, Event, Context" and "Form and Meaning: A Note on the Phenomenology of Language" are some of the prominent philosophical essays, *La Dissemination* may be called a collection of literary essays – in the sense the literary is our name for effects of language which defy conceptual determination.

The eponymous essay "La Dissemination" deals with Phillipe Sollers novel – '*Nombres*' to provide both an account and an example of 'dissemination' – which Derrida defines as a linguistic or textual productivity which escapes the domination of or determination by concepts.

Derrida's *Positions* is a collection of three interviews and is considered to be the best introduction to Derrida[n] he[s] interview 'Positions' contains a lucid account of 'deconstruction' and also dwells on history, Marxism, and Jacqu[es] Lacan. *Glas* was published by Derrida in 1974 and it immediately became notorious for its provocative treatment of the concept of family in Hegel (including Holy family and the Immaculate Conception). On the left hand column of each page Derrida analyses the concept of family, while in the right – hand column, facing the author of *The Philosophy of Right* is the thief and homosexual, Jean Genet. Constantly at work in the text is the problematic relationship between the two columns, always offered as a possibility but never affirmed. More recently Derrida published his deconstructive discourse on autobiography, "*Monolingualism of the other,* or *The Prosthesis of origin*" (1998). In this book Derrida critiques the idea of "origins" and the illusions of authenticity. In the book, he describes his alienation and distance from his domestic French, his disenfranchisement, and positions himself as an other even in his mother tongue. Apart from these major works, he has published many essays on such divergent issues as the teaching of philosophy, Lacan, Nietzsche, the idea of women and the condition of interpretation. 'Economimesis' is a powerful deconstruction of Kantian and Romantic aesthetic theory – whereas 'Le Paragon' deals with the frame and the framed. Similarly 'Structure Sign and Play in the Discourse of Human Sciences' remains a much – anthologized essay in the 'Readers' of 'Contemporary Theory'.

1.2 Derrida's Contribution: Reconstructing the Tradition of the Postmodern

Derrida stands at the cusp of the modern and the postmodern, or structuralism and poststructualism reconstructing the existing structures of meaning through discursive strategies like 'difference' and 'deconstruction'. Though he critiques the western logocentric tradition, he re-invents the hidden energy of "logos" that incarnates itself in the elusive existence of the written word. Thus, without discarding the tradition completely, he reconstructs it and reconciles it to the constantly changing critical contours of the postmodern.

Derrida's major contribution to the western critical and philosophical discourse is his critique of 'logocentrism' through his deconstructive readings of various texts. He improvised the views of Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) and Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), German philosophers who radically questioned fundamental philosophical concepts such as "truth", "knowledge" and "identity" as well as Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) whose psychoanalysis subverted traditional concepts of a coherent individual consciousness and a unitary self. His central position as enunciated by him in *Of Grammatology* is "the axial proposition that there is no outside – the – text". This statement has multiple significations but the primary meaning is that a reader cannot get beyond verbal signs to any things – in – themselves which, because they are independent of the system of language, might serve to anchor a fixed meaning. Thus, all western language and culture are "logocentirc (word-centric)" and they rely on the "metaphysics of presence". Derrida's reading strategies free the signifiers from any outside (ideological) control. Thus, his method of "deconstruction" as applied in literary criticism, suggests a reading practice which interrogates and claims to subvert or undermine the assumption that the system of language provides grounds that are sufficient to establish the boundaries, the coherence or unity, and the determinate meanings of a literary text. In other words, Derrida proved that a deconstructive reading sets out to show that conflicting forces within the text itself serve to dissipate the seeming definiteness of its structure and meaning into an indefinite array of incomparable and undecidable possibilities.

For example, a deconstructive reading of Dickens' novels will foreground the hitherto unexplored (con-)textural meanings which are grounded in the processes of empire – building, gender-politics and colonialism. Similarly, if we deconstruct Shakespeare's plays like *King Lear*, *The Tempest* and *Twelfth Night,* we may get new interpretations/insights on gender – politics, colonialism, growth of rationalism etc.

1.3 Detailed Critical Summary of the Text

"Differance"[1]

(i) To Differ is to Defer : Towards An Archaeology of Language

In his essay – "Differance", Derrida coins the portmanteau term "differance" in which, he uses the spelling "ance" instead of "– ence" to signify a fusion of two senses of the French verb "differer": to be different, and to defer

[1] Excerpts from the prescribed essay "Differance" have been taken from "Differance" included in *Margins of Philosophy* Jacques Derrida (trans Alan Bass), Sussex, Harvester Press, 1982. Further cited as *D* with page numbers in parentheses

Interestingly, the pronunciation of these two cognate words or signifiers is the same – "difference" and "defferance". This double sense is obvious only when the sign or the word is written – in speech it remains occluded and eclipsed. This phenomenon also points to a position where a text proffers the "effect" of having a significance that is the product of its difference, but, on the other hand, this "significance" can never finally reach or get to an actual "presence" – or a transcendental signified. Derrida begins the essay by saying that he intends to deal with the problem of 'writing on writing' and 'writing within writing':-

> *"I will speak, therefore, of the letter,* a, *this initial letter which it apparently has been necessary to insinuate, here and there, into the writing of the word* difference, *and to do so in the course of writing on writing, and also of writing within writing whose different trajectories thereby find themselves, at certain vary determined points, intersecting with a kind of gross spelling mistake, a lapse in the discipline and law which regulate writing and keep it seemly." (D, p. 3)*

This self-conscious violation of a "graph or word" in mis-spelling "difference" as "differance" is symbolic of more than a mere graphic disorder. In order to justify his decentering of the oral speech, Derrida maintains that the vowel – bassed difference in the spelling of two words "remains purely graphic; it is read, or it is written, but it cannot be heard. It cannot be apprehended in speech. The *a* of *differance*, thus, is not heard; it remains silent, secret and discreet as a tomb" (*D*. p. 4). Thus is it only the written from of "differance" that may make its "presence" before a reader – the pronounced oral sign will invariably refer to "difference" Derrida supports Saussure's idea that all the signs in a language – system work through the play of "differences". The inaudible difference between "e" and "a" makes Derrida say – "If there is no purely phonetic writing, it is that there is no purely phonetic phone. The difference which establishes phonemes and lets them be heard remains in and of itself inaudible, in every sense of the word". (*D*, 5). Thus, the signifier "difference" – which is neither a concept nor a word till now – occupies space between speech and writing. Tracing the etymological journey of newly coined term "difference", Derrida says: -

> *"Even though* difference *is neither a word nor a concept, let us nevertheless attempt a simple and approximate semantic analysis that will take us to within what is at stake.*
> *We know that the verb* differer *(Latin verb* differe*) has two meanings which seem quite distinct.*[2]
> *In this sense the Latin* diferre *is not simply a translation of the Greek* diapherein, *and this will not be without consequence for us, linking our discourse to a particular language that passes as less philosophical... than the other. For the distribution of meaning in the Greek* diapherein *does not comport one of the motifs of the Latin* differe, *to wit, the action of putting off until later, of taking into account, of taking account of time and of the forces of operation that implies an economical calculation, a detour, delay, a relay, a reverse, a representation – concept that I would summarize here in a word... in this chain – temporization... And we will see, later how this temporization is also temporalization and space, the becoming – time of space and the becoming space of time... The other sense of* differer *is the more common and identifiable one: to be not identical, to be other, discernible etc... Thus, the word* difference *(with an* a*) is to compensate – economically – this loss of meaning, for* difference *can refer simultaneously to the entire configuration of its meanings. It is immediately and irreducibly polysemic. In its polysemia, this word, of course, like any meaning, must defer to the discourse in which it occurs, its interpretive context, but in a way it defers itself, or at least does so more readily than any other word... " (D, 7-8).*

In this statement, Derrida, through his analysis of the new word "differance" suggests that any signifier would never reach a 'fixed' signified – as in its epistemological and semantic detour, it will continue to defer its 'meaning' or "final

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[2] In English the two distinct meanings of the Latin *differre* have become two separate words – to defer and to differ.

signified" – producing in the process a series of new signifiers, new meanings. But the process of deferral of meaning is possible only when there are differences. Thus, *differance* connotes both difference and deferral. The sign is merely a means to refer to the thing – it cannot be the thing itself. But in speech, the sign makes the thing 'present' which is, in fact, not – present. Derrida rightly says:-

> *"The sign represents the present in its absence. It takes the place of the present. When we cannot grasp or show the thing, state the present, the being – present, when the present cannot be presented, we signify we go through the detour of the sign. We take or give signs. We signal. The sign, in this sense, a deferred presence."* (D.9)

The relationship between the signifier and the signified is, thus, provisional, and not fixed, or, in other words, the sign does not present the meaning, it only defers it interminably. It eventually produces different meanings through the process of deferral. Derrida agrees with Saussure who put the arbitrary character of the sign and the differential character of the sign at the very foundation of general semiology. Difference is the condition for signification and the sign is both – signified and signifier. The signified is the concept – the "appleness" of an apple" – which is the signifier or the image. Through the word – sound or sign – sound (or the accoustic phenomenon), the relationship between signifier and signified is indicated. Derrida builds up his deconstructive project on *difference* and *differance* thus:-

> *"Essentially and lawfully, every concept is inscribed in a chain or in a system within which it refers to the other, to other concepts, by means of the systematic play of differences. Such a play,* difference, *is thus no longer simply a concept, but rather the possibility of conceptuality, of a conceptual process and system in general... What is written as* difference, *then, will be the playing movement that produces" – by means of something that is not simply an activity – these differences, these effects of differences.* Difference *is the non-full, non-simple, structured and differentiating origin of differences. Thus, the name "origin" no longer suits"* (D, *11).*

(ii) The Subject : Metaphysics of Presence

Derrida underlines the Saussurean proposition that "language (which only consists of difference) is not function of the speaking subject" (*D.*15). This implies that the speaking subject (in its identity with itself, or eventually in its consciousness of its identity with itself, its self-consciousness) is "inscribed in a language, is a "function" of language, because a speaking subject only by making its speech conform...to the system of the rules of language as a system of differences or at very least by conforming to the general law of *differance*". (*D.* 15). Thus the overwhelming question in Derrida's discourse on the construction of subject-position is "Who am I?" We can go on defining, redefining the subject "I" without ever reaching the final or the transcendental signified –" *So-aham* (or I am that)" - which is a spiritual-mystical position (which lies beyond language). In answering the question "who am I?"- all our linguistic or discursive detours imply continuous interplay of *difference* and *differance*. Derrida, therefore, poses certain relevant questions in this regard::

> *"Difference, thus, are "produced"- deferred – by differance. But what defers or who defers? In other words, what is differance? With this question we reach another level and another resource of our problematic. What differs? Who differs? What is differance? If we accepted the form of the question, in its meaning and its syntax ("what is ?" "who is it that?"), we would have to conclude that differance has been derived on the basis of the point of a present being, which itself could be some thing, a form, a state, a power in the world to which all kinds of names might be given, a what, or a present being as a subject a who. And in this last case, notably, one would conclude implicitly that this present being for example, a being present to itself, as consciousness, eventually would come to defer or to differ".* (D X. *14-15).*

What is being emphasized here is the proposition that a subject can only defer or delay the presence endlessly in and through his/her speech. But what about the written form of speech? Can we ever "mean" what we want to mean in and through the written form of language? Derrida questions this opposition between speech and language and affirms that the meaning or truth eludes even the written language because even the inscribed or written signs can mean provisionally

within a language-system through constant play of *differance* (and difference). What we temporarily or provisionally consider as "presence" in our language, is, in fact, an absence of the presence. Derrida also quotes Saussure who holds that "language is necessary in order for speech to be intelligible and to produce all of its effect, but the latter is necessary in order for language to be established; historically, the fact of speech comes first" (*D.* 12.)

Derrida also raises a fundamental point here – "Is consciousness the origin/source of language (oral and written)? Or, " Is consciousness constituted by difference and *differance* while working within a language system? These questions are possible only when we admit that one's "consciousness" is prior to any kinds of signifying-system called language. Thus, what the subject wishes to present through language is "consciousness"- which, however, eludes the grip of sign-systems. This refers to the proverbial gap between the intention and the execution. The old modernist T.S. Eliot once faithfully and rightly said – "For us, there is only the trying. The rest is not our business" (*Four Quartets*).[3] We may come back to Derrida's questions- "What differs? Who differs?" From the preceding analysis it is obvious – what gets deferred is "I" and what actually differs (from anything else) in a sign-system is once again- "I". This I is "Pure consciousness" or "self" (or *chitta* according to Indian tradition) that is the source of all our action – including speech.

Derrida continues to explore the agency of "speaking or writing" further":-

> *"One might be tempted by an objection: certainly the subject becomes a speaking subject only in its commerce with the system of linguistic difference; or yet the subject becomes a signifying (signifying) in general, by means of speech or any other sign) subject only by inscribing itself in the system of differences. Certainly in this sense the speaking or signifying subject could not be present to itself, as speaking or signifying, without the play of linguistic or semiological differance." (D 16).*

The constant deferral of the subject, in this manner, raises, according to Derrida, yet another fundamental question- "What is consciousness?" Or "What does consciousness mean?" Derrida answers by saying that in the very form of meaning, consciousness offers itself to thought as self-presence, as the "perception of self in presence" (*D* 16). What consciousness is can never be fully, wholly known, by the ordinary mortals at least, in the realm of corrupt human affairs – excerpt by the sages who experience atma – both (self – knowledge). Therefore, Derrida holds that – ".. what holds for consciousness holds here for so called subjective existence in general. Just as the category of the subject cannot be, and never has been, thought .... so the subject as consciousness has never manifested as self-presence" (*D.* 16). Derrida, thus, critiques what he calls the "ether of metaphysics" of presence. Presence presupposes a kind of "closure" in speech and writing- whereas, it has to be and writing- whereas, it has to be solicited (i.e., shaken well to make it tremble in entirety) in and through our linguistic or signifying systems. Presence, to cut a long story short, is only an "effect" produced through *differance* in our semiological systems.

(iii) Re-defining Presence, Re- thinking Differance:

Derrida, in his essay, "Differance" pins down language to consciousness which appears to the speaking subject as the *presence* informing or determining all the semiological or language system. He cites the names of such radical thinkers as Nietzsche, Freud and Hiedegger who probed such a complex field of investigation as (human) consciousness and questioned its certainties. Is it not remarkable that "they....did so on the basis of the motif of *differance*?" (*D.* 17). To Nietzsche, "the great principal activity is unconscious, and that consciousness is the effect of forces whose essence, byways, and modalities are not proper to it" (*D.* 17).Even the concept of force, which is "only a play of differences and quantities", is highlighted here. There will be no "force in general without the difference between forces; and here difference of quantity counts more than the content of the quantity, more than absolute size itself". (*D.* 17). Thus, it is on the basis of difference that we experience or relate to power. Because what "force" or "power" is, is never articulated, can never be articulated, can never be made "present" in the signifying system. It is continuously deferred through semiological signs that are grounded in difference. Derrida, then, subverts the logocentric (word-centric) logic of the western philosophy:-

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[3] T.S. Eliot, *Collected Poems*, London, Faber & Faber 1974, p. 203. Further cited as *CP* with page numbers in parentheses.

> *"Is not all of Neitzsche's thought a critique of philosophy as an active indifference to difference, as the system of adiaphoristic reduction or repression? Which according to the same logic, according to logic itself, does not exclude that philosophy lives in and on* difference, *thereby blinding itself to the same, which is not identical. The same, precisely, is* difference *(with an* a*) as the displaced and equivocal passage of one different thing to another, from one term of an opposition to the other" (*D. *17).*

In this way, the subject travels from one logos to another and to yet another and so on during an endless journey without the final destination.

Thus, Derrida deconstructs the logo-centric logic of philosophy that creates arbitrary binary pairs of opposites -such as nature/ culture, man/woman, reason/myth, sense /non-sense tradition/modernity, darkness/light, etc.- for its evolutionary or regressive discourses. Derrida, therefore aptly says:-

> *"Thus one could reconsider all the pairs of opposites on which philosophy is constructed and on which our discourse lives, not in order to see opposition erase itself but to see what indicates that each of the terms must appear as the difference of the other, as the other different and differed in the 'economy of the same).... culture as nature different and deferred, differing –deferring;).... And on the basis of this unfolding of the same as* difference, *we see announced the sameness of difference and repetition in the eternal return" ((*D. *17).*

Thus, it is obvious from the preceding analysis that all our linguistic beginnings through the process of differing- deferring are destined to make an "eternal return" to the point of "beginning" only- the "end" is an elusive presence. Even our starting-points, our beginnings, in a signifying system, are deferred ends or ends in-difference. One can quote again from Eliot's *Four Quartets* to force this point: - "What we call the beginnings is often the end / And to make an end is to make a beginning. / The end is where we start from. /..../ Every phrase and every sentence is an end and a beginning." (CP 221)

Differance, according to Derrida is a detour or a ruse which drives our active interpretational endeavours and substitutes incessant deciphering for the unveiling of truth as the presentation of the thing itself in its presence, etc. All the linguistic signs, therefore, are without truth- they are merely a "system of figures not dominated by the value of truth, which then becomes only an included, inscribed, circumscribed function". (*D.* 18). Derrida, thus, attempts to define *differance* as

> *"The name we might give to the "active" moving discord of different forces and of differences of forces, that Nietzsche sets up against the entire system of metaphysical grammar, wherever this system governs culture, philosophy, and science." (*D. *18)*

Thus, all our cultural and philosophical discourses that construct knowledge and truth for us can be deconstructed using Derrida's mode of *differance*. Thus, "presences" in our language are always, already tied to "absences" through the play of *differance*. Even our "unconscious", as Derrida says, is not :-

> *"as we know a hidden, virtual, or potential self-presence. It differs from, and defers, itself; which doubtless means that it is woven of differences, and also that it sends out delegates, representatives, proxies; but without any chance that the giver of proxies might "exist", might be present, be itself somewhere, and with even less chance that it might become conscious. In this sense, contrary to the terms of an old debate. . . . the "unconscious" is no more a "thing" than any other thing, is no more a thing than it is a virtual or masked consciousness." (*D. *20-21).*

Thus, even the unconscious, which was the source of human desire is, according to Derrida, is no more than "consciousness" "deferred and differed" implying that it is only through "the conscious" (presence) that we can talk of "the unconscious (absence)". This is how Derrida deconstructs the unconscious / conscious binary.

Another important idea in the essay is the distinction between Being (presence) and Beings (present). Derrida, at length, quotes from Heidegger's text- "The Anaximander's Fragment" in order to bring home the difference.

Heidegger says that:

> *"The forgetting of Being forgets the difference between Being and beings .... "to be the Being of beings is the matter of Being..... even the very relation between presenting and what is present remains unthought..... Presencing itself unnoticeably becomes something present.... The essence of presencing, and with it the distinction between presencing and what is present, remains forgotten. The oblivion of Being is the oblivion of the distinction between Being and being". (D. 23).*[4]

It is in this sense that Derrida defines *differance* as a historical and epochal unfolding of Being or of the ontological difference. In our linguistic utterances (or written inscriptional form), we only explore the trace or traces of presence that dislocates itself and has no site within the signifying system. Speech presupposes Being –which is endlessly deferred, only in order to perform a function (say, of communication) in our society. Speech or writing creates provisional meanings or truths implying that there is neither a Being, nor any fixed unitary truth within the domain of speech or writing. Yet language-systems (even in their day-to-day-communicational modes) function because of the play of difference and *differance* – a sine qua non of our linguistic – human condition. *Differance,* in this sense, may justifiably be called 'metaphysical' in nature as it has no essence, no conceptual fixities, no determined boundaries. Being (presence) and speech are allied in all our utterances, though the former is only "not there" (or "about") as it is infinitely deferred.

Derrida ends the essay- "*Differance*" by affirming the significance of *differance* as a necessary effect or function of signifying systems:-

"Being / speaks/ always and everywhere/ throughout / language" (*D.* 27).

1.4 Critical Analysis of Some Topics on the Writer and the Prescribed Text:

(i) Deconstruction (Also see pp. 8-11)
(ii) Metaphysics of Presence (Also see pp. 11-14)
(iii) Trace and Aporia (pp. 21-22)
(iv) Difference / Differance (see pp. 8-11, 14-17)
(v) Speech and Writing (see pp. 22-24)
(vi) Literature and Philosophy (See pp. 24-26)

(i) Deconstruction:-

Much of ambiguity over the term "deconstruction" exists because it is unnecessarily construed as a synonym of "destruction". In fact, it is a mode of critical inquiry or a method of reading which carefully teases out the apparently oppositional or warring force of signification within the text itself. As Barbara Johnson, who has "deconstructed" Derrida himself, rightly argues in her book *Critical Difference* "if anything is destroyed in a deconstructive reading. it is not the text, but the claim to unequivocal domination of one mode of signifying over another" (p.50).[5] Derrida's method of critical inquiry, known as deconstruction, implies a theory and practice of reading which interrogates and claims to "subvert" or "undermine" the assumption that the system of language provides grounds that are sufficient to fix or lay down the boundaries, the unity, and the determinate meanings of a literary text. M.H.Abrams has aptly put it:- "Typically, a deconstructive text sets out to show that conflicting forces within the text itself serve to dissipate the seeming definiteness of its structure and meaning into an indefinite array of incompatible and undecidable possibilities". (*Abrams* 55).

Derrida used this deconstructive mode of critical reading in his analysis of writers such as Husserl, Heidegger, Saussure and Freud to show that all our texts produce meanings provisionally through *difference* and *differance.* All our utterances (oral and written) mean only by continuously deferring the meaning or presence – implying the open – ended text have no fixed meanings.

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[4] Derrida quotes from Heideger's "The Anaximander Fragment" in *Early Greek Thinking*, trans. David Farell Krell and Frank Capuzzi (New York; Harper and Row, 1975). p.50.

[5] Quoted in *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, M.H.Abrams (seventh edition), Singapore, Harcourt Asia, 2000. p. 60, Further cited as *Abrams* with page nos. in parentheses.

(ii) Metaphysics of Presence:-

According to Derrida, the texts of western philosophy and culture are 'logocentric' (word-centric)- foregrounding the metaphysics of presence (of meaning or the transcendental signified such as God or even the absence of God as in the orthodox Marxist discourse). Derrida shows how different texts affirm as well as undermine (through his readings of Husserl, Heidegger, Saussure, Freud, and Nietzsche) this metaphysics of presence which is the only metaphysics we know. It underlies all our thinking but it can be "shown to give rise to paradoxes and contradictions that challenge its coherence and consistency and therefore challenge the possibility of determining or defining being as presence"[1] Commenting on the framework of the history of metaphysics, Derrida writes in his famous *Writing and Difference*

> *"It would be possible to show that all the terms related to fundamentals, to principles or to the centre have always designated the constant of a presence- essence, existence substance, subject, transcendentality, consciousness or conscience, God, man, and so forth." (*Sturrock , *161).*

Moreover, the subtext of Derrida's critique of the metaphysics of presence is the oft-quoted Cartesian *cogito* 'I think, therefore I am'. This "I", according to Derrida, is the presumed or supposed subject or presence of all our speech or language-acts. This "presence" or "being" which is supposed to be the main determiner of "meaning" or "message" is never questioned in our readings. Hence, its "metaphysical" character. Derrida undercuts our obsession with the present instant in our utterances. We consider that the future will exist and the past did exist once but the reality of each depends on its relation to the presence (being) of a present T.S. Eliot has beautifully poeticized this idea in the opening lines of *Four Quartets*:-

"Time present and time past, / Are both perhaps present in time, / future And time future contained in time past. If all time is eternally present, / All time is unredeemable". (*CP* 189). According to Derrida, the future is an anticipated presence and the past a former presence. Another example would be the notion of meaning (when we speak to each other) as something present to the consciousness of the speaker or the speaking subject, which is then articulated through signs or signals, 'meaning is what speaker has in mind' at that crucial "present" moment. Derrida's critique "metaphysics of presence" has been excellently summed up by Jonathan Culler:-

> *"Reality is thus made up of a series of present states. These states are what is basic, the elementary constituents which are given and on which our account of universe depends This view is powerful and persuasive, but there is a problem which it characteristically encounters. When we invoke these states or moments of presence which are supposedly so basic, we discover that they are themselves already dependent in various ways and therefore cannot serve as the simple givens on which explanation must rest". (*Sturrock *162).*

In short, we can say that, for Derrida, nothing is ever simply present. Presence depends for its effect of "presence" on differences and *differance* –the condition of subject being different and deferred. In other words, Derrida through his discourse on "metaphysics of presence" does not so much discredit the semiologic or linguistic framework as shows its limits.

(iii) Trace and Aporia:- Trace

Derrida holds that in all possible utterances (sentences or texts, oral or written) the signified meaning are never present to us in their own positive identity, as signs (or words) in a signifying system go on differing and deferring meanings. But, on the other hand, the identification of the reader/ listener/ speaker with "meaning" or "presence" is also not absent. Derrida, therefore, says that is any spoken or written utterance, the apparent meaning is the function or result of a "self-effacing" trace- (self-effacing because one is not aware of it) which consists of all the absent or

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[1] Jonathan Culler "Jacques Derrida" in *Structuralism and Since* (ed. John Sturrock), New York, Ford Univ. Pres p.161 Further cited as *Sturrock* with page numbers in parentheses.

non-present differences from other constituents in the language-system that bestow the utterance with its "effect" of *having a meaning in its own right. Since all utterance (oral or written) presuppose a presence – which is in fact,* absence of presence. But, presence is an effect, which is produced through "trace" – which is an end in itself and lies outside as well as inside the text. Since trace is not a presence "but the simulacrum of a presence that dislocates itself, displaces itself, refers itself, it properly has no site – erasure has no structure" (*D.* 24).

Aporia

Derrida calls his way of reading-"double reading"- as he first interprets a text, in the standard fashion, as lisible (readable, intelligible) because it produces "effects" of having determinate meanings. This may be called "provisional stage" to a second or deconstructive "critical reading", which disseminates the provisional meanings into an indefinite range of significations that he claims, always involve an aporia (a term taken from logic)- an insuperable, impenetrable dead end or deadlock or double-bind of incompatible or contradictory. Thus, because of inherent textual / contextual aporias, a text deconstructs itself and "disperses itself into incoherent meanings that a deconstructive reader neither initiates nor produces" (*Abrams*, 58). The text, because of its aporetic nature, will lend itself to multiple readings – whereas each reading will be "provisional" because of the deadlock it encounters in its semiological field. In short, aporia pushes a text into the realm of unlimited interpretational possibilities without a final meaning.

V. Speech and Writing:-

Through his critical readings of Saussure, Nietzsche, Husserl and Heidegger, Derrida has questioned the valorization of speech over writing and the construction of the very oppositional binary speech/ writing. Derrida repeatedly refers to the Saussurean anti-logocentric logic that a sign is a purely rational unit and that in language, there are only differences. In the western tradition of thinking abut language, speech has been considered as natural and direct communication and writing as an oblique or indirect representation of a representation. There is also a logocentric logic in Saussure's discourse also. The object of linguistic analysis is both the written and the spoken forms of words; the spoken forms alone constitute the object. Writing, Saussure holds, is simply a means of representing speech, a technical device, an external accessory and is, therefore, not required when one is analyzing or studying language. Writing consists of physical marks which are divorced from the thought which might have led to their production and it functions in the absence of either speaker or listener. Writing, thus, gives uncertain access to a writer's thought and it can even appear as entirely anonymous- unconnected with any speaker or author. Writing, thus, is deformed speech. Speech, on the other hand, presupposes that the speaker and the listener are present to one another and "the words issue from the speaker as the spontaneous and nearly transparent signs of his present thought, which the listener can grasp". (*Sturrock*, 166-167).

Derrida has, throughout his work, challenged this privileging of speech over language and hinted at the possibility that speech may not be independent of writing after all and that writing may affect and infect speech. While reading Rousseau, Derrida discovers a term to designate this play of relations (between speech and writing)- "supplement". A supplement is something, as any dictionary may tell us, that completes or makes an addition.

This logic of supplementarity, as Derrida describes it, is powerful and pervasive; it makes possible everything which we think of as human: language, passion, society, art. Derrida argues that through the effect or process of *differance*, writing, the marginal supplement proves to be the constitutive condition of language itself.

Derrida turns the entire traditional debate on its head by saying that speech itself is already a form of writing. Reversing the hierarchy, we can treat speech as a species of writing. Speech may justifiably be considered, as Derrida argues, a kind of "archi-ecriture" or proto-writing (archi-writing)- which is a condition of both speech and writing in the narrow sense. One can't help quoting a few lines from T.S. Eliot's master-poem "Four Quartets" to show how the poet also considers the written form or pattern of words more important than mere words-in-speech-which may have ephemeral existence:-

"Words strain,
Crack and sometimes break, under the burden,
Under the tension, slip, side, perish,
Decay with imprecision, will not stay in place,
Will not stay still" (CP, *194).*

This archi or proto-writing is "invoked by the themes of 'arbitrariness of the sign' and of difference and [illegible] can never be recognized as the object of a science. It is that very thing which cannot let itself be reduced to the form of a presence."(*Of Grammatolgy*, quoted in *Sturrock* p. 172).

(vi) Literature and Philosophy: Interconnections, Interfaces:

One of the major issues raised by Derrida's work is that of the interface between literary and philosophical discourses. In a way, philosophy always tended to pose as superior to language because of the fictionality, and elusive nature of the latter. Moreover, philosophers doubted the power of language to approximate truth. Derrida thinks that this positing of opposition between the philosophical and the literary has been philosophy's own way of recognizing (and containing) the threat which language poses to its concerns and activities. Somehow, philosophy has always dreamed of pure logical means of articulation which would protect it from the machinations and metaphoricity of literary expression or language. The transparency and capacity to carry pure meanings-which were ascribed to language-in-philosophy has been critiqued by logical positivists. Hence, the opposition between the philosophical and the literary is another version of the opposition between speech and writing. According to Derrida, philosophy constituted itself in a direct relation to the Logos by identifying as its other a fictional and rhetorical mode of discourse. In other words, philosophy cannot escape the rhetorical, the literary, the linguistic.

Derrida's deconstructive mode of reading cogently suggest that the-so-called philosophical texts are most appealing and precise when their figures and their rhetorical strategies are given close attention. On the other hands texts usually identified as literary reveal powerful deconstructions once the importance of their special logic, like the logic of their supplementarity is recognized. Derrida's own readings combine what we generally consider as the literary play of language with trained philosophical rigour. What gives Derrida's own writings their special charm and power is this remarkable combination between the literary and the philosophical. What Derrida has obviously exposed is the fact that certain qualities of language are attributed to writing/literature so that they may be treated as parasitical or derivative and so that the purity and direct relation to truth of speech/philosophy may be preserved. But, as Derrida holds, that speech and philosophy are always tainted, marked by writing/ literature.

Derrida's own example as a professional who works within "philosophy" by working on "language-systems" proves the symbiotic relationship between literature and philosophy. In Indian tradition, the philosophical and the literary co-exist happily and form a creative continuum. After all, who will and who can decide whether the *Vedas*, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* are more literary than philosophical, or vice versa? Surprisingly, the Indic traditions situate both- *darshan* (philosophy) and *Kavya* (literature) within the domain of *Vak* (language or primal creative energy) as overlapping entities.

1.5 List of Long and Short Answer Type Questions:

Essay-type

(i) Write an essay on "differance". (See pp. 8-11, 14-17)
(ii) Critically examine Derrida's notion of "metaphysics of presence". (See pp. 11-14)
(iii) Critically examine the concept of "deconstruction". (See pp. 18-21, 8-11)
(iv) Critically examine the relationship between speech and writing. (See pp. 22-24)

Short-answer type

Write short notes on the following:-

(i) difference / differance (See pp. 8-11, 18-19)
(ii) Trace (pp. 21-22)
(iii) Aporia (pp. 21-22)
(iv) Speech and writing (pp. 22-24)
(v) Literature and Philosophy (pp. 24-26)

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Michel Foucault

Introduction

Michel Foucault is a major voice among the postructuralists, though many still count him among structuralists. In essence, there are certain similarities between the works of the structuralists and his own work. It is but natural, because Foucault himself does not see any separation from the "conditions and rules" which determine the making of the present-day thought. In this regard, Foucault's thinking is encyclopaedic. With his vast reading, his works cut across disciplines, encompassing all branches of knowledge medical, political, sexual, et al, for he attempts to show that all systems of knowledge, past, present and to come, are linked within a great chain of being. He sees analogies, for example between the stars in the heavens and the features in a human face. This establishes identity between modern science of biology, philology, and political and numerous other disciplines. The result is nothing less than an archaeology of the sciences that unearth old patterns of meaning and reveal the shocking arbitrariness of our individual truths.

Indeed, the sub-title of Foucault's seminal work **The Order of things is: Archaeology of Human Sciences**. is in tune with the poststructuralist thinking. Archaeology in Foucault has multiple meanings. In one sense an arch is a form that bridges over several seemingly separate disciplines; it could well mean making fun (an arch smile, for example) of those who do not know the order of things and regard that their thinking as different from the rest of the world. In fact, the text **The Order of Things (1970)** begins with Foucault's laughter. In the opening of the Preface, he says:

> *This book first arose out of a passage in Borges, out the laughter that shattered. As I read the passage, all the familiar Landmarks of my thought – our thought, the thought that bears the stamp of our age and Our geography – breaking up all ordered surfaces and all the planes with which we are accustomed to tame the wild profusion of existing things and continuing long afterwards to disturb and threaten with collapse our age – old distinction between the Same and the Other*

This very passage then quotes a certain Chinese encyclopaedia in which it is written that animals are divided into so many kinds. They are funny kinds such as belonging to the Emperor, on the one hand and those belonging to strange kinds, on the other. However, it is not the ' fabulous' animals that are impossible; they are after all patterned on the same "prototype" that nature merely lengthens, shortens, modifies and multiplies the same organs. Imagine the fingers of a hand bound together and the material of the nails increased to develop the whole; in place of a man's hand you would have a horse's hoof.

Foucault's interest in biological evolution is not merely speculative. Familiar with comparative anatomy, he observes that every one of the animals resembles the other. Such considerations led him to conclude that there is no real division between animal kingdoms. Nature loves to vary her constume. But variety should not be taken to mean separation between one kind and the other.

Foucault belongs to the long tradition of Enlightenment particularly the French Enlightenment of Voltaire and Diderot. The 18th century witnessed a concerted attempt on the part of philosophers to free mankind from obsolete institutions and old superstitions. This was not merely an academic movement, for its influence was felt in economics, politics, sciences and religion, as well as in other fields of culture. The growing influence of Asiatic culture, especially of China, shook localism of Europe. The moral system of Confucius had a marked impact on many thinkers of the 18th century, especially on Voltaire and Wolff. The interchange of ideas within Europe itself, especially between England and France was especially lively. Nationalism and individualism had yet not become the dominant emotion of modern man. The influence of Newton on European thought acted to liberate human thinking from religion, though he himself was extremely pious in his feelings about God. However, his followers neglected his religious spirit, and instead, concentrated on the philosophical implications of the Newtonian world-picture.

The French Enlightenment coincided with the reign of Louis XIV. This was the age of Cornville, Racine, Moliere, La Fontaine, to mention only a few of the brilliant literary lights. These writers attacked the spirit of supernaturalism, undermined the traditional concept of morality, and helped pave the way for scepticism in religious and political

matters. Thinkers like Voltaire and Diderot devoted themselves to an actual consideration of human problems. Not coincidently, the dominant spirit of Voltaire in the 18th century and Foucault in the 20th century was and is their philosophical laughter. His **Candide** is one of an outstanding satires in the history of civilization. Together with Diderot, Voltaire helped people struggle against divided aims. They also carried on a bitter warfare against the metaphysical systems. Candide is a commentary upon the narrowness in philosophical thinking.

Foucault resembles Diderot (1713-84) who represented the climax of French philosophical thinking. Like him, Foucault fights today for freedom of speech, which he prefers to call discourse, borrowing it from conversations between characters, especially in a drama. When two characters argue on a point they seem to differ; however where they differ, they also defer, i.e.; postpone or suspend their difference, because they seem to agree: differing deferring deferring differing. Foucault's position is none too different from that of Derrida. This is where they are marked poststructuralists; they do not search for a metaphysical centre, fixed and unalterable. Instead, they balance two opposite terms, searching in them for a common ground. In Foucault the search for a common ground what he calls the same (with capital S) ends in positing that nature, like a woman, loves to varying her dress. She does not require many different outfits because she knows how by varying a sleeve or collar, adding a pleat or letting down a hem, it is possible to achieve an infinite number of effects while using the same pattern.

Things thus are various, but not without an order in them. They are links in the chain of being, as the Enlightenment thinkers, especially Dederot posited. But mankind limited by what it observes misses the links of this chain and thus fails to see the world as a whole. The order of the whole is natural, not supernatural in Foucault, as in the French Enlightenment thinkers. Foucault's greatest boldness lies in the view that he does neither seek variety without unity nor unity without variety. He understands man's role in nature and of the role of science in human affairs. That is why like Derrida who was sometimes his student, Foucault calls science human sciences eliminating the boundry between pure sciences and social sciences. In Copernican albeit deconstruction mode, Foucault seems to question the centrality of man in a universe which itself is decentred, i.e. it rotates around the sun. But he feels dismayed, finding majority of men still thinking of man as occupaying a favoured position in the universe.

Foucault blames this contradiction on man's comparative vision. Man in the world is like other animate and inanimate objects. Similarly, one type of knowledge or body of ideas are like other type of knowledge or body of ideas. In the Foreword to the English edition of **The Order of Things**, Foucault says:

> *This book must be read as a comparative not a symptomatological study. It is not my intention, on the basis of a particular type of knowledge or body of ideas, to draw up a picture of a period, or to reconstitute the spirit of a century. What I wished to do was to present, side by side, a definite number of elements: the knowledge of living beings, the knowledge of the laws of language, and the knowledge of economic facts and to relate them to the philosophical discourse that was contemporary with them from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century.*

This vision that in an age or ages, all discourses—from the economic to the philosophical- are related, forming a region in which all disciplines are contemporaneous. For instance, the world we today inhabit cannot be studied on the basis of single discipline, say, economics; it has to be seen in relation to other disciplines—history, politics, biology, and so on. His own study is interdisciplinary. Foucault thinks that this comparative method is capable of producing results, which are strikingly different from those to be found in single discipline studies. This methodology will not juxtapose biology with a history of linguistics, a history of political economy, and a history of Philosophy. What happens in one discipline also happens in the other. They have links joining them. But unfortunately in every society as Foucault finds, what is spoken and written is "controlled, selected, organized and redistributed, according to a certain number of procedures", the procedures of exclusion.

Indeed, the chapter for our study, titled " The Order of Discourse" taken from **Discipline and Punish** raises the question of the freedom of what is spoken and written, particularly the role of social institutions, as, for example the rise of prisons in the early 19th century and the exercise of power through discipline especially discipline of the body. The Puritan fathers in American thought of raising prisonhouses in order to contain sexual liberties in life as well as in litrature, in Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter,* for example.

The interest in the application of discipline through discursive and other practices continues in the last of Foucault's major work, the three volumes of **The History of Sexuality**. The 17th century was the period of sexual frankness, when codes governing obscenity, indecency were lax. The later 17th century – which Foucault characterizes as the age of sexual repression - choked sex with repression. This could not stop proliferation of sexual discourses alongside the institution of confession and the importance of penance, as in the case of Hyster Prynne, as a retribution and re-incorporation for the ills of the flesh. Thus, adultery in **The Scarlet Letter** sought to be transformed with the change in social utility. Hester's skill with the needle made her acceptable.

Foucault's methodology is thus experimental. It has an echo of Bacon's **Novum organum** . He interprets nature, not rationally, but empirically. Like Bacon, he asks us to form theories, but warns that facts may defeat them. The proper method of studying nature for Foucault is to proceed from facts to further facts, as they are linked by an unbroken chain of being. One should proceed from observation and move on to reflection; the latter combine facts in mind. Discovery of facts by observation are then combined through reflection. But these also needs be tested with reference to further facts. A scientist in Foucault's view as in Bacon's is like a bee. He must constantly pass back and forth from observation to reflection and back to observation. Observation followed by reflection in which facts are compared and analysed is not a methodology singularly adopted by Foucault; Eliot recommended it in his criticism. In "Tradition and Individual Talent"; he, following Remy de Gourmont, said that comparison and analysis in fact are the chief tools of the critic. But these tools, he further said, should be handled with care. One must know what to compare and contrast. Therefore, he welcomed discovery of new facts howsoever trivial that may be, even as trivial a fact as the discovery of Shakespeare's laundry bill; it may be made use of by some genius. Foucault also emphasizes the discovery of facts in the first place, because facts cannot, as Eliot said corrupt taste; they can at worst gratify the taste for history or antiquity or archaeology in Foucault's sense of the word.

It is for this reason that Foucault rejects the idea of the observing subject unless he is able to relate fact. It is a difficult process. On the contrary, it is easy for the writer to give his own point of view and thus become an author. Foucault is of the view that the historical analysis of scientific discourse should, in the last resort, be subject, not to a theory of the knowing subject, but rather to a theory of discursive practice in which instead of relating the biological taxonomies to other knowledge of the living being, one must compare them with the linguistic sign, the language of action, the hierarchy of needs, and the exchange of good.

This, according to Foucault, had two consequences for him. He was led to abandon the great divisions that are now familiar to us all. He, for example, did not look in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries for a beginning of nineteenth century biology or philosophy or economics. What he saw was the appearance of figures peculiar to the classical age: a 'taxonomy' or 'natural history' that was relatively unaffected by the knowledge that there existed in animal and plant physiology; an 'analysis of wealth' that took little account of the assumptions of the 'political arithmetic' that was contemporary with it, and a 'general grammar' that was quite alien to the historical analysis and works of exegesis then being carried out. This led to chaos rather than to order— a situation akin to the tower of Babel, every one speaking in a different language unintelligible to the other.

Foucault, instead, finds that things looking so different, may have family resembles. As he states in the Preface to **The Order of Things**.

> *Frontiers were redrawn and things*
> *usually far apart are brought closer,*
> *and vice versa.*

Further, he says:

> *Moreover, I saw the emergence between the different figures, of a network of analogies that transcended the traditional proximities; between the classification of* plants and the theory of coinage, between the notion of generic character and the analysis of trade, one finds in the classical sciences isomorphisms that appear to ignore the extreme diversity of the objects under consideration.

In Foucault's order of things, the space of knowledge receives a totally different way from the schematized in the nineteenth century. He does not operate at the level of the historian of science, tracing the progress of the discovery, the formulation of problems, and the clash of controversy. On the contrary, he attempts to reveal a **positive unconscious** of knowledge: a level that he says eludes the consciousness of the scientist and yet is part of scientific discourse. In contrast to the facile optimism with which many enthusiasts for science, Foucault, following Diderot, recognizes that the path of the experimenter is straight,and narrow and that there are few who find it. The mysterious combination of gifts, which makes up a creative genius, can be traced back to the threshold of what Foucault calls **unconscious positive**. Men who combine the insight necessary for fruitful observation with power of reflection and with the skill and patience required for fruitful experiment are, of course, exceedingly rare. On the other hand, the average person can spend his whole life, observing, say, insects, where as another takes a passing glance and discovers a whole new order of life. Eliot tried to explain this faculty thus: Since mastering the whole tradition requires a vast erudition, knowing that the mind of Europe is much more important than the poet's own private mind, it is likely that he may turn out to be a pedant. It may be also affirmed that much learning deadens or perverts poetic sensibility, a claim that can be rejected by appeal to the lives of poets in any pantheon. Shakespeare, for example, "acquired more essential history from Plutarch than most men could from the whole British Museum. And though Eliot does not call this faculty unconscious, he is aware that the unconscious does play a crucial role in transmuting facts. as, for example that in tracing similarity between old economics and the new: that the latter is a complication of the former. for the new economics is altered only in terms of exchange – instead of barter system, we now exchange through currency. But to dwell up the one, ignoring or privileging the other is to disturb the order in the discourse and thus the pave way for seizing power on the basis of what Arnold calls, half – truths or what Foucault terms playing "the role of truth in a mask."

What then Foucault posits, as we have seen, has at its back a long tradition, going back to the age of Enlightenment which rejected particular rational constructions, on the ground that rationalists sought to revise the world to fit their methods, instead of revising their methods to fit the world. Foucault wishes to arrange the knowledge of science on the axis of the same and the different. He searches for a system of elements – a definition of segments by which resemblances and differences can be shown, the types of variation by which those segments can be affected, and, lastly, the threshold above which there is a difference and below which there is a similitude – it is indispensable for the establishment of even the simplest form of order. "Order is" he further says, " at once and the same time, that which is given in things as their inner law... and also that which has no existence except in a grid created by a gaze or examination, a language; and it is only in the blank spaces of this grid that order manifests itself in depth as though already there, waiting in silence for the moment of its expression."

This statement further elucidates that there is an inner order of things and that an individual or a society, a school or an institution has the onus to express unity of thought while regarding differences as variations on the same truth. The individual, Foucault like Eliot and earlier Arnold, is obliged to discover this order, this tradition, or what Arnold calls the "high poetic quality", which for is constant in all great poetry, despite differences of diction and style. This is what sustains us in poetry, said Arnold. A culture that loses the sense of this common core of poetry, which, as Eliot said, never improves though the material of it is never the same, does it at its own cost.

However, unfortunately, this classical order bread and nurtured during the seventeenth and eighteenth century was ruptured with the beginning of the nineteenth century, and though it may still claim the status of an order, it being romantic, is fragmentary. For example, the theory of representation disappears. Poetry is no more a matter imitation, but of imagination. Language also loses its privileged position. In Wordsworth, the language of poetry reduced to that of a common man. Strangely enough, as Foucault says in the Preface to The Order of Things, "man - the study of whom is supposed by the naïve to be the oldest investigation since Socrates – is probably no more than a kind of rift in the order of things...." Foucault questions: "Whence all the chimeras of the new humanisms, all easy solutions of an 'anthropology' understood as a universal reflection on man, half – empiric half – philosophical?" the less it is comforting for Foucault that man is only is recent invention, a figure not yet two centuries old.

Foucault, as is clear by now, is a classicist, as good as Eliot and Arnold were. He finds the development of individuation at the beginning of the nineteenth century unfortunate. It inflated human ego, making him egocentric. With the loss of

the vision of tradition which consisted of simultaneous order of the old and the new—the old directing the new and the new modifying the old—resulted in the emergence of individuals who, being lamps unto themselves, breath eternal message of vanity, fear and lust. This could as well be said about societies and institutions. The difference between an open and closed societies and institutions seems to be rather the difference between the complete and fragmentary, the adult and the immature, the orderly and the chaotic.

Foucault consistently fights for freedom of speech from all narrow bounds of politics and economy, religion and language, cultural and nationalism. He has been till his death fighting against all kinds of obscurantism. He was, not merely an academic philosopher in the narrow sense of the word. He not only rejected the concept of personal God, but also the notion of personal immortality. Man, for him, is a psychological creature, an animal like other animals, holding no privileged position. Man's mind must be interpreted by scientific laws, not by abstruse reflections of the metaphysicians. But he was not a positivist and had no intention of limiting human knowledge to the results of observation and experimentation. He was an interpreter of nature; he takes his stand from what is known to what is yet to be known. He could smell out the directions of nature, a capacity which lies beyond the intellectual horizon of the typical academic philosophy. He, thus, draws from the order of things conclusions abstract and general. It appeared to Foucault that the possibility of experimental science rests upon the assumption that there is only one casual principle operative in the world. But he was equally impressed by the variety which nature exhibits at every level. He allowed himself to speculate that a species of animals might not have come into being all at once but might have grown through many stages of development, changing according to changes in the environment. Just as mathematicians in examining properties of a curve, find the same properties present under different aspects, so experimental physics may eventually arrive at a single hypothesis, which covers different properties as weight, elasticity and magnetism. But how many intermediate hypotheses, he wonders, had to be found before the gaps could be filled in. Nor could there be any short cut. The task is arduous.

On the contrary, he saw a deplorable tendency for various branches of science to built mutually exclusive systems of explanation. He felt that men must wander in the wilderness, without hopes of ever reaching understanding with other science. Hence, these discourses become narrow and dogmatic, because they follow the path of exclusion and hegemony. There is always a disparity between our fragmentary knowledge and the vastness of nature. Foucault's laughter ensues when he begins to compare the infinite multitude of the phenomena of nature with the limits of human understanding and the weakness of our faculties. In such an impase, our work lags and frequently drags to a halt, and thus all we possess is a few broken and isolated links of the great chain of being.

Human mind thus works on the procedures of exclusions, what it cannot encompass. Indeed, where is the mind that could take it all in.? How many volumes would be required to record it? And how far would any one person is able to read? Shakespeare could master the whole Roman history by smelling out its direction in Plutarch. But such minds are few and far between. Are we not then the men of Babel? Foucault's pessimism is directed not against human finitude, but against intellectual pretensions, particularly against trying to understand the world in abstract terms. Wisdom, therefore, consists in cultivating one's silence in the face of vastnesses of universe, instead of boastfully speculating about matters too

high for us. Still, he was hopeful that eventually experimental science would alter the sorry state of mankind till now bragging on bits and parts and would bring into being vast stores of knowledge for its betterment. But then there is a rub. Utility may circumscribe everything and turn us philistines, abandoning our search for pure knowledge.

Paragraph-wise Analysis of "The Order of Discourse"

1. **The first** paragraph states the following hypothesis:

> *Here is the hypothesis which I would like to put forward tonight in order to fix the terrain- or perhaps the very provisional theatre- of the work I am doing; that in every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed by a certain number of procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality.*

Analysis: Foucault directly goes to the heart of the matter, i.e. to the heart of the work he has been doing. That universal order of discourse, what can be clearly said, is broken. In The Order of Things, he has at length analysed the moment of breach. It happened in the beginning of the nineteenth century, particularly with the rise of the philosophies of break-up with the classical (seventeenth and eighteenth century) thought. As a result, following Hume but more importantly Kant, the law of discourse was detached from representation. Kant, for example, posited the unknowability of thing in itself. Earlier, Hume said that all knowledge is based on impressions and sensations. The being of language itself became fragmented. Consequently, it became doubtful whether anything can be represented. It became more difficult to represent life and the world when Nietzsche killed man and God both at the same time, and thereby promised the return of the multiple discourses

Foucault is not against multiple discourses but he is worried about the loss of unity and order of discourse as such. He is unhappy at the thought that in each society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed by a certain number of procedures, mainly of exclusion. Of course, saying is what gives a society power to keep its hold on people, but such a procedure also helps it to ward off the power and privilege of what the other society or societies say and process. Thus, controlling, selecting, organizing and redistributing discourse enables us to ward off both the power and dangers of other social orders – communism wards off the power and dangers of capitalism, and vice versa.

Thus, every society protects itself against external influences. But it does so at the cost of limiting itself. The world is already speaking in many languages, so much so, we have become incommunicable to one another. Arnold bewailed this loss of unity in his poem "Dover Beach": The world was once a unity but has now become divided into continents. It is a world at war in which ignorant armies clash by night. It is also the case with diverse fields of knowledge as power. Discourse in Foucault is a system of statements within which and by which the world can be known and masterad. The greater the force of discourse, the greater its hold. There are, with the break-down of unity, multiplicity of force relations. They are ever in ceaseless struggle. When they find support in one another, they form a chain and system, but when they fail to do so, they isolate themselves, and enter into confrontation with one another, as in the case of the power struggle between the imperialists and the colonized nations.

Foucault thinks that discourse are ways of constituting knowledge and knowledge gained to exert mastery over its what Foucault calls chance events (since cause is one, one discourse or the other is only a broken line subject to chance and accident) in order to evade its "ponderous materiality", i.e. its facts. Discourse, whether political or economic, biological or psychological, linguistic or cultural, is a finite view of the infinite field of knowledge. In a discourse, all facts which are its material, are not taken into account. If Freud says that sexual relations remove human alienation, Sartre, finds it untenable. But since no system is capable to encompassing all facts at a glance, no discourse is universal. Hence, discourses are bound to be narrow, more or less. In this situation, one has to be silent, for what one can say in the face of infinite knowledge––are we different or the same, individuals or social, homosapiens or part of the animal kingdom? Till the beginning of the nineteenth century, man recognized his finitude, and as Foucault says, worked by the sweat of his brow. He was diffident. But with the onset of the nineteenth century, man started thinking that there inhabits in him a higher reality. The romantic thought of the Continent flowered in America in the form of transcendentalism.

What Foucault in the opening passage means to say is that since all facts constituting the Discourse cannot be mastered, modern man, finite as he is, tries to use the procedures of exclusion calling others, and their discourses alien or the Other.

2. **Text:** In a society like ours, the procedures of exclusion are well known. The most obvious and familiar is the prohibition. We know quite well that we do not have the right to say everything, that we cannot speak of just anything in any circumstances whatever, and that not everyone has the right to speak of anything whatever. In the taboo on the object of speech, and the ritual of the circumstances of speech, and the privileged or exclusive right of the speaking subject, we have the play of three types of prohibition which intersect, reinforce or compensate for each other, forming a complex grid which changes constantly. I will merely note that at the present time the regions where the grid is tightest, where the black squares are mot numerous are those of sexuality and politics, as if discourse, far from being that transparent or neutral element in which sexuality is disarmed and politics

pacified, is in fact one of the places where sexuality and politics exercise in a privileged way some of their most formidable powers. It does not matter that discourse appears to be of little account, because the prohibitions that surround it very soon reveal its link with desire and with power. There is nothing surprising about that, since, as psychoanalysis has shown, discourse is not simply that which manifests (or hides) desire-it is also the object of desire and since, as history constantly teaches us, discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but is the thing for which and by which there is struggle, discourse is the power which is to be seized.

Analysis: These procedures, Foucault says, are well known, particularly in the Western society, French, to be precise. The most obvious of these procedures of exclusion is the most obvious and familiar procedure of prohibition. That what we cannot assimilate we prohibit. Society and states used this weapon to disarm what they think to be alien and disturbing. That is why they prohibit us from speaking what we wish to speak. Freedom of speech, therefore, is an illusion. Foucault, indeed, says in the beginning of this passage:

We know quite well that we do not have the right
to say everything, that we cannot speak just anything
in any circumstance whatever, and that not everyone
has the right to speak of anything whatever.

That is what amounts to controlling, selecting, organizing and redistributing the discourse—depriving us the right to say all that can be said. As Wittgenstein put it in the Preface to his Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus: "we can say clearly what can be said; what we cannot say, we must pass over in silence."

Foucault then finds that there are three kinds of prohibition corresponding to three procedures of exclusion—taboo on the object of speech, say for example, alternate sexuality, the ritual of the circumstances of the speech, such as the demand of the occasion and finally the privileged or exclusive right of the speaking subject. Together these three kinds intersect, i.e. there could be at a time two conditions or even all the three conditions working to influence the discourse. In that case, one condition, taboo, for example, reinforces the other condtion/s. As Foucault puts it: they compensate for each other, forming a complex grid (an important concept in Foucault), as for example, the grid or network of sexuality. In his book The History of Sexuality, Foucault attempts to disapprove the thesis that the Western society has seen a repression since the seventeen century. On the contrary, sexuality has long been fixated in the western culture. It is what is called repression, because sexuality was never taken as something quite natural. Hence, the west has created a discourse around it, permitting some form of sexual behaviour, barring the other. The other kind—homosexuality or lesbianism is the creation of the taboo that only heterosexuality i.e. of the male and female can be talked about, not the other kind.

This makes clear Foucault's view of discourse i.e. it is a process of exclusion—what can be talked and what we cannot say or put into words is passed in silence. Thus, a discourse comes to be formed when the chain of being i.e. the natural order is broken by accepting some aspects, relegating others to silence.

Foucault chose the discourse of sexuality for his analysis because at the present time the grid of sexuality is highest; it is mostly marked by the blank squares of sexuality and politics, i.e. sexuality is not taken in its natural form. According to Foucault, the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth brought about the loss of neutral view of things. Sexuality got aligned to power. Sexuality became an exercise of power through social practices. The emergence of social institutions during the nineteenth century controlled, selected, organized and redistributed sexual discourse among others. It was now no more transparent, no more innocent and natural it rather armed itself with political power as a result, it became privileged prohibitions surrounded it, as it came to be seem, as for example, in Freud, an expression of desire, as also a need for its suppression. Foucault, rightly says that there is nothing surprising about that, since, as psychoanalysis has shown, discourse of sexuality is not simply that which manifests (or hides) desires—it is also the object of desire, a bone of contention for its expression and suppression.

3. **Text:** There exists in our society another principle of exclusion, not another prohibition but a division and a rejection. I refer to the opposition between reason and madness. Since the depths of the middle Ages, the

madman has been the one whose discourse cannot have the same currency as others. His word may be considered null and void, having neither truth nor importance, worthless as evidence in law, inadmissible in the authentification of deeds or contracts, incapable even of bringing about the transubstantiation of bread into body of Mass. On the other hand, strange powers not held by any other may be attributed to the madman's speech, the power of uttering a hidden truth, of telling the future, of seeing in all naivety what the other's wisdom cannot perceive. It is curious to note that for centuries in Europe the speech of the madman was either not heard at all or else taken for the word of truth. It either fell into the void, being rejected as soon as it was proffered, or else people deciphered in it a rationality, naïve or crafty, which they regarded as more rational than that of the sane. In any event, whether excluded, or secretly invested with reason, the madman's speech, strictly, did not exist. It was through his words that his madness was recognized; they were the place where the division between reason and madness was exercised, but they were never recorded or listened to. No doctor before the end of the eighteenth century had even thought of finding out what was said, or how and why it was said, in this speech which nonetheless determined the difference. This whole immense discourse of the madman was taken for mere noise, and he was only symbolically allowed to speak, in the theatre, where he would step forward, disarmed and reconciled, because there he played the role of truth in a mask.

Analysis: Along with sexuality, the other discourse which is aligned with social power to express and suppress is that of madness. Discourse in Foucault is concerned with the relationship of language with social institutions. To examine language—what is said—is to identify the institutional rules that makes possible particular significations and, consequently, makes possible particular form of knowledge—how a society allows certain expression and suppresses others in an attempt at safeguarding its interests—how, for example, it diagnoses madness and builds asylums to ward off dangers arising out of abnormal behaviour. For a detailed analysis of this aspect we may refer to Foucault's early work Madness and Civilization, though herein his interest mainly focuses on how a discourse on madness, for example is produced. In his later works, discourse is a power which is to be seized.

This passage under discussion representing Foucault's slight shift, shows that through the discourse of madness the western society applies the principle of exclusion, and though this principle is not another prohibition, as, for example, in sexual matters, but a division and rejection. Homosexuality may be a taboo, but madness needs to be rejected by drawing a sharp line between sanity and madness.

Foucault refers to the opposition between reason and madness during the middle Ages. The madman has been one whose discourse cannot have the same currency as others. He could be any one holding a view in opposition to reigning view, as, for example, Joan, who claimed that France is for the French and England for the English. Her case for nationalism was disregarded as mad. Like her, Galieo was even asked to disown his discovery because it went against the established view that the sun rotated round the earth. Like him, there were many others whose words were considered null and void, having neither truth nor importance, worthless as evidence in law, inadmissible in the authentification of deeds and contracts, incapable of bringing about the trans-substantation of bread into body at Christian Mass, a ritual so sacred in Christianity.

Foucault has already referred to the three procedures of exclusion—the taboo, the ritual and the exclusive right of circumstances of speech. The Church alone had the right to speak for God, not the individual during the Middle Ages. However, when societies follow these procedures of exclusion, a sneaking suspicion that those whom they exclude may be right, also persists. For example, strange powers of uttering a hidden truth, of telling the truth, not held by any other may be attributed to the madman's speech—the power of uttering a hidden truth, etc.

It is curious to note, says Foucault, that for centuries in Europe the speech of the madman was either not heard at all, or else taken for the word of truth. It either fell into the void, or taken to be more rational than that of the sane. This contradiction in sexuality, as also in madness exists because in what we say and what we prohibit from saying there is only a shift of emphasis. This leads Foucault to abandon divisions and draw afresh frontiers: things usually far are thus brought closer. The field of knowledge is, indeed, one. In any event, as Foucault says, whether excluded, or secretly invested with wisdom, the madman's speech, strictly did not exist. It was through his words that his madness was recognized. It with through the words of Hamlet that Polonius calls him mad by

drawing a line (where no line exists) between madness and sanity. Hamlet's words that Polonius is a fishmonger strike the latter as symptomatic of the former's madness, but Polonius is a fishmonger in that when there was the prospect of Hamlet becoming the next king, Ophelia as allowed to develop intimacy, but now that he is in crisis, as Claudius has taken over kingship, Polonius prohibits Ophelia to see Hamlet.

Thus, if some aspects of sexuality are tabooed, madness is prohibited. Both are excluded from the permissible discourse. The words of a madman are neither recorded nor listened to, says Foucault. No doctor before the end of the eighteenth century even thought of finding out what was said, or how or why it was said. His discourse was taken for mere noise, and he was only symbolically allowed to speak, in theatre, where he would step forward to say, because theatre is not real. Hence, there is no danger in his discourse. The madness there plays a role of truth in a mask. Hamlet's madness is only put on. What he cannot say clearly, he says obliquely.

4. **Text:** You will tell me that all this is finished today or is coming to an end; that the madman's speech is no longer on the other side of the divide; that it is no longer null and void; and on the contrary, it puts us on the alert; that we now look for a meaning in it, for the outline or the ruins of some oeuvre: and that we have even gone so far as to come across this speech of madness in what we articulate ourselves, in that slight stumbling by which we lose track of what we are saying. But all this attention to the speech of madness does not prove that the old division is no longer operative. You have only to think of the whole framework of knowledge through which we decipher that speech, and of the whole network of institutions which permit someone a doctor or a psychoanalyst- to listen to it, and which at the same time permit the patient to bring along his poor words or, in desperation, to withhold them. You have only to think of all this to become suspicious that the division, far from being effaced, and working differently, along other lines, through new institutions, and with effects that are not at all the same. And even if the doctor's role were only that of lending an ear to a speech that is free at last, he still does this listening in the context of the same division. He is listening to a discourse which is invested with desire, and which-for its greater exaltation or its greater anguish-thinks it is loaded with terrible power. If the silence of reason is required for the curing of monsters, it is enough for that silence to be on the alert, and it is in this that the division remains.

Analysis: Today, it might be supposed that things have changed, that we no longer see the boundary between reason and madness. Foucault is not very optimistic about it. On the contrary, we have been careful, because psychoanalysts now look for meaning in a madman's discourse; they try to find the outlines or ruins of some discourse which was once sanity. They even attempt to uncover what a normal man articulate in the madman's utterances, though what he says is that stumbling by which we look the tract of what we are saying.

What Foucault means to say is that today the attention given to the mad discourse is not meant to eliminate the boundary that divides madness from sanity; we are only curious to know how he lost his sanity. We tend to find in his speech some method of discourse, though his steps are not logically consistent with a normal speech. Then we withdraw in fear lest we should also stumble as he does.

So our attention to his speech does not prove that the old division is no longer operative. Our curiosity to analyse his speech does not carry us very far. The division stays. We analyse his speech with the whole frame work of the knowledge of psychiatry. It means we do not try to understand the mad discourse naturally, innocently of the knowledge of a deranged mind we have devised. We have at our back the whole network or discourse of institutions which permit only doctors specialized in abnormal behaviour to decipher the patient. In fact, we take it for granted that the person is sick, that he is to be analysed with care, that he belongs to the other side of sanity. Foucault rightly says that while seeing a psychiatrist conducting his analysis of a madman, we have only to think of this to become suspicious that the division, far from being effaced, is working differently, along other lines, through new institutions, and with effects that are not at all the same. For instance, when a doctor listens to an illogical discourse, he is conscious that his patient is not like him, sane and logical in his speech. The doctor examining the patient is no longer the witch doctor, nor is the institutions religious in condemning a madman to the asylum. Even the effects of the change in our perception of madness, the division between reason and madness, is the same. A psychiatrist today listens to a madman with the division in mind. He listens to a discourse, says Foucault, invested with desire, i.e. it is not a disinterested endeavour on the part of the doctor.

The doctor, and in fact the whole of social institutions with their vested interest in safeguarding sanity, approach the madman with the terrible power to keep madman out of bounds. This terrible power is seen in the silence of reason for the curing of monsters of madness. In fact, the silence in the face of the blab-blab of the madman is the silence on the alert, and that it is in this that the division remains.

Foucault's critique of the institutions backing the discourse of sanity is very severe. It has to be in the context of his philosophy that the division between reason and madness is because we miss the broken link between the two.

5. **Text:** It is perhaps risky to consider the opposition between true and false as a third system of exclusion, along with those just mentioned. How could one reasonably compare the constraint of truth with divisions like those which are arbitrary to start with or which at least are organized around historical contingencies; which are not only modifiable but in perpetual displacement; which are supported by a whole system of institutions which impose them and renew them; and which act in a constraining and sometimes violent way?

Analysis: Foucault here refers to the third kind of exclusion in the opposition between true and false. It is another opposition in which the 'false' is excluded by the force and power of the 'true'. It is a division brought about neither by the taboo, nor by the ritual, but by the privilege or the exclusive right of the speaker. It follows the principle: might is right. Again, the right to speech is invested with the social institutions. The boss is always right. So is the case with powerful races and nations. Foucault finds it difficult the resist the discourse of truth because it is arbitrary i.e. it is organized around historical contingencies which the writer says, are not only modifiable but in continuous displacement of what is termed as 'false' and which is supported by a whole system of institutions. Thus the power and force of social institutions to allow what they regard as 'truth' is imposed by renewed efforts to keep 'false' ever displaced. These institutions, as of the Athens of Socrates not only constrain the voice of the other but also hush it with violence.

6. **Text:** Certainly, when viewed from the level of a proposition, on the inside of a discourse, the division between true and false is neither arbitrary nor modifiable nor institutional nor violent. But when we view things on a different scale, when we ask the question of what this will to truth has been and constantly is, across our discourses, this will to truth which has crossed so many centuries of our history, what is, its very general form, the type of division which governs our will to know (notre volonte de savoir), then what we see taking shape is perhaps something like a system of exclusion, a historical, modifiable, and institutionally constraining system.

Analysis: However, when we view what is 'imposed as 'truth' i.e. truth as proposition or unproved statement nothing seems to be violent about its imposition. The form of proposition generally looks innocent of institutional pressures and violence. Some one puts a question or proposes a theory, for example. So from within the form of a proposition, there seems to be nothing wrong. But it is only when we view it across history how numerous propsitions have been advanced in the name of truth. Foucault says that such historical truths have at their back the will to truth, as there are other similar propositions, such as will to live, will to power, will to believe, etc. Like other wills, the will to truth by its very nature is compulsive; it compels us to admit that there is falsehood. It creates a system of exclusion which is supported not by a single will, but by a whole host of institutions, and so call it all these institutions which divide truth from falsehood are part of history. As such they are modifiable with time.

7. **Text:** There is no doubt that this division is historically constituted. For the Greek poets of the sixth century BC, the true discourse (in the strong and valorised sense of the world), the discourse which aspired respect and terror, and to which one had to submit because it ruled, was the one pronounced by man who spoke as of right and according to the required ritual; the discourse which dispensed justice and gave everyone his share: the discourse which in prophesying the future not only announced what was going to happen but helped to make it happen, carrying men's minds along with it and thus weaving itself into the fabric of destiny. Yet already a century later the highest truth no longer resided in what discourse was or did, but in what it said: a day came when truth was displaced from the ritualised, efficacious and just act of enunciations, towards the utterance itself, its meaning, its form, its object, its relation to its reference. Between Hesiod and Plato a certain division was established, separating true discourse from false discourse: a new division because henceforth the true discourse is no longer precious and desirable, since it is no longer the one linked to the exercise of power. The sophist is banished.

Analysis: The division between truth and falsehood is thus historically constituted. Foucault in the present paragraph refers to the Greek poets of the sixth century B.C. It was a time of the awakening of the Greek consciousness, similar to the 18th century Enlightenment in France. It was a time when people aspired for democracy, protesting against the institutions such as monarchy and oligarchy, which divided society. The history of Greek literature of the time reveals the development of the spirit of reflection and criticism. The Homeric cheerfulness and objectivity gradually disappeared; the poets became less optimistic and more critical and subjective. In Hesiod, the note of criticism and pessimism grows louder.

This attitude of mind could not fail to encourage the growth of individualism. The individuals asserted; what I happen to think is true; what I happen to believe is right, is right. One man's opinion is as good as another's. There is no universal right or wrong.

Foucault in the present passage traces the development of Greek thought, beginning with the sixth century B.C. The Greek poets betrayed a strong moral outlook that attacks the foibles of the age. They inspired respect and terror, and to which one has to submit their discourse. In religion, the Greeks poets helped create a discourse that gods dispensed justice. Oracles prophesied the future. Destiny ruled all. Oedipus was destined to kill his father and marry his mother.

Yet already, a century later, i.e. in the fifth century, as Foucault says, the highest truth, no longer lay in what the Greek poets moralized, but what they meant. The sophists displaced this ritualized discourse of the poets by saying that everything means in relation to its reference. Truth for Sophists, therefore, was relative. Truth could not be separated from falsehood. It is not surprising that no man's opinions should have been esteemed very highly. So far so good, but sophism soon degenerated. Sophist originally meant a wise man. "Man is the measure of all things", so the sophist Protogoras taught. That is, the individual is law unto himself in matters of knowledge. It led the later sophists to say that even morality is a mere convention; it represents the will of those who have the power to enforce it. Natural right is the right of the stronger.

Sophists thus were led to another hegemony. However, owning to the hostile criticism of Plato, Sophists lost their importance. Foucault refers to this change: "Between Hesiod and Plato a certain division was established, separating true discourse from false". The chief concern of Socrates was to meet the challenge of the Sophists, who in saying that there is no absolute true and false, threated the 'foundation of morality and the State. Socrates, and following him, Plato found that the prevailing ethical and political fallacies sprang from a total misconception of the meaning of truth and that the problem of knowledge was the key to the entire situation.

Socrates had an optimistic faith in the power of human reason to separate the true from false. The aim which he set himself to was not to construct a system of philosophy, but to arouse in men the love of truth and virtue. He taught that in order to reach the truth, we must not trust every chance opinion, but to clear up our ideas, to understand the real meaning of terms, to define correctly the notions we employ, to know exactly which we are talking about. Plato reinforced this pursuit of truth and thus help establish, according to Foucault, a sharp division between the true and false, thus banishing the Sophist. Not coincidently, Plato also banished poets. especially Homer, for not having the view of Ideas of things, servilely imitating only things and objects.

This historical division probably gave our will to know its general form. However, it has never stopped shifting: sometimes the great mutations in scientific thought can perhaps be read as the consequences of a discovery, but they can also be read as the appearance of new forms in the will to truth. There is doubtless a will to truth in the nineteenth century which differs from the will to know characteristic of Classical culture in the forms it employs, in the domains of objects to which it addresses itself, and in the techniques on which it is based. To go back a little further: at the turn to the sixteenth century (and particularly in England), there appeared a will to know which, anticipating its actual contents, sketched out schemes of possible, observable, measurable, classifiable objects; a will to know which imposed on the knowing subject, and in some sense prior to all experience, a certain position, a certain gaze and a certain function (to see rather than to read, to verify, rather than to make commentaries on); a will to know which was prescribed (but in a more general manner than by any specific instrument) by the technical level where knowledges had to be invested in order to be verifiable and useful. It was just as if, starting from the great Platonic division, the will to truth had its own history, which is not that of

constraining truths: the history of the range of objects to be known, of the functions and positions of the knowing subject, of the material, technical, and instrumental investments of knowledge.

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Analysis: Plato's conception of truth of Ideas and forms, diving knowledge into Forms and formless, permanence and change, immutable and changeable was, according to Foucault a historical division, i.e. a division in the history of thought. Plato's division is significant in the sense that it gave our will to know its general form, i.e. only that can be known which is conceived on the level of eternal Forms or Idea, and not what is passing and shifting.

However, this form of knowledge itself never stopped shifting. New discoveries did sometimes bring about changes in the scientific thought, as for example, discoveries in various fields during the Renaissance. Galileo, for example, told that it is not the sun which rotated around the earth, but the other way round. But still, under the influence of what the Bible said, people continued to believe that the earth is the centre of the universe and its supreme creature is man for whom the whole universe and its creatures are created. Foucault, as a post-structuralist, wishes this centrality of man to go. In the nineteenth century the will to know appeared in a different form: it searched for empirical facts. It was different from the will to know in the sixteenth century. In the sixteenth century, the emphasis on the knowing subject was to see and discover new lands, observe stars and record their movements, etc. As Foucault puts it: there appeared a will to know, which anticipating its actual contents, sketched out schemes of possible, observable, measurable, classifiable object, a will to know a certain position, a certain gaze and a certain function (to see rather than to read, to verify rather than to make commentaries on). It was a will to know, interested in the verifiable and the useful. It had to be so because the sixteenth century has only recently emerged from the darkness of the Middle Ages and was moving into the domain of new knowledge and new logic, as, for example, of Francis Bacon.

Foucault's own sympathies lie with the knowledge gained through observation and reflection. He rejects rationalistic approach to nature, finding it, as he does, useless, to study nature; one must proceed from facts by the use of method of inference. If there is smoke, there must be fire. He traces the history of the will to know from Plato to the nineteenth century to show that though there were shifts in the will to know en route, the will to know has never been free in its search for knowledge, for it was all along dominated by one ideology or the other; it always gathered knowledge by making division in the knowable. If Plato searched form Ideas, the sixteenth century wished to known the concrete.

Foucault wishes us to know without making cuts in knowledge – between Ideas and things, abstract and concrete knowledge, idealism and realism. There cannot be a theory without facts and facts without theory. Similarly there is no poetry, as John Crowe Ransom says, of the body, without the poetry of thought. Eliot also rejects the dissociation of sensibility, dividing poetry to be either of emotion or of thought. Foucault finds that a creative genius should combine the insight necessary for fruitful observation with power of reflection. But he finds that since search for knowledge is always dominated by institutional hegemony, it is rarely able to see the whole field of knowledge at a glance.

9. **Text:** This will to truth, like the other systems of exclusion, rests on an institutional support: it is both reinforced and renewed by whole strata of practices, such as pedagogy, of course and the system of books, publishing, libraries; learned societies in the past and laboratories now. But it is also renewed, no doubt more profoundly, by the way in which knowledge is put to work, valorized, distributed, and in a sense attributed, in a society. Let us recall at this point, and only symbolically, the old Greek principle: though arithmetic may well be the concern of democratic cities, because it teaches about the relations of equality, geometry alone must be taught in oligarchies, since it demonstrates the proportions within inequality.

   Analysis: The will to truth is inherently exclusive. Like the other systems of exclusion, says Foucault, the will to truth rests on institutional support such as educational practices, i.e. pedagogy system of books, publishing, libraries, learned societies and laboratories. These institutions impose some constraints or others on what is to be known in all ages– past and present, and all of them inhibit insight into the working of nature, the kind Newton possessed when he happily discovered the theory of gravitation on seeing an apple fall on the ground. He could smell out the working of nature through an insight, an insight which combined observation and reflection in an instant.

   But all societies do not encourage this direct insight into the order of things. For instance, while arithmetic was encouraged in Greek city-states, because it touches about the relations of equality, geometry was alone taught in oligarchies, since it shows the proportion within equality. So each society teaches different subjects to help it bring about the kind of state it envisages.

   As a post-structuralist, Foucault does not favour studying mathematics because it is merely a branch of metaphysics. It is a kind of game that does nothing to increase our understanding. So, in the post-modern age, mathemaics, though helpful to astronomers, is of little use. On the contrary, the metaphysical strain in it, that 2+2 necessarily make four is fixed and given a priori.

10. **Text:** Finally, I believe that this will to truth – leaning in this way on a support and an institutional distribution – tends to exert a sort of pressure and something like a power of constraint (I am still speaking of our own society) on other discourses I am thinking of the way in which for centuries Western literature sought to ground itself on the natural, the 'vraisemblable,' on sincerity, on science as well – in short, on 'true' discourse. I am thinking likewise of the manner in which economic practices, codified as precepts or recipes and ultimately as morality, have sought since the sixteenth century to ground themselves, rationalize themselves, and justify themselves in a theory of wealth and production. I am also thinking of the way in which a body as prescriptive as the penal system sought its bases or its justification, at first of course in a theory of justice, then, since the nineteenth century, in a sociological, psychological, medical, and psychiatric knowledge: it is as if even the word of the law could no longer be authorised, in our society, except by a discourse of truth.

    Analysis: Finally, Foucault believes that the will to truth leans for support on institutions, as, for example, what kind of history is to be written depending on the ideology of the state. Of late, in our own country the charge of saffronizing history has been leveled against the previous government. It means, history, like other branches of knowledge cannot remain neutral if the state tries to colour it, bend it, in order to promote its ideology. The institutional distribution, as Foucault says, tends to exert a sort of pressure and something like a power of constraint on all discourses. For example, says Foucault, Western literature, for centuries, sought to base itself on the natural, urging upon the poets to follow nature, i.e. what is verifiable or 'vaisemblable' as they say in French, on sincerity of the artist – his authentic self, on science as well. That is how a 'true' discourse was separated from the false – the unnatural, insincere and unscientific. The same can be said about economic practices. A certain ideology, Laissez-faire, for example, propagates free economy. Western nations, particularly USA wants the whole world to reform their economic systems and do away with the idea of a welfare state. Such economy uphoads individual initiative. It is codified as precepts or what Foucault calls recipes and ultimately as morality; these recipes have sought since the 18th century ground themselves, rationalize themselves and justify themselves in a theory of wealth and production. The World Bank and other agencies spread the gospel of this economy; these agencies, indeed, enforces economic reforms on nations committed to welfare activities. Similarly, other areas are influenced by the ideology of the state, areas like law and medicine. In fact, the state pressure is exerted on the whole chain of discoveries in various fields.

11. **Text:** Of the three great Systems of exclusion which forge discourse – the forbidden speech, the division of madness and the will to truth, I have spoken of the third at greatest length. The fact is that it is towards this third system that the other two have been drifting constantly for centuries. The third system increasingly attempts to assimilate the others, both in order to modify them and to provide them with a foundation. The first two are constantly becoming more fragile and more uncertain, to the extent that they are now invaded by the will to truth which for its part constantly grows stronger, deeper, and more implacable.

    Analysis: Foucault is of the view that of the three systems of exclusion, the forbidden of speech, division between reason and the will to truth, the third is the most significant, as it represents the highest system of exclusion. It is precisely for this reason that Foucault has also written on it at length. The fact is that it is towards this third system that the other two have been drifting constantly for centuries. The first stage of knowledge is marked by taboos – Do not eat the fruit of knowledge; the Bible forbids. Sexuality belonged to this forbidden speech. It was followed by the exclusion of madness from the realm of sanity. According to Foucault, these two stages were assimilated in the third, i.e. the will to truth in the sense that he forbidden and the mad were regarded as false discourses in an attempt to modify them and provide them with a foundation, i.e. since they are false, they need to be excluded from the saner discourse. So, all societies have made attempts to suppress sexuality and send mad men to asylums or to clinics for the mad. This is how, societies in order to safeguard the saner elements, excluded what they thought to be dangerous to their existence.

    This made both sexuality and insanity more fragile, i.e. easily breakable, because it was thought false. So madness also became weak and uncertain to the extent that sexuality and madness are attacked by the will to truth, and with impuity with the force at its back. While the other two have grown weaker, the will to truth ironically have over the passage of time grown stronger, deeper, and more implacable, adds Foucault

12. **Text:** And yet we speak of the will to truth no doubt least of all. It is as if, for us, the will to truth and its vicissitudes were masked by truth itself in its necessary unfolding. The reason is perhaps this: although since the Greeks 'true' discourse is no longer the discourse that answers to the demands of desire, or the discourse which exercises power, what is at stake in the will to truth, in the will to utter this 'true' discourse, if not desire and power? 'True' discourse, freed from desire and power by the necessity of its form, cannot recognize the will to truth which pervades it; and the will to truth, having imposed itself on us for a very long time, is such that the truth it wants cannot fail to mask it.

    Analysis: Ironically again, the will to truth which has, in comparison with sexuality and madness grown stronger, deeper and implacable, we speak of it no doubt least of all. We do not so much speak of what is true, but we are vocal about what is false. It is as if, for us, Foucault says, the will to truth and its ups and downs in history as to what exactly is true are masked by truth itself when it unfolds itself. It is so because when it unfolds itself what we find is not truth but an utterance prompted by our desire and power. We then do not speak of truth but justify what we forcibly desire.

    Foucault says that the will to truth is not so vocal because after all what we utter is an expression of our desire. Although since the Greeks 'true' discourse is no longer the discourse that answers to the demands of desire or power, it cannot be articulated. The true is then the desirable or what gives us power. Actually, when we claim to utter 'true,' we say nothing except what we desire. Foucault challenges those who still hold on to 'true' discourse. True discourse, freedom from desire and power cannot recognize the will to truth which pervades it. We do not know what this will to truth is except that we desire certain things. There is a close relationship between truth and desire, or else truth is an indefinable property. Things are true because we like them. So the will to truth is the will to desire and power. Nietzsche has already evolved the concept of the will to power which will overthrow the slave morality, Foucault feels that the will to truth should not mask desire or power on the contrary, it should express itself openly in the form of power, as Nietzsche did.

13. **Text:** Thus all that appears to our eyes is a truth conceived as a richness, a fecundity, a gentle and insidious universal force, and in contrast we are unaware of the will to truth, that prodigious machinery designed to exclude. All those who, from time to time in our history, have tried to dodge this will to truth and to put it into

question against truth, at the very point where truth undertakes to justify the prohibition and to define madness, all of them, from Nietzsche to Artaud and Bataille, must now serve as the (no doubt lofty) signs for our daily work.

Analysis: Foucault thus is in favour of the expression of the will to power without the mask of the will to truth. Such an expression, open and honest, will be clear in its expression. Moreover, this will to power will not employ the strategy of exclusion. On the other hand, it is guided by a proper synthesis Dionysian and Apollonian principles. In that it would be good. If only correct the imbalance in European/Christian civilization which encouraged the weak and the incompetent, the biologically unfit and repress the strong-willed individuals of a type similar to the old Greek aristocracy. Hence, it would be corrective, rather than exclusive. It would be the creation of a sound mind in a sound body of a brave but kind man. In Nietzsche, one has to go beyond good and evil, true and false.

Foucault, unlike Nietzsche, however, is not concerned with criticizing Christianity; his concern is mainly with institutional hegemony which is perpetrated in the name of truth. Truth thus serves a mask to desire and power. Thus, as Foucault says, all that appears to our eyes is a truth conceived as a richness, a fecundity, a gentle and insidiously universal force. Such a strategy makes us unaware that the will to truth is a huge mechanism meant to exclude what it calls false. Here and elsewhere Foucault's project appears similar to that of Nietzsche and indeed in this last paragraph of the second part of "The Order of Discourse," Foucault refers to those philosophers who like Nietzsche favoured an open and honest expression of power rather than mask it insidiously.

All those who, says Foucault, dodge or avoid facing the will to truth as essentially the will to power must rely upon philosophers from Nietzsche to Artaud and Bataille.

14. Text: There are, of course, many other procedures for controlling and delimiting discourse. Those of which I have spoken up to now operate in a sense from the exterior. They function as systems of exclusion. They have to do with the part of discourse which puts power and desire at stake.

Analysis: For Nietzsche, the traditional morality defends the weak and even glorifies the decadent against the strong. The will to know is, in fact, the will to exclude the strong. This is how the weak exclude the strong as calling the latter bad. This is how weak societies control and delimit discourse.

In the third part of The Order of Discourse, Foucault comes to dwell on how the delimited discourse arrived at the cost of excluding what is taken to be false is repeated so as to ensure its recurrence in every age. It is also repeated for emphasizing its significance in all times. So far, Foucault has spoken of the systems of exclusion which operate from outside i.e. social taboos, asylums for madmen and the metaphysical will to truth. In the third section of the essay, Foucault shows how these systems of exclusion also operate from within the discourse itself.

15. Text: I believe we can isolate another group: internal procedures, since discourse themselves exercise their own control; procedures which function rather as principles of classification, of ordering, of distribution, as if this time another dimension of discourse had to be mastered: that of events and chance.

Analysis: Foucault in the above paragraph proposes to isolate some internal procedures of exclusion from external procedures he has been discussing so far. These procedures, according to Foucault, function rather as principles of classification, of distribution, of ordering in order to master the play of events and chance. Foucault rejects any kind of determinism.

This is not say that over a span of time same tensions and combinations are bound to recur, bringing with them the same world and repeating its history. But he is against consciously repeating the same in order to show that nothing changes. We have already referenced to the dogma of the centrality of man in the universe, despite the fact that astronomers have for long declared that the earth rotates round the sun. It has been alleged that Foucault in his philosophy denies changes. And yet the main concern of his philosophy has been with change. Like Nietzsche again he finds that nothing is pre-determined and the recurrence is only mechanical, repetition is not stereotyped and the return may be spiral, not cyclical. We should be born in each new age on the level on which we died in each preceding one. But we are free always to make the life we inherited stronger and richer than we lived it last.

In the Foreword to The Order of Things Foucault accepts the existence of events and chance. He says that two things in particular strike him: the suddenness and thoroughness with which certain sciences were sometimes

reorganized; and it is a fact that at the same time similar changes occurred in apparently very different disciplines. Within a few years, for example, around 1800, the tradition of general grammar was replaced by an essentially historical philology. If we look for a similar change in British poetry, we will be surprised to see that poetic diction of the eighteen century was suddenly replaced by William Wordsworth by a language really spoken by men in rustic and humble conditions. Shortly before or rather simultaneously, the British philosophy became empirical reacting to the rationalism of the Continent. Likewise, as Foucault says: natural classifications were ordered according to the analysis of comparative anatomy and a political economy was founded whose main themes were labour and production.

Confronted by such curious combination of phenomena, it occurred to Foucault that these changes should be examined more closely, without reducing them, in the name of continuity, to either abruptness or science. It seemed to him that different kinds of changes were taking place in scientific discourse, though those changes did not occur at the same level, for new proposition s were produced, new facts isolated, or new concepts built up, did not follow the same model. Foucault respects such differences within a collective spirit emerging at the beginning of the nineteenth century. And though he would not at the moment pin down the cause for such multiple changes, he is hopeful that one day, a theory of scientific change and epistemological causality will be constructed.

Foucault thus refutes the desire to repeat the discourse of exclusion, for it admits no change in thinking. It is nothing but an expression of human desire to exert power, so that the same continues to dominate the field of knowledge.

16. **Text:** In the first place, commentary. I suppose – but without being very certain– that there is scarcely a society without its major narratives, which are recounted, repeated, and varied; formulae, texts, and ritualised sets of discourses which are recited in well-defined circumstances; things said once and preserved because it is suspected that behind them there is a secret or a treasure. In short, we may suspect that there is in all societies, with great consistency, a kind of gradation among discourses; those which are said in the ordinary course of days and exchanges, and which vanish as soon as they have been pronounced; and those which give rise to a certain number of new speech-acts which take them up, transform them or speak of them, in short, those discourses which, over and above their formulation, are said indefinitely, remain said, and are to be said again. We know them in our own cultural system: they are religious or juridical texts, but also those texts (curious ones, when we consider their status) which are called 'literary'; and to a certain extent, scientific texts.

Analysis: According to Foucault, internal procedures which are evolved to exclude other discourses that of sexuality, madness and falsehood include, in the first place, commentary. Thus, a kind of scholasticism comes to be formed wherein societies develop their respective narratives. These narratives create inner circle, such as Eliot refers to the Browning Study Circle in his essay "The Function of Criticism." The members of the circle create a world within which they can alone live. It is a kind of churning from within. Things are recounted, repeated; formulae, texts and ritualized set of discourses are recited in well-defined circumstances. It happened in the Middle Age when Aristotle's philosophy was commented upon in varied forms. This formed a closed circle of reading without new opening. As a result, nothing new emerged.

Foucault finds this tendency retrograde to the development of thought. In scholasticism, things are said and preserved because it is suspected that behind them there is a secret and treasure. Such a procedure is hardly insightful, for nothing new gets discovered. All societies, according to Foucault, follow this procedure so that they can enforce the delimited discourse and thus use the will to truth as a mask for acquiring truth. In short, as Foucault says, we may suspect that there is in all societies, with great consistency, a kind of gradation among discourses, a kind of hierarchy of true and false, of good and bad, of superior and inferior. This is what Foucault wishes to demolish. It is in this respect that he is with Derrida. Both deconstruct the divisive tendencies in societies. In this respect, they have a common programme and a common pursuit, as Eliot would say.

Foucault, in particular, wishes to undo all exclusive tendencies in societies because they promote separation in place of unity. Commentaries on the reigning discourse exerts power over other discourses. It creates a sense of self-sufficiency and smugness, whereas there should be a room for cooperation. In fact, there is no room for the subject claiming to be an individual in Foucault, as in Eliot. The critic, according to Eliot, should endeavour to discipline his personal prejudices and cranks – tares to which we are all subject – and compose his differences

with as many of his fellows as possible, in the common pursuit of true judgement. It equally applies to societies. When we find that quite the contrary prevails, we begin to suspect that the critic, adds Eliot, owes his livelihood to the violence and extremity of his opposition to other critics, or else some trifling oddities of his own with which he contrives to season his opinions which men already hold, and which out of vanity they prefer to maintain.

Societies too are prone to hold such opinions and therefore create some trifling difference between themselves and others, such as Eliotpoints out, the French pride themselves for being critical and the English for creativity. Whereas, Eliot alludes to Arnold's remark and finds that between the two activities there is no opposition. Probably, indeed, the larger part of the labour of an author in composing his work is critical labour; the labour of shifting, combining, constructing, expunging, correcting, testing: this frightful toil is as much critical as creative.

Foucault would agree with Arnold and Eliot that the two aspects of literature, creative and critical are not oppositional. But societies, as individual, are content to, limited as they are in their perception, to live in separation. And not that we live our separate social orders, but that our social discourse is repeated day in and out in all spheres of our life. But this or that institutional discourse once pronounced vanishes. In fact, the life span of institutional discourse is very short. They should be said and are to be said again. Such phenomena exist in all cultural system. For example, there are in all societies religious or juridical texts and also texts which, Foucault says, are strangely called 'literary,' and to a certain extent, scientific texts. These texts in original and their commentaries repeat themselves ad nauseum, and one feels caught up in a vicious cycle.

Foucault here seems to echo Nietzsche's concept of 'eternal recurrence.' The theory that history repeats itself in identical cycles in familiar to us through Plato, who derived it from Egyptian and Babylonian astronomers. It requires a concept of time that had not been congenial to Western thought ever since it was attacked by Saint Augustine. For us, time seems to move in a strange line that has no turning. Nietzsche, knowing that his doctrine would not be well received did state it: Everything goes, everything comes back; eternally rolls the wheel of being.

For Foucault, as for Nietzsche, it is really depressing that societies do not progress in a straight line. Eliot also abandons the hope for progress in poetry. In "Tradition and Individual Talent," he says that poetry does not improve, though the material of progress is never the same.

17. **Text:** This differentiation is certainly neither stable, nor constant, nor absolute, there is not, on the one side, the category of fundamental or creative discourses, given for all time, and on the other, the mass of discourses which repeat, gloss, and comment. Plenty of major texts become blurred and disappear, and sometimes commentaries move into the primary position. But though its points of application may change, the function remains; and the principle of a differentiation is continuously put back in play. The radical effacement of this gradation can only ever be play, utopia, or anguish. The Borges-style play of a commentary which is nothing but the solemn and expected reappearance word for word of the text that is commented on; or the play of a criticism that would speak for ever of a work which does not exist. They lyrical dream of a discourse which is reborn absolutely new and innocent at every point, and which reappears constantly in all freshness, derived from things, feelings or thoughts. The anguish of that patient of Janet's for whom the least utterance was gospel truth, concealing inexhaustible treasures of meaning and worthy to be repeated, recommenced, and commented on indefinitely: 'When I think,' he would say when reading or listening, 'when I think of this sentence which like the others will go off into eternity, and I have perhaps not yet fully understood.'

Analysis: Foucault does not find any absolute difference between literary or scientific, or religious and legal texts. They are of the same order. Like Eliot again, he seems to say that the fundamental problem is that of order. Hence, there is not, on the one side fundamental discourses, and on the other, the mass of discourses which repeat, or creative, gloss, and comment. In this regard, all discourses are alike. There is also no absolute difference between the original works, say Vedas in the Indian context, and commentaries on them. For example, Shankara's commentary on Vedanta is as significant as the Upanishads themselves. The same can be said of the commentaries on the Bible, or the Gita. In fact, as Foucault adds, plenty of major texts become blurred and disappear, and sometimes commentaries move into the primary position.

But though its points of application may change, the function remains the same. This is really disappointing. And the

principle of differentiation that one text – legal – is different from the religious – is continuously put back in play. First of all, as Eliot says, when we think of literature, we do not think of it as a collection of writings of individuals, but as "organic whole" which includes the writings of the whole of the world, and within it, of Europe and of a single country. That is exactly the order of literature. But literary texts are also not cut off from religious or scientific texts.

But most of us lay emphasis on difference, and not on unity, on order. Once we recognize the order of things – the order of discourse, we see things in relation to systems which, and only in relation to which individual works on various disciplines cohere. That is how we come to see an individual author in relation to the order he writes in. Like Eliot, Foucault also questions the personality of the author. In a seminal essay "What is an Author" first published in 1969, he probes the institutional forces that affect writing and knowledge. He theorized on the same project in The Archaeology of Knowledge. The essay "What is an Author" points out a contradiction in modern culture. In many ways, Western culture regards the author as unimportant (for example, following Eliot, perhaps. New criticism and also structuralism dispensed with studying the biography of the author, and yet in our criticism we do not hesitate to use the names of authors. On the basis of this contradiction, Foucault sets the direction of inquiry. He asks the general question: what conditions and interests allow one to be regarded an author and another writer not. Foucault then hammers the point that the text is never a product of a unified consciousness, i.e. the author, but consists in several, socially determined roles, or author – functions.

Foucault finds the principle of gradation that one text is written by one author and another by another, or in one period or another cannot be effaced. Foucault refers to Borges-style theatre of the Absurd in which nothing changes. It also happens in Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot. The two tramps in the play decide to go from the place where they have been waiting for Gogot, but do not move: the moral of the play is that nothing happens, nothing moves. Similarly, commentaries repeat verbatum the original text. It is only in a lyrical dream that we can think of an original text reborn, as Foucault says, new and innocent at every point, and which reappears constantly in all freshness, derived from things, feelings and thought. Such is the utopia of new literature. But it does not exist. Foucault refers to a character in Janet for whom the last utterance was a gospel truth, concealing inexhaustible treasures of meaning and worthy to be repeated, recommenced and commented upon indefinitely.

Such is the predicament of human nature; we tend to perpetuate our texts, their commentaries, like sacred cows. They are not changed, questioned or modified. They are preserved, as one defends his wall.

The character is Janet says: "I think, I think of this sentence which like others will go into eternity, and which I perhaps have not yet fully understood. His plight is like ours. We do not place a discourse in the over-all context of other discourses. We cannot understand even a sentence in Foucault unless we place it along side all that has been and is being said. Once again we are reminded of Eliot: no poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead.

Eliot in his formulation of the critical and the creative process has said as does Foucault that repeating the old is not enough. It deadens receptivity. As Eliot put it: The necessity that he (the poet) shall conform, that he shall cohere, is not one-sided; what happens when a new work of art is created is that happens simultaneously to all works of art which preceded it. The order between the past and present is simultaneous.

18. **Text:** But who can fail to see that this would be to annul one of the terms of the relation each time, and not to do away with the relation itself? It is a relation which is constantly changing with time; which takes multiple and divergent forms in a given epoch. The juridical exegesis is very different from the religious commentary (and this has been the case for a very long time). One and the same literary work can give rise simultaneously to several distinct types of discourse the 'Odyssey' as a primary text is repeated, in the same period, in the translations of Berard, and in the endless 'explications de texte', and in Joyce's 'Ulysses.'

Analysis: Foucault, like Eliot, is of the view that instead of repeating, instead of asking the new poet to conform would be to annul i.e. to break one of the term of relation each time, and yet the relation exists. But it is a relation which, according to Foucault is constantly changing with time and which takes multiple and divergent form in a given period of time. In this regard, religious commentaries are different from legal interpretations. In literature

it is all the more pertinent that the artist is acutely conscious of his place in time, of his own contemporaneity, says Eliot. The wasteland of King Fisher is not exactly the wasteland of our times. And Foucault also affirms: one and the same literary work can give rise simultaneously to very distinct type of discourse; the Odyssey of Homer as a primary text is repeated, in the same period; in translation by Bernard, and in the endless 'explications de texte,' and in Joyce's Ulysses. If we may add, numerous myths and complexes of the old are differently conceived in the present times, as in the past. 'Oedipus complex' is the same and yet not the same in Hamlet and Sons and Lovers; so is the complex of Electra in O Neill's Mourning Becomes Electra.

19. **Text:** For the moment I want to do no more than indicate that, in what is broadly called commentary, the hierarchy between primary and secondary text plays two roles which are in solidarity with each other. On the one hand it allows the (endless) construction of new discourses: the dominance of the primary text, its permanence, its status as a discourse which can always be re-actualised, the multiple or hidden meaning with which it is credited, the essential reticence and richness which is attributed to it, all this is the basis for an open possibility of speaking. But on the other hand the commentary's only role, whatever the techniques used, is to say at last what was silently articulated 'beyond,' in this text. By a paradox which always displaces but never escapes, the commentary must say for the first time what had, however, never been said. The infinite rippling of commentaries is worked from the inside by the dream of a repetition in disguise: at is horizon there is perhaps nothing but what was at its point of departure – mere recitation. Commentary exorcises the chance element of discourse by giving it its due; it allows us to say something other than the text itself, but on condition that it is this text itself which is said, and in a sense completed. The open multiplicity, the element of chance, are transferred, by the principle of commentary, from what might risk being said, on to the number, the form, the mask, and the circumstances of the repetition. The new thing here lies not in what is said but in the event of its return.

Analysis: All that Foucault wishes to undo is the power of hegemony that accompanies the desire to repeat the old discourse without taking into account changed times. This makes the discourse traditional and stereotyped. Besides, as Foucault says, in a commentary, the hierarchy between primary and secondary text plays two roles which are in solidarity with each other, i.e. they are in agreement with each other. On the one hand, it allows the endless construction of new discourse.

The existing monuments form an ideal order before the new work arrives; for order, Eliot says, and Foucault would agree, to persist after the supervention of novelty, the whole existing order must be, if ever so slightly, altered. Thus, the order of discourse, changes as it does with passage of time and so the relation, proportions, values of each work of are toward the whole are readjusted; and this is, Eliot insists, is the conformity between the old and the new. Foucault traces this possibility, when a new artist re-actualises the primary text while commenting upon it; its hidden meanings are articulated, adding to its richness and resilience.

Thus, the secondary text, the commentary has the possibility of articulating the primary text. But on the other hand, the commentary's only role, whatever the technique used, is to say at last what was silently articulated 'beyond' in the text. According to Foucault, this is a loudable role of a commentary that it gives voice to what the text is silent about. It is, of course, a paradox and Foucault is conscious of this paradox. By a paradox which a 'good' commentary tries to remove, but perhaps fails to do so, is that it must say for the first time what had, however, never been said. Thus, the unsaid in the text should be put into words in a commentary. Wittgenstein sent the manuscript of his Tructatus to a publisher with the remark that it is a book on ethics, but the publisher found not a word independently said about ethics. That shows that he could not read what was not clearly stated.

As it happens, normally a commentary indulges in what Foucault calls 'infinite rippling'; it makes endless small waves, without disturbing or churning the depth of water. At best, it works from inside by a dream of repetition in disguise. Foucault rightly says that such a commentary does not touch the horizon of the text, except that it recites, rehearses or repeats what is said there in it. Foucault is obviously critical of such commentaries because they carry on the old and fixed point of knowledge forward and impose it with violence on the next generation. It adds force to what it says because through repetitions the text becomes sacred. That is how fundamentalism is born. The post-structuralists, and Foucault among them, hit at this tendency that harks us back to something

fundamental, something original. It becomes a dangerous exercise because the old knowledge is not relevant to the new generation. Such commentaries which perform the ritual of recitation prohibit the chance element in discourse, as Foucault says, by giving back what the text says, i.e. by giving it its due; it, Foucault adds, allows us to say something other than the text itself, but on the condition that it is this text itself which is said. In one can at best explicate it, as the neo-classicists did with regard to classical texts during the eighteenth century.

A so-called good commentary does not articulate silences and gaps in the text. It does not establish links with the old and new ways of perceiving things. It closes the possibility of multiplying the text. The open possibility and the elements of chance are transferred from what might risk being said. And without taking risks, nothing new gets said. If at all there is anything new in a commentary it is with regard to not what is said, but in that the text returns intact. We have already referred to the repetition of the same in Nietzsche. Nietzsche condemned this doctrine in no uncertain terms because it encourages determinism and curbs our freedom to say anything new. Determinism breeds conformism to the tradition. As Eliot also says: To conform merely would be for the new work not really to conform at all; it would not be new, and would not be a work of art. He further says: And we do not quite say that the new is more valuable...we say: it appears to conform, and is perhaps individual. But it appears individual, and may conform, but we are hardly likely to find that it is one and not the other.

Like Eliot, Foucault does not disregard the text altogether; he is of the view that silences in the text, its unstated premises, should be articulated, so that the commentary itself becomes a text. In that case, we would not be able to say that it conforms and yet it is an independent work and vice versa.

20. Text: I believe there exists another principle of rarefaction of a discourse, complementary to the first, to a certain extent: the author. Not, of course, in the sense of the speaking individual who pronounced or wrote a text, but in the sense of a principle of grouping of discourses, conceived as the unity and origin of their meanings, as the focus of their coherence. This principle is not everywhere at work, nor in a constant manner; there exist all around us plenty of discourses which circulate without deriving their meaning or their efficacity from an author to whom they could be attributed: everyday remarks, which are effaced immediately; decrees or contracts which require signatories but no author; technical instructions which are transmitted anonymously. But in the domains where it is the rule to attribute things to an author – literature, philosophy, science – it is quite evident that this attribution does not always play the same role. In the order of scientific discourse, it was indispensable during the Middle Ages that a text should be attributed to an author, since this was an index of truthfulness. A proposition was considered as drawing even its scientific value from its author. Since the seventeenth century this function has steadily been eroded in scientific discourse: it now functions only to give a name to a theorem, an effect, an example, a syndrome. On the other hand, in the order of literary discourse, starting from the same epoch, the function of the author has steadily grown stronger: all those tales, poems, dramas or comedies which were allowed to circulate in the Middle Ages in at least a relative anonymity are now asked (and obliged) to say where they come from, who wrote them. The author is asked to account for the unity of the texts which are placed under his name. He is asked to reveal or at least carry authentification of the hidden meaning which traverses them. He is asked to connect them to his lived experiences, to the real history which saw their birth. The author is what gives this disturbing language of fiction its unities, it nodes of coherence, its insertion in the real.

Analysis: Commentaries, if they fail to discover any new in the text, just repeat and recite and thus lend it an exalted status. They create a suspicion that the text is unalterable, holy and sacrosanct. Besides commentaries, what further lends exaltation to a discourse, complementary to that of commentaries, to a certain extent, is the author. We have already referred to Foucault's essay "What is an Author?" The coming into being of the notion of "author" according to Foucault, constitutes the privileged moment of individualization in the history of ideas, knowledge, literature, philosophy and the sciences. In Marx, literature is a part of the superstructure of which the base is formed by the means of production. Foucault also believes that the author is the creation of certain conditions. He is not an indefinite source of significations which fill a work. The author does not precede the works: he, as Foucault says, does certain functional principles by which, one culture, one limits, excludes and chooses; in short, by which, in our impedes the free circulation, the free manipulation, the free composition

decomposition and re-composition of fiction. In short, the author is constrained by the social institutions. He is an ideological product. He writes within the constraints of the state. He is no genius, but we make him one. He is equally not authentic and original. He is not his free self who writes taking the whole gamut of knowledge into consideration. He writes by excluding certain areas. But we glorify him, valorize him, because he says that much which suits us. Commentaries on his works also repeat what he has written, whereas what is important is what he is silent about or what he excludes.

In the above passage, Foucault underlines the identity of an author. Generally, we identify an author figure around a group of his works, his oeuvre, like 54 plays of Shakespeare, Odes of Keats and novels of D.H. Lawrence. But does it matter who speaks, except that his discourses are grouped together and are given unity and origin of their meaning, as the focus of their coherence. However, this principle of grouping, feels Foucault, is not a work. Do we know all that an author thought and wrote? This is despite researches carried in discovering an authoritative text of a writer. There exist all around us plenty of discourses which circulate, certain ideas and ideologies whose author cannot be pinned down. These anonymous writings and sayings are part of our institutional set-up. They include everyday remarks which are, says Foucault, effaced, but they do leave their impact. These everyday remarks are part of our everyday existence. There are other anonymous writings such as daily contracts and decrees to which businessmen and judges put their signatures, but they are not authors.

Foucault's analysis of the author figure is existential, i.e. an author is one whose existence is prior to the ideology of his society. But that rarely is the case. It was a practice in the Middle Ages to attribute literature, philosophy, science to an author, since this was an index of truthfulness. But since the seventeenth century this function has, according to Foucault, steady eroded, particularly in scientific discourse. It now functions only to give a name to a discovery – Newton's law or Raman Effect or Freud's discovery of the Oedipus complex. Nevertheless, in literature the search for the author has curiously grown stronger. It was not the case in the Middle Ages. Who wrote Everyman and all those Miracle, Morality and Mystery cycles is not known.

Today, the author is asked to account for the unity of the texts which are placed under his name. He is asked to reveal or give an authentification of the hidden meaning. "Who was Godot?" someone asked Beckett and the later replied 'I would have told, had I known.' The author is asked to connect his work to his lived experience, to the real history which saw their birth. He is asked to do so, or else his fiction, disturbs us because without the author at its centre we lose its coherence. So every time when we tend to lose our track, we invoke the name of the author.

21. **Text:** I know that I will be told: 'But you are speaking there of the author as he is reinvented after the event by criticism, after he is dead and there is nothing left except for a tangled mass of scribblings; in those circumstances a little order surely has to be introduced into all that, by imagining a project, a coherence, a thematic structure that is demanded of the consciousness or the life of an author who is indeed perhaps a trifle fictitious. But that does not mean he did not exist, this real author, who bursts into the midst of all these worn-out words, bringing to them his genius or his disorder.'

Analysis: The quest for the author, for the authority, for authorization to the reader to say what the writer means is, as Foucault finds, a curious phenomenon since the seventeenth century. Presuming Shakespeare to be unlearned in Greek and Latin, we ask who wrote his plays. It does not mean that Shakespeare did not exist, or he did not write the plays attributed to him. The quest for the author is undertaken after his death by criticism. The author is dead. What he has left behind is a tangled mass of writing, Foucault lightly calls "scribblings." The critic must create a central figure and reorganize those stray thoughts. He must surely introduce a system, a method, in that madness called literature. This could be done by a project, a thesis, a coherence, a thematic structure that is demanded of a consciousness or life of an author but the author is more or less fictitious. As we know, Foucault does not rule out the existence of his real author, who Foucault says, bursts out in his works bringing to them both the possibilities – of bringing order or disorder in his works.

22. **Text:** It would, of course, be absurd to deny the existence of the individual who writes and invents. But I believe that – at least since a certain epoch – the individual who sets out to write a text on the horizon of which a possible oeuvre is prowling takes upon himself the function of the author: what he writes and what does not write, what

he sketches out, even by way of provisional drafts, as an outline of the oeuvre, and what he lets fall by way of commonplace remarks– this whole play of differences is prescribed by the author-function, as he receives it from his epoch, or as he modifies it in his turn. He may well overturn the traditional image of the author, nevertheless, it is from some new author-position that he will cut out, from everything he could say and from all that he does say every day at any moment, the still trembling outline of his oeuvre.

Analysis: Foucault insists that there should really exist the individual who wrote these and other works after all, someone has penned them down. The author is not a ghostly presence. Nor is it possible to imagine someone taking upon himself the function of the author just because he happens to be an animal moving like a thief and looking for a chance to steal. In fact, the author is the product of as Foucault has consistently argued the procedures of, exclusion: what he writes and what does not write, what he sketches out, even in the form of drafts for the time being, or draws an outline of his works, or even what he speaks and writes by a commonplace remark – he follows the procedure of exclusion, nonetheless. That is what makes him an author. But what he writes and what he passes into silence is determined not by him, but by the whole epoch - his society, his age and the institutional set-up of that historical period. What he receives from his times is, of course, not returned in the same form but is modified. He may well, Foucault concedes, overturn the traditional image of the author by challenging his age; nevertheless, he must follow the procedure of exclusion. He will, as Foucault says, cut out from everything he could say. But whatever he says everyday at every moment, his speech and his writing betray fear and trembling because what he has said shows the other limit – what he has not said.

23. Text: The commentary-principle limits the chance-element in discourse by the play of an identity which would take the form of repetition and sameness. The author-principle limits this same element of chance by the play of an identity which has the form of individuality and the self.

Analysis: Foucault in this passage and elsewhere has repeatedly said that commentaries limit the play of chance element and therefore limit the process of change in the text. Thus, the text is preserved in its purity in a commentary. The two – the text and its commentary remain identical. The author-principle–that there is at the centre of the text texts an author, also limits chance element and change in it. That is why Roland Barthes announces the death of the author in his essay of the self-same title, for he feels that it is in the death of the author that the reader is born – or else the reader always refers back to the author and thus fails to do justice to his own reading.

24. Text: We must also recognise another principle of limitation in what is called, not sciences but 'disciplines' a principle which is itself relative and mobile; which permits construction, but within narrow confines

Analysis: Foucault traces another principle of limitation or exclusion or differentiation. Various disciplines, although casually one in the great chain of being, take their own position from a narrow focus. For example, first as mathematicians, in examining the properties of a curve, find the same properties present under different aspects, so, experimental physicists may eventually find a single hypothesis which cover such different properties as weight, elasticity and magnetism. But how many intermediary hypothesis had to be found before the gaps could be filled in. This deters researchers belonging to various disciplines, and they stay content within their narrow confines. It is equally with societies and cultures. The author also resorts to similar procedures of exclusions; he rests content in dealing with bits and parts. Thus he resorts to constructions and this is what Foucault deconstructs. Incidentally, Derrida at one time was the student of Foucault.

25. Text: The organization of disciplines is just as much opposed to the principle of commentary as to that of the author. It is opposed to the principle of the author because a discipline is defined by a domain of objects, a set of methods, a corpus of propositions considered to be true, a play of rules and definitions, of techniques and instruments: all this constitutes a sort of anonymous system at the disposal or anyone who wants to or is able to use it, without their meaning or validity being linked to the one who happened to be their inventor. But the principle of a discipline is also opposed to that of commentary: in a discipline, unlike a commentary, what is supposed at the outset is not a meaning which has to be rediscovered, not an identity which has to be repeated, but the requisites for the construction of new statements. For there to be a discipline, there must be a possibility of formulating new propositions, ad infinitum.

Analysis: Foucault is of the view that there is one casual principle operative in the world, but there are numerous elements, divisible into smaller parts. Likewise, there is unity among various fields of knowledge. Foucault was not a positivist and had no intention of limiting knowledge into smaller and smaller but specialized disciplines, not because specialization is retrograde to the development of knowledge, but because disciplines create their respective confines and keep masses in bondages with force. Disciplines not one divide knowledge which is indivisible, but also exclude other disciplines from the one they pursue.

According to Foucault, the organization of knowledge into disciplines is just as much opposed to the principle of commentary as to that of the author, the two aspects which he has been discussing in the preceding passage. He has opposed the principle of commentary on the basis that it exacts the status of the text by not reading what its author has been silent about and thus makes the future reader to take the limited vision of the text for granted.

Foucault rejects the author on the similar ground; that he resorts to the act of exclusion and thus prohibits the reader to have a fresh look at the discourse. The organization of disciplines is opposed both to the principle of commentary and that of the author. It is opposed to the latter because when an author composes a text in a certain discipline and puts his signature there he gives it a name, whereas the discipline as such has not name. Take, for example, the discipline of literature. But literature as such is a wider category and is anonymous. It is like others, a nameless system. Similarly, the discipline like literature is opposed to the principle of commentary because it is a possibility only of which commentaries actualize new discourses, new propositions. In a discipline, as Foucault says, what is supposed at the outset is not a meaning which has to be discovered, nor an identity which has to be repeated, but the material for the construction of new statements.

In Foucault's terms, a discipline is, of course, a division of knowledge, but authors–their texts and the commentaries upon them further narrow the realm of knowledge.

26. Text: *But there is more, there is more, no doubt, in order for there to be less: a discipline is not the sum of all and that can be truthfully said about something; it is not even the set of all that can be accepted about the same data in virtue of some principles of coherence or systematicity. Medicine is not constituted by the total of what can be truthfully said about illness; botany cannot be defined by the sum of all the truths concerning plants. There are two reasons for this: first of all, botany and medicine are made up of errors.*

Analysis: The above passage points to the infinitely large field of knowledge, of which a discipline – medicine or botany are limited disciplines. Foucault here takes his stand on what today is called naturalism, which at the same time called Spinozism. What we are able to perform, but what is not done is vast, as Browing said in "My Last Ride Together." Of all the eighteenth century philosophers, Spinoza equated God with infinite extension of his attributes in nature. We know our finitude in relation to God or nature's attributes. The existence of the infinite makes us aware of our finitude. Foucault puts the argument geometrically – that the sum of all angles of a triangle is 180°. If we know the more, we also know the less. The existence of more has to be beyond doubt in order there to be less. A discipline, as he says, is not the sum of all that can be truthfully said about something, say, literature. We have divided literature into genres and kinds, but if you ask Aristotle, he would say that music, lyric, epic, comedy and tragedy are all forms of poetry produced by one cause – action. This causal principle is greater than its manifestation in different genres, already known and yet to be discovered. It is in biological term the genus of which genres are attributes.

Foucault is sad over the prospect of making parts appear wholes. Thus, fragmentary knowledge gives birth to bigotry. The bigot thinks his own partial knowledge to be true and the rest of it is false. So all disciplines are fragmentary more or less, there are forms of errors, medicine, botany and the rest, as well as all truths. That is all disciplines are a mix of errors and truth. Errors, therefore, are not foreign to any discipline; they are an integral part of the truths of that discipline, but which according to Foucault have positive function, a historical efficacity and a role that is indissociable from that of truths. It is so because all disciplines have their own phantasm, what Foucault calls popular imagery. For example, in medicines, there are many quacks along with truly competent doctors. In linguistics, we still search for the primitive form of language. Every discipline, thus, has its chimera and reverie. These are the monsters inherent in all discipline. It is, therefore, wrong to exclude

from one discipline what it is considered to be false. The false is still embedded in the discipline. There is thus no state of purity a discipline can claim.

27. **Text:** Within its own limits, each discipline recognises true and false propositions: but it pushes back a whole teratology of knowledge beyond its margins. The exterior of a science is both more and less populated than is often believed; there is of course immediate experience, the imaginary themes which endlessly carry and renew immemorial beliefs; but perhaps there are no errors in the strict sense, for error can only arise and be decided inside a definite practice; on the other hand, there are monsters on the prowl whose form changes with the history of knowledge. In short, a proposition must fulfil complex and heavy requirements to be able to belong to the grouping of a discipline: before it can be called true or false, it must be 'in the true,' as Canguilhem would say

Analysis: It is but incumbent upon each discipline to recognize true and false propositions, but instead it pushes back to a whole knowledge which it suspects to be error-ridden beyond its margins. Foucault is part of the post structuralist movement because he suggests marginalization of the other. All cultures resort of the procedure of exclusion of the other – women, negroes, aboriginal – and in short anyone who do not fit in their idea of truth. Any science, for that matter, renews beliefs from the hoary past. But they too are, according to Foucault, not errors. Errors arise when that science tends to shrink internally by its desire to exclude what it cannot comprehend. In fact, cultures and societies, like sciences, feel comfortable within their narrow range; they believe in exclusion rather than in inclusion.

28. **Text:** People have often wondered how the botanists or biologists of the nineteenth century managed not to see that what Mendel was saying was true. But it was because Mendel was speaking of objects, applying methods and placing himself on a theoretical horizon which were alien to the biology of his time. Naudin, before him, had of course posited the thesis that hereditary traits are discrete; yet, no matter how new or strange this principle was it was able to fit into the discourse of biology at least as an enigma. What Mendel did was to constitute the hereditary trait as an absolutely new biological object, thanks to a kind of filtering which had never been used before: he detached the trait from the species and from the sex which transmits it; the field in which he observed it being the infinitely open series of the generation, where it appears and disappears according to statistical regularities. This was a new object which called for new conceptual instruments and new theoretical foundations. Mendel spoke the truth, but he was not 'within the true,' of the biological discourse of his times. It was not according to such rules that biological objects and concepts were formed. It needed a complete change of scale the deployment of a whole new range of objects in biology for Mendel to enter into the true and for his propositions to appear (in large measure) correct. Mendel was a true monster, which meant that science could not speak of him; whereas about thirty years earlier, at the height of the nineteenth century, Scheiden, for example, who denied plant sexuality, but in accordance with the rules of biological discourse, was merely formulating a discipline's error

Analysis: Since most of us tend to exclude the other, people have often wondered how the botanist or biologists of the nineteenth century managed not see what Mendel was saying was true within a limited horizon. Mendel was obviously confining himself to a narrow field of his discipline. Naudin, before him, had posited the thesis that hereditary traits are separate and distinct. This thesis, though new and strange did fit into the discourse of biology at least as an enigma or a puzzle. But Mendel tried to constitute the hereditary straits as a absolutely new biological object, detaching them from the species and sexes which transmit it. Mendel, of course spoke the truth, but as Foucault says, he was not 'within the true,' of the biological discourse of time. Hence, Mendel sought to construct a new and different framework. Foucault calls him a true monster, who is the name of new and different, separated the issue of hereditary traits from the rest of biology. Foucault thus shows that new developments should not be exaggerated; they should be seen in the context of the old. And the new, as Eliot also says, is not more valuable becomes it fits in; but its fitting in is a test of its value.

29. **Text:** It is always possible that one might speak the truth in the space of a wild exteriority, but one is 'in the true' only by obeying the rules of a discursive 'policing,' which one has to reactivate in each of one's discourses.

Analysis: In the light of the above, it is clear that Foucault is not for creating new but separate disciplines. That is why he says: ...the truth,(lies) in the space of wild exteriority. On the contrary, one is 'in the true' only by

obeying the rules of narrow discourse, which constrains our perception. Foucault calls the force that narrowing discipline use 'Policing'. Knowledge as it increasingly narrows itself down to small and smaller disciplines, exerts its power and force people to look within.

30. **Text:** The discipline is a principle of control over the production of discourse. The discipline fixes limits for discourse by the action of an identity which takes the form of a permanent re-actuation of the rules.

Analysis: Thus, the discipline, any discipline, for that matter, is a principle of power, of control, of hegemony, over the production of discourse. The discipline fixes the limits for discourse by the action of identity thorough rules of the game of the discourse.

31. **Text:** We are accustomed to see in an author's fecundity, in the multiplicity of the commentaries, and in the development of a discipline so many infinite recourses for the creation of discourses. Perhaps so, but they are nonetheless principles of constraint: it is very likely impossible to account for their positive and multiplicatory role if we do not take into consideration their restrictive and constraining function.

Analysis: It is these rules of the discourse – its 'policing' that we become accustomed to seeing its greatness, its ability to produce discourse in the multiplicity of commentaries and in the development of a discipline so many infinite resources for the creation of discourses. The author works from within the discipline, understands the rules for the production of discourse and is able to multiply it. Hence, he is no genius. Foucault fights for freedom of speech, for he suspects that what is written by so-called authors and is multiplied in commentaries, is forced by the rules of constraints. So, the greatness of a discourse is ever suspect. Foucault rightly says: It is very likely impossible to account for their positive and multiplicatory role if we do not take into consideration their restrictive and constraining function. In fact, as we have already seen, a discourse comes into being by confining itself to a narrow focus; the narrower it is, the more violent it becomes in forcing its perspective.

32. **Text:** There is, I believe, a third group of procedures which permit the control of discourses. This time it is not a matter of mastering their powers or averting the unpredictability of their appearance, but of determining the condition of their application, of imposing a certain number of rules on the individuals who hold them, and thus of not permitting everyone to have access to them. There is a rarefaction, this time, of the speaking subjects; none shall enter the order of discourse if he does not satisfy certain requirements or if he is not, from the outset, qualified to do so. To be more precise: not all the regions of discourse are equally open and penetrable; some of them are largely forbidden (they are differentiated and differentiating), while others seem to be almost open to all winds and put at the disposal of every speaking subject, without prior restrictions.

Analysis: Foucault has already listed two groups of procedures for controlling of discourse, namely mastering their power and averting the role of chance in changing them. In the IV section of "The Order of Discourse", he underlines the third group of these procedures – procedures which determine the condition of this application, of imposing certain number of rules on the individuals who hold them and thus of not allowing everyone to have access to them.

Through these procedures, the discourse becomes a privilege of a few; it becomes exalted in the process. The key of it is with the important speaking subjects. The discourse is the privilege of those who meet certain requirements, and possess certain qualification in order to speak. The less qualified and less privileged can have access to the discourse only marginally. In fact, the discourse itself is not open to all: Some of them are largely forbidden, while to others it is open without restrictions.

Foucault thus points out that an already limited discourse is further restricted to a few of its adherents. The discourse thus gains a privileged status – forbidden, and forbidding, differentiated and differentiating, differeing and deferring.

33. **Text:** In this regard I should like to recount an anecdote which is so beautiful that one trembles at the thought that it might be true. It gathers into a single figure all the constraints of discourse: those which limits its powers, those which master its aleatory appearances, those which carry out the selection among speaking subjects. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Shogun heard tell the Europeans' superiority in matters of navigation, commerce, politics, and military skill was due to their knowledge of mathematics. He desired to get hold of so precious a knowledge. As he had been told of an English sailor who possessed the secret of these miraculous

discourses, he summoned him to his palace and kept him there. Alone with him, he took lessons. He learned mathematics. He retained power, and lived to a great old age. It was not until nineteenth century that there were Japanese mathematicians. But the anecdote does not stop there: it has its European side too. The story has it that this English sailor, Will Adams, was an autodidact, a carpenter who had learnt geometry in the course of working in a shipyard. Should we see this story as the expression of one of the great myths of European culture? The universal communication of knowledge and the infinite free exchange discourses in Europe against the monopolised and secret knowledge of Oriental tyranny?

Analysis: There may be stories, but the fact is the knowledge is appropriated for power, for control over men and materials. Foucault recounts an anecdote, though himself trembling at the thought how could one Shogun, learning that the Europeans' superiority in navigation depended on the knowledge of mathematic, engaged an English sailor, versed in mathematic, and took alone lessons from him. He thus came to possess exclusive knowledge of mathematics. The fellow possessed power on the strength of this knowledge and lived to a great old age. But the desire to possess exclusive from discourse is not confined to Europeans alone. The Orient is as culpable as the Oecidental. All discourses tend to be tyrannical and monopolized.

34. **Text:** This idea, of course, does not stand up to examination. Exchange and communication are positive figures working inside complex systems of restriction, and probably would not be able to function independently of them. The most superficial and visible of these systems of restriction is constituted by what can be gathered under the name of ritual. Ritual defines the qualification which must be possessed by individuals who speak (and who must occupy such-and-such a position and formulate such-and-such a type of statement, in the play of a dialogue, of interrogation or recitation); it defines the gestures, behaviour, circumstances, and the whole set of signs which must accompany discourse; finally, it fixes the supposed or imposed efficacity of the words, their effect on those to whom they are addressed, and the limits of their constraining value. Religious, judicial, therapeutic, and in large measure also political discourse; finally, it fixes the supposed or imposed efficacity of the words, their effect can scarcely be dissociated from this deployment of a ritual which determines both the particular properties and the stipulated roles of the speaking subjects.

Analysis: However, as Foucault says, tyranny and monopoly of discourses is broken by the desire, though paradoxical, to communicate and exchange. Thus, exchange and communication are positive features working inside a complex system of restrictions. In fact, the discourse, howsoever restricted, would not be able to function without some exchange and communication. For example, the most of superficial and visible of these systems of restrictions is constituted by rituals of communication and exchange. The individuals who are authorized to speak do so through rituals gestures, behaviour, circumstances and the whole set of signs. These discourses could be religious, judicial, medical, as also political.

35. **Text:** A somewhat different way of functioning is that of the 'societies of discourse,' which function to preserve or produce discourses, but in order to make them circulate in a closed space, distributing them only according to strict rules, and without the holders being dispossessed by this distribution. An archaic model for this is provided by the group of rhapsodists who possessed the knowledge of the poems to be recited or potentially to be varied and transformed. But though the object of this knowledge was after all a ritual recitation, the knowledge was protected, defended and preserved within a definite group by the often very complex exercises of memory which it implied. To pass an apprenticeship in it allowed one to enter both a group and a secret which the act of recitation showed but did not divulge; the role of speaker and listener were not interchangeable

Analysis: The persons controlling these discourses could be individuals or societies; the latter Foucault calls 'societies of discourse', which function to preserve or produce discourses, but only in order to make them circulate in a closed space. These societies communicate knowledge they possess according to strict rules, they, however, do take care that the holders of these discourses do not themselves come to dispossess them in the process of communication, as for example, the rhapsodists (speakers with powerful feeling to express) of the old recited poems with enthusiasm without explaining what the poems were about.

36. **Text:** There are hardly any such 'societies of discourse' now, with their ambiguous play of the secret and its divulgation. But this should not deceive us: even in the order of 'true' discourse, even in the order of discourse that is published and free from all ritual, there are still forms of appropriation of secrets, and non-interchangeable roles. It may well be that the act of writing as it is institutionalized today, in the book, the publishing-system and the person of the writer, takes place in a 'society of discourse', which though diffuse is certainly constraining. The difference between the writer and any other speaking or writing subject (a difference constantly stressed by the writer himself), the intransitive nature (according to him) of his discourse, the fundamental singularity which he has been ascribing for so long to 'writing,' the dissymmetry that is asserted between 'creation' and any use of the linguistic system – all this shows the existence of a certain 'society of discourse,' and tends moreover to bring back its play of practices. But there are many others still functioning according to entirely different schemes of exclusivity and disclosure: e.g., technical or scientific secrets, or the forms of diffusion and circulation of medical discourse, or those who have appropriated the discourse of politics or economics.

    Analysis: And though such secret societies – 'societies of discourse' appear to have vanished but this should not deceive us, for even in the order of 'true' discourse, i.e. the holder of so-called 'true' discourse (excluding what they regard as false) and even those freely published, are still, according to Foucault, forms of appropriation of secrets; they still are constraining, through widely diffused, through press and publication. They still carry a mystique about them. Foucault's analysis is very perceptive: he sees rather smells out the constraining syndrome in discuses unsuspected, of hypocrisy. He finds that if a writer claims to be singular, different, dissymmetrical, it is a sure sign of the existence of a certain 'society of discourse,' at his back. Besides, there are many others still functioning according to entirely different schemes of exclusivity and disclosure, as for example, technical or scientific secrets, or the forms of diffusion and circulation of medical discourse, or those who have appropriated the discourse of politics and economies.

    Foucault obviously condemns such discourses based on exclusion, difference, closure.

37. **Text:** At first glance, the 'doctrines' (religious, political, philosophical) seem to constitute the reverse of a 'society of discourse', in which the number of speaking individuals tended to be limited even if it was not fixed; between those individuals, the discourse could circulate and be transmitted. Doctrine, on the contrary, tends to be diffused, and it is by the holding in common of one and the same discursive ensemble that individuals (as many as one cares to imagine) define their reciprocal allegiance. In appearance, the only prerequisite is the recognition of the same truths and the acceptance of a certain rule of (more or less flexible) conformity with the validated discourses. If doctrines were nothing more than this, they would not be so very different from scientific disciplines, and the discursive control would apply only to the form or the content of the statement, not to the speaking subject. But doctrinal allegiance puts in question both the statement and the speaking subject, the one by the other. It puts the speaking subject in question through and on the basis of the statement, as is proved by the procedures of exclusion and the mechanisms of rejection which come into action when a speaking subject has formulated one or several unassimilable statements; heresy and orthodoxy do not derive from a fanatical exaggeration of the doctrinal mechanisms, but rather belong fundamentally to them. And conversely the doctrine puts the statements in question on the basis of the speaking subjects, to the extent that the doctrine always stands as the sign, manifestation and instrument of a prior adherence to a class, a social status, a race, a nationality, an interest, a revolt, a resistance or an acceptance. Doctrine binds individuals to certain types of enunciation and consequently forbids them all other's but it uses, in return, certain types of anticipation to bind individuals amongst themselves, and to differentiate them by that very fact from all others. Doctrine brings about a double subjection: of the speaking subjects to discourses, and of discourses to the (at least virtual) group of speaking individuals.

    Analysis: On the face of it, doctrines or set of beliefs – religions, political, and philosophical, for instance, seem to be opposite of a 'society of discourse' i.e. a society which holds back knowledge to power, keeping it to itself as an exclusive possession, because the former does not restrict the number of individuals authorized to communicate them. For example, a political partly comprises so many members, and although its spokesmen are limited, each of its members is capable of enunciating and defending its doctrine. A doctrine is comparatively more diffused, as its members are in conformity with one another.

But, according to Foucault, doctrinal allegiance puts in question both the statements and the speaking subject, the one by the other. The speaking subject must make a statement in relation to what the party or religion or system wants him to speak. Hence, the procedures of exclusion are followed in that what he is not expected to say. There are rarely agreements between holders of two religions, political and philosophical groups. That statement constraint the speaking subject. On the other hand, statements are conditioned by the speaking subject to the extent that the doctrine always stands as the sign of a prior adherence to a class, a social status, a race, a nationality, an interest, a revolt, a resistance or an acceptance. A statement by a person belonging to a religious community is conditioned by the relation of the speaking subject with his race or nationality. Doctrines thus bind individuals to certain types of enunciation and consequently forbid them from all others. But, as Foucault adds, certain types of enunciation bind individuals among themselves, and to differentiate them by that very fact from all others. There is, as Derrida would also say, a double bind, a double subjection: of the speaking subject to discourses, and of the discourses to the speaking subject.

38. Text: On a much broader scale, we are obliged to recognise large cleavages in what might be called the social appropriation of discourses. Although education may well be, by right, the instrument thanks to which any individual in a society like ours can have access to any kind of discourse whatever, this does not prevent it from following, as is well known, in its distribution, in what it allows and what it prevents, the lines marked out by social distances, oppositions and struggles. Any system of education is a political way of maintaining or modifying the appropriation of discourses, along with the knowledge and powers which they carry.

Analysis: On a much broader scale, we are, Foucault says, obliged to recognize large scale gaps the way a society appropriates discourses. For example, education is generally regarded as a fundamental right and here too the procedures of exclusion are strictly observed. There are in every society social distances, oppositions and struggle. No field – legal or medical – are open to all alike. Any system of education is a political way of maintaining or modifying the appropriation of discourses. Each IIM in India, for one, will not reduce the fee structure, lest the less privileged should encroach upon the exclusive right of the rich.

39. Text: I am well aware that it is very abstract to separate speech-rituals, societies of discourse, doctrinal groups and social appropriations, as I have just done. Most of the time, they are linked to each other and constitute kinds of great edifices which ensure the distribution of speaking subjects into the different types of discourse and the appropriation of discourses of certain categories of subject. Let us say, in a word, that those are the major procedures of subjection used by discourse. What, after all, is an education system, other than a ritualisation of speech, a qualification and a fixing of the roles for speaking subjects, the constitution of a doctrinal group, however diffuse, a distribution and an appropriation of discourse with its powers and knowledges? What is 'ecriture' (the writing of the 'writers') other than a similar system of subjection, which perhaps takes slightly different forms, but forms whose main rhythms are analogous? Does not the judicial system, does not the institutional system of medicine likewise constitute, in some of their aspects at least, similar systems of subjection of and by discourse?

Analysis: In the last paragraph of "The Order of Discourse", Foucault sums up his view of human bondages arising out of our exclusive discourses. These discourses –whether of rituals, societies, doctrinal groups and social appropriations – are not distinct, for they all alike pursue the procedures of exclusion. Most of them are linked to each other and constitute kinds of great foundations which ensure the distribution of speaking subjects into different types of discourse. These are, according to Foucault, the major procedures of subjection. Any system, say that of education, fixes the roles, prescribes qualifications and ritualizes speech for the speaking subject. A philosophical doctrine may appear to be diffused, spread in many directions, not restricted to a narrow focus, but it too is a system of subjection, which as Foucault finds, takes slightly different forms, but forms whose rhythm is the same restrictive and constraining rhythm. Finally, Foucault does not make a bland statement regarding his view of human institutions, but interrogates his critique, saying: Does not the judicial system, does not the institutional system of medicine likewise constitute in some of their aspects at least, a similar system of subjection of and by discourse?

Foucault's analysis of institutional forces that subject the respective discourses to restrictions and rules, not only narrow their own focuses in order to enforce discipline among their adherents, but in the process are bound themselves by their discourses.

Important Questions

Question.1. What are the three types of prohibition which, according to Foucault form the grid of exclusion?

Answer. Michel Foucault (1928-1984) was a professor of Systems of thought in Paris at the time of his death in 1984. Quite likely, his thinking, traces as it does the history of human thought or the order of discourse, has an important bearing on our times. His analysis of discourse and discursive practices that constitute, inform and reinform power structures diagnoses, as Derrida's thought does, the ills of out ecriture, our writing and our speech. His main concern has been to uncover the discourse of 'truth', of sanity, that calls the other 'false', mad and wrong. In fact, he has been all through his works on sexuality, madness, legal and medical, concerned with the growing tendency to somehow exclude others who do not fit in the hegemonic order of the 'right.' Before him, his fellow-countrymen, Sartre has analysed the role of pre-reflective consciousness that discloses the self and the other. But while Sartre showed that the self and the other indulge in mutual objectification, Foucault focuses mainly on the tendency of the self to exclude as many 'others' as possible in order homogenize our field of knowledge and power.

Obviously, Foucault derides this tendency in human sciences and societies. Like Derrida, he does not believe that there is ever a centre that can hold the world together, not does he believe in absolute knowledge. Rather, the centre is sought to be established by what he calls the procedures of exclusion. It is a dangerous exercise, for it not only excludes others, but makes us narrow in an attempt to protect our secret code, our source of power.

In order to show this self-defeating exercise, that Foucault in the beginning of the second part of 'The Order of Discourse" states his hypothesis: that in every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed by a certain number of procedures to protect (ward off) its powers and dangers (keep them in a mask) to gain mastery over its chance events, affecting any change, and lastly to evade its cumbersome and strong materiality. What Foucault states in his hypothesis is first, that every society does not allow all alike to speak just anything in any circumstances. We may think that we have a right to say or write anything, but we are deceived in believing in absolute liberty. In fact, every society not only controls discourses, but also selects among them and then organizes them and finally redistributes them. Take, for example, the Presidential Address to the Parliament. It is prepared by the ruling party for the President to speak. It is subject to discussion but the President is to be thanked for what he spoke.

So, our liberty to say whatever we please is curtailed by, as Foucault says, three types of prohibitions – the taboo on the object of speech, the ritual of the circumstances of speech and the privileged or exclusive right of the speaking subject. These three types of prohibition are not distinct from each other. In fact, they intersect, reinforce and compensate for each other, forming, as Foucault says, a complex grid which changes constantly.

For instance, if an object is regarded as a taboo – that it should not be talked about, sexuality for that matter, the taboos on sexuality intersect two other types of exclusion – ritual and the privilged right. In the Indian context, sexuality was ritualized in Kamasutra or made part of Moksha. The ritual of marriage is in all societies a prohibition, so that there should be no sexuality outside marriage. In his The History of Sexuality, Foucault says that sexuality is so prohibited from the natural speech and writing that it appears unnatural to talk about it. Ironically, this tabooed subject, further ritualized in marriage, has given rise to sexual identities in the form of homo sexual and lesbian. The excluded and the forbidden of both sexes are forced to live outside marriage.

Societies prohibiting the discourse of sexuality and politics choose these subjects because in them there are numerous black squares. We know these black spots which should not be openly discussed. There is, for instance, still a debate whether sex education be imparted to the young children. Even the Western societies fight shy in broaching the subject in classrooms. As far as politics is concerned, it should be talked as a subject, as a science among other human sciences, but not as a topic to explore real politics in all spheres of life. We allow students to discuss aesthetics of literature, but that literature has its own politics is still a forbidden territory. All kinds of formalism in literary criticism are evolved to keep politics out of reach. New criticism forbade the study of the life of the author, and here it may appear to be post-structuralist in questioning the author of the poem, but its actual purpose was to make literature so autonomous and autotalic that the reader is not supposed to make any reference to the history of the age.

As a result, the academic discourse far from being transparent or neutral or natural, becomes instead artificial opaque and biased. In particular, sexuality is disarmed and politics pacified by the force of prohibition. But the cost one has to pay for excluding sexuality and politics out of reach, the discourse becomes puerilee: it, as Foucault says becomes of little account. But for the custodians of society, it does not matter. However, since the discourse loses its value, we soon become conscious that it is inhibited because it is linked with desire and power. Foucault finds that there is nothing surprising about the links of discourses of sexuality and politics with desire and with power, since, as psychoanalysis has shown, a discourse is not simply that which manifests (hidden) desire – sexuality, for instance and this is quite naturally a human desire, but it is also the desire, i.e. we desire to know about it. It is the latter aspect which is prohibited because it is linked with power because it is for which struggle between the puritans and liberals is waged for domination. So, a discourse, whether of sexuality or politics is the expression of power which is to be seized.

Question.2. What is the importance of Foucault's analysis of madness in the whole scheme of exclusion?

Answer. Along with Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault has emerged as one of the most prominent European influences on the poststructuralist thought, particularly on discourse analysis. His central thesis is that though we cannot reach back to the myth of one universal language before Babel, i.e. before confusion in the form of multiplicity of languages and discourses set in, we should try to see links in discourses and disciplines and thus create unity in diversity. Indeed, he thinks that there are natural links, though not visible on the surface, which he calls the archaeology underlying all knowledge. This is the common source of all discourses and languages. But since man, by nature, always tends towards the nearest and most pressing results, he first thinks of his needs, his pleasures. Hence, he has come to develop many disciplines which appear to him so diverse that they seem to have no common ground.

One such discourse is that of madness. Like all discourses, the discourse on madness is born when man made a distinction between reason and madness. His early work Madness and Civilization reflects his concern that discourses are created by acts of differentiation, particularly when the links between unity and the other, i.e. madness are not traced. In his book Madness and Civilization, Foucault investigated the way in which a culture can determine a massive, general form of difference that limits it. In fact, reason and madness are at once different and identical. Foucault is in fact concerned with the history of resemblance: on what conditions was classical thought able to reflect relations of similarity or equivalence between things, relations that would provide a foundation and justification for their words, their classification their systems of exchange? asks Foucault in the Preface to The Order of Things. He further asks: what historical a priori provided the starting-point from which it was possible to define the great checkboard of distinct identities against the confused, undefined, faceless, and, as it were indifferent background of differences? The history of madness would be the history of the other of that which, for a given culture, is at once interior and foreign. Therefore to be excluded (so as to exorcise the interior danger) but by being shut (in order to reduce its otherness); whereas the history of the other imposed on things would be the history of the Same – of that which, for a given culture, is both dispersed and related, therefore to be distinguished by kinds and to be colleted together into identities.

Alongside two forbidden, ritualized and exclusive righteous discourse of sexuality and politics, madness forms the third of the grid of exclusion. However, there is still a difference between sexuality and politics, on the one hand, and madness, on the other. Foucault traces in the discourse on madness another principle of exclusion (not of the taboo, the ritual and the right). It is not the principle of prohibition, as is the case with sexuality and politics, but of a division and a rejection.

Foucault refers to this division in terms of reason and madness. He here traces the history of this division. Since the depths of the Middle Ages, he explains, the madness has been one whose discourse cannot have the same currency as others. The division between the two is brought about by Western rationalism, which regarded the discourse of the madman as irrational, illogical and chaotic. His word may be, Foucault says, considered null and void, having neither truth nor importance, worthless as evidence in law, inadmissible in the authentification of deeds and contracts incapable even of bringing about in the ritual of regarding transsubstantiation of bread in the Christian Mass. In short, the madman's discourse is of no use in legal, religious and business matters.

But, on the other hand, strange powers not held by any other may be attributed to the madman's speech, the power of uttering a hidden truth. Thus, Foucault finds the madman's discourse ruptured from within. Polonius finds Hamlet's madness intriguingly 'true' when he calls the former a fishmonger and when later Hamlet tells him that the book he

is reading is nothing but words obviously without meaning. Madness may also be healing. Lear's madness is redemptive, for he was mad when paradoxically he acted in sanity in banishing Cordelia. Now that he loses senses, he comes to see his earlier madness. This is supported by Gloucester's remark when he was blinded: I stumbled when I saw.

Again, madmen are credited with possessing the power of predicting of future, of seeing in all naivety what the 'others' wisdom cannot perceive. The two terms – reason and madness – are thus interdependent. Together they form the paradox of life. It is curious to note, as Foucault does, that for centuries in Europe the speech of the madman was either not heard at all, or else taken for the word of truth. It either fell into the void, being rejected as soon as it was uttered, or else, people found rationality in it, which they regarded as more rational than that of the sane.

Foucault thus deconstructs reason/madness opposition. It is, therefore, difficult to exclude madness out of rational discourse. Foucault, like Derrida recognizes the common ground of reason and madness. In fact, there is no exclusive speech of the madman. In any event, Foucault further says, whether excluded, or secretly invested with reason, the madman's speech, strictly speaking, did not exist. It was through his words that his madness was recognized.

What Foucault underlines is that madness is recognized through the language of the madman. Foucault is less concerned with language at the level of sign and much more concerned with the relationship of language and social institution, a relationship that calls discourse. Since languages differ, so do discourses. To examine language at the level of discourse is to identify the institutional rules that make possible particular significations and consequently, make possible particular form of knowledge.

In Madness and Civilization, Foucault identifies the conditions that made possible the emergence and development of modern areas of knowledge and their corresponding institutions: the diagnosis of madness and the emergence of asylums, scientific medicine and clinics.

The emergence of psychiatry, for example, provided methods of recognizing madness. This is a new phenomenon. No doctor, according to Foucault, before the end of the eighteenth century had even thought of finding out what was said, or how and why it was said. Either the madman was not attended to or he was made symbolically to speak, in the theatre, under the mask. Similarly, the fool was allowed to speak in the court or the theatre.

According to Foucault the wall between reason and madness has not fallen in modern times. On the contrary, it exists. It rather puts us on alert. We now search for a meaning in it, particularly tracing when did it occur. We try to perceive it in our own speech when at times we lose track of what we are saying. Yet the old division persists. Instead of listening to the madman ourselves, we have allowed experts to listen to what he says. Foucault rightly says that the division between reason and madness, far from being effaced, is working differently, along other lines, through new institutions, and with effects which are not at all the same. Even the psychoanalyst or the doctor does not find the division gone. He also stands on this side of the divide and listens to the madman, as a priest does a confessor. The doctor listens to the madman's discourse which he finds invested with desire, with terrible power, to be rejected, chained and kept in the prison-house.

Question.3. What is the importance of the will to truth among the systems of exclusion?

Answer. In "The Order of Discourse" Foucault underlines three systems or procedures of exclusion, namely what forbids speech, the division of madness and the will to truth. These three systems overlap; in fact, they re-inforce and compensate each other. The third procedure is perhaps the most important in this regard, as it assimilates the other two, i.e. we forbid certain discourses, sexuality and politics, for example, because we find them untrue. Similarly, the discourse of the madman is excluded because it is false as evidence in the court, in business and contracts, and in short, in all other matters of institutional conduct.

But Foucault finds that like the discourse of madness as distinct from the discourse of the sane, it is difficult, even risky, to consider the opposition between true and false. "How could," he asks, "compare the constraints of truth with divisions like those (of madness), which are arbitrary to start with, or which at least are organized around historical contingencies..." They are not only arbitrary and contingent, but also modifiable and perpetually changing. This has been the case with the division of madness. However, the constraints are supported by a whole system of institutions, which impose them and renew them; and which act in a constraining and sometimes violent way.

Foucault makes it clear at the onset of his analysis of truth that the will to truth is metaphysical, and therefore it needs to be deconstructed, or else, when viewed at the metaphysical level or viewed from the level of a proposition, on the

inside of a discourse, says Foucault, the division between true and false is neither arbitrary nor modifiable nor institutional nor violent. It is only when we think on a different scale, i.e. historically, we come to know that it has changed during the course of time. Nevertheless, while changing in time, it has still remained constant in one aspect, i.e. it has remained a system of exclusion – a historically, modifiable and institutionally constraining system.

Foucault finds that the division between truth and false is historically constituted. Hence, it is no metaphysical. It has changed with the passage of time and has yet remained ever constraining. For example, for the Greek poets of the sixth century B.C. the dominant discourse was the one sanctioned by the rulers of the time. It was the discourse that dispensed justice, prophesied the future and made it happen. For example, Sophocles underlines this discourse in his plays, particularly in Oedipus Tyrannus. Oedipus must be judge for what he did – killed his own father and married his own mother. Destiny overruled the Greek world. It was predicted at Oedipus birth what he is destined to do. Sophocles, following the discourse of his time, not only predicted what was going to happen, but also helped to make it happen, carrying men's minds along with it and thus weaving itself into the fabric of destiny. However, a century later, the same truth, that destiny is character, was displaced, not in what it was or did, but what it said. The new poets tried to find the meaning of this discourse. It is, therefore, did not remain ritualized; it did not remain so effective, a just act of enunciation. But then a new division was established separating true from false discourse by the time of Plato. But it was not longer the one associated with the exercise of power of religion. It was only philosophical; it helped Plato, and before him Permenides, to banish sophists who said that anything could be proved otherwise.

This historical analysis enabled Foucault to prove that the will to truth is not metaphysical. On the contrary, it changes with times. Nevertheless, it remains constant in so far its desire to divide the discourse of true from that of false is concerned. The latter is the general form of the will to truth; it changes and does not change. However, it never stopped shifting, sometimes more hegemonic, at others less enforcing its constraints. Again, sometimes, the great changes in scientific thought can perhaps be read as a consequence of a discovery, as of Copernicus during the Renaissance, but these changes can also be read as the appearance of new forms in the will to truth, as in the Socrates and Plato.

It means while changing, the will to truth does not change. Every age has its form of the will to truth. There was doubtless a will to truth in the nineteenth century, which differin form from the will to know of the classical culture, i.e. of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It differed in three ways: in form, in objects and its techniques. In the classical culture in the beginning of the seventeenth century, the form of the will to know was in the form of seeing new stars and discovering new lands. We know the discoveries of new lands during the period. Foucault sums up this form of the will to know in the following words: to see rather than to read, to verify rather than to make commentaries on. It was a will to knowledge in order to be verifiable and useful. In short, it was the will to explore. It was not constraining as far as the range of objects to be known of the functions and positions of the knowing subject, of the material, technical and instrumental investment of knowledge were concerned.

The variant of the will to know i.e. the will to truth that reigned from the beginning of the nineteenth century, on the other hand, rests not on individuals for exploration, on finding, on discovering, but on the institutional support for creating the system of exclusion. It depended upon, for example, pedagogy, i.e. the ways and means of imparting education, Rousseau's philosophy of education for example, on systems of books, publishing, libraries, learned societies and laboratories. The will to truth was further renewed and re-informed by spreading certain forms of knowledge which suited the form of government. Since it suited democratic governments of Europe during the nineteenth century to spread natural system of education, Rousseau and Wordsworth's natural system of education found favour with them. The old Greek taught arithmetic because it suited their democracies, as it deals with equations. But geometry found favour with oligarchies, since it demonstrates propositions with inequality.

Foucault, thus, finds that the will to truth is constraining, as the will to know is not, because the former leans on a support and an institutional distribution. The state tends to exert its pressure on the question of truth and falsehood. For example, for centuries, Western literature sought to ground itself on the natural. The whole Romantic movement in British poetry of the early half of the nineteenth century, spread, nay, enforced the view that nature and what is natural is divine. Similarly, other concepts like sincerity, truth and general will, the happiness of all, proffered utilitarianism, which changed the theory of wealth and that of justice.

Foucault has spoken of the will to truth at great length because it supports more than the other two systems of exclusion do – the forbidder of speech and the division of madness, his thesis that the discourse of truth is the most exclusive system, that it is toward this system that the other two have been drifting constantly for centuries, that it tends to assimilate the other two, both in order to modify them and to provide them with a foundation. As a result, while the other systems have grown weaker, the will to truth has grown stronger, dividing cultures and disciplines. The irony of it is that it has grown weaker, the will to truth has grown stronger, dividing cultures and disciplines. The irony of it is that it has gown subtler. We speak of the will to truth it has grown subtler. We speak of the will to truth least of all; it has thus masked itself. That is why we express desire and exercise power in the name of truth with impunity and thus exclude what we deem untrue, false and wrong. Nietzsche and following him philosopher like Artaud and Batailie, have dared to expose the mask of the will to truth, by saying, as Nietzsche did, that Christianity (not Christ) has bread a culture of the weak who have enslaved the strong.

Question.4. What is the role of commentary in controlling and restricting the advancement of knowledge?

Answer. In the third section of "The Order of Discourse", Foucault broaches another system of exclusion, over and above the three earlier systems, namely the forbidding of speech, the discourse of madness and the will to truth. These three systems of exclusion constrain us from outside. They have to do with that part of discourse which puts, say Foucault, desire and power at stake, that is, they, culminating in the third – the will to truth – express desire and power in the name of truth.

In addition to these three external systems of exclusion, Foucault lists another group of systems – internal procedures, since discourses themselves exercise their own control, particularly in terms of classification, of ordering, of distribution. These are internal procedures within the discourse. In a religious discourse, for example, the weak and God-fearing are separated as a class from others; then an order, a hierarchy of superior and inferior is established, and finally, this kind of thinking is distributed or propagated. Thus, it is also sought that these procedures should not be subject to change, but become a permanent part of religion and other allied discourses. In short, as Foucault says, such a discourse had to be mastered by those who propagate it and those who imbibe it.

In order to master the discourse so that it should not be left to the vagaries of events and change, the text codifying this discourse should not be analysed, but merely commented upon. It is for this reason, the holy texts are not analysed, but are endlessly commented upon. In a commentary, the text, may it be the Bible, or the Quarna or the Geeta, the text remains not only intact, but is, in addition glorified, that it has so many commentaries: the more, the better for the text.

The system of commentaries is so wide spread that there is scarcely a society without its major narratives or commentaries, which for emphasis and for enforcing the tradition, are recounted, repeated and recited: they are encapsulated in the form of formulae, texts, and ritualized sets of discourses, which are delivered in well-defined circumstances, in churches, meetings and prayers. These discourses are said once and preserved because it is, as Foucault says, that behind them there is a secret or a treasure. In this regard, all societies are alike. If these discourses show any change, it is only in respect of their gradation in certain times – those which are said in ordinary course of days and exchanges, and which vanish as soon as new discourses replace them, transform them. But there are others, which, over and above their formulation, are said infinitely; they are said and said again. This is their immortality. These could be religious text or judicial texts and even literary texts.

These texts do not, of course, remain the same in importance. There is also no difference whether the text is creative or it happens to be just a commentary, as far as their importance is concerned. For example, plenty of major texts get blurred, but are secured by commentaries, as authentic as the texts themselves. Our cultures survive on commentaries more than the texts. That is what is absurd. We hardly read the original text, but we do read commentaries in which the primary text is repeated. One and the same text can give rise simultaneously to very distinct type of discourse. For example, the Odyssey as a primary text is repeated, in the same period, in translation by Berard, and in the endless 'explications de texte', and in Joyce's Ulysses.

For one thing, whatever the number of commentaries on a text, the hierarchy between primary and secondary text plays two roles which are in solidarity with each other: one; a text allows an endless construction of new discourses; it can always be re-actualized, as it is credited with the essential relicence or silence and richness; two, the commentary's only role is to say what was silently said beyond the text. So, as Foucault points out, a text can be made to articulate either its silences and gaps, or what is said beyond the text. In both, the commentary must say what had never been

said within the text, Foucault, however, finds it paradoxical, that the text says and does not say. In that case, what is the status of the text? Commentaries then claim to repeat the text in disguise of saying what is not said there. Indeed, they repeat and recite the text. Nothing new thus gets said in commentaries. They rather reinforce and thus add to the power of the text. Commentaries, in fact, exorcise the chance element of discourse by giving back what they receive. Even if a commentary claims to say other than the text itself, it does so on the condition that it is this text itself which is said, and in a sense completed. Thus, multiple commentaries and the elements of chance do nothing but preserve the spirit of the text. Commentaries are thus masks and circumstances in which they are written do nothing but to reiterate.

Thus, Foucault establishes that commentaries are guises through which religious, judicial and literary texts are repeated and preserved in an attempt to sanctify them, give them the status of the holy, the true and the beautiful, so that what a society regards as unholy, untrue and ugly, may be excluded. Our cultures, thus, survive on multiple procedures of exclusion, of which commentaries are one.

Question.5. What according to Foucault, the role of the author in delimiting discourse?

Answer. Besides the principle of commentary, there is another internal system of exclusion, namely, the principle of the author. In line with Eliot and Barthes, Foucault questions the status of the author in his essay: "What is an Author." In "The Order of Discourse," the question that Foucault raises is not so much against the person of the author, not even his coming into being by the oeuvre on the horizon of the age, which Arnold called the currency of ideas, the moment, the philosophy, of which the man becomes happily inspired, as much that what he writes excludes what he does not write. This is the whole play of difference between what he writes and what he does not write. That means, the author, like the principle of commentary is a principle of 'rarefaction'; the author thus helps to bring into being something uncommon, something valuable, making others more common and less exalted. The author thus helps perpetuate that there is not only difference in knowledge, but also, in their gradation – some fields of knowledge are more exalted and sanctified than others.

The author in Foucault's scheme of the order of discover becomes an accomplice in the system of exclusion. Foucault is not, therefore, against the person of the author – the speaking subject – who wrote a text. He is not complimentary to the principle of commentary in this sense, but in the sense of a principle of grouping of discourses, conceived as unity and origin of their meaning, as the focus of their coherence. Foucault thus objects to these three aspects of the author principle. It is around an author, who is, in fact, himself the product of the institutional forces, that we come to group certain works. We group Lycidas and comus and Paradise Lost around Milton, as we do 54 plays around the person of Shakespeare. But what about those writings which were not attributed to them or far that matter they wished to write, but could not, for fear of public outrage. So it is arbitrary to group certain writings, certain discourses around a certain writer in the first instance, and then presuming that he is, the unity and origin of these discourses their meaning and coherence.

Since the author himself is the product of social institutions, he becomes a mask, a disguise to hide desire and power of these institutions. Foucault exposes this facade by showing that the principle of the author is not the only principle through which the hegemonic forces of social institutions express themselves; there are in any age and society plenty of discourses which circulate without deriving their meaning or their afficacity from an author to whom they could be attributed. These are anonymous discourses transmitted to the public without a name. They are more insidious and insinuating, as they circulate sometimes casually and at others more concertedly. For instance, such discourses may spread through everyday remarks which, of course, are effaced the moment they are uttered, but there are others which stay longer in circulation and do greater damage in excluding or snubbing other discourses in the name of truth.

But, according to Foucault, even in the domain where it is the rule to attribute things to an author in, for example, the fields of literature, philosophy and science – it is quite clear that the attribution does not always play the same role. It was indispensable in the Middle Ages to give a name to a scientific discourse, not others. For instance, no one knows the author of the play Everyman or for that matter, the whole cycle of Miracles, Morality and Mystery plays have come down to us without a name. But a discourse on science must have an author. It was probably because the Middle Ages had been dominated by the two institutions – the church of Rome and Feudalism - feared more from science than from literature, as their world-view was not based over science, but on the dogma.

However, since the seventeenth century, this author function had steadily been eroded in scientific discourse. May be

it is because of the spread of science during the Renaissance. The author came to function only to give a name to a theorem, an effect, an example, a syndrome. But the author principle functioned differently in literature – it steadily grew stronger during the seventeenth century. Foucault refers to tales, poems, dramas or comedies which were allowed to circulate in the Middle Ages in at least a relative anonymity were in the seventeenth asked where they came from, who authored them, who, in short, wrote them – singly or in collaboration. The author was asked to account for the unity of the texts, placed under his name. He was, indeed, asked to authenticate them, so that what was interpolated may be excluded. He was also asked to explain the hidden meaning in the texts gathered and published under his name. Finally, he was asked to relate them to his lived experiences, to the real history and even identify the real persons behind the fictitious. In essence, the author was asked to give unity to an otherwise diverse, and even disturbing language of fiction. This was imperative because diversity was seen as chaotic. Foucault, in fact, wishes us to see that all fields of knowledge form a unity an archaeology of human sciences, but nature also loves to very. A unity which was sought in certain texts around the figure of an author was in essence meant to see his works in separation from other works of the same or other periods. The works of Bacon were seen as different from that of Shakespeare, or Montaigne or Machiavelli. This amounted to missing the links between them Foucault like Eliot, favours a comparative estimate in which contrasts form an integral part.

Question.6. What is the constraining function of disciplines in discourses?

Answer. In tracing external and internal procedures of exclusion, which tend to differentiate human knowledge and thereby exclude what social institutions deem, in their own interest, forbidden, mad or false, and perpetuate, exalt and sanctify what serves their purposes through the principles of commentary and that of the author, Foucault comes upon two more, though allied, principles of internal exclusion – disciplines and doctrines. They may not be as important as the principle of commentary and the principle of author in preserving certain discourses and making them prevail. but they are all the same principles of division of knowledge, which in Foucault's classical view, is one spread over different disciplines and even doctrines. According to Foucault, dividing knowledge into disciplines is the principle of limitation. We are limited, and finite in our perspective, whereas knowledge is infinite, though varied. We unfortunately regard variety as a sign of difference because we do not see link in the great chain of knowledge that the French enlightenment thinkers, such as Voltaire and Dilerot thought. Foucault is unhappy with modern thinking, beginning with the nineteenth century, it has taken divisions of knowledge into disciplines as absolute. This principle of limitation, as Foucault calls it is relative and fluid; it permits various constructions of disciplines in sciences, but it does so within narrow confines. This is what Foucault deplores.

Foucault, following his comparative method of analysis shows that the organization of disciplines is just as much opposed to the principle of commentary as to that of the author. In a discipline, unlike a commentary, what is supposed at the beginning is not meaning which has to be discovered, not an identity which has to be repeated, we construct a new statement. Similarly, in a discipline, unlike the principle of the author, we construct a whole system of objects, methods, rules, techniques. It means that the principle of the discipline, though a principle of limitation is more open than either the principle of commentary or that of an author. But, as Foucault says, there is more in order for there to be less. A discipline is a broader organization of human sciences.

And yet a discipline has its own limitations. Afterall, it is a principle of limitation. It is, therefore, not a sum of all that can truthfully said about something. It is, adds Foucault, not a set of all that can be an accepted about the same data, as it cannot assimilate which it claims it does. No discipline is thus complete in itself. Medicine is not, for example, constituted by the total of what can be truthfully said about illness. This same can be said about literature; it cannot be a total system without other disciplines, philosophy, in the main. Botany cannot be a sum of all the truths concerning plants. Medicine, literature and botany, and other disciplines cannot truthfully say all that can be said concerning the subject. In essence, all subjects, all disciplines are interconnected. Poststructuralists among whom Foucault is one of the pioneers reestablished the interdisciplinary nature of knowledge. The construction of disciplines should both be seen in isolation and association in the order of knowledge. Since discipline are linked together in a chain of knowledge. There are bound to be errors as well as truths in all disciplines.

According to Foucault, errors have a positive function, which are part of history of the subject – a role that is indissociable from that of truth. It is because no subject remains pure and simple in the course of its evolution. For an example, Foucault refers to the evolution of botany from the sixteenth to seventeen century. During the seventeenth

century, for a proposition to be botanical, it had to deal with not only the visible structures of the plant but with system of its close resemblances or the mechanism of its fluids, whereas in the sixteenth century and before that plant was a set of properties to be defined in themselves. As we enter the nineteenth century, a plant besides its comparison and contrasts with other plants, was also seen metaphorically. A poem, for example, was regarded as organic, growing like a plant. Romantics were especially fond of comparing their verses with trees. Poetry, they claimed, comes as leaves come to a tree. This imagery was quite poplar, so much so that even in the twentieth century theorists, Cleanth Brooks, for one, said that a poem is like a plant, growing from the soil of all its thorns and blossoms. If literature could be linked with plants and streams, other disciplines could as well be linked with literature. It was no more outrageous to feel consciousness in plants.

Within its own limits, Foucault adds, each discipline recognizes true and false propositions. Nothing, then, alien and foreign. If disciplines still searched for purity, for truth, they could do so by 'policing' by forcing them to keep up and develop comparative methodology. In that case, a discipline becomes a principle of control over the production of discourse, art for art's sake, for instance. We may speak of art for life's sake, but when we come to the literary text, we try to eschew discussing it in relation to human sciences. Hence, all disciplines tend to restrict this they have a constraining function to perform.

Question.7. What Foucault's contribution to poststructuralism?

Answer. Poststructuralism as the term itself suggests is a movement that came after structuralism. Indeed, it is an extension of structuralism. Many structuralists, Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault, for instance, became poststructuralists in their later works, one could see the seeds of poststructuralism within structuralism. In this regard, Foucault's development from structuralism to poststructuralism is interesting, though he rejects being called a structuralist at any stage of his life. In fact, those who still label him a structuralist are called "half-witted" commentators by none else but by Foucault himself. In the foreword to the English edition of The Order of Things, Foucault shows his helplessness to get into the tiny minds of such French commentators. He claimed that he used none of the tools of structurliasm that characterize structuralism and the methods and concepts his English readers would trace him to a connection that certainly does him honour, but that he has not deserved. Still, he concedes that there may be certain similarities between the works of structuralists and his own work.

He, for sure, has some similarities with structuralists. Structuralism as a movement flourished during the late 1950s and 1960s. It sought to analyse a work of any discipline, including the discourse, as Foucault would like to call the study of literature for example, in larger contexts, or structures. Those contexts and structures could be of cultures with disciplines – literary, scientific, philosophical, are of institutions – medical, legal, pedagogical. Following Ferdinand de Saussure's lead that grammar or language is a system or structure of language that governs our actual utterances, structuralists searched for an underlying system at work in all disciplines – in anthropology, sociology, etiology.

Foucault also searches for the underlying structure of knowledge and finds that there is one casual principle operative in the world, but at the same time, there are numerous elements, divisible into molecules, themselves indivisible. But he was as much impressed by the order of things, forming a well-knit whole, as much by the variety which nature exhibits at every level, that he shied away from that there is God or a uniform metaphysical substance. Instead, he favoured a materialistic version, that every element that goes to make nature is essentially different from every other; each is endowed with desire and aversion. So cultures are essentially different and yet the same.

It is in the later aspects, in elements forming nature as essentially different that Foucault can be called a structuralist and poststructuralist.

In his analysis of human discourse – what we say, Foucault finds that though we are limited to say that about the subject, we find it convenient to do the rest what we cannot say unspeakable, mad and untrue. In addition, we try to perpetuate our limited discourse through commentaries, through the figure of the author, through mutually exclusive disciplines and doctrines. Foucault, as against the structurilsts is not against diversity of disciplines and discourses, but he does not wish them to be regarded as absolutely separate from sister disciplines.

Again, as against the structuralists, Foucault refutes the view that there is no inherent or natural connection between what we say and what the other person utters. Foucault is less concerned with the level of sign and meaning, but concerned with the relationship of language and social institutions, a relationship which he calls discourse.

a language at the level of discourse is to identify the institutional rules that make possible particular significations and consequently, make possible particular forms of knowledge. A discourse, in Foucault's terms, is temporal; it has its historical development. We, once, thought collectively, but as we advance, we think more as individuals, than as parts and portions of universal knowledge.

For Foucault, our development is not necessarily improvement. The seventeen and eighteen centuries were more homogenous than the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Foucault thinks of human knowledge in archaeological terms, i.e. we must cut across disciplines and discourses, limited in focus, and reach back into the seventeenth century, when people experimented, explored and discovered new avenues of knowledge. Foucault's whole oeuvre shows how classical systems of knowledge, which linked all nature – astronomy with navigation, discovery of new continents with politics, knowledge with power – within great chain of being. He found analogies between the stars in the heavens and the features in the human face. The result is nothing less than an archaelogy of sciences that unearths old pattern of meaning and reveals the shocking arbitrariness of our received truths.

Foucault's contribution to poststructuralist thinking is seminal in that, like Derrida, he deconstructed oppositions between one discourse and the other, between one discipline and the other, and thus stemmed further drift of sciences and discourses towards the nihilism of isolation. He does trace 'origin' of knowledge without forbidding its dissemination and proliferation. Like Barthes, Foucault announces that all discourses are connected to all others in an unending chain of intertextual relations.

There is, therefore, no gradation – higher or lower in Foucault's order of discourse. There is no margin or centre – every discourse is a weave, a grid, a complex of discourses, and although Foucault's discourse analysis is not as close as that of Derrida; his purpose is the same, i.e. to show that there is a hidden ground that connects two discourses and disciplines. He thus deconstructed hierarchies between true and false, as he does between reason and madness, between power and knowledge. He also deconstructed the valorization of commentaries, authors, disciplines and doctrines. His concerns were essentially poststructuralist in that he sought to know how we form our discourses through the process of exclusion, of marginalization, of segregation. He is not interested in who speaks, but rather in those procedures of exclusion that make speech possible. Thus, all discourses are conditioned by institutions which weild power and exert pressure on the speaker. He interrogates the will to truth, for responsible for creating limited discourses, for it excludes what it in its own interest and finitude regards as false. A discourse, in Foucault is an event, not immune to changes, it is not fixed, but fluid.

In sum, Foucault's analysis of discourse points out that all discourses inform and reinforce power structure, making boundaries and creating the other in the Sartrean sense of objectification of the other. The need to recover from such narrow confines is to seek to know that all speech, all writing, is in the form of variations on the same grid of knowledge.

Unit IX
Feminist Criticism and Post-Colonial Theory

Elaine Showalter

(a) Feminist Criticism in Wilderness

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak

(b) Feminism and Critical Theory

Introduction

Feminism is a complex, heterogeneous and a contradictory intellectual, ideological and activist baggage. Though a female-centered consciousness constitutes its core and informs its basic premises, it is, nevertheless, a daunting task to undertake a rough review of the movement and its basic theoretical assumptions. This is because this movement over the years has evolved through the accretion of diverse, uneven, and often contradictory feminist perspectives. A quick sampling of few names that have contributed to the movement in various ways – Mary Wollstonecraft, Dale Spender, Dorothy Richardson, Elaine Showalter, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Helen Cixous, Ivy Compton-Burnett Jane Gallop, Jane Marcus, Josette Feral, Judith Fetterley, Julia Kristeva, Juliet Mitchell, Kate Millett, Luce Irigaray Marcia Holly, Marry Ellmann, Mary Jacobus, Michel Barrett, Monique Wittig, Nathalie Sarrault, Robin Lakoff, Sandra M. Gilbert, Shulamith Firestone, Simone de Beauvoir, Susan Gubar, Susan Robin Suleiman, Toril Moi, Virginia Wolf, bell hooks, Xaviere Gauthier – make it amply clear that though belonging to the same movement, the stances these theoreticians/activists take are not necessarily compatible with each other. Most of the time they seem to speak from the vantage point of an already existing theoretical position – Liberal, Marxist, Radical Freudian, Lacanian Deconstructive, Structuralist, Post colonial etc – or an eclectic combination of these. This necessarily gives feminist movement its enriching diversity.

But despite this seemingly cacophony of voices, the movement is held together by a commonality of some basic premises:

1. Feminism as a perspective provides a female-centric conceptual framework - theoretical and political to understand reality and woman's location within this reality. It enables socio-cultural, economic, political, philosophical and epistemological analyses of society from an overtly self-conscious feminist perspective.
2. Theoretically, feminism emphasizes gender both as a category of description and a tool of analysis. However, like all other knowledge perspectives, over time, this analytic category has been broadened to include the questions of race, class and nationality.
3. Like any movement it has its own history that has evolved over time and space. Feminism is an ever-evolving corpus of theory and practice. What had originated as Feminism in the west as a monolithic concept has, consequently, been replaced by a more plural concept 'feminisms'. This shift from Feminism to feminisms foregrounds not only the constant evolutionary movement of feminism, but also indicates its increasing intersection with other conceptual frameworks like race, class, sexual orientation, and nationality, among others.
4. At the level of praxis, feminism has evolved as a socio-cultural and political movement for ameliorating the condition of women.

5. At the level of theory, it straddles across and deconstructively engages with various discourses to create its own discourse that aims at understanding and empowering, and emancipating women and creating women-centric episteme.

Understanding Key Concepts

Feminism

'Feminism' is a multi-layered semantic configuration. While the suffix 'ism' imbues it with ideological-activist potentials, the antecedent, i.e., 'feminine' tends to locate that activism within a particular socio-cultural and experiential location.

This location reveals itself as 'gendered'. Another morphological form 'femininity' is used synonymously with feminine to describe a socially constructed image of femaleness.

'Feminine', in harking back to the root 'female', further foregrounds various semantic echoes embedded in the term 'feminism': the 'sexed' body, a human body with particular biological features etc.

Feminist is one who holds the view that women are less valued than men in a patriarchal society. A feminist also insists that these inequalities are not fixed or determined and that women themselves can change the social, economic, political and epistemic order through affirmative (and collective) action. Thus the feminist purpose is an active desire to change women's position in society.

Any attempt at defining the term 'feminism' entails a critical negotiation with these (and many more) embedded meanings inherent in it.

Feminism can be defined many ways but it basically connotes a way of analysing the position of woman in society. It is best defined by its concerns: to correct inequities that women have been subjected to and to address ideas about what constitutes woman, her nature, her history, and her future. There are many different theoretical approaches through which one can achieve these aims, and there is a considerable range of disagreement what theories and even what facts should prevail.

Feminist literary criticism takes its sustenance from various feministic schools. It critiques the ways in which representations of gender (gender per se or in conjunction with other categories such as caste, race or class) produce, transform and transcend social stereotypes about women and men.

Gender

It is widely held that while one's sex is determined by anatomy, the concepts of 'gender' – the traits that constitute masculinity and femininity – are largely, if not entirely, cultural constructs, affected by the omnipresent patriarchal biases of our civilization. The masculine in this fashion has come to be identified as active, dominating, adventurous, rational, creative; the feminine, by systematic opposition to such traits, has come to be identified as passive, acquiescent, timid, emotional, and conventional. R. W. Connell defines gender as the structure of social relations that centres on the reproductive arena and set of practices (governed by this structure), that brings reproductive distinctions between bodies into social processes.

Gender relations are generally conceived in terms of difference between men and women. The approaches to gender as regards to this idea of difference vary. Some conceive of this difference as dichotomous, others see it as relational. The three most influential ideas of gender difference are:

1. The idea of natural difference, which treats the body as a machine
2. The idea of two separate realms of sex and gender
3. The idea of gender as a discursive or symbolic system which treats body as a canvas on which society paints

However, 'gender' is only one of many categories through which one understands, describes and analyses reality. Gender, as a category of description and analysis, thus does not exist in isolation but straddles across other analytic categories such as that of caste, race, nation, religion etc. Understood as such, feminism unfolds itself as an 'activism' that manifests itself through the interplay of moment, milieu and (wo) man.

Patriarchy

It means male hegemony or rule by the father. The basic view is that our civilization is pervasively male-centred and controlled, and is organized and conducted in such a way as to subordinate women to men in all cultural domains: religious, familial, political, economic, social, legal, and artistic.

Literary Theory/Literary Criticism

Though the concepts of literary theory and literary criticism overlap yet it would be a mistake to consider the two as synonyms. Warhol and Herndl propose a simple yet significant distinction between the two: "A simple way to distinguish between literary criticism and literary theory might be this: to talk about a particular text – to discuss what it means, how it got produced, what it's worth – is to 'do criticism'. To talk about doing criticism – to examine what our assumptions are, how our questions get formulated, where our values come from – is to 'do theory'."

Elaine Showalter & Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak

Feminism and the Theories of Literature

The concept of feminism, based as it is on multiplicity of perspectives, each having its own analytic emphasis, privileges the heterogeneity and plurality within feminist literary studies. This plurality is often irreconcilable and to seek a "unison performance" is almost impossible. For an initiate, this plurality may prove perplexing. The following attempts to comprehend the various critical perspectives emanating from literary feminisms, appreciate and locate this plurality, compare and contrast these respective stances, and seek critical intersections among them.

A literary process involves the following:

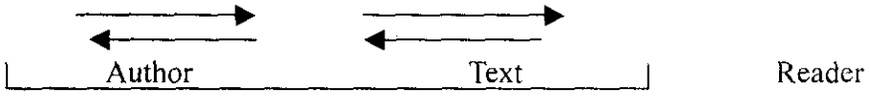
Author

Text

Reader

Context

History



Context and History

In this process, author is the product of moment and milieu. Whereas the moment signifies a temporal awareness of one's surroundings, the milieu signifies the socio-cultural dynamics of reality and one's location within it. It also includes an awareness of one's literary heritage and literary milieu. Author's context thus raises the issues of his/her relationship with literary traditions, his/her vision, and his/her ideological underpinnings, and his/her notions of literature and literariness, and his/her relationship with the text. The author not only writes the reality but also writes himself herself in literature.

Text does not exist in a vacuum. Being a product of author's creativity, it necessarily encapsulates author's understanding of reality and his/her visualization of it from a certain perspective. It embeds its author's interpretation of the reality. The text is also something that exists not in itself but in relation to other texts that have succeeded it, i.e. texts within a literary/textual/discursive tradition. It is a part of socio-cultural scape. Finally, seen from readers' perspective the text becomes an interactive platform between the location of the reader and the writer, and among various readers themselves. The focus on text raises the issues of literary history.

The focus on reader, who is the ultimate target of the text, raises the issues of 'reading'. The reading of a text is not an innocent activity. It involves the issues of location of the reader, the question of pleasure and instruction etc. It raises the issues of canonicity, methodology etc.

Raman Selden, in his A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory posits that various literary theories can be thought of as raising different questions on literature. These questions are generally the function of theoretical emphasis on any one of the three components of literary process: "Theories may ask questions from the point of view of the writer, of the work, of the reader" (Selden, 3). Working on Roman Jakobson's model of linguistic communication, and assuming that various theories are the result of their respective interrogative emphasis on one of the three components of literary process (i.e., the writer, reader or the text) Selden, in a series of diagrams explains the intersection of various theories thus:

Context

Writer writing Reader

Code

If we superimpose various literary theories on this diagram they will be located as under:

	Marxist	
Romantic	Formalistic	Reader Oriented
	Structuralist	

He rightly points out that feminist criticism can not be given a place in the above diagram because it is not an 'approach' in the sense that applies to the other kinds of theories. Whereas other critical approaches presume 'a priori' relation between them and literature, and are woefully blind to the 'gendered' nature of literary dynamics, Feminist poetics/criticism attempts a re-interpretation of all these issues and, in fact, all literary approaches from a feminist point of view. It not only brings under its incisive focus various components of literary process, but also critiques the assumptions underlying various critical approaches.

Patterns of Literary Feminisms

There have been numerous schematic attempts to understand the phenomenon called feminism. These include:

1. Understanding literary feminism as a sequence of historically evolving phases or waves: Early feminism, First Wave Feminism, Second Wave Feminism, Third –wave feminism/Post Feminism etc. Each wave is a heterogeneous group, demarcating the evolution of various strands of feminisms across the globe. Another way within this schema is described thus: "The history of feminism has been generally narrated in two ways: by contrasting French and Anglo-American feminisms with each other, and aligning with anyone in particular. For example, Toril Moi's Sexual/Textual Politics employs this historical approach and aligns with French Feminism. In contrast, Janet Todd in Feminist Literary History aligns with Anglo American approach." (Warhol and Herndl, xv)
2. Understanding literary feminism as location-specific phenomenon: Anglo-American Feminism, French Feminism, Post-colonial Feminism, etc. This is what Showalter does when she asserts that, "the emphasis in each country falls somewhat differently: English feminist criticism, essentially Marxist, stresses oppression; French feminist criticism, essentially psychoanalytic, stresses repression; American feminist criticism, essentially textual, stresses expression."
3. Understanding literary feminism as ideologically embedded phenomenon (as an offshoot of various theoretical positions already in existence): Liberal Feminism, Radical Feminism, Post-colonial Feminism, Marxian Feminism, etc.
4. Understanding literary feminism in terms of the methodology the feminist critics employ: the Psychoanalytic Feminism, Deconstructive feminism, etc.
5. Understanding literary feminism in terms of their sexual difference and sexual focus: Gender studies, Lesbian studies, etc.
6. Understanding literary feminism in terms of their aims at defining or establishing a canon or theories seeking to reinterpret and re-vision literature (and culture and history etc): Gynocriticism, liberal feminism etc.

However, all these patterns of understanding overlap; the distinctions are only schematic and often blur. There are many intersections among theories, and feminists use an eclectic array of various approaches to understand the mechanisms through which gender operates within texts. For example, Elaine Showalter in her book, A Literature of Their Own, sees the evolution of literary feminism in Britain in terms of moments and phases (the Feminine, the Feminist, and the Female) but on the other, she uses locational taxonomy to understand feminisms in her essay "Feminist criticism in wilderness". It is better to understand feminist critical dynamics by focusing on certain concepts that recur regularly in feminist critical debates. It is through the deployment of these concepts strategically that feminist criticism seeks to re-write the traditional notions of literature.

Wading Through the Conceptual Quagmire

This section attempts a critical survey of literary feminisms by focussing on some of the important concepts we as students come across while wading through theoretical jigsaw that present itself as feminist poetics, i.e., feminist aesthetics, feminist history, feminist criticism and feminist theory.

1. Feminism as a Critique of Institutions:

Feminist debates posit the omnipresence of systematic or institutionalised nature of women's oppression. The concept

of institution subsumes within it the concept of self or individuality as 'constructs' within institutions. Institutes establish orderliness, rules, and sameness. Insuring homogeneity and 'otherness' are two important ingredients of any institutional definition. Feminisms contend that institutions have established the sameness at the expense of the 'difference' represented by women. Feministic reading explores how women's otherness from established patterns has caused their exclusion from various structures of power. It focuses on how women's difference necessarily disrupts and disturbs the orderliness imposed by male dominated systems. In the process of homogenisation, difference is excluded, overlooked, forced back into conformity with an artificial norm, or suppressed.

Feminists begin this analysis from outside, as people who had themselves been excluded from and oppressed by educational, religious, and governmental institutions. They try to understand how oppression had become institutionalised, how it functions, and how it could be changed.

Feminist literary criticism has been a part of this challenge, questioning the **basic institutions of literary study**: how we evaluate literature, how we constitute knowledge about it, how its study is determined by the structure of academy, and how it is separated from other disciplines. Out of the latter concern, was born a whole new integrated field of inquiry – Women's Studies. From other questions, has come serious critique of how literature is taught, what is taught, and who teaches it. Literary study has been dramatically changed in the last few decades, largely as a result of feminist critique of it as an institution. Showalter's gynocriticism is a step forward in this direction.

Three institutes that feminist criticism addresses itself are Methodology, Canon and Tradition. The canon and tradition are direct questioning of some aspects of literary tradition. They explore the construction, maintenance and functioning of literary studies: literary criticism, literary history, and academic evaluation in the academic institution.

These literary issues/institutions are generally explored in relation to other systems: criticism, the history of Western thought, psychoanalysis, literary history etc. Each examines the inter relation of these structures and how they support each other; e.g., sexism institutionalised in one system contributes to sexism in another structure, sometimes even when the second system is deliberately working to avoid it.

Western dichotomised thinking has adversely impacted literary criticism and women. Oppositional thinking dominates patriarchal cultures (we define things by their opposites and impose hierarchy upon the opposition: man/woman, sane/insane, speech/silence, same/other). The traditional ways of defining a woman has always tended to subordinate her in this dichotomous opposition; she is man's other and therefore what he is not – insane and silent. Many feminist critics have examined the impact of this opposition upon the critical institution. Traditional literary criticism is blind to women, unable to theorize or visualise otherness. The task before a feminist critic is how to work against and from the outside of linguistic and critical institutions so that she will no longer be defined as mad, silent, Other, and invisible.

Recently, there has been a shift in feminist institutional criticism. It has become more self-reflexive. Post-Feminists have begun to question each other to examine their methods, goals and alliances and their exclusion and possible oppression. For example in "Not One of the Family: The Repression of the 'Other' and feminist criticism" (1989) Helena Michie returns to the question of otherness and feminist criticism. She examines how feminism's reliance on metaphors from other institutions – psychoanalysis and family – has excluded in the sense of 'other women' outsiders, whether defined as outside of family as sexual threats or as Other, in the sense of being different – third world, lesbian, or antifeminists. Feminism remains uneasy with otherness, so the 'Other' woman is often either displaced or incorporated into sameness, even in feminist texts that set out to avoid it. Michie advises feminist critics to be careful about how they attempt to include the 'other woman' so that they do not merely reinscribe the institution of sameness.

2. Methodologies of Feminism

American feminist critics are moving away from androgyny (effacement of gender differentiation) as a standard of art to a beginning to embrace difference in the production and evaluation of literature. Gender provides them the primary methodological tool. As it has a significant impact upon experience, gender makes an important difference in the production and evaluation of literature. That is why questions as – Does the difference of gender inhere in the body, or is it culturally constructed? What do the signs of gender difference look like in literary texts? What difference does gender make when a critic undertakes to evaluate a work written by a woman, or one written by a man? How

can feminist criticism overcome the double marginalization of lesbians and minority women writers? Should feminist criticism adopt a pluralist theoretical stance? Does it need theory at all? – come to acquire importance in feminist criticism.

For some feminists, "Feminism is a stance, a rethinking of assumptions." So they are constantly bothered about the feminist methodological assumption. Jehlen, for example, questions the advisability of concentrating exclusively on literature by women, and asks how 'ideological' and appreciative criticism might come together in feminist study of men and women's texts.

Another methodological problem in feminism is that of reconciling contradictory ideology and aesthetic values. This problem manifests in feminism in questions such as: should we (feminists) avoid the temptation of universalising all literature as male? Are there problems with heterosexual assumptions within feminism vis-à-vis lesbian literature? Is feminism an inclusive or exclusive way of referring to women?

The differences among feminist critics, and among the theoretical movements they represent, are chronicled in Elaine Showalter's "A Criticism of Our Own: Autonomy and Assimilation in Afro-American and Feminist Literary Theory" (1989) and in "Feminist Criticism in Wilderness" (1981). She is one of the primary historians of literary criticism, postulating categories in which to place all the varieties of feminist projects, and explaining the evolution of these categories within chronological framework. It outlines dominant feminist methodologies. She shows that it has evolved through parallel stages. Six versions of its history are:

1. Androgynist poetics dedicated to effacing gender differences
2. The feminist critique of male culture
3. A Female Aesthetic celebrating women's culture
4. Gynocriticism, or study of traditions of women writing
5. Gynesic, or poststructuralist feminist criticism, focusing on "the feminine" as a category within culture .
6. Gender theory

3. Canon

One of the axioms of traditional literary criticism has been that "great literature" represents "universal" experiences. But with feminism this notion has been questioned. What had appeared universal to once homogeneous group that studied literature and defined it as great as well as universal – a group entirely composed of white upper/upper middle class males – does not seem so to heterogeneous groups. What had once taken been for purely "aesthetic" choices about literary texts that would be included on course syllabi, in anthologies, and on academic programmes have begun to be questioned as political and social choices. The canon of literature – those works recognised as great or worthy to be read and studied in academic settings – was never as codified as its religious namesake.

Judgement is at the centre of canonicity. Feminist reading is redefining the parameters of this canonicity: It is joining issues with male judgemental values as to what makes literature great or what makes it academics worthy?

Is the purpose of literature to examine "universal" or individual, diverse experiences? Should we value repetitive or aesthetic language? What makes an experience universal? What guides our choice of what is aesthetic? As women readers found supposedly "minor" women writers whose works were more moving, exciting and representative of their experiences than that of "major" writers, they began to question the standards of literary taste and to question the grounds on which those standards were based.

Many judgements of tastes were based on an exclusion of difference. Feminists, particularly French feminists, turned difference, which was characterised as threatening and inferior by male canonicity, into source of strengh.

Feminist criticism sees the task of denial of absolute values as both an opportunity and challenge of feminist criticism. They have effectively demonstrated that the forms of criticism are not value free. In feminist revision of canon, the work of criticism and of political action converges. Feminist critics cannot rely on solely literary criteria, because such criteria are never value free, and can never be innocently used. Instead, feminist criticism calls for an evaluation of culture, the role literature plays in the culture, and the role that criticism plays in making the world better and our lives fuller.

As feminism posits female aesthetics an encapsulation of a different experience, it strives to establish a tradition, different from the mainstream that can account for feminine creativity. A corollary of this is the resurrection of female texts and female genres. Showalter hints at it. In India, Tharu's and Lalita's feminist project, Women Writing in India, *is a step in this direction.*

4. Tradition

Late 1970s and early 1980s saw the beginning of mapping out the tradition of women's writing. The impulse to tell the story of women authors' relations to their predecessors is an important part of, what Elaine Showalter calls, gynocriticism the study of female writers in the context of their own, not in relation to 'Great Tradition' that included a few of them but rejected many more. Theories of women's tradition resemble androcentric literary history in that they conceive of literary development in terms of phases, modes, or moments, and they typically see change as evidence of progress. Sometimes too, they borrow the terminology of mainstream literary movement to describe phases in tradition, such as lesbian realism, lesbian romanticism (Catherine Stimson). Such terms are used, however, without specific reference to their historical links to men's writing.

Because gynocriticism limits itself to purview of texts written by women, it has become vulnerable to charges of biologically based essentialism. Critics have become suspicious of assertions about women's writing that seem to suggest universal or ahistorical stereotyping of women, or that seems to point to the physical fact of femaleness as the determinant of how people write.

However, Elaine Showalter anticipates this objection in her A Literature of Their Own" that was published in 1977. She is very careful to explain that the women's tradition she charts is the "product of a delicate network of influences operating in time", and that it "comes from the still evolving relationship between women writers and their society. She concentrates on British women writers and who published novels after 1840, and she finds in their work "an imaginative continuum, the recurrence of certain patterns, themes, problems, and images from generation to generation. She attributes this to "female subculture" which, in Victorian England especially, ensured that women's experiences of living and of writing would be pointedly distinct from each other."

Showalter, whose partiality to the phases is evident, enumerates three moments in the women's tradition she charts as Feminine, Feminist, and the Female. Though non-feminist commentators sometimes treat these terms as interchangeable, Showalter painstakingly distinguishes among them, showing how the attitudes novels evince towards women's roles and female authorship are tied to their cultural contexts in Victorian and Modern England.

Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar primarily focus (The Madwoman in the Attic, 1979) upon canonical women writers though their concentration on the 19th century British and American novelists and poets. Their main thesis is that women authors experience the anxiety of authorship. Based on the woman's socially determined sense of her own biology, this anxiety makes its way into women's texts in recurring patterns of themes, forms, and motifs.

While Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, and Showalter revise literary history to better account for the place of canonised women writers in it, other theorists have sketched out alternate traditions, parallel to but not dependent upon the development of writings by white, heterosexual, middleclass women authors. These include lesbian novels and African –American women's novels. These histories are trying to make place by writing literary histories of tradition that have been excluded from conventional studies of great literature and that hold only peripheral place in traditions based on 'great women writers." Each conceives of a tradition she sketches out as independent and free standing. But each is honest enough to acknowledge how her tradition has developed in response to and in reaction against the dominant culture's conception of lesbian and black women.

5. BODY

"Write yourself. Your body must be heard." This rhetorical call given by Helene Cixous has provoked much speculation about sexual difference as an aspect of literary production. It suggests a feminine writing that is the direct function of sexual difference that possibly extends in the realm of language. It is a writing that is different from the kind of writing usually valued in Western culture, and which is specifically gendered. Though not restricted to female writers it, nevertheless is seen to vary along gender lines, to correspond to culturally determined gender codes. These codes

differentiate male language as rational, logical, hierarchical, and linear and female language as 'a-rational'/irrational, contra-logical/illogical, resistant to hierarchies, and circular.

The movement was founded in France by, among others, Cixous and Irigaray, in mid 70s. At its core lies the refusal to accept the tradition body-mind separation. In such dichotomous definitions one term is privileged over the other and is usually linked with the male. Woman, linked with body rather than the mind, was supposed to be antithetical to writing, an activity presumed to be restricted to the intellect. The authors associated with l'e'ctriture fe'mininie have challenged these traditional notions in two ways: first, by celebrating women's association with body, thereby refusing the subordination of body to mind; and second, by refusing to accept the separation between the two. Writing the body or letting the body be heard are clearly attempts at refuting the sense of writing as a strictly mental act.

The field, which has most thoroughly explored the connections between mind, body and language, is psychoanalysis. The theories of Freud and Lacan thus provide an important subtext to the critics of l'e'ctriture fe'mininie. Questions of the relation between being biologically sexed female and culturally gendered feminine are central to these critics. Unlike Freud, who saw female sexuality as a "dark continent", yet to be explored, these critics see female sexuality as something that is likely to be apparent in women's written texts. Though these critics refute the Freudian postulate that "biology is destiny", they do raise the possibility that biology makes itself heard in literary discourse.

Cixous in her essay "The Laugh of the Medusa" (1975/76) both discusses and illustrates her theories of women writing. It is not linear, logical, or progressive, which means that it is not constrained by traditional (masculine/patriarchal) notions of argumentation and development. The movement of feminine writing is more fluid than direct, more experimental than argumentative.

Luce Irigaray carries on Cixous' celebration of difference of the female body, and further develops the issues raised by her predecessor. She rejects traditional psychoanalytic notions, which take male sexuality as the norm and model and suggests that female sexuality is not marked by a lack (of penis) but is marked by multiplicity and abundance. Transposing this argument analogically on literature she argues that femininity and the language of femininity is not singular (not one) either but multiple. Therefore, woman's pleasure in language, like her pleasure in sexuality, is not direct, linear or singular: "she sets off in all directions leaving him [the male reader] unable to discern the coherence of any meaning". The masculinity of the patriarchal language, on the other hand, does not give woman a chance to express her genuine self. It leaves her fragmented. What is left of her in linguistic representation is not her complete self. She finds the pieces of her self missing. Irigaray suggests that the realization of language would result neither in woman's 'wholeness' (if by wholeness is meant "unicity" and "singularity") nor in "ownership", but that its realization will allow for woman's "nearness" to herself.

Irigaray analyses the oppression of women in terms of Marx: women are turned into property, into objects of exchange between men, a transaction which denies their subjectivity and turns them into objects. She urges women to use their nearness to themselves to develop closeness to each other, to work together to resist the oppression that denies them their pleasure and their language.

Irigaray and Cixous envision a separate language for women metaphorically based on their women's physical experience of their sexuality. Kristeva sees women's role in language primarily as providing oppositional force within traditional discourses.

However one should caution oneself about the problems that this "bodily based feminism' can create. Some of the problems that may be created are:

1. Notion of "essential" female sexuality is not sustainable. All psychoanalytic models of sexuality recognize sexuality as culturally constructed. To accept these cultural constructs as "natural" is not advisable.
2. One should be cautious about the political effects of taking "women" as too generalised a category, since race, class, and national origin may account for more differences than would gender.
3. Is it possible to write from the body, given many women's difficulty with language?
4. Is a separate language desirable at all (given the richness of our historical connections to cultural and linguistic traditions)?

Cixous's connection between writing and female body creates an essentialist trap, by tying creativity to procreativity.

6. DESIRE

"What does a woman want?" asks Freud. "Penis," he supplies the answer himself.

The question of wanting, of desire, is one of the central issues in feminist criticism. The concept of feminine desire i.e., what a woman wants and what is wanted of/ from her, has been problematised at length in feminism

This problematisation has a significant bearing on feminist literary theory. Whereas Freud had conceptualised woman's desire as 'envy', as arising out of 'lack', the feminist are concerned with the exploration of whether this desire can be analysed in more positive term and whether or not female desire must always be subordinated to male desire

Desire is a dense term. While Freud understood female desire in terms of 'lack', and 'envy' that manifest itself in female's envious desire for acquisition, Jacques Lacan, the French 're-reader' of Freud, analysed it in terms of 'gap'. He arrives at the notion of desire in a very complex manner. According to him, each person, in the process of growing, encounters a deep split when s/he begins to use or "enters" language. Language is something exterior to human existence (Lacan presumes an exteriority of linguistic experience). Language completely changes one who uses it and structures the unconscious. Language is always metaphorical (it always stands for something else and can never be that thing), there is always a gap between expressing a wish and receiving its answer, since language can never fully express exactly what we want. **This gap is desire**. Lacan postulates that human desire is always for **juissance** (a French term that refers to both to orgasm and to state of blissfulness), an ecstatic union that would complete us, would heal the split when we enter language. This desire is unrealisable. Its impossibility however, does not keep us from continually seeking its fulfilment.

"Desire" becomes an issue for feminists because of the precarious relation women have to it. The woman is understood by Lacan, to be desirable to man because of the (false) beliefs that she will be able to complete him, that she is his Other (all that he is not), and that union with her is a unin with all that he is not. Lacan's famous assertion, "The woman does not exist," does not refer to real woman, but to this imaginary woman who could complete man. Desire is also important to women because of how their own desires are defined – and therefore limited within psychoanalytic discourse. Irigaray warns that such restrictions within the realm of discourse may well limit the possibilities open to women in the world of lived experience.

The symbol most central to desire for Lacan is the phallus. Although it bears a connection to the physical penis, Lacan argues that it did not represent the physical organ itself, but came, metaphorically, to stand for all that was desirable. The origin of this signification for Lacan, as it was for Freud, the castration complex; the male fears the loss of penis, the female feels the anxiety of never having had one, and therefore the penis comes to represent that which is desirable. But Lacan insists that its symbolic force always exceeds its reference to the physical organ. Not surprisingly though this is one point that has troubled feminists writers deeply; the line separating phallus and penis is very fine. The "phallocenticism" of Lacan's reliance on male metaphor irrevocably marks his work as male dominated and male privileging, and therefore raises serious questions for its applicability to feminist thought.

Feminists have however used psychoanalysis in their critique of gender, despite misgivings about its phallocentricism. Psychoanalysis provides a framework for understanding how gender is defined, how it comes into being. Feminists have also realised that psychoanalysis has been (with Marxism) a discourse that has shaped the 20th century. To ignore it would be to concede grounds to hostile forces.

Two other Lacanian terms, the Symbolic and the Imaginary, are also important. Language exists in the order of the symbolic, because language symbolises things in the world. "The symbolic" refers to connections between signifier (a word) and signified (what it stands for) which is always arbitrarily established (no essential connections). The system in which these symbols work is outside the subject who uses it and that subject is never in control of the system. Lacan calls this arbitrary system the "Law of the Father", because of its structural similarity to the establishment of patriarchy and its chronological connection to the Oedipal complex.

The Imaginary on the other hand, is the realm of the image. Unlike symbols, whose connection to the signified are arbitrary, images have a visual relation to the signified. The imaginary is typified, for Lacan, in the relation of subject to his/her mirror image: that image both is and is not the subject. Whereas the symbolic is triadic – signifier, signified, and signifying system – the imaginary is dyadic –image and signified.

Desire has become an issue for feminist literary critics because it exists within the field of language. As Lacan understood it, desire was the motivation for all languages. Desire is its origin and its root. The literature shapes and is a vehicle for desires.

How desire shapes issues that are crucial to feminist criticism? Are desire and its forms specific to each gender? Does desire shape our understanding of sameness and difference? How is desire related to political power? The central question about desire for feminist critics is: How is sexual/political desire expressed in literary representations?

Irigaray has tried to join issues with the Freudian conception of desire by raising some crucial question: Why should a little girl necessarily recognise the penis as valuable, enviable organ at all? Why she should experience sense of lack of sexual organs when she clearly has not the only one but several? And, finally how it benefits Freud to believe that he has the thing women envy? She goes onto show that woman's desire is defined in psychoanalytic discourse by male desire, that woman functions for Freud as a mirror that reflects back what the man wants to see. The whole issue of visibility becomes central to Irigaray's questioning here.

The field of vision also has a central place in Lacanian thought. Lacan describes the original experience as of the split in the subject as an experience before the mirror, and has described the "gaze" as itself a source of pleasure. For Irigaray, the privilege accorded to visibility in Freud's thought – the penis is more highly valued because it can be seen, and therefore desired – results in a misrepresentation, or non-representational of women's desire.

Julia Kristeva, in Desire in Language (1980), links questions of desire to large issues of linguistic, political, and historical change. Using psychoanalytic and socialist frame of references, she casts doubt on the notion that women's desire is fundamentally different from men's, and probes what the ramifications of desire would be if it were different.

Women desire political, economic and reproductive equality. Second generation feminists have tried to explore their own differences and the specificity of women's experiences in/of language. Kristeva is troubled by uncritical acceptance of women's differences by feminist critics.

Kristeva provides a model of desire in which gender is not an issue. Both man and woman suffer from the lack of being unfulfilled and lacking. Both of them suffer the psychic split which Freud called Spaltung and which Lacan located at entry into language.

7. Reading

There are two literary meanings of reading; the first meaning centres on text, the second on receivers of texts.

In the former sense, a 'reading' implies interpretation, an individual critic's version of a piece of writing. A feminist reading in this usage would be interpretation of a text assuming gender's centrality to what the text means. In this reading, gender can come into play as something represented in the text (image of woman criticism), as something shaping the experience, and therefore the writing, of the author; or as significant influence in the life – and, therefore, the interior experience – of a particular reader who is trying to understand what the text says.

"Reading" in the second sense, refers directly to that interior experience of readers, understood as an activity or a process. This aspect of reading is not much debated. Generally the reader response theorists hypothesize a universalised abstraction called "the reader", and they describe what 'he' feels, thinks, or does when confronted with a given text. For such critics "reading" is something conceptual, based on their own personal experiences of the text. In such a theoretical framework gender is not seldom seen as a potential influence upon the reader's experience.

Feminist reading implies a reception and processing of texts by a reader who is conceived of not only as 'possibly female', but also as one conscious of the tradition of women's oppression in patriarchal culture. The feminist reader is committed to breaking the pattern of that oppression by calling attention to the ways some texts can perpetuate it.

Feminist reader is the resisting reader. Feminist reading is a process that occurs when a female reader confronts an androcentric (male-cantered) or even a misogynist text. Explaining that 'great ' literature treats male experience as universal, this canon requires one to identify as a male, to sympathise with masculine heroes whose troubles are overtly or covertly associated with women in their stories.

This has lead to emasculation of woman as reader, who must identify 'against her own self' as she reads. In the

process, she becomes a 'divided self'. The resisting reader would work to "exorcise" the male-imposed part of that self, to be conscious of the way male classics exclude and alienate her.

*Some feminist critics take gender as a biological given. Within their argument, a person's sex is the primary determinant of the identification process s/he undergoes while reading. On the other hand, Jonathan Culler, in "Reading as a Woman" (*On Deconstruction, *1982) asks whether woman is defined by anatomy or by culture He breaks the feminist reading into three moments:*

1. First moment is feminist criticism's assertion that gendered experience carries over from personal/social life into reading, and its confrontation of "the problem of women as consumers of male produced literature"
2. The second moment is described as the effect achieved by the 'postulate' of a woman reader, which served to make male and female readers begin questioning the traditional assumptions about gender on which their reading had traditionally been based. It calls into question that male reading perspective is "gender neutral."
3. The third moment has less to do with specifically with reading than with the critique of all Western Culture: in it, feminists question whether "rational" literary criticism might be culpably "in complicity with the preservation of male authority," and explore alternative, non-rational ways to read literature.

8. Discourse

The question implied in this concept is: Can we talk? It also repudiates theory as a patriarchal device.

In the 1980s, feminists were confronted with the question of articulation. Though most of them worked as their predecessors had previously worked within the mainstream theoretical frameworks, like Psychoanalysis, Marxism, Structuralism and Post-structuralism, there was an increasing awareness among feminists that "Theory" was essentially a patriarchal device. It led to an intense debate within feminism. While some asserted the necessity to reject theory as a tool of feministic articulation, others saw theory as holding a promise of precise vocabularies, widely circulated premises, and analytic methodologies that could lend **form** to feminist observations and could enable them to engage in conversation with the critical community. They advocated an insertion of gender into the models proposed by andocentric theorists to examine how these formulations and applications impacted the understanding of the femininity and the female.

The original meaning of discourse is to "to talk". It denotes a conversation among theoretical communities. Discourse, in critical vocabulary, however, refers to a particular use of language in a given time and place. Novels, television commercials or political speeches are not themselves discourses, rather they are instances of discourse, of the way language gets used on given topics in particular culture and society.

How does this concept concern itself with Feminism? Feminists insist that there is a need to change/break the masculine discourse to change society. Herein such questions as the cause of oppression, class struggle vs. Gender inequities are raised.

All narratives supposedly consist of two components: Story (what happens in a narrative), and discourse (how 'what happens'). All narratives get shaped in language. The question of voice, perspective, temporal organization, and repetition (stylistic/ linguistic components of narrative) has an important bearing on how knowledge and power through knowledge is constructed in the narrative. The knowledge of this discursive dynamics is important for feminists to expose the hidden agenda or false consciousness in literature and devise discursive means to counter it.

9. Ethnicity/Race/Nationality/Cultural othering

"From margins to the center."

This provocative phrase (attributed to bell hooks) encapsulates the movement of women's study as a whole. Feminism has worked to pull women's voice, experiences, and concerns out of the periphery of official culture, and has insisted upon placing gender-related issues squarely in the middle of all academic fields of inquiry. If women have traditionally occupied the margins, the women of colour have been doubly marginalized. And such women, whose sexual preference, class or nationality differentiate them even further from the heterosexual, middleclass white norm, have – recently – been pushed so far into the margins as to have been almost imperceptible to the academic eye.

Feminists who enter feminism from ethnic perspective have tried to redress the marginalization of women of colour in mainstream feminism, as well as culture at large. The argumentative strategies of these feminists closely parallel those of the feminists who do not bring race into the foreground of their studies. Some of the salient aspects of their feminist strategies are:

1. They tend to celebrate difference. According to them, ethnic difference (like gender difference) is culturally constructed. Ethnicity refers to person's cultural orientation as it has been shaped by the traditions and experiences associated with that person's race, which is itself not a biological matter, but another arbitrary defined category within culture and society.
2. The focus on ethnicity requires readjustments in information and the perspective which reader brings to the experience of reading. What one knows (or does not know) about a literary work's extra literary context will determine one's appreciation of it, and what one has experienced (directly or imaginatively) will shape the perspective one takes in evaluating or understanding it.
3. Experience, therefore, plays a crucial role in feminist criticism that focuses on race. It is a criticism that moves freely among academic observations, personal anecdotes, and literary analysis.
4. The issue of activism is also important. The experience of activism affects not only the information a feminist critic brings to her work, but also her perception.
5. One's expectations and information affect one's reading of a minority text.
6. Community is the theme frequently recurring in criticism on marginalized groups.
7. Another central issue in this category is that of woman writer's assertion of her subjectivity in the act of telling stories about herself and others like her.

But the problem with this criticism is how to define minority disadvantage: "All minorities are marginalized; some are more marginalized than others."

10. History

Historiography has departed from diachronic narratives of political and military 'events' moving into more synchronic accounts of such matters as conventions for courtships, attitudes towards smell and personal hygiene, and even patterns of weather in the past. The 'new history' tries, among other things, to scrutinise the experience of those who have inhabited the margins of culture and society, whose voices had previously been silenced because their race, class, gender or sexuality or nationality denied them access to power and self-expression in the world of 'events'.

In literary studies, "new historicism" holds texts up against non-literary documents from their own historical period, looking at how a culture's discourse on a topic – be it sexuality, knowledge, madness, etc. – affects our interpretations of a work of literature addressing the same topic. New historicism puts literary texts into historical context.

Though feminists have been using history in their analysis of literary texts, not all have been using it in a 'historicist' way. For example, the "image of women" movement of the 1970s, along with certain modes of Freudian and Jungian archetypal criticism tended to locate certain female figures in texts (as "earth mother" or as "witch goddess") outside of history, pointing to the recurrence of types and of psychological patterns without reference to their specific movements in time. Even gynocriticism (the study of women's literary tradition) suffers from this tendency. According to Newton, it tends, "to focus on the presence of unchanging or trans-historical patterns," a focus she identifies as the crucial difference between her project and those of Elaine Showalter, Nina Auerbach, and Gilbert and Gubar. Although these critics arrange their works around historical periods and chronological developments, they do not account for literature's relation to "developing material conditions" or "shifting ideologies". In other words, practitioners of gynocriticism do not usually adopt a Marxist model of explanation for historical change and stasis.

Salient features of neohistoricist feminist criticism are:

1. It makes use of Marxist premises and make explicit its intention to 'do history' when reading literary text.
2. This is apparent from critics' focus on questions of class and economics, and in their use of the language of false consciousness and dominant ideology, capitalism and class struggle. Marxism often provides a vocabulary for feminist analysis of women's social and political status.

3. The seeming compatibility of two modes is Marxian insistence that there is such a thing as "the material conditions, the real relations" operating in the world. For all our post-structuralist sophistication, a questioning of the truth status of discourse and texts, all feminists do agree on certain fundamental truths, for example, that the oppression of women is a reality, which ought to be eradicated. Marxism grounding in economic evidence – its belief in the 'real' – provides reinforcement for feminism's parallel interests, as well as providing an operative model for radical or progressive social change.

11. Class

Difference – the exploration of differences between men and women – has been one of the chief concerns of feminist criticism. Recently, though, feminist theorists have become interested in the differences among women, insisting that to categorize women as just "women" is to reinscribe a sexist ideology that sees all women as just the "same." Differences exist among women in countless aspects, including race, age, sexual preference, and social class. The feminists concerned with the concept of class explore not only what the differences of social class might mean, but where they come from, and how they have been – and continue to be – part of the oppression of women.

Many feminists have long felt that not all women share the same struggle, that workingwomen have very different lives and different concerns from those of middle-and upper-class women. Yet when they turn to the most fully theorised analysis of class, that is, Marxist critique, they find that it devotes almost all its attention to men and traditionally male institutions.

These feminists also try to work through the question of the place in literary studies of what has been traditionally the academic domain of the social sciences. How do gender and class issues become literary questions? Although each critic answers this problem differently, they all share one assumption: Literature has a definite function in society beyond simple aesthetic pleasure. Aesthetic pleasure itself, they argue, is clearly tied to the way literature acts as a social agent. Literature does not exist in a realm that is somehow independent of social and political questions, but is intricately involved in our understanding of culture and the shaping of society.

The last three concepts, and how they are problematised in feminism, become particularly relevant in our understanding of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak as post-colonial cultural feminist.

Elaine Showalter

Elaine Showalter: A Biographical Note

Elaine Showalter is one of the pioneers of feminist literary criticism in America. Born Elaine Cottler in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1941, she grew up in the suburbs of Boston. She pursued an academic career against the wishes of her parents. She received a BA in English from Bryn Mawr College (1962), an MA from Brandeis University (1964) and received her Ph.D. from the University of California at Davis (1970). Her academic honors include a Guggenheim fellowship (1977-78) and a Rockefeller Humanities fellowship (1981-82).

She claims to have "never met a feminist when I was growing up, never even met a 'career girl.'" This, however, did not hinder her from initiating one of the first women's studies programmes in the US, at Rutgers University. She came into critical prominence with the publication of her path breaking work, A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Brontë to Lessing, in 1977. Apart from charting a history of women writing tradition in Britain, this work also tried to evolve a terminology for the theorization of feministic reading and writing strategies, thus developing the concept and practice of gynocriticism. Moreover, it was her questioning of the Virginia Woolf as a feminist that became the most contentious aspect of her criticism.

Currently she is a Professor of English at Princeton University.

Her major works include:

1. A Literature of their Own: British Novelist from Brontë to Lessing, *1977. (Herein she plots the History of Women writing in Britain, and plots the contours of Gynocriticism)*
2. The Female Malady: Women, Madness, and English Culture *(1830-1980), 1986. (This book is an examination of British psychiatry's mistreatment of women, covering the period from 1830 to 1980)*

3. Hystories: Hysterical Epidemics and Modern Media, *1998. (In this book the author argues that many modern woes are the products of therapeutic suggestions and media prompting.)*
4. Inventing Herself, *her latest book, is a collection of short biographies of feminist icons from Mary Wollstonecraft to Princess Diana.*

Showalter's "Feminist criticism in the wilderness": An Explanatory Reading

Elaine Showalter wrote this essay in 1981. This essay, along with "Towards a feministic poetics" that she had written in 1979, contains the essence of her theoretical observations on feminist literary theory. In "Feminist criticism in the wilderness," she not only recapitulates thematic concerns of her earlier essay, i.e., "feminist critique" and "gynocriticism" as two forms of feminist criticism, but extends it further, by mapping four main offshoots of gynocriticism: biological, linguistic, psychoanalytic and cultural criticism.

Showalter begins "Feminist criticism in the wilderness" by emphasizing the need for the establishment of feminist critical theory. She locates the cause of this critical 'wilderness' (i.e., the lack of well-nuanced critical focus) in feminist suspicious aversion of theory as a delimiting, "falsely objective," and homogenizing male logos. Showalter explains early obstacles in feministic literary theorizations in America thus: "An early obstacle to constructing a theoretical framework for feminist criticism was the unwillingness of many women to limit or bound an expressive and dynamic enterprise. The openness of feminist criticism appealed particularly to Americans who perceived the structuralist, post-structuralist, and deconstructionist debate of the 1970s as arid and falsely objective, the epitome of pernicious masculine discourse from which feminist wished to escape." She herself believes that androcentric models of literary theory tend to co-opt women in masculine codes. The models deny woman the uniqueness of her experience and are irrelevant: "So long as we look to androcentric models for our most basic principles – even if we revise them by adding the feminist frame of references – we are learning nothing new." Taking due cognizance of the 'masculism' inherent in Theory, she nonetheless, feels that until a "truly feminist" theoretical base backs feminist criticism, it will remain in the wilderness.

Thus, a feminist historian as she is – and realizing the political and academic implication of what she terms as a feminist "theoretical impasse" – she traces an evolutionary pattern through this "wilderness." Showalter perceives two distinct feministic critical streams – "feminist critique" and "gynocriticism" – that emerge from this wilderness. Showalter sees these as two distinct modes of feminist criticism with distinct theoretical potentialities.

The first type, i.e., feminist critique, is ideological. It is concerned with the feminist/woman as a reader. It basically deals with works of male authors, and as Showalter tells us in "Towards a feminist poetics," is a "historically grounded inquiry that probes the ideological assumptions of literary phenomena." The female as reader here is generally placed in the position of a revisionist interpreter. It offers feminist readings of 'texts' which consider the images and stereotypes of women in literature, the omissions and misconceptions about women writing in criticism, and woman-as-sign in semiotic systems. This is not all that a feminist reading can do; it can be a liberating intellectual act. Feminist reading or feminist critique is in essence a mode of interpretation, one of many that any complex text will accommodate and permit.

Showalter however feels that "It is very difficult to propose a theoretical coherence in an activity [i.e., interpretation] which by its nature is so eclectic and wide ranging."

The second type, which for Showalter constitutes the true core of feminist criticism, she labels as "gynocriticism". She sees it as a move away from revisionist readings and towards a sustained investigation of literature by women. It focuses on **women** as **writers**. Its subjects are the history, styles, themes, genres, and structures of writing by women; the psychodynamics of female creativity; the trajectory of individual or collective female career; and the evolution and laws of female literary tradition.

Unlike feminist critique, which is mainly interpretive reading, gynocriticism offers many theoretical opportunities.

As a critical project, gynocriticism not only posits **the primacy of women writing** as a **primary focus of female critical endeavour**, it also conceptualises women writing in terms of **gender difference**. Both these facts necessitate

conceptual reorientation and redefinition of the theoretical problem: How to constitute women as a distinct literary group? What is the **difference** of women's writing?

Showalter's critical theorization, thus has a twin object: To theorize women's writing in terms of difference and then to posit a critical method, feminist in intent, that could be used to analyse this difference. In other words, the gynocriticism she advocates is premised on a particular definition of the "feminine." Gynocriticism implies evaluating women's texts in terms of this definition of the feminine, i.e., how "femininity" has shaped/shapes women's creative expression and critical evaluation.

Having defined the creative and critical parameters of gynocriticism, Showalter next elucidates how European and American feministic locations are trying to understand and constitute the concept of 'feminine difference'. Though she discerns an overall shift from androcentric to gynocentric feminist criticism, she, nevertheless, recognises the presence of different streams - merely a result of different perspectives/emphases employed in defining the difference – within this broader theoretical shift: **"The emphasis in each country falls somewhat differently: English feminist criticism, essentially Marxist, stresses oppression; French feminist criticism, essentially psychoanalytic, stresses repression; American feminist criticism, essentially textual, stresses expression. All however, have become gynocentric. All struggle to find a terminology that can rescue the feminine from its stereotypical associations with inferiority."**

Using one of the offshoots of French gynocriticism, i.e., ecriture feminine as an illustration, Showalter tries to explicate how it constitutes the " feminine difference": " The concept of ecriture feminine, the inscription of the female body and female difference in language and text, is a significant theoretical formulation in French feminist criticism, although it describes a Utopian possibility rather than a literary practice ...Nonetheless, the concept of ecriture feminine provides a way of talking about women's writing which reasserts the value of the feminine and identifies the theoretical project of feminist criticism as the analysis of difference."

Theories of women writing, according to Showalter, presently (it has to be kept in mind that Showalter was studying her 'gynocritical' case in 1981) make use of **four models of difference: biological, linguistic, psychoanalytic, and cultural.** She makes a detailed presentation of these differences under four headings:

1. Women's writing and women's body (gynocriticism premised on biological gender difference)
2. Women's writing and women's language (gynocriticism that theorises difference in terms of distinct feminine language)
3. Women's writing and women's psyche (gynocriticism that takes off from psychoanalysis)
4. Women's writing and women's culture (the most comprehensive model of gynocriticism, rooted in the concept of unique feminine culture)

Women's writing and women's body

This is how Showalter develops her explanation under this head:

Also called organic criticism, **biological criticism is the most extreme statement** of gender difference: a text indelibly marked by the body: anatomy is textuality.

It is one of the **most perplexing** theoretical formulations in feministic theory. To invoke it is to risk a return to crude essentialism, **the phallic and ovarian theory** of art that oppressed women in the past.

While most feminists reject the attribution of literal biological inferiority, some seem to accept the metaphorical implications of female biological difference in writing. Feminist like Gilbert and Gubar, for example, conclude that women writing is informed by lack (no phallic authority) and is thus marked by anxiety of difference. The title of their critical thesis, "The Madwoman in the Attic," makes this anxiety of women's writing explicit.

Showalter finds this analogy ('pen as penis as an instrument of regenerative power which is explicit in Gilbert and Gubar's theorization of women's literature) and its positing of the difference of women writing oppressive. Such a theory of literature (writing as an act of insemination) is as oppressive and essentialist as the 'maternity theory' of literature (writing as an act of gestation, labour and delivery).

Some feminists insist that these metaphors may be read as more than playful; that [they] must seriously rethink and redefine biological differentiation and its relation to women's writing. "They argue that 'women's writing proceed from the body, that [their] sexual differentiation is also their source', rather than [their] destiny".

Feminist criticism written in the biological perspective generally stresses the importance of **body as a source of imagery**. Contemporary American women writers use franker, more pervasive anatomical imagery than their male counterparts. This insistent body language, feminists assert, refuses the spurious transcendence that comes [in male writing] at the price of denying the flesh.

Biological Feminist criticism tends to write from the critic's body. It is intimate, confessional, and often innovative in style and form. Showalter sees this gyno-critical tendency as a double-edged sword. In its failure, this criticism makes itself **defiantly vulnerable to canonical judgement.** But when it succeeds it achieves the power and dignity of art.

Another shortcoming of this "feminist biocriticism" is that "in its obsession with the 'corporeal ground of our intelligence' it can also become prescriptive".

Finally, Showalter thinks that though the "ideas about the body are fundamental to understanding how women conceptualise their situation in society...there can be no expression of the body which is unmediated by linguistic, social and literary structures." Quoting Miller, she postulates, "The difference of woman's literary practice must be sought in the 'body of her writing and not the writing of her body.'"

Women's writing and women's language

In this section the contours of Showalter's argument emerge thus:

Debate over language is one of most exciting areas of gynocriticism. While drawing attention to the philosophical, linguistic, and practical problems of women's use of language, the linguistic and textual theories of women's writing try to tackle such questions as: "Do men/women use language differently; whether sex differences in language use can be theorised in terms of biology, socialization, or culture; whether women can create new language of their own; and whether speaking, reading and writing are all gender marked?"

Some feminists argue that languages are inherently sexist: They embed and perpetuate male-centred biases. As women find themselves forcibly immersed in this linguistic milieu, they are unwittingly appropriated by its predominantly male-centric categorizations. Feminists have, thus, increasingly directed their attention to the "inherently oppressive aspects for women of a male-constructed language system." Understanding language as a construction, these feminists then seek to reconstruct it so as to escape masculine oppression. They advocate a deliberate subversion/inversion of the language in literature forging textual strategies that are digressive, vis-à-vis male textual strategies.

French feminists emphasise that men and women use language differently. This difference springs from the difference in body. They advocate that this difference has to be exploited textually and politically as a celebration of women's difference: "Language is the place to begin: a prise de conscience [capture the consciousness] must be followed by a prise de la parole [capture the speech]...In this view, the very form of dominant modes of discourse show the mark of the dominant masculine ideology. Hence when a woman writes or speaks herself into existence, she is forced to speak in something like a foreign tongue, a language with which she may be uncomfortable."

It is through the medium of language that one defines and categorizes areas of difference and similarity, which in turn allows one to comprehend the world around oneself and also demarcate one's position within it.

Many French feminists advocate a revolutionary linguism, an oral break from the dictatorship of patriarchal speech. They tend to connect biofeminism with linguism.

There is another stream of feminist scholars who, as Showalter puts it, "want [to create] a women's language that is intellectual and theoretical, and that works inside the academy." They obviously are faced with a paradox: 'As long as women remain silent, they will be outside the historical process. But if they begin to speak and write as men do, they will enter history subdued and alienated; it is a history that, logically speaking, their speech should disrupt'. To resolve this impasse these critics propose a "reinvention" of language through a simultaneous use and deconstructive undercutting of the male language.

Showalter, however, finds these solutions rhetorical and the feminist problematisation of 'language-difference' unoriginal. According to her, the problematic of women's language is very old. It appeared frequently in ancient folklore and myths; in these the essence of women's language was thought to lay in its 'secrecy'. Such descriptions, however,

were rooted in male perspective that wanted to highlight the enigmatic nature of the feminine. In certain cultures women, Showalter tells us, had evolved a private form of communication out of their need to resist the silences imposed upon them in public life.

The issue of language difference was also a part of the politics and history of decolonisation.

Showalter does not negate the significance of the ways language issue has been theorized. But she tends to foreground this advocacy of women's language as a "political gesture that carries tremendous emotional force." But despite its unifying appeal, this concept of women's language is riddled with difficulties. Some of the difficulties are enumerated by Showalter as under:

1. "There is absolutely no evidence that would suggest the sexes are programmed to develop structurally different linguistic systems."
2. "Furthermore, the many specific differences in male and female speech, intonation, and language use that have been identified can not be explained in terms of two separate sexspecific languages', but need to be considered in terms of styles, strategies, and contexts of linguistic performance."
3. "Language and style are never raw and instinctual but are always the product of innumerable factors, of genres, tradition, memory, and context."

After surveying the trajectories of various 'feminist theories of language difference', and the subsequent consideration of their limitations, Showalter proposes that:

1. **" [T]he appropriate task for feminist criticism...is to concentrate on women's access to language, on the available lexical range from which words can be selected, on the ideological and cultural determinants of expression. The problem is not that language is insufficient to express women's consciousness but that women have been denied the full resources of language and have been forced into silence, euphemism, or circumlocution".**
2. "Rather then wishing to limit women's linguistic range, we must fight to open and extend it. The holes in discourse, the blanks and gaps and silences, are not the spaces where female consciousness reveals itself but the blinds of 'prison-house of language.' Women's writing is still haunted by the ghosts of repressed language, and until we exorcise those ghosts, it ought not be in language that we base our theory of difference."

Women's writing and women's psyche

"Psychoanalytically oriented feminist criticism locates the **difference of women's writing** in the author's psyche and in **the relation of gender to creative process**." According to Showalter, the psychoanalytic model of women's writing is an advance over previously discussed models in the sense that it includes both of them within its theorization of the difference of women's writing: "It incorporates the biological and linguistic models of gender difference in a theory of female psyche or self, shaped by the body, by the development of language, and the sex-role socialization."

The psychoanalytic model mainly comprises two streams, Freudian and Lacanian. The Psychoanalytic criticism has generally "focused on the absent phallus." Penis envy, castration complex, and the Oedipal phase have become the Freudian coordinates defining women's relationship to language, fantasy and culture. Lacanian stream of French feminism has extended castration into total metaphor for female literary and linguistic disadvantage. Lacan theorizes that the acquisition of language and entry into symbolic order occurs at the Oedipal phase in which the child accepts his or her gender identity. This stage requires an acceptance of the phallus as a privileged **signification** (language) and consequent female displacement.

One of the major difficulties of this model, in feminist theorization arises from its focus on '**lack**'. In psychoanalytic terms '**lack**' is associated with feminine. Feminist critics, though aware of the potential of psychoanalytic criticism, have to encounter these notions of feminine disadvantage and lack, so as to make psychoanalysis models truly gynocentric.

One-way of negotiation is offered by Gilbert and Gubar in The Madwoman in the Attic. In their view, the nature and difference of women's writing lies in its troubled and even tormented relationship to female identity.

Some feminist critics, like Annis Pratt, Barabara Rigney, etc., have tried a theorization difference by working within psychoanalytic frames alternative to Freudian theory.

Then there are some feminists who have tried to explore the possibilities of a new feminist psychoanalysis that does not revise Freud but instead emphasise the development and construction of gender identities. Showalter sees such critics as working outside the Freudian paradigms to counter Freud. For example Nancy Chodorow's The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and Society (1978) revises the psychoanalytic concepts of differentiation by which the child comes to perceive the self as separate and to develop ego and body boundaries to posit an affirmative identity to female. The child develops core gender identity concomitant with differentiation, but the process is not the same for boys and girls. A boy must learn his gender identity negatively as being 'not female', and this difference requires continual reinforcement. In contrast, a girl's core gender identity is positive and built upon sameness, continuity and identification with the mother. Women's difficulties with feminine identity come after pre-Oedipal phase, in which male power and cultural hegemony give sex differences a transformed value. Chadorow's work suggests that shared parenting, the involvement of men as primary caretakers of children, will have profound effect on our sense of sex difference, gender identity, and sexual preference.

Having discussed various streams of psychoanalytic feminism, Showalter turns to the question of their significance for feminist literary criticism. One thematic carry over of Chadorow's theorization has been the critical interest in the mother daughter configuration as a source of female creativity. It has led to the foregrounding of the psychodynamics of female bonding in women's writing. This aspect has challenged Bloom's paradigm of literary history. Abel, for example, sees a "triadic female pattern" in which the Oedipal relation to the male tradition is balanced by the women writers' pre-Oedipal relation to the female tradition. "As the dynamics of female friendship differ from those of male, Abel concludes, "the dynamics of female literary influence also diverge and deserve a theory of influence attuned to female psychology and to woman's dual position in literary history."

However, despite its strengths this "gyno-psychoanalytic criticism" results in a kind of immutable tradition, where commonalities of women's literature are stressed but differences of women's culture cannot be explained.

Women's writing and women's culture

Showalter terms it as the cultural model of gynocriticism. She considers this to be the most comprehensive model. It not only includes in its sweep, all of the previously discussed strands of feminist theorization, but can also account for **specificities and difference of women's writing** (that is women's writing is a specific kind of writing and that it is a different kind of writing) as it analyses feminine-experience/writing in relation to the social contexts in which they occur.

Showalter argues that the way women conceptualise their bodies and their sexual and reproductive functions are intricately linked to their **cultural environment**. In addition cultural theory acknowledges that there are important differences between women as writers. Class, race, nationality, and history are literary determinants as significant as gender.

She further argues that women's culture, though a part of the total reality, is different from it. It (women's culture) forms a collective experience over time and space. It is in the emphasis on the binding force of women's culture that this approach differs from Marxist theories of cultural hegemony. This way Showalter distinguishes her model of culture from Marxian model.

Showalter then evaluates various cultural models/hypotheses put forward by various schools in order to arrive at a model that is most suitable for her brand of gynocriticism. She is basically looking for a model that can transcend the 'trap' of masculine systems, hierarchies, and values, and simultaneously reveal/get at the primary and self-defined nature of female cultural experience.

Showalter argues that for defining female culture, historians distinguish between the roles, activities, tastes, and behaviours, and functions actually generated of women's lives.

In Victorian era, this distinction between men and women was conceptualised in terms of separate, though complementary, cultural spheres. As "women's sphere was defined and maintained by men," women only "internalised its precepts" as a true marker of femininity. This model is irrelevant for her, as it robs woman of her independent entity.

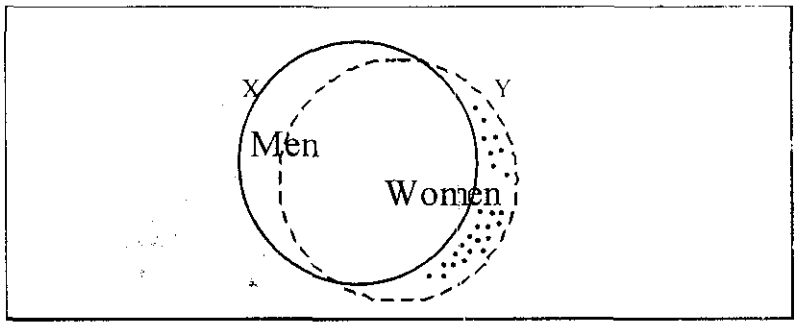
For Showalter, Women's culture necessarily redefines women's activities and goals from women-centric point of view. The term implies an assertion of equality and an awareness of sisterhood, the community of women. It refers to broad-based community of values, institutions, relationships, and methods of communications unifying female experience.

Showalter concedes that some feminists have accepted the model of separate spheres and have seen the movement 'from women's sphere to women's culture to women's-rights activism, as the consecutive stages of an evolutionary political process. But she also finds another feministic trajectory (exemplified by Lerner) that "see[s] a more complex and perpetual negotiation-taking place between women's culture and general culture."

But the model that holds maximum potential for Showalter is the one postulated by Shirley and Edwin Ardener. Ardeners argue, "Women constitute a muted group, the boundaries of whose culture and reality overlap, but are not wholly contained by, the dominant (male) group." Showalter finds the postulates of this model "crucial to understanding both how they are perceived by the dominant group and how they perceive themselves and others." It not only transcends the limitations of earlier models, mostly androcentric, for the analysis of female experience: " In the past, female experience which could not be accommodated by androcentric models was treated as deviant or simply ignored. Observations from exterior point of view could not be the same as comprehension from within. Ardener's model has many connections to and implications for current feminist literary theory, since the concept of perception, silence, and silencing are central to discussions of women's participation in literary culture."

Diagrammatically Ardener's model can be represented as:

Ardener's Model



Ardener's model plots the muted (female) and dominant (Male) group as intersecting circles – X and Y – within the social totality. The crescent of women's circle that lies outside the dominant (Men) circle is termed as wild. The wild zone of women's culture can be thought of spatially (no-man's land/place forbidden for men), experientially (that is in terms of those female life styles which are outside of and unlike those of men), or metaphysically (or in terms of consciousness). The wild crescent, from men's point of view, is always imaginary, simply a projection of the unconscious.

Showalter then discusses some of the feminist theories in the context of Ardner's model. and shows how these theorizations are deficient.

Some feminists – whose shared project is to bring into being the symbolic weight of female consciousness, to make the invisible visible, to make the silent speak – think that the wild zone/female space must be the address of genuinely women centred criticism, theory, and art. French Feminist critics would like to make the wild zone the theoretical base of women's difference. Through voluntary entry into the wild zone, a woman can write her way out of the 'cramped confines of patriarchal space'. The images of this authenticating journey manifest in women writing.

Many forms of American radical feminism also romantically assert that women are closer to nature, to the environment, to the matriarchal principle at once biological and ecological. Working on this premise, that is obviously rooted in the 'wild zone' of Ardener's model many writers, notably Margaret Atwood, tend to build utopias, fantastic and idyllic enclaves, full of independence in their writing.

But for Showalter the presence of these fantasies of an idyllic enclave in feministic writing and criticism, have only a 'historical" significance. She rather insists on the recognition that, "we must also understand that there can be no writing or criticism totally outside the dominant structure; no publication is fully independent from the economic and political pressures of male dominated society. The concept of women's text in the wild zone is a playful abstraction; in reality, to which one should address as critic".

In reality, women's writing is a double voiced discourse that always embodies the social, literary, and cultural heritages of both the muted and the dominant. Every feminist writer and critic shares this heritage; every step that feminist criticism takes towards defining women's writing is a step towards self understanding as well; every account of a female literary culture and female literary tradition has parallel significance for our own place in critical history and critical tradition.

Showalter concludes that "women writing are not, then, inside and outside of the male tradition; they are inside two traditions simultaneously." In other words, she advocates that the "feminist criticism must poise itself on this border and must see women's writing in its changing historical and cultural relation to that other body of texts identified by feminist criticism not simply as literature but as men's writing." This is, then, the lesson gynocriticism must draw from Ardener's model of women's cultural sphere.

Another advantage of this model is that it helps understand the difference of women's writing in terms of complex and historically grounded cultural relation. An important aspect of this is the recognition that there are muted groups other than women. It also helps expose the complex and varied dynamics of how dominant structure may determine many muted structures.

Based on this awareness of women's culture and its complex interaction with dominant culture, Showalter defines the task of gynocentric criticism thus:

The task of gynocentric criticism is to plot the precise cultural locus of female literary identity and to describe the forces that intersect an individual woman writer's cultural field. A gynocentric criticism would also situate women writers with respect to the variable of literary culture, such as modes of production and distribution, relations of the author and audience, relations of high and popular art, and hierarchies of genres.

Showalter enumerates the salutatory impacts of gynocriticism thus:

1. According to Showalter gynocriticism enriches literary criticism by providing another perspective on literary history. This perspective, being more sensitive to women writing, help rehabilitate many feminist genres. Androcentric literary history has tended to erase the importance of these genres.
2. It has generated a new view on the power of women's fiction to feminize 19th century American culture. And feminist culture has reformulated the place of female writers in literary history. For example, it has made scholars realise that Woolf belonged to a tradition other than modernism and that this tradition surfaces in her work precisely in those places where criticism has hitherto found obscurities, evasion, implausibility and imperfections in her work. Such a reformulation and re-evaluation of Woolf's work highlights the tacit assumption of gynocriticism that the evaluation of women's work requires identification with women's experience, and this is facilitated by gynocriticism.
3. Gynocriticism also recognises the fact that "our current theory of literary influences also needs to be tested in terms of women's writing. Woman's text is not only mothered but also parented, it confronts both paternal and maternal precursors and must deal with the problems and advantages of both lines of inheritance."
4. "One of the great advantages of women's culture-model is that it shows how the female tradition can be a positive source of strength and solidarity as well as negative source of powerlessness; it can generate its own symbols which are not simply the obverse of the male tradition.

She also hints at the possible strategies which cultural model of women's difference - as enunciated by gynocriticism – makes available:

1. One implication of this model is that women's fiction can be read as a double voiced discourse, containing a dominant and muted story, as palimpsest.
2. Another interpretive strategy for feminist criticism might be the contextual analysis that the cultural anthropologist

Greetz calls '**thick description**'. A genuinely thick description of women's writing would insist upon gender and upon literary tradition among the multiple strata that make up the force of meaning in a text. No description could ever be thick enough to account for all the factors that go into the work of art. But we could work towards completeness, even as an unattainable ideal.

Finally, Showalter concludes with the following advice:

1. Cultural model is useful but should not replace other models of feminist criticism.
2. No theory, however suggestive, can be a substitute for the close and extensive knowledge of women's texts, which constitutes our essential subject.
3. Cultural anthropology and social history can perhaps offer us terminology and a diagram of women's cultural situation. But feminist criticism must use this concept in relation to what women actually write, not in relation to the theoretical, political, metaphoric, or visionary ideals of what women ought to write.

Understanding the Terminology used by Showalter:

Androcentrism: It denotes a system of thought centred around male identity and values. Within Androcentrism the female constitutes a deviation from the norm defined by reference to the male. The androcentrism of English language is apparent. For example, the 'mankind' is a term used to refer to all people regardless of their gender. Androcentrism is the defining feature of the patriarchal order.

Androgyny: In Greek 'andro' is male and 'gyn' is female. Together it signifies a fluidity in the assignation of gender linked characteristics. Virginia Woolf claimed that androgynous consciousness was a precondition for effective writing. But Showalter rejects this stance. She argues in *A Literature of Their Own* that the concept of androgyny enabled Woolf to "evade confrontation with her own painful femaleness". Showalter, in effect, sees the recognition of the femaleness as an essential quality of gynocriticism.

Binary Opposition: A pair of terms differentiated by their opposition to one another. Examples would include yin yang, light/dark, masculine/feminine, up/down, and gay/straight, but also more subtle oppositions such as sea blue/cyan, vigilante/villain, and slacker/stoner. Saussure's linguistics implies that binary oppositions organize all language, and Derrida's thought maintains that these oppositions are unstable. Deconstruction demonstrates this underlying instability or play in binary oppositions.

(The) Other: A term from French philosophy that has several, sometimes overlapping meanings in cultural studies, including anthropology and psychoanalysis.

1. Most commonly, another person or group of people who are defined as different or even sub-human to consolidate a group's identity. For example, the Nazi's internal cohesion depended in part on how they defined themselves against (strove to maintain distinctions from) their image of the Jews. In this sense, "The other" is the devalued half of a binary opposition when it is applied to groups of people.
2. **A "specular" other:** In the thought of Jacques Lacan, human infants have an image of themselves as whole before they actually have control over their bodies. This "mirror phase" in their development gives them an image of wholeness to strive for, but it is also alienating because the image in the mirror does not match their burping, defecating reality. Presumably we might spend our entire life trying to achieve a kind of wholeness and integration, this time on a psychic level, that is ultimately at odds with how our brains and bodies, and certainly language, works. For this reason, images of our doubles may be experienced as threatening and sinister
3. **The "symbolic" Other:** The Other that is always capitalized. For Jacques Lacan and many other French philosophers, to be is to speak, but to speak is use a system of representations that precede us. To the extent that our inner thought processes (how we *represent* ourselves and our experience to ourselves) are shaped by language, we are as much "spoken" or "inscribed" as we are speaking. In this account, our consciousness is created by a kind of intrusion from the outside, a kind of alien Other that structures our subjectivity

The Phallus: While all of them agree it's important, some critics say the term "the Phallus" in Lacan's work has as many as eight meanings and some as few as one meaning. One thing everyone pretty much agrees on, though, is that

Lacan *tries* to maintain a distinction between the Phallus as a signifier privileged male attributes, and the penis, as a spongy little organ that can't live up to the Phallus's inflated claims.

Écriture Féminine: The focus in the so-called French school of feminist criticism on the existence of a distinctive "woman's language." (Compare gynocriticism.)

Gynocritics/Gynocriticism: Term coined by Elaine Showalter for feminist criticism focusing on literary works written by women. Such criticism challenges the traditionally patriarchal literary canon by retrieving and reassessing texts by women, thus tracing a female tradition in literature. Gynocriticism frequently emphasizes the evolving female consciousness reflected in literature and explores the ways in which women writers have comprised and aided "a world of their own" (Showalter's phrase).

Phallocentric: **centered on the masculine.**

Phallogocentricism: This term is a combination of phallocentricism and logocentricism. It connects patriarchal authority and self-legitimating systems of thought which define themselves in relation to an authoritative center. This center is the unchallengeable source of linguistic meaning. Phallogocentricism represents a form of double-bind to the female subject, who is constituted linguistically by a male lexicon which makes masculinity the measure of normality.

Resisting Reader: In reader-response criticism, one who rebels against the perspective the text would seem to impose upon the reader. This is the strategy that Showalter (and Spivak too) advocates for in feminist critique.

Lack: This concept was first developed by Freud to explain the emergence and stabilisation of sexuality in men and women. Before the Oedipal crisis, that is before the child understands the relationship between mother and father, one has a blissful relationship of psychic plenitude with the mother in which one experiences no loss or lack. It is only with the primary repression of desire for the mother, which brings the unconscious into being and marks one's entry into full subjecthood, that one experiences lack. For feminist, however, it is Freud's theory of feminine sexuality as lack that has been most often attacked. Sexual difference is understood as having/not having a penis, and therefore is defined as lack, an incomplete or castrated man and victim of penis envy. This idea has been hotly debated in feminism.

Showalter as a Critic: A Critique

As a feminist literary historian and a critic, Elaine Showalter has imparted Anglo-American literary criticism the rigour of academics and passion of activism. She has constantly endeavoured to trace the trajectory of Western women writing and the attendant critical theorization that has marked this evolution. As a pioneer in her field, she has also struggled to forge a critical terminology to classify and differentiate the contours of this ever-evolving creative critical corpus. The aim has been to present a nuanced understanding of what she calls as "women in writing and the writing by women". In the process she has also unveiled a blue print for feministic poetics.

Women's literary history, feminist creativity and feminist critical praxis – these form the three distinct yet overlapping co-ordinates of Showalter's feministic poetics. All the three have been premised on a classificatory schema.

In **A Literature of Their Own**, Elaine Showalter shows how women's literature in Britain has evolved, starting from the Victorian period to modern writing. She visualizes it as a movement with three distinct stages – **the Feminine** (a period beginning with the use of the male pseudonym in the 1840s until 1880 with George Eliot's death); **the Feminist** (from 1880 till the winning of the vote in 1920); and **the Female** (from 1920 till the present-day, including a "new stage of self-awareness about 1960").

She discusses these phases in junction with other women literary subcultures ("such as black, Jewish... or even American") and to find how women's writing has developed 'as a whole'. This comparative mode makes her realize that a 'female solidarity always seemed to exist in women's writing. She imputes this to female writers' commonality of experience and feminine awareness in mind. For her, women's writing and women's experiences "implied unities of culture."

In the Feminine phase – which includes women writers such as the Brontes, Elizabeth Gaskell and Elizabeth Barrett Browning – Showalter finds in each subculture, and thus in women's literature, first a long period of imitation of the dominant structures of tradition and an "internalization of its standards of art and its views on social roles." These women attempted to integrate themselves into a public sphere, a male tradition, and many of them felt a conflict of

"obedience and resistance" which appears in many of their novels. Oddly enough, during the Victorian period women novels flooded the market and comprised a healthy segment of the reading public. Still, women writers were left "metaphorically paralyzed."

In the Feminist phase (the second stage), Showalter sees a tendency in women's writing to lash out against the traditional standards and values. Women writers seem to be vocal in demanding their rights and increasingly stress that their/women's sovereignty be recognized. Women writers, through their literature, employed varying angles of attack – in the form of social commentaries, translating their own sufferings to those of the poor, the laboring class, slaves, and prostitutes, thereby venting their sense of injustice in an acceptable manner. They expanded their sphere of influence by making inroads into social work. The 'Sensation novels' of Mary Braddon, Rhoda Broughton and Florence Marryat, in 1870s, "explored genuinely radical female protest against marriage and women's economic oppression. But the protest is evoked in the framework of feminine conventions that demanded the erring heroine's destruction." Militant suffragists, such as Sarah Grand, George Egerton, Mona Caird, Elizabeth Robins, also wrote prolifically during this protest phase of literature. They made "fiction the vehicle for a dramatization of wronged womanhood... demand[ing] changes in the social and political systems that would grant women male privileges and require chastity and fidelity from men." On the whole, Showalter, however, does not recognize these women's writings as examples of fine literature. Their projects concerned themselves more with a message than the creation of art, though their rejection of male-imposed definitions and self-imposed oppression opened the doors for the exploration of female identity, feminist theory, and the female aesthetics.

The third period, then, is characterized by a self-discovery and some freedom "from some of the dependency of opposition" as a means for self-definition. Some writers end up turning inward during the subsequent search for identity. In the early half of Female phase of writing, it "carried... the double legacy of feminine self-hatred and feminist withdrawal...[turning] more and more toward a separatist literature of inner space." Dorothy Richardson, Katherine Mansfield, and Virginia Woolf worked towards a female aesthetics, elevating sexuality to a world-polarizing determination. Moreover, the female experience and its creative processes held mystic implications – both transcendental and self-destructive vulnerability. These women "applied the cultural analysis of the feminists [before them] to words, sentences, and structures of language in the novel." However, Showalter criticizes their works for their androgynistic natures. For all its concern with sexual connotations and sexuality, the writing avoids actual contact with the body, disengaging from people into "a room of one's own."

This changed when the female novel entered a new stage in the 1960s. With twentieth-century Freudian and Marxist analysis and two centuries of female tradition. Writers such as Iris Murdock, Muriel Spark, Doris Lessing, Margaret Drabble, and A.S. Byatt Express women's experiences, using previously taboo language and situations such as sexuality "as sources of female creative power." Showalter's analysis shows how the progress of women's writing reached this phase and expresses all the conflicts and struggles still influencing the current of women's literature.

Besides an analysis of historical evolution, Showalter in A Literature of Their Own, proposes a multi-part model of the growth of feminist theory. It outlines dominant feminist methodologies. She shows that it has evolved through parallel stages. Six versions of its history are:

7. Androgynist poetics dedicated to effacing gender differences
8. The feminist critique of male culture
9. 'A Female Aesthetic' celebrating women's culture
10. Gynocriticism, or study of traditions of women writing
11. Gynesic, or poststructuralist feminist criticism, focusing on "the feminine" as a category within culture, and
12. Gender theory

These concerns are however explored with more lucidity in the essays such as "Towards feministic poetics" and "Feministic criticism in wilderness."

Androgynist poetics, having relations and perhaps roots in mid-Victorian women's writing of imitation, contends that the creative mind is sexless, and the very foundation of describing a female tradition in writing was sexist. Critics of

this vein found gender as imprisoning, nor believed that gender had a bearing in the content of writing. Imagination is too broad to be hemmed in by gender. However, from the 1970s on, most feminist critics have rejected the notion of genderless mind, finding that the "imagination" cannot evade the conscious or unconscious structures of gender. Gender is part of that culture-determination. Such a position emphasizes "the impossibility of separating the imagination from a socially, sexually, and historically positioned self." This movement of thought allowed for a feminist critique as critics attacked the meaning of sexual difference in a patriarchal society/ideology. Images of male-wrought representations of women (stereotypes and exclusions) came under fire, as was the "'division, oppression, inequality, [and] interiorized inferiority for women.'"

"Towards feministic poetics" and "Feministic criticism in wilderness." take off at this moment. In "Toward a Feminist Poetics," Elaine Showalter sets out to offer an introduction to feminist criticism by comparing two types: the feminist critique and gynocriticism.

The feminist critique focuses on woman as a reader of male-produced and male-oriented texts. As "a historically grounded inquiry," the feminist critique probes the engendered "ideological assumptions" of literature. It evaluates the "sexual codes" of the literary text and explores how "the hypothesis of a female reader" affects an assessment of meaning. Such criticism is "essentially political and polemical," but Showalter concludes that it is still male-oriented. The subject being studied is not a woman's experience, but "what men have thought woman should be".

Showalter argues that the focus of feminist criticism should not be delineated by male perceptions and assumptions. Rather, it should be on the woman's experience. Literature written by women inevitably contains just that. Because of their "educational, experiential, and biological handicaps," women develop their "sympathy, sentiment, and powers of observation" to bring the substance and significance of the female experience to readers. In women's literature, these qualities become what Virginia Woolf termed the "'precious specialty,' [of] a distinctly female vision."

Showalter identifies the "precious specialty" as the essential focus of gynocriticism. Concerning itself with woman as a writer, gynocritics approach woman as "the producer of textual meaning." From this view, literary criticism must create and elucidate new models that are based on female experiences. The "precious specialty" of feminist criticism is in part a result of the relationships that women have with one another. Description and evaluation of this female subculture can lead to a framework for the new models of analysis. Gynocriticism is based upon "research in history, anthropology, psychology, and sociology, all of which developed hypotheses of a female subculture".

In "Feministic-criticism in wilderness", Showalter apart from reiterating her earlier position about the "two forms of feminist criticism," also attempts a detailed presentation of what she takes to be the four main directions of present day feminist criticism: biological, linguistic, psychoanalytic and cultural criticism (For details see the previous section).

As a literary critic, Showalter underlines the establishment of a theory. She employs a division between 'feminist critique' (she also calls it feminist reading) and 'gynocriticism'. Yet at the same time she is aware of the vulnerability this need for theory brings to her position as a feminist. She sees it in terms of male logos that, in the past, had tended to appropriate female creativity and critical understanding within its androcentric categories. This seeming conflict puts her –as a critic – in a dicey situation. Showalter says: "It is very difficult to propose theoretical coherence in an activity [i.e., interpretation] which by its nature is so eclectic and wide-ranging, although as a critical practice feminist reading has certainly been very influential." Toril Moi, an influential feminist critic herself, sees in this Showaltrian posturing an attempt to evade the "intractable 'male questions like: What is interpretation? What does it mean to read? What is the text?" This evasion seems escapist when Showalter is trying to delineate a critical position that directly confronts male theoretical practice.

According to Toril Moi, Showalter fails to sufficiently argue or elaborate in detail the dichotomy that she constantly creates between 'male critical theory' and her 'gynocriticism.' In the lack of this theoretical 'non-articulation' her own theoretical premises become suspect, and are many a times rendered contradictory and ambiguous. Toril Moi provides an illustration of this incompatibility thus: "while she denounces the 'white fathers', Lacan, Macherley and Engels [in "Feministic criticism in wilderness"], she ends up by extolling as particularly suitable for gynocritical activity the cultural theory developed by Edwin Ardener and Clifford Geertz. Despite a token excuse for this inconsistency ('I don't mean...to enthrone Ardener and Geertz as the new white fathers in place of Freud, Lacan and Bloom'), she

nevertheless manages by this gesture to bemuse the reader who has followed her so far. Should the aspiring gynocritic use 'male theory or should she not? Showalter's final answer to this question is frankly evasive, based as it is on the dubious contrast between 'theory' and 'knowledge': "No theory, however suggestive, can be a substitute for the close and extensive knowledge of women's texts which constitutes our essential subject". [Toril Moi here quotes Showalter from "Feministic criticism in wilderness"]. "But what 'knowledge' is ever uninformed by theoretical assumption

Showalter aims to create a separate canon of women's writing, not to abolish all other feminist canons. But Toril Moi finds in her tendency to create a separate canon an unwitting "complicity" with "empiricist and humanist variety of feminist criticism and the male academic hierarchy it [Showalter's gynocriticism] resists." Toril Moi explains it thus:

> The humanist believes in literature as an excellent instrument of education: by reading 'great works' the students will become a finer human being. The great author is great because he (occasionally even she) has managed to convey an authentic vision of life; and the role of the reader or the critic is to listen respectfully to the voice of the authors as it is expressed in the text. The literary canon of 'great literature ensures that it is this 'representative experience' (one selected by male bourgeois critics) that is transmitted to future generations, rather than those deviant, unrepresentative experiences discoverable in much female, ethnic and working-class writing. Anglo –American feminist criticism has waged war on this self-sufficient canonization of middle class male values. But they have rarely challenged the very notion of such a canon. Showalter's aim, in effect, is to create a separate canon of women's writing, not to abolish all canons. But a new canon would not be intrinsically less oppressive than the old. The role of the feminist critics will still be to sit quietly and to listen her mistress's voice as it expresses authentic female experience. The feminist reader is not granted leave to get up and challenge this female voice; the female text rules as despotically as the old male text. As if in compensation for this obedience, the feminist critic is allowed to launch skeptical critique of 'male' literature, provided she keeps this critical stance separate from her concerns with women writers (Sexual/Textual Politics, 77).

Toril Moi further asserts "if texts are seen as signifying processes, and both writing and reading grasped as textual production, it is likely that even texts written by women will be subjected to irreverent scrutiny by feminist critics." In such a situation Showalter's gynocriticism would "face a painful dilemma, caught between the 'new' feminists and with their 'male' theories and the male humanist empiricists with their patriarchal politics."

Showalter's postulation of feminist reading and female aesthetics is problematic at another level. Among the primary concerns of 'gynocritics' we find "the history, themes, genres and structures of literature by women" as well as the "psychodynamics of female creativity' and 'studies of particular writers and works ["Towards feminist poetics"] There is no indication here that the feminist critic concerned with women-as-writers "should bring other than sympathetic, identity-seeking approaches to bear on works written by women." (Moi, 74). The 'hermeneutics of suspicion', which assumes that the text is not, or not only, what it pretends to be, and therefore searches for underlying contradictions and conflicts as well as absences and silences in the text, seem to be reserved for texts written by men.

The implication, according to Toril Moi, is not only that the feminist critic should turn to 'gynocriticism', the study of women's writings, precisely in order to learn 'what women have felt and experienced', but also that this experience is directly available in texts written by women. The "text in other words, has disappeared or become the transparent medium through which 'experience' can be seized. This view of text as transmitting authentic 'human' experience is, as we have seen, a traditional emphasis of Western patriarchal humanism. In Showalter this humanism is also tinged with a portion of empiricism.

So, gynocriticism positions itself more as a political than a literary stance. This makes Showalter's position as a critic essentialist, the charge she consciously and deliberately tries to counter through her theorization and prioritization of cultural model of gynocriticism.

Suggested Exercises

1. Differentiate between:
   a. Feminist Critique and Gynocriticism
   b. Gynocriticism and ecriture feminine
   c. Gynocriticism and Deconstructive criticism
   d. Androgynist poetics and Feministic Critique
2. Compare and contrast various offshoots of gynocriticism. Why does Showalter argue for cultural model of gynocriticism?
3. Attempt a well-reasoned critique of Showalter as a critic.
4. Contextualise and critique the following statements:
   i. "Feminist criticism has been an empirical orphan in the theoretical storm."
   ii. "While scientific criticism struggled to purge itself of the subjective, feminist criticism reasserted the authority of the experience."
   iii. "There are two distinct modes of feminist criticism, and to conflate them ...is to remain permanently bemused by their theoretical potentialities."
   iv. "Feminist reading *or* feministic critique, *is in essence of mode of interpretation, one of many which any complex text will accommodate and permit."*
   v. "In the past decade, I believe, the process of defining the feminine has started to take place. Feminist criticism has gradually shifted its center from revisionary reading to a sustained investigation of literature by women."
   vi. "Anatomy is textuality."
   vii. "The challenge facing the woman today is nothing less than to reinvent language...to not only against, but outside of the specular phallogocentric structure, to establish the status of which would no longer be defined by the fallacy of masculine meaning."
   viii. "The appropriate task for feminist criticism... is to concentrate on women's access to language, on the available lexical range from which words can be selected, on the ideological and cultural determinants of expression."
   ix. "The problem is not that language is insufficient to express women's consciousness what that women have been denied the full resources of language and have been forced into silence, euphemism, or circumlocution."
   x. "A theory based on a model of women's culture can provide...a more complete and satisfying way to talk about the specificities and difference of women's writing than theories based in biology, linguistics, or psychoanalysis."
   xi. "The concept of perception, silence, and silencing are center to discussion of women's participation in literary culture."
   xii. " Women writing are not, then, inside *and* outside *of the male tradition; they are inside two traditions simultaneously."*
   xiii. "One implication of this model [cultural model] is that women's fiction can be read as a double-voiced discourse, containing a dominant and a muted story, what Gilbert and Gubar call a 'palimpsest'."
   xiv. "No theory, however suggestive, can be a substitute for the close and extensive knowledge of women's texts which constitutes our essential subject".

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak: A 'Biographical' Introduction

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak is one of the leading literary theorist and cultural critics of our times. She was born in 1942 in Kolkata. Her formative years, spent in the solid metropolitan middleclass surroundings of Kolkata, were the years of intense political transition in the history of India as a nation. She ,thus, belonged to the 'first generation of Indian intellectuals after independence," a more interesting perspective she claims, than that of the Midnight's Children, who were "born free by chronological accident " As a young, active Bengali intellectual, she attended Presidency College (itself a highly politicized institution) in her native town,. She received a degree in English and spent two years in graduate school in Kolkata prior to her arrival in the United States in 1962 as a Ph.D. student of comparative literature at Cornell University. She "fell into comparative literature" because it was the only department that offered her money. She taught at the University of Iowa while working on her Ph.D.. Her dissertation was on Yeats (published as Myself Must I remake: The Life and Poetry of W.B. Yeats, (1974) and was directed by Paul de Man. It was de Man who initially steered her toward Derrida. During this time she married and divorced an American, Talbot Spivak.

Her first book Myself, I Must Remake (1974), is a historical-biographical study of W. B. Yeats's poetry. The publication in 1976 of her "Introduction to and translation of Jacques Derrida Of Grammatology" catapulted her on road of critical fame. This 'introduction' has been variously described as "setting a new standard for self-reflexivity in preface", as "absolutely unreadable, its only virtue being that it makes Derrida that much more enjoyable " Throughout the 1970s she also published a number of essays concerning feminist strategies of reading, Marxism, the politics of interpretation, and the place of the institution of literary studies within the politico-socio-economic text. The publication in 1980 of her three seminal essays – "Draupadi," "French Feminism in an International Frame," and "Displacement and the Discourse of Woman" – marks an important transitional moment in Spivak's evolution as a critic. Now the questions concerning the problematic of race and gender; the historical antagonisms between Marxism and feminism; Deconstruction and the critique of imperialism; subaltern history; and, finally, the awareness of her own problematic position as a "commodified so-called Third World Marxist-feminist-deconstructionist critic working in the United States" enter her work. She describes herself as a "para-disciplinary, ethical philosopher." who revels in, what can be termed as "Applied Deconstruction." She has applied deconstructive strategies to various theoretical engagements and textual analysis: From Feminism, Marxism, and Literary Criticism to, most recently, Postcolonialism. This is how she visualizes her own critical oeuvre: " My position is generally reactive one. I am viewed by Marxists as too coded, by feminists as too male-identified, by indigenous theorists as to committed to Western Theory. I am uneasily pleased about this (Post-Colonial Critic).

Despite her outsider status – or partly, perhaps, because of it – Spivak is widely cited in a range of disciplines. Her work is nearly evenly split between dense theoretical writing peppered with flashes of compelling insight and published interviews in which she wrestles with many of the same issues in a more personable and immediate manner.

Presently, Spivak is the Avalon Foundation Professor in the Humanities at Columbia University.

Spivaks major works include:

1. Myself Must I Remake: The Life and Poetry of W. B. Yeats, *New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1974*
2. Of Grammatology *(translation with critical introduction of Jacques Derrida,* De la grammatologie*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1976.*
3. Selected Subaltern Studies, *edited with Ranajit Guha, New York: Oxford, 1988.*
4. Outside in the Teaching Machine, *New York: Routledge, 1993.*
5. Imaginary Maps, *(translation with critical introduction of three stories by Mahasweta Devi), New York: Routledge, 1994.*
6. The Breast Stories *(translation with critical introduction of three stories by Mahasweta Devi), Calcutta: Seagull, 1997.*

7. Old Women, *(translation with critical introduction of two stories by Mahasweta Devi). Calcutta: Seagull Press, 1999.*
8. In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics. *New York: Methuen, 1987.; Translated into Chinese and Japanese.*
9. A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Towards History of the Vanishing Present, *Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1999; Calcutta: Seagull Press, 1999.*
10. Song for Kali: A Cycle, *Calcutta: Seagull Press, 2000.*
11. Red Thread *(forthcoming from 'Harvard University Press in 2001).*
12. Reaching Out: the New Comparative Literature *(in preparation for Columbia University Press).*

Some Critical Works on Spivak Include:

1. The Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues, *ed. Sarah Harasym, New York & London: Routledge, 1990; translated into Chinese; extracts in Japanese translation in Voices From Border (Japan: 1992);*
2. The Spivak Reader, *eds, Donna Landry and Gerald Maclean, New York: Routledge 1995.*

Spivak's "Feminism and Critical Theory": An Explanatory Reading

The essay is divided into four parts. The first section is a self-conscious recapitulation of her earlier talk (1978) on the issue, that she had delivered before a feminist audience in America. It reflects the 'then' understanding of the critic on the issue. The second section is in the nature of introspection. Here the critic revisits her earlier notions on Marxism, psychoanalysis and feminism, and analyses them in the light of her new understanding and experience. The third section constitutes what Spivak calls as "an intermediate moment." In the final section she re-locates the whole discussion within the present and focuses on larger economic issues in which 'the third world' woman is implicated.

In the first section Spivak deconstructs the 'basics' of Marxism and Psychoanalysis from a feministic angle. While Marxism provides a historical-economic model to understand the social reality, Psychoanalysis provides a model to understand the self and sexuality. However, Spivak so problematizes the 'by now' axiomatic parameters of Marxism and Psychoanalysis as to expose their inherent masculine presuppositions. Both the models take 'man' as the universal referent (both as receptor and consumer) of knowledge and hence carry out their analysis of the self and the society from an androcentric (with male at the center of society) perspective. This perspective is not only biased but also deficient, as it ignores the totality of "raw data", the initial bases of understanding ad analysis. With Man as a reference and data, the actuality of woman is lost sight of. She is either subsumed within the category 'Man,' or is thought to be too insignificant to affect the process of understanding. This slant permeates the basic parameters of Marxian and psychoanalytic criticism as proposed by Marx and Freud. This renders suspect the very basis around which the edifice of understanding the world, and self in the world is erected. Looking from this angle, Spivak avers that both, the Marxist conception of alienation (conceptualised in terms of commodification of the labour, through a process of "exteriorisation" of the subject from the processes of production and value accruing from it) and Freud's conception of "penis envy" (as a decisive factor in the shaping of consciousness and desire) is based on "inadequate evidence." Marx's theory of alienation the worker, premised as it is on male worker, completely ignores the significance of "womb as a workshop." Consequently it is unable to recognise the "very different forms of alienation of product from labour" that is "represented by/in childbirth, and the "unpaid" aspect of women's domestic work. Similarly Freud's enunciation of 'penis envy' as the primary determinant of feminine desire and female personality overlooks the place of womb as a place of production. It also does not explore the possibility of womb envy (as has been suggested by many feminists) as another possible site (that could emerge as "an interactive complement to penis envy") of or determinant of subjectivity. Spivak thus brings out the **arbitrariness inherent in Marxist and Freudian** theorizations. She further proposes that feminists should use the 'texts' (narratives?) of Marx and Freud by reading them "beyond" themselves. It will enable them to produce/invent, what she suggestively terms as the new "common

currency" with which to understand society, and hence literature, that is a part of it. (This call contains in it the seeds of her academic activism, which was as yet in incipient stage).

Whereas in the first section, Gayatri Spivak tries to reconfigure Marxism, Psychoanalysis and Feminism in a critique relationship through deconstructive reading of the first two in relation to the third, in the second section, she further expands the concept of feminism by adding to it the dimensions of race and history (of colonialism). These complexities are brought in with a view to wrench feminism out of its western location, and, thus, make it internationally relevant. **This introspective "itinerary" indicates Spivak's self-consciousness about the 'occasionality' and 'provisionality' of knowledge.**

Accordingly, in the light of 'new evidences and her new interests', i.e., gender, race and class, (or what she calls as the production of colonial discourse) she once again re-reads Marxism and Psychoanalysis. This opens up new avenues in the exploration in her still evolving understanding of feminism as an international phenomenon. When seen from race sensitive perspective, Spivak finds American feministic criticism myopic yet hypocritically hegemonic. American feminist theory, though a product of particular historical moment and milieu, nevertheless, tended to articulate itself as universally valid. Herein a particular historical phenomenon was universalised at the cost of other specificities of women like race and place. This imperialistic episteme, Spivak avers, has led to the production of the "colonial object" (i.e., the other women has been shorn of her subjectivity and has been objectified in the image of the middle class American elitist feminism). The agency to the "Third World" women is imparted from outside, i.e., by first world feministic imagination.

Spivak not only reassesses Freud's "masculism" but all those theories, which spawned around it, either as an offshoot or in reaction to his psychoanalysis. The biggest limitation of psychoanalytic project that revolves around Freud is that, besides being ahistorical, it is always grounded in "the nuclear parent-child models" or nuclear family as an explanatory fact. Its feminist alternatives, in addition, fail to see beyond Greek mythical prototypes (as regulative type-case of the Oedipal model) and ravel only in romantic utopia wherein the answer to the ills of nuclear family are seen in extended family, "especially a community of women." Spivak asserts that sexual constitution is not only a function of the constitution of the family or penis envy, but is equally a result of the historical and political economy within which the family, nuclear or extended, is located.

Spivak's finds her earlier understanding of the intersection between Marxism as flawed. Now instead of seeing this interaction in terms of an easy fit (with minor adjustments) she concedes the "historical antagonism between Marxism and feminism on both sides".

Her earlier work of reproductive alienation was touched by nuclear familial "hysterocentrism." As it failed to historicize either Marxism or feminism, she now "prefer[s] the work that sees that the essential truth of Marxism or feminism can not be separated from history." Her new perspectives on feminism make her aware that to understand the nature of male dominance requires something "more than an analysis of capitalism" and that "the sexual division of labour" can not serve as its "primary determinant." She now hypothesises the text of international feminism "as operated by the production and realisation of surplus value." The invocation of colonial history and politics in conjunction with psychoanalytic and Marxist feminism equips Spivak to understand the socio-psycho-economic operations of new imperialism. "The discourse of race has come to claim its importance in this way in my work," she concludes.

Despite her revisionary reading of Marxism and Psychoanalysis, Spivak's faith in deconstructive methodology remains intact. It is in fact the 'reversal-displacement morphology' of deconstruction, which enables Spivak to see through the 'asymmetry of interests of the historical moment" and help understand the "hidden ethico-political agenda of differentiation constituting of knowledge." The deconstructive view also enables her to constantly resist the "essentialist freezing of the concepts of the gender, race and class. It also disallows the establishment of a hegemonic global theory of feminism.

In the third section Gayatri Spivak, undertakes a deconstructionist reading of Margaret Drabble's Waterfall, as a case study, to underline her concerns about race and gender. Her deconstructive gaze vis-à-vis Drabble's Waterfall has a threefold focus:

1. First, it deconstructs Drabble's/Jane's (The female protagonist of Waterfall) thematic focus as a kind of feminist

exploration about 'love and sexuality' that is circumscribed by the 'first world feminism'. For them the most important issues before woman remain "sexual deprivation" and "sexual choice". Drabble's 'plotting' and 'narration' of the "the question of love" competently foregrounds the issues that impinge on the life of women: "the problem of necessity versus contingency in love; an attempt not to "rivalise" women; blood bonds between mothers and daughters; love free of social security. However, Spivak is disturbed by the fact that "the entire questioning is carried on in what [she] can only see as privileged atmosphere." This location is seen as a universal location. In the process the questions of race and history are excluded and class boundaries tend to replicate as universal boundaries.

2. Second, Spivak here illustrates the importance of deconstruction as an evaluative strategy. Deconstruction makes one aware of the contingency and arbitrariness of one's categories – both subjective and objective - of understanding and knowledge construction. "When one takes a rational or aesthetic distance from oneself one gives oneself up to the conveniently classifying macrostructures [Marxism is an example]... When one involves oneself in the microstructural moments of practice that makes possible and undermines every macrostructural theory, one falls, as it were, into deep waters of first person who recognises the limits of understanding and change, indeed the precarious necessity of micro-macro opposition, yet is bound not to give up." However the tendency among First world feminist is that they are so overwhelmed by their agenda (this includes a desire to "understand" and "change" women's destiny) and their location-blindness that fail to heed to the cautions of deconstruction. The result is that the "mictrostructural" gets superimposed on the "macrostructural" and the complexities of international feminism are wiped out.

3. Third, Spivak sees Waterfall as an "aesthetic allegory of deconstructive practice." Herein certain conceptual/ activist difficulties in first world feminism are sought to be understood in conjunction with the narrative strategies that Jane/Drabble employs in order to construct "knowledge" and "truth" in Waterfall. Drabble "manipulates [Jane] to examine the conditions of production and determination of microstructural heterosexual attitudes within her chosen enclosure." This enclosure, of necessity, carries within it the impress of the privileged location of Jane/Drabble. This enclosure is important, for this not only defines norms, but also makes it possible to coin new rules. Hence, the rules that emanate from the enclosure are not fixed. Jane and Drabble are aware of this complexity. Lest the microstructural understanding should get inflated as macrostructural, Drabble proposes an aesthetic form where the narrative oscillates between the first and third person. She realises the limitations of first person (microstructural?) narrative, i.e., limits of self-interpretation, and constantly acknowledges the need to shift to the third person (macrostructural) or other-person interpretation of the self and the world.

Spivak's final analysis of Drabble is worth reflecting on: " Drabble fills the void of female consciousness with meticulous and helpful articulation, though she seems thwarted in any serious presentation of the problem of the race and class, and of the marginality of the sex. She engages in that microstructural dystopia, the sexual situation in extremis, that begins to seem more and more a part of women's fiction."

In the fourth section Spivak exposes the complicity of First World feminism with the heightened exploitation of Third World women's labour brought about by the multinational corporations in the microelectronic industry. She illustrates this complicity by analysing the life situation of the female labour, employed by "Control Data", an MNC electronic firm located in Korea.

The incident was narrated thus:

> "In Seoul, South Korea, in March 1982, 237 women workers in a factory owned by Control Data, a Minnesota-based multinational corporation, struck work over a demand for a wage raise. Six union leaders were dismissed and imprisoned. In July, the women took hostage two visiting U.S. vice-presidents, demanding reinstatement of union leaders. Control Data's main office was willing to release the women; the Korean government was reluctant. On July 16, the Korean male workers at the factory beat up the female workers and ended the dispute. Many of the women were injured and suffered miscarriages."

Spivak tries to understand the incident from various angles. The narrative posits the owners of multinational as fair, non-sexist, progressive and egalitarian. The male workers and the Korean government emerge as villainous. Spivak however argues that the situation – and hence its implications for feminism – is not so simple. Untangling the 'over-determinations' inherent in the "narrativization" of this episode (that actually took place), she brings out the socio-economic and political complexity of the global economic order/this situation and how it is detrimental to women as wage employees in a seemingly patronising socialist economic regime. The first world feminist, as they are blind to the "other women", and because they tend to align with the so-called liberal-humanist discourse of globlization and liberalization, become accomplice in this 'patriarchal' economic regime.

To avoid this kind of blindness, Spivak reiterates that any attempt at a comprehensive 'reading' of the 'world' as a text demands a rigorous 'deconstructive' acumen.

Understanding Spivak's Terminology

Allegory: typically a narrative in prose, verse, or drama that self-consciously presents its meaning through concrete symbols. The significance of a given symbol, however, is determined by the conventions of the allegory as a whole. An allegory has at least two levels of meaning: the literal level of the immediate narrative and the political, historical, philosophical or moral commentary the author intends to be recognized. Thus allegories are generally didactic in focus.

Commodification: A Marxist concept that describes all things in a society (even people) as commodities. All material and social phenomena are products of a society and contribute to the production of other components in that society. This concept emphasizes the Marxist strategy of evaluating everything in terms of the economic exchange and competition occurring in culture.

Discourse

As used by Foucault, this term connotes an authoritative way of describing. Through this concept he gives a "name" to the systems of linguistic representations through which power sustains itself. He argues that within individual discourses a series of mechanisms are used as means of controlling desire and power, which facilitate classification, ordering and distribution. Discourses are propagated by specific institutions and divide up the world in specific ways. In this way mastery is exerted over what appears to be the randomness of everyday reality. It is thus possible to investigate these discourses that have been used to master reality and, in turn construct it, in the past. Literary criticism is also a discourse, as is the terminology associated with grading.

Ethical responsibility/Ethical singularity: "Responsibility" is one of the important critical concepts in Spivak. She uses this concept akin to Bhaktinian sense of "answerability." It carries within it a twin signification: i) an act of 'response' that completes the transaction of speaker and listener, and, ii) an ethical stance of making discursive room for the 'other' to exist. The editors of The Spivak Reader put it this way: "ethics are not just a problem of knowledge but a call to a relationship" (Introduction to The Spivak Reader).

By "ethical singularity," Spivak means that the ideal relationship is individual and intimate. It is achieved through the engagement of the "Other" in non-essential, non-crisis terms.

We all know that when we engage profoundly with one person, the responses come from both sides: this is responsibility and accountability. The object of ethical action is not an object of benevolence, for here responses flow from both sides. The ideal relation to the "Other", then, is an "embrace, an act of love". Such an embrace may be unrequited, as the differences and distances are too great, but if we are ever to get beyond the vicious cycle of abuse, it is essential to remain openhearted, not to attempt to recreate the "Other" narcissistically, in one's own image, but generously, with care and attention.

Hegemony: a term used mostly by Marxist critics to delineate the web of dominant ideologies within a society

Ideology: the unifying system of beliefs, attitudes, and values expressed in the superstructure of a culture. It is a body of thought and ideas that guides a society and perpetuates the status-quo of the bourgeoisie.

Margins/Outside: There is a critical consensus that Spivak's work explores "the margins at which disciplina-

discourses break down and enter the world of political agency". She interrogates the politics of culture from a marginal perspective ("outside") while maintaining the prerogatives of a professional position within the hegemony. Through deconstruction she turns hegemonic narratives inside out, and as a Third world woman in a position of privilege in the American academy, she brings the outside in. (Hence Outside in the Teaching Machine, 1993). These contradictory positions have led her to develop the notion that the center is also a margin. This is the classic deconstructive position: "In the middle, but not on either side. This reconfiguring of the "center" (or re-centering, perhaps) also changes the position and status of the margins: no longer outside looking in, but an integral, if minor, language.

Overdetermined: It is a term from psychoanalysis. If something is "overdetermined," it is possible to construct several plausible, non-mutually exclusive ways to explain it. In such cases, we might use the expression "both . . . and" instead of "either . . . or."

Performative: A term coined by J.L.Austin, performative is a semiotic gesture that is a being as well as a doing. Or, more accurately, it is a doing that constitutes a being, an activity that creates what it describes. Performatives are intelligible only within a matrix that is simultaneously social and semiotic. To borrow one of Austin's own examples of a performative, "I pronounce you man and wife" both performs an action and describes a new state of being. A minister or magistrate's act of describing a couple as "man and wife" is what makes them so. However, as Austin himself pointed out, this performative depends on a densely woven web of social relations that render it intelligible, believable, and acceptable. Shift the context of the utterance a little, say by having someone other than a minister or magistrate say it, or by directing it at a pair of cats, and it loses its cultural authority. As Judith Butler has pointed out, such a shift can also parody the dominant conventions, revealing that they are, in fact, conventions. Directed at a pair of women lovers, "I now pronounce you man and wife," mimics a heterosexual institution but also displaces it, troubling dominant notions of what it means to be male, female, and married.

Privileged: The sign within a binary opposition, which is given a positive or affirmative valuation. Tracking the complementary privileging of signs within a sign-system provides one means of highlighting the deep structure of a text that focuses meaning. For some post-structuralists, the text deconstructs this apparent privileging of signs, infusing the meaning of the text with a radical irony or ambivalence.

Strategic Essentialism: Strategic essentialism is an important, but a puzzling notion in Spivak's critical repertoire. Generally the notion that some "core" meaning or identity is determinate and not subject to interpretation. Essentialism, in relation to gender, refers to the belief in natural or innate differences between men and women. By extension it may also mean a tendency to reduce the dichotomous differences into mere essences, i.e., natural but ahistorical truths. It also refers to the tendency to define anything in terms of natural fixity, or as unique. For example many feminists argue in terms of unique female identity.

Spivak says that essentialism is bad, not in its essence – which would be a tautology – but only in its application. The goal of essentialist critique is not the exposure of error, but the interrogation of the essentialist terms. Uncritical deployment is dangerous. Critique is simply reading the instructions for use. Essentialism is like dynamite, or a powerful drug: judiciously applied, it can be effective in dismantling unwanted structures or alleviating suffering; uncritically employed, however, it is destructive and addictive.

Spivak's strategy is deconstructivist, like that of a good lawyer: when on defense, prod the prosecution's narrative until the cracks begin to appear and when prosecuting, piece together a case by understanding the criminal's motivation. "Strategic essentialism" is like role-playing, briefly inhabiting the criminal mind in order to understand what makes it tick. The Subaltern Studies group, for example, succeeds in unraveling official Indian history by particularizing its narrative: "a strategic use of positivist essentialism in a scrupulously visible political interest." This is also the way Spivak uses deconstruction, for example, without fully subscribing to it as a viable philosophic system or practice, much less a political program. Or, as she puts it, "[Deconstruction] is not the exposure of error. It is constantly and persistently looking into how truths are produced."

The misuse of the concept of "strategic essentialism" is that less "scrupulous" practitioners ignore the element of strategy, and treat it as simply "a union ticket for essentialism. As to what is meant by strategy, no-one wondered about that." She claims to have given up on the phrase, though not the concept.

Subaltern; Spivak uses this term to describe the colonized subject. She in effect achieved a certain degree of misplaced notoriety for her 1985 article "Can the Subaltern Speak?: Speculations on Widow Sacrifice" where she tried to problematize this concept as used by Subaltern Studies Group, founded by Ranjit Guha. In it, she describes the circumstances surrounding the suicide of a young Bengali woman that indicates a failed attempt at self-representation. Because her attempt at "speaking" outside normal patriarchal channels was not understood or supported, Spivak concluded, "The subaltern cannot speak." Her extremely nuanced argument, admittedly confounded by her sometimes opaque style, led some incautious readers to accuse her of phallocentric complicity, of not recognizing or even not letting the subaltern speak. Some critics, missing the point, buttressed their arguments with anecdotal evidence of messages cried out by burning widows. Her point was not that the subaltern does not cry out in various ways, but that speaking is "a transaction between speaker and listener. Subaltern talk, in other words, does not achieve the dialogic level of utterance."

Beyond this specific misunderstanding, Spivak also objects to the sloppy use of the term and its appropriation by other marginalized, but not specifically "subaltern" groups. "Subaltern," Spivak insists, is not "just a classy word for oppressed, for Other, for somebody who's not getting a piece of the pie." She points out that in Gramsci's original covert usage, it signified "proletarian," whose voice could not be heard, being structurally written out of the capitalist bourgeois narrative. In postcolonial terms, "everything that has limited or no access to the cultural imperialism is subaltern—a space of difference. Now who would say that's just the oppressed? The working class is oppressed. It's not subaltern."

Another misreading of the concept is that, since the subaltern cannot speak, s/he needs an advocate to speak for her/him. It is seen as an affirmative action or special regulatory protection. Spivak objects, "Who the hell wants to protect subalternity? Only extremely reactionary, dubious anthropologistic museumizers. No activist wants to keep the subaltern in the space of difference... You don't give the subaltern voice. You work for the bloody subaltern, you work against subalternity". She cites the work of the Subaltern Studies group as an example of how this critical work can be practiced, not to give the subaltern voice, but to clear the space to allow it to speak.

Spivak is particularly leery of the misappropriation of the term by those who simply want to claim disenfranchisement within the system of hegemonic discourse, i.e. those who can speak, but feel they are not being given their turn. "Many people want to claim subalternity. They are the least interesting and the most dangerous. I mean, just by being a discriminated-against minority on the university campus, they don't need the word 'subaltern'... They should learn what the mechanics of the discrimination are. They're within the hegemonic discourse wanting a piece of the pie and not being allowed, so let them speak, use the hegemonic discourse. They should not call themselves subaltern."

"Unlearning one's privilege as one's loss": Spivak thinks that privilege is also a kind of insularity that cuts off the privileged from certain kinds of "other" knowledge. One should strive to recognize these limitations and overcome them not as a magnanimous gesture of inclusion, but simply for the increase of knowledge. The way to do this is by working critically through one's beliefs, prejudices and assumptions and understanding how they arose and became naturalized. Embedded in this phrase is Spivak's plea that the holders of the hegemonic discourse should de-hegemonize their position and themselves learn how to occupy the subject position of the other rather than simply say.

Subjectivity: The traditional concept of the subject is synonymous with the notion of self or ego as an autonomous and self-actuating agent capable of valid self-knowledge. Liberal humanism views the subject as endowed with the power of reason, and thus a conscious and unified self-possessing a unique core or identity. Later theorists have challenged this notion of the self-determining subject.

The notion of subjectivity results from a postmodern rejection of these models of the subject. The conscious individualism of previous models is replaced by notión of subject, not as the originator of meaning, but a function of discourse—a recipient site of meaning rather than the source. Agency, that is capacity for independent and self conscious action and the capacity for self–determination are seen as illusory products of the subject's discursive position. The subject is viewed as fissured and constantly 'in process'. Spivak aligns herself with is notion.

Spivak as a Critic: A Critique

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak is one of the eminent critics and cultural activists of our times. Her critical practice is a complex mosaic of interdisciplinary perspectives. The "Spivakian" critical vigour incisively cuts through and welds

diverse critical perspectives such as postructuralism, feminism, post-colonialism, multiculturalism, Marxism, and psychoanalysis to weave, what she calls a deconstructivist analysis of the literature and society. Her critical readings carry an impress of erudite abstractions and concrete realities of life.

Her critical methodology however has both its limitations and merits. Her critical analysis is generally carried out in a very dense and suggestive language. It makes her texts difficult to understand. This difficulty of the texts both puts off and attracts the readers to her work. While the initiates are put off by the erudite and complex, often perplexing, drift of her arguments, the scholars are enticed and seduced by the intellectual and activist rigour of her deconstructivist interdisciplinary theory and practice.

Her critical practice, an itinerary that constantly moves in many directions simultaneously, clearly encapsulates her location as a third world woman in first world academia. She is both an insider and an outsider at once; rather she posits herself as one who simultaneously occupies both the centre and the margin. Her works explore "the margins at which disciplinary discourses break down and enter the world of political agency". She interrogates the politics of culture from a marginal perspective ("outside") while maintaining the prerogatives of a professional position within the hegemony. Through deconstruction she turns hegemonic narratives inside out, and as a third world woman in a position of privilege in the American academy, she brings the outside in. The title of one of her books, i.e., Outside in the Teaching Machine, amply illustrates the contradictions of her activist-academic location.

Her critical itinerary charts the tensions between the political investments of the academic and her class position. The prototypes of this critical-activist itinerary are apparent even in her essay, "Feminism and Literary Theory." Many commentators see Spivak as rhetorical critic: her essays such as "Can the Subaltern Speak?" foregrounds this aspect of her critical oeuvre. This text, both at the level of content (the way it foregrounds the question of speech) and methodology, is an excellent example of Spivak's own rhetorical textual analysis. Speech in this essay itself becomes a social and political category of particular significance.

Spivak's critical corpus is, thus, an example of deconstructive writing and deconstruction as practice. As a critical perspective deconstruction is associated with Jacques Derrida. It holds that all meaning in written and spoken language is indeterminate because words have no inherent meaning in themselves, and the meaning of a word is based on its relationship to other words. Deconstruction holds that every text has at its center an aporia, i.e., a contradiction or irreconcilable paradox, a point at which meaning breaks down completely, and attempts to show where this happens. According to J. Hillis Miller, any literary text contains irreconcilable or contradictory meanings; therefore "all reading is misreading." This view of deconstruction posits it as an inconclusive practice, for 'honest' deconstruction must always begin with an admission of failure of arrival. Spivak however is at pains to dispel this general impression. She defines deconstructive stance thus: " Persistently to critique a structure that one cannot (wish to) inhabit is the deconstructivist stance" (Outside in the Teaching Machine, p, 284). Plainly speaking it means that a critique of a thing is predicated on the thing itself. Deconstruction is a kind of "doubling commentary". This is a phrase that Spivak uses to demarcate the responsibility of a deconstructive critic. Deconstructive stance posits criticism as a labour of love wherein a deconstructive critics attempt to carefully and faithfully unpack the full meaning of the text to be deconstructed, from all sides, both as an insider and outsider.

Spivak, thus, posits deconstructive criticism as a responsible practice that demands "unlearning of one's privileges as one's loss". She further states that though "Deconstruction cannot found a political programme of any kind" it nevertheless, "is a political safeguard". Spivak's deconstructive reading of feminism at the intersection of Marxism, psychoanalysis, racism and colonialism, in "Feminism and Critical Theory" reiterates this premise. It is in effect her belief in the 'reversal-displacement morphology' of deconstruction, that enables Spivak to see through the 'asymmetry of interests of the historical moment" and help understand the "hidden ethico-political agenda of differentiation constituting of knowledge." The deconstructive view also enables her to constantly resist the "essentialist freezing of the concepts of the gender, race and class. It also disallows the establishment of a hegemonic global theory of feminism."

One of the salient features of Spivak as a critic is the **sense of transparency**. This transparency holds a threefold significance for her as a critic. And all the three assumptions unfold simultaneously in her critical endeavour. The first of these constitutes her obsessive anxiety to 'make-apparent' her slant as a critic. For example in Her essay

"Feminism and Critical Theory" she makes it clear on the outset that she her approach to-her subject matter is **conditioned by her position as woman** within literary criticism. She further explains what she 'understands' by literature. She also makes clear the politics of her critical perspective, i.e., she intends to approach the problem of critical theory from feministic-racist perspective, employing a deconstructive critique of Marxism, psychoanalysis and First world 'positivist-empiricist feminism.' In foregrounding her stance thus, she is able to foreground the fallacy of essentialist or universalistic epistemic pretensions. She makes it amply clear that knowledge is a function of one's context, valid only within it. The moment the context changes, or complexities are introduced within the context, the knowledge will have to be revised. Even in this revision it cannot be claimed that knowledge or understanding is complete. It will always remain contingent and unstable. This awareness is the bedrock of her critical practice. While she tries to 'read' and 'deconstruct' the discursive practices of others, she also very self-consciously revise her own understandings. She forever remains acutely aware of the unreliability of her own 'knowledge' and, at the same time vigilant of other's 'knowledge-stances.' The process of understanding, for her, entails not only exposure of the "hidden agenda of others, but also an exposure of her own agendas at work. Her ideas are continually evolving and resist, in true deconstructive fashion, a straight textual analysis. She constantly forbids any kind of intellectual closure. She her self has said that she prefers the teaching environment where ideas are continually in motion and development.

This allows her to recognise that if knowledge cannot be the Knowledge, then to talk in terms of an absolute and overarching Feminism is futile. We should rather talk about feminisms and also make our context clear. This however, does not make her feminism stand in opposition to other feminisms, but in relative and non-essentialist position with them.

Gayatri defines literary activity as a textual act that is implicated in larger textuality: "To my way of thinking the discourse of the literary text is a part of general configuration of textuality." She however makes it clear that "One should not mistake the grounds out of which the idea of the world and self are produced with the business of the appreciation of the literary text."

What is Deconstruction? How does Gayatri use the term? How does the essay unfold the concept?

Deconstruction is a difficult and a complex concept. It is associated with French theorist Jacques Derrida. The term has been contentiously debated and has generated a lot of sloganeering. What follows is a sample of some of the critical positions on deconstruction. These positions tend to define the term in terms of what "NOT". Most of the time it comes out a "misplaced critique":

1. One of the perspectives on deconstruction sees it as critical stance that posits that "**there is no truth**." This is a typical misconception about deconstruction. It is not that deconstructivist do not believe in "truth;" they simply object to the privileging of the "Truth". What is really objected to is their situating of truth as Truth in larger, more meaningful contexts. They problematize "Truth" as a profoundly historical and contextual product of discourse and material reality.
2. ***"There is nothing outside the text"*** *is yet another alleged suppositions of deconstruction. It is the translation of* "il n'ya pas de hors-texte", *the more accurate translation of which could have been "there is no outside-text," or even, "there is nothing but context.*
3. Critics of deconstruction believe that this perspective propagates the assumption that **"there is no subject."** Instead, deconstruction is premised on the notion that the centering of the subject is an effect structure of language.
4. That "**deconstruction denies history**" is another falsity. No, instead of denying history, deconstructive methods foreground what Derrida called the paleonymic burden of the sign.
5. We need to contest the charge that "**deconstruction is a negative metaphysics**": i.e. it is an attempt at radical scepticism that makes the logical fallacy of "belief" in an ontological "nothing" (outside the text, for example). In effect, deconstruction never pretends to "escape" metaphysics but rather attempts to underscore and trace its history and meaning. There is, strictly speaking, no "cure" for logocentrism in deconstructive work.
6. That "**deconstruction leads to infinite regression**" is the most common charge against it. But how can one ignore the polysemic pull. One cannot "mean" just any old thing when one uses language.
7. ***"Deconstruction is a method of interpretation"*** or even a "negative hermeneutic": no; strictly speaking

deconstruction is a strategy for reading, not a way of exposing error or reaching truth. It is self-reflexive reading practice that radically questions — but does not do away with — the tyranny of the "proper."

8. ***"Deconstruction is (bad) politics":*** Strictly speaking once again, one cannot found a politics upon deconstructive practice. Deconstructive politics, however, are not therefore something like "anarchy"; rather, deconstruction allows for the radical self-reflexivity of any politics. Spivak has said elsewhere that while deconstruction cannot found a politics, a politics that does without deconstructive reading quickly degenerates into the worst kind of fanaticism.

9. ***"Deconstruction is anti-science":*** no; while a deconstructive reading of scientific practice might more rigorously inscribe science within a more powerful discursive context, deconstruction does not thereby pretend to invalidate scientific research or the laws of gravity.

10. ***"All interpretation is misinterpretation"*** – or deconstruction is somehow "mean" or distasteful to the text or the author is a misplaced notion. In fact, the rigorous practice of deconstructive reading requires the critic to fully involve himself/herself in the text ("doubling commentary") s/he interprets. Spivak once said deconstruction is based on a metaphorics of love and that she must love the text she is deconstructing.

11. ***"Deconstruction is anti-communication":*** Critics like Donald Ellis and Jurgen Habermas hold this position. They present their case as a variation of the charge that deconstruction destroys truth and meaning. But the originators of Deconstruction think contrarily. In fact, theorists like Spivak and Derrida strive for something like mutual understanding and precise meaning making throughout their discourses. Thus, deconstructive practice in no way abandons goals such as community, society, or conversation.

So what is deconstruction? What are deconstructive concepts? What does a deconstructivist do?

1. ***"Trace" and "trace structure":*** In any discourse, for one to be able to speak, it is necessary to recognise that what seems to be internally divided is actually a whole. The critique of "intentionality" suggests that "the subject" is internally divided rather than being self-aware and complete. In discourse, one cannot speak without presupposing a unit that is whole at the beginning. The condition of possibility of speech is that one must cover over this division; one must pretend that "I" represents a unified, coherent, consistent subject with the intention to speak. The "trace" is the mark of division that inhabits any discourse. It is read by the deconstructivist as the sign of an "absent presence" – an elephant shit is a sign that an elephant was around. Reading the trace in this way opens the text to its own division. [This is why there can be no fully deconstructive politics – you acknowledge at the outset that every speech act begins with a mistake of sorts. The taking of a concrete stand must always come before or after the deconstructive act.]

2. ***"Paleonymy":*** It suggests the history of the uses to which a sign has been put. You can't just will any sign to mean whatever you want. The paleonymic burden of the sign overdetermines its meaning. The concept of paleonymy when read in conjunction with deconstruction helps one escape the fallacy that every reading is a misreading.

3. ***"Doubling commentary":*** This is Spivak's phrase for the deconstructive critic's attempt to carefully – and faithfully – unpack the full meaning of the text that is to be deconstructed.

The essay, "Feminism and Critical Theory" is an illustration of deconstruction both at the level of content and methodology. The author enters her subject matter with "an attention to the particular protocols of specific occasion," a characteristic gesture of deconstruction. This protocol involves a kind of self-reflexivity. This is apparent from the following points:

1. Spivak is self consciously aware of the provisionality of evolutionary understanding, and about the occasionality of 'knowledge'. The very form and structure of her essay is imbued with this self-reflexivity. In its present form this essay (anthologised in In Other Worlds that was published in 1985) is a rewritten and expanded form of Gayatri Chakravory Spivak's two earlier critical speculations, a talk titled "Feminism and Critical Theory" that she had delivered in 1978 to a theoretically uninitiated feminist audience in US, and an essay "Three Feminist Readings: McCullers, Drabble, Habermas" which she wrote in 1979. While the 1978 talk constitutes the first section of "Feminism and Critical Theory", the third section of the present essay, where Spivak discusses Drabble's Waterfall, is abstracted from her 1978 essay. The rest of the sections were later insertions. The

format of the essay thus becomes very significant. It becomes suggestive of the " itinerant " nature of knowledge. It also stresses the need for continual reassessment of one's knowledge-position in the light of the new evidences. This format suggests that the boundaries of knowledge are inherently unstable and incomplete. This sense of provisionality runs through out the essay.

2. Spivak's critical perspective is **conditioned by her position as a woman** within literary criticism.
3. Spivak is conscious of the excruciating contradictions and complexities of knowledge construction. While on one hand she recognises that rigorous definition, **deconstructively speaking**, is impossible and that definitions are at best only provisional and polemical '**constructions**', on the other, she also recognises the critical inevitability of using these conceptual frames as tools for any discursive/explanatory foray.
4. At the content level, the foregoing awareness leads her to the recognition that any attempt at arriving at an absolute definition of a woman is neither possible nor desirable.
5. Her definition of woman is then dependent on the term 'man'. It is a relative and not a dichotomous position. Further this definition is textual: "I construct my definition of a woman not in terms of a woman's putative essence but in terms of words currently in use. Man is a word in common usage. Not a word, but the word."
6. All discourses, of which literature is a part, seemingly articulate themselves through the play of three shifting 'concepts': Language, world, and consciousness.
7. Spivak takes language as a category that subsumes other two categories and is also determined by these. According to her nothing exists outside language; everything is structured by it.
8. 'Text', "a weave of knowing and not-knowing" is a "figure" in the organising principle of literature and is outside "language- (speech)-writing opposition".
9. The discourse of literary text is part of a general configuration of textuality.
10. Marxism and Psychoanalysis are, nothing, but the narratives that attempt to understand the world from a particular location.
11. Spivak exploits this idea of narrativity of knowledge to find holes in Marxism and Psychoanalysis from a feminist perspective, which she sees not as a monolith but a conglomerate of narrative positions. These narrative positions themselves are relative.
12. Her perspective on feminism is conditioned not only by her location but also is motivated by her interest in the texts of Marxism, psychoanalysis, post colonialism, international division of labour. She tries to understand feminism as an international project and brings to bear her understanding of other discourses on to it.
13. She proposes a re-writing of feminism (vis-à-vis American and French Feminisms, Marxism, psychoanalysis, racism, post-colonialism) through its continuous, comparative, and deconstructive problematzation, not only of other discourses but also her position and understanding within them.
14. She hopes that such an enterprise would infiltrate the real academy and "redo the terms of understanding of the context and substance of literature" as a part of human enterprise.
15. She is moved by the " 'reversal-displacement morphology' of deconstruction, crediting the asymmetry of the interest of the historical moment." Investigating the hidden "ethico-political agenda" of differentiation consisting of knowledge and judgement interests her even more. And it is "the deconstructive view that keeps her resisting an essentialist freezing of the concepts of gender, race and class." It also disallows the establishment of a hegemonic global theory of feminism.
16. Her reading acknowledges global dismissal of any narrative speculation about the nature of truth and then dismisses it in turn, since it might unwittingly suggest that there is somewhere a way of speaking about truth in truthful language, that a speaker can somewhere get rid of the structural unconscious and speak without role play.
17. However active in the production of civilisation as a by-product, socialised capital has not moved far from the presupposition of slave mode of production.
18. The phallocentric tradition so defines a woman (in terms of property and propriety), Spivak argues, as to perpetually keep her, as a sign, indeterminate.

19. According to Spivak, "The dissimulation of political economy is in and by ideology. What is at work and can be used in that operation is at least the ideology of nation-states, nationalism, national liberation, ethnicity and religion. Feminism lives in the master text as well as in the pores."
20. The presumption to change the world, in the context of ideological dissimulation, is only a chi
21. Spivak is averse to 'generalist' conception/definition of feminism. Instead of Feminism she thinks in terms of feminisms. For her feminism, of necessity, is contextually and experientially a diverse, heterogeneous and relative phenomena.
22. Deconstruction, for Spivak, is "not just a critique of presence but [also]an awareness of the itinerary of presence in one's own critique." It is a self-critical attitude, a kind of "vigilance against one's own claim to transparency."

Can the Subaltern Speak? This rhetorical question forms one of the most controversial insights of Spivak's deconstructive oeuvre. It brings into focus the question of imperialism and representation. It is important to understand the problematic of subaltern speech. What light does it throw on our understanding of her essay "Feminism and Critical Theory?"

The term subaltern was initially used by Gramsci to denote the economically dispossessed people. Ranjit Guha, an Indian historian, who founded a historiographic project, the Subaltern Studies Group, appropriated this term. The aim of subaltern history was to re-read the history of India from the perspective of the subalterns. It was an attempt to locate and re-establish a "voice" of the subalterns that traditional historiography had silenced. It was an attempt to 'see', and 'do history from below in such a way as to insert erased subaltern 'voice' in history and hence society. Though Spivak concedes the epistemic violence done upon Indian subalterns, she criticizes this project of giving voice, and hence améliorate their condition from outside. Such an attempt, she avers, is simplistic. It attempts to delegate for the 'other' from an elitist perspective. The sympathetic representation of the 'other' cannot be other's self-presentation. It will only be an approximation/appropriation of the 'other'. The 'other' will be understood not in the terms of the 'other' as the 'other' actually is, but through the investment of one's (here researcher's) traces on to the 'other.' Further, the subaltern view presumes: 1) a logocentric assumption of cultural solidarity among a heterogeneous people, and 2) a dependence upon western intellectuals to "speak for" the subaltern condition rather than allowing them to speak for themselves. As Spivak argues, by speaking out and reclaiming collective cultural identity, subaltern scholars will in fact re-inscribe their subordinate position in society.

This critique of the subaltern scholars finds its echoes in "Feminism and Critical Theory." Herein, Spivak tacitly hints at the fallacy of American Feminism to speak for the women who occupy a position – cultural, racial, historical and familial – that is markedly different from their own (that defines their assumption of female oppression) location. In this essay, Spivak asks them to heed the cautions of deconstruction – the desire to 'change' third world conditions through such an appropriatory and essentialist 'understanding' will turn the third world female into a universal abstraction. Spivak favours deconstructivist scepticism of essentialising. It tends to obliterate, not only the temporal and spatial specificities of the 'other,' but also makes one blind to pluralism and contingency inherent in one's own location. Such an academic/activist assumption of a Western feminism, in their desire to understand and change the female situation – by superimposing one's subjectivity on all – is nothing but an 'epistemic violence'. This kind of feminism is an ethnocentric extension of Western *logos* – a totalising, essentialist "mythology" as Derrida might describe it – that doesn't account for the heterogeneity of the colonized body politic.

Spivak marks how this hegemonic perspective works in her critical work, "Three Women Texts and a Critique of Imperialism," where she analyses Emily Bronte's Jane Eyre, Jean Rhys' Wide Sargasso Sea, and Mary Shelley's Frankenstein. Commenting on Bronte Spivak makes it clear that though the novel upholds its protagonist as a new feminist ideal, it is done at the expense of Bertha, Rochester's **creole bride** who functions as a colonial subject of 'other' to legitimate Jane's simultaneous ascent to domestic authority. In other words, a feminist approach to theory perhaps precludes an understanding of the novel's depiction of the 'epistemic violence' done upon imperial subjects (here symbolized by Bertha). Spivak portrays such imperialism as a "worlding" process that attempts to disguise its own workings so as to naturalize and legitimize Western dominance.

Gayatri contends that the dynamics of imperialism and colonialism, in its constitution of the 'other', or the colonized,

had denied it, its articulate position or subjectivity. The other was/is constituted as an object, i.e., it was/is constituted by/in the desires (economic, political, cultural, epistemic) of the coloniser. The colonised, thus, is always a representation and not a self-presentation of his/her self. This is how Spivak explains this dynamics: "in the constitution of the Other of Europe, great care was taken to obliterate the textual ingredients with which such a subject could effect, could occupy (invest?) its itinerary." Spivak, thus, reads the narrative of Western imperialism as an instance of epistemic violence that organizes reality according to the international division of labour.

The issue of how the international division of labour impacts women's question is taken care of in the last section of the essay. She tries to read the predicament of Korean women, who have supposedly been given an empowering presence in the economy by the forces of liberalization and corporatization. Within this neo- economic dynamics, whereas the first world occupies the position of investing capital, the third World is trapped in the position of providing the field for investment and supply of labour. In order to maintain cheap labour in third world countries one needs authoritarian governments, minimum subsistence levels, and the absence of systematic training in the ideology of consumerism. Females occupy place in labour market not by virtue of their 'agency' but because of the 'exigencies' of the new economic order. She is now caught in double patriarchy – one present in physical proximity, the other acting through remote control. Spivak makes this clear through the Control Data episode. The figure of third world woman disappears into a violent shuttling between patriarchy and imperialism. And it is here that the first world feminist becomes a accomplice. Spivak argues and illustrates this complicity thus: "Bourgeois feminism, because of its blindness to the multinational theatre, dissimulated by "clean" national practice and fostered by the dominant ideology, can participate in the tyranny of the proper and see in Control Data an extender of the Platonic mandate to women in general."

Showalter And Spivak As Feminist Critics: A Comparison and Contrast

That Feminism is not a homogeneous monolith, but a contentious terrain, is apparent from the two essays. "Feminist criticism in wilderness" by Elaine Showalter and "Feminism and Critical Theory" by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Both the essays are examples of Feminist Literary Criticism in practice. Though both the critics bring to bear feministic perspective on the issues at hand, yet it is their approach to the issues that brings out the heterogeneity of their feminist concerns. The feminist critical practice (practice includes both theorization and criticism) is, thus, not only mediated by, but also implicated in the location and gaze of the critics.

The feministic perspectives of both Showalter and Spivak are constituted differently. While the former is the pioneer of gynocriticism that is mainly focused on the Anglo-American and European feminist traditions, Spivak is a 'Third World" feminist located in the first world. She is more in the tradition of post-feminism. Unlike Showalter, who critiques as an 'insider', Spivak's criticism emerges from an 'ambivalent' (both intellectual and situational) location She considers herself both as an insider and an outsider.

Elaine Showalter, in the process of outlining her gynocriticism, is more concerned about charting a history of feminist criticism. She is more interested in finding the linkages between various feminist perspectives, 'moments' and 'phases' within western feminisms. She works with a classificatory and analytic framework that, though employing a vocabulary of evolution and progress, is essentially ahistorical and 'west-centric'. In discovering a feminist critical tradition Showalter unwittingly privileges west-located feminism as the Feminism, and its history as the History. This is because the theoretical assumptions underlying her study are located in a particular world-view that fails to problematize the 'other' (i.e., the women who by virtue of their different socio-cultural and economic contexts - racial, colonial national etc.- are rendered marginal or subaltern), as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak calls it. This deficiency (a kind of essentialism) in Showalter's problematisation of gender becomes apparent the moment we come to Spivak's essay

Showalter's concept of gender as an oppressive cultural regime, though located in the concept of man-woman hierarchical difference, is, nevertheless, synchronous with western academic/feministic eliticism. She in her essay, "Feminist criticism in wilderness," seems to use the concept of gender as a universally valid category of feminist knowledge building. Instead of taking cognizance of the specificities of culture, race, location, caste etc, she (in comparison to Spivak) tends to homogenise woman as universal abstraction. Even in her theorization of cultural gynocriticism, where she offers a more nuanced understanding of gender, she tends to propose a critical methodology that still carries the traces of her privileged location. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak views this homogenising tendency as a new-imperialism. So, instead of understanding gender purely in terms of male-female dichotomy, she problematises it at the cross-section of race, place and history, so as to bring the 'other' (within the category 'women') in its critical purview, both as a critique (of the western feminist canon) and as an expansion of the concept (i.e., giving it a Third world dimension/post-colonial dimension).

The titles of Showalter's and Spivak's essays embed in them their respective critical trajectories and hence are suggestive of their critical premises. Showalter's "Feminist criticism in wilderness," if pondered over a bit, seems to take for granted the term 'feminist' not only as self-explanatory but also as self-evident. It seems to mark the closure on debate as to what is 'feminism', or what is 'feminine' as a gender category. It only suggests a 'directionless-ness', a "wilderness", as to the focus of what feminist criticism should aim at, or what should be the right trajectory of doing feminist criticism. Her essay's title is suggestive of an overarching schema as to the evolution of feminist critical practice in the west, and by default in the world.

The title of Spivak's essay, "Feminism and Critical Theory," on the contrary, seems to join issues with the very term feminism as a critical theory. She deconstructs western feminist project as elitist and hegemonic. According to her western feminist project is deficient as it fails to account for the complexities inherent within the category "woman". 'Deconstructivist' as she is, she is averse to definitional generalizations and advocates a constant playing with/ opening up of the concepts (signs) to expose the politics of meaning. The definition presupposes a semiotic dynamics that aims at stabilising the meaning through inclusion and exclusion. The dynamics of inclusion and exclusion is not determined objectively, but subjectively. The subjectivity is a function of one's bodily, experiential, socio-cultural, economic and power location and situation. Spivak, by virtue of her location (she is an Indian located in the west, a woman circumscribed by male academia, a post-colonial feminist professionally located in the west, who emotionally identifies and understands the East) is able to see through the blindness of western feministic project and, through the insertion of her own problematic/textual self within this terrain, affects a complex politico-critical interface with it. This way she is able to expand the notions, both of gender and feminism.

Though Showalter appreciates and duly catalogues Marxist and Psychoanalytic streams of Feminism (and she pitches for Feministic criticism rooted in Marxism), she, unlike Spivak, hardly questions the basic premises of Marxism. Her critical stance merely fits in feminism and Marxism into a kind of symbiotic frame. Spivak, on the other hand, seeks to destabilise deconstructively both Marxism and Psychoanalysis, from a feminist angle, and in the process brings in an accretive understanding of the phenomena. Her problematisation of the concept remains open ended.

While Showalter tends to essentialize women's difference vis-à-vis men, Spivak tends to understand the men-women relationship in terms that go beyond an essentialist dichotomization.

The above perspectival contrast also manifests itself in their respective understanding of literature. Showalter conceives of gynocritical aesthetics purely in terms of its uniqueness vis-à-vis male aesthetics. This is implicit in the distinction she makes between feminist critique and gynocriticism. However in Spivak, literary text is merely a part of larger textuality. She in fact cautions that: "One should not mistake the grounds out of which the idea of the world and self are produced with the business of the appreciation of the literary text."

While Elaine Showalter provides an overview of the evolution of western Feminist literary criticism and discusses its various offshoots, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak locates the problem of literary criticism within the post-colonial and subaltern perspectives. However both advocate **'thick description'** as a potent tool of critical analysis. This helps them place their literary criticism within wider cultural-scape.

Spivak in effect carries out her analysis of the implications of liberalization and globlization on Korean (Third World) by tackling the 'over determinations' of their narrative situation.

Suggested Exercises

1. What are the important postulates Spivak as a feminist? Illustrate these on the basis of your reading of her essay "Feminism and Critical Theory"?
2. How does Spivak view literature as an aesthetic category?
3. Discuss Spivak as a deconstructivist feminist critic.
4. How does Spivak problematize the issue of subalternity in her essay "Feminism and Critical Theory"? Discuss.
5. Compare and contrast Spivak and Showalter as feminist critics.
6. Contextualise and critique the following statements:
   i. "I can not speak of feminism in general. I speak of what I do as a woman within literary criticism."
   ii. "No rigorous definition of anything is ultimately possible, so that if one wants to, one could go on deconstructing the opposition between man and woman, and finally show that it is the binary opposition that displaces itself."
   iii. "Text ...is the area in which the problem of the discourse in human sciences is made available."
   iv. "The problem of the human discourse, is generally as articulating in the play...of three shifting 'concepts': Language, world, and consciousness."

v. "To my way of thinking the discourse of the literary text is apart of general configuration of textuality."

vi. *"One could indefinitely allegorize the relationship within [Marxian] triad use, exchange and surplus -- by suggesting that woman within it traditional social situation produces more than she is getting in terms of her subsistence, and therefore is a continual source of the production of surpluses* for *the man who owns her, or* by *the man for the capitalist who owns his labor power"*

vii. "The idea of the womb as a place of production is avoided both in Marx and in Freud."

viii. "One should not mistake the grounds out of which the idea of the world and self are produced with the business of the appreciation of the literary text."

ix. "Today I would see my work as the developing of a reading method that is sensitive to gender, race and class."

x. "As long as American feminists understand theory as a positivistic empiricism that scorns theory and therefore remains ignorant of its own , the "third World' as its object of study will remain constituted by those hegemonic first world intellectual practices."

xi. "I am still moved by the reversal-displacement morphology of deconstruction."

xii. "My attitude towards Freud today involves a broader critique of his entire project."

xiii." My attitude towards Marxism now recognizes the historical antagonism between Marxism and feminism, on both sides."

xiv. "Essentialism is a trap."

xv. "The dissimulation of political economy is in and by the ideology."

Suggested Reading List

Beauvior, Simone de. The Second Sex. *London: Pan, 1988.*

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Moi, Toril. Sexual/textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory. *London /New York : Methuen, 1985*

Oliver, Kelly, ed. French Feminism Reader. *Rowman & Littlefield, 2000.*

Showalter, Elaine. A Literature of their Own: British Novelist from Brontë to Lessing. *London: Virago, '97*

—— *ed.* The New Feminist Criticism: Essays on Women, Literature and Theory. *London: virago 1996*

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorti. In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics. *London/New York: Methuen 198*

——. A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Towards History of the Vanishing Present, *Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1999; Calcutta: Seagull Press, 1999.*

Warhol, Robyn R. and Diane Price Herndl, eds. Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism *New Brunswick/New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1996.*

Suggested Websites

1. Feminisms
2. What is Feminism and Why Do We Have to Talk About It So Much? by Mary Klages
3. Feminism and Women's Studies - Carnegie Mellon U
4. Women's Studies Resources (University of Maryland)
5. Feminist Theory Website by Ksristin Switala
6. Feminist Theory Resources by Karla Tonella
7. Schools of Feminist Thought by Cindy Tittle Moore
8. Feminism Theory (Women's Studies Department of Northern Arizona University)
9. Gender Studies and Feminism Links
10. ACRL Women and Gender Studies Weblinks
11. Alan Liu's Voice of the Shuttle (UCSB)—List of Links to Feminist and Gender-Related Sites
12. Mary Klages' lecture notes on "What is Feminism"

APPENDIX

Taxonomy of Feminist Intellectual Traditions

(From the web page hosted by Warren Hedges, Engish Dept, Southern Oregon University)

Tradition	Representative *Thinkers*	Presuppositions and Aims	Dilemmas
Liberal Feminism	Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem, etc.	Attempts to reform or use existing political structures to advance women's interests along a civil rights model. Argues that women deserve the same privileges, protections, pay, and opportunities that men do.	Even when reformed, existing political structures may not be adequate to address women's needs. How to achieve equality with men without erasing women's difference, making them in effect, "honorary men."
Cultural Feminism	A great variety of female artists, musicians, teachers, activists, etc. A very big tent.'	Attempts to recover lost or marginalized women's works and traditions and create a culture that nurtures and supports women's experiences and values. Music, literature and other arts form a large part of this endeavor. Argues that existing institutions and the values they represent are male-dominated.	How to create a "gynocentric" culture without drawing on a notion of "universal" sisterhood that may exclude some women. How to avoid "policing identity" and setting up some women and their values as more "women-centered' than others.
French Feminism	Hélene Cixous, Luce Irigaray, Julia Kristeva, Monique Wittig, Toril Moi	Draws on recent French intellectual traditions to examine the role that language plays in creating subjectivity and maintaining gender asymmetries. Explicitly critiques many of liberal feminism's presuppositions, although it supports its political advances	How to critique linguistic formations that make change difficult without characterizing their influence as something so powerful and pervasive that any attempts at political change are deluded and hopeless.
Psychoanalytic Feminism	Nancy Chodorow, Julliet Mitchell, Jane Gallop, Kaja Silverman, Toril Moi	Argues that the Freudian tradition, especially in its most recent formations, provides the best framework for understanding how language shapes subjectivity and gender definitions. Draws on moments in Freud's work where he analyzes traditional heterosexuality and gender roles as arbitrary rather than "natural."	How to draw on Freud's more subversive moments without also perpetuating sexist premises. Question of how plausible a model based on a Oedipal triangle is in a society where dual parent households are becoming less common.
Material Feminism	Susan Willis, Donna Harraway	Attempts to relate women's subordination to historical and class factors like the division of labor between men and women.	How to avoid treating gender issues as an offshoot of class issues.

Contd...

Cont.

		Tends to focus on collaboration rather than identity politics.	
Anti pornography Movement	Catherine McKinnon, Andrea Dworkin	Argues that pornography is the most extreme instance of a culture that objectifies women as a means to oppress them, and uses rape as a form of terrorism. "Pornography is the theory and rape is the practice."	How to account for the difference between representations and acts. How to explain things like some women's rape fantasies or lesbian B&D without policing women's desires.
Pro-Porn Movement	Gayle Rubin, Susie Bright, female performance artists	Argue that the anti-porn movement has a naive view of representation and has vitiated women's sense of sexual agency. Does not want to censor porn, but to create better porn that reflects women's desires, body types, and diversity.	How to best combat the continuity between some forms of straight male pornography and violence against women
Queer Theory	Gayle Rubin, Judith Butler, Michael Moon, Eve Sedgwick	Examines the ways that marginalized sexualities subvert, parody, and disrupt dominant gender and power relations. Especially interested in how drag, camp, etc. complicate or disrupt received oppositions like those between "male" and "female," "gay" and "straight," etc.	How to maintain a cohesive oppostional politics that does not depend on a notion of shared identity.
Separatism	Mary Daily	Argues that at this historical moment women's primary responsibility is to care for each other and combat patriarchy, and that this is best achieved by creating female-only spaces and relationships. Especially during the late seventies lesbian separatists were sometimes taken (often by others) to be the most radical or pure form of feminism.	How to be a vanguard if you don't have a positive program for males, especially boys. How to account for non-traditional males such as gay men and transvestites.

Radical Feminism:

The term has at least three contestatory claims:

1. That Radical feminism is a revolutionary form of cultural feminism, overlapping with separatism, and arguing for nothing less than a complete revolution in terms of gendered oppression and resistance on all fronts, public and private
2. That radical feminism was a term highjacked from feminists with Marxist leanings and appropriated by a more conservative essentialism that privileged personal style over political coalitions.
3. That radical feminism reifies men and women's gender roles and relies on 19th century notions of women's purity and men's corrosiveness, making it conservative, especially in its tendency to police women's identities by labeling butch women as "male-identified" and excluding femme-men from serious consideration.

Post-Colonial Theory - Unit-X

B. Ashcroft, G. Griffiths and H. Tiffin

(a) The Empire Writes Back

Homi Bhabha

(b) "Of Mimicry and Man:

The Ambivalence of Colonsial Discourse in Modern Literary Theory

Introduction to Post-colonial Theory

Postcolonialism, before it evolved into a full-fledged credo or an enterprise of recovery, has its brief history and definite past. As the British Empire liquidated and broke up, it in order to retain some vestige of its imperial past, it attempted an illusion of unity under the euphemistic title of 'Commonwealth'. Consequently, a new object appeared on the margins of departments of English Literature which was named as 'Commonwealth Literature'. It incorporated the study of writers from the predominantly European settler communities as well as writers belonging to those countries which were in the process of gaining independence from British rule, such as those from African, Caribbean and South Asian nations. The institutionalization of Commonwealth Literature in a way ensured for the first time a literary recognition of the writings of the writers of the erstwhile colonial world. This was quite a breakthrough and a step-forward towards the acceptance of the colonized world as a site potent enough to generate literary works if not classics.

Literary critics began to distinguish a fast-growing body of literature written in English which included works by such figures as R.K.Narayan (India), George Lemming (Barbados), Katherine Mansfield (New Zealand) and Chinua Achebe (Nigeria). It is pertinent to observe that only works written in English were entertained under the rubric of Commonwealth. Writings in native tongues continue to suffer neglect. The creation of the category of 'Commonwealth Literature' as a special area of study was an attempt to identify and locate this vigorous literary activity, and to consider via a comparative approach the common concerns and attributes that these manifold literary voices might have. Significantly neither American nor Irish literature, then, was associated exclusively with the selected countries with a history of colonialism.

The term 'Commonwealth' was first used to refer collectively to the special status of the dominions within the Empire and their continuing allegiance to Britain. However as the relationship between Britain and the dominions changed in the first half of the half of the century, a different meaning of 'Commonwealth' emerged. After Second World War, British monarch was recognized as the head of the Commonwealth in symbolic terms only; the British crown held no political authority over other Commonwealth nations, and the word 'British' used as adjective before the Commonwealth was abandoned altogether. Thus 'Commonwealth' became redefined after the War II in much more equitable terms, as meaning an association of sovereign nations without deference to a single authority.

The identification and the study of 'Commonwealth Literature' certainly echoed the tenor of specifically benign usage of 'Commonwealth', but it also had its own problems. It distinctly promoted unity in diversity – revealingly, the plural term 'Commonwealth Literatures' was rarely used. Commonwealth Literature may well have been created in an attempt to bring together writings from around the world on an equal footing, yet the assumption remained that the texts incorporated under Commonwealth Literature were addressed primarily to a Western English–speaking readership. The Commonwealth in Commonwealth Literature was never fully free from the older, more imperious connotations of the term. For all intent and purposes, the canonical English literature remained as the privileged centre or critical reference for all Third World literatures.

One of the fundamental assumptions held by the first Western critics of Commonwealth Literature concerned the relationship between literature and nation. Many agreed that the 'novel' ideas and new 'interpretations of life' in

Commonwealth Literature owed much to the ways that writers were forging their own sense of national and cultural identity. This was certainly one of the functions of the texts regarded as 'Commonwealth Literature'. However the attention to the alleged nationalist purposes of much Commonwealth literature often played second fiddle to more abstract concerns which distracted attention away from specific national contexts. Many critics were primarily preoccupied with identifying a common goal shared among writers from many different nations that went beyond more 'local' affairs. Just as the idea of a 'Commonwealth of nations' suggested a diverse community with a common set of concerns, Commonwealth literature – whether produced in India, Australia or the Caribbean - was assumed to reach across national borders and deal with universal concerns. Commonwealth Literature certainly dealt with the national and cultural issues but the best writing possessed the mysterious power to transcend them too

Because the texts studied under Commonwealth Literature were written ostensibly in English, they were to be evaluated in relation to English Literature, with the same criteria used to account for the literary value of the age old English 'classics'. Commonwealth Literature at its best was comparable with the English literary canon which functioned as the means of measuring its value. In net terms, Commonwealth Literature was really a sub-set of canonical English Literature, evaluated in terms derived from the conventional study of English that stressed the values of timelessness and universality. National differences were certainly important, adding the novelty of 'personality', 'light and 'colour'; but ultimately these 'national' specifics were secondary to the fundamental universal meaning of the work.

Any critical approach that makes historical context secondary and privileges its 'universalist appeal' ultimately lapses into the enlightenment theory of liberal humanism. For liberal humanists the most 'literary' texts always transcend the provincial contexts of their initial production and deal with moral preoccupations relevant to people of all times and places. In retrospect many critics of Commonwealth literature appear very much like liberal humanists. For postcolonial critics the different preoccupations and contexts of texts were to become more important than their alleged similar abstract qualities. The patient, detailed and enthusiastic readings of Commonwealth Literature laid the foundations for various postcolonial theories/ paradigms that were to follow and to which postcolonial critical activity remains indebted.

But before postcolonial theory could come into its own into a cohesive project of counter-thinking, various theories of colonial discourses had prepared a fertile ground for its subsequent arrival. In other words, theories of colonial discourses have been hugely influential in the development of postcolonialism. In general, they explore the ways that representations and modes of perception are used as fundamental weapons of colonial power to keep colonized peoples subservient to colonial rule. Many writers have striven to demonstrate how colonialism suggests certain ways of seeing, specific modes of understanding the world and one's place in it that assist in justifying the subservience of colonized peoples to the oft-assumed 'superior', civilized order of the British colonizers. These ways of seeing are at the root of the study of colonial discourses.

Colonialism is perpetuated in part by justifying to those in colonizing nation the idea that it is right and proper to rule over other peoples, and by getting colonized people accept their lower ranking in the colonial order of things a process we can call 'colonizing the mind'. It operates by persuading people to internalize its logic and speak its language; to perpetuate the values and assumptions of the colonizers as regards the ways they perceive and represent the world. Theories of colonial discourses call attention to the role language plays in getting people succumb to a particular way of seeing. Colonial discourses form the intersections where language and power meet. The intervention of Ngugi wa Thiong'o, a Kenyan novelist in this regard is pertinent: "Language," he writes, "carries culture, and culture carries. Particularly through orature and literature, the entire body of values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world." British endured by getting both colonized and colonizers to see their world and themselves in a particular way, internalizing the language of Empire as representing the natural and true order of life.

In 1950s there emerged much important work that attempted to record the psychological damage suffered by colonized peoples who internalized these colonial discourses. Prominent was the psychologist Frantz Fanon, who wrote widely and passionately about the damage French colonialism had wreaked upon millions of people who suffered its power. Fanon's two polemical books – *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), and *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) – deal rather angrily the mechanics of colonialism and its effects on those it ensnared. Black Skin, White Masks depicts those colonized by French imperialism doomed to hold a traumatic belief in their own inferiority. One response to such

trauma is to strive to escape it by embracing the 'civilized' ideals of the French 'motherland'. "The white world", Writes Fanon, "the only honourable one, barred me from all participation. A man was expected was behave like a 'man' I was expected to behave like a 'black man'." For Fanon, the end of colonialism meant not just political and economic change, but psychological change too.

In 1978 Edward W. Said's *Orientalism* also explored the extent to which colonialism created a way of seeing the world, but it paid attention more to the colonizers than to the colonized. Said examined how the knowledge that the Western imperial powers formed about their colonies helped continually to justify their subjugation. Western travelers looked upon the Orient as mythic place of exoticism, moral laxity and sheer barbarism.

Fanon and Said and to some extent writings of Gandhi, Aurobindo, Tagore and other thinkers from the colonized world, inspired a new generation of literary critics in 1980s. What critics learned was the simultaneous candid and complex fact that Empires colinize imagination at the very level of the unconscious. A keen understanding of the processes of colonization and how they can be decolonized constitutes the basic core of postcolonial theory.

True it is that much of the credit of establishing postcolonial theory as way of counter-reading goes to Said's *Orientalism*, yet one must not forget the general revival of theory in 1980s in the entire Western academia. With the grand arrival of theory in 80s, reading literature remained no longer a value-free, apolitical, non-ideological exercise. The writing of literature, as the theory explicated rather assiduously, is as much implicated in the power games, as reading it. In other words entire literary act – involving its three players, i.e., the writer, the text and the reader – we are told, is intensely political and loaded with values which are hardly empirical or innocuously value-neutral. The rise of theory ensured a re-thinking in the whole range of processes involved in the manufacturing, circulation and reception of a literary representation. Text is no longer just an organic offshoot of a writer's imagination for what is romanticized as 'the writer's imagination' is hardly his imagination. It is the imagination of the political structure of which he is a part and parcel, The writer may not be vocal about his political or cultural choices; he may not be avowedly a politician, yet willy-nilly he is medium of power politics that permeates in the environment.

Postcolonial theory thus brings politics into literature, without any sense of guilt or shame, for it underlines rather persuasively that the literature written or read in the erstwhile colonies bears the brunt of colonialism. Colonial past is the necessary condition of creativity for the postcolonial writer. Colonialism is thus seen not merely an economic enterprise, but as a very deep-rooted cultural enterprise which no creative writer from the colonized world can escape.

Previous critical enquiries into empire and its consequences had focused on colonialism and imperialism as projects of an expansionist Western capitalism. Amongst the objects of discussion were the violent territorial advancement of Western capitalism on non-capitalist worlds, the extraction of raw materials and the exploitation of labour, authoritarian rule etc. The postcolonial theory has brought to our understanding colonialism's global reach. In the wake of Said's *Orientalism* academic studies came to examine the range of cultural resistance together with colonialism's elaborate and hitherto overlooked deployment of knowledge in the exercise of political subjugation, and the extent of empire's dissemination in the culture and consciousness of the imperial homeland.

A group of postcolonial critics who used the post-structuralist thought of Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault and Jacques Lacan began to enquire in particular the representation of colonized subjects in a variety of texts, not just literary. Besides Said who derived much of his theoretical impetus from Foucault's thesis of 'Power as Knowledge' (as against the 'Knowledge is Power'), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Homi Bhabha descended on the postcolonial scene with new theoretical insights and propositions. Spivak, a translator of Derrida, obviously, deployed postcolonialism as a deconstructive tool to unfold and lay bare the constructionist politics of the colonials. Bhabha depends a lot on the Lacanian notion of liminality. His chosen masters are Fanon and Lacan. Said, Bhabha and Spivak are often described as the Holy Trinity of postcolonial theory. In recent years Said-Spivak-Bhabha triad has become focus for much of commentary and debate in postcolonialism..

The theories emanating from colonial discourses and postcolonial practices spawned a whole new breed of literary critics who argued that texts written in the erstwhile colonial world were primarily engaged in a process of questioning and travestying colonial discourses in their work. This process/ approach was termed later on as 'writing back to centre'. The approach was crystallized in an important book that appeared at the end of the decade titled: *The Empire*

Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literatures (Routledge, 1990), co-authored by three critics from Australia: Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffins. It epitomized the increasingly popular view that literature from the once-colonized countries was fundamentally concerned with the challenging the language of colonial power, unlearning its world-view and producing new modes of representation.

The Empire Writes Back takes up as its central theme the relationship of the periphery to the metropolitan centre in the context of post-colonial literature. The title is highly ambiguous and paradoxical, symptomatic of the paradoxes built in the very enterprise of postcolonial theory. The tile echoes *The Empire Strikes Back,* the second film in the Star Wars Trilogy in which the counter-insurgence of the guerillas is checked by the might of the Empire. There is another intertextual echo in the title. The tile is a quotation from Salman Rushdie who, writing from within the centre as a critic of it, now finds himself denounced for complicity with the values of the colonizer, the imperialist. "The Empire", writes Rushdie, "would not have lasted a week without such collaborators among the colonized people". The title *Empire Writes Back* thus sounds like a Freudian slip, announcing the inevitable triumph of the Empire's counter-attack as the slogan for a book that celebrates post-colonial subversion.

Despite so much of theorization, defining postcolonialism continues to be difficult if not impossible, task. The big question is: is it possible to speak about a postcolonial era, if colonialism's various assumptions, opinions and knowledges remain unchallenged? Also postcolonialism wishfully ignores the continuing reality of colonialism in our day-to-day life. Colonial ways still persist, and have agency in the present; unfortunately they have not magically disappeared or declined. That is why most of the postcolonial theorists tend to deploy postcolonial as a period of history, and reserve it for talking about aesthetic practices.

So the term postcolonialism is not a signifier of 'after colonialism'. It doers not inaugurate new radical historical era, nor does it herald a brave new world where all the ill-effects of colonialism have been sufficiently countered. It however sensitizes us to the politics of presentation and other subtle political strategies and processes that were and are being used to appropriate people into the discourse of hegemony and easy assimilation.

Some Important Postcolonial Thinkers

Frantz Fanon

Fanon was born in Martinique in 1925, and left Fort de France to fight with the free France during the war. In 1945 he returned to Martinique to study philosophy. Fanon underwent his first moment of political radicalization under the influence of Cesaire. Reinforced with the potent mixture of communism and negritude, Fanon returned to France to begin his formal studies in medicine, psychiatry and philosophy. But Fanon's most seminal phase of life started only when he took the job of psychiatrist in Algeria in 1953. He became a revolutionary and was expelled from Algeria for his fight against French colonizers. He died in Washington in 1961 at the age of just 36. He was influenced a great deal by Marxism and the writings of Cesaire on negritude.

The Wretched of the Earth (1961), hailed by Stuart Hall, as "the Bible of decolonization" is the most seminal book on colonial politics with its special accent on Third World nationalism. To begin with Fanon, unlike Gandhi, openly supports combative militancy as a necessary tool of decolonization. He says, "decolonization is a always a violent phenomenon". While describing the process of formation of national consciousness, as an aftermath of decolonization Fanon locates three distinct phases. The first is the phase of 'unqualified assimilation' of the colonial culture by the native nationalist elite. The second stage is that of 'turning backwards' wherein the native elite turns back to the cultural past and digs out frames of indigenous nationalism. In the third stage, native elite realizes the passivity of their entire enterprise of looking backwards, and begins to fight for active nationalism. This is stage of combat as the native elite strive(s) transform and mobilize the native tradition into a working principle. This process of transformation of fossilized tradition into a dynamic principle of active nationalism entails its (tradition's) reinterpretation, modification and critical revision.

Nationalism, despite its so many pitfalls, is postulated as the principal remedial means whereby the colonized culture overcomes the psychological damage of colonial racism. He understands the therapeutic necessity of anti-colonial

nationalism. Thus in his *The Wretched of the Earth*, he privileges nationalism for its capacity to heal the historical wounds inflicted by the colonial culture which confines the colonized to a bare sub-human existence. Nationalism becomes the urgent plea for re-humanization. It becomes a process of recovery and repossession. Speaking against the idea of forming a pan-generalized pan-African movement against European colonialism, he favours the idea of nationalism, for blacks in different geographical locations have different problems and any construction of pan-Africanism would be based on false sense of homogeneity. Fanon therefore asserts the idea of the nation as the focal point for anti-colonial resistance not least because it allows the native intellectual to address the specific historical circumstances and challenges of one particular colonized location.

But Fanon is extremely skeptical of what he calls as 'unconditional' advocacy of nationalism. Any radicalism on account of distinct and fetishized national consciousness mere reiterates and gives legitimacy to the insidious racialization of thought, which in a way serves the colonial politics of fostering division among people along racial lines. Accordingly, any unconditional affirmation of African culture only supports unconditional affirmation of European culture. Aggressive assertions of cultural identity come in the way of wider international solidarities. Fanon's writings thus maintain a deep ambivalence towards the desirability of postcolonial nation-state. National consciousness should not in any case lapse into fixed and narrow nationalism. Fanon apprehends that bourgeois nationalist has every chance of being transformed into neocolonial elite. "The national bourgeoisie", Fanon observes quite pertinently, "steps into the shoes of the former European settlement". Extremely critical of national middle class, he says, "it lives to itself and cuts off from the people . . . the national middle class will have nothing better to do than to take the role of the manager for Western enterprise, and it will in practice set up its country as the brothel of Europe."

Black Skin White Masks (1956), another significant book by Fanon, examines the psychological effects of colonialism. The book explains at length the consequences of identity formation for the colonized subject who is forced into the internalization of the self as an 'other'. The 'negro' is deemed to epitomize everything that the colonizing French are not. The colonizers are civilized, rational, intelligent etc.; the 'negro' by implication is a rude, barbaric and uncivilized. One psychological response to such traumatic situation is to internalize and embrace the colonizer's ideals, so as to escape the brutalities of the colonizer.

Albert Memmi

Albert Memmi, the Tunisian anti-colonial revolutionary and intellectual has argued that the colonial aftermath is fundamentally deluded in its hope that the architecture of a new world will magically emerge from the physical ruins of colonialism. Memmi maintains that the triumphant subjects of this aftermath inevitably underestimate the psychologically tenacious hold of the colonial past on the postcolonial present. In his words, "And the day oppression ceases, the new man is supposed to emerge before our eyes immediately. Now I do not like to say so, but I must since decolonization has demonstrated it: this is not the way it happens, The colonized lives for a long time before we see that really new man". Memmi's political pessimism delivers an account of postcoloniality as historical condition marked by the visible apparatus of freedom and the concealed persistence of unfreedom. He suggests that the pathology of this postcolonial limbo between arrival and departure, independence and dependence, has its source in the residual tracers and memories of subordination. Memmi argues that the lingering residue of colonization will only decompose if, and when, we are willing to acknowledge the reciprocal behaviour of the two colonial partners. The colonial condition, he writes, "chained the colonizer and the colonized into an implacable dependence, moulded their respective characters and dictated their conduct". Memmi thus makes singular contribution in problematizing the oppositional postcolonial theory. He was the first to protest against the strict dichotomy between the colonizer and the colonized laid down by Sarter and Fanon, arguing for an understanding of the mutual mental relations between the colonizer and the colonized.

Amilcar Cabral

Amilcar Cabral, like Fanon, was a revolutionary who against fought colonialism to liberate Guinea-Bissau from the Portuguese. Cabral made three significant speeches: "The Weapon of Theory" (1966), "National Liberation and Culture" (1970) and "Identity and Dignity in the Context of National Liberation Struggle" (1972). National liberation is defined by Cabral not just in terms of the formal aspects of political independence, not just as the end of colonial

rule, but as freedom from foreign domination. Political independence as such is not its object, for this Cabral regards as a false independence. The "principal aspect of national liberation struggle is the struggle against neo-colonialism" Cabral's "weapon of theory" makes a radical intervention into the problem of the relation of national liberation struggle movements to socialism. The revolutionary goal of liberation comprised both formal independence and a socialist revolution within the nation. Liberation thus involves, according to Cabral, two stages, a corporate struggle in which the nation forms a single class, and a second stage in which the working classes destroy the social and cultural fabric created by imperialism in order to create equality and true liberation from oppression. As soon as the political independence is won, the corporate class has to commit suicide as a class in favour of a socialist revolution. The nationalist elite has to undergo a 'cultural reconversion' in order to take the benefits of political independence to the people.

Aime Cesaire

Aime Cesaire was born in the French Caribbean colony of Martinique. He came to Paris in the 1930s to study where he met fellow-student Leopold Senghor, from the French African colony of Senegal. Cesaire and Senghor found themselves commonly identified by the French *negres* – a derogatory insult that approximates to the racist term 'nigger in English. While Senghor made claims about the specific qualities to be found in all people of black African descent, Cesaire's version of Negritude was based much less on the perceived instinctual or essential difference between whites and blacks. He understood Negritude primarily as something to be measured with the compass of suffering. This meant that black peoples were united more by their shared experience of oppression than by their essential qualities as 'negroes'. Cesaire's version of Negritude is best exemplified by his influential poem *Notebook of a Return to My Native Land*, published in 1939.

Edward Said

Although the genealogy of postcolonial theory is historically complex, extensive and itself an example of trans-cultural admixture, it was Edward Said's critique in *Orientalism* (1978) of the cultural politics of academic knowledge that effectively founded postcolonial studies as academic discipline. The first main area of Said's work deals with the political implications of Western colonialism and imperialism and the West's domination and representation of the East or, more generally, the non-European world. The concept of Orientalism, as understood and approached by Said has been explained in some detail in the glossary given towards the end of the notes.

The second main focus of Said's work is the analysis of the situation in Palestine, Israel and the Middle East more generally. *Orientalism* was quickly followed by *The Question of Palestine* (1979) and *Covering Islam* (1981). In a way all the three books deal with the relation between 'Islam, Arabs and the Orient', on the one hand, and 'the West, France, Britain and in particular the United States', on the other. Two man concerns with regard to the problem of the Middle East emerge. The first is the documentation of Palestinian existence in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with emphasis on the need for a Palestinian narrative to counter the pro-Israeli narrative of events in the Middle East. This accompanied by the analysis of the distortions, prejudices and racism that all too often characterize the representation of Islam and Arabs by the Western media and academia. Secondly Said has consistently provided a critique of US government policy in the Middle East, and of the Israeli and Arab governments and their actions including those of the recently established Palestinian Authority.

Said's third central topic is the function of criticism in the contemporary world, especially the role and responsibilities of the intellectual. The two key texts are *The World, The Text and the Critic* (1983) and *Representations of the Intellectual* (1994). In the first he puts forward his own theoretical position as he proposes a model of 'secular criticism' and criticizes much contemporary theory because of its detachment from the problems and constraints of the real world and explains why Foucault rather Derrida provides part of inspiration for his own approach. For Said, key words for the intellectual are skepticism, memory and above the 'the critical sense'. In *Representations of the Intellectual* he develops his argument that the intellectual should not be seduced by power or official approval, but should remain unco-opted, if not uncommitted, ready to challenge orthodoxies and received ideas and to change the world.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o

Ngugi, a famous Kenyan novelist, contributed to postcolonial theory by way of his strong comments against 'English' as the privileged medium of literary expression in his seminal book *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Lan-*

guage in African Literature (1981). Since 1980, Ngugi has stopped writing in English and now writes in his native tongue Gikuyu. For him the silencing of Gikuyu by the colonial regime in Kenya was a violent and destructive act of cultural colonialism. To dismiss a language is to dismiss a whole culture. He observes very pertinently that, "Culture embodies those moral, ethical and aesthetic values, the set of spiritual eyeglasses, through which [a people] come to view themselves and their place in the universe. Values are the basis of people's identity, their sense of particularity as members of the human race. All this is carried by language. Language as culture is the collective memory bank of a people's experience in history". Ngugi argues that if he continues to write in English, he remains split off from the 'memory bank' of his community. To write in English is to deal in the values of the oppressor, to see the world through colonial lenses and not through inherited 'spiritual eyeglasses'. He calls on other African writers to renounce English so that, through the use of indigenous language they might 'reconnect themselves to the revolutionary traditions of an organized peasantry and working class in Africa in their struggle to defeat imperialism'. There is so much resentment against the dubious cultural and pedagogical pre-eminence of English literature within a decolonized African context that he goes to the extent of pleading for the abolition of English departments altogether.

Ashis Nandy

Nandy's book *The Intimate Enemy* comprised an analysis of the 'unheroic ways' that Indian intellectuals and politicians had dealt with the dominant power of British colonialism, and the ways in which Indians responded to colonial knowledge by creating 'an alternative language of discourse'. Though far less acknowledged, *Intimate Enemy* was one of the books that contributed most to the setting up the basic framework of the postcolonial studies in India

Nandy's most tendentious assertion , that 'colonialism is first of all a matter of consciousness', makes a claim for the priority of the ontology over history, and clearly sets colonialism's effects on consciousness above disruptive transformations to the world – material, military, economic and cultural – brought about by colonial expansion. One does not have to agree with Nandy's order of primacy. Nandy follows Gandhi's argument that colonialism produced a cultural and psychological pathology in both colonizing and the colonized societies as well as in individuals. He argues that there were effectively two strains of anti-colonialism, the first one was more or less Marxist, the second one took the form of psychological resistance that allowed the construction of an alternative west.

Intimate Enemy consists of two juxtaposed essays, "The Psychology of Colonialsim: Sex, Age and Ideology in British India" and "The Uncolonized Mind: A Post-Colonial View of India and the West". The two essays together, established four of the major issues that have become central to the field: the psychology of resistance, the problems of resisting through ideas and strategies drawn from the very culture that is being resisted, the gendering of ideology and praxis of imperialism and of resistance to it, and the possibilities of hybridization.

Nandy begins by positioning himself in Gandhian terms against Marx's problematic affirmation of colonialism as part of a progressive western modernity. Following Gandhi's emphasis on the dark and violent aspects of modern western civilization, Nandy argues that world wars, colonial wars such as Vietnam, "genocides, ecodisasters and ethnocides are but the underside of corrupt sciences and psychopathic technologies wedded to new secular hierarchies". Modernity, he claims, may itself be "the second form of colonization", which comprises an ideology that those in the colonial and postcolonial world have internalized as a necessary means to freedom. Even those who struggled against colonialism, Nandy argues, often did so by 'guiltily' embracing and endorsing modernity: "conventional anti-colonialism . . .could be an apologia for the colonization of minds". Colonialism managed to create 'a culture in which the ruled are constantly tempted to fight their rules within the psychological set by the latter".

Nandy invokes Gandhi's strategy of *satyagraha*. The Indian experience suggests that resistance can also operate at the psychological level and that such forms of resistance can in certain contexts be more effective than militarized struggle. By taking seriously Gandhi's notion of internal resistance, Nandy complicates the dynamics of the colonial arena.

"Of Mimicry and Man": The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse

A Critical Exposition

Before we undertake an extended critical exposition of the essay, let us by way of introduction, discuss some of the

foremost concerns of Homi Bhabha as they emerge from *The Location of Culture* – the name of the book of which this essay is a part of. The 'location' in Bhabha's theory is defined as the "in-between" or the "interstitial passage" – the space that is occupied by the diasporic, the dispossessed, the colonized, the culturally dislocated, and the subjects that do not fit into conventional, homogenous national and racial typologies. In simple words, there is none who could be defined in straight national terms like Indian, British, or American. Each one of us is a mixed being, a divided self culturally pulled apart by the nationalist phase in one direction, and modern global pulls on the other. A whole range of new identities like Indo-American, Sino-Americans, Indo-Canadians etc. have emerged beyond national identities. The in-between thus emerges as problematic cultural location which demands a rethinking of the constitution of politics, identity, and the human agency. Any reader of Bhabha will find difficulty in "locating" his critical position, simply because his thinking embraces what is understood to be hybrid and split structures of postcolonial experience. Location of Culture has been heralded as one of the principal texts of recent postcolonial theory. It adds to the vocabulary of the field a difficult concept of hybridity and inbetweenness. Ambivalence in postcolonial subject response remains a constant reference in Bhabha's understanding of postcolonial condition. By invoking theoretical insights from Fanon, Lacan and other post-structuralists, he creates his own critical meta-language which is difficult for the beginner, but on careful re-readings, one gathers a lot from Bhabha.

"The discourse of post-Enlightenment English colonialism," says Bhabha in the opening line of the essay, "often speaks in a tongue that is forked, not false." Let us try to understand the term "Enlightenment" first. Enlightenment as a philosophical ideal stands for the values of rationalism, democracy and individualism. As period in history it marked an end to the superstitious Middle Ages. The political consequence of the Enlightenment is the growth of the doctrine of liberalism, with its chief economic belief in the free-trade market.

Post-Enlightenment marked a phase in history that questioned the basic postulates of Enlightenment. Thinkers began to question the assumptions that underpinned the Enlightenment as the disastrous effects of free-market industrialization and nationalism became clearer. Rationalism too failed to provide the mental/ spiritual stay to the people at large. The post-Enlightenment English colonizers began to realize the inadequacies of the Enlightenment pursuits of their predecessors. They realized the impossibility of prescribing rationalism or democracy as universal ideals in the colonies. The post-1857 English officials in India for instance began to recognize the cultural distinctness of India as a colonized nation. The later English rulers relented and even visibly backtracked from their avowed colonial mission of reforming the entire world along their lines of reason-based modernity.

Consequently the tenor of colonial discourse undergoes a change. From an uncritical aggressive tone, it acquires an idiom that is deliberately divided, or ambivalent. The tongue of the colonial course in this sense becomes "forked". The colonial discourse seeks to humanize the bestial Third World native, yet it did not want to humanize him totally. The civilizing mission of the colonizers stopped short of totally transforming the Third World native. 'Human and not wholly human" – this becomes the slogan of post-Enlightenment English colonialism. This was quite a scaling down from the epic intentions of erstwhile English colonial elite that sought total de-culturalization of the Third World.

This change in tone or turn of events, Bhabha finds, is highly comic. It gives rise to a discourse/ or a text that is conspicuously ironic. 'Human and yet not wholly human' forms the very structure of irony. Instead of bringing about radical changes in colonies, they settled on changes which served their interests without inviting any backlash from the natives. In short the colonial imagination checkmates itself, it settles in favour of what Bhabha calls, "low mimetic literary effects". "Low mimetic effects" in simple words means an inferior, raw and unrefined copy of the original who in this case happens to be the colonial master.

What "low mimetic effects" ultimately result into is a creation of a postcolonial being who is partially anglicized and is made half-English, half-native. Anglicization of the colonial subject, without really making him 'English' as such generated the poetics of mimicry. A half-anglicized, half-native response to a situation would be pathetically very comic. In the native folklore we come across many such 'desi' characters who are ridiculed for their overtly anglicized ways.

The low mimetic effects ensure a change in the outlook of the native who is anglicized but not treated at par with English. The difference between the original and the imitated is carefully maintained. Such an arrangement suited the interests of the both the colonized and the colonizer. Colonized was happy that his culture is not wholly turned upside down, the colonizer was happy it allowed the perpetuation of colonial power and knowledge without violent native backlash.

Mimicry emerges as the most befitting strategy of "the conflictual economy of colonial discourse". The term "conflictual economy" demands some explanation. Those who perceive the relationship between the colonial and the colonized as that of perpetual violence and widespread conflict, perhaps under-estimate the subtlety of the processes of colonization. Colonialism is not as much a bloody war-game, as it is an enterprise of controlling the mind. Colonial discourse is all about managing the native without much violence to his cultural distinctness. It is to economize the element of conflict, without compromising the colonial interest. It in this sense Edward Said uses the term "conflictual economy of colonial discourse".

'Direct confrontation' is not the language of colonial discourse. The post-Enlightenment English colonial administrators are least militaristic. Even in their pursuits of engendering reforms within the orthodox, ritual-ridden tribal Indian society, they are no longer as aggressive. The proselytizing zeal of the earlier colonials is missing among the latter-day colonials. The latter-day colonial discourse is all about ensuring domination, it is acquiring the power of panoptical surveillance, yet allowing some space to the native to change on his own, on account of his being different culturally.

Mimicry is the best bet to negotiate the tension between diachronic and synchronic aspects of history. Here the terms 'diachronic' and 'synchronic; demand explanation. If 'Diachronic' stands for the historical perspective, 'synchronic' stands for the perspective of the present. Diachronic stands for change across the vertical axis of time, synchronic stands for situation at the present moment. Diachronic involves a study of evolution of any phenomenon across time, synchronic is the study of the phenomenon in terms of its present scope.

In the context of colonial discourse, synchronic stands for the general domination that the colonials tend to exercise at any point of time, diachronic stands for the change and difference that it undergoes over a period of time. Synchrony is the panoptical vision of domination; diachrony is the counter-pressure of change and difference. Panopticon is *vantage position in a prison from which the jailer can have an eye on all the activities that go inside the prison.* Foucault frequently employs this metaphor of panopticon to describe the pervasiveness of the discourse of domination everywhere. Colonial discourse negotiates between the pulls of history on the one hand, and its tendency to wield power perpetually on the other.

When a discourse as dominant as that of panopticon inside a prison, concedes ground to the forces of change and difference down below, mimicry is the natural logic of this tension. Mimicry thus emerges as the very poetics of colonial condition. It satisfies the desire of the colonial powers to reform the natives, or what they preferred to describe them as 'the others', to the extent that they remain different from them. The 'Other' is reformed, yet he is recognizable as different from the colonial Self. The 'Other' is *almost the same* as the self is, but *not quite* so. This gap between 'almost the same, but not quite' so, gives rise to mimicry as the very strategy of colonial continuation.

The politics of anglicizing the native to the extent that he falls short of being 'an English', makes colonial discourse highly ambivalent. Colonial education, even technology promises to give the native so much, but it ensures the gap is somehow never bridged and the dependence continues. The hierarchies are not disturbed. It is this ambivalence built-in the very discourse of latter-day colonial discourse that makes mimicry so central to it. Mimicry as a mechanism *maintains an uncanny difference between the original and the imitated*

Mimicry is strategic imitation. It is a camouflage to deceive the adversary (who in this case happens to be the Third World native). It is a complex strategy to subvert the native from within. It reforms as well as regulates, it allows change, yet it disciplines. It is this double-edgedness which makes mimicry such an effective weapon of colonial control. An efficient colonial dispensation is one which encourages mimicry as policy of control, yet does not allow this mimicry to become too much a matter of public ridicule. If mimicry is too loud and blatant, it could be detrimental to the colonial interests.

Mimicry is a strategy both of appropriation and inappropriation. It appropriates 'the Other'. Colonial discourse in its mature phase does not antagonize 'the Other'; rather it befriends and gives the impression of its real benefactor. It masquerades not only as the custodian of the colonized cultures, but also as its genuine well-wisher. Appropriation is stretched only to the extent that the difference between 'the colonial self' and 'the native other' remains intact.

Mimicry normalizes colonial knowledge, yet it alienates the colonized from the colonizer by creating a language which

is ambivalent. Bhabha cites the example of the ambivalent use of the word 'slave' by Locke in his discussions on liberty. The word 'slave' in one context is "intolerable illegitimate form of ownership", but in other context it is "the locus of legitimate form of ownership". Colonial education in its effort to appropriate the Third World native imparts the first meaning of slave as that of "a trope of an intolerable illegitimate form of ownership", yet it also makes him believe that he is very much "the locus of legitimate" subject for ownership.

Mimicry threatens the disciplinary colonial regime with its slippages and excesses. Imitation of colonial knowledge by 'the colonized other' is never complete, there are slippages and gaps which cause ambivalence in the entire colonial discourse. The more the slippages, the deadlier it becomes. No wonder in postcolonial writing mimicry is employed as a device of protest. The greater the dis-harmony between the original and the imitated, the more dis-orienting it (mimicry) becomes for both the colonizer and the colonized.

Mimicry as an act of imitation in the colonial context, is not a slavish copy of the original as Plato would have loved to define it. Imitation, according to him, meant a step removed from the very idea of the original. Later on Aristotle redeemed the poetics of imitation, by asserting its creative potential. Imitation, he advocated, can enhance the original, it can idealize the imitated object towards a higher truth. If Plato defined imitation as downright condition of disadvantage, Aristotle almost metaphysicalized it. Neither of the two could imagine the relationship of the imitated with the original in the colonial context of 'collaboration and resistance', 'appropriation and inappropriation'.

Mimicry is collaboration with the so-called 'original', yet it ensures a degree of difference with the original. Original in this case is the colonial knowledge which the Third World subject imitates to gain advantage in the colonial scheme of power allocation. Imitation of colonial paradigms does not determine the full trajectory of mimicry; it is not a harmonious imitation of the original. It is only a fake, a planted imitation of the so-called original colonial discourse.

The phrase frequently employed in the colonial context –'brown sahib' can help us understand the dynamics of mimicry in the postcolonial context. A brown sahib is one who has internalized the English values to quite an extent, yet he cannot become English. Brown sahib is a mimic man – a native anglicized enough that he remains neither English, nor native. This mixing of cultures creates ambivalence in his being. This ambivalence if on one hand helped the colonialist, on the other it these English educated Indians who posed a resistance to the colonial hegemony.

The twin elements of collaboration and resistance engender an unprecedented ambivalence in the entire enterprise of mimicry. The post-colonial subject while following the colonial paradigms of 'cultural superiority', seek its own enhancement, culturally as well as materially, tends to de-stabilize them. On account of his distinct nativity, there would always be a gap between what the original and the imitated.

Mimicry thus attains quite a duplicitous character. It depends upon the original for its sustenance and yet it evolves a rivalry against it. Mimicry on the one hand perpetuates colonial superiority, on the other hand it by virtue of its slippages and excesses destabilizes it. The postcolonial subject as mimic man is a confused being for he happens to love his enemy. Ashis Nandy describes this situation of the postcolonial subject in /terms of its relationship with the colonial masters as that of intimate animosity.

Mimicry is not mockery for it is never monologic or overtly one-sided. Mockery is a rather flat mechanism of running down the adversary. Mimicry is not just ridicule aimed at bringing about genuine reform. The civilizing mission of the erstwhile colonialists undergoes semantic as well as syntactic mutations. Mimicry is the surest mechanism of civilizing partially. Mockery aims at the total transformation or 'rupture' of the colonized self. Mimicry intends to create tentativeness and confusion in the colonized subject. In case of mimicry, the civilizing enterprise is deliberately kept 'incomplete'.

The success of the colonial discourse depends upon the proliferation of the appropriated colonized subjects. But since the appropriation is never complete, it also results in the proliferation of inappropriate ones. A mimic man is as much appropriated as he is inappropriated. He resembles the colonial master in many ways, yet he is his caricature. Mimicry in this sense is both a resemblance and menace to the colonial rule. It is a menace because the difference between the colonized and the colonizer is never bridged.

Bhabha cites the example of Charles Grant's "Observations on the state of society among the Asiatic subjects of Great Britain" as a classic example of 'partial' reform that colonial masters intended for the native subjects. Even a

text written as early as 1792 had seeds of the approach of mimicry which later colonial rulers used to great effect. Grant, a Christian missionary was desperate to introduce the evangelical system of mission education in India through English as a medium of instruction. He was of the belief that colonial rule in India required "a system of subject formation" compatible with the requirements of colonial rule for days to come. But Grant feared that a dose of liberal education might generate turbulence for liberty among the natives. He did not want to take his missionary pursuits to a level where they begin to collide or collude with divisive caste politics in India. Such a relationship, he apprehended, could go against the interests of colonial rule in India. So he settled for a 'partial' diffusion of Christianity and 'partial' influence of moral improvements". In nutshell, Grant sought to civilize the barbaric Third World partially so that the essential difference between the colonial and the colonized remains intact. He was sure that partial reform would produce "an empty form of imitation of English manners". Mimicry in this sense is an empty form of imitation.

After Grant's "Observations", Bhabha probes into the infamous and more belligerent Macaulay's "Minutes" (1835). The "Minutes", fashioned after Grant's "Observations", were more in the nature of mockery than mimicry, until Macaulay realized the dangers built in his diatribes. Macaulay dismissed entire Oriental learning not worth a handful of books of English literature. Macaulay conceived the reformed natives as " a class of interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern – a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, opinions, in morals and in intellect". This constituted his model of the mimic man as nothing more than a translator between the colonized and the colonizer. Such mimic man as characters figure in the works Anglo-Indian writers such as Kipling, Forster, Orwell, Naipaul etc. Indian characters in their fiction are half-English, half-native.

Bhabha does not give much credence to the common anti-colonial rhetoric of holding colonialism for the passivization of the native self. Fanon, a famous Algerian revolutionary, had maintained that the black man stops being an actional person for only the white man can represent his self esteem. In his *Black Skin, White Mask*, Fanon holds the colonials responsible for engendering among the colonized blacks what he terms as "the dependency complex". He earnestly believes that blacks did not suffer from any complex till white colonized them. Such an argument denies any agency/ identity to the colonized subject. Also it gives absolute space to colonial discourse. As a votary of mimicry, Bhabha would never define the relationship of the colonized with the colonizer as that of one-sided dependence.

Similarly Bhabha contests Cesaire for describing the presence of essential black consciousness behind the mask of an anglicized black native. Cesaire uses the term 'colonization-thingification' to describe the commodification of a postcolonial subject into the colonial fold. It is behind this 'thingification', he discovers a presence of the native self. Bhabha rejects the logic of putting native consciousness 'behind' the appropriated self. Mimicry stands for the simultaneity of two cultures, it is not that one is behind the another.

Strength of mimicry lies in its double vision – a vision which while establishing the authority of colonial rule disrupts it concurrently. Mimicry in this sense is menace, it is not apolitical harmless exercise. There is no question of a nativity languishing behind the mask of an anglicized one. Mimicry demands a co-presence, even co-appearance of both the selves – one innately native and other appropriated one – in any postcolonial subject. The chosen words in Bhabha's analysis are therefore 'ambivalence' and 'partial/ representation'.

Grant's partial imitator and Macaulay's translator are the authorized versions of otherness – they are authorized by the colonial masters. But as Bhabha has been consistently arguing, they are also the potent threats to the discourse of coloniality. A translated self is not an original self. The fact of 'the otherness' cannot be overcome, nor is there any desire on the part of the colonizers to demolish 'otherness' altogether. If 'otherness' is to be retained even partially, it is potent enough to unsettle the linearity of colonial discourse. The narcissistic demand of colonial authority is only half-realized, and therefore half-unrealized too. 'Narcissistic demand' does not entertain any other image of the self, if there are 'others' they have to define themselves in terms of the narcissistic image of the colonial authority. Colonial authority by the very fact of its being imperialist tends to be narcissistic, that is, it is all lost in its own self-assumed glory.

Bhabha does not endorse any one-sided perspective of colonialism. If colonialism tended to homogenize cultures in favour of 'white aesthetics', the 'other cultures' had no less disturbing effect on the character of colonizers. The colonial gaze at the effeminate native turns upside down, as the natives after being appropriated in the colonial discourse begin to return the gaze. The observer (in this case the colonial) is equally observed. The partly colonized

native self, who is never accepted fully in the colonial canon, returns the gaze that is potent enough to displace the entire project of disciplining the native. Partial gaze is a hidden threat to the stability of colonial rule as well. The disturbing potential of the native's counter-gaze is accepted by Eric Stroke who while asserting that Indian culture did not fashion British civilization, yet "In many ways it acted as a disturbing force, a magnetic power, located at the periphery tending to distort the natural development of Britain's character."

The centre-periphery relationship is central to the understanding of (post)colonial condition. Normally in the postcolonial imagination, the centre (i.e. the colonial Europe) is lionized as the sole axis of power, the periphery (the poor countries of the Third World) is at the receiving end of the excesses committed by the centre. There is nothing that the periphery can do, against the wishes of the centre. Bhabha, however, would not give 'centre' absolute powers for two reasons. One, the centre does want to incorporate the periphery within its fold without any sense of discrimination, and two, the discourse of native identity is no less significant as it also does not submit easily to the disciplinary tendencies of the centre. The identity of a postcolonial being is a mixed one, partly disciplined by centre, partly informed by its position of periphery. It is thus a site of discipline and disruption both.

The colonial discourse therefore has a very rich textuality, i.e., it has no one singular interpretation. It has many subtleties and sub-texts. Bhabha always relates the political with the psychological. In fact in the colonial context, the political is so much mind-game that it as project ultimately aims at controlling the natives not as much economically or culturally as mentally or psychologically. Colonialism, for instance, Ashis Nandy would insist, is more an enterprise of conquering the very consciousness of the natives than mere draining them of their material richness. Frederic Jameson, an American marxist thinker, goes a step ahead and uses the term "the political unconscious" to describe the state of mind of the postcolonial self. Colonialism, he observes, is not just controlling consciousness, it is capturing the very unconscious of the native.

Bhabha influenced deeply as he is by Lacan, a French psychoanalyst, locates mimicry between the unconscious and the preconscious. Unconscious, which was described by Freud as a dark zone of irrational impulses and chaotic energies, in the scheme of Lacan is recognized to be structured like the language. The postcolonial unconscious has been subjected to so much of agony and subjugation that it is no longer unconditioned/ unstructured. However in the present essay Bhabha quotes Freud to help us understand the psychological foregrounding of the poetics of mimicry in the colonial/ postcolonial context. Freud compares "the partial nature of fantasy" with the fate of "individuals of mixed race who taken all round resemble white men but who betray their coloured descent by some striking feature or other" As fantasies are not approved of as normal narratives, such individuals (of mixed origin) are also not socially privileged.

Mimicry comes to the fore when a discourse is at the crossroads of what is permissible and what must be concealed. The site of mimicry is the site of interdiction, i.e., where the discourse of colonialism comes into clash with the discourse of nativity (or vague Third World nationalism). The space between the lines is the space of the mimicry. This is not a metaphysical space, this is a condition of in-betweeenness. The colonial position of 'almost the same, but not white' leaves the Third World native neither wholly white, nor essentially black. Mimicry is flouting norms, yet living within them.

The question of representing 'the different' constitutes a major problem for the colonial authority. The Other always resists signification. That is 'the Other' as different cultural category refuses to fit in the colonial system of representation. The translation as a means to appropriate the Other into the colonial mainstream only yields the effect of mimicry for the cultural specific terms despite all pseudo-assimilative gestures of the translator refuse to be carried over in the target idiom. The desire of colonial mimicry is not to transform the native wholly, but to register its presence in his mind and soul partially.

The desire of colonial mimicry is defined in terms of "metonymy of presence". Let us understand the term metonymy first. Metonymy is a figure of speech in which meaning is communicated by association, in contrast to metaphor, where meaning is communicated by analogy. The term metonymy is composed of two parts: *meta*, or to transfer and *onoma*, or name. Thus, literally speaking, metonymy is "substitute naming". Metaphor communicates by a focus on similarity between things, metonymy focuses on association in time and space between things. Metaphor is the poetics of identification, metonymy is the poetics of association.

Identification with the native is not what the colonial authority ever wanted. So metaphor could never become the poetics of colonial desire. A 'brown sahib' is not a metaphoric incarnation of an English officer; he is only his 'substitute' in the colonies. Mimicry, in this sense, stops short of being metaphoric, it tends to be metonymic. Metonymy ensures a non-repressive accommodation of the native difference within the colonial discourse of authority. A 'brown sahib' is not as repressive as 'a bloody nigger'. 'Brown sahib' is not an assimilative identity, despite its non-repressive nature, it remains a discriminatory identity.

Colonialists, as a matter of strategy, kept the native hopping between the metaphoric and metonymic axes of identity-formation. On the one hand, they promised to transform the natives into 'English beings' notwithstanding their cultural differences; on the other they only intended to deploy them as clerks – native substitutes for 'English officialdom'. The confusion between 'a metaphoric conversion' and 'a metonymic substitution' was deliberate. 'Brown sahib' – a phrase used repeatedly in this critical exposition for the sake of illustration – is a confused being lost between the axis of metaphor on one hand, and axis of metonymy on the other. It is the confusion between the two axes that determines the double-edgedness of mimicry. Mimicry gives the impression of assimilation into the colonial discourse, yet it is steadfastly separatist.

Bhabha goes back to the opening quote from Lacan's *Of the Gaze*, to dilate upon the effects of mimicry. When a colonial master empathizes or sympathizes with the native, there is no harmony intended with the object of imitation. Mimicry is form of resemblance that differs from the original. A brown sahib bears a resemblance with the English officer, yet he is never the English. Mimicry is a camouflage which the native taken on to resemble with the colonizer. Lacan compares the camouflage implicit in mimicry with the same technique used in human warfare. In the war, the enemy sometimes wears the uniform of his adversary to deceive him or to trap him in his game-plan. Mimicry too is a trap for the colonizers as well as the colonized. The colonizer in his effort to woo the native tends to act as his spokesman, the colonized in order to avoid direct confrontation with the colonizers adopts the ways and method of the oppressor without repressing his different sense of identity. Both the colonizer and colonized resemble each other, yet both are at loggerheads with each other. By comparing mimicry with the device of camouflage used in modern warfare, Bhabha bestows a rare combative edge to it.

The threat that mimicry creates for the colonial authority comes from what Bhabha describes as "the prodigious and strategic production of conflictual, fantastic and discriminatory identity effects". Such effects are not just innocent repercussions of the 'noble' white man's burden; they are strategically grafted onto the project of civilizing 'the other'. The anxiety on the hand to appropriate the native to Western values, and the arrogance on the other to dismiss his as mere savage and strange create a fissure in the colonial discourse, which attains menacing dimensions. After defining the native in the shifting terms of "piety, prevarication and perversion", the colonial discourse creates fears for itself. The mission of creating the native in the image of the white becomes all the more difficult. The fact of difference overtakes the politics of resemblance.

The essay thus problematizes the predicament of colonial discourse. Mimicry as ambivalence does not merely destroy the narcissistic colonial authority, it creates a pretext for an anti-colonial impulse through repetitious slippage of difference and desire. The contradictions in the discourse of colonial authority do not stem as much from the colonized active participation in history, as from the lack of conceptual clarity of what colonialism unambiguously could be. The ambivalence built-in the discourse of colonialism/ mimicry constitutes a "historical crisis on the conceptuality of colonial man as an object of regulatory power". The castrated colonial subject (i.e. the native) is not the cause of menace, it is the failure of the colonial object (i.e. the colonizer) who ends up in creating an ambivalent discourse of colonialism which as it progresses runs counter to it. Bhabha in his endeavor to relate psychology to politics, deliberately uses the Freudian term 'castration' to express the sense of lack that the Third World subject constantly suffers. In classical psychoanalytic theory, the fear associated with the loss of one's genitals is called castration complex. In the male the complex is supposedly manifested as anxiety surrounding the possibility of loss; in females the complex begins with the awareness of having already experienced the loss.

Mimicry is perceived as "a form of cross-classificatory, discriminatory knowledge within an interdictory discourse". It is cross-classificatory because it serves the purpose of both the colonized and the colonizer. Mimicry is an instru-

ment in the hands of both the colonial and the colonized. That is, it is deployed against each other as a strategy of camouflage. It would be one-sided to label mimicry as solely a strategy of the colonizer. Colonial discourse is seen as an interdictory discourse for it interdicts (i.e. prohibits) the colonized to act and behave as mere ill-mannered native. But it is discriminatory at the same time as it strategically maintains 'the difference'.

The culture that colonialism creates, engenders a split in the colonized self. Colonialism reduces, or as Bhabha would like to say, fetishizes the vibrant indigenous culture into a mummified one. For instance Indian culture before the intervention of colonial reformers was open and multilateral. It was open to the extent of being undefined. It was fetishized by the colonials as a very strange kind of culture, which is too exotic and esoteric to be taken in as this-worldly. The subsequent excessive spiritualization of Indian culture, which was an attempt on the part of the colonial rulers to wean Indians away from their human existential concerns, ultimately turned out to be the weapon of counter-culture in the hands of the nationalists. Fetishization thus is double-edged process, if at one level it exoticizes a culture, at other level it reduces the living culture into a static frame of archaic practices. Colonial administrators fetishized native cultures to the extent that the indigenous people started believing in them as counter-cultures – cultures which have the potential to take on colonialism. Mimicry and fetishization are therefore co-extensive projects, since both take the colonized native away as much as close to the indigenous culture. Like mimicry, fetish is only a partial way to control or define the native self/culture. Both convert the native self into a partial colonial being.

The partial conversion of a native into brown sahib is what constitutes the "interdictory otherness" within the so-called other. In Homi Bhabha's postcolonial theory, 'the self' and 'the other' are not two exclusive constructs. The 'other' is not binary opposite of 'the self'. The easy or polemical poetics of clash or conflict which is normally invoked to approach the complex postcolonial predicament is done away with. Instead a more dynamic relationship is seen between the two poles of postcolonial reality. 'The other' is not an insular being, nor is it a self-defined category. It is constantly interacting with 'the self'. The interaction involves both competition and collaboration with 'the self' an imitation of the civilized ways of the self and yet a rejection of its colonial ways. The "interdictory otherness" therefore is not 'contradictory otherness'; rather it is an otherness which mimes 'the self' in moments of love and hate both.

The interdictory otherness of the colonized being defeats all attempts at classification, because both 'the self' and 'the other', 'the colonial' and 'the colonized' are crucially split between postcolonial reality and desire. In case of a colonized being this split is quite visible. In terms of external response to colonial situation, the colonized native reacts, yet at the level of desire, there is an inner effort to imitate that very situation which he reacts against. [In simple terms, almost any average Indian would like a visa for US, and would strive hard to be a green card holder, yet as a Third World subject he would decry the imperialist ways of American leadership.] Such 'contradictory articulations of reality and desire' form the very poetics of postcolonial culture. The latent desire to be just like the colonial master creates confusion. The rejection of the colonial culture ironically enough is articulated in terms of desire for it. Desire replaces disavowal. This is the paradox of mimicry – the postcolonial other.

Mimicry, Bhabha identifies to be a real 'menace' for postcolonial world. The awareness of that the postcolonial situation is invariably mimetic and that the difference between the self and other is insurmountable to the advantage of the former (i.e., the self) is indeed dreadful. The fact of that the postcolonial subject is interdicted at the level of the unconscious reduces his fight against into the colonial powers to a mere farce. The postcolonial presence is partly a colonial presence too. The authenticity of both the colonial and the colonized experience is rendered false by the menace if mimicry.

Mimicry is thus the very locus of postcolonial condition. It needs to juxtaposed with the claims of what is often privileged or imagined as 'original'. For our purposes, mimicry is the binary opposite of 'original'. The very fact of mimicry hits at the metaphysical notion of the 'original'. What is cherished in the romantic thought as 'original' is mere fantasy, it could at best be speculative. Search for the original will take us back to a pre-historic past that cannot be retrieved or constructed ab-initio. There is nothing like 'original self', 'original state' or 'original response'. To claim 'originality' is to deny the historicality of the self. The self is not a transcendental construct. What history ordains upon the postcolonial self is the baggage of mixed attitudes – attitude of covert acceptance and overt rejection of the colonial past. To cherish originality, in such badly split situation is nothing but hypocrisy; it is encouraging some sort of fundamentalism which is historically invalid and untrue. .

On the whole the basic thrust of Bhabha's essay is that the discourse of colonialism pulls in two contrary directions. On the one hand the colonized are considered the 'other' of the Westerner, essentially outside Western culture and civilization. Yet on the other hand, the discourse of colonialism attempts to domesticate colonized subjects and abolish their radical 'otherness'. The construction of 'otherness' is thus split by the contradictory positioning of the colonized simultaneously inside and outside the Western knowledge. Mimicry is a strategy of power as well as resistance.

This is a different assertion to Said's model of Orientalism, which does not consider how colonial discourses generate the possibilities of their own critique. Said's argument has been that the discourse of colonialism is all about projecting 'the Other' as a savage, uncouth, uncivilized and exotic being. For Bhabha the relationship between colonizer and colonized is more complex, nuanced, and politically ambiguous. He goes a step forward and asserts that any attempt to radically subdue the Otherness of the colonized is perpetually offset by the terrifying images of 'the other' that the colonizers have themselves repeatedly projected on to them. A destabilizing 'ambivalence' can be detected in the way that the colonizer represents the subject peoples; thus the stereotypes of the 'wily Oriental' and 'the faithful servant' both common images in colonial discourse express clearly contradictory sentiments towards the colonized. For Bhabha this kind of affective and discursive conflict suggests that the colonizer is less secure, both physically and politically, than *Orientalism* implies. Said's discourse does not refer to the assimilative pretensions of the colonizers, and therefore his discourse of Orientalism lacks the dialogic structure which Bhabha's concept of mimicry ably inheres.

Previously the notion of mimicry had been seen as a condition of the colonized's subservience and crisis, the measure of their helplessness. We can find this view at times in Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*; its most famous expression is perhaps the Trinadadian V.S.Naipaul's novel *The Mimic Men* (1967). But Bhabha refuses the defeatism in Naipual's work and offers a much more positive active and insurgent model of mimicry. So by revealing that the discourse of colonialism is forever embattled and split by ambivalence and mimicry, always doomed to failure in its attempt to represent the colonized, Bhabha avoids the criticisms of Said's work by attending to the ways in which colonial discourses are problematized by the very people they claim to represent.

Bhabha's theoretical model of hybridity and mimicry however is contested for what actually happens on the plane of reality to a postcolonial subject. To hold that cultures are interactive and dialogic is a utopian perspective. David Dabydeen, for instance, does not see any constructive or creative inter-mixing among communities in a supposedly multicultural setting. He says that in 1990s London 'culturally diverse, but there is little criss-crossing of cultures taking place'. Very little happens by way of cultural exchange; people cross back to their cells having had a brief, divisionary encounter with 'cultural diversity'.

To recount, Bhabha basically argues that cultural identities cannot be ascribed to pre-given, irreducible, scripted, ahistorical cultural traits that define the conventions of ethnicity. Nor can "colonizer" and "colonized" be viewed as separate entities that define themselves independently. Instead, Bhabha suggests that the negotiation of cultural identity involves the continual interface and exchange of cultural performances that in turn produce a mutual and mutable recognition (or representation) of cultural difference.

Secondly, Bhabha attempts shed light upon the "liminal" negotiation of cultural identity across differences of race, class, gender, and cultural tradition. This "liminal" space is a "hybrid" site that witnesses the production—rather than just the reflection—of cultural meaning. Liminality not only pertains to the space between cultural collectives but between historical periods, between politics and aesthetics, between theory and application. In a discussion of a museum installment by African-American artist Renee Green, for instance, Bhabha describes the exhibit's postmodern stairwell (which, apparently, connected the exhibit's upper and lower halves) as a "liminal space, in-between the designations of identity [that] becomes the process of symbolic interaction, the connective tissue that constructs the difference between upper and lower, black and white" (4).And yet Bhabha's model also introduces a number of potentially serious problems in its translation to the complicated process of collective social transformation. That is, Bhabha's formulation of an exilic, liminal space between (rather than supportive of) national constituencies is problematic in that it fails to engage the material conditions of the colonized Third World. Does Bhabha's liminal space itself become a privileged, textual, discursive space accessible only to academic intellectuals? What about the exiled working class? Doesn't the privileging of, say, Edward W. Said as a "liminal intellectual" somewhat discount the very

real exile of diaspora Palestinians as a result of Israeli occupation? Try to find examples of "liminality" (borders, thresholds, in-betweenness) in literature in order to assess the limitations and expediences of Bhabha's conceptual model. For example, look at the ways in which "metaphor" and "translation" function—"meta" and "trans" both meaning "across" or "through." In other words, how can an author's use of metaphor or translation serve as an index of the "crossing" of a discursive liminal space?

Cutting the ground: Critical methods of Post-colonial literatures

A Critical Exposition

Post-colonial literature consists of writings by those peoples formerly colonized by Britain and other European powers. In other words literatures produced by writers of erstwhile colonies of Western European nations constitute the corpus of post-colonial literature. Literatures of African countries, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Caribbean countries, India, Malaysia, Malta, New Zealand, Pakistan, Singapore, South Pacific Island countries, Sri Lanka etc. belong to the domain of the post-colonial. Despite specific cultural configurations of literature written in each of these countries, there is something common among them. They emerged in their present form out of the experience of colonization. The fact of colonial past is too awesome to be ignored or underplayed in favour of any universal or objective poetics. Each writer of the Third World inherits a history of imperial past that runs through his post-colonial present not just as a political imperative, but an aesthetic value of a different kind.

In the essay, Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, the three co-authors of what is regarded by many as the Bible of post-colonial studies *The Empire Writes Back*, dwell upon at length various critical paradigms that are can be fruitfully employed to understand and approach a literary work produced by a post-colonial writer. One thing is quite clear, that this literature cannot be approached through value-free, empirical, impersonal poetics of New Criticism lionized in the West as the most scientific form of critical practice. To study post-colonial literature in terms of the conventional categories of irony, plot, synthesis, round/ flat characters etc. is to appreciate its cultural nuances halfway only. Post-colonial literatures demand for different kind of critical imperatives – imperatives which may not necessarily be 'aesthetic' at all.

The authors identify four critical models that have been employed by various post-colonial critics to understand the work written by post-colonial writers. The first model lays special emphasis on the representation of national consciousness in a post-colonial work. The second set of approach hinge around 'race' as a category of analysis. Race cuts across even national boundaries and thus assumes a trans-national character. In this sense race-based models have greater range than the so-called 'nation'–based models. The third kind of critical approaches are 'comparative' in nature which seek to account for the particularity of post-colonial experience across literatures of two or more post-colonial texts/ writers. The focus of research in such comparative venture has been to identify the particularity of post-colonial literatures, beyond specific micro-level cultural differences. The fourth category of critical approaches does not lay emphasis on the specificity of post-colonial experience/ literature in terms of its separate and radically distinct nature. These approaches instead focus on the aspects of hybridity and syncretism as features of post-colonial experience. The above suggested models/ approaches to post-colonial literature are in the process of evolution, and are not as yet as clearly definable. The authors of the essay therefore use a more tentative term 'assumptions' instead of 'discrete' critical practices to underline the provisional nature of their survey.

To begin with, let us dilate upon the nation or nationality-based models of post-colonial criticism first. The earliest form of critical response to post-colonial literature is based on the notion of distinct nationalism that the colonies came to acquire vis-à-vis British imperialism. The peoples in the colonies in order to resist the homogenizing and hegemonizing tendencies of the colonizers forged a sense of nationalism, which they perceived as indigenous enough to withstand the Western authoritative discourse of nationalism. Later on the sense of nationalism around which the people of the colonies rallied to take head on the might of the imperialists, came to be known in critical parleys as 'Third World nationalism'. In simple words Third World nationalism formed the very critical perspective through which it was preached, the worth of a post-colonial text can be appropriately measured and calibrated.

The authors of the essay include the writings of/ from America within the rubric of post-colonial literature for at one point of time even America was a colony of the British. They locate the rise of nationalism among Americans as the first visible sign of nation being used as category of cultural analysis. The recognition of 'American literature' as a separate category from 'British literature' was an indication enough of the acceptance of 'national literature' as valid category of critical inquiry. The authors give Americans the credit of forging a 'national literature' for the first time, as a possible counter- discourse to British literature. The very association of place with literature, or nationality with literature was unprecedented. Not satisfied by being subsumed within the universalist category of English literature, the writers of America wanted a distinct status outside the so-called 'English Literature'

The arrival of literature from America under a distinct category of 'American Literature' inaugurated a new trend in post-colonial writing and critical practices. It opened the possibilities of alternative literatures outside Britain. For so long it was presumed that American literature is a part or a branch of British literature only. The parent-child or stream- tributary analogy was employed to justify this kind of relationship between the colonized and the colonizer. Such organic analogies were invented to keep the growth of new national literatures very much within the ambit of British literature. It was insisted that American literature for all intent and purposes derives its basic models from the 'parent' British literature, and therefore it is at best a subsidiary variant of mainstream British literature. The origin or the fountain-head of literary imagination remains to be the British literature which writers from other nations imitate and model their creative energies on. British literature was privileged as the mother-culture, or the only tradition from which writers of other nationalities can learn and receive lessons of creative writing.

But with the extensive growth of American literature, the pressures of breaking free from the so-called parent tradition of British literature grew all the more. American literature, which was perceived to be different but very much an offspring of British literature, rose to a level that it became its potent rival, matching and even out-matching it in terms of artistic maturity and experimentalism. American literature sought autonomy, an independent status of full-fledged tree on its own, and not just a branch of some other alien tree. The evolution of American Literature as an alternative literature – literature which is not derived from British models, but is nourished and nurtured by local national imperatives – paved way for the growth of new literatures in other cultures along nationalist lines.

The self-awareness of literatures from the colonized world as 'literature with distinct national imagination' marked a paradigm shift in post-colonial studies an enterprise on the whole. The emphasis shifted to study, re-invent and even plant an indigenous national consciousness or national tradition as against the powerful Eurocentric one. The Eurocentric world-view had dominated the entire critical scene as 'the centre' of knowledge and wisdom; the emergent national consciousness in the colonies challenged the exclusivity of this centre. With a 'national history' to beckon each of the nations under imperialism, the unquestioned centrality of European hegemony was thoroughly shaken, if not displaced altogether.

To counter the essential authority of Eurocentric world-view, the colonized world did generate orthodox discourses of nationalism and racism, but in the given scenario that was inevitable. At least it created a sense of distinctness and difference, denied so systematically by the colonial powers. The entire process of looking at one's own culture/ literature as one's own and not dependent upon some parent culture/ literature was quite redeeming. The impulse to be independent culturally as well as politically constituted a real threat to imperial discourse of cultural superiority.

The authors of the essay while underlining the seminal role of growth of nationalist awareness among colonized nations strike a note of caution too. They fear that in some cases nationalism is so loud pitched that it becomes exclusive and even obscurant that it creates a false myth of self-righteousness around it. Nationalism bordering on narrow provincialism or racialism bordering on orthodoxy is detrimental to the post-colonial credo of self-growth and self-analysis. So Third World nationalism is as redeeming as it is atrophic to post-colonial ends. Nationalism as an answer to colonialism is one strategy of counter-discourse which if taken too far begins to destroy itself.

Besides the rise of national literature among the colonized nations, there was also in some cases the rise of what the authors of essay term as 'regional literature'. By 'region' they mean a category even larger than 'nation'. Some times nations of a region share cultural characteristics to form a collective identity. Regional consciousness could be seen among nations of West Indies or Africa. Instead of dividing the literatures along national lines, the African writers prefer to retain the title 'African Literature'. Similarly the literature written in the Caribbean island nations is

known as 'Caribbean Literature'. National identities are not as pronounced among these nations, and th[illegible] settle for a regional category 'Caribbean' or 'West Indian'.

Such regional identities are invoked as broad descriptive addresses of post-colonial literatures. But this does not [illegible] that the whole idea of national distinctness is abandoned or done away with. The basic mission of post-colonial [illegible] is not as much forging cultural differences among colonized nations as it is to set up a cultural clash with the Europ[illegible] notion of culture. In order to ward off the hegemonic threats of European aesthetics, these colonized nations d[illegible] shy away from invoking trans-national regional identities if they happen to have a cultural contiguity. Sometim[illegible] colonies happen to be too small to pose a threat to the colonizers, in such cases the idea of regional identity bec[illegible] culturally more pragmatic and practical to take on the might of the colonizers.

Despite the danger of regional identities becoming too homogenizing, such identities do assert the regional nat[illegible] literature. The space of global literature being appropriated by the colonial literature solely at least stands exposed [illegible] thoroughly contested. Regional is any day less ambitious than 'the World' or 'the Universal — the adjectives hith[illegible] used rather uncritically for the Western Literature. Regional identities, in some regions are accepted without [illegible] resistance from individual nations/ traditions of the regions. But for all practical purpose regional identity is nothing [illegible] a variant of nationalist identity. When the nations tend to be small, and economically weak, and culturally and histo[illegible] cally not very different a collective identity becomes their subterfuge of post-colonial assertion.

The authors warn us about the aggressive use or misuse of regional or national identity in the post-colonial debate [illegible] some well-argued reasons. Nationalism is at bottom an ideology of imperialism. And the form in which it is practi[illegible] in Third World countries is no different from what it is in the West. It is observed that nationalism in Third W[illegible] nations is controlled and coordinated by the countries of the West.

In the wake of growing awareness among colonized nations to forge their own distinct traditions and literatures [illegible] new models of post-colonial criticism evolved. The essay deals at length various models of postcolonial inqu[illegible] models which while underlining the plurality of approaches within postcolonial theory point towards some essen[illegible] unity or similarity of concern. To begin, three models are suggested, these amy be termed as the earliest mo[illegible] postcolonial inquiry. From the simply contrastive model of British versus the Other, three principal type of mo[illegible] frames evolved as what the authors describe as 'genuine' post-colonial frames. Under the first type, comparis[illegible] were undertaken of literatures between countries of white diaspora. Lot many examples of this type of comparis[illegible] frame are suggested in the essay. J.P.Matthews' *Tradition in Exile*, for instance, offers a comparison betw[illegible] poetry in Canada and Australia in the nineteenth-century. Joseph Jones' *Radical Cousins: Nineteenth C[illegible] American and Australian Writers* (1976) considers important literary and political similarities between th[illegible] Australia, and in fact it goes on to argue the importance of US rather than UK on the poetry of poetry of Aust[illegible]

Under the second type, the comparisons between areas of the Black diaspora were covered. Critics like [illegible] Ngugi and even Griffiths concentrate on similarities between writing within the Black diaspora, comparing lit[illegible] from African countries with those of the West Indian nations or even with Black American writing. The thi[illegible] more cross-cultural as it studied say literatures of West Indies with that of Australia. It involved comparative stud[illegible] Dalits in India in the context of blacks in US; the plight of aboriginals in Australia with that of plight of tribals in[illegible]

Another model of postcolonial inquiry has been more or less racial. Instead of nationalities, the vantage point [illegible] comparison is the condition of one race across the globe, which includes both the colonized and the colonizer [illegible] A grouping of this type which cuts across several of literatures from postcolonial societies is "Black writing". [illegible] the authors of the essay very cogently put, "proceeds from the idea of race as major feature of economic and [illegible] discrimination and draws together writers in African diaspora whatever their nationality – US Blacks, Afro-Carib[illegible] and writers from African nations." Such overarching groupings overlooked cultural differences between li[illegible] which are produced by a Black minority in a rich and predominantly white country like US and those produced [illegible] Black majority population of an independent nation. Despite such problems, Black writings constitute a ve[illegible] cant corpus of post-colonial literature on the whole.

The concept of Negritude, as developed by Cesaire and Senghor, underlined the distinctive qualities [illegible] culture, and was seen as counter-discourse to Euro-American style and culture. The champions of [illegible]

stressed integration of Blacks all across the postcolonial world to pose an ideological and cultural challenge to hegemony of the white imperialism. Though such kind of thesis-antithesis stance between white and black cultures was in way patently European for it was based on binaries and ultimately sought to challenge white hegemony in terms which were all-white. In simple terms, any discourse of protest, would lapse into the very discourse its protest, if it does not forge its independent dynamics, and it stays clear from binary clash with the dominant discourse.

The philosophy of Negritude has been used by Black American writers (also called as Afro-American) as well. Senghor's ideas on Negritude have been used by famous American writers like Langston Hughes and Richard Wright almost as a matter of natural right. Such a usage of this philosophy by the Black writers across Africa, America and even Europe has created a brotherhood of blacks or a distinct black consciousness. In relationships of this type national boundaries become secondary to the racial consciousness. The whole ideology of the Black literature in a way relegates the very idea of nation as seminal to postcolonial inquiry or intervention.

Black critics did not like terms or categories like 'Commonwealth' for it not only segregated them from the blacks outside the commonwealth, it also failed to accommodate their racial plight all across the world. The streak of racialism is so strong in Black literature/ criticism that it becomes as exclusive as once the white literature or criticism was. Edward Said notices a "double kind of possessive exclusivism"; it is double because at one level it cuts itself off from the rest of the world, particularly the white one, at another level it does not allow anyone else to talk about the Blacks. Blacks can speak for Blacks only.

The problems in having a racial model as possible model of postcolonial literary studies were too evident; therefore many attempts were made to forge more comprehensive comparatist frames which can incorporate the heterogeneity of literary works being written from the erstwhile colonial world. The earliest attempt in this direction was made by some Joseph Jones who coined the term 'terranglia' which aimed at bringing all the works written in English all across the world under one umbrella.

But the model which really gained currency and critical acceptance for quite a long period was that of 'Commonwealth Literature'. The term came into vogue after the liquidation of British Empire in 1960s and included literature written in the colonies as respectable enough for serious academic and literary studies. The assumption behind this model was that since people in the colonized world have under similar kind of experience in terms their colonial past and modernist aspirations, there is commonality of theme in the writings of the 'Commonwealth'. Since this model continued to employ British literature as the canonical reference and sought to underplay the plurality of literary responses from the different Commonwealth countries, this model did not satisfy the academics of the postcolonial world.

New nomenclatures/models were coined to account for the diversity of literary output from all across the Commonwealth. Some departments of English floated courses in what they termed as 'Third World Literature(s)' as an alternative to the so-called Commonwealth Literature. The focus was more on the exclusion of British literature. Some departments opted for a more positive label and floated another model named as 'New Literatures in English'. Literatures from Australia, Canada, India, Africa, Caribbean Islands etc. were accommodated under this new title. A series of seminars and conferences were organized all across the erstwhile colonized world to assert its newness.

But the model which survived literary moods and political currents was that of 'post-colonial literatures' – a model which continues till today as perhaps the most comprehensive and culturally accurate model for literatures written by the natives of erstwhile colonial societies. 'Post-colonial' as a project embraces an understanding of both the historical reality and the power relationship which colonized world has/ had with the colonial world at economic, cultural and psychological levels. 'Post-' as a prefix marked not only a study of the past, but more significantly of future configurations. In short post-colonial proved to be far more enabling than commonwealth. It was open-ended; it was not just project of backward looking; it was also not a project of any easy native celebration or colonial bashing.

Within the 'post-colonial', all kinds of models and frames of comparative analysis emerged which only buttressed the claims of the 'post-colonial' as the most representative and over-arching frame of critical inquiry. Some of postcolonial thinkers give special emphasis to the role of English – the alien as well as colonial language – which the colonized were forced to learn and even appropriate as their 'own' language. English in the capacity of its being the major emerging language of the colonized world as against various indigenous languages which this world claimed to have since times immemorial, created quite a cultural displacement and sense of alienation than anything else.

D.E.S. Maxwell in 1965 studied at length the relationship between language and place in the context of postcolonial experience. He divides entire postcolonial experience into two categories: one is postcolonial experience in settler colonies and other is in the 'invaded colonies'. Among the settler colonies he includes nations like Australia, Canada and New Zealand where the immigrant whites as colonial masters transplanted their own civilization, gained autonomy and broke free from British past. They did not adopt any indigenous language as the language of their newly acquired nations, they continued to express themselves in English – a language which was colonial, but in their case it was not alien. In case of invaded colonies (like India, Nigeria etc.) the white immigrant colonial officials did not settle, and left the colonies soon after the decolonization of respective colonies after World War II. In invaded colonies, the native tongues have their own rich and ancient past, and the imperial use of English caused a high degree of cultural schizophrenia and disjunction – something which the settler colonies did not face as much.

In case of settler colonies, English is used to describe the local experience; while in case of invaded colonies the local experience is sought to be expressed in the imported tongue (i..e. English). In either case the disjunction between the native and the imported could be felt and experienced with varying degrees of intensity. As mentioned earlier the greatest impact of this disjunction is experienced by the natives of invaded colonies as they have to negotiate with the colonial tongue. Settler colonies at least have the illusion of a filiative (not organic, but naturalized) relationship with the dominant discourse of English, the colonies of intervention and exploitation do not have such illusion, as the rich native traditions continue to co-exist and assert.

Maxwell's model has its drawbacks. First of there is no easy bifurcation of postcolonial experience possible at all. Where would one place the experience of countries like South Africa or the Caribbean islands? They are neither settler colonies nor invaded ones. The colonial past of the West Indies is too complex and checkered too be slotted into any of these compartments of postcolonial experience. Similarly South Africa has a mixed character it is settler as well as invaded.

Another possible frame of postcolonial inquiry could be along the lines commonality of themes. Thematic parallels across the postcolonial writings could be a fruitful enterprise. Themes such as struggle for independence, the influence of foreign culture on indigenous ways of life, the question of home and native belonging etc. recur frequently in the works of the writers of the postcolonial societies. Even in terms of technique or approach to postcolonial situations, the writers evince fair degree of similarity. Use of various techniques such as allegory, magic realism, irony, parody etc. is common to postcolonial fiction.

Another thematic topology could be worked out along the predictable dialectics of the colonizer versus the colonized. Most of the postcolonial writings aim at strategies of decolonization. In other words postcolonial literature seeks to recuperate from the colonial excess before it makes any claim for the possible recovery of the native past. There are many ways to recover. One is to invoke the remote past as pure and sacred native past, other is to strike a middle path and take a composite look at present. The question of authentic representation of native cultures is at the core of this project of recovery built in the postcolonial discourse of decolonization. What is authentic native space – pre-colonial past, mythic past, colonial past or postcolonial present? – this question occupies the central position in creative and critical writings of the postcolonial world. Most of the later postcolonial writers have settled in favour of 'mixed' or syncretic present rather than an exclusive and fundamentalist pre-colonial past.

Critical thinkers like Said, Jameson, and other late-marxists and post-structuralists have emphatically pointed out to-and fro movement between the colonizer and the colonized as the inevitable locus of postcolonial present. In any project of self-recovery in the postcolonial phase of recuperation, the colonial legacy cannot be set aside or unlearned rather wishfully. The dialectical encounters between the colonizer and colonized have altered both, and have engendered changes which cannot be undone.

Another dialectic that is usually invoked as perhaps a more comprehensive option than that of the dialectic of colonizer and the colonized is that of the dominant versus the dominated. Such a model accommodates both hierarchies between cultures and hierarchies within a culture. Dalit writings in India and Aboriginal writings in Australia offer most appropriate examples of the dominated literature which the conventional model of the colonized versus the colonizer would either miss totally or pay marginal attention to. The relation of Irish, Scottish and Welsh literature vis-

mainstream British also could be fruitfully understood under the model of *dominated versus the dominant*. This cuts across national boundaries and as such deals with hierarchies of power in any situation.

The above suggested models of postcolonial studies tend to be bi-polar in nature and are built around easy binaries such as the native versus the foreign, the colonizer versus the colonized, the dominant versus the dominated, the mainstream versus the peripheral etc., but the model which has really gathered maximum critical attention and even acceptance is the one which stay clear from binary exclusivisms. It is the model of hybridity and syncreticity. Thinkers from Homi Bhabha to Edward Said or creative writers from Rushdie to Naipaul, ultimately tend to settle in favour of fluid, mixed and syncretic postcolonial condition in which no hostile or fundamental oppositions between the colonizer and the colonized could be any longer entertained to the benefit of the either.

For the model of hybridity there is this saner admission of the fact that colonialism is an irreversible legacy and that liberation from the burden of the colonial is possible only through a subtle negotiation with it. Any rejection of the colonial past is not only wishful; it amounts to negating a very powerful fact of history. The recovery of the postcolonial is possible through a careful understanding of history. The best way to confront or undo the colonial past is to re-write it, re-inscribe it with newer vision. This re-inscription would entail subversion, parody or a mimetic reproduction of colonial narratives, which as techniques of re-writing are essentially dialogic and inter-civilizational.

Any postcolonial project that looks back in time and discovers or digs out some specimen of 'untainted insular' past which is oblivious of the present day dynamics of place or space would be grossly lopsided and is bound to fail. Time cannot meet out the demand of space. If space is hybrid, multicultural and cross-national, no reversion in past can undo or cancel it. Postcolonialism is more a project of space than time or to be more precise of transmutation of time into space. The composite space which we inherit as a result of colonial past is the real space of postcolonial negotiations. Hybriculturality is the buzzword in current phase of postcolonial theory.

The essay on the whole presents us an array of various approaches/ paradigms models within the rubric of postcolonial studies. All these models insect at some point and do fit in the overall frame of postcolonial concerns. But ultimately the writers of essay seem to privilege syncreticism and hybridity as more appropriate models than any of binary models of critical theory. Also what is constantly highlighted is the importance of comparative methodology that is so unique to postcolonial aspect of self-analysis. The twin focus on comparison as a method of analysis and cultural syncretism as the desired end of postcolonial recovery in a way pre-empt the possibility of this theoretical enterprise ever lasing into a monolith.

Critique of Empire Writes Back

Gender differences. *The Empire Writes Back* neglects gender differences between writers. How does gender impact on these issues? 'Women and men do not live "post- coloniality" in the same way'. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin offer us little way of accounting for gender differences in their theory of the uses of language in postcolonial texts. Exactly the same can be said for class differences. Important social facts of a writer's identity are passed over by the authors in an attempt to isolate an identifiable, common mode of postcolonial writing.

National differences. Similarly, there is little attempt to differentiate within or between writings from divergent nations. Did colonialism happen in the sane manner in divergent locations? Can we assume that the writing from countries with such different historical and cultural relationships with the 'centre' functions in the same way? There is a fundamental incommensurability between the predominantly cultural subordination of settler culture in Australia and the predominantly administrative and militaristic subordination of colonized cultures in Africa and Asia. A theory of postcolonialism which suppresses differences like these is ultimately flawed as an ethical and political intervention into conditi0ons of power and inequality.

Is writing back so prevalent? Some critics have voiced their concern with the assumption that all writing from once-colonized locations is writing against colonial discourses. It is vitally important at the beginning of our understanding of postcolonial theory that we do not assume that all writing from countries with a history of colonialism is primarily concerned with colonial history, colonial discourse and 'decolonizing the mind'.

Is Postcolonial creativity an offshoot of colonial culture? The writers of *Empire Writes Back*, describe postcoloniality euphorically, as 'an unprecedented assertion of creative activity' in those societies which emerged

after the 'dismantling' of British imperial power. At the same time they seem to insist that this new postcolonial creative assertiveness is not so much a gesture, however flawed, towards a cultural difference as it is a cultural compromise, produced Through the encounter between colonial structures and indigenous processes. In their words, "postcolonial literatures are a result of this interaction between imperial culture and the complex of indigenous practices .. imperial language and local experience." The language used by these writers sets up, albeit inadvertently, an implicit hierarchy between imperial structure/language/ culture on the one hand and indigenous process/practice/ experience on the other.

Critique of Postcolonial Theory: Problems and Demerits

It is true that under the broad rubric of postcolonialism, diverse intellectual spheres generated a cross-disciplinary and theoretically eclectic demystification of colonial discourse, but it had its problems too. Here are some of the problems of postcolonial theory:

1. **The semantics of postcolonialism** as a term is highly fluid and ambiguous. The terms stand for so many things at one time – it stands for 'a historical transition', 'an achieved epoch', 'a cultural location', 'a theoretical stance' etc. For Gayatri Spivak, whose inspiration is Derrida, postcoloniality is a case of a deconstructive philosophical position towards the logocentrism and identitarian metaphysics underpinning Western knowledge. Neil Lazarus enjoins a postcolonial practice which is simultaneously committed to "the philosophical discourse of modernity' and which to its urgent critique. As a temporal designation where the 'post' is understood as past and decolonization marks the definitive end of North/South inequalities, its usage, argues Benita Perry, is manifestly unsustainable.
2. **Postcolonial theory tends to homogenize particularities.** One remembers Edward Said's well-known warning that even with the best of intentions one might, and sometimes does, give the impression that through one's own discourse the Other is now representable without due regard to its bewildering complexity. Whereas the early version of orientalism effectively reduced the multiplicity of languages and ideologies into a homogenized European discourse, the Empire Writes Back , for very different reasons, cannot hear the almost carnivalesque sounds of the non-english unconscious, either. Aijaz Ahmad's observation on the effects of globalizing postcolonialism without maintaining local differentiations are worth notice: "...the fundamental effect of constructing this globalized trans-historicity of colonialism is one of evacuating the very meaning of the word and dispersing that meaning so wide that we can no longer speak of determinates histories and determinate structures."
3. Postcolonialism accepts uncritically the geographical divisions of Commonwealth Literature.
4. **Postcolonialism does not discriminate** adequately between different experiences of colonialism.
5. It **takes a lot from Western theories of postmodernism** and post-structuralism.
6. **Its exponents are well ensconced in Western academia**, and they have no involvement and even access to the material problems of the grass roots. Aijaz Ahmad, tends to dismiss postcolonial theory as mere recreational, a sheer luxury based upon the availability of mobility and surplus to a privileged few, while the vast majority of others are condemned to labour 'below the living standards of the colonial period'. He insists that postcolonial intellectuals are merely 'radicalized immigrants located in the metropolitan university' who are uniformly marked by a 'combination of class origin, professional ambition and a lack of prior political grounding in socialist praxis. Arif Dirlik also argues that the sophisticated jargon of postcolonial intellectuals bears no relevance with the 'problems of social, political and cultural domination' of the people of the Third World
7. For Aijaz Ahmad postcolonial theory is entirely complicit with the globalizing tendencies of contemporary capitalism. **It offers no new ways of criticizing the advancement of global capitalism**, and it also discredits older modes of critique such as Marxism. Issues of class remain absent from the agendas of much postcolonial theory.
8. **Postcolonialism is too celebratory**: Its celebratory emphasis damagingly directs attention away from the continued, neo-colonial operations throughout the globe. Postcolonialism is seriously handicapped to address

the issue of neo-colonialism. In the late twentieth century and even in the new millenium it is argued that Western multinational companies are the new colonialists, while America continues the military aggression in countries of Latin America and Middle East. The global economic relationships between the wealthy Western nations and their poorer neighbours reflect colonialism's economic, political and cultural de-formative traces in the present.

9. In its attempt to reconcile postcolonial thought with tenets of postmodernism, postcolonialism as project of recovery and recuperation **loses its sting of resistance**. In the end, as it endeavours to stay clear of easy binaries of the West and the Rest, the colonial and the colonized, the North and the South, etc, it sounds quite complicitous. It is an irony that the story of mutual give and take between the colony and the empire, is now being composed by some postcolonial critics. Such a story makes an inadvertent return to the benign narrative of colonialism once disseminated by British imperial historiography, and one which in the metropolis continues to have a purchase on the official and popular memory of empire. In contemporary postcolonial theory three is hardly a space for anti-colonialist theories, inscribing irreconcilable contest, or anti-colonialist practices that were/are manifestly confrontational.

10. With its accent on diaspora as a synonym for a new kind of cosmopolitanism, entire project of **postcolonial studies tends to forget about other economically enforced dispersal of the poor** from Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Philippines. Postcolonial studies should promote empirical investigations of these unsettled diasporas, and undertake the dissemination of the experiences spoken by scattered impoverished, and despised populations stranded in temporary and exploited employment as contract workers, casual labourers, or domestic servants in Europe, North America and the Gulf States.

11. Another charge against postcolonial theory is that **it has failed to generate its distinctive language and idiom** attuned to local knowledge and universal hopes. Its jargon is much common with other theories of structuralism and post-structuralism. It is said that poets, novelists and playwrights from the Third World have contributed more to postcolonial consciousness than theorists and critics. The contribution of creative writers like Wole Soyinka, Naguib Mahfouz, Octavio Paz, Nadine Gordimer, Salman Rushdie, Derek Walcott, Toni Morrison etc. is much more laudatory than the highly jargon rhetoric of Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak or even Said.

12. One school of postcolonial studies tends to reject Western thought in favour of radical nativism as an alternative to self-growth and self-assertion. According to Ihab Hassan, such a tendency to look back is a perfect "**historical instance of cultural atavism**". Such a stance not only smacks of gross medievalism built in the postcolonial bias towards the past, but also its wishful neglect of the progress made all these years under Western paradigms.

13. Closely related with the above criticism of postcolonial theory is that it, by aligning itself with reactionary content of post-structralism, has not only implicated itself in the demise of Marxist thinking, it has in a way **promoted the rise of right-winged politics** all over the globe.

14. Postcolonialists are least grateful to Marx or Marxist ideology despite the fact that he was the one who spoke most cogently against the capitalist modernity unleashed under the colonial regime. Marxist critics like Jameson and Ahmad refer not so much of colonialism or postcolonialism but of capitalist modernity, which takes the colonial form in particular places and at particular times."

15. Another serious problem with postcolonial theorists is that **they take a rather moral view of history**. Ihab Hassan once again argues that "Since Machiavelli, it has been recognized that nation-states have no firm moral principles, only compelling national interests which they labour to disguise as principles." The very idea to have imagined at all a benign foreign power is not only political naïve but also downright ahistorical.

16. The efficacy of postcolonial studies on contemporary practices of the imperial powers is highly questionable. The question that stares postcolonial project is: has it brought about any change in the attitudes of Coca-Cola, Mercedes Benz, or the IMF? Has it brought about any change in the attitude of US towards other Third World states?. Under the rubric of postcolonial studies, where is the assessment of situation in gross realistic terms, over above moral or idealistic positions?

17. Moreover postcolonial theorists share some unexamined assumptions, which make their entire credo shaky and ideologically weak and less-sustainable. One assumption is that "Race is key to colonization". Ihab Hassan,

would say that "Race was irrelevant for the Arabs in Africa and Asia, for the English in Ireland, the Swedes in Finland, the Danes in Norway, the Russians in Ukraine". The moral is that the drive to domination may be basic but the motives of colonization are diverse.

18. Another assumption is that "The wealth of European nations is derived from their colonies abroad". The counter argument is that some of the most affluent nations have had no colonies for the greater part of the century: Switzerland, Sweden, Canada etc. are some of the nations of this category. Moreover some of the former colonies have done very well – Singapore, Taiwan, South Korea, Malaysia etc. The entire relationship of wealth and colonialism need be seriously reviewed.

19. Another fallacy or assumption is that "Violence and oppression occur mainly along a vertical axis, between colonizer and the colonized, the centre and the margin". The counter argument is that violence and oppression also occur along a horizontal axis —witness the horrors in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, the Balkans etc.

20. Postcolonial theorists tend to fetishize difference over sameness. Too much accent on difference can "discourage mutual obligations, cripple empathy, defeat trans-cultural judgements, leaving only raw power to resolve human conflicts. It can lead to hostility, exclusiveness, less respect for others than solidarity with ourselves."

21. Postcolonialists often argue that the postcolonial subjects are often constructed in a particular way. But so are the colonial subjects. Constructionism is never one-way. The truth is that we are not only constructed, we also 'construct' back; we interact.

Glossary of Post-colonial Theory

Appropriation: Etymologically the word appropriation is derived from Latin *ad* which means 'to' with the notion of 'rendering to', and *proprius* which means "own personal". The combination *appropraire* means "to make one's own". To appropriate today means to take something for one's own use. The common meaning of appropriate is 'proper', but used in pejorative sense stands for abduction, or even theft.

Agency: Agency refers to the ability to act or perform an action. In contemporary theory, it hinges on the question of whether individuals can freely and autonomously initiate action, or whether the things they do are in some sense already determined by the ways in which their identity has been constructed. Agency is particularly important in postcolonial theory because it refers to the ability of the postcolonial subjects to initiate action in engaging or resisting imperial power. For most of the postcolonial theorists the entire question of agency is troublesome for the simple reason that that the postcolonial subject seems to be already so thoroughly appropriated by the Western discourse of power and capitalism that his capabilities too challenge the West, look at best derivative and at times even sponsored by the West itself. The theorists however do believe that despite near total appropriation of the colonized subject in the imperial power-game, there is a possibility of action, counter-action. In other words, some agency is granted to the postcolonial subject.

Ambivalence: It is a term that came from the filed of psychoanalysis first. It stands for a continual fluctuation between wanting one things and wanting its opposite at the same time. It refers to a simultaneous attraction and repulsion from an object, person or actions. Adapted into colonial discourse theory, Homi Bhabha uses it to describe the complex mix of attraction and revulsion that characterizes the relationship between colonizer and the colonized. The relationship is ambivalent because the colonized subject is never simply completely opposed to the colonizer. Rather than assuming that some colonized subjects are 'complicit' and some 'resistant', ambivalence suggests that complicity and resistance exists in a fluctuating relation within the colonial subject. Ambivalence also characterizes the way in which colonial discourse relates to the colonized subject, for it may be both exploitative and nurturing, or represent itself as nurturing, at the same time.

Canon: It is a term derived from the Greek *kanon* , meaning measure or rule. Its early usage refers to the selected authoritative texts of the Bible and 'canonized' theologians. The canon has subsequently been understood as a list of 'great books" invariably drawn from the period of classical to modern European Literature and identified with authors such Homer, Dante, Milton, Shakespeare, Eliot etc. The works of these authors are defended as the embodiment of aesthetic and universal moral or human value. Although this clearly implies a process of judgment and discrimination it is a

circular and self-ratifying one, since the truly great are deemed unquestionably great and in this respect beyond judgment.

Many have come to question the authority of the so-called canon particularly over the last 20-30 years. This criticism highlights the principles of selection and exclusion on which the canon depends. Certain works by a selected author are preferred to others; a certain discourse is preferred to non-literature; certain literary forms are preferred over the others. These hierarchies are also joined by other exclusion of class, gender race and ethnicity. The canon therefore emerges as the embodiment not simply of aesthetic values but of a selective humanist ideology whose representatives are white, male and European. It is one these grounds primarily that the authority of the concept and its contents have been questioned The result has been an 'opening of the canon' to hitherto neglected authors and forms, or to the establishment of alternative canons or counter-canons, from traditions of women's writing or Caribbean writing or Third World writings etc.

The canon, much like the looser notion of 'tradition', has therefore depended on a constellation of aesthetic, moral, class-based, and gendered values, and has been deployed in the promotion of an idea of culture, or sometimes to bolster an ethnic or national identity.

Comprador: A Portuguese word meaning 'purchaser', comprador was originally used to refer to a local merchant acting as a middleman between foreign producers and a local market. Marxists have used it to refer specifically to those local bourgeoisie who owe their privileged position to foreign occupation. In postcolonial theory the term has evolved a broader use, to include the intelligentsia – academics, creative writers and artists whose independence may be compromised by a reliance on, and identification with colonial power. The word continues to be used to describe a relatively privileged, wealthy and educated elite in the international communicative practices introduced by colonial domination, and who may therefore be less inclined to struggle for local cultural and political independence.

Contrapuntal: Contrapuntal reading of a work of art involves its study two perspectives – one internal, and the other external. From an internal standpoint, interpretation aims at explanation of the work's narrational, rhetorical, and linguistic strategies, an explanation that respects the strategies and the density of the textual elements they implicate. It is important that the internal standpoint articulates the work's vision as compellingly as possible. An external standpoint examines the problematic seductiveness of the work's capacity to guide its audience's responses. By reminding us of information about the structure of reference that the work ignores, distorts, or minimizes and by reminding us that the structure invoked attitudes has plausible alternatives that the texts has effectively excluded, the external standpoint situates the text critically within wider field of imaginative possibilities. As Said formulates, we read from an external perspective " . . . with an effort to draw out, extend, give emphasis and voice to what is silent or marginally present or ideologically represented" (Cultural and Imperialism, 66) in the work. Within the internal dimension of a contrapuntal reading, one constructs the articulated upshot of participation in an authorized game of make-believe. Within the external dimension, one's reading rides piggy-back upon this participation and is responsive to whatever grounds one has for rejecting or, at least, resisting full involvement in the imaginative enterprise encouraged by the text.

Given the goal of opening up a work to a range of alternative external perspectives readers are permitted to employ any background assumptions and evaluative principles that have some facet or dimension of the work. Even perspectives that severely marginalized within the work are to be admitted. What is more readers are not to rely upon their normal perceptions concerning the relative weight and importance of various elements in the text. And finally, there can be no overall requirement that contrapuntal interpretative views must be consistent with the work taken in its entirety. The contrapuntal reader will often take special interest in the contradictions that a text can be forced to reveal.

Creole/ Creolization: Creolization stands for the process of intense cultural and racial hybridization specific to Americas and Caribbean. In the Caribbean islands, plantation slavery and later colonial schemes of indentureship left in their wake diverse groups of people cut off from their communities of origin. Manned by wholly introduced populations, the Caribbean was unlike both the settler colonies of Canada and Australia and the imperial possession that was India. Nor was it like the colonies of Africa where tribal units were subjected to the colonizer's sense of a civilizing mission. Creole has traditionally been used to distinguish that which is created in the colonies, which is neither native nor derives directly from the culture of origin. It is used to describe both, someone born in the colonies and some new cultural or linguistic forms created from the juxtaposition of diverse populations.

The approach to the Creolization is utterly divided. According to one view, Creolization tends to suggest a smooth and serene cultural wholeness which conceals the truth about the turbulent societies formed from the colonial processes. Such a stance tends to minimize class and ethnic complexities. The terms also tends to suggest that the process of Creolization is fairly homogenized, underplaying in the process its dynamic and unpredictable nature. Caught in the dynamics of assimilation in one hand and sense of differentiation on the other, creolization is a highly contentious process.

For writers like William Harris, Derek Walcott, Edward K Brathwaite the process of Creolization is, however, conducive to creative exploration of the self and society. Derek Walcott is in favour of exploring the aesthetic of renaissance and metamorphosis implicit in the process of creolization. For him, creolization is a context which despite its brutal beginnings, permits the artist to rethink old hierarchies to experience an openness to influences from everywhere, and to explore the emergence of new forms of hybridity. Walcott, in his essay "The Muse of History" believes that creolization as a "spirit of inventiveness and renewal in the New World makes history irrelevant." For William Harris too Creolization seems to begin with the group's imaginative efforts to circumvent historical tragedy.

So the Creolist project works towards a plurilingual ideal where the free play of oral and written, standard and vernacular, renders notions of mimetism or mimicry irrelevant. The creation of Creole identities in a post-plantation context now shades not a global concern with societies where no one is native and all are expatriates.

Deconstruction: Derrida is widely associated with the practice of deconstruction. To deconstruct is to take apart, to undo, in order to seek out and display the assumptions of a text. The critic dismantles and analyses turns something unified back into detached fragments or parts and reassembles them. In particular deconstruction involves the dismantling of hierarchical binary oppositions such as speech/ writing, reality/ appearance, nature/ culture, reason madness etc. which serve to guarantee truth through excluding and devaluing the 'inferior' part of the binary. Thus within the conventions of western culture speech is privileged over writing, reality over appearance, men over women. Deconstruction seeks to expose the blind spots of texts, the unacknowledged assumptions through which they operate. This includes those places where a text's rhetorical strategies work against the logic of its own arguments, that is, the tension between what a text means to say and what it is constrained to mean.

Diaspora: Diaspora is the voluntary or forcible movement of peoples from their homelands into new regions. Under colonialism, diaspora is a multifarious movement, involving:

- the 'temporary or permanent' movement of Europeans all over the world, leading to colonial settlements. Consequently, the ensuing economic exploitation of the settled areas necessitated large amounts of labour that could not be fulfilled by the local populace. This leads to:
- the diaspora resulting from the enslavement of Africans and their relocation to places like the British colonies. After slavery was outlawed, the continued demand for workers created indentured labour. This produces
- large bodies of people from poor areas of India, China (and others) to the West Indies, Malaya, Fiji, Eastern and Southern Africa, and Southeast Asia, etc.

Diasporas are of importance to postcolonial studies because the descendents of these people have come to produce highly unique cultures that both maintains and builds on the perceptions of their original cultures.

The entry in *The Dictionary of Global Culture* starts with two senses of the word. In its original use it referred to the process by which the Jews were exiled from their homeland, while in more recent times, it refers to the Jewish people residing outside Israel. Diaspora is often associated with Zionism, which is the belief in the Jews' legitimate claim to a homeland (Palestine). Historically, the Diaspora has undergone different phases, the first significant one occurring in 586 BCE when the Babylonians conquered Judah, leading to the enslavement of the Jews. The largest Diaspora, which occurred during the first century BCE and lasted for 1800 years, led to the displacement of 5 million Jews. The numerous Diasporas that have taken place did not necessarily lead to Jews returning to Palestine even after the initial cause of the exile had disappeared.

Sometimes conceptual categories are used to display the variety of meanings the term 'diaspora' invokes. These are victim diasporas, labour diasporas, imperial diasporas, trade diasporas, homeland diasporas etc. But there is a common element in all forms of diaspora; these are people who live outside their 'natal (or imagined natal) territories' and

recognize that their traditional homelands are reflected deeply in the languages they speak, religions they adopt, and the cultures they produce. Each category underlines a particular cause of migration usually associated with particular groups of people. So, for example, the Africans through their experience of slavery have been noted to be victims of extremely aggressive transmigrational policies, or in the case of Indians, they are seen to be part of labour diasporas because of their involvement with the colonial system of indentured labour. These categories are not mutually exclusive, and at any given moment one diasporic group could fall into different categories.

Displacement, forced or self-imposed is a now accepted as fact of life which cannot be averted in the nomadic postmodern present. Staying back in one's so-called native cultural backyard in the name of roots and home, is simply anachronistic. In fact long back during the colonial period itself, Fanon, had dismissed the idea of fixed and fetishized nationalist identities, because such identities tend to be reactionary and backward-looking. Entrenched discourse of cultural essentialism does not pose a real threat to the colonizers. Aggressive assertion of national identities comes in the growing phase of internationalism. Postcolonialism should ideally facilitate what Said calls as "enlightened posnationalsim". Bhabha would like to look at diaspora as site of cultural exchange and transaction.

Diaspora as a term subsumes all categories of displaced people, from indentured labours to expatriates all fall within the rubric of diaspora. Diaspora over the years has become so pronounced that it has altered the demographic pattern of many countries. In England and Canada for instance the number of Asians has increased to the extent that they are reckoned as key political power-centres.

Difference: The concept of difference is given to us by Derrida, and pertains primarily to post-structuralist theory as such. But as marker of different and always elusive Third World cultural identity, it is used by the postcolonial thinkers as well. Différance (as it is spelled and spoken in French) is a two-fold characteristic which all signs have: i they **differ from one another**, and hence open a space from that which they represent, and ii) they **defer the meaning**, and hence open up a temporal chain, or, participate in temporality. Thus "différance" refers to at once the differing and the deferring of signs. There are no absolute identities nothing 'is itself' by virtue of its being, is simple and absolute identity with itself. Any ultimate, transhistorical truth is only a truth by virtue of difference; so that no ultimate 'truth' can be, and be itself, nor can it be outside of time and space, and hence beyond contingency. Any 'truth' exists, then, only continently, and relationally, through différance. Taken to various applications, the fact of différance is why exclusions and repressions are so important to the operation of deconstruction. Différance makes being and meaning radically historical. Derrida writes that we will designate as différance the movement according to which language, or any code, any system of referral in general, is constitued historically as a weave of differences. In fact, it was Saussure who showed that signs differ from each other and they become meaningful through their differences which often take the form of opposition. Derrída carries this argument to its logical extreme when he shows that the very differences that make meaningful keep them from meaning anything definite. More importantly, Derrida adds, that signs do not shed the multiple meanings they acquire in different contexts. They retain the traces of their other uses. The point here is that history is built in, and is built as a network of relations, that is differences, displacements, traces, deferrals. Derrida's concept of différance puts into question, for instance, the concept of consciousness, which is based on the idea that we are present to ourselves: we are never exactly present, we cannot be, we are deferred and differing always, so our center is not really a centre, our self-presence is a fiction which disguises the play of opposition and displacement within which we live and move and have our beings.

Discourse: This is a much used word in contemporary theory and in post-colonial criticism is mostly employed in such terms as colonial discourse, which is specifically derived from Foucault's use of the concept. Discourse was originally used from about the sixteenth century to describe any kind of speaking, talk or conversion, but became increasingly used to describe a more formal speech , a narration or a treatment of any subject at length, a treatise, a dissertation, or sermoh. More recently discourse has been used in a technical sense by linguistic to describe any unit of speech longer than a sentence.

However, the Foucauldian sense of the term has little to do with the act of speaking in its traditional sense. For Foucault, a discourse is a strongly bounded area of social knowledge, a system of statements within which the world can be known. The key feature of this is that the world is not simply 'three' to be talked about, rather, it is through

discourse itself that the world is brought into being. It is also in such a discourse that speakers and hearers, writers and readers come to an understanding about themselves, their relationship to each other and their place in the world. It is the 'complex of signs and practices which organizes social existence and social reproduction.

Double Colonization: Kirsten Holst Peter and Anna Rutherford have used the phrase 'a double colonization' to refer to the ways in which women have simultaneously experienced the oppression of colonialism and patriarchy. In the 'Foreword' to their *A Double Colonization: Colonial and Postcolonial Women's Writing* (1986), they argue that colonialism celebrates male achievement in a series of male-oriented myths such as 'mateship, the mounties, explorers, freedom fighters, bushrangers, missionaries', while women are subject to representation in colonial discourses in ways which collude with patriarchal values. Thus the phrase 'a double colonization' refers to the fact that women are twice colonized – by the colonialist realities and representations and the by patriarchal ones too. Such postcolonial feminist criticism has attended to the representations of women created by 'double colonization' and questioned the extent to which both postcolonial and feminist discourses offer means to challenge these representations.

Enlightenment: The Enlightenment stands for a widespread intellectual cultural and technological/scientific movement which is usually regarded as beginning of Modern Era. Beginning in the early seventeenth century in England, and ending at the close of the eighteenth in France and Germany, the Enlightenment thought was characterized by the ideals of liberalism, popular sovereignty, equality and individualism. The Enlightenment as description is usually taken to signify the contrast with the superstitious irrationality that is presumed to have been the cultural and intellectual signature of the Middle Ages. The period is often regarded as the seed plot of several of the basic principles of modernism; namely reason is the motor and measure of historical change; humanity is capable of progress, all men are by their faculty for reason created equal, etc.

In 1974, Kant in his very famous essay "what is Enlightenment?" argues that that the Enlightenment offers man and a way out of, or exit from immaturity into the improved condition of maturity. The Enlightenment, he maintains, is the possibility whereby man philosophically acquires the status and capacities of a rational and adult being

The Enlightenment rejected the irrational and demoted the realms of feeling and imagination, and there have been any number of rejections to this emphasis from romantics to its wholesale rejection by Nietzsche. The latter has in turn helped inspire a skepticism within post-structuralism and postmodernism towards the claims of reason and credibility of any supposed universal truths such as equality and progress. Postcolonial criticism in particular has pointed to how these ideals are founded on a selective European model and thus bear the legacy of colonialism.

Essentialism: The search for identity is premised on the idea that there is such a thing to be found, that identity exists as a universal and timeless core of the self which we all possess. The essence of the self constitutes its identity. Such a view point assumes that the self is unitary and it culminates at a definite destination. The physical differences are dismissed as mere external variations. Essentialism in this sense takes a rather metaphysical perspective of the self

In school exercises, students are normally asked to write the 'essential' (or central) idea of the poem. The underlying presumption is that a poem yields a meaning which lies at its core, and which remains unalterable whatever the approach a reader takes to read it. Similarly when it comes to defining India across its subcultures and geographical diversities, we are told that essentially are one. The rhetoric of 'unity in diversity' is an essentialist slogan. Such essentialist tropes reduce the existential complexity of human situation. The binary opposite of essence is existence. Existence defies essence. It stands for irreconcilable difference in subjectivities. According to existentialists, no two wills are identical, and since each one of us imbued with a subjective will, alienation is the natural logic of existence. Essential unity is wishful simplification of life.

Eurocentricism: It is term that describes the way a particular cultural model, 'centered' upon European intellectual traditions and socio-political systems, has been generalized so as to apply to the world at large. This bias in this geo-cultural and largely white, male perspective upon human history and world affairs has been especially exposed in postcolonial studies. Other contemporary critical theories have contributed to the decentering of this concept.

Gaze: In the nineteenth-century, visual perception of art relegated all other ways of perception - particularly audio and tactile – to background, for the simple reason that the optical sense came to be recognized as the sense of the

intellect, the spirit and the imagination. 'Gaze', a term that gained currency in twentieth century, however goes beyond mere the act of seeing, or staring, rather it takes into account as to who is gazing and who is being gazed. It thus acquires a double-edgedness, which mere 'spectatorship' or 'beholding' did not have. The gaze corresponds to desire for self-completion through another. There is struggle over the gaze: one gets to look, to be master of the gaze and the other is looked at. The gaze colours the relations between the majority and the minorities, between the first world and the third world, whose inhabitants can be the object of the gaze because they are viewed as exotic. The subject-turned-object sees itself as the other sees it; it internalizes the gaze.

Hegemony: The term hegemony was coined by Antonio Gramsci, an Italian Marxist. The traditional definition of the term involves the concept of political domination, control and rule, especially in reference to sovereign states. What Gramsci wanted to do was show how the dominant classes were able to convince those who are being exploited that their situation was natural and thus universal which meant that things cannot be changed. According to this thinking, it is the cultural institutions that are dominant or play a major role in convincing people to accept the status quo. The opposition to the dominant is only illusory as it takes place within the framework of what is allowed by the dominant culture. Hegemonic domination is more widespread, more hidden or disguised, more complete than ideological domination, which has parameters that can be located and addressed.

Hybridity: Purity of being is a myth, which the postcolonial thinkers debunk through their understanding of, what they perceive as, 'irrevocable and irreversible impacts of colonialism' on the native subject. The colonized past is reminder of 'our' mixed heritage. It would be naïve to assume that colonialism did not influence us internally, or that our so-called 'core' remained immune from colonial successes and excesses. As a project of controlling the mind of the colonized natives, colonialism in its mature phase invades out private recesses, and hits at the very psychology of the native subject. In the nationalist rhetoric, the alteration or mutation in the native subject was bemoaned for so long as position of loss or fall.

Postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha appropriates the concept of hybridity from Michael Bakhtin, who refers to a 'hybrid utterance' as on in which multiple linguistic registers or various different voices coexist. Bhabha argues that the postcolonial subject is always split because of its ambivalent relationship to the dominant culture. Bhabha looks upon this condition not of perpetual entropy, but of gain and celebration. For them it amounts to inhabiting two worlds. Hybridity as signifier of a mixed cultural make-up is a position of advantage, a necessary condition of creativity in the postcolonial context. In the context of emergent multicultural world order, 'pure' nationalist identities in any case do not make sense. "Melange, hotchpotch, a bit of this and a bit of that is how newness enters the world. It is the great possibility that mass migration gives the world, and I have tried to embrace it", proclaims Salman Rushdie in his *Imaginary Homelands* (394). The movement across national borders is so rampant that in the post-national scenario narrow nationalist identities collapse and crumble, into new hyphenated formations. So hybridity as a term used in the postcolonial discourse stands for our mixed past and hyphenated present.

The term 'hybrid' thus refers to the integration (or, mingling) of cultural signs and practices from the colonizing and the colonized cultures. 'Integration' may be too orderly a word to represent the variety of stratagems, desperate or cunning or good-willed, by which people adapt themselves to the necessities and the opportunities of more or less oppressive or invasive cultural impositions, live into alien cultural patterns through their own structures of understanding, thus producing something familiar but new. The assimilation and adaptation of cultural practices, the cross-fertilization of cultures, can be seen as positive, enriching, and dynamic, as well as oppressive. "Hybridity" is also a useful concept for helping to break down the false sense that colonized cultures — or colonizing cultures for that matter — are monolithic, or have essential, unchanging features.

Liminality: This term is derived from the word 'limen' which means threshold. It is a word particularly used in psychology to indicate the threshold between the sensate and the subliminal, the limit below which a certain sensation ceases to be perceptible. The sense of the liminal as an interstitial or in-between space, a threshold area, distinguishes the term from the more definite word 'limit' to which its is related. The importance of the liminal for post-colonial theory is precisely its usefulness for describing an 'in-between' space in which cultural change may occur. For instance the colonized subject dwells in the zone of the liminality, because, he fluctuates in the in-between space of

colonialism and anti-colonialism. Liminality prevents identities from polarizing between the colonized and the colonizer, between the native and the alien, between the black and the white. Liminality and hybridity are quite close terminus with each other.

Logocentricism: It is term derived from the Greek *logos* meaning word, law sense or meaning. It was introduced by the French philosopher Derrida to characterize those systems of thought that evoke or assume the existence of a single organizing centre, first principles or underlying cause. This centre, however, as Derrida, points out, exists paradoxically both inside and outside of a given systems of ideas; what is thought of an informing influence is also felt to be prior to and outside of a given system. It is simultaneously a presence and absence. The idea of God as at once a transcendent, absent being or force and as existing within all things is a prime example. Derrida claims that the entire tradition of Western philosophy is logocentric. In simple terms it stands for the authority of the written word over and above speech.

Macaulay's Minutes: In 1835, Thomas Babington Macaulay came out with some observations — known as 'minutes' — aimed at introducing English education in India. In one of the 'infamous' minutes, Macaulay ridicules entire 'oriental' knowledge thus: "The intrinsic superiority of the Western literature is indeed fully admitted by those members of the committee who support the oriental plan of education. . . It is, I believe, no exaggeration to say that all the historical information which has been collected in the Sanskrit language is less valuable than what may be found in the paltry abridgements used at preparatory schools in England." Not only Macaulay assigns an inherently superiority to Western knowledge, he ridicules entire indigenous system of knowledges nothing more than kindergarten stuff.

Macaulay interventions into the proper education of colonized Indians, for instance, are informed by the sense that colonialism is really a 'development' project. The colonizer in his understanding is principally, if not exclusively, an educator: "What is power worth if it is founded on vice, on ignorance, and on miser; if we can hold it only by violating the most sacred duties which as governors we owe to the governed and which, as a people blessed with far more than ordinary measure of liberty and of intellectual light, we owe to a race debased by three thousand years of despotism and priestcraft. We are free, we are civilized to little purpose, if we grudge to any portion of the human race an equal measure of freedom and civilization." Clealrly Macaulay's defence of the pedagogical motivations of colonialism betrays its Enlightenment legacy, namely the sense that European rationality holds the possibility of improvement for all humanity. The civilizing impulse built in the discourse of colonialism comes to the fore without camouflage.

The minutes contain such nasty observations about the native Indians and their knowledge systems: "It is impossible for us, with our limited means, to attempt to educate the body of the people. We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population." Macaulay's pronouncement rests upon several assumptions. Knowledge is deemed the enriching possession of the 'scientific' West and must be taught to those in India, but the process is not reciprocal. An Orientalist hierarchy is asserted between a knowledgeable civilized West and an ignorant, savage East.

Nation/Nationalism: The settled nature of the term 'nation' undergoes remarkable conceptual shifts in post-colonial theory. Nation, hitherto privileged as essentialized idea or a transcendental construct, during the modern period is seen more as a mechanical monolith forged to lend people of an area/ territory a definite historicity, a sense of sovereignty and above all a map to co-ordinate and contain their civic needs and desires. The myth of nation as a prehistoric divine idea is sufficiently deconstructed by Benedict Anderson who locates the rise of nation in print capitalism. The emphasis shifts from the so-called organic growth of nation to its consciously and calculatedly forged nature. Nation as imagined community becomes a tangible entity through factors such as the standardization of language and rise of novel, facilitated by the rise of printing press. Eric Hobsbawm, for instance, talks about a carefully thought-out re-invention of tradition through the modern nationalist implant some chosen symbols, totems and rituals that consolidate the hazy idea of nation. Nation is defined not in terms of organic past, but in terms of official arrangement. In the post-colonial context, nation is seen as an utterly divided space, where the imperatives of archaic cultural past constantly

clash with the modern notions of nation as state. According to Homi Bhabha, nation is a contested territory where people live in 'double-time': on the one hand they believe in the pre-given authority of the nation, on the other they have the desire to progress. The 'people' with in a nation-state are not a homogenous lot, they have their "unequal interests and identities".

Negritude: Negritude, originally a literary and ideological movement of French-speaking black intellectuals, reflects an important and comprehensive reaction to the colonial situation. This movement, which influenced Africans as well as Blacks around the world, specifically rejects the political, social and moral domination of the West. The term, which has been used in a general sense to describe the black world in opposition to the West, assumes the total consciousness of belonging to the black race.

In contrast to this broad definition, a narrower one pertains to artistic expression. The literature of Negritude includes the writings of black intellectuals who affirm black personality and redefine the collective experience of blacks. A preoccupation with the black experience and a passionate praise of the black race, provides a common base for the imaginative expression in association with romantic myth of Africa. The external factor defining the black man in modern society is colonialism and the domination by the white man, with all the moral and psychological implications. Negritude rehabilites Africa and all blacks from European ideology that holds the black inherently inferior to the white — the rationale for Western imperialism.

Leopold Sedar Senghor, president of Senegal, who further defines Negritude in his poems and writings, rejects the classical white/black view that races can be mutually exclusive saying, "Race is a reality—I do not mean racial purity. There is difference, but not inferiority or antagonism." Senghor believes in the expression of values of traditional Africa as they are embodied in the thinking and institutions of African society, but he does not desire a return to outmoded customs, only to their original spirit. His interpretation of Negritude has become the clear most definition and a model for other writers.

In contrast, Wole Soyinka speaks against negritude, which he sees belonging to colonial ideology because it gives a defensive character to any African ideas. The artist, for him, is a reformer who draws on the past for significant lessons and proceeds to what he calls "the re-appraisal of the whole human phenomenon." This view balances the more romantic view of the early Negritude writers. Soyinka takes into account the imperfections of the past, which he accepts as inherent to the human condition and which he takes as an invitation to question the present. He provides something important to the idea of Africanism that he finds missing from Negritude. In the colonial period, the innocence of Africa had to be stressed, but the new generation of African writers and intellectuals have been freed from colonial restraints and express African reality very differently

Orientalism: "The relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of complex hegemony", observes Said. Deriving his basic critical impetus from Foucault's theory of 'Power is Knowledge', he in his path-breaking study of the Orient comes to the conclusion that the imperial West, powerful as it was, constructed a rather infernal image of the East to deprive the Orient its share of knowledge and humanity. Such a construction prepared a grand cultural pretext for its civilizing mission in the East. What came to be known as Orientalism in Western accounts, hardly ever represented the Orient. Orientalism refers to the sum of the West's representations of the Orient. It is first and foremost a fabricated construct, a series of images that came to stand as the Orient's reality, for those in the West. "The centuries-old designation of geographical space to the east of Europe as "Oriental" was partly political, partly doctrinal, and partly imaginative; it implied no necessary connection between actual experience of the Orient". Colonialism created a way of seeing the world, an order of things that was to be learned as true and proper. Oreintalism reveals by proxy more about those that describe the Orient than the people and places that are being described. The West comes to know itself by proclaiming via Oreintalism everything it believes it is not. Orientalist representations function to justify the propriety of Western rule of Eastern lands. "European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self" (Said).

The Orient is constructed in terms which are esoteric and mysterious. It is strange and savage — if India is strange, Africa is savage. Orient is not just different, it is oddly different – unusual, fantastic and bizarre. India for instance is

always orientalized as country of princes and maharajas, snake-charmers and naked sadhus, sati and tantric practices of human sacrifice. The politics behind such a depiction was to assert that Occident is rational, sensible and human the orient is irrational, abnormal and sub-human. Orient appears "lamentably under-humanized, antidemocratic, backward, barbaric". At times it is overvalued and over-esteemed too; it is "overvalued for its pantheism, its spirituality, its stability, its longevity, its primitivity" etc. Even such a superlative construction quite characteristically denies the Orient its claim to humanity. The basic thrust of Orientalist constructions, positive or negative, was to somehow place the East in a frame that is non-scientific and eccentric. The Orientals, in the words of Said, "were rarely seen as looked at; they were seen through, analyzed not as citizens, or even people, but as problems to be solved or confined or – as colonial powers openly coveted their territory – taken over". The Orient is denied "the very possibility of development, transformation, human movement."

The contributions of Said are so many.

1. To the standard scholarly and historical analysis, Said added a new dimension: literary criticism. Said contends there would have been no European novel without imperialism.
2. Said was able to bring the different strands of critiques of Orientalism into multidisciplinary cultural analysis

But there are many critical doubts too. They are:

1. Said's theory derives its theoretical impetus from contemporary Western theory. Orientalism draws upon developments in Marxist theories of power, especially the political philosophy of the Italian intellectual Antonio Gramsci and France Michael Foucault. Hence it is derivative.
2. Orientalism is presented as an unchanging, monolithic, predominantly male-oriented discourse. In contrast Orientalism itself expressed a whole range of voices, Islamophobics as well as lovers of Islam, hegemonic movements as well as counter-hegemonic endeavours, differentiated by gender, ideology and sexual preference. Said's reduction of this diversity and heterogeneity actually amounts to Occidentalism – a stereotyping in reverse.
3. Orientalism offers no alternative to the discourse it critiques.
4. Any notion of resistance is so conspicuously absent form Orientalism. The native recipient of this discourse is passive and mute.
5. Orientalism is ahistorical. It tends to make totalizing assumptions about a vast and varied expanse of representations over a very long period of history. Said glosses over the variable factors such as the contrasting economic and social circumstances of different territories.
6. Said ignores gender differences.
7. Said ignores resistance within the West.
8. Said's own negative appraisals of Orientalism does not appear to leave room for indigenous appropriations of Orientalist discourses for positive anti-colonial goals. Richard fox terms this positive anti-colonial Orientalism as 'affirmative Orientalism'
9. The isolationist premises that underpin the Orientalist's absolute distinction between East and West, pre-empt the possibility of inter-action, dialogue and a 'fusion of horizons.

Originality: The romantic "solemnities of the origin" are done away with in postmodern theory. "The best way to consider originality is to look not for first instances of a phenomenon, but rather to see duplication, parallelism, symmetry, parody, repetition, echoes of it – the way, for example, literature has made itself onto a topos of writing". On the claims of creative writing as 'original' writing, Said, has many cogent counter-arguments to offer. "The writer thinks less of writing originally, and more of rewriting. The image of writing changes from original inscription to parallel script, from tumbled-out confidence to deliberate fathering-forth, from melody to fugue." Said looks upon "Writers as workers in the already-begun".

Instead of the metaphysical term 'original', Edward Said's preferred term is 'beginning'. According to him beginning has "more active meaning, and origin the more passive one" He thus posits 'two kinds of beginnings' – "one gentile or historical and other the sacred". (which parallels his distinction between 'beginning' and 'origin'. He employs another set of binary opposites to distinguish between two kinds of beginnings – one is called 'transitive' beginning

and other is termed 'intransitive' one. The 'transitive' beginning "is suited for work, for polemic, for discovery". It "allows us to initiate, to direct, to measure time, to construct work, to discover, to produce knowledge". He further adds, "A beginning is a formal appetite imposing a severe discipline on the mind". The 'intransitive' beginning is "something of a necessary fiction". Its "existence cannot be doubted, yet its pertinence is wholly to itself. Because it cannot truly be known, because it belongs more to silence than it does to language".

Post-: 'Post-', a common prefix that is usually deployed in contemporary critical jargon. In terms of semantics, it gives the impression of being of a marker of 'rupture' or 'break' from the past. One common perspective, as Lyotard observes, of the 'post-' is that it gives "the sense of a simple succession, a diachronic sequence of periods in which each one is clearly identifiable. The 'post-' indicates something like a conversion: a new direction from the previous one". This perspective of 'post-' as a signifier of historical periodization is rather narrow and does not explain its reflexive potential. 'Post-' is not used as binary opposite of 'pre-'. It has more to do with the understanding of cultural processes, and politics of representation that we have hitherto taken for granted. To Lyotard, 'post-' is more "a procedure of 'ana-': a procedure of analysis, anamnesis, anagogy and anamorphosis which elaborates an 'initial forgetting'."

Does 'post-' refer to "a realm of the beyond"? Homi Bhabha, while dealing with what he terms as "controversial shiftiness of the prefix 'post-' ", insists on not looking at 'post-' as a trope of sequentiality or even 'anti-' (something). If it is to be taken in the sense of the beyond at all, it must be used as a signifier of "an exploratory restless movement" of "here and there", "hither and thither", "back and forth". The 'beyond', Bhabha, says, is "neither a new horizon, nor a leaving behind of the past". To dwell 'in the beyond', as Bhabha explains, is "to be a part of a revisionary time, a return to the present to re-describe our cultural contemporaneity; to reinscribe our human, historic commonality". 'Post-' if it is to used in the sense of 'beyond' at all, must "renew the past, refiguring it as a contingent 'in-between' space that innovates and interrupts the performance of the present". Post, thus according is more a signifier of the in-between temporal space between the past and the present. If Lyotard approaches 'post-' in terms of 'ana-', the preferred semantic equivalent of Bhabha for 'post-' is 're-' as in re-inscribe, re-new, re-describe, re-turn etc.

Postcolonial Literature: The concept of producing a national or cultural literature is in most cases a concept foreign to the traditions of the colonized peoples, who

(a) had no literature as it is conceived in the western traditions or in fact no literature or writing at all, and/or

(b) did not see art as having the same function as constructing and defining cultural identity, and/or

(c) were, like the peoples of the West Indies, transported into a wholly different geographical/political/economic/cultural world. (India, a partial exception, had a long-established tradition of letters; on the other hand it was a highly balkanized sub-continent with little if any common identity and with many divergent sub-cultures).

It is always a changed, a reclaimed but hybrid identity, which is created or called forth by the colonizeds' attempts to constitute and represent identity. The very concepts of nationality and identity may be difficult to conceive or convey in the cultural traditions of colonized peoples.

There are complexities and perplexities around the difficulty of conceiving how a colonized country can reclaim or reconstitute its identity in a language that is now but was not its own language, and genres which are now but were not the genres of the colonized. One result is that the literature may be written in the style of speech of the inhabitants of a particular colonized people or area, which language use does not read like Standard English and in which literature the standard literary allusions and common metaphors and symbols may be inappropriate and/or may be replaced by allusions and tropes which are alien to British culture and usage. It can become very difficult then for others to recognize or respect the work as literature (which concept may not itself have relevance).

There other are times when the violation of the aesthetic norms of western literature is inevitable, (a) as colonized writers search to encounter their culture's ancient yet transformed heritage, and (b) as they attempt to deal with problems of social order and meaning so pressing that the normal aesthetic transformations of western high literature are not relevant, make no sense. The idea that good or high literature may be irrelevant and misplaced at a point in a culture's history, and therefore for a particular cultural usage not be good literature at all, is difficult for us who are raised in the culture which strong aesthetic ideals to accept.

The development (development itself may be an entirely western concept) of hybrid and reclaimed cultures in colonized countries is uneven, disparate, and might defy those notions of order and common sense which may be central not only to western thinking but to literary forms and traditions produced through western thought. The representation

of these uneven and often hybrid, polyglot, multivalent cultural sites (reclaimed or discovered colonized cultures searching for identity and meaning in a complex and partially alien past) may not look very much like the representations of bourgeois culture in western art, ideologically shaped as western art is to represent its own truths (that is, guiding fictions) about itself.

Site: It is a term often used to suggest that meaning is produced by an interaction or conflict of forces at a particular point. Thus the individual or human subject, a text, artistic movement or epoch might be regarded as the site on which aesthetic, philosophical, social, economic or cultural tensions, or some combination of these, is played out. Alternatively a social theme or category itself, such as class, race, gender or sexuality might be the site where other meanings, especially those influencing relations of power are enacted.

A further use of the term, and a comparable term like 'domain', which again refers not to a physical location in the material world but a 'virtual' site, occurs in the language of computer communications, especially on the internet where a multitude of such 'sites' are set up and connected.

Subaltern: This is a term from Gramsci. In *The Modern Prince* and *The Prison Notebooks* Gramsci describes the subaltern classes as those subordinated by hegemony excluded from any meaningful role in a regime of power. Gramsci himself has workers in mind, but the term has also been used to describe other groups who are excluded and do not have a position from which to speak—for example peasants, women etc. Gramsci further notes that "the subaltern classes, by definition, are not unified and cannot unite until they are able to become a 'State'"

Subaltern historiography: As against the elite nationalist historiography, a school of Oxbridge historians led by Ranajit Guha, Partha Chatterjee, Dipesh Chakravorty, Gyanendra Pandey, Shahid Amin etc. launched a new school of subaltern historiography in late 80s. In the elite constructions of Third World nationalism, rise of national consciousness among the colonized nations is largely attributed either to British colonial rulers and administrators or to Third World elite personalities and institutions. Indian nationalism, for instance, is normally represented as "the sum of the activities and ideas by which the Indian elite responded to the institutions, opportunities, resources etc generated by colonialism". Such a response not only excluded the common people from the processes of nationalism, it also confines Third World nationalism as a mere response to colonialism. The elite historiography of nationalism is limited to the kind of exchanges that indigenous elite had with the colonial elite. The dynamics of exchange are explained in subaltern historiography in terms of the twin processes of collaboration and competition between/ among the forces native and foreign. The nationalist historiography, however, tends to portray elite national leaders as idealists or even spiritualists who with all their sense of altruism and self-abnegation fight for the cause of national liberation. Their collaborationist part is underplayed and even deliberately suppressed. Ranajit Guha observes that "The history of Indian nationalism is thus written up as a sort of spiritual biography of the Indian elite". In simple words, the history of Indian freedom struggle in nationalist elite historiography is thus reduced to a spiritualized account of the metamorphosis of MK Gandhi into Mahatma Gandhi. In such representations, the contributions made by the people on their own, independently of the elite to the making of and development of nationalism remain unacknowledged. Guha says, "What clearly is left out of this unhistorical historiography is the politics of the people". Indian freedom struggle did not necessarily revolved around the dominant elite, there are numerous instances when people on their rose against the oppressive authorities. The subaltern historians designate the spontaneous, non-elite and local locus of protest and resistance as the autonomous domain of national history. This domain was active even before the colonial period and it continued to operate vigorously even during and after the colonial period. "It was distinguished by its relation to a greater degree of depth in time as well as structure". The mobilization in the autonomous zone of the people relied more on the traditional organization of kinship, and territoriality; elite mobilization tended to be relatively more associationistic and constitutionalists in orientation. Popular mobilization was more spontaneous and even violent: the elite mobilization was more cautious and controlled. In terms of ideology, the autonomous zone of the people, does not evince much cohesiveness, in terms of its social composition it is diverse. What however unites or brings these diverse movements of the people is their resistance to the elite domination. This resistance however varied in degree or density.

The subaltern historians are however quick to point out that elite and subaltern (that is the domain of the common people) were not hermetically sealed off from each other; rather there was a great deal of overlap between the two. The braiding together of the two the two strands of elite and subaltern politics, observes, Guha, "led invariably to explosive situations". Guha also admits that "initiatives which originated from the domain of subaltern were soon

their part powerful enough to develop the national movement into a full-fledged struggle fro national liberation". The result of all this was numerous uprisings of peasants, low castes, workers and tribals – that for want of revolutionary leader, or mere economism – did not lead to a decisive victory over the colonialists. The subaltern historiography is a project that investigates into the "failure of nation to come to its own".

Subjectivity: Postcolonial subjectivity cannot be defined in Cartesian terms. Cartesian ideas of the "I" as self-sufficient and self-knowing entity have undergone conceptual changes. Poststructuralism has led to the assumption of a new starting position(s)

- One of the possible new starting places, which has been used in postcolonial theory, is with Foucault. Particularly important are issues of discourse and power, which are related to governmentality. These are key to analysis of colonial discourse - for example in the use of education to form people in a certain way. The colonial education of Indians, and careful choice of texts in order to produce a certain sort of subject are examples of this constitution of self at work through the discourse of the colonizer.
- Another starting point is Althusser's "interpellation", and his ideas about ideological state apparatus. Interpellation deals with the idea of a subject which is situated in relation to models or ideals, for example ideal ego, and authoritative symbols. Our own subjectivity is fixed in relation to an overriding Subject (subject with a capital s as opposed to the subject with a small s). Althusser's example is God - we place ourselves in relation to something larger upon which we base ideas about the self and the ideal of the self. Again, the link with the postcolonial is clear - the relationship with something which is ideal, an object of desire or ambition for the subject. The individual's desire to be the ideal subject. An economy of desire is set up, tied up with power. Within colonial discourse, the ideal subject (rational etc) is presented as the agent of history, the colonizer. The colonized (or women, as has equally been the case) can be characterized as irrational, and therefore not as an ideal, or in a position of power. Colonization sets up an ideal subject and teaches that others should see themselves as situated in relation to an ideal, and reinforce this through discourse in education.

  An example of the opposition to this setting up of subjectivity is the work of Franz Fanon.
- Freud and Lacan are also important in terms of a psychoanalytical approach. The idea of the subject being constituted, and the importance of the subconscious are at work here. Ideas of fantasy, deferral etc in the work of Bhabha come from ideas of psychoanalysis.

These are three positions at the level of theory therefore, which argue against the Cartesian "I": claiming that it doesn't just appear but is constituted - and therefore subject to outside influence - formed in relation to another or others

The Other: Postcolonial theory is built in large part around the concept of otherness. There are however problems with or complexities to the concept of otherness, for instance: (i) otherness includes doubleness, both identity and difference, so that every other , every different than and excluded by is dialectically created and includes the values and meaning of the colonizing culture even as it rejects its power to define; (ii) the western concept of the oriental is based, as Abdul JanMohamed argues, on the Manichean allegory (seeing the world as divided into mutually excluding opposites): if the west is ordered, rational, masculine, good, then the orient is chaotic, irrational, feminine, evil. Simply to reverse this polarizing is to be complicit in its totalizing and identity-destroying power (all is reduced to a set of dichotomies, black or white, etc.); (iii) colonized peoples are highly diverse in their nature and in their traditions, and as beings in cultures they are both constructed and changing, so that while they may be 'other' from the colonizers, they are also different one from another and from their own pasts, and should not be totalized or essentialized — through such concepts as a black consciousness, Indian soul, aboriginal culture and so forth. This totalization and essentialization is often a form of nostalgia which has its inspiration more in the thought of the colonizers than of the colonized, and it serves give the colonizer a sense of the unity of his culture while mystifying that of others.

Third World Nationalism: The rise of nationalism among the colonized nations during the colonial period was seen as the very locus of anti-colonial protest. Indian nationalism from 1857 to 1947, for instance, is often seen as a counter-discourse to British imperialism. The struggle for independence along nationalist lines was perceived to be

threat to colonialism. Soon it was realized that even imperialism was also a form of nationalism practiced and fought fiercely on the terrain of the Third world by European nations. Nationalism, it was realized, cannot be an effective anti-dote to imperialism. Later post-colonial thinkers like Partha Chatterjee and Homi Bhabha have pointed out the derivative nature of Third World nationalism. To them most of the nationalist depended heavily on the notions of nations they received through colonial paradigms. Third World nationalism they believe is historically so located that it has no option but to sound mimetic or a derived form of the First World nationalism. The only exception, if one may say so, is Gandhi who in his *Hind Swaraj* seeks to define Indian nationalism in terms of its cultural past based on the values of sacrifice and mutual respect. In this small book Gandhi offers not only a civilizational critique of Western modernity, he suggests his larger idea of home-rule. Home-rule to him was not just contained to imitate the West or to occupy the vacant positions left by the British in India, it was an enterprise of establishing an alternative world-view. Swaraj or self-rule consists in self-discipline.

Some of the Indian Terms used in Postcolonial Theory

Marga: As against the local and people-oriented poetics of the *desi*, the *marga* has come to stand for the canonical and elitist sanskritized way of culture. The origin of the word *marga* can be traced back to three roots *mrj* (to purify and to cleanse), *mrg* (deer, a forest animal) and *marg* (the path of the hunter, or the track). Of these the root *mrj* is taken as original root and the roots *marg* and *mrg* are believed to be derivative ones. If the three roots are combined, the marga stands for the process of purification of the wild and uncultivated, by way of its domestication and cultivation along the standard lines. Therefore marga by its derivation presupposes for its motif the existence of something impure, mixed or wild which is made pure, separated and domesticated. Having its connection with growing in a state of nature, wild, uncultivated, uninhabited, uncivilized, savage, rebellious, fierce, violent, violently excited, passionate, desirous, etc. the word marga acquired the senses of artificial or acquired domesticated, cultivated, inhabited, civilized, servile, tame, cool, apathetic, controlled etc. in contradistinction to *desi*.

***Desivad*/ Nativism:** "In the Indian context, Desivad is used as a synonym for the term 'Nativism'. However it is important to remember that its root term desi belongs more to the area of descriptive linguistics than to cultural anthropology. Dandin had described desi in his *Kavyadarsha* as 'dialect' spoken in a specific geographical region. He was aware that a desi dialect was not mutually exclusive of Sanskrit and that such a dialect could be intelligible to a speaker of Sanskrit. He conceptualized tatsama, tadbhava and desi as three descriptive categories of Sanskrit.

By the end of the tenth century, desi had come to be perceived in opposition to margi or marga. These two aesthetic categories were employed by Matanga in his treatise on music, Brihaddesi. In his typology of styles of musical composition, Matanga included all contemporary folk styles under the title desi and all conventional and elite styles under the title marga. Thus the *marga* tradition included nationally pervasive characteristics specific to small regions and brief historical periods.

The musicologist Sarngadeva (1230AD) explains the words marga and desi as technical names of musicology. "Music is twofold, namely marga and desi. Marga is said to be that which is ordained by Brahma and enacted by Bharata in front of the god Sambhu and (thus) bestows prosperity. Desi is that (combination of) song, instruments and dance which is heart-pleasing to the common people and found place to place as (different).

When Sanskrit started breaking up into numerous new languages at the beginning of the present millennium the term *desi* was used to describe the new languages."

The use of *desivad* as equivalent of Nativism is problematic. Nemade's preferred term is *desiyata*. Desivad to him is suggestive of vigorous, oppositional, self-defensive movement as distinguished from the more natural, normal and self-evident sense of *desipana* or 'nativeness'. *Desiyata*, according to Nemade, includes both *desipana* and *desivad*, both innate 'nativeness and ideologically charged 'nativism'.

Bhasha Literatures: Literature written in modern Indian languages is termed as bhasha literature(s). Instead of using the long and cumbersome expression 'literature in the modern Indian languages', nativists prefer to employ the traditional term bhasha. Each bhasha has a tradition which can be described in all fairness as a mature tradition

Some bhashas like Kannada and Tamil have literary histories of more than a millennium; others, like Marathi and Gujarati, of seven or eight centuries. The beginnings of various bhasha literatures vary from 1000 BC (Tamil) to the seventeenth century (Sindhi). The bhashas expressed regional and heterodox aspirations in protest against the hegemony of Sanskrit and culture it promoted. GN Devy argues that the beginnings of modern literature in each bhasha is a result of the indigenous dynamics of that bhasha rather than a product of the exogenous cultural pressures.

Dalit: The term 'Dalit' came into vogue in 1930s and 40s as a Marathi / Hindi translation of the British Category of "Depressed Classes", It became widespread with the rise of Dalit Panthers in 1972, as militant alternative to the Gandhian term "Harijan" and the colourless governmental "Scheduled Castes". Earlier in 1920s, i.e., in the pre-Ambedkar period, there were attempts to re-name the so-called depressed classes. The names of most dalit movements started with the prefix 'adi' which meant pre-historic/ pre-Aryan. The rise of Ad-Dharm in Punjab, Adi-Hindu in UP and Hyderabad, Adi-Dravida, Adi-Andhra and Adi-Karnatak in South India indicated the common claim of dalits being the original inhabitants of India.

The definition or the scope of the dalit has been ever expanding. In the manifesto of Dalit Panthers itself, the economic dimension comes into play. According to the manifesto of Dalit Panthers, "members of scheduled castes and tribes, neo-Buddhists, the working people, the landless and poor peasants, women and all those who are being exploited politically, economically and in the name of religion" (Gail, 72). Dalit Panthers was radical in its approach: "We do not want a little place in Brahman Alley, We want the rule of the whole land" (Gail, 73). 1980 saw the formation of BSP, another dalit party by Kanshi Ram.

Dalit Literature: The term "Dalit Literature" can be traced to the first Dalit literary conference in 1958, organized by the Maharashtra Dalit Sahitya Sangha. 'Bandhumadhav' a Dalit intellectual in his article in the *Prabuddha Bharat* on 15th February, 1958, explains the necessity of such a conference and its aim. Resolution No5 passed at the need of the conference declared that 'the literature written by the Dalits and that written by other about the Dalits in Marathi be accepted as a separate entity known as Dalit Literature". However, the writer who "gave momentum to Dalit Literature" was Baburao Bagul used the little magazine *Fatka* to publish his poems of social rebellion. He also published independently some writers in a collection called *Jevha Mi Jaat Chorli Hoti* (When I had Concealed My Caste), a collection which took the entire literary world by storm, because of its frankness and ferocity in indicting the caste system of the Hindus. The most significant institutional contribution was made by Milind College, the institution of higher education founded by Dr Ambedkar. A Milind Sahitya Parishad was set up by the faculty and a new journal *Asmita* was launched.

In the later 1960s, a conference in Bombay held and brought out a collection of entitled *Akar* that included poems by Baburao Bagul, Daya Pawar, Arjun Dangle, Yadarao Gangurde, Chokh Kamble etc. The conference of a state award on Baburao Bagul in 1968 for his second collection of stories *Maran Swasta Hot Ahe* (Death is Getting Cheaper) was indeed significant. In 1972 Namdeo Dhasal came out with *Gopitha* – colloquial languages of the lower castes.

Swaraj: Swaraj constitutes the core of Gandhian approach to colonialism. Though the term swaraj – translated literally as Home Rule – was much in vogue prior to the arrival of Gandhi on the national scene, yet it was he who dilated upon its cultural and civilizational ramifications. In his small book entitled *Hind Swaraj* — written on board an ocean liner that carried him back from London to South Africa n November of 1909, Gandhi lifted the term from its narrow strategic usage to the level of, what Fred Dallmayr terms, "political ethics and a vision of 'good life': the vision of democratic self-government transcending self-centredness or selfish interests" (105). It is pertinent to observe that at the time his booklet was published, there was already an ongoing home rule movement on the subcontinent, sponsored in part by the Indian national Congress. Dadabhai Naoroji and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, had

specifically employed the term swaraj to designate the economic and political goals of their nationalist aspirations. However, as used by these leaders, the term had a narrow ideological or strategic cast, suggesting basically nothing more than the expulsion of the British from India "Transferred to the social and political arena,,swaraj translates into self-rule of a larger community, that is , into a synonym for national democratic self-government or "home rule". Swaraj requires people who "rule themselves". There is a challenging circularity involved in swaraj: the self rules the self.

Sanskritization: In his study of the phenomenon of upward social mobility in an Indian caste-based setup, M.N.Srinivas, the famous Indian sociologist identified two processes namely Sanskritization and Westernization. By 'Sanskritization', he meant, "the process by which a 'low caste' Hindu caste, or tribal or other group, changes its customs, ritual, ideology and way of life in the direction of a high, and frequently, 'twice-born' caste". Westernization on the other hand "refers to changes introduced into Indian society during British Rule, and which continue, in some cases with added momentum in independent India". Of the two processes, 'Sanskritization' is found to be far more crucial for the understanding of Indian social dynamics in terms of the mobility of its people up the social hierarchies.

'Westernization', a much hyped process of social mobilization in the postcolonial context, according to Srinivas is rather limited in its range and reach, whereas 'Sanskritization' is far more pervasive and universal. In terms of it time-span, 'Westernization' comes into effect only during or after the colonial rule, whereas 'Sanskritization' "seems to have occurred throughout Indian history and still continues to occur". Secondly though 'Westernization' increasingly seems to affect a larger section of Indian population, 'Sanskritization', however, is found to be widespread, as it takes into stride even tribal groups, and other non-Hindu communities.

Srinivas hit upon this term while he was writing his master's degree thesis on *Marriage and Family in Mysore* a thesis which was subsequently published in 1942. To his great dismay he found that lower castes in the Kannada society were imitating the rather rigid and ritualistic practices of higher castes in order to gain acceptance in the caste-hierarchy. And this process of imitation has been going on for centuries; any attempt to reclaim the traditional local and low-caste-specific cultures therefore becomes self-defeating. Very significantly, 'Sanskritization' "resulted only in positional changes for particular castes or sections of castes and did not lead to a structural change That while individual castes moved up or down, the structure remained the same".

Sanskritization is not necessarily brahiminization, for upper-castes in the Indian caste-system include Kashatriyas and Vaishayas, besides of course the Brahmins. And there have been period in history where among the top- three top castes

Some Important Distinctions

Post-colonial/ Postcolonial: The two words look quite similar but on closer inspection they have different semantic connotations. The hyphenated term 'post-colonial' seems more appropriate to denote a particular historical period or epoch, like those suggested by phrases such as 'after colonialism' 'after independence' etc. In OED the compound exists alongside other compounds such as post-adolescent, post-cognitive, post-coital etc. The first entry for the word is dated 12 Dec.,1959. Postcolonialism however does not stand for historical period; it rather refers to disparate forms of representations, reading practices and values. Postcolonialism is not contained by tidy categories of historical periods or dates although it remains firmly bound up with historical experiences. Post-colonialism is more oppositional in nature, whereas postcolonialism is am always present tendency in any literature of subjugation marked by a systematic process of cultural domination through the imposition of imperial structures of power

Colonialism/Imperialism: Colonialism is sometimes used interchangeably with 'imperialism', but in truth the terms are different things. Imperialism is an ideological concept which upholds the legitimacy o

the economic and military control of one nation by another. Colonialism however is only one form of practice which results from the ideology of imperialism, and specifically concerns the settlement of one group of people in a new location. Imperialism is not strictly concerned with the issue of settlement; it does not demand the settlement of different places in order to work. Hence it could be argued that colonialism is virtually over today; imperialism continues apace as Western nations such as America are still engaged in imperial acts, securing wealth and power through the continuing economic exploitation of other nations.

Postcolonialism/ Anti-colonialism: What makes postcolonialism distinctive is the comprehensiveness of its research into the continuing cultural and political ramifications of colonialism in both colonizing and colonized societies. Postcolonial theory involves a political analysis of the cultural history of colonialism, and investigates its contemporary effects on the postcolonial subject making connections between the past and the politics of the present.

Postcolonialism/ Marxism: The historical role of Marxism in the history of anti-colonial resistance remains paramount as the fundamental framework of postcolonial thinking. Postcolonial theory operates within the historical legacy of Marxist critique of colonial practices of exploitation and subjugation.

Postcolonialism/ Postmodernism: If we catalogue the crucial features of postcolonialism – viz. fracture, intertextuality, polyglossia, subversion etc. — we find that we are drawn via the defining qualities of postmodernism. In other words postcolonial as a category tends to subsume the postmodern and vice versa. It is indeed very fruitful to understand the relationship between the postmodern and the postcolonial in terms of similarities and departures that these two cultural positions evince. Postmodernism even while it subverts hierarchies, it remains playful; postcolonialism is a credo of social enactment and ethical responsibility. Postmodernism does not empower the marginal in a positive way. Postcolonialism takes a lot of theoretical impetus from postmodern theories of discourse, power and post-Freudian psychoanalysis, yet it remains for all intents and purposes a political project.