



UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT

SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

STUDY MATERIALS

M. A. ENGLISH
(PREVIOUS)
(1997 Admission)

PAPER III

BRITISH LITERATURE SURVEY : FROM THE VICTORIAN AGE TO 1940

**PAPER III BRITISH LITERATURE SURVEY
FROM THE VICTORIAN AGE TO 1940**

Max. Marks : 120

A POETRY

1. Texts for study in detail

Alfred, Lord Tennyson	:	"The Lotos Eaters"
Robert Browning	:	"Andrea Del Sarto"
Matthew Arnold	:	"Dover Beach"
Thomas Hardy	:	"The Darkling Thrush"
G.M.Hopkins	:	1. "The Windhover"
		2. "No Worst, there is none"
W.B. Yeats	:	1. "Easter 1916"
		2. "Among Schoolchildren"
		3. "Byzantium"
T.S. Eliot	:	"The Love-Song of Alfred "Little Gidding"
W.H. Auden	:	"The Shield of Achilles"

2. Texts for General Study

Robert Browning	:	"Porphyria's Lover"
Arnold	:	"The Scholar-Gypsy"
G.M.Hopkins	:	"Felix Randal"
W.B. Yeats	:	"Lapis Lazuli"
Wilfred Owen	:	"Futility"
T.S.Eliot	:	"The Waste Land"
John Beteman	:	"Green Away"
W.H.Auden	:	"In Memory of W.B.Yeats"
Louis Mac-Neice	:	"The Sunlight on the Guardian"
Stephen Spender	:	"The Express"

B.DRAMA

1. Texts for Study in Detail

T.S. Eliot	:	Murder in The Cathedral
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2. Texts for General Study

G.B.Shaw	:	St.Joan
J.M.Synge	:	Riders to the Sea
Sean O'Casey	:	Juno and the Paycock
Cristopher Fry	:	The Lady is not for Burning

C.PROSE AND FICTION

1. Texts for Study in detail

Virginia Woolf	:	Modern Fiction
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2. Texts for General Study

Matthew Arnold	:	Preface to 1853 poems
Emily Bronte	:	Wuthering Heights
Charles Dickens	:	Hard Times
George Eliot	:	The Mill one the Floss
Thomas Hardy	:	Mazor of Casterbridge
Joseph Conrad	:	Heart of Darkness
James Joyce	:	A portrait of the Artist as a Young Man
D.H.Lawrence	:	Sons and Lovers
Virginia Woolf	:	To the Lighthouse

Break up: 4 Annotations + 3 Essays + 3sh. notes + 10 obj.
(8 x 4 + 20 x 3 + 6 x 3 + 10 = 120)

SECTION A - POETRY

ANDREA DEL SARTO

ROBERT BROWNING

Browning selects his subject from all ages of history and from various phases of human action, character and passion. Like many of his works, 'Andrea Del Sarto' reveals his interest in Italian Renaissance and art. The poem was written in reply to a friend's request for a photograph of Andrea del Sarto's self-portrait in the Pitti Palace, Florence and is based on the account of the painter's life as given by Vasari in his 'Lives of the Painters'.

Andrea del Sarto (called the 'faultless painter') a Florentine born in 1486 was known for his technical master. He married Lucrezia del Fede, whom he loved all his life and for whom he sacrificed everything, but who proved to be his undoing. He also used her as a model for his Madonnas and other paintings. He was invited by Francis I to the French Court and there painted some of his best pictures. Although he was successful and in royal favour, his worldly wife tempted him to return to Florence, where he built a house for himself and his wife out of the money given to him by the King to purchase pictures. Because of his weakness of will and his excessive love for his wife, Andrea submitted himself to every whim of his wife, knowing fully well that she was indifferent to his art and was even unfaithful to him. Andrea died of plague in 1530, deserted by his wife and disappointed at his failure as an artist.

Browning's poem is in the form of a speech by Andrea addressed to his wife Lucrezia. He is an aging and disappointed man, looking out over Florence from his studio. It is an autumn evening, which is in tune with Andrea's mood of weariness and sterility. We break in upon the last words of a quarrel for money and Andrea's pathetic request to her to bear with him for once. As the poem

proceeds, Andrea meditates on his life, on his art, on his love for her and on her treatment of him.

Lines 1-20

Andrea is apologetic and implores his wife not to quarrel any more. He assures her that he is willing to paint a picture for her 'friend's friend' the next day and that he will abide by the subject, time and even the price chosen by that friend, all that he wants is to sit by the window, holding her hand in his ('as married people use') and to look towards Fiesole (a small town on a hill top near Florence), quietly for just an hour. If she gives him this privilege, he might get the enthusiasm and joy to do the painting which would fetch her the money she needs.

The setting is carefully chosen. The tone is subdued and autumn evening reflects the mood of the aged and defeated Andrea. His excessive love for his beautiful young wife, who cares only for money and his readiness to degrade his art for her sake are hinted at.

Lines 21-34

Andrea is enthralled by the perfect physical beauty of Lucrezia and luxuriates over it. As Andrea holds the soft hand of his wife, he imagines he is embracing her. ('Your soft hand is a woman of itself'). He calls her 'serpentine beauty, rounds on rounds', because serpents with their tails in their mouths (i.e. circular in form) are symbols of perfection. (The irony that she is deceitful like a serpent, who has entwined herself round him is also implicit). He calls her 'My face, my moon, my everybody's moon'. Though she belongs to him, he is aware that he has no exclusive right over her. Everyone looks at the moon and loves it. The moon in turn looks on every one, but loves no one in particular. Though Lucrezia is loved by many, she is incapable of genuine love for anyone in particular, least of all for her husband.

Lines 35-52

These lines blend the autumnal twilight with the twilight of

the painter's hope and aspirations. Lucrezia's pride in him has disappeared and everything about him is toned down like the grey that suffuses nature outside. The autumn landscape is gloomy, quiet and there is a sense of foreboding. Days become shorter and Andrea realises that there is autumn in everything. The toiling bell, the chapel's tower, the convent hall, the solitary monk and the growing darkness - all these suggest the quite, sombre evening atmosphere, which Andrea finds within himself too, 'a twilight piece' as he calls it. He seems his entire life and works a failure, which now await final dissolution. He, however, attributes his failure to God. 'Love, we are in God's hand' and that our freedom of action is only an illusion, he tells Lucrezia, who is not even listening to him.

Lines 53-87

Andrea tells Lucrezia how technically perfect his paintings are and how easily he can draw them. He draws the attention of the unwilling Lucrezia to some of his paintings and talks of his extraordinary skill. He can very easily accomplish what others can only dream of. In spite of hard work they can never reach anywhere near him. He mildly reproaches her that she has no idea the trouble the other artists take to paint the trifle which he did so easily and which she spoiled so carelessly by allowing her flowing dress to take away a part of the wet paint. But then, he lacks the fire and spirit of great artists. "Less is more" he sadly muses. Achievements, which fall short of completion, because their aim is high, is greater than achievements which have attained completion by aiming low. The productions of other artists may be inferior to his in technical mastery, but theirs are nobler because of their high ideals and aspirations, even if they fail to achieve them. They are superior because they are divinely inspired and possess the creative imagination. 'My works are nearer heaven, but I sit here' he laments.

Lines 88-103

Andrea continues to make a distinction between other art-

ists and himself. While others are easily excited, he is unmoved as the mountain itself. His paintings, though faultless, are not inspiring and he attributes his failure to his love for Lucrezia.

The essence of Browning's philosophy is contained in the lines:

'Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for?'

The very idea of Heaven implies unattainable perfection. One's failure while trying to achieve the impossible is nobler than the success or attainment of limited aims. Andrea's tragedy, as he himself realises, is the tragedy of powers unstretched to the uttermost. He knows what to achieve and how to achieve it. But he does not have the will, the drive, to pursue it. He is aware of his moral and spiritual inadequacy. His soul is wholly devoted to Lucrezia and hence his failure as an artist.

Lines 104 - 131

Andrea points to a painting by Rafael and talks of the high ideals which inspired him to paint it, though it may have some physical defects here and there, the soul or the spirit is unerringly captured. But all the play, the insight and the stretch, which characterises Rafael's paintings are out of him. (Rafael is called 'Urbinate', as he was born at Urbino and was one of the greatest artists. He was a contemporary of Andrea.) Andrea alternately blames Lucrezia and himself for his inability to rise to the level of Rafael or Michelangelo. Had she possessed the beauty of the mind, along with her physical beauty he could have done works of lasting value. Andrea compares himself to a bird and Lucrezia to the fowler (the bird-catcher). Like a bird; he was caught and enslaved through deceit and deception. Andrea, however, checks himself and blames himself and God for what happened. Andrea's mood, we find, varies from mild reproach to Lucrezia to self pity.

Lines 132 - 144

He sees no reason to blame his wife for his failure. Once

again, he becomes a fatalist and blames God. Moreover, inspiration should come from within and not from outside. The world is peopled by half-men; those who have either the will power or those who combines in himself both the will to do great things and the talents of achieve them. He feels that if God's judgement is just, he stands to gain as he has been underrated and despised here on earth. 'All is as God overrules' says he, resigning to his fate.

Lines 145 - 165

Andrea, so full of self-pity, now talks of his miserable condition, the dishonesty he showed to the King of France makes him ashamed of himself. This leads him to think of the 'kingly days' he had spent in Fontainebleau in the midst of the admiring King and his courtiers and stimulated by the greater reward awaiting him in Florence (i.e. Lucrezia). Andrea here alludes to the misuse of the king's money. Instead of buying art treasures, he built a house in Florence with that money, for Lucrezia and himself to live in.

Lines 166 - 182

Andrea responded to the urgent summons of Lucrezia and returned to Florence, thereby destroying all his chances to fame and glory. He however does not regret his action because he is like a weak-eyed bat, which cannot endure the sunlight. He followed his instincts and returned home to be with Lucrezia, whom he considers adequate compensation and the triumph of his life. He consoles himself by thinking that he is in a way luckier than Rafael in having Lucrezia both as his wife and as his model.

Lines 183 - 207

Andrea reminds Lucrezia that even Michelangelo once praised him. He (ie Michaelangelo) told Rafael about Andrea thus "There is a little man in Florence, who, if he were employed upon such great works as have been given to you, would make you sweat". In a sudden impulse, Andrea tries to correct the arm in Farael's portrait; but soon gives it up as he realises that its soul is beyond him to draw. He, nevertheless, is content to be with Lucrezia

and calls the hour with her well spent. ('This hour has been an hour').

Lines 208 - 243

Darkness has descended and Andrea asks Lucrezia to come into their 'melancholy little house' built with the tainted money of the King. It is indeed an instance of tragic irony, that just when Andrea pours out his soul and implores her to love him ('Let us but love each other'), she hears the whistle of her "cousin" and prepares to go. The series of questions asked in quick succession show his heart-rending pathos. He once again promises her that he would work hard the next day to pay for the gambling debts of her lover.

Lines 244 - 267

Andrea has no illusions and is resigned to his lot. He is troubled by the ingratitude he showed to king Francis and his negligence of his parents. But he tries to justify his action and finds excuses. Lucrezia's love is all that he yearns for not only in this world, but even in the next world. The cousin's whistle is heard again and Andrea ends his reflection with the significant words 'Go, my Love. The pathetic and disconsolate husband who has sacrificed everything - his youth, his ambition, his fame and glory - for his wife and who continues to dote on her, gives her leave to go and meet her lover. The words 'Go, my love' ('a tragedy in three words') are charged with the full meaning of what has gone before, and they sum up 'the kingdom of Hell' that Andrea experiences.

GENERAL COMMENTARY

The poem is a penetrating psychological study of a man who has scarified everything for the sake of his wife; but gets nothing but contempt and infidelity from her. Browning adopts the stream of consciousness technique, as a result of which we directly confront the very soul and heart of Andrea as he sadly mediates over his past and present. To begin with, the atmosphere and tone are

in perfect tune with Andrea's physical and emotional condition. It is an autumnal evening and "a common grayness silvers everything". It is the twilight of the painter's life and the end of all his hopes and aspirations. The landscape is gloomy, quiet and desolate. As Andrea broods over his love for his beautiful wife, his triumph as a craftsman and his failure as an artist, the golden year he had spent in France, the dishonesty he had practised and the neglect he had shown to his partners, it gets darker and darker. 'The ringing of the bell, the length of the convent wall, which seems to hold the trees together, the departure of the last monk and the darkness that envelops - all these reinforce Andrea's sense of desolation and weariness. The whole nature, including himself, appears 'a twilight piece' to him as he himself says, "autumn grows, autumn in everything".

What distinguishes Andrea from many other characters is his insight into himself. He is fully aware of himself. He knows the unfaithful nature of his wife and her indifference to him. He calls himself a bird trapped by the "Fowler's pipe" How he wished that "with the same perfect brow, and perfect eyes, and more than perfect mouth," she had brought a mind-a mind which could understand him and inspire him. He knows that she is not interested in his art and that she is not even listening to him ("what he? Why, who but Michael Angelo?").

But then such is his nature that he yearns for her love not only in this world but also the world hereafter! He has no illusion about himself. He knows his own weaknesses much better than anyone else. His lack of drive, creative imagination and high ideals make him call himself a "half man". This self-knowledge makes his condition terrible, for he cannot find solace in any self-deception or illusion.

The poem, it is true lacks animation, liveliness and energy. As the speaker's thoughts wander, it appears to have no logical progression either. But, beneath the seeming aimlessness and stillness, a recurrent restlessness and emotional movement can be

discerned. "Andrea brooding over the sterility of his life and the nullity of his prospects, clutches at a straw; he assumes confidence, attributes blame or otherwise seeks peace in finding a reason, however untenable, or hope however frail. Only to have each confronting thought crumble as he grasp it. Only the disconsolate resignation born of weariness remains". He tries to bolster up his sagging ego by reference to the technical mastery, his 'kingly days' in France and by quoting Michelangelo's words about him. At times he blames God for his failure (Love, we are in God's hand.... So free we seem, so fettered fast we are!) and at other times mildly reproaches Lucrezia for recalling him from France, for showing no interest and encouragement to his works. But then, there are also moments when he realises that he himself is at fault. He calls himself the "weak-eyed bat no sun should tempt". His mood varies from condemnation of others to self pity, there are occasions when Andrea emerges out of his lethargy and placidity only to sink back with a deeper sense of gloom. His attempt to correct the painting of Rafael, for instance, is followed by his sad reflection of its futility. (Ay, but the soul! He's Rafeal, rub it out!)

The poem also gives expression to Browning's philosophy of life, the core of which is "Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp/Or what's a heaven for". Andrea's tragedy, as he himself tells us, is his inability to stretch his powers to the utter most. He is only a low-pulsed forthright craftsman', while 'there burns a truer light of God' in Rafael or Angelo.

The last words of Andrea 'Go, my love', as Lucrezia leaves him to keep a rendezvous with her lover, are charged with the conflicting passions of the disappointed man. The verb 'go', the possessive pronoun 'my' and the noun 'Love' together express the awful and bitter burden that Andrea carries, as he resignedly watches her leaving him.

Such is the skill of Browning in his dramatic monologues, that even though only the main character speaks and reveals his soul, the responses of the silent listener are also vividly revealed. In this poem Lucrezia, though she never speaks, emerges fully

drawn in the round. We find her smearing the still wet canvas with her robes afloat; she forgets or cares not, what Angelo has said of her husband's talents. She has no love for Andrea and is unfaithful to him. She smiles only for money and in the end hastens to join her lover when the whistle is heard. She is a woman confident of her power over men. She is contemptuous of her husband and condescends to sit by his side for a while just for the sake of money. Andrea, who is infatuated by her physical beauty, has become her willing slave. She has no interest in his art either. She is light hearted, quarrelsome and lacks nobility of mind. (You turn your face, but does it bring your heart? Andrea himself asks her). In fact, she has all the attributes of a female devil and Andrea inadvertently compares her to a serpent and a fowler. Like Andrea's paintings, she too is perfect in form. But like his own art, she also lacks soul. Andrea's tragedy is his inability to escape from her physical charm, ('let smiles bye me! have you more to spend?' He asks.) Such is the fatal attraction of Lucrezia that Andrea is not prepared to lose her, even in the new world, regardless of consequences.

REFERENCE:

1. Ian Jack: Browning's Major Poetry
2. G.D. Chesterton: Robert Browning
3. Valerie L. Barnish: Browning's Poetry
4. Kenmare: An Area of Darkness
5. Duffian: Amphibian
6. Cohen J: Browning
7. Essays by F.L. Lucas, Park Honan, John Bryson and others

THE SCHOLAR GIPSY

(MATHEW ARNOLD 1822-1888)

BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

Born at Laleham, Middlesex on 24 Dec 1822 - Son of Dr. Thomas Arnold, senior master & headmaster since 1828 of the famous public school at Rugby.

ARNOLD'S FIRST COLLECTIONS OF POEMS

The strayed reveller and other poems (1849)

Empedocles on Etna and other poems (1852)

His last volume of poems New poems (1867)

Arnold is also famous for his literary and sociological criticism. Noted works: Essays in criticism (First series 1865, second series 1888). Culture and Anarchy (1869).

Died on 15th April 1888 in Liverpool

"The scholar Gipsy" was published in poems (1853)

For textual notes refer:

Thomas C.T. Ed. Chaucer to Housman, Vol. II, B.I. Publications, 1990. pp 558-565

Essay: 750 - 100 words - Approx. 4 pages)

Comment on the quest motive in "The scholar Gipsy" or comment on the various themes in the "Scholar Gipsy"

Or

Examine the view that the poem is really about the poet and his generation.

Ans: Mathew Arnold was always disturbed by the material mindedness of the Victorians. He pleaded for a return to Hellenism. Arnold yearned for the cultural and aesthetic excellence of that period, 'The scholar Gipsy' to a certain extent is a criticism of the state of lethargy and cultural decadence of the Victorians.

Arnold employs many of the pastoral conventions in "The

Scholar Gypsy" The opening stanza is in the form of an address by a shepherd to his friend. This shepherd friend tends the sheep by day and joins the protagonist at night in his search for the Gypsy Scholar. The poet may be offering an indirect comment on the way of life of the Victorians in general. There is, in all likelihood, an autobiographical strain too, for the poet's shepherd-friend, his own friend, Arthur High Clough, who prematurely died, is touched upon. This prompts the poet to pursue the theme of life, death and permanence. The quest motive is an offshoot of it. Arnold, in keeping with his classical temperament and love of the past, chooses a legend linked to the experiences of a seventeenth century Oxford Scholar as delineated by Joseph Glanvill in his book, 'The Vanity of Dogmatizing' (1661), for developing his quest theme. The seventeenth century Oxford student dispirited by the condition of the society and culture at that time, left the university to join a group of gypsies to discover the secret of their lore. The situation prevailing in the Victorian England is similar to that. The poet launches on a quest for the spirit of the seventeenth century Oxford scholar, which he believes could still be met in the countryside around Oxford. The quality that moves Arnold is the scholar's single minded devotion to his noble aim. This trait is totally absent in the Victorian. Hence the symbol of the seventeenth Century Oxford Scholar provides an opportunity for the poet to draw a comparison between the 'scholar gypsy' and the Victorian people at large. Glanvill provided the cue for this poem. But his love for Oxford, the Cumnor countryside, and his own youth gave 'The scholar gypsy' its real life. In this sense also it becomes a return to the past and search for the immortal values; the mysterious sources of elemental life. Arnold's letter to his brother, Tom proves this point.

The poet quite imaginatively makes the Scholar Gypsy "the wandering mesmerist". He has a set purpose in doing so "By wandering, the Scholar Gypsy cannot merely seek the spark from heaven but he can also pass before our eyes the natural scenes with which he is associated" (A Dwight Culler, Imaginative Rea-

son, The Poetry of Mathew Arnold, 182).

Arnold criticises the material ways the Victorian by subtly suggesting that the Scholar Gypsy is one with the Cumnor hill and countryside, a veritable spirit like Lucy Gray. Only pure simple country folk can see him that too in their most idle and unprofitable moments when boys when they are scaling rocks in the wheat fields, maidens when they are dancing about the elms, reapers when they have left their reaping to bathe in the abandoned lushes. Twilight and the night fall are the best times to see him, and the best places are those most secret and retired. Often he may be found close to water, that 'mediator between the inanimate and man', for Oxford riders coming home at even see him at the ferry, but then "they land about thou art seen no more!" (185)

The poet stresses the need to be one with the 'Scholar-Gypsy'. In fact, seeing the Scholar Gypsy and being the Scholar Gypsy are a process imperfectly distinguished. Arnold seems to suggest that the quest for the scholar gypsy, the search for heavenly light and primordial Wisdom, should take place both within and outside. In the poem there is a dual quest: the poet's quest for the Scholar - Gypsy, and the Scholar-Gypsy's quest to learn the secret of the gypsy's art. The gypsy's art denotes any kind of divine or natural lore which can be gained not from book but can be acquired intuitively from the book of nature. In seeking the Scholar-Gypsy, he seeks himself as poet, and he finds himself as poet in the course of writing his poem. It is by envisioning the Scholar-Gypsy, as engaged upon an unending quest, that the poet brings his quest to a successful, if temporary conclusion.

The first 130 lines of the poem is a reverie, by which alone the poet/protagonist/every man kindled with that rare heavenly light could reach after and perhaps reach at the mysterious sources of immortal knowledge. It is the poetic way to persuade and prevail upon the people to shun this "sick, hurry and divided" world. The Scholar Gypsy waits "for the spark from heaven! And we.... only see "New beginnings, disappointments new"..... The poet exhorts

the Scholar - Gipsy to "fly our paths, our feverish contact fly!". In the later half of the poem (last 120 lines) it becomes a studied criticism on the wanton ways of "Victorian materialistic life. Arnold makes it explicit by telling the Scholar-Gipsy, "Then fly our greetings, fly our speech and smiles!"

The search for light and knowledge, the desire to merge with the Cumnor hills, the vision of the poet, its repudiation, final assertion and the criticism of life are all parts of a larger theme; the quest for excellence and immortality.

Short Questions

(length 3/4 to 1 page, 150 to 250 words)

1. Write a note on the structure of the poem. "The Scholar-Gipsy".

The first part of the poem is modelled upon the Romantic dream-vision. It is very similar to the "conversation poems" of Coleridge and the great Odes of Keats, especially "the Ode to a Nightingale". In this part, Arnold recreates a monumental reality: the vision of the scholar gipsy; the immortal spirit and ever and everlasting secret, but in imagination. The poet reads the oft-read tale again. But the vision is fled after a while and the poet cries, "But what I dream" But Arnold goes on to complete the dialectic of his complicated situation.

A closer look reveals five sections. The first three stanzas set up the natural scene. In the next ten stanzas the poet presents the imaginative vision of the scholar - gipsy. The following single stanza generates the repudiation. In the succeeding nine stanzas the essential validity of the vision is established. Here he adopts a method of contrast based on the senses' understanding. The final two stanzas with the "end - symbol" of the Tyrian - trader redepicts the vision with imaginative reason. From the angle of the progression of thought. "It is the product, first of the heart and imagination, then of the senses and understanding, and finally of the imaginative reason" (185).

2. The source of the poem, The Scholar-Gipsy.

The most important source is Joseph Glanvill's "The Vanity

of Dogmatizing" (1661). It is the story of a 17th century Oxford scholar disgusted with the decadent state of society and culture at the time. He left the university and joined a band of Gypsies to get at the secret of their lore. The Gypsies for their values of life and the life style itself depended solely on nature, intuition, and elemental simplicity. The scholar Gipsy with single minded devotion pursued the search for the secret of the gypsies' lore. At one level it is a search for finding one's own true self. At another level, it is a search for values and life forces in the past. Arnold might have used his own youth and experience in Oxford: Oxford shire and the Cumnor Hills as source for "the life in nature", especially in the first part of the poem the reverie the mod of the first part of the poem may be built on the "Conversation poems" of Coleridge. Wordsworth's, Lucy Gray and Keats' "Odes" particularly, the Ode to a Nightingale". For the second part of the poem, from line 131 onwards, the source is obviously his own harsh experience of the crass material Victorian world. The eagerness to affect a contrast between the golden past and decadent present too works as a source for the avowed Hellenist, Matthew Arnold.

3. The setting of the poem and pastoral conventions

The setting of the poem is the country side near Oxford. The under graduate days that Arnold spent at Oxfordshire, Berkshire and the Cumnor range in the company of his late bosom friend, Arthur Hugh Clough and his brother Tom are recaptured. It is clear that the background of the poem "was meant to fix remembrance of those delightful wanderings in the Cumnor Hills. "In keeping with 'unpolluted' surroundings of Oxford as background. the poet introduces the conventions of the pastoral genre. The poet assumes the role of a shepherd and the opening stanza is addressed to a co-shepherd, probably his own late friend, who tends the sheep during the day and joins the poet in his search for the scholar Gipsy. In the true pastoral vein the poet tells "No longer leave thy wistful flock unfit, Nor let they bawling fellows rack their throats". But he wants his friend to join him in his quest when "Only the

white sheep are sometimes seen/cross and recross the strips of moon - blanch green".

He tells, them, "come shepherd, and again begin the quest!"

The late reapers beating folded flocks from upland afar the live murmur of a summer's day, are reverberated in full. The creepers, flowers, August sun and the Oxford towers set the nature background where alone the spirit of the Scholar-Gipsy could survive and roam and the poet could carry on his search.

4. Comment on the end of the poem

The later half of the poem, as a whole is devoted to "a felt criticism" of the decadent, lethargic ways of living of the Victorians. The scholar Gipsy offers an in built contrast to this attitude and mode of living, therefore the poet highlights the need for the scholar Gipsy to flee from this feverish world of "sick hurry and divided aims". The poet exhorts the Scholar - Gipsy to "fly our greetings, fly our speech and smiles". In the last two stanzas the poet offers a rational explanation for the flight of the Scholar - Gipsy with concrete historical instances. The phoenicians from Tyre were the chief traders in the Mediterranean area from 900 BC to 700 BC. They were slowly replaced by the progressive Greeks. The Tyrian traders were forced to flee Iberia by the most aggressive Greeks. Like that the Scholar also fled to the Gypsies to learn the secret of their lore and the mysteries of life, for the "Victorian world was too much for him". The loss of the Mediterranean area proved to be a blessing in disguise for the Tyrian trader for he could find some calm in the midst of the dark Gypsies of the Iberian Peninsula ('Spain and Portugal). The same path is pursued by the Scholar - Gipsy and the poet protagonist too.

Probable passages for Annotation

1. Go, for they call you.....
.....their threats' (ll 1-5)
2. And near me on
.....brain (ll 30 -34)

3. His mates.....
.....skill (ll 45 - 50)
4. The black bird.....
.....heaven to fall (ll 116 - 120)
5. But thou possessest.....
.....have not (ll 157 - 160)
6. And then we suffer.....
.....wretched days (ll 182 - 186)
7. Still fly, plunge deeper.....
.....Solitude
.....shade (ll 207 - 212)
8. Then fly our greetings, fly.....
.....trader (ll 231 - 232)

Objective type Questions

1. The main source of the poem, "The Scholar Gipsy" is.....(Ans. (b))
 - a. "The Vanity of Human wishes"
 - b. "The Vanity of Dogmatizing"
 - c. "The Vanity Fair"
2. Another famous elegy composed by Mathew Arnold (Ans. (c))
 - a. "Adonais". b. "Lycidas". c. "Thyrsis"
3. The Scholar Gipsy was first published in (Ans. (a))
 - a. "Poems" (1853). b. "New Poems" (1867). c. "The strayed Reveller and other Poems" (1849).

"DOVER BEACH"

MATTHEW ARNOLD

"Dover Beach" is probably one of the best short poems of Arnold, composed in all likelihood in 1851, immediately after his marriage on 10th June 1851. When he spent a few days there.

Records show that he also spent a night there in October of the same year while returning from Europe. The poem was pub-

lished in "New poems" (1867).

(For textual Notes please refer "Chaucer to Houseman", ed by C.T.Thomas. pp. 566-572)

Essay (length. Approx. 4 pages. 750 or 1000

Critically evaluate the development of thought 'in Dover Beach'.

How does the poet succeed in merging two major themes love and melancholy in "Dover Beach"?

Or

Comment on the relevance of "Dover Beach" to modern man?

Ans. In "Dover Beach" Arnold presents the dilemma of modern man - loss of traditional faith in religious dogma and the failure of the scientific, industrialised society to live up to the belief of man humanity's steady progress. The mood of the protagonist becomes naturally melancholic, and the tone inevitably elegiac. Arnold, quite adept in elegiac vein, with ease transfers it to the landscape too. A perfect mood is evoked. Disturbing thoughts steeped in doubts are generated. The loss of Christian faith, cracks in man's myth of progress, chaos of scientific discoveries all become the poet's pet concerns. He pithily but poignantly expresses the plight of modern man in "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse"

"Wandering between two worlds, one dead.

The other powerless to be born"

The only means to get over this melancholy is love. Arnold paints the picture of melancholy quite deftly in "Dover Beach" and interfaces it with the silver lining of love.

In the opening stanza the poet looks at the French coast across the narrow straits of Dover from Dover. The scene is couched in sinister calm. The sea is calm, the tide its full, the moon lies fair upon the straits. There is no sign of man except a single light which gleams for a moment and then is gone, and the great, reassuring cliffs of England stand, glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay. But the poet, the disturbed purveyor, descends and finds that the sea is not calm there is a "long line of spray", the

moon does not lie fair up on the straits, it "blanches" the land with a ghostly pallor, and the bay is not quiet for if you listen, You hear.

.....the grating roar

.....note of sadness in (ll 9 -14)

The poet moves the reader from the illusion of natural beauty to the tragic fact of human experience. In the second part of the poem more or less the same pattern is repeated, but this time he makes use of human history, not of the natural scene. The sea seems to murmur eternally of sadness, but it means differently to different people. To Sophocles in the classical age it spoke in humanitive sense off the turbid ebb and flow of a purely human misery. Arnold hears its sorrow over the waning of the Christian faith, in a religious sense. Sea is used as a symbol indicating the ebb and flow of faith. "For in a lovely, feminine, protective image of the Sea round earth's shore/Lay the folds of a bright girdle furl'd, following the ancient cosmology of ocean stream. But now following the new cosmology of an open, exposed, precarious universe, it retreats to the breath/of the night - wind down the vast edges dear/And shingles of the world" (40).

The 'naked shingles of the world' suggest "the darkling plain". In the last section the sea is far away from, the humanity. In fact, the sea has retreated from the world and left us "inland far" but unable as in Wordsworth's poem.

to see the children sport up on the shore.

And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Even the verse structure, four parts of unequal length, is controlled by the ebb and flow of the tide. It acts as a constant metaphor indicating the ebb and flow of thought; hope and despair. The irregular rhyme scheme and unequal distribution of stress also suggest the chaotic, confused conditions of the modern man.

The last stanza of the poem is the keynote of the Arnoldian testament. The poet implores his beloved to be true to one another. (It can be extend to every man). "The world which seems/to

lie before us like a land of dreams/ So various beautiful, so new has really neither joy nor lone nor light: The poet is really pained. Looking around the speaker finds that everything is shrouded in uncertainty. There is no peace, no help is rendered to alleviate misery. The human condition is painfully but rightly under scored by the poet in. "We are here as on a darkling plain/Swept with confused alarms of struggle and fright/where ignorant armies, clash by night. The image of ignorant armies drawn from Thuey dide's famous account of night - battle of Epipolae, puts the intellectual confusion of the modern age in right perspective. Arnold in his vision of the tragic and alienated condition of man finds a ray of hope in man's capacity to love one another.

Short Questions (Length 3/4 to 1 page. 150 - 250 words)

1. The melancholic atmosphere/The elegiac vein of "Dover Beach".

Matthew Arnold's patent poetic mood is melanchilic and elegiac. The loosening hold of Christianity, the failure of science to deliver the goods as expected by steadily maintaining the progress of man. And the general state of confusion make the poet deeply sad. This sadness is well reflected in "Dover Beach" both in its thought and back ground. The landscape to begin with is seemingly positive- "The tide is full, the moon lies fair". Across the straights of Dover there is just a glimmer of light indicating the presence of man. The poet moves from sight of sound to suggest and still sad music of humanity echoed in the grating roar of pebbles which the waves draw back and fling. The poet hears the sad music of the sea. He feels, the crumbling of Christian faith, and failure of science of modern man in filling up that vacuum. The result is confusion, decadence. Sophocles heard in the waves of the Aegean seats sadness over the loss of humanism. The proceeding. Sea of faith makes Arnold quite sad and melancholic. As a last result he insists, "Ah, love, let us be true/To one another.... for we are on a darkling plain where ignorant armies clash by night".

Comment on the images of sight and sound and in "Dover

Beach."

The thought development in the poem itself is closely related to the images of sight and sound in it. It is to be noted that these images are even carefully contrasted and ultimately coalesced in order to produce the intended effect.

In the first stanza it is predominantly sight images; the tide is full, the moon lies fair, the light gleams, the cliffs.... stand. But even there Arnold employs sound images, the "calm" sea, the tranquil bay. In lines 9 and 10 he contrasts "the moon - blanched land" with the "the grating roar of pebbles" (He partly evokes the effect by the very sounds here... grating, roar). The "eternal sadness" is both seen and felt in the constant movement of the waves, which Begin, and cease and then again begin.

With tremulous cadence slow.

Sophocles heard this long ago the poet hears it now, both saw and heard "the turbid ebb and flow of human misery". The tide used as the controlling metaphor, itself is both visual and auditory.

See the contrast

The sea of faith

....world (11-21-28)

In the last three lines, And we are.....

.....Clash by night the images of sight and sound are merged.

underlining the confused state of modern man. "Darkling Plain" almost blinds one's sight and one's peace is "grated" by the clash of "ignorant armies"

Objective Questions

1. The coast of Dover has several chalky cliffs.... is one among them

a, Spencer cliff. (b) Milton Cliff (c) Shakespeare Cliff. Ans (c)

2, The great Greek dramatist referred to by Arnold in "Dover Beach" to link past and present

(a) Euripides (b) Sophecles (c) Aristophanes. Ans: (b)

3. For ignorant armies 'Arnold's Source is.....

a) Ovid (b) Herodotus (c) Thucydides. Ans: (c)

For further reading

Culler, A Dwight. Imaginative reason.

The poetry of Mathew Arnold. Yale Univ. 1966

(For both "the Scholar Gipsy" and Dover Beach)

Roper, Alan Arnold's poetic landscape. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ Press, 1969.

Drew, P. "Mathew Arnold and the passage of Time". A study of "The Scholar Gipsy and "Thyrsis" The Major Victorian Poets: Reconsiderations. Deds. I Armstrong. London. 1969.

GERALD MANLEY HOPKINS

(1844 - 1889)

A. INTRODUCTION

Hopkins is victorian by birth, but in his poetic sensibility and technique he is essentially a modern.

Born in stratford, Essex 28 July 1844, Hopkins was educated at Highgate school; and Balliol college, Oxford. He was particularly interested in classics . The Oxford Movement affected him. He joined the roman catholic Church in 1966. In Mar 1866 he took three vital decision to become a priest, to become a Jesuit and to burn his poems. He worked A The Chair Of Greek at University College, Dublin from 1884 till his death in 1889.

Right from his young age he proved his mettle as a poet. But from his conversion in 1866, he gave up poetry. However he came back to poetry by writing the celebrated " wreck of the Dentscland" (Winter 1875-76) Probably he felt that his poetic talent must be used to glorify God. However, his poems came to light only when Robert Bridges published them under the title, Poems of Gerald Hopkins, now first published with notes in 1918 Quickly these poems were noted for their technical virtuosity and innovative qualities. His vocabulary, diction and rhythm are specially praise worthy. They have the unmistakable stamp of originality and boldness. Hopkins in the latter part of his career was probably influenced by Duns Scotus's (Scottish Franciscan philosopher) concept of thinness' (haecceitas) an the idea of whatness' (quidditas) stressed by Thomas Aquinas Hopkins in his poems tries to comprehend the inward pattern of an object. He termed in 'inscap' perhaps he brought about great changes by making the language very near to the spoken world. Also he employed the traditional Anglo-Saxon Rhythm; sprung rhythm. In "The wreck of the Dentschland' he used sprung rhythm from the first time. In

sprung Rhythm too as in conventional verse has feet. Every foot has at least one strongly stressed syllable. Hopkins himself explains it as follows. (But it consists) "On scanning by accents or stress alone, Without any account of the number of the number of syllables, so that a foot may be on strong syllable or it may be many light and one strong' (Letter to R.W.Dixon). In another letter to Robert Bridges Hopkins makes it clear that 'sprung rhythm' is perhaps that must natural, rhetoric and emphatic of all possible rhythms. Along with the stressed syllable oriented scanning, the poet also makes use of many other musical devices compound adjectives, end rhyme, half rhyme, word play, assonance, alliteration etc.

Hopkins' poetic career shows three distinct periods; 1) The early romantic period. 2) the middle period beginning with "The Wreck..." highly experimental. 3) The period of the sonnets of desolation; intense in emotion but quite severe and austere in language.

"THE WINDHOVER"

A. INTRODUCTION

Written at St. Beuno's May 1877. It is a well-wrought Sonnet. Hopkins considers it as his best poem. The Windhover (Kestrel) is the symbol of Christ's beauty and fierceness. The perfection of bird's flight is synonymous with the perfection and mastery of Christ. The poet is thrilled by this rare sight. Probably, every witness will be excited for there is the manifestation of 'terrible beauty' in the birds' breath-taking flight and also in its flawless act of catching the prey. Part of the meaning is conveyed through its rhythm and its images of light and movement. This is a sonnet which reveals "god's grandeur". Hopkins uses Sprung rhythm to great advantage in this sonnet.

B. Glossary

windhover: a small hawk: Kestrel found in Europe hover hang

in the air

"To Christ our Lord - Dedication

Incidentally, it is the only poem dedicated to Christ by Hopkins. The opening lines generate a rare vision and set the tone. A rich emphatic vein is struck.

Lines:

1. I Caught: Like the falconer catching the falcon or I caught sight of caught brings about the abruptness surprise and happy triumph of the moving sight.

Minion : darling; creature

2. Dauphin: heir to the throne (French)

dapple dawn-drawn Falcon: - Falcon seen in the background of the different colours of the dawn. It may suggest the kinship between the dappled dawn and the falcon. The falcon is motivated in to action by the multi-coloured sky (air) of the enthusiasm. steadies the air (world) underneath him.

4. Rung upon, the a term related to horse training, to ring up on the rein = to make a horse run round a circle with a long rein.

In falconry 'ring' suggest spiritual upward movement in the air. Wimpling: rippling; the bird in its ecstasy seemed to hang up on its rippling wing.

5-6 As the heel of a skate making a perfect sweep round a bow shaped curve. The Kestrel performed a swing.

6-7 rebuffed - Pushed back

The hurl and gliding of the Kestrel pushed back the air (Christ overcame all opposing forces. His disciples / knights too smothered all enmity forces created a calm and steadiness).

in hiding a) The poet is in hiding watching the bird.

b) The poet as a priest keeps himself away from the natural world of the Kestrel.

c) Hopkins says that hiding refers to the hidden life of Christ. "set your affections... not in things on the earth, for ye are dead, for your life is hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3)

8. Stirred for a bird: The poet's heart yearned for a bird (per-

haps the poet's heart yearned for Christ's Second Coming) the achieve....thing. The poet astonishment at the bird's masterly performance.

9. Brute beauty... The perfect merging of beauty and valor in the bird (Windhover) prompts the poet to deem the bird as a symbol of Christ.

10. Buckle: A highly debated word. Still in the context it may mean.

a) to bring (fasten) together

b) to engage the enemy

c) To lapsing under pressure

AND is a typographical device used to suggest the poet's shift from the bird to Christ.

The Conjunction 'AND' may also suggest the equal importance that the poet attaches to the bird & Christ.

Thee: Christ.

O my chevalier. As in the manner of a vassal addressing his huge lord, the poet addresses Christ cheralier - knight.

12. Sillion (archaic word): the ridge between two furrows of a ploughed field.

13. My dear: address to Christ of George Herbert's poem "Love"

13-14 A the blue bleak ember fall they reveal a gash of red-hot gold

C Essay

Write a critical appreciation of "The Windhover"

Or

Do you agree with Hopkins view that "The Windhover" is his best creation?

Or

Write a critique on "The Windhover"

Answer:

In Hopkins' opinion "The Windhover" is his best poem. The theme of the poem underlines the relationship between the bird and Christ, the coalesc-

ing of beauty and valour the need for self purification and merging with god. etc...and the rich imagery, moving rhythm, rare resonant vocabulary make this poem worthy of the poet's high estimate. In essence the poem is an inspiring account of God's majesty and might as reflected in the Windhover, a true disciple of Christ himself.

The octet of the sonnet is a powerful description of the flight of the Kestrel where as the sestet is about the act performed by the bird in all its excellence. The poem can be interpreted at three levels. (1) It can be looked up on as an accurate description of the physical act of the Kestrel (Windhover) 2). The falcon is associated with kinship, authority and power. There fore the bird can be taken as the symbol of Christ, the king of beings (3) The bird can be looked up on as an emblem of every man or more specifically as a true disciple of Christ. Obviously, these three layers overlap certainly this metaphor strain enriches the meaning and relevance of the poem.

Hopkins dramatic opening of the sonnet. I caught.....Morning's minion fully brings home to the reader the distinctive quality of the bird and the excellence of its act. The poet's joy at being witness of the bird's awe-inspirity flight sparked with terrible beauty is tinged with a sense of surprise and triumph. The majesty might and perfection of the windhover's flight riding the air underneath him steady prompts the poet to think of Christ and his disciples (knights) engaged in creating a world of beauty, joy, calm quelling all antagonistic forces. The poet's joy & wonder are fully echoed in the lines, High these how he rung up on the rein of a wimpling wing.

In his ecstasy!

The tracing of the perfect low-bend, its hurl and gliding re-buffing the big wind, instill in him a craving for a bird (reappearance of Christ / or disciple of Christ) The achieve of the mastery of the thing! Is certainly emblematic of Christ. The Windhover's perfect tracing of the circle and the sweep of a flawless nowbend

early persuade the poet to see in the bird, christ and his disciple and the master trainer behind it.

When the Kestrel hurls how down to catch its prey the poet witnesses a rare synchornising of beauty and valour and act. The uncanny precision and bewildering beauty with the kestrel lays hold on its prey make the poet think. Oh air, pride, plume, her Buckle". The Kestrel and its prey become almost one. The conqueror and the conquered become one. Christ and his sheepmerge. The disciples (knights) of christ and the people concur. All faculties are brought together at this point of consummation. The Windhover (christ/disciple) engages his enemy with absolute mastery and majesty. "It is not the refinements of the bird that are significant, it is the inspiration that is realised thought them. (Buckle) if read as an indicative and not, as above as an imperative the meaning of the poem is changed. Completely and tends to become the weary surrender of the poet to the ascetic demands of the priest that many critics believe it to be.....a variant of the imperative rading of Buckle' is that the bird, represents only the "vallour" and pride of brute beauty, which is purposeless and that the poet-priest calls up on these qualities-to the sterner demands of a life of plodding action."sheer Plod makes plough down-sillion shine" (Dennis Ward, p.175)

The poet priest conflict is implied here. The natural leanties and sensuors deligh are not to belittled. But they are to be stressed for they too are manifestations of God. "The mortal beauty of the falcon, the energy and valour and pride will be a billion times told lovelier' when apprehended as the outward and visible sign of the creative force, God, which is under the world's splendour and wonder"(Dennis Ward, p. 177)

Thee'. 'O my chevalier! will in a way suggest a multiple mode of address Hopkins is really addressing christ and his heart and the Falcon. For they are coalesced, which simply marks the triumph of god. The close of "The Windhover" brings out the con-

trast between the high deals and the earth bound struggles the priest (Father Schoder's opinion) The end of the poem never strikes a weary not but it strikes a 'purposeful' note. The times .

No wonder of it.....

gold vermillion

Bring out the battling nature of the faleon and the knight, the essential burden of the poem.

"The Windhover of a declaration of Christian purpose and a triumphant confirmation of poet's personal faith-the faith that was his very existence. I have not only made my vows publicly some two and twenty times about I make them to myself everyday" (Dennis Ward, 180).

The natural and spiritual are brought to ring out the glory of god and to affirm the poet's (humanity's) faith in the same. A rare poetic sensibility, a true feel of the language its musical metaphorical sensuous and spritual possibilities are fully exploited in "The windhover". it is heightened spiritual experience. sprung-rhythm is used with great effect to produce a sense of wonder and awe by ushering in varied vibrant movements. "Everything is really brought to its highest pitch. The light drenched atmosphere of dawn, the powerful light, the vigour of the bird's circling-Nature verges on ecstatic self transcendence...(Roman quardini: Aesthetic-Theological thoughts on "The Windhover" Hopkins: a Collection of critical Essays. Ed. Geoffrey H. Hartman, P. 77)

"The Windhover affirms God's triumph. Incidentally, it also asserts Hopkins poet's triumph.

D. annotate the following

- (1) High there....bid wind
- (2) My heart.....thing
- (3) Brute.....Buckle!
- (4) AND.....chevalier!
- (5) No wonder.....gold =remilion

Note : Every fine in this sonnet is a potential line for annotation)

E. (a) Attempt a short note in the imaginary in the poem.

(b) Write a brief note on the linguistic facilities in The

Windhover

NO WORST, THERE IS NONE

A. Introduction

A sonnet per excellence belonging to the last period of Hopkins poetic career. It has strong affinity with Donne's Holy sonnets. For No Worst, There Is None Thou Art indeed just. Lord' etc....are sonnets written with utmost severity and austerity.

Most of the lines on this sonnet have fire stress, though freely sprung

e.g:-Woe worlds sorrow: on an age-old 'nvil wi wee ans sing

This sonnet (like many others of this period) betrays what St. Ignatius calls, desolation stands for a darkening of the soul, trouble of mind movements to bare and earthly things, restlessness of various agitations and temptations moving to distrust, loss, of love, when the soul feels thoroughly apathetic, sad, and as it were separated from her creator and Lord' (spiritual Experiences) first week, Discerns of Spirits There is a Shakespearean under thought too, especially in relation to fate and adversity.

B. Glossary

L. 1 Pitched past pitch of grief.

boundless grief, placed beyond the blackest spot/level of grief. (note the alliteration)

L2. Pangs-sudden sharp feelings of pain for pangs-feelings to pain just experienced (slightly earlier)

L3 Schooled at for epangs-tamed (tempered) at earlier apangs-(Typical collection/formation of words by Hopkin)

L4. Wilder wring-come out in a sharper way

L5 Herds-long ie. troublers come not single spies, but on battalion (if Shakespeare, Hamlet)

L6. World-worror sorrow of the world if German Welsehmerz

L8 Force-perforce by the need of the hour, (in the light of my

experiences) if Shakespeare's force perforce,

L 10 Fright ful- fearful (First draft in Hopkins has Fright ful, sheer down not fathomed)

L12 Durance: endurance; short span of life; force ful invention coinage coinage of Hopiness

L13 Wretch an Unfortunate or unhappy person

Whirr mind: a tall pipe-shaped body of sir moving forward while whirling at high speed

C. Essay

a) Write an appreciation of No worst, There is None

b) Write a critique on No worst, There is None,

G.M. Hopkins always experimented boldly with his thoughts and poetic form. He began his poetic career with a Keatsian and Shakespearean romantic sensibility. Soon (after a period of poetic lull imposed on his his self willed religious immersion) he switched on to a period of starting poetic experiment, the peak of which is marked by "The wreck of the Deutschland". In keeping with commitment to and confirmation with (the densedriven passion he embarks on a complex spiritual so journ in his sonnets of Desolateou, a typical instance of which is seen in No worse, There is None.

Hopkins unravels an inescapable darkening of the soul, echoing more or less the thoughts of St. Ignatius. He delineates a darkening of the soul, trouble of mind, movement to base and earthly things, restlessness this sate entails loss of hope, loss of love, for at this crisis-torn juncture the soul herself feels thoroughly apathetic, said and it were served from her creator and Lord.

The speaker is at a point where one is forced to utter No worst, there is none". In the pang packed life, sharpened by forpangs (earlier painful experiences) The post protagonist (for that matter every man) is forced to query where the comforter Mary's. Both the comforter and comforting' seem to be amiss May be it is a passing stage in the strife torn, woe-bitten life of every spirituality minded mortal. A lurid picture of life with unremitting

setbacks and unfathomable pain is etched in the affective lines My
eries heave, herds long.....leave off the puny little mortal man's
;light and the might of fury are wrong home in No lingering. Let
me be fell. Force I must be brief. Towering fury has no time mince
his words and waste its time. The condition of man bereft of spiri-
tual relief is brought home to us precisely and poignantly.

"It is not emotional indulgence of its our sake; it describes
the poets need and search for strength" (Patricia A Wolfe, Hopkins,
P.223) pitched past pitch of grief may point to an exceptional state
of intense grief. No worst there is none must be looked at from the
spiritual perspective. The poet feels that he must become master
of himself in life. Achieving selflessness through death alone will
not give him a chance to participate actively death done will not
give him a chance to participate actively and willingly in Christ's
sacrifice. He has doubts about his strength and performing that.
"To the poet then, there is no worse ordeal than seeing the right,
trying too follow it and being hindered by human weakness It is
the fear that he will not live up to Christ's example which leads him
into a painfully emotional state of mind" (Wolfe, 223) Really "Christ's
grace has pitched the plot into a new sphere of spiritual activity,
for God...can shift the self that his in one to a higher, that is /
better. pitch to itself; that is to a pitch or determination of itself on
the side of good (223) Hopkins suffering is an aftermath of Christ's
suffering. The poet's attempt to intimate the saviour is quite evi-
dent here. Hopkins once wrote: "The special grace to be asked for
in the passion is sorrow with Christ in sorrow, a broken heart with
Christ broken-hearted tears and interior pain for the great pain that
Christ has suffered for me (Dennis War of P.187)

Experiencing one's own intense spiritual agony imposes a
sort of withdrawal, experienced earlier even by the god head. At
this point, the poet cries out: Comforter Where is your comforting?
The poet is obviously begging for mere grace, but he is not pretty
sure from where, when and who,. Perhaps he repeats his plea
with "Mary, mother of us." Hopkins asks for the Virgin's interces-

sion, because it was here more than all other creatives that Christ
meant to win from nothingness and it was her that he meant to win
from nothingness and it was her that he meant to win from noth-
ingness and it was her that he meant to raise the highest'
(Dennisward, p.45)" (p.224) The poet is really facing a thorny situ-
ation. Neither God nor Mary comes to his rescue. No angel ap-
pears to help him out. In a dejected mood, he turns to the reader.
His plight is presented poignantly as that of every man. "My cries
leave...sing" the world of sorrow and sin is projected with force.
Certainly the grating wince and sing of the cries striking the anvil
is reminiscent of another sound, another sound, another discor-
dant blend of the ugly and the beautiful, one which Hopkins
described....'in relation to Lucifer who indulged in self apprise suc-
ceeding only in raising of counter music and counter temple and
altar a counterpoint of dissonance and not o harmony' (D.W.pp
200-1) Wolfe, p.224-5)

In all likelihood Hopkins world-sorrow indicates the disso-
nant satanic music. Man's pride in himself (his inseparable) prevents
him from freely merging with his saviour-Having reached a climatic
chord, Hopkins emotional intensity subsides. His cries lull, then
leave off, and the poet explains that the brevity of the emotion
necessitates its fierceness (Wolfe, p.2245)

The focal point of the sestet is the immensity of the human
mind. Sometimes it can scale rapturous heights, and get other
times it can plumb into bottomless pits.' This realization is of su-
preme value for. (a) t hearkens back to its pre-existent union which
the mind of God, yet also clings to its present status as a
fragmentary, but seemingly independent human being. It is the
source of the greatest earthly happiness and the greatest earthly
happiness and the greatest earthy tournament. The poet's own
high pitched consciousness has brought about his present deso-
lation: for the keener the consciousness the greater the pain: and
the both these show that the higher the nature the greater the
penalty, (D.W.p.138 Wold,p.225)

The simple and sensitive mind a fraught with dangers, Cliffs of fall are yet to be fathomed by any man. But to grasp the gravity of the paradoxes embedment in human mind, an awareness of these razor-edged cliffs is a must. "Hold them cheap/may who ne'er hnd there/The poet is not belittling ordinary mortals for even sensitive people cannot hold on to such frightening insights for long. Sleep or death is called fourth as a way out. No worst, there is none ends on a note of dejection, for in effect the poet is asking, "to have the sacrificial cup taken away from him; if he must imitate christ and surrender his mortal self hood, let it to be as an ordinary man does through an acceptance of physical rather than psychological oblivion " Wolf 226) It is a fervent " terrible sonnet, which speaks of Hopkins' all firegold' poetic glee.

W. B. YEATS

1. INTRODUCTION

Probably the greatest English poet of the present century. William Butler Yeats was born in Dublin (Ireland) in 1865. His father and brother were painters. His mother belonged to Sligo in Western Ireland, Yeats poems are replete with reference to this locality. Much of his boyhood was spent in London. London and Dublin,. Besides the countryside of Sligo Shaped his poetic imagination. It was while in London that he came into contact with a number of literary figures and art movements, notably Ezra Pound and Imagism; Arthur Symonds and Symbolism and Tagore and Upanishads. He was educated at the Godolphin Schools in Hamersmith and then at the Erasmus Smith School in Dublin. He got some training in art too. He developed an interest in esoteric beliefs. Theosophy, Rosicrucianism, Kabbalism and mysticism all attracted him in varying degrees. His religious beliefs were summed up in his prose works like 'A vision ' and an 'Essay on Magic'.

Yeats' early poems were in the romantic tradition, influenced

by Spenser, Blake, Shelley and Keats. 'The lake Isle of innisfree' belongs to this period. He was drawn to the Irish freedom movement and became one of its central figures. His knowledge of the rich Irish myths and legends and his meeting of Irish freedom fighters like John O. Leary inspired him to write about the vision of a Nationalist Ireland. His collection of poems like *In the seven woods*, and the *'The Green Helmet and other Poems'* express the truth of his Irish background and experience. His love for Maud Gonne, a stunningly beautiful young woman and an activist in the cause of Irish nationalism, made him write many love poems, which are ranked among the best. Her refusal to marry him despite his many proposals and her eventual marriage to MacBride broke his heart and he became cynical for a while. His association with Lady Gregory a nationalist and a writer of some distinction, brought out the best in Yeats. Together with Lady Gregory, he founded the Irish Literary Theatre (The Abbey Theatre) and encouraged many writers like Synge to write plays based on Irish folk tales. He himself wrote plays for the Theatre and became the leader of the Irish Literary movement. His poetic style in the meanwhile developed into what Ezra Pound described 'a new robustness and the tool of satire'. He wrote less poetry between 1903 and 1914, But his style became more sparse and condensed. The range of the themes, however, widened. His best poetry belongs to the middle age. No wonder, Eliot called him a poet of the middle age.

In 1917 he married George Hyde Lees. She was an occultist and practised automatic writing. Mrs. Lees brought maturity and serenity to both his poetry and his life. A new poetic strain, metaphysical in nature, began to enter his poems. 'The tower', 'The Windings' become sure vigorous and the symbolism personal. A fundamental sincerity characterises these poems. They fuse poetically the widest range of human emotions, sensations and ideas. He was a member of the newly formed Irish Free State from 1922 to 1928. In 1923, Yeats was awarded the Nobel prize for Literature. In 1928, he published a translation of two plays of

Sophocles and his 'Autography' appeared in 1938. He died on 25 January 1939 in France.

Yeats' best poems like 'The Second Coming' 'nineteen Hundred and Nineteen', 'The Tower' and the two Byzantium poems are characterised by their intense lyricism, use of symbolism, sensuous beauty precision and realism.

LAPIS LAZULI

'Lapis Lazuli' is the second poem in 'New Poems', the last collection of the poems, which Yeats published in 1938. Most of Yeats last poems, express the mood of tragic gaiety'. a dynamic acceptance and affirmation of reality. This is all the more so in poems like 'Gyres' and 'Lapis Lazuli' (written in July 1936). Unlike his earlier poems like for instance, 'The Second Coming', there is no horror or revulsion at what he sees around him. There is a noticeable shift in his attitude to the past and the present. Obviously, Yeats has outgrown his earlier self and has gained much self-knowledge and insight. He accepts the pain of history with tragic joy.

Yeats received a gift of a large piece of lapis lazuli from Harry Clifton (a semi precious ultramarine blue stone) "carved by some Chinese sculptor into the resemblance of a mountain with temple, trees, paths and an ascetic and his pupil about to climb the mountains. Ascetic, pupil, hard stone-eternal theme of the sensual cast. The heroic cry in the midst of despair. But writers Yeats. I am wrong the East has its solutions always; and therefore knows nothing of tragedy. It is we, not the east, that must raise the heroic cry. "The poem has as its themes the relevance of art and the tragic joy" It conveys and the superiority of the East over the West, giving a new and wild strength to the ageing poet's work.

Stanza 1

The common place modern reaction to art is presented. Hysterical women (i.e. those who are motivated by narrow, emotional considerations) have nothing but contempt for art, which

they think is foolishly gay. Art, according to them, has nothing drastic to offer to save the modern world from war and total annihilation. Art has no relevance or utility and hence they are sick of it. Palette and fiddle-bow represent painting and music respectively and these together with poetry constitute the three principal areas of art, which merely focus on contemplation rather than on action, Yeats has perhaps in mind such women as Maud Gonne and Constance Mariewics (of. Ester 1916) who pursued politics with single-minded devotion, and were convinced (mistakenly of course) that involvement in politics alone can prevent a future war.

Lines 6 to 8 indicate that all wars are the same. Modern war is as bad as that of 1690, when King Billy of Orange pitched in bomb-bells at the Battle of the Boyne and which found a modern counterpart in another king Billy, Kaiser Wilhelm II whose geppelin and aeroplane had harried the English in the First World War. (Zeppelin is the name given to a cigar-shaped airship, designed by count Zeppelin).

Stanza 2

This stanza describes the way the great heroes and heroines of literature met tragedy and death. Hamlet, Lear, Ophelia and Cordelia, to name but a few, perform their tragic role and there is gaiety in the life despite their minor drawbacks (Hamlet rambles and Lear rages). They are greater and are more exultant when they face death. This is quite different from the 'hysterical women', who break up their lines to weep'. While the tragic heroes are all gay, gaiety transfiguring all the dread the artists are considered by those women as superfluous!, "Tragedy is wrung to uttermost in their gaiety as they find and lose all that men have aimed at: for as both scenes and heroes literally 'black out', heaven blazes in to their heroes heads." (Note how Yeats uses images from the theatre to reinforce the theme) The moment of their tragedy is the moment of the final insight and consequently of supreme delight. Ellman points out that the moment of their actual death is the moment of their stage triumph: for death fuses them to their

chosen image of themselves, transcending the temporal and becoming immortal. Art thus is a permanent bridal chamber of joy.

Stanza 3

In this stanza the poet talks of the civilization put to the sword by time. But we need not feel sorry if our own civilization is wiped out. For, "All things fall and are built again.

And those that build them again are gray."

Since birth is inherent in death, there is no need to feel despondency, asserts the poet. In the early lines of this stanza, the poet describes how armies march sometimes on their feet, at other times, 'on shipboard/ Camel-back, horse-back, ass-back, mule-back' putting an end civilization after civilization in the past. But, though history is a record of perpetual war and destruction, it is also a record of perpetual renewal and affirmation. "The artist, who contributes most to each civilization, will be as defeated as everyone else but like his characters he will be gay in his defeat." Take for instance Callimachus, the Athenian sculptor of antiquity. He was so skilled an artist that he handled marble as if it were bronze. He made so many wonderful and exquisite things like draperies, and "long lamp chimney shaped like the stem of a slender palm. But what happened to his wonderful creation? Alas! nothing of him now exists. Even his best production stood but a day'. But when there is no need to feel defeat and sorrow. Individual defeat is not very much important to the artist. For he is the inspirer. He knows that though all things 'fall' they are built again. And he does it cheerfully. The urge to create is as strong as the urge to destroy. The tragic gaiety inherent in the artist refuses to accept defeat. It implies him inexorably to reconstruct what has been destroyed. He finds fulfillment and consequent joy in doing so. Thus the tragic joy inherent in arts and artists is further illustrated in terms of the vicissitudes of history. Yeats perhaps reminds us of the fate of his own poems, the spirit of which will survive even if they are lost in oblivion in future.

Stanza 4

In this short stanza, the poet focusses on the piece lapis lazuli and the carvings on it. The images are of two Chinamen, behind them a third one, the third one apparently a servant and carrying a musical instrument. Over them flies a long legged bird, which, says the poet, is a symbol of longevity. In a letter Dorrohy Wellesely Yeats identified the two Chinamen as an ascetic and his pupil, characteristic of the tradition of the East. The ascetic like himself is old and wise.

This and the next stanzas centre on the lapis lazuli and its images. The wisdom of the East, its universality and permanence, are characterised by the Chinese ascetic and his disciple and the long-legged bird, which stands for the long flights of creative imagination and keen insight.

Stanza 5

The idea of tragic gaiety is crystalized in the image of the chinamen. The perspective changes. Unlike stanzas 2 and 3, here, along with the ascetic, we are made to stand on a lofty mountain overlooking the world and the ages. The three old men are pictured in the stone as climbing toward a little half way house, sweetened as the poet supposes, by plum or cherrybranch. Then, he imagines, that seated there they stare (and we, with them) "on all the tragic scene below. "From here the rise and fall of civilizations is no matter for pathos or female hysteria, but seems necessary part of the scene. When asked for mournful melodies. Accomplished finger (doubtless the serving man, who is the artist himself) begin to play and the listeners instead of feeling sorrow, become gay. Thus art transfigures all tragedy into defiant gaiety it properly comprehended like the hero of tragedy or the wise men or the sages of the East.

John underacker has compared this stanza with Keats' Ode on the Grecian Urn. The final stanza, he says expands the fourth stanza in very much the same way as Keats expands the little down toward the end of his poem, Like Keats, yeats too becomes

part of the scene. He presents the scene from inside, as it were, with the help of his creative imagination. The creator and creation become one. Yeats climbs with the chinamen then sun bright blossom bright mountain. Unlike Keats, however, Yeats is not content in static action alone. The discoloration of the stone, the accidental cracks or dents, are interpreted in various ways. These cracks or dents taken as a water course or a valance/ or lify slple where it still snows. Each crack, in other words, seems to have meaning depending of course not only on the artist but on the reader and his imagination. Cowell rightly points out that though the inessential aspects of the craving are ravaged by time the essential thing. The attitude-services the attitude is that of the tragic wisdom that can accept rise and fall with joy (Note that the carvings like civilizations in the earlier stanza, are subject to destruction; but the gaiety borne out of wisdom survives)

As the stanza proceeds, the wisemen have reached a resting place (the little half way house) and have started contemplating the tragic scene spread below them where undoubtedly lives that hysterical women and their ilk. One of them asks for mournful melodies. While in the second and the third stanzas, Yeats examines drama and sculpture, here music is introduced, Thus all kinds of art are brought into the poem making it exemplify the power and glory of art over nature-tragic gaiety and wisdom over shallow and spontaneous emotions.'

The gaiety of the Chinamen arises out of their full knowledge of sorrow which is found, at any rate for the West, only in Art. Artists urge usto behave in our bomb-threatened lives with the dignity of people in art. Whether they are hamlet on the stage or the three Chainamen in carving.

The stanza integrates all the earlier images and themes and also to celebrate the wisdom of the East. The chinamen, with their ancient glittering eyes amid may wrinkles are gay, there be testifying that their gaiety of irresponsibility. But is borne out of their wisdom and insight, the result of along and unbroken tradition of

sages endowed with an all comprehensive vision and true understanding.

STYLE

The poem is marked by Yeats mastery of language and style, It is said that nothing in Yeats illustrates his great control of language than this poem. Yeats himself said, It is almost the best I have made in recent years. Critics have commented up on the racy and apt use of words. Though the subject is quite complicated, Yeats handles it with remarkable control and mastery. The strong rhythm and shifts of tone to suit the changing perspectives add to the richness and variety of the poem. While the first stanza is slangy, off hand, (to suit the description of hysterical women) the later sections become elevated and dignified. Utmost economy is exercised so much so that often connectives are left out and the reader has to supply many of them. Irony and wit operate throughout as controlling forces. The past and the present are brought together to illuminate the essential truth of human situation. The war of William of Orange is in no way materially different from modern warfare, Conversely, Hamlet or Lear more than any other human beings have relevance now. While they are imaginative creations, the Cahinamen are representatives of the wise East. Together, they show us the only way, the ancient way, out of the human predicament.

Crities have commented upon the 'stone' imaginary especially in the last poems of years. In this poem, the stone (lapislazuli) itself becomes the central image as the three wise Chinamen are carved in stone. Yeats himself has written that it represents the eternal theme of the East. It represents both the hard-often bitter-intransigence of fate, the desolation of reality. But at the same time, it also symbolizes the eternity of truth, of the forms of life and of art, which abides unchanged through all the 'gyres' and cycle os man's history'. Thus the stone image serves a double purpose at once representing 'the harshness of things' and the eternal way out of it.

EASTER 1916

Called by G. S. Fraser as Yeats greatest tragic poem on human politics', Easter 1916 was written in September, 1916. It express Yeats attitude towards the Easter Rising in Dublin. Yeats, for whom the cause of Irish freedom was always very close of his heart and who himself was deeply involved in Irish struggle for freedom through his writings, was profoundly affected by that violent upheaval. On Easter Monday in 1916, the Irish nationalists in their bid to proclaim Ireland a Republic and thereby put an end to the long period of domination by England seized a few public building in Dublin, notably the general post office. The British were busy with the First World War and the revolutionaries hoped that the rebellion might lead to general rising and eventual liberation of their country. Even those who were not so optimistic at least recognised the symbolic value of the rebellion and its psychological and moral effect upon a people struggling for freedom. After a few days of heavy fighting, the rebels surrendered. The British Govt. Court martialled and shot dead sixteen of the rebel leaders, thereby creating new heroes for Irish legend.

'Easter 1916' is a sequel to an early poem by Yeats entitled 'September 1913'. It was written in a mood of disillusionment and with contempt for the character, particularly of the divot, shop-keeping Dublin catholic lower middle classes'. Yeats then found these men, born, to 'pray and save', cautious, coldhearted, indifferent to the romantic tragedy of Ireland's past. He never expected them to think beyond their narrow selves and risk their lives for the sake of their country. He lamented bitterly then.

'Romantic Ireland's dead and gone

'It's with O' Leary in the grave'.

But now the miracle has happened. The Easter Rebellion has convinced Yeats that romantic Ireland by no mean is dead and gone.

No wonder the rebellion took Yeats by surprise. He knew many of the leaders personally and he had no high opinion of most

them. They essentially belonged to the lower middle class. There were minor poets and school masters too among them. There was Major MacBride, who was the husband of Yeats 'beloved Maud Gonne. Yeats had nothing but contempt for the dukes Major for having married Maud Gonne and for having treated her brutally. Another person involved was the beautiful aristocratic. Constance Markiewicz. Yeats had never thought much of them. Consequently he was taken aback when he found them all in new light after the rebellion.

The little suggests that the poem is partly a retraction of or apology for September 1913. He frankly admits that he misjudged their character and the mood of the Irishman in general. In the poem he hails the dead patriots and calls them heroes. People whom he had considered jesters became martyrs and the casual comedy gave way to tragedy indeed.

All changed, changed utterly
A terribly beauty is born.

His attitude towards the patriots however, is not so simple. No doubt he violently moved by the sacrifice of these men and regrets their death. He blames himself for their death, for had his own writings also prompted them to embrace death for the sake of their country? He also examines the nature of heroisms and hails them as patriotic martyrs. But the fears that all who devote themselves fanatically to the narrow cause of Irish Nationalism may find their hearts turned to stone. He also doubt whether their supreme sacrifice after all was warranted? He examines heroism and martyrdom in the cold light of reason, without the aura of idealism and romanticism, and against the hard facts of life, present and past. However, he ends the poem on an optimistic note, Easter 1916 he hopes may usher in an era of happiness for Ireland.

The poem is divided into four sections. The first and the third sections have sixteen lines each, while the second and fourth have 24 lines each. The first, second and its sections end with

the line. The Stones in the midst of all. Which has quite different effect, thereby expressing the poet's complex attitude towards the event. The rhyme-scheme is a bad, cdcd, efef etc., Some lines reflect Anglo Irish Phonetics thereby enriching the beauty, Charm and conversational ease of the poem. The poem also shows the technical mastery of Yeats in its variation of pace, pitch and pause.

section 1

Yeats describes the mood of lassitude greyness, trivial jocular malice which he had accepted as the permanent mood of Dublin a mood of mocking and motley. He admits he was completely wrong. Here he gives a picture of Ireland and its men before the Easter Rebellion. In Dublin, life moved at a leisurely pace and there was no sign of impending upheaval. He knew the men - lower middle class people. Whose lives consisted of their work at the offices meaningless chutes and jokes with their friends and mere clownish deeds. They were commonplace people who never talked of Independence or never gave any indication of their patriotic zeal. But he realizes that he has mistaken them all. Everything was changed drastically with the Easter Rising. The jesters have become martyrs.

The tone to the opening line is detached and relaxed, and has a casual conversational effect.

I have met them I have met the revolutionaries. Note the dramatic opening.

Counter or desk shop or office

Being certain This shows how he underrated them. He was amazed when his friends acted like heroes.

Being certain that.... is worn They were no better than clowns in a comedy. Yeats though both his friends and himself looked at life superficially and were like clowns in a comedy, making fools themselves and remarking uninvolved in serious events. All changed... utterly: Yeats was surprised at the sudden and complete change that came over them. From mere jesters, they transformed themselves into heroes.

A Terrible beauty is born - complex attitude of the poet towards the Rebellion is suggested in the expression a terrible beauty. While it is attractive, romantic and heroic, it also involves terror, fanaticism and death. The line becomes almost a refrain in the poem.

Section 2

In the second section he sets out to celebrate the leaders of the rebellion the beautiful Constance Markiewicz, once the aristocratic beauty of the countryside, her sweet voice now grown shrill with political exhorting; Schoolmaster and minor poets who might, just might, have, have come to something: Máic Bride, a drunken bully suddenly becomes a legendary hero. Apart from Constance Markiewicz they are people who he would ordinarily find drab or disapprove of, but he humbles himself before them, as heroically transformed.

That woman Constance Markiewicz, was member of the leaders of Rebellion. The only one from aristocracy, she belonged to Sligo, who was imprisoned for life. Of Yeats' poem on political Prisoner.

Her nights... shrill she was known for her beauty and sweet voice. But her voice grew shrill and hoarse by arguing and lecturing to people on politics.

Harries-pack of hounds with huntsmen chasing hares (Perhaps before her entry into politics, she went for hunting)

This man - Patrick Pearse an Irish poet and the owner of St. Enda's School Dublin one of the sixteen leaders, he was shot dead.

Winged horse, In Greek mythology, Pegasus was the horse of the Muses, or Poetry. Here it stands for the literacy and cultural renaissance of Ireland.

This order his helper and friend - Macdonagh, himself a writer and a lecturer in English at University College. Dublin, helped Pearse run the school. He was one among the executed.

This other man Major Bride, whom Yeats detested for marrying his beloved Maud Gonne and for ill treating her. He made

her so unhappy with his drinking and bullying tactics that she was compelled to leave him. He led an attack on a factory in the Easter Rising and thus became a hero overnight.

He had done.....near by heart some who are near my heart refers to Maud Gonne. The bitter wrong he had done was of course to marry Maud Gonne and then to make her unhappy.

Resignedcausal comedy he gave up his life of superficiality and light heartedness. Causal comedy is Yeats phrase for a life without depth and intensity.

SECTION 3

The third section is the most concentratedly beautiful part of the poem. It is a sustained long metaphor. The hearts of the rebels (hearts with one purpose alone) are like a stone in the midst of a stream where clouds are moving, hoses are passing, birds are flying - in short, everything is changing minute by minute but

The stone's in the midst of all

We feel the heroism of the stone, but also in the rest of the metaphor, Yeats' wistfulness for the gentle changing pace that is life. Fanaticism is heroic; but it is also an image of earth. To concentrate too narrowly on a cause at the exclusion of the others (In this case the cause of Ireland) however admirable it may be, is also a denial of life and all that implies.

Hearts with one purpose alone. The rebels had a single minded purpose. I.e., the liberation of Ireland.

A heart enchanted to a stone-this is Yeats symbol for one who devoted himself to a cause disgracing his life and love! those who are enchanted to a stone are those who gave up too many other interests to concentrate too narrowly on a cause. The revolutionaries, in other words became as insensitive as a stone to every other cause. The stone symbol also implies them undying external fame as well as their hardened hearts and in human inflexibility.

The trouble the living stream social life like a stream, moves onward, Movement or change is the very spirit of life. But the rebels

with their doggedness and violence impede the progress of life. Like the stone in the midst of a stream obstructs the free and smooth flow of water the rebels with their doggedness and violence impede the progress of life and sap its spirit. (Yeats is opposed to narrow-minded nationalism and violence)

A horse hoof.....call. the poet looks at the stream and finds change (which is life) in everything.; The stream flows, the horse splashes the water with his hooves, the water birds dive and respond to the mating calls of the male birds.

The stone'sof all Note the contrast and its effect. The stone alone remains changeless and still in the very midst of change and life. It even obstructs the flow of life. Whatever be its merits, it represents the changelessness of death. The stone suggests permanence: it is out of stone that monuments are made. Anything that lives has to die; it is subject to change.

SECTION 4

"In the last section he underlines that too long a sacrifice can make a stone of the heart. He has the courage to ask whether perhaps this death was needless. Loyal to his own moderation, he points out that England may keep faith for all that is done and said. And it is no good saying that the heroes of 1916 have fallen sleep. They are dead, But even if they died in error (bewildered)" it was excess of love for Ireland that bewildered them. They are dead, and there is nothing now but to name their sacred names and celebrate them. They have become part of the Irish legend, and they have transformed Irish history. Yeats makes his splendid gesture of salutation to heroic simplicity without surrendering the complexity of his own mind.

A stone of the heart-their determination makes them hard hearted and fanatical (Note the earlier stone image too)

O when may it suffice? Where it is enough to win freedom Yeats doubts whether it alone can achieve their goal.

That is Heaven's.....had run wild. These lines are full of lyrical intensity and tenderness. It is not for us to pass value judge-

ments on their deeds. They might have acted recklessly and are now dead. What we are to do is to call their names softly like mothers calling the names of their children fondly when they have fallen asleep after their pranks. These rebels are to be treated with love and tenderness even if they might have over reached themselves.

Was it but nightfall?-Yeats wonders whether he can gain relief from the thought that they are only asleep (like children in the earlier lines) i.e., their lack of popularity or fame is but temporary.

No. on.....death Yeats faces the hard reality boldly. (Note the repetition of no indicating his coming to term with their death)

Was is needless death after all? Yeats doubts the wisdom of the revolutionaries.

For England.....and said. In 1913, the British Govt. passed a bill for Home Rule in Ireland, though this was stayed at the outbreak of the war, England promised Ireland freedom after the war (In other words, even without these self-sacrifices, England may have kept up its promise)

Bewildered confused; perplexed. Though they died in error, it was their excessive love for their country they made them do it.

Connolly a trade union organizer and leader of the rebellion, who was executed.

Green the national colour of Ireland

It is to be noted that it is only towards the end of the poem that Yeats mentions the names of the four ring leaders. He names them only after defining completely his attitudes towards them. The earlier jesters have now become martyrs and it is by way of sincere salutation to their heroic simplicity that he names them in the end. The poem expresses Yeats complex attitude towards the death and martyrdom of the revolutionaries in the most restrained Lyrical manner, combining within it both sanity and proportion using the most appropriate and complex images.

W.H. AUDEN

(1907-1973)

INTRODUCTION

W.H. AUDEN was born in to a middle class family in York in 1907. He was educated at Gresham school, York and Christ Church, Oxford. In his early career he tried to imitate Thomas Hardy. But before long he came under the influence of T.S. Eliot, Stephen Spender and on the remembers of the Pylon School.. His first volume of poems came out in 1930. His second volume of poems, "The Orators" came out in 1932. He took part in the Spanish civil War as an ambulance driver & Stretcher bearer, taught for a while in the pre-Hilter Germany. In 1935 he married and settled in the United States of America. This brought about a radical change in his poetic career and life vision.

In the 1930's Auden seemed a Marxist poet. He was considerably influenced at this stage by Marx and Freud. Still he displayed admirable fluency and a wide range. Perhaps his own statement in the introduction of the Poet's Tongue.

Poetry is not concerned with telling people what to do, but with extending our knowledge of good and evil, perhaps making the necessity for action more urgent and its nature more clear, but only leading us to the point Where it is possible for us to a rational and moral choice.

During this period, 30's Auden wrote some plays. The dog Beneath the Skin (1935) the Ascent of F6 (1936) and On the Frontier (1938) probably to give a telling expression to political, social and moral concern. Christopher Isherwood was his collaborator in these plays.

However, there was a marked change in the 1940's in Auden towards the religious/Christian vein. In this period he was moved by Kierkegaard and Reinhold Ktional stanza forms and myths (E.L.

Black, Nine modern Poets, 1966 p... 91)

"THE SHIELD OF A CHILLS"

Notes

Written in 1952 and published in 1955, it is the first poem in a volume of poems title The Shield of A chilles. The poems is based on an episode, in Homer's Iliad relating to Achilles, Agamemnon. Patroclus, Thetis and hehaestes (or Vulcan) The central staple of this poem is the new coat of arms being made for Achilles. Auden uses it cleverly to offer a carping commentary on the present stat of the world.

12. ungregated-Came together in a large group

25. heifer a young cow which has not yet given birth to a calf.

26. Libation an offering of wine to a God. Esp. in ancient Greece and Rome

61. Hephaestos - Vulcan

hobbled - limped

62. Thetis - Mother of Achilles

66. Slaying : Killing

Essay

1. Could you consider "The shield of Achilles" as a criticism of contemporary life?

Or

To what extent does Auden correlate myth with modern life?

Or

Comment on Auden's use of myth in "The Shield of Achilles"

Auden ina remarkable way create a conductive context to brood over the decadent comtemporany culture and life in general

Auden uses the episode dealing with the Coat of Armour of Achilles. In protest against the indecent behaviour of Agamemnon. Achilas kept himself away from the war front. However be lent his Coat of Armour to his friend, Batroclus to give his pseud-prowess. But the was killed by Hector, he took away patroclus coat of

armour Thetis, Achilles mother assured him in a dream that she would come the next morning with a fresh coat of armour made by Hephaestos (or Vulcan the gifted heavenly blacksmith) On her requesrt Vulcan made a new coat of armour decorated all over with patterns of the heavenly bodies colourfull cities full of people, marriage and banquets scenes, a city steeped in war and belaboured with the spirit of death swaying its peaceful postures, vineyards forms and dancing scenes (Homer, LLiad XVIII)

The plot help Thetis to see wholesome and inspiriting scenes being embossed on the Shield. Instead what strikes her it the life lessness of the Hollowmen parading on the shield. Dictators, pale bureaucrats a huanile deliquent, a caricature of crucifixion etc. are some of the achieving scenes.

The divine artifice Hephaestos (or Vulcanis poet. The various scenes and people on the shield closely resemble what is being said or projected in the poem. That is assigned the role of the public. The whole shield poem is a severe and candid criticism (Commentary on the state of modern culture. Auden uses a very succinct and simple diction to choice his profound concerns on the decaying modern culture. He enriches, the poem with rich symbolic images which very often voyage out to the mysterious and provocative realm of allegory and allied thoughts and judgement.

The poet makes one feel the anguish of Thetis when she under the shock looked over the shoulder of Hephaestos. She anticipated vines and Olive trees well governed cities of marbles and ships up on unhastered (untamed) seas. But instead of all these she could only see an artificial wilderness and ask like lead. Auden draws the picture of cotemporary life and world appears to Thetis a a plain without a feature, bare and brown, Noblade of gras, no sign of neighbourhood it is a cowded hungry world nothing to eat an no where to sit down. The blankness and helplessness of the masses her deed uncontrolled by, and commanded by dictators and war.

mongers are put across in a compressed way by Auden. His clear and cutting collocation of words does the trick, note his brief but effective description to this effect.

Yt. congregated on its blankness, stood

An unintelligible multitude.

A million eyes, a million boots in a line

Without expression, waiting for a sign

the faceless dictator's (military commander's) harsh voice command men to fight for a just cause, proved by statistics.

Thetis sees men in cold silence moving in columns shrouded in dust. They marched away, enduring belief only to suffer and grieve somewhere for somebody else's infallible logic and irrevocable orders. Auden's Careful selection and ordering of words generate the intended meaning.

Instead of a sacred altar where rituals meant to enable and purify the multitude should have taken place she could only see concentration camps. Thetis eagerly looked for rituals, pieties, white flower garlanded heifers, libation and sacrifice. But she only saw military spot enclosed by barbed wire. The poet here draws a picture of the post world war II situation when the victors loaded the world with chilling (killing) concentration camps. Auden's anguish and powerless men (The so called vanquished) are subjected to inhuman cruelty and suffering. Officials lounge. Sentries sweat, An ineffective ordinary crowd of decent folk watched.

Majority of the people in this war torn world are at the mercy of a powerful few. The powerful foes keep the defeated under their control. Auden never minces words. See the force with which he hits.

The mass and majesty of this world all

The carries weight always weighs the same

Lay in the hands of others...

Such illfated people died much before their bodies. Auden Painfully makes us realize..." They lost their pride and dies as men before their bodies died.

Thetis to her chagrin does not find Hephaestus setting a dancing floor or a sports and games arena. No athletes, no dancers moving their sweet limbs in tune with quick music instead she could only find all activities healthy and cheerful are simply missing. The shield is a telling a replica/reflection of contemporary life. A valueless world packed with violence and pride is what one sees. In this world crucifixion takes place time and again. A valueless world packed with violence and pride is what one sees. In this world 'crucifixion' takes place time and again. Violence is unleashed just for the sake of violence. Reckless urchins would innocent birds. Girls are raped. Boys are killed by boys. The promised land has receded. Hopelessness rule the roost. No love is lost between people. Nobody weeps for anybody else.

The fate of modern man is writ large in the last stanza. After finishing the new armour of Achilles, in a palpably different way from which Thetis (People at large) are left guessing in a benumbed vein. She was dismayed at what God had wrought to please her son, iron-hearted, man slaying Achilles. There is a wide gap between what the mother expected and what she actually saw on the "Shield" that is the way of the present world' deprived of love, devoid of values, entrapped in doom and death. Thetis gapes and grasps, for she realizes with heart ache that her son (Achilles) or that matter ever one's son) would not live long.

Objective questions

1. W.H. Auden wrote his plays in collaboration with (a) Louis Machiniece (b) Richard Arlington (c) Christopher Isherwood

(Ans: c)

2. The Dyer's Hand is a famous collection of essays written (z) W.B. Yeats (b) W.H. Auden (c) Stephen Spender (Ans: b)

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T.S.ELIOT

(1888-1965)

Thomas Sterns Eliot was born at St.Louis missouri, USA on 26 September 1888. He had his education up to MA in USA. the he spent a year at the sorbonne in Paris. Again he returned to Harvard working for a doctorate on philosophy on Francis Heaberty Bradley. In the meanwhile he spent sometime at Marburg, Germany and Oxford, London.

On 22 september 1914, Eliot met Ezra pound in London. That meeting brought about a total change in Eliot's life and career. Pound persuaded him to settle in England in view of his future as awriter. Eliot married on 16 JUne 1915 an English woman. Pound took the initiative to publish Eliot's poem.The Love Song of J.Alfred Prufrovk in factory in 1915 while he worked as a school teacher. On 19 March 1917 he joined the Lloyds bank, London. Poem by T.S. Eliot was published by Alfred knopf in 1920. In the same Year, along with Wyadhem Lewis he went to Paris. There hemet Jmes Joyce. Ill health forced him to move to Lausanne, Switzerland. While returning, he stayed for a few days in Paris and submitted the manuscript of The Waste Land to pound. It first appeared in Dial, Boni and Liveright published it in New York in 1922.

Eliot started criterion in the same year. He wanted it to be a European review. The Journal ladsted for seventeen years.

In 1925 Eliot left Lloyds and joined Faber and Gwyer (later Faber and Faber) in 1927 he became a British citizen 1922-1939 was perhaps his most productive period. The Hollow Men was published in 1925, journey of the Magi in 1927, A song of simeon in 1928 Marina and Ash Wednesday in 1930. His last great poem, Four Quarters was published during 1936-40

Eliot also wrote a number verse dramas too. Murder in the Cathedral (1935) The Family Reunion (1939) the Cocktail Party (1949) The Confidential Clerk (1953) and the Elder Statesman (1958)

Notes Towards Definition of culture was published in 1949.

Eliot made significant contributions to literary criticism too. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1948. He died on 4 January 1965.

T.S. Eliot remarkably changed the very complexion of poetry and criticism bequeathed to him by the Romantics and the Victorians. He is one of the major voices of modernism. His influence was so great that his period will ever be remembered as the age of T.S. Eliot.

THE WASTE LAND

NOTES

Eliot wrote about this long poem that he had had in mind for a long time. For the first time to John Quinn, the New York Attorney and art Collector and then to his mother he composed the poem partly at Margate, but mostly at Lausanne in Switzerland in 1921.

In early January 1922, he submitted the manuscript to Ezra Pound at Paris. Pound brought about radical changes besides supplying the title. Eliot also effected a few alternations at the suggestion of Vivien, his first wife. The Waste Land first published in the Criterion in October 1922 and in The Dial (New York) in 1922. It was published with Eliot's notes by Boni and Live Right (New York in 1922). The manuscript of this poem passed into the hands of Quinn. Though for a long time it was supposed to be lost, it was rediscovered in 1968. A facsimile, edited by Valerie Eliot was published by Faber in 1971.

The change levelled against Pound for bringing about radical changes is quelled by this facsimile. Eliot's ill-health and strain of his marriage to a mentally imbalanced person might have created a mental condition opposite to creative indulgence which yielded this rich, complex and rare poem.

Eliot moved away from the tradition of long deceptive po-

ems. He tried to make poetry as much more suggestive and complex through select images and their imaginative organisation. In the modernist vein Eliot employed resourcefully vegetation myths, folklore which stress that the barrenness of the land is due to the impotence of its ruler. He makes good use of the spiritual belief that the land and the king (Ruler) can be made fertile by a questing knight posing the right questions.

In the Notes Eliot acknowledged two vital sources.

Not only the title, but the plan and a good deal of the incidental symbolism of the poem were suggested by Miss Jessie, L. Weston's book on the General Legend: From Ritual to Romance. To another work of anthropology I am indebted in general, one which has influenced our generation profoundly; I mean The Golden Bough; I have used especially two volumes; Adonis At tis, Osiris.

Jessie L. Weston in her book From Ritual to Romance (1920) advances the thesis that all medieval romances are based on vegetation cults. The grail, the holy vessel used during the Last Supper and the lance that was used to pierce the side of the Christ after his crucifixion, are equated by Weston with female and male fertility symbols. In her version the Fisher King was ruler of a cursed land by an evil spell. It made him too impotent. The only way in which fertility to the land and its ruler of by a virtuous and bold quester; a knight; by raising a series of ritual questions and getting the answers.

Besides its direct bearing on this poem, Eliot also might have used it profitably to draw a close parallel between the blighted land in Weston and the modern waste land bereft of spiritual values, religious hold and cultural moorings. The poet also takes the cure for a possible redemption from Weston and applies it imaginatively to the contemporary situation.

The epigraph: These words are taken from the Satyricon of the Roman writer Petronius Arbiter (1st century A.D.) trans. of the epigraph

For once I myself saw with my own eyes the sibyl at Cumae

hanging in a cage, and when the boys said to her "Sibyl., what do you want?" She replied, "I want to die". [Sibyls = prophetic old woman of Greek mythology. In The Waste Land prophecy becomes mere fortune telling Madam Sosostris]

The cumaean sibyl Aeneas through Hades in Virgil's Aeneid. As a boon Apollo granted the cumaean Sibyl perpetual life, but without youth. She inevitably withered in to old age. Probably her only wish, paradoxically, was to die. Eliot finds a provocative symbol in her in relation to modern life where everybody desperately craves for death)

'Il miglior fabbro' (Italian)

= 'the greater craftsman' Waste Land is dedicated to Ezra Pound, who influenced and guided Eliot in his poetic ventures. The Waste Land was thoroughly revised and reduced in length by Pound, "the greater craftsman".

'il miglior fabbro' are the words originally used by Dante to hail the troubadour provincial artist. Arnaut Daniel in Purgatory (Dante, Purgatory, XXVI 117).

The Phrase, not only as used by Dante, but as quoted by myself, had a precise meaning. I did not mean to imply that Pound was only that; but I wished at the moment to honour the technical mastery and critical ability manifest in his own work, which had also done so much to turn. The Waste Land from a jumble of good and bad passages into a poem (T. S. Eliot). At first The Waste Land was published without dedication. While presenting a copy of the poem to Ezra Pound, Eliot added this. However, Eliot included the dedication, when The Waste Land was reprinted in Poems 1910 - 1925).

[troubadour = aristocratic poet minstrels of Provence in southern France.]

Section 1 Lines

The burial of the Dead 'The Burial of the Dead' Eliot has

taken this title from the Book of Common Prayer. In the church of England, the full title of the burial service is 'the order of the Burial of the Dead'.

In the context of the poem with its mythological allusion, 'the dead' may be the fertility gods, mentioned by both Weston and Frazer.

1. April....month: Easter is celebrated to remind humanity of Christ's resurrection. It normally falls in April. In vegetation myths too spring brings fertility to the land and potency to the Fisher King. The very thought of 'resurrection', spring and string of life fills modern man with fear. Hence April is called the cruellest month' Eliot alludes to the opening line of Chaucer's prologue to the Canterbury Tales in an ironic way, for there it is spring, shower, pilgrimage prayer, cheerfulness and the like.

2. Lilacs....land: In ancient myths lilac symbolised. Eliot refers to it in an ironic way.

Lines 1 - 7 Depict a powerful symbolic picture of winter and receding life.

8. Starbuck: A well known lake resort near Munich. West German. Eliot visited it in Aug. 1911 King Ludwig's Castle, Schloss Berg was here. While attempting escape, he was drowned in the lake (if Death by Water', fourth section of The Waste Land)

9 - 18 May be a vision of the conversation that Eliot had with the niece of King Ludwig, Marie Larisch. Critics for a long time believed that Eliot had taken details from the countess' autobiography My Past (1913). Interestingly, Marie was a believer in fortune telling by cards. The poet's description of the sledding is just a snatch of the conversation that he had with this niece and confidante of the Austrian Empress Elisabeth (See Valerie Eliot, ed The Waste Land Facsimile, pp. 125-6) [take note of the sudden change of mood that Eliot effects in these lines].

10. Hofgarten : An outdoor cafe (German). There is a famous 'Hofgarten' in Munich in a public park with a zoo.

12. Bin.....Deutsch: I am not Russian at all, I come from

Lithuania, a pure German' A word by word transcript of a remark made to Eliot by centers Marie Larisch.

19. eliot effects another sued range here.

20. Son of man:cf. Ezekeil Zil

(Eliot's note)

And he said unto me, son of man, stand up on they feet, and I will speak unto thee.

22. Broken images: of Ezekiel 6:6 'In all your dwelling places the cities shall be laid waste, and the high places shall be desolate, that your altars may be laid waste and made desolate and your idols may be broken and cease, and your images may be cut down, and your works may be abolished.

23. The cricket no relief: cf. Ecelesiast es 12:5 (Eliot's note) 'Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets'

26. 'red rock': the sacrificial altar, a holy spot, may suggest a bloody revolution (critics differ in their views]

26-29 Actually these lines are rerendering of the lines in an earlier poem, 'The Death of Saint Narcissue' (1910 or 1911). cf. The complete Poems and Plays, P.605)

30. I will..... dust... The allusion is biblical. cf. Ecclesiastes 12:7. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was.' In John Donne too there is a similar passage cf. Meditation 4 of Devotions Up on Emergent Occasions? (1524); What's become of man's great extent and proportion, when himself shrinks himself, and consumes himself to a handful of dust.

"The whole passage. It would be noted, has behind it echoes of the old Testament prophets, and more especially of Exekiel and Ecclesiastes: messenger, one might say, of door for the people of Israel, but messengers who also bore with them the promise of a renewal of life. (Derek Traversi, T.S. Eliot The Longer Pomes, 27)

31.34 Frisch..... du: Tristan and Isolde, I, verse 5-8(Eliot's note) cf. Richard Wangerner's music drama in which a young lover in Trinstan's ship sings in a casual way of his sweetheart. Fresh wafts the wind/To the Homeland/My Irish sweetheart (Child)

Where are you lingering?

35. Hyacinths: A symbol of regrowth. In Greek mythology a Spartan youth Hyacinthus, was accidentally killed. The hyacinth flower grew from his blood, Usually in Sparta Hyacinth's death and rebirth are celebrated in early summer. There is a close connection between hyacinths and vegetation cults.

37-41 Yet..... silence: An in explicable mystical experience of love. cf Wagner's Tristan and Isolde: Tistan was sent to Ireland to bring Isolode to be the bride of his uncle Kind Mark. A potion Tristan and Isolde drink makes them eternal lovers

42. Oed'.....Meer. Tristan and Islode, III verse 24 (Eliot's note). Tristan is on his death bed, still anxiously looking forward to the ship carrying Isolde. His men after surveying the sea reports. Desolate and empty the sea.

43. Madame Sosostris: Eliot might have borrowed the name from Aldous buxley chrome yellow (1921). It is the pseudo name of one of Huxley's characters. Counters Marie Larich too might have given him a tip. There seems to be an oblique reference to Madam Blaratsky too.

Clairvoyante: A woman having the ability down. ("bathos")

46-56 The reference is obviously to the Tarof Pack of cards originally used for dirination by the Egyptian priests, now cheapened by base fortune-tellers. of. Eliot's note: I am not familiar with the exact constitution of the Tarof pack of cards, from which I have obviously departed to suit my own convenience. The hanged man, a member of the traditional pack, fits my purpose in two ways: because he is associated in my mind with the hanged God of Frazer and because I associated him with the hooded figure in the passage of the disciples to Emmans in part V...The man with There Starves (an authentic members of the Tarot pack) I associate quite

arbitrarily with the Fischer King himself.

Jessic L Weston connects the Tarot pack of cards (78) with primitive rituals. In Grail Legends the four suits of the Tarot pack the cup, the lance, the swords and the dish are used as the life symbols. Many of the figures on the Tarot pack of cards are related to fertility rites. In Italy and France the Tarot was used in the fourteenth century. No body knows much about the origin of the Tarot pack.

47. Phoenician sailit: He tolls in to phoebes in section IV Eliot seems to project him as a fertility god, whose image was thrown into the sea every summer and recovered on the spring. It may symbolize resurrections.

48. Those.....look! of. Shakespeare. The Tempest (I ii, 398).

This is part of Ariel's song which tells prince Ferdinand about the imagined drowning and transformation of his father king Alouso.

Full fathom five thy father lies....and strange (I ii 396-401)

49 Belladonna (Italian)= beautiful lady a deadly night shade (a plant) from which a poisonous drug is obtained. Some use it as a beauty preparation to enlarge the pupoe, of the eye of women

Lady of the Rocks Eliot implies a contrast with Virgin Mary in keeping with the Waste land situation

of. Madonna of the Rock's a famous painting by Leonardo da Vinci

50. The lady of Situations: The lady of unequal, incompatible situations, The low stature of this lady is indicated by the small letter 'l' Notice the l used in the previous line. This lady anticipates the fallen lady in part II.

51. Man with three Staves (Eliot's note) Je identifies him with the maimed and sexually impotent King (of. crossed staves of The hollow Men -T.S Eliot)

Wheel : Wheel of fortune; Wheel of life (a favorite image of Eliot). The poet might have been conscious of its Eastern & Western connections. The wheel of life is supposed to be rotated by

Anubis, the Egyptian funeral god with A Jackal's head symbolising good, and Typhoons, the giant of Greek mythology standing for Evil.

52. One eyed Merchant: He merges with Mr. Eugeminds, the smyrna merchant (part III:II 209-14): *the totta n-ny ton*

Eliot may be describing him as one eyed since he is depicting a side view. He may also be suggesting his baseness. Traditionally the Syrian merchants were credited with the spreading of the mysterious relating to primitive fertility rites,

53. Somethings back in all likelihood the mysteries of fertility cults

55. The Hanged God: One of the Tarot cards in it there is the figure of a man hanging by one foot from a cross (T-shaped). Eliot seems to link this figure with Frazers hanged God, sacrificed to restore fertility to the land. Fear Death by Water: in part IV, Death by Water, the protagonist has this sad end.

57. Mrs. Equitone: Eliot may not be referring to any particular woman. She may stand for any shallow, fashionable modern woman Eliot imaginatively coins such provocative proper nouns.

60. Unreal city: (Eliot's note): He refers to two lines of! Les septes Vielilards.' (The Seven old Men). A poem from Les Fleurs du Mal (The Flowers of Evil) by Charles Baudelaire, a 19th century decadent French Romantic poet. (trans) Crowded city, city full of dreams, Wherein broad daylight the spectres stops the passes but Eliot must have been struck with Baudelaire's Paris similarity to his own Waste Land, and Dante's Inferno

62-63 So many (Eliot note)

of. Inferno III, 55-57

It never would have entered in my head. There were so many men whom death had slain (Dante's words to Virgil as he finds the damned in the vestibule of Hell)

64. (Eliot's note) of: Inferno. IV, 25-27

We heard no loud complaint. No crying there no sound of grief except the sound sighing Quivering for ever through the eter-

nal air.

(Dante's description of the pagans in limbo) deprived of the bliss of God's presence.

66. King William street: a Well known street in London

67. Saint Mary Woolnoth: An anglican church designed by Christopher Wren after the Great fire in London at the corner of kind William Street and Lombard Street.

68. With anine: (Eliot's note) He makes a special mention of the flat, sound of the last stroke of nine. In England office workers begin their day at 9 there.

'dead sound flat sound

'There may be a reference to the hours immediately after crucifixion from the third hour to the nineteenth darkness descended on earth!

69. Stetson (Another instance of striking a proper noun of Mrs. Equitone)

Usually considered to be Ezra pound.

70. Mylac: one of the navel battles of the First Punic War 260B.C) in which the Romans fought against the carthaginians for trade supremacy in the Mediterranean. The romans War. The protagonist's finding of steel, son at mylac in the First Punic War and not in First world war suggests that all wars one war. Eliot always subscribed to the view that the past and [present roll into each other.

71-75 In these lines Eliot Takes is back to the central theme of the First section the burial of the dead

71-72 Eliot obviously refers the, fertility cult: burial and resurrection.

74. (Eliot's note) of. Webster's White Devil

According to Eliot it refers to the dirge (a slow sad song sung over a dead person) sung by the insane corneal at the time of the burial of her son who was murdered by his brother

But keep the wolf far thence, that's foe to men

for with his nails he'll dig them up again (White devil V IVV)

note the changes Eliot effected

Wolf to dog and foe to friend

Dog-There may be a reference to stirus, the dog Star. It is closely connected with fertility cults. When the Dogstar rose the Waters of the Nile too rose.

76. (Eliot's note) of. Preface to *Fleurs Du mal*

This is the last line of Bay dialers's prefatory poem. Aulecturer (To the Reader) The line may be ?Translated As. Hypocrite Reader! My likeness, my brother! Baudelaire believed that the poet and the reader alike suffered from lethargy & dullness which are the problems if modern man too. Just like Baudelaire, Eliot too wants to shock the reader to be alive while reading/responding to the poem.

Section II

A GAME OF CHESS

Lines

A game of Chess: multi layered allusion, typically, Eliotian At the outset, it may be an allusion to Thomas Middleton's (1580-1627) play. A Game at Chess (1264). It is a satire on marriage effected for political advantage, Perhaps. A more relevant allusion may be to the same play wrist's work, women Beares Woman (16221") Livia, procures plays chess with the mother while her daughter in law. Branca is being seduced by the Duke Bothe these actions take place together (Woman Beware Women, Act II) There may also be a reference to Alexander Popes' The Rape of the Lock. Take note to the Game of ombre described in that poem.

The note of boredom is merged with a sickening opulence and luxury minus the soul.

lines 77- (Eliot's note) Antony and Cleopatra, II, ii 190

77-80 Here Enobarbus describes the sailing of cleopatra on the river Cindus flowing through the city of Tarsus, in Asia Minor

The bagrge she sat in like a burnished

throne burned' on the water...

and what they undid did

(Antony and Cleopatra, II ii 195-208)

79. Standards-poles

80 Cupidon - small bottles, phials

88. Urgent- thick oily substance ointment

92. Lacqueria (Eliot's note)

Aeneid, 1726. Eliot suggests virgil's description of the banquets hosted by Dido, Queen of Carthage in honour of Aeneas, flaming torches hang from the golden, panelled ceiling: and torches conquer the night with flames (Dido fell in love with Aeneas and hence the grand show. But later on she was 'disheartened for Aeneas unaffected by her love went on with his mission)

93. Coffered:

98. The sylvan scene: (Eliot's note) of. Milton's Paradise Lost, IV 140. The phrase sylvan scene is used Milton's account of Statian's first glimpse of the garden of Eden

So on Le fages and to the border comes

Access denied..(PL, N. 131-137)

99. The change of Philomel.... (Eliot's note) cf. Ovid's Metaphases. VI Ovid, the Roman poet gives a version of the Greek myth, Centered on Philomela a daughter of Pandion, King of Athens. Philomela was raped by her brother in law, King Tereus (her sister, Procne's husband). Tereus cut off phonically tongue to hush his crime and even told Procne that philomela was dead. But she though in captivity, managed to pass on her fall" on a tapestry through a maid to her sister, But the gods out of compassion covered Philomela into a nightingale, Procne into a swallow and Tereus in to a hope. A shocking story of sheer lust warranting legitimate comparison with the waste land set up

103. Jug Jug: In Elizabethan poetry this represented nightingale's song. In modern times it refers to sexual intercourse. Eliot obviously pins to the utter degeneration that is rampant in the waste land relating to love and sex.

111-123. Eliot's deliberate attempt to use conversational snatches and to shock the readers out of their slumber cf. B.C. Southam's opinion that these lines have striking resemblance to D/H/Lawrence's poems. The Fox (Refer A Student's guide to the Selected poems of T.S. Eliot, pp 79-80)

A laxity and loosens indicative of shallow thinking is the patent strain of the Waste land, Eliot stresses this point in these lines.

115 Rat's alley A-disquieting symbol of the waste land.

125. Those are eyes There may be a reference to The Tempest (I,ii, 398) Ariel's song which tells prince Ferdinand of his father, King Alonso's drowning and transformation. In The tempest' every thing moves towards positive values and love triumphs, whereas in the waste land just the reverse happens, Eliot has made imaginative use of this implied contrast to heighten his poetry.

128. Shakespearean rag

Rag: a type of jazz, dance music The Shakespearean rag' was [popular song of 1912

cf. Kenneth Ball's song, Oh you Beautiful Doll'

The rag begin

That Shakespearean rag

Most intelligent, very elegant Eliot quite aptly satirizes the tendency

to tamper with the classics

138... A game of chess (Eliot's note)

Women Beware Women

(Read the note on the title of this section)

139. Demobbed (slang) demobilized allowed to leave military service

141. The bar attendant's mild warning at the time of closing at an English Pub, 145 antique old

142-70 A telling realistic shot of I, life devoid of sham and pretence, though its level' is quite low.

164. A cryptic comment on the values attached to marriage

(family children etc.)

166. Gammobn bacon or harm

168-69: These lines are used as a sort of refrain & warning to the people at large do or die may be its burden: all the world is a pub Eliot ironically comments

170 Good night Deliberate distortion of good night indicating the low standard of the people 172 (An implied contrast between Lils and Lous and Ophelia) cf. Hamlet IVV, 72 Parting words of Ophelia to the King and Queen she is insane and firmly believes that Hamlet has raped and left her, At this juncture she sings a song about St. Valentines day. Ophelia also meets her death by water (cf IV section of The Waste' Land)

SECTION III

THE FIRE SERMON

The fire is the Sterile burning of lust Eliot tries to evoke the format of a sermon. He might have been inspired by Buddhas's sermon to his disciples exhorting them to eschew the fires of lust. St. Augustine's words on unholy passions too might have weighed with Eliot. In all probability the poet took a form St. Paul's pregnant warning it is better to marry than to burn.

170-75 A Vision of the modern winter

Struck river scene is evoked

176- Eliot alludes to the refrain in Edmund Spenser's (c 1552-99) Pratholmion which describes the betrothals of Elizebth and Jatherine Siomerset (daughters of the Earl of Somerset) The Atmosphere is one of joy and fertility as opposed to the present state of pain and barrenness (In spencer's "Prothalamion"the scene described is also a river scene at London. And it is dominated by nymphs and their paramours, and the nymphs are preparing for a wedding. The contrast between spencer's scene and its twentieth century ceiling is jarring (Cleanth Brooks, "The Waste Land: Critique of the myth" Studies in The Wasste Land"ed. Bradley Gunter,

49)

182. cf. Psalms 137:1 The Jews Bermourn their exile in Babylon. By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea , we wept, when we remembered Zion

Lac=Lake

Lake Geneva (In Switzerland is locally knows as LacLeman) It may be remembered that Eliot wrote The Waste Land mainly at Lausanne near Lac Lemon

leman is also an euphemism for sweetheart 185: but at my back...I hear: Eliot deliberately twists some lines from Andrew marrell's "To His Coy mistress" 'But at my back I always hear Ties 'Winged chariot hurrying near (21-22)

The lover is pleading with his love to abandon her coyness for the time being. The same line is echoed in 1196 too

189. cf. The Fischer King of fertility cults

192 cf. The Tempest, I, ii (Eliot's note)

Ariel's song on the presumed drowning of Alonso, king of Naples, Prince Ferdinand's father

Sitting on a bank,

Weeping again the King of Father's wrack

This music crept by me up on the waters,

Allaying both their fury and my passion with its sweet air (392-96)

Here too Eliot spins the web of contrast

(The dominant mood and theme of The Tempest is that of reconciliation and regeneration. But in The Waste Land the haunting theme is that infertility decay and death)

196 Eliot parodies the famous lines from to his coy Mistress by Andrew Marvel 197-98 (Eliot's note) cf John day's (15740,1640)

The parliament of Bees

When of the sudden, listening, you shall hear, A noise of horns and haunting which shall bring Actacon to Diana in the spring When all shall see her naked skin...

Actacon ventured to catch Diana, the goddess of chastity in

all her naked splendour While bathing with her nymphs. He was severely Punished for this violation. He was turned into a stay and was killed by his own hounds. One has to pay dearly, when one gets drunk by love. Eliot uses imaginatively the allegorical reaches of this myth to comment on aberrant love that flourishes on the waste land

Sweeney: A stock symbol of sensual man in Eliot's scheme

199-201 Mrs Porter her daughter: Characters in cheap ballad sung during world war I by soldiers, It is alleged that they ran bawdy house in Cairo. They tried to protect themselves from venereal diseases. Eliot's critics suggest that this ballad was a parody of popular song, Pretty Red Wing Some relevant lines are given below

Of the moon shines bright on Mrs. Porter
And on the daughter of Mrs. Porter
And they both wash their feet in soda water
And so they oughter
To keep them clean

Soda Water (not to the aerated drink)=a Bio carbonate solution

202 EtO...conpole! (French) trans

and Of those children's voices chanting from the choir loft (Verlaine. Parsifal) Eliot refers to Verlaine's Parsifal in his note

Paul Verlaine (1844-96)

French Poet. He describes the quest of knight Parsifal. While questing, he withstands the seduction of the temptress Kundry. In acknowledgment of his purity, before entering the castle to heal the wounded King, the knight's feet are washed, while the children went on singing from the choir loft.

203 Refer the notes for 1199-103

206. Tereu's violation (raping) of Philomela is contrasted with the purity of Parsifal

209 Smyrna: now known as Izmir. in western Turkey, a well-known trading centre of ancient world.

211. c.i.f.f: (Eliot's note) cost, insurance and freight (corrected by Valerie Eliot as carriage and insurance free to London

The Waste Land Facsimile, p,147)

Documents sight: (Eliot's note) the bill of lading etc. were to be handed to the buyer upon payment of the sight draft.

212 demotic language used by the ordinary people

213. Cannon street Hotel: A Famous hotel at London Where the business houses are situated

241 Metropole: A Luxury hotel in the sea side resort, Brighton. The reference is to the homosexual proposition advanced by Mr. Eugenides to the protagonist. Some critics deem it as autobiographical. Eliot himself admits it. (cf.B.C. Southern a students guide to the selected Poems of T.S. Eliot. p83

281. Tiresia (Eliot's note) Heracles Tiresias as a comprehensive and complex symbol of the diverse experiences of modern man underscoring the modern predicament arising out of lust, aberrant sex, barren spiritual values etc.) Eliot observes: Tiresias although a mere spectator and not indeed a "character" is yet the most important personage in the poem uniting all the rest....and the two sexes meet in Tiresias 'What Tiresias sees' in fact is the substance of the poem (Note)

Eliot refers to Ovid's Metamorphosis, where Tiresias's sex transformation and retransformation are narrated. Tiresias's violent beating of the coupling serpents in the forest transformed him into a woman. After eight years, when the act was repeated, she was changed back to a man. This Tiresias could experience the joys and the aches of both sexes, and perhaps could be a critic of both sexes. He weaves in another strand from the Roman legend relating to Love and Juno. When Juno and Love had a difference of opinion on the enjoyment of sex by gods and goddesses the dispute was referred to Tiresias. He gave his judgement in favour of Love. The ire struck Juno made him blind. Love in retort to Juno, to compete Tiresias's loss gifted him with forevision the capacity to foresee things.

219. Old man.....Breasts' seemingly and Ovidian echo Acts as a refrain (cf.228)

221. (Eliot's note) He cites sappho, Greek poetess of the seventh century B.C. cf. fragment 149. There is a prayer addressed of Evening star to fetch the child back to his mother,

There seems to be a more direct link with R.L. Stevenson's Poem, Requiem'

Home is the sailor, home from sea'

And the hunter home from the hill

222-227 A contrast between the old world and the modern world where women and life in general are mechanised. Romance and love are lost words lust and full are the watch words now.

227. Camisole: A short undergarment worn esp formerly by women on the top half of the body.

Stays: A lady's old fashioned undergarment stiffened by pieces of bone and worn tight around the waist.

228-030 the expected fall of (w) man as foreseen by Tiresias' is described in a casual and deliberately deflated key.

231. Young man Earbuncular: Multiple allusions to both Milton and Chaucer Milton's sonnet. The Lady Margaret Lay that old man eloquent

Chaucer Prologue to Canter bury tales (cf., His description of summoner)

Carbuncle: A large painful boil carbuncular

(derogatory) associated with loose sex and aberrant living.

234. A Bradford millionaire: One who shot into fame through quickly acquired wealth Bradford: an industrial town in Yorkshire, England, famous for Woolen industry. During World War I many industrialists became rich all on a sudden.

238. Unreported - not a re (roved)reprove=to talk to angrily or express disapproval of)

238-42 The mechanical nature of love reduced to dull sex is a most clinically delineated with commendable case in satiric vein

241. Tiresias used to prophesy in the market place of Thebes

for many generations.

246. Tiresias sat in Hades (the underworld)

and there too he prophesied -Ulysses consulted him in Hades

252. The purely mechanical nature of human relationships including sex is critically put across.

253-56. cf. Eliot's note He refers the reader to Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield He alludes to the scene where Olivia sings, when she comes back to the scene of her seduction by thornhill

When lovely woman stoops to folly

And finds too late that men betray

What charm can soothe her melancholy

What art can wash her guilt away 2

The only art her guilt to cover

To hide her shame from every eye,

To give repentance to her lover

And Wring her bosom is to die

Eliot subtly contrasts the old order with the new. They very notion of morality, sexual purity, honour etc. has undergone an unwholesome change.

257. cf. The Tempest, I,II 389 words uttered by Ferdinand When he listens to Ariel's song

258. Strand A major street in London

Queen Victoria street in the City (the business quarter of London

260. Lower Themes street; in the city (market place) of London. Eliot worked in Lloyed bank situated in this street.

261. Mandoline (mandolin) a round-backed musical instrument with eight metal strings, rather like a lute.

263. Fishmen-fishermen from the near by Bill ring gate main fish market of London

264-65. Magnus Martyr, a fine church designed by Christopher Wren. It is situated in Lower Thames street, London

Inexplicable gold of Eliot's note

The interior of St. Mangus Maryr is to my mind one of the finest among Wren's interiors.

Lonian-typical of ancient Greek building that is not very highly decorated. Something like a purple patch (an oasis) in the Waste land/. The Fishermen, Magnus Martyr, Lonaian splendour, music, leisure- all point to positive values, in an other wise arid land where only patronising kisses' shoot off from men groping in the dark land lovely women are too willing to stoop to folly

cf. Eliots note

The song of the (three) Thames daughter begins here. From lien 292-306 inclusive they speak in turn .v(ide) Gotterdammerung. III, I the Rhine of the Nibelungs composed by Richard Wagner. In the Twilight of God's the Rhine daughter bemourn the loss of gold that they guarded for the Nibelungs, for the loss of gold resulted in the loss of their joy and the beauty of the Rhine River too Both lin content and form (rhythm) Eliot closely follows wagner. The poet seems to be influenced by Joseph Canard's heart of Darkness too

272. Leeward: going in the same direction as the wind (nautical) spar : mast

275 Green which reach: a division of London on the north side of the Thames

276. Isle of Dogs: a peninsula in the Thames. Just opposite Green which

277-78 Weiatala

Leialala-Wagner's refrain

Where the Rhine daughters weep over the loss of gold

279. cf. Eliot's note. He refers us to the fruitless amorous adventures of Queen Elizabeth and Robert Dudley. The Earl of Leicester

280-85 Reverberate Enobar bus description of Cleopatra's barge and her sailing of Shakespeare. Antony and Cleopatra

293. cf. Eliot's note he refers us to Dante's Purgatory C 133 La pia's lament, who was murdered by her husband/

Remember me, who am la Pia

Seina made me, maremma

un made me...

(Place name)

Highbury: In North London, A residential suburb

Richmond and new: Places on the Western side of London on the thames

296. Moorgate: A tube (underground) railway station in the East End of London

300 Margate: A Sea/side resort in kent on the Thames estuary. Eliot began the composition of The Waste Land here in 1921.

307 To carthage then i came: Eliot's note He refers us to The Confessions of St. Augustine (345-430). In this passage St Augustine remembers his youth full days steeped in bust Carthage.

308. cf. Buddha's fire sermon when he stresses the idea that everything is on fire only when one is cleansed of base passions one could really be free and escape from rebirth.

309 cf. St. Augustine's Confessions

Here also fire is conceived as a symbol of consuming and cleansing symbol I entangle my steps with these outward beauties, but thou pluckiest me out, Of, Lord, Thou pluckiest me out!!!

Often, Hoshua, the high priest is refereed to as the brand plucked out of the fire.

Eliot right from the title to the very end of this section ha used quite imaginatively the elusive possibilities of fire with its traditional and topical imports. The use of tradition and individual talent is amply evident in this section.

Section IV Death by Water in Eliot's manuscript it was a much longer section. He wrote the first part of this section inclose imitation of the Ulysses episode in "Inferno"

(canto XXVI) Ezra Pound axed these lines. Eliot was a bit uneasy. He even said that he would do away with even the phoebes passage. But Ezra pound insisted that phlebas is a key fire (Introduced in the Tarot pack of cards) and he should be retained exactly where he is

cf. The Waste Land Facsimile P.129)

Death by Water-fertility cult practice of Jessie L. Weston The ritual of throwing and effigy of pagan fertility God like Adonis into the sea at Alexandria. And reclaiming the same in spring or Bibles. (Cf. The Indian rites-Ganesh Puja, Durg Puja etc.) 319 Gentile, (a person who is) not Jewish 320 Wheel An important symbol in the Tarot Pack of Cards. The Wheel of fortune in the picture, the wheel is regulated by a figure holding a crown and a sword. Man's Indefinable fate is symbolically depicted here.

SECTION V

What the Thunder said Ezra Pound acclaimed these lines He had even admitted that lines, in this section. Did not even need retouch

Cf Eliot note: In the first part of Part V three themes are employed the journey to Emmaus, the approach to the chapel Perilous (see Miss Weston's book) and the present decay of eastern Europe

Lines,

322-30. Eliot in his own characteristic way links crucifixion with the fertility cults: the fisher King legend. Christ's passion. The scene, his suffering at Gethsemane, Cheating, imprisonment, trial and crucifixion. Both aggravate the Waste Land condition and its inevitable despair.

322. Cf. John 18:3 Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.

323. Eliot hints at the event that preceded the arrest of Christ at Gethsemane (Mathew 26:36) And Golgotha, the mountaineers spot where the crucifixion took place.

324. Agony in strong places: There is a clear echo of St. Mathew 26:38. Thennsaith he unto them My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even untodeath.....

326. The wrong headed people came with arms and shouted crucify him

If St. Mathew 26:47& St Mark 15:13-14: And they cried out again crucify him.....And they cried out the more exceedingly, crucify him

326-28 Eliot brings home to the reader the humiliation of Christ, crucifixion and its after effect in ateling way, packed with Biblical echoes.

Prison and palace-After imprisoning Christ, he was first taken to the place of the high priest Caillaphas and then to that of Pontious Pilate. The later was the prosecutor of jud aea.

reverberation....dead Cf. St. Mathew 27:51

329-31. Note the tense used in e.329.we who were....The poet does not say "We who are loving." It is "We who were living. It is the death in life of Dantes Limbo. Life in the full sense had been lost (Cleanth Brosks, Studies in the Wate Land, p.56)

331-59 In Eliots, opinion the best lines of the Waste Land. He considered these lines to be last ingvalue. (Cf. the waste land Facsimile, p.129) The spiritual sterility and despair, after effects of the crucifixion is merged with the prevailing barrenness of all sorts in the wasteland.

341& 343. the quest motif Cf. Fertility cults. Note: not even silence: not even solitude

356. Eliot in his note says that the water-dripping song of the hermit-thrush is apathy famous.

360-6 The resurrection of Christ shown to his disciples on the way to Emmaus. Cf. St. Luke 24:13-15. And behold, two of them went that some day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about there score furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus, himself drew near, and went with them Eliot in his note makes a mention of an Antarctic expediton. When the explorers were very tired, they had the constant delusion that there was one more member than could actually be counted.

"Who is.....your? "The God has returned has risen, but the

travellers cannot tell whether it is really he or mere illusion induced by their delirium (Brooks p. 56)

"Hooded figure" who walks always besides you and the "hooded hordes"-Eliot invokes both parallelism and contrast.

Cf. the Hollow Men

Shape without form, shade without colour

Paralysed force, gesture without motion

366-76 Eliot voices his concern over the decay of Eastern Europe. He links it with the fall of Christendom due to the attack of the unspiritual barbarians. As we know this unholy event motivated St. Augustine to write his City of God. Eliot, as his notes tell us, has particularly connected the deception here with the "decay of Eastern Europe". The hordes represent, then, the general waste land of the modern world with a special application to the break up of Eastern Europe, the region with which the fertility cults were especially connected and in which today the traditional values are thoroughly discredited (Brooks p. 57)

And for that matter all cities become one city. Cf. Hermann Hesse, *A Glimpse into Chaos* (1920)

379-84 A series of lurid, shocking scenes (pictures) all indicative of a total collapse. Eliot seems to echo Kurtz's words: 'The horror, the horror' (Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*). Shocking spiritual aridity is depicted in the perspective of chilling horror. Some critics attribute these macabre pictures to Hieronymus Bosch's (1450-1516) paintings. 387-94 Eliot's depiction of the chapel perilous Knight for fertility has to undergo a number of trials (He also has to take risks to prove his worth to restore fertility by raising meaningful queries and by getting answers for the same). Even a glimpse of the Grail will depend on his courage and mental readiness.

392. Peter's denying of Christ three times and then the cock crowed (such an eventuality was predicted by Christ)

394-420 the meaning and message of the poem, is rendered as the message of the thunder, divine voice)

395-99 In keeping with the Upanishadic Lore that Eliot tries

to weave into the poem to hammer out his, its message, he creates very subtly in Eastern backdrop. Eliot always pleaded for the breaking down of geographical boundaries and borders, in an attempt to make poetry universal (the Gangetic river belt was also connected with fertility rites)

400 DA the noise of the thunder

Cf. Brahadaranyaka Upanishad'

Eliot makes use of the parable relating to the three types of descendants of Prajapati gods, men, asuras. After their studies under the tutorship of Prajapati himself, at the request of his disciples he uttered the syllable da. Gods said they heard *damyata* = (control) Asura said they heard '*Dayathvam*' (=Sympathise) Men said they heard *datta* (=gave)

Prajapati acclaimed for they understood da, in the respective manner in which they should have understood it:

The thunder (divine voice) also rings out the same da, da, d
Be controlled, Be generous, Be Merciful'

The true meaning of da are totally lost in *The Waste Land*
401 Datta Give (Be generous)

403-4 The very idea of giving is distorted in the Waste land, where it merely points to sexual surrender

But Eliot subtly suggests another type of surrender (conquering of one's self) and awful...rooms, an unselfish, unthought of unrecorded act (of Kindness) which alone would couch for one's existence.

411. *Dayathvam*: Be merciful; sympathize I have...key: Eliot in his notes refers us to *Inferno XXXIII 46*.

And from below I heard the door of the horrible tower being locked. The words are uttered by *Ilgolno*. He was imprisoned along with his two youngest sons & grand sons by the Archship. All of them died of starvation.

410-416 the sad state of modern man, virtually imprisoned forever in spiritual bankruptcy, (But Eliot underscores the need for breaking this prison)

cf. the situation of the lady in 'A Game of chess 'too is one of imprisonment. She too confirms her prison by thinking of the key which turned in the door)

416. A. broken Coriolanus: (cf. Shakespeare, Coriolanus) Coriolanus, the Roman statesman, who was defeated by this own pride

418. Damyata - be controlled

418-22 Eliot exhorts the need on our part (asuras) to be subjected to the control of the divine hand. Remember, In thy will is my will

423-24 If Eliot's note. He refers us to the Chapter on the Fisher King in H.Jessie. L.Weston's From Ritual to Romance

425. Eliot makes use of the parallel situations of King Hezekiah (Bible) and the Fisher King (Grial legend, West on)

Cf. Isaiah 38:1 set thine house in order for though shalt die, native This was a sort of warning given to king Hezekiah. However he prayed to God. He was spared and his kingdom was delivered from the Assyrians the fisher king was also anxious to see the quest for fertility come to a fruitful end.

(Eliot always believed that a non christen Civilization would inevitable collapse, but faith would survive through the dark ages. Cf. The end of his Essay: Thoughts After Lambeth")

426. The refrain of an English nursery rhyme.

427. Cf. Eliot's note. He quotes the word of Arnaut Daniel. The provincial poet. To Dante when he meet him in purgatory.

Now you pray you by that virtue which leads you to the top of the stair, think of me in my time of pain. (Purgatorio XXXVI 145-8) The line that Eliot quotes from Dante means. He disappeared to Eliot in a special way, probably because of cleansing spiritual strain.

428. Cf. Eliot's note> He refers to an anonymous Latin poem The vigil of Venus, The quoted line is When shall I be like the swallow?" (Cf. Philomela tale sections II and III Philomela's sister was changed i to a swallow)

429. This line is quoted from The E.I Desdchado (The Dis-

inherited) by the 17th Century French poet, Gerard de Nerval.

The Prince of Aquitaine in the ruined tower (trans)

Yet another symbol of the broken. rootless modern civilization

430- The heap of broken images and far flung allusions bring out the sad start of the maimed fisher king and his waste land'

431- An allusion to The Spanish Tragedy: Hieronymo is Mad again by Thomas Kyd. Hieronymo Stages a play at court and takes vengeance in the murderers of his son, Horatio Hieronymo gives them what they deserve death.

432. Key message: the means to break the prison; the waste land'

433. Shanthi.....

Traditional, formal ending to an Upanishad Cf. Eliot's note.

" The peace which passeth understanding" is feeble understanding of the content of this word.

Eliot rightly diagnoses the disease, spiritual (and even) physical sterility. Modern man's alarming maladies can be overcome only by restoring spiritual, moral and religious values of high order once again erected on wholesome faith. Then only we will have showers (rain) in this waste land. A radical spiritual upheaval alone can save humanity and enable him to ascend to Shanthi. Shanthi, shanthi.

Essays

1. The Waste Land is a set of separate poems 'Do you agree? Examine its structure.

The sense of the abyss the framework, the waste land' fertility cults, grail legend myth, the numerous far reaching allusions and a heap of broken images shored against the ruins of modern man fishing for life land. The waste land a rare and rich unity. Each section is a separate poem on its own but there is an underlying inviolable link which string together all sections and make it more than a single whole In a way the whole poem is a complex rendering of the modern man with the aid of a modern mind'. In

one way it is a desperate search for the restoration of fertility by refurbishing the sunken spirit to of man. The quest of the knight in weston for a Glimpser of the grail to bring back fertility to the land and potency to the kings is very much in keeping with the need if the battered and barren protagonist and arid land, which Eliot draws imaginatively in *The Waste Land*. Fragments of fertility cults are placed in different parts of the poem to yield a complex oneness. Effigies are drowned only to be reclaimed. The sunken spirit of modern man badly needs a rise just as in fertility rise.

Eliot lends poem another layer of unity by tendering a lurid vision of the city of London. (Cf. St. Augustine, *City of God* James Joyce, *Ulysses*, (The city of Dublin) As Helen Gardner puts it; *The Waste Land* (it built) upon the myth of the mysterious sickness of the Fisher King in the Grail stories and the bring of the infertility which has fallen upon his lands. Which can only be lifted when he destined Deliverer asks the magic question or perform the magic act" (18). (Elaborate this point by a brief analysis of different sections) Use the explanation given in Notes)

Some critics come out with the charge that Mr. Eliot discards plot and his poem has no solution or conclusion. However, it is not true. The mythical layer, linked allusions and the rheumatic oneness; spiritual fall. Degeneration of love into lust, barrenness (people/king and land alike), distortion of time tested values- all lend the poem as a whole a laudable structural cohesion. (Give examples from different sections of *The Waste Land* to prove these points)

Yet another method adopted by Eliot to give the poem a structural unity is musical repetition. He gives his poem unity, partly by means of musical repetition and variation, but mainly by constant references to the underlying myth and to related myths of death and re-birth (Helen Gardner, p.69) (You can establish these points with suitable instances from different sections.)

The poem drifts: Fragments float. Roots do not clutch. Images are heaped. All facilities an incessant (at times even insane)

movement. The restless movement (an inevitable sign of hollow men the cursed inhabitants of the waste land) lends structural unity of an unusual kind.

Yet another strategy adopted by Eliot to give structural cohesion is roll the character places in to one another. He melts the character, but they continue to the bearings of the central concerns of the poem as a whole from Beginning to end. (See my note based on Eliot's note on Tiresias) In his opinion the most important "character" was Tiresias. just as the one eyed merchant. seller of currants, melts into the Phoenician Sailor, and the latter is not wholly distinct from Ferdinand and Prince of Naples, so all the women are one woman, and the two sexes meet in Tiresias. In the same way the time is all time and no time. Though we are plainly at times in modern London, "It is all humanity that seems to be waiting then; the disciples have buried their Lord and the women then; the disciples have buried their Lord and the women are lamenting the death of Syrian Adonis or Phrygian Attis" (Helen Gardner, 70)

The Waste Land gains a structural force and cohesion by Eliot's linking of places- London, Vienna, Alexandria, deserts, the southern pole, the village Emmaus, Chapel Perilous, Sinking Ganga, distant Himalayas are merged through Shapes of horror and death in life. *The Waste Land* is a series of visions but they linked delicately to make a whole take section by section At one level each section has contrasting scenes. But at another level there are many people' Characters' though hazy and scents which have an underlying unity.

Eg. *The Burial of the Dead'*

Marie, Isolde, Madame Sosostris, Tristram, The hanged Man, Fisher King. Overriding concerns..... debunking of love, cheapening of sex, death in life, quest motif-- recurring the many spokes which strengthen a unified structure-

A game of chess'

Masterly contrasts - The Modern lady (Cleopatra) Philomel tale, low class woman cheap seduces, hollow love, surrender to

meaningless sex, demobbed' disgruntled humans- all yield structural cohesion. The death in life bogged down by spiritual hollow-ness and physical debility is delineated with commendable insight in a comprehensive way in 'The fire sermon'. (Prothalamion) Shakespeare (The Tempest) Weston (Fisher King Legend), Andrew Marvell, and such other sources are used to delineate depth and reach of the maladies of the waste land. Definitely this poetic technique renders structural cohesion. The fall of the typist (lady) and the presence of Tiresias (both man and woman and a pervasive conscience) underscore Eliot's endeavour to connect all people, place, and time and hence all sections of the poem too. While the lady typist, Elisebeth, Thames daughters (spermer), Rhine Daughters (Wagner) - (all) 'fall', Eliot also finds space and time to hint the possibilities of revival/regeneration.

Magnus Martyr, fishermen, music, union, splendour, even fire burning (in spite of its multilayered meaning) - Suggest away out Cleansing-purgation and resurrection. The moot points that Eliot's vision is very much dependent on the preceding sections.

Death by water also stresses the inevitable structural links. The crux of the section -- death by water -- fully delineates the paradoxical position of the unscrupulous, material minded, spiritually hollow modern man. The very life giving water seemingly consumes such people beyond recognition in the waste land. The possibility of an ineffable, peace, a passage backward through a dream, to a seamless sleep in which the stain of living is washed away' cannot be ruled out (Helen Gardner, 74)

From the structural point of view, in the last section Eliot takes up the very same themes which he initiated in the first section. Of course he lends it another dimension by bringing the West East together and by elevating the very tenor of the poem to a spiritual height, which alone will show a way out to the maimed fisher king and his people in the modern waste land.

(Show how the Grail legend quest motif and the message of Prajapati (Brahma) Upanishad) DA (Datta, Dyaatvam,

Damyata) are subtly merged and rounded off with the formal end of an Upanishad, Shanti, Shanti, Shanti. The very possibility of rain (actual or expected) is in agreement with the waste land mood and need, which Eliot built up throughout the whole poem (not in separate sections alone)

Structurally and thematically. The Waste Land is a single poem with an overarching mythical, allusive and musical pattern of its own generating a terrible beauty.

2 What are the major themes in The Waste Land?

Or

Could you consider The Waste Land as Eliot's criticism of modern life?

OR

Eliot's primary concern is with the spiritual and religious fall of modern man. Denigration of ethics and traditional values disturb him. A non-Christian violence ridden war torn 20th century world prevails upon him to fall back on the cursed land of the maimed fisher king, to draw a parallel between or it,es and theirs. Normally, he deems the modern waste Land to be devoid of fertility and its king to be impotent. Spiritual barrenness results in physical sterility and collapse. Love is displaced by lust. Wholesome (healthy) human relationships are supplanted with soulless contrasts of convenience just on the basis profit and loss.

Eliot is appalled by the spiritual drought. He cannot, but see such a humanity as dead shrouded in forgetful snow sustaining little life with dried tubers. Death-in-life becomes a major motif. (Comment on the appropriateness of the title. The burial of the Dead)

Fruitless love relationships (A sort of death, perhaps more than death) Choose your own Examples from different sections. Marie, the aristocratic lady, the typist lady, Lou, Lil, and their counterparts-lust, sex, The waste land setup where no healthy values persist- Eliot is profoundly disturbed by the absence life sustaining religious/spiritual values (ll 20-30)

Fear death by water Another major concern of Eliot (ll.50-60) of section IV

Death by Water

Eliot is very much concerned with the state of life in modern cities, where men women live like shaded ghosts with sick hurry an divided aims (Last part of the first section.

Even in the midst of suffocating inescapable thoughts relating to death, Eliot has resource to fertility cults (falling back on Farer and Weston) and round the distant possibility of rebirth. Death-rebirth theme remains a recurrent one throughout the poem (Use relevant lines from sections III 70-74, III F I 257-60 Death by Water.

III 354-345 etc.)

Elaborate the quest motif (Use the details given in notes) This theme is closely related to the death-rebirth theme-side by side Eliot stresses the need for spiritual strength and moral cleaning. Only by establishing a link with higher values and faith man can survive. It is a major theme running throughout the poem. (Section V II,330-365, particularly)

Another theme fragmentation Eastern Europe-Refuge problem (Ref Sect V,II 366-76)

Eliot is also conscious of the need to find a way out to the spiritual and physical maladies infesting the waste land. The solution he could think of is the resurgence of faith, strengthening of spirit and the capacity to respond to higher values. Such a readiness on the part of modern advanced man alone will help the avid waste land to hope for the showers which may bring Shanthi to the people an Ind.

Eliot is critical of the poor state of modern life with all its spiritual and physical ills. He is deeply disturbed for, he he is fully aware of the gap between the past and the present good and wevil, love and lust, life and death, a fertile land and the waste land a potent king and an impotent one and the like. Therefore Eliot is critical in his stance, to a certain extent pessimistic too. But he is

not a guest without some light hope.

3 Comment on the mythical method/comment on Eliot's use of myth in The Waste Land

OR

What are the major symbols used by Eliot the Waste Land?

In order to make full use of the enriched wisdom of a modern poetic mind (History, myth, religion, anthropology, classics etc., all serving well the modern mind) Eliot resorts to a very sensitive use of score primordial myths and complex time tested (even original) symbols to delineate his profound concern with the start of modern life bereft of spiritual and all other sustaining positive values. (Refer to my notes and briefly explain the fertility cults and Grail legend: Frazer's Golden Bough and Weston's from Ritual to Romance)

In the application of these myths to the central theme, Eliot resorts to the principle of contrast The contrast is between two kinds of life and two kinds of death. Life devoid of meaning is death; sacrifice, even in the sacrificial death, may be life giving, an awakening to life (Cleanth Brooks,38)

In his use of symbols and employment of myths, Eliot evinces a deep awareness of moral Good and evil, Action and Inaction, Cum-xx Siby/is used as curtain raiser in the epigraph (Cf.Notes)

In the first section, The Burial of the Dead, Eliot projects the paradoxical state of modern life death in life Men dislike to be roused from the death - in life (Brooks, 39)Cf. Eliot, Gerontion Murder in the Cathedral etc.) Winter the season of liberation is symbolic of death.

Biblical illusions (Ezekiel and Ecclesiastics) in the first section itself bring in the merging of fertility gods-the Hanged Man and the fisher King)Eliot time again work up on these symbols to further death rebirth pattern even in the paradoxical perspective of the Waste land. Use relevant passages from different sections to prove this point) Yet another symbolic dimension is given by rolling together the phoenical sailor -the smyrana merchant the

fertility God and the fisher King.

Symbolic culled from different sources are strung together to give a rare thrust to the complex thoughts worked in the poem.

Comment on at some length on some select major symbols like the Waste land, rock, water Tarot, pack of cards, the Hanged Man, Tiresia's rock, Water, fire, grail, thunder etc., (Use the details from the poem)

Eliot's ability to use literary allusions with symbolic ramifications Explain a few highlight this point

Allusions to spender Shakespeare, Webster, Marvell, Middleton, Dante, Virgil, Wagner, Kyd etc. Illustrate from the text (Note will help you)

Classical legends used as symbolic sigh posts et: Philomela legend, Sybyl/legendm divination acts etc. (Grail legends) Allusions to popular songs/ballads lending them a symbolic strain

oo that Shakespearean Rag

Rhine-daughters song

Thames daughters song

Comment on reference to traditional lores/sermons etc. making them symbolic eg: Fire sermon'

Brahad Aranyaka Upanishad 'DA' (Last section) Shanthi Shanthi Shanthi

Eliot thus uses resourcefully not only the mythical method but also the symbolic and allusive strategies to make The Waste Land a complex and thought-Provoking poem which moves any modern reader with a grain of conscience.

Annotate the following:

Only some possible passages are suggested)

Section I

1. What are the roots that chitch...
2. (Come in...rock
3. I do not find/The hanged man. Fear death by water
4. O keep the Dog for hence, that's friend to men or with his

nails he'll dig up again!

....mon Frere!

Section II

5. Above the antique mantel....

.....enclosed (Even portions of this passage)

6. The hot water at ten

Section III

7. The nymphs are departed...

Sweet themes....my song.

8. But at my back.....

9. While I was fishing.....

10. (And ITiresias have foresaferred all dead)

11. Where fishermen lounge at noon...

12. Burning burning...

O Lo'rd thoupluckest

burning

Section IV

13. Phelbas the phoenician.....

14. Gentile or Jew

Section V

15. He who was living is now dead

16. There is not even silence in the mountains

17. Who is the third....You?

18. Falling towers

19. There is the empty chapel

20. Ganga was sunken.....

21. I have turned the key

.....Coriolanus (Even parts of this)

23. I sat up on the shore

24. These fragments I have shored.....

.....mat again

25. Datta, Dayadhavam.....

.....shantih

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ALFRED LORD TENNYSON

"THE LOTOS - EATERS"

THE VICTORIAN AGE

The period which derived its name for the reign of Queen Victoria (1837- 1901) roughly dates from 1832, the year of Walter Scott's death. It is marked by the Oxford Movement (which was initiated at Oxford by John Keble for reviving the same faith in the church that it commanded in the Middle Ages) in religion and the democratic process (which began with the Reform Act of 1832 and progressed with a series of legislation of franchise to the labouring classes, universal adult male suffrage voting by secret ballots and increased opportunities for education) in politics. The British empire steadily expanded to include India Egypt and South Africa and several self governing colonies of America. While Darwin's theory of evolution shook human pride vigorously, the railway the automobile the aeroplane, the radio, the telephone and the telegraph revolutionized his life style.

By 1830, the accident of death had created a break in English poetry. Keats died in 1821, Shelley in 1822 Byron in 1824 and Coleridge and Wordsworth were poetically "dead" by 1830 - points out For Evans in *A Short History of English Literature*. So time was ripe enough for the birth of a new kind of poetry. Wider education and stronger democratic principle led a large public and this changed the concept of the poet's function in society. Thus, in general, Victorian poetry came to be voice of Victorian England.

The Victorian age in literature retained the romantic trend in its individualism, play of imagination love of the picturesque and interest in Nature and the past. But while the romantics lived in world of their own the Victorians lived in the wider world shared by their contemporaries. And this world looked up to them for guidance.

Victorian poetry was marked by doubt or a positive disbelief

in God. With the existence of God himself in doubt the poet saw no divinity in nature. Though poetic continued to be ornate and musical, it was more to the point now.

The two major poets of the period were Tennyson and Browning. Fitzgerald, Clough, Arnold and James Thompson were the sceptic poets of the age and D.G. Rossetti, Willan Morris and Swinburne were the Pre-Raphaelites (who got their name from the school of painting called the pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood that was established in England in 1848). Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Christina Rossetti were the woman poets of the age and Oscar Wilde and Arthur Symonds represented the decadents (who sought beauty in ugliness and defined the moral conventions of the age to dally with sensual pleasures).

TENNYSON'S LIFE AND POETIC CAREER

1809- Alfred Tennyson was born as the fourth son of Rev. George Clayton Tennyson. The rector of Somersby in Lincolnshire.

1827- Charles and Alfred Tennyson, School boys at the Grammar School in Louth, published the book *Poems by two Brothers* synonymously.

1828- Entered Trinity College, Cambridge.

1829 - "Timbuc too", the poem which obtained the Chancellor's medal published

1830- *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical*

1833- *Poems by Alfred Tennyson*

1838 - Member of the Annoynmous club, in company with Carlyle, Thackeray and Forster

1842 - *Poems by Alfred Tennyson* (2 Volumes)- New editions of the book came in 1843, 45 and 46

1850 - In Memorium - Married Emily Sellwood - Appointed to succeed Wordsworth as Poet Laureate of England.

1852- *His eldest son*, Hallam, was born.]

1854 - *Maud and Other Poems*

1859 - *Idylls of the King*

1864 - *Enoch Arden*

1865 - *A Selection From the Works of Alfred Tennyson*

1869 - *The Holy Grail and Other Poems*

1875 - *Queen Mary - a Drama*

1877 - *Harold - A Drama*

1877 - *Harold - A Drama*

1880 - *Ballads and other Poems*

1885 - *Tiresius and Other Poems*

1888 - A new edition of *Tennyson's Complete works* published by Macmillan and Co.

1892- Death - Buried in Westminster Abbey

TENNYSON'S POETIC CRAFT

Even his sternest critics give Tennyson credit for his perfect control of the sounds of English and for a consummate choice and taste in words. He used poetry to describe a beautiful, antique and often illusory world and liked to close his eyes to the ugly industrialization of his own country. As a metrical artist, Tennyson is with the greatest and he combined his metrical skill with a careful attention to the musical value of vowel and consonant. But as a result of the rigorous discipline to which Tennyson submitted his craft, its beauty sometimes became an end in itself and beguiled him from his fuller purpose. But though perhaps he could not be a "sage-poet" he was a poet in the fullest sense of the term sensitive to the core, observant of minutest details and endowed with a keen gift of melody

THE LOTOS-EASTERS

The Poem was written in the period 1830-32 It was published in 1832. In 1842 the poem was revised. The main source of the poem is Homer's *Odyssey*. The verse here is melodious and the description picturesque.

L-1 Courage! he said=Ulysses says this. He and his men, disheartened because they could not see land even after sailing for so long, are happy at the sight of land.

- L2- mounting wave=swelling wave
 L3- in the afternoon= The time of the arrival of Ulysses and his companions is well-chosen. After is the time of drowsiness.
 L4- in which...afternoon= The atmosphere is charged with the sleepy, benumbing effect of the lotos. The sun light is never hot and harsh like the noon sun but remains, soft through out like the afternoon sun.
 L5-6- languid=tried lifeless, lazy swoon=faint fall asleep breathing like.....dream=like a man breathing heavily in sleep troubled by a tedious dream. A typical Tennysonian passage fusing a sound and sense to express a feeling of luxurious indolence.
 L-8-10 And like a downward...did go=The comparison to smoke here suggests the slow, heavy drifting of the stream seen from a distance. Onomatopoeic effect is produced by the halting lines of spensarian stanza here and the repetition of the phrase "downward smoke" Tennyson took this detail from the waterfall at Gavarnie in the Pyrenees, when he was twenty or twenty one years old.
 L-11-Slow dropping...did go =lawn=thin, fine linen (used in theatres to imitate a waterfall)
 L-13 A slumbrous=foam= when the mountain steam reached the plain, it spread into an expanse of water with fluffy froth
 L-15- Inner land=a valley (to the rear of the mountains)
 L-17 Three silent...sunset-fulshed=the snowy peaks of the mountains seemed to be suggestive of their age. At the same time, the setting sun gives them the tinge of pink.,
 Dewed ...drops=drenched in the fine misty spray, flung up by the falling water.
 L-18- Up clomb=Climbed up. The shadowy pine=the pine trees with their dark foliage. Woven copse=coppice or undergrowth. Short trees growing thickly together under tall ones.
 L-19 The charmed ...adwon =the setting sun lingered on the horizon as if held there by a magic spell.
 L-20-21..through mountain clefts..inland=through the narrow and steep opening among the mountains, the valley (dale) was seen

- yellow down=and uneven plain the soil of which is yellow
 L-22 border'd with palm=date palms
 winding vale=twisting valleys
 L-23-slender galigales=tall, thin stemmed plant with aromatic roots
 L-24-A land ...same=Everything was at a stand still there
 L-25 round about the keel=The lotos-eaters came crowding round the keel (ship) Keel is the bottom most part of the ship on which it balances
 L-26- That rosy flame=the sky reddened by the sunset
 L-28- enchanted stem=magical stem
 L-29 laden=laded
 L-31-gushing of the wave=the splashing noise of the sea
 L-32=rave=shout, Ulysses men who ate the fruit were dull. The thundering noise of the sea seemed to be far-off to them. They were only dimly conscious of sights and sounds
 L-33 alien =here it means distant
 L-5 And deep....awake=The sailors, under the effect of the lotos spoke as if in a trance.
 L-38 between the sun and moon=the moon rose slowly in the east, the sun set slowly in the west, on either side of the sailors
 L-39- and sweet...father-land. The lazy contemplation of the past was a pleasant pastime.
 L-42 Most Weary.....oar=They were too sluggish to think of their tedious voyage back home.
 L-42- The wandering....foam=two excellent examples of transferred epithet. "Wandering and barren "actually do not apply to the fields and the foam but to the homeward voyage across the "fields of sea."
 Chronic song =under the effects of the lotos the sailors started singing in a chorus, thus giving expression to spineless philosophy of fatalism. But remember that Tennyson himself was not a fatalist.
 L-46-47 There is ...grass=sweet music perhaps refers to the roaring of the sea which seems softer and more distant to them. Or it may be a reference to the sound of their beating hearts as referred to earlier. Blown roses=roses that have passed the peak of their growth and have begun to

fade.

L-50-51- Music that...tird' eyes=The music falls as soothingly on the mind as eyelids close over the eyeballs of a tired person dropping asleep. The metaphor suits the drowsy mood of the singer.

L-52 Music that brings...sikes=the long line contributes to the sleepy tone of the poem.

L-53-56- And tro...sleep =Ivy is a creeper, usually creeping over walls and rocky ledges. Here ivies creep over the moss covered rocks on the banks. Flowers with long petals droop over the stream, their dew dripping into it.

Craggy ledge-flat, shelf-like projections of rock. From the craggy ledges, the poppies hang their heads above the stream, drugged with their own opiate essences.

L-57- why are we..heaviness-why are we burdened with depressing cares?

L-58- Consumed with sharp distress=Preyed upon by tormenting misery. Unlike human beings, other creatures do not endure sorrow or have worries beyond their primary needs.

L-60 Why should we toil alone=why should men take on themselves duties more than subsistence demands. (Why should they scorn delight and live laborious days?" Milton puts in Lycidas")

L-61- The first of things-The highest in the hierarchy of God's creatures

L-62 Make perpetual mourn-grieve always in misery

L-65 Nor ever fold our wings=stop striving as a bird folds its wings and stop flying.

L-66- sleep or brows..balm=bathe over foreheads with the sweet, refreshing comfort of sleep. Compare Shakespeare's description of sleep in Macbeth (Act II-Scene II)
"Sleep that knits up the ravell's slave of care

The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath

Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course

Chief nourishes in life's feast"

L-67- harken=fisten to the inner....sings=the mind which cries out for peace, for release from worry and grief

L-69...the roof and crown of things= the summit and glory of cre-

ation

L-71...is wooed...bud=the folded leaf is coaxed into uncurling itself from the leaf bud. Nature does not busy herself beyond the simple, leisurely activities needed for generation, growth and preservation. So should life be slow-pacedm relaxed, passively undergoing the round of changes that time brings from birth to death.

L-70- Waxing over-mellow=becoming over-ripe

L-80- Its allotted length of days=the period of life given to a flower

L-82 and hath no toil=has no work (of course, a wrong concept)

L-85- vaulted=forming a dome or vault over the earth

L-84-85 Since the sailors imagine the drudgery of a voyage, they hate the thought of limitless sea under a limitless sky.

L-86-87 Death is the end...labour be ?=Lotos-eaters entertain the epicurean argument that there is no life after death. So striving beyond the present pleasure is of no use

L-88 ...Time driveth...fast=life is short and passes quickly

L-89our lips are dumb=Death comes and silences us

L-90 ...What is it that will last?=The things that we strive for wealth, fame; success, luxury-are just transitory

L-92 Portions and parcels=part and parcel. The dreadful past=Lotos-eaters, the worshippers of the present dread the thought that even the joys of the present will soon become part of their past.

L-93-94What pleasure...evil?=Fighting against the evils of the world is a futile strain. They feel it is better to bypass evil because lotos makes them cowardly too.

L-95 ...climbing up the climbing wave=Engaging in a voyage on a stormy sea-striving to reach an objective which eludes our grasp for ever

L-96 All things.....dreamful ease=The Lotos-eaters are even ready to welcome death because that would mean long, uninterrupted rest for them. Everything on earth, in their point of view, grows and proceeds to death, in silence (in inactivity, without protesting or passively) The long line here gives us the sense of prolonged, uninterrupted period of inactivity or death.

- L-102= amber=golden amber is a kind of hard yellowish gum used in making jewelry
- L-103the myrrh-bush=a plant from which a fragrant gum is obtained.
- L-106Criping = forming into curls
- L-107and tender...spray=when the wave retreats after dashing on the shore, it leaves a thin yellowish-white line of foam, here called "spray"
- L-109Mild minded melancholy=Even the memories of their infancy and childhood are things of luxury for them because they enjoy the mild melancholy attached to it.
- L-111- old faces=faces of old friends, long dead
- L-112-113-Heaped over...brass=The exploits of the old time heroes are now nothing but a little ash in the urns. This fact that "paths of glory lead but to the grave" gives them additional justification for their inaction
- L-114wedded lives=married lives
- L-115The last embraces=When they did farewell to set out to fight the Trojan War.
- L-226hath suffered change=undergone change
- L-117...Our household hearts are cold-In their long absence, their families might have learnt to do without them and therefore there will not longer be the warmth of affection. hearth is the fireplace and can be taken as the symbol of happy family life. Or the line can be interpreted as their houses might have fallen to ruin.
- L-118-119: Our sons...joy=their sons might have started managing their property. They would believe that these fighters are dead and gone. So if they return home with the innumerable marks of strain on their features left by the ten long years of fighting, they will be looked upon only as ghosts.
- L-120-21...the island...substance=The nobles of Ithaca might have forcibly taken possession of their property (Actually, in the mean while, as the story goes, Penelope, Ulysses wife, was persuaded by other nobles to believe that her husband was no more and to marry one to her instead)
- L-123-half-forgotten-dimly remembered (as a thing of remote past)

- L-124- confusion=civil war
- L-125Let what...so remain=It is useless trying to restore order if Ithaca is in confusion.
- L-126The Gods...reconcile it is difficult to please the capricious Gods who delight in human sorrow. Since, according to Homer's epic, Gods and Goddesses are described to have taken sides in the war between Greece and Troy, the lotus-eaters statement here does not seem to be groundless
- L-128-32:There is ...pilot-stars=the singers are determined to believe that there is trouble in Ithaca and that the situation there is incorrigible especially for aged and weary soldiers like them. aged breath=old age. Sore task=difficult task. And eyes...pilot-stars =They have been voyaging all their lives guiding their course as sailors do by the stars.
- In contrast to the toil that awaits them at home, life on the lotus island is pleasant.
- L-133-34: But prompt ...lowly -Reclining their heads of flowers of amaranth (A legendary, never-fading flower of the underworld-here lotus is described as amaranth) and moly (a magical flower which Hecates gave to Odysseus, to protect him from the magic of the enchantress Circe-according to Homer in his Odyssey)
- L-135...half drop eyelids still=with peaceful, half-closed eyes
- L-136...a heaven dark and holy=a solemn darkening sky
- L-139-40...The dewy...vine=As twilight descends and the dew falls, the soothing echoes of sounds from the mountain streams pass and repass between the caves overgrown with tangled vines
- L-142:... acanthus-wreath=The acanthus is a tall plant with large, spiny or toothed leaves and white flowers. The green water fall descends through bushes of acanthus with interwoven foliage and flowers.
- L-143brine=the salty sea water
- L-144: stretched out=lying at full length
- L-146Winding creek=The inlets of the sea crookedly cutting far into the land.
- L-147: Mellow tone: a gradually softening tone

- L-148: ...alley lone=loney lane
- L-149: Spicy downs =Plains the air above which is fragrant with lotos
- L-151: starboard/larboard=Right hand and left hand sides of the ship respectively. The rhythm of the line imitates the movement of the ship on the waves. surge=the sea. seething free=frothing abundantly.
- L-152: The wallowing monster=the whale rolling about in the sea. spouted has foam=fountains=the whale has a blow-hole at the top of its head through which it drives a fountain of water when it breathes out
- L-153: ab equal mind= a steady, unchanging mind
- L-155careless of making: indifferent to the sufferings of humanity
- L-156: the bolts are hurl'd=the thunder bolts are hurl'd =the thunder bolts are hurried by Jupiter, King of the gods, at his enemies
- L-157: Far below...valleys=The Gods from the top of Mount Olympus hurl their thunderbolts at unfortunate mortals in the world below
- L-158: Golden , house...world+ The sunlit world lies round the Olympias like a girdle or belt. the gods live aloof in their splendid mansions on the mountain.
- L-159: wasted lands=destroyed lands
- L-160Blight=a plant pest that destroys the crops and causes famine roaring deeps=the thundering ocean
- L-161: Clanging fights=battles with the noise of weapons and armour
- L-162: ...music centered in a doleful song: The sorrowful cries of men music to the Gods who delight in hearing it.
- L-163: Steaming up=gushing up like water from a fountain
- L-164: Like...strong =The story of a man's life is framed in pompous expressions but full of idle situation. Compare Macbeth's description of life as a "tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury signifying nothing"
- L-165: Chanted=sung cleave the soil=plough the earth
- L-166: Enduring=cotinuing
- L-167: Little dues=The petty benefits wrested from the earth

by the sweet of their brow

L-168-8 ...some, it's dwell=After all the torture which men have to endure for the sport of the Gods, more torture is supposed to await some of them in Tartarus, the region of fire in the underworld reserved for the wicked. Elysian valleys= Elysium is a part of the underworld reserved for the brave heroes among mankind.

L-170: beds of asphodel=The asphodel was an Elysian flower which soothed away all the sufferings of mortal life from the limbs of the heroes who came to Elysium

Essays

I. What are the arguments put forward by the lotos eaters in support of their if of idleness?

The lotos-eaters observe that man alone is burdened with endless responsibilities and that he alone is consumed by heart-breaking sorrows and restless toil. And yet he takes pride in the fact that he is the crown and glory of creation. He cannot take heed of the song of the inner spirit telling him that "There is no hour but calm"

In the wood, the leaf unfurls itself from the bud, grows green and broad, turns yellow and brown and falls down. The apple ripens in the summer sun and gently drops to the grounds. So also, the flower blossoms, gets full-blown, fades and falls in its allotted time-span There is no feverish anywhere in nature.

When we very well know that death rounds up the whole show what is the point in filling our life with labour? In no time, each achievement of the present will become part of the story of the past. The endless" climbing up the climbing wave" is tedious and hateful It is useless even to declare war with evil because that will bring only agony and strain to us.

The environment of the lotos-island is sleep inducing. It is delightful to recline on the se-shore watching the vastness of the sea giving into the mild melancholy of nostalgia remembering the faces on one's own kith kin and thinking of the good, old times of one's infancy.

They agree that the memory of Ithaca and their families there is dear to them. But in all probability, the members of their family might have learnt to put up with their absence-their children already managing their property and everyone accepting the fact that they are dead long ago. Now if they return home with their personalities changed by the sufferings of a decade of lighting, they will get only a cold welcome as if they are ghosts, why intrude into the peace of their lives and upset the order there?

Or possibly, their homes may be in ruin with no one to take care of it for so long. Other princes might have taken possession of their lands and their wives. In that case too, it is better not to return. At this age, they are incapable of facing any more challenges in life. They had enough of action. Now it is time to take rest. For the time being they will live in the lotos-island in perfect bliss like the Gods on the Olympias with nectar by their side.

2. Point out the weaknesses of the lotos-eaters philosophy comparing it with the philosophy propagated by Tennyson in Ulysses.

Through "The Lotos-Eaters" Tennyson presents a philosophy of luxurious indolence of physical inertia and moral stagnation. Eating lotos makes the people epicureans and escapists. They hide themselves away from their share of duties. They cook up lame excuses to justify their inaction. Their conscience pricks them with memories of their homeland families but they lull their conscience with comfortable delusions. Being weak fatalists, they picture the Gods as being brutal enjoying the misfortunes of mankind.

In describing the lotos-Eaters state of mind, Tennyson exposes the hollowness of this hedonism. The Victorians had conveniently gave up the path of faith and religion under the pretext of having a scientific approach to life. They hoped that science would make them all powerful like the Gods.

Tennyson's attitude was the opposite of the lotos-eaters phi-

losophy. He gives expression to it in his poem "Ulysses". Ulysses has a hunger for wandering. A readiness to face hardships and the chivalry to go on adventurous expeditions. According to him, experience enriches man's knowledge. On his return to Ithaca, Ulysses is restless, For him, the easy-going life of a king is nothing but drudgery. So he sets sail once more with his manners. His motto in life is "To strive, to" seek, to find and not to yield!" While the lotos eaters ask.

".....Why should we toil alone,

We only toil, who are the first of things,

And make perpetual moan.

Still from one sorrow to another thrown

Nor ever ford our wings

And cease from wandering"

Ulysses entertains just the opposite notion:

"How dull it is to pause, to make and end

to rust unburnish'd not to shine in use"

The choice before every man is between the life of a man and that of a mere beast; a life of physical pleasure which dulls our nerves in the long run or a life spiritual and mental peace derived from making use of our talents to the maximum, a life of vain and empty dreams or that of heroic action. Everything around man extends lotos to him. The true strength of characters in rejecting the offer. Only in this way can we rise nearer to the Gods.

Sample Questions

Essays

1. How far is the landscapes of the poem "The Lotos-Eaters" in harmony with the mental condition of the manner?
2. Comment on the structure of the poem in terms of the prologue, the choric song and the epilogue.

Short notes

1. The attitude of the lots-waters to their Gods
2. What are the excuses provided by the lotos-eaters for

remaining on the island forever?

Passages for annotation

1. There is sweet music here that softer falls
.....in gleaming pasds
2. Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness
...rest from weariness?
3.why should we toil alone,
.....to another thrown
4. Lo! In the middle of the wood
.....take no care
5. Hateful is the dark-blue sky
.....ALL LABOUR BE?
6. dear is the memory of our wedded lives
.....hearths are cold
7. Where thy smile innsecret....
.....and praying hands.

W.B. YEATS

AMONG SCHOOL CHILDREN

THE BACK GROUND

The latter part of the nineteenth century witnessed a final breakdown of a pre-industrial style of life. The agricultural depression of the period (1870-1902) brought with it, the fall of the human and spiritual values which the agrarian society stood for. The enlarge dole of money on the economy, the emergence of a new ethic based on competition, the dissolution of old social acceptances by the introduction of the empirical, sceptical spirit of science and the traumatic experience of the first world war was brought about a sea-change in man's view and actions. Even contemporary philosophy, with a new consciousness of professional expertise and an aptitude for rigorous argument, could not come to the rescue of man in his new predicament of uncertainty and confusion.

The theory of evolution by Darwin in science, the revolutionary concept of man as a biological phenomenon by Freud in psychology and the success of Marxism in politics paved the way for drastic changes in society.

Relatively speaking, during the mid-Victorian period English literature pursued a self-contained course. But it was followed by a period of major influences from continental Europe.

The dawn of the present century saw representative poems both in the traditional and in the experimental trends. The traditionalists followed the time-honored principles of clarity, melody and form. Poets like Gerard Manley Hopkins, G.K. Chesterton, John Masefield, Robert Bridges, Rupert Brooke, John Drinkwater, D.H. Lawrence and Wilfred Owen belong to this group. The experimentalists were engaged in innovations in subject-matter and form. The most marked influences on them were those of psycho-analysis and the French symbolists like Baudelaire, Verlaine, Rimbaud and Maeterlinck. To this group belonged symbolist poets like Yeats,

imagists (who, under the leadership of Ezra Pound, a Revolted against the Romantic extravagance in thought and expression be created new rhythms including free verse, where the verse is free of the limitations of meter. C. Created exact images and d. Observed utmost economy in the use of words) like Hopkins, new - metaphysicals (who exhibited a revived interest in Donne and the metaphysical school) like Eliot, Cecil Day Lewis, Louise Mac Niece and W.H. Auden, surrealists (who consider the subconscious as more real than the conscious) like Herbert Read and neoromantics (who stressed the role of emotion and imagination in poetry just as the romantics did) like Kith Douglas.

W.B. YEATS 1865-1939-BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

1865-born in Dublin as the eldest son of John Bulter Yeats, a Dublin painter of the Pre-Raphaelite school and Susan Pollexton, a country girl from Sligo. 1867-family moves to London, 1875-Yeats joins the Godolphin school, Hammersmith-Holidays spent in Sligo 1880 family returns to Ireland-1883 Yeats joins school of Art, Dublin, 1885 first published poems appear in Dublin University Review, Becomes friend of O'Leary, the Irish patriot, 1889-The Wanderings of Oisín and Other Poems published. 1891-The Rhymer's club founded in London Proposes to Maud Gonne, the Irish revolutionary No favourable response from her. 1893-Edited The Works of William Blake with Ellis - 3 volumes 1894-first visit to Paris. Proposes to Maud Gonne once again -1895-Poems published 1896-Affair with Dina Vernon-Meets Lady Gregory-1899. The Wind Among the /Roads. 1902-becomes president of Irish National Dramatic Society. 1903-Maud Gonne marries John Mac Bride. So disheartened, First lecture tour in US 1904-Producer-manager of Abbey Theatre-1906 poems-1895-1905, 1'908 collected works in 8 volumes-1912-meets Ezra Pound-1915-refuses knighthood, 1917-The Wild Swans at Coole-marries Georgie Hyde Lees. 1919. Anne Bulter yeats born 1921. the birth of Michael Bulter Yeats. Four Plays for Dancers. 1922 D. Lift of Dublin University

Senator of Irish Free State. 1923-Nobel prize for poetry. 1924 Essays 1927 Congestion and bleeding of lungs. 1928-The Tower, 1929-The Winding Stair, 1931 D. Lift at Oxford 1934-Collected Plays. 1936 ill with nephritis 1938-Last public appearance at Abbey Theatre 1939 Dies on 28th January.

AMONG SCHOOL CHILDREN-ABOUT THE POEM

This poem was written on 14th June. 12926 and first appeared in The Dial "(August, 1927) and "London Mercury" (August, 1927) In an unpublished diary on 6th September, 1909, Yeats asked himself why life is "a perpetual preparation for something that never happens A draft in Yeats's notebook written about 14th March, 1926 records his intention of linking the theme with the old thought that life prepares for what never happens Later the poem was included in the collection of poems The Tower (1928)

Explanatory note and critical analysis

Stanza - 1

Long school room = of St. Otteran's School in Waterford. In February, 1926 Yeats visited the school. Run on Montessori Principle, the school won praise from Yeats in the Senate.

A kind old nun = Rev. Mother Philomena, the Mistress of schools

Hood = the covering for the head and neck worn by nuns

Cipher = (1) Work out problems in arithmetic

(2) put into (secret) writing

Here it can be taken as the children learning to write and do sums

A sixty year old man = the poet himself. He is caught in the inimical to his convictions. So Frank Kermode, in his essay 'On Poetry as image points out that the tone here is that of self-mockery. He quotes expression like in the best modern way to support his arguments. In encountering this common place ordinariness of life which the children here are prepared for the old and public man feels amused, though a little bit humiliated, So he is singing

too.

Stanza-II

The sight of the classroom reminds him of the great image of a lady who was all that they could never hope to be. The lady as a little girl in retrospect was more a product of the poet's imagination rather than of memory. She, according to him, was the daughter of the swan, the perfect emblem of the soul. She was none other than Maud Gonne, his beloved.

Tocrhiana Excited Reverie (ed. by Jeffares and K.G.W. Cross 1955) makes some interesting remarks on the relationship between yeats an maud Gonne. He takes a description of Flonnuala and Aodh from Elle Young's Celtic Wonder Tales (1910) which Maud Gonne illustrated with a recurring motif of a sphere containing two swans intertwined, ultimately beint as one, an obvious symbol of kindred souls.

Ladean body=A descendent of Leda. Leda in classical mythology is the mother of Castor and Clytemnestra by her husband Tyndareus And in the shape of Swan, by Zeus, she be gets tow children Pollux and Helen in the form of eggs. Here Maud Gonne is described as Helen. The daughter of Leda (There by assessing heavenly beauty and qualities)

harsh reproof: finding fault, blaming rudely...it seemed that...shell="Each human being," says Plato "was a whole with its back and flanks rounded to form a circle and had four hands and an equal number of legs and two identically similar faces upon a circular neck with one head common to both the faces which were turned in opposite directions" (The Symposium) As the story goes in the Symposium, since their strength was immense and they attacked the gods, Zeus put and end to the race by cutting each of them in half "like eggs which are cut with a hair" Then each half yearned for the other half from which it had been severed. This Platonic concept, it is interesting to note, has something in common with the Indian concept of 'Aradhanareeswara' and also the concept in physiology which states that each human being has a

male and female identity within him.

Stanza III

The poet searches for a child's face there in the class room which would serve as the face of the little girl that Maud Gonne was when she had the tragic experience which is hinted in the previous stanz. Consequently, he is able to visualize her and her expression at the time of that past event. For even daughter...heritage=paddle is a short oar with a borade blade to propel a canoe through water. Paddling also can be moving one's feet or hands playfully in water. A paddler therefor is a person who paddles canoe through water or paddles in water with his feet. Padding thus becomes common for both the swan and the paddler. So also, Yeats says, there must be something in common for one of these faces in front of his and the little Maud Gonne's expression on that day in the past. By and by, Yeats is able to visualize his lady love as a child with the help of his imagination.

Stanza-IV'

Her present image =Maud Gonne's appearance at the time of writing the poem. Even Maud Gonne, Who is the symbol of beauty, greatness, dedication and nobility has become old now.

Qualhrocanto finger= The hand of a fifteenth century Italian painter. This was "quintocent"finger in the early version. it was altered to da Vinci (Leonardo da Vinci)finger in the version published in "London Mercury"

Pretty plumage=yeats had raven-coloured hair once scare-crow figure of a man set in old clothes set up to scare birds away from corps,. This a recurring image in yeats's later poetry when he was experiencing the difficulties of old age himself. It is remisniscent of "Sailing to Byzantium"

"An aged man is but a paltry thing

A tattered coat upon a stick

The image of the little girl in his mind is constricted in this stanza with the present day appearance of his beloved. Now it is "hollow of cheek" "mistaking a "meat" This shruken figure is not

her plight alone. The poet also has changed. His "pretty plumage" has disappeared. But with a jolt, he brings him back to the immediate situation and decides that is better to smile at the smiling faces in front of him and prove that he is a likable sort of old fellow.

Stanza V

from the object of his affection, the poet now turns to the greatest of all earthly affection, the Mother's love for her child. Torchiana quotes a passage from Gentile's *The Reform Education* which Yeats had read. There Gentile suggests that the mother who tenderly nurses her sick child would like to see its body vigorous and strong so that though it has sold could requite maternal love by filial devotion. If in the bloom of health, he were to reveal himself stupid, callous and beastly, he would cease to be his mother's favorite and would arouse revulsion and loathing in her. Yeats probably adopts this idea in the stanza.

Honey of generation = This image comes from Porphyry's *es say "On the Cave of the Nymphs" (1917)*. It is a symbolic reading of the cave image in *Home*. In the cave which Homer described in the thirteenth book of *Odyssey* were bowls and works of divine workmanship in which the busy bees placed delicious honey. It is dedicated to the nymphs. Odysseus, on his return home is brought to this cave on the coast of Ithaca. Porphyry interprets this narrative as the myth of the return of the soul to its heavenly abode. Honey thus is also indicative of the pleasure which draws souls downward to generation. Plutonism symbolizes the birth of the soul as the journey from the isles of the blessed in a celestial boat, during life, the soul is tossed about on the sea of emotion and passion. And after death, living backwards in time, it returns to its starting point-recrossing the sea, Yeats traced Porphyry's influence on Shelley's cave symbolism in his essay on the philosophy of Shelley's poetry. What youthful mother decide=The young mother is gifted with a baby in her lap which has come down to her "trailing clouds of glory" as words worth put

it. Honey is the drug that destroys in the newly incarnated soul of the child recollection of the freedom it enjoyed before its birth.

Struggle to escape=to escape the pangs of life (and reach back its heavenly abode) Sixty or more winters...head =the graying of hair seen as the snowfall of the winter of life-the period when life becomes colder, inactive and restricted.

No mother, with a baby betrayed by the honey of generation upon her lap, would think that her son is sufficient compensation for the pang of his birth if she could anticipate his plight when he is whitened by sixty or more winter.

In Yeats's play "At the Hawk's Well" he had given expression to this idea earlier.

"A mother that saw her son"

Doubled over a specked shin.

cross-grained with ninety years...

Would cry, "How little worth

Were all my hopes and fears

And the hard pain of his birth"

Thus stanza V develops the theme of destruction of the body by Adam's curse the cause of labour and childbirth

Stanza VI

The poet thinks how even the profoundest of intellectual wisdom is not an adequate compensation to physical perfection which is life's natural ideal

Spume=foam, scum or froth

paradigm=pattern, ghostly paradigm of things=Here it stands for the Platonic idea of essence (behind universe) The consolations of wisdom are ironical So all Plato's wisdom seems to suggest that we live in a world of phantoms

Played the taws=played a game called taws in which marbles are arranged in the centre of a circle drawn or scratched on the ground. The object being to knock out as many as possible from the circle. Here it means punishment. Soldier Aristotle...of kinds=Since Aristotle was tutor to Alexander the great, he inflicted

corporal punishment on Alexander by way of educating him

World famous...heard=Pythagoras made some measurement of the intervals between notes on a stretched string. He discovered the numerical relation between the length of strings and musical notes that they produce when vibrating and evolved the idea that the explanation of the universe is to be sought not in matter, but in numbers and their relations. Golden thighed=the phrase comes from Thomas Taylor's translation of Life of Pythagoras where he gives an account of how Pythagoras, as if in reality he was god himself, taking Abacus aside, shows him his golden thigh as an indication of his greatness and divinity, perhaps the manuscript version of the poem is simpler in expression

"World famous, golden thighed Pythagoras
who taught the stars of heaven what to sing And
the musicians how to measure cords"

Yeats her moves from Plato who saw through the mysteries of the individual soul to Aristotle who was behind the moulding of the administrator who ruled the state goes on to Pythagoras who 'directed' the universe in the music of the spheres (music produced when they move in their orbits-inaudible to human ears according to Pythagoras)

Muses=the nine daughters of Zeus who protected and encouraged poetry, music history and other branches of learning. The spirit that inspires the poet.

Stanza-VII

reverie=day dream, The mother worships the new born babe as the image of perfection repose=absence of movement, animation etc. Here it means stationary statues. O Presences=the statues and children that are knowable by passion, piety, or affection they too break hearts=as the images of worship are subject to the ravages of time and cannot equal the ideal that man always strives for.

There is a tormenting contrast between the images signified by the bronze and marble statues and the living beauty of a

speaking body, which includes the soul. This contrast necessitates the invention of poetic image which will resemble the living beauty rather than the marble or bronze one. No static image will serve that purpose. It should go on moving, conveying a series of changing simpliciton. Hence the relevance of the next stanza. O presences...enterprise=The presences are the images (lovers, statues and children) knowledge through passion (of the lover), piety (of the nun) and affection (of the mother)

Stanza VIII

Labour =the pain involved in child birth which befell on Man as part of the cause of God on Adam

Bruised=wounded, hurt

blear-eyed wisdom=dim-sighted wisdom

bole=the trunk of a tree

More than a painful effort at earthly becoming labour is spontaneous act of blossoming (an erotic suggestion of vaginal dilation also can be read in to the life) or dancing

Labour...soul=two explanations are possible (1) labour becomes blossoming or dancing whenever the body is not hurt to give pleasure to the soul (2) labour becomes blossoming or dancing in which the body is not bruised to give pleasure to the soul. The first explanation is the more widely accepted one. But the second one is more in keeping with the trend of thought of the last stanza.

The dancer is, In Yeat's favourite expression, self-begotten-that is, independent of labour that leads to birth. As such, she differs totally from the artist who seeks her. She can exist only in the pre destined dancing-place where, free from Adam's curse, beauty is born itself, without the labour of child birth or that of art. There art means wholly what it is. The tree also means what it is an its beauty is a function of its totality.

The contradictory nature of all human endeavour, the conflict between, the ideal and the real, can be resolved as the poet has attempted to do in the last stanza, if the conflicting elements

are treated as inalienable parts of the same whole.

The paradise is the place in which beauty is self-begotten and costs nothing, In this paradisaical life. All those delighting manifestations of growth and change in which the scarecrow has forfeited his part, give away to a new condition in which marble And bronze are the true, life and inhabit a changeless a world, beyond time and intellect. The artist himself may be imagined as changeless thing. Those who generate and die and are perpetually imperfect have praise only for that world,. The old man (the poet) has no part in it. He hopes to escape into the world of complete being, the world of the self begotten.

How can we know...dance? =The image of the dancer, so rapt among the many figures that she forms that she seems a part of them, is one of his formal symbols. This identification of the dancer with the dance goes far to explain how Yeats could continue to develop his creative genius continuing to mirror every fresh experience -high passion, deep despair, public self-mockery, all compatible in the creating mind that will not commit itself to anything but the poetry made out of these experiences. The dance is not the little movement of the dancer's body the music to which it sways or the brightening glance of the dancer, but the creative unity of all these parts. The chestnut free in not the leaf, blossom or the trunk but the totally of the free. So also, poetic creation cannot be separated from the poet who is the creator.

Now that we have, gone thought the poem line by line we are in a position to summarize it and get an overall view of the poem.

The evolution of thought in the poem "Among School Children"

The immediate situation of the poem is when Yeats pays a visit to St. Otheran's School.. Waterford in 1926 His queries regarding the institution re answered by Rev. Mother philomena, the Mistress of Schools. She informs him that chiffon learn to cipher, to sing, to study reading books and his ties, to cut and sew and to be neat in everything in the best modern way. While talking like

this, the poet looks at the classroom and finds that the children's eyes stare at him in momentary wonder as the sixty year old public man that he is, smiles at them in meek approval.

The whole setting reminds him of a great image of a lady who was the embodiment of all the qualities that these children, tutored on common place transactions of life, could never aspire for. She is none but his platonic lady love, Maud Gonne, the majestic revolutionary worker of the Irish Republican Brotherhood. She is described as the offspring of Leda, the swan-shaped wife of Zeus in classical mythology. Once, bent above a sinking fie, Maud Gonne had narrated to him the tale of a harsh reproof. Though the exact facts are not mentioned here, the poet assures us that it was enough to convert a childish day into a tragedy. In the act of revealing this extremely personal sorrow, sympathy brought two bosom friends together into a single entity like the yolk and white of a single egg (as Plato once visualized human relationship in the Symposium)

The poem searches for a child's face there in the classroom which would serve as the face of the little girl that Maud Gonne was when she underwent the agonizing experience. Since even daughters of the swan share something of a common heritage with an ordinary paddler, the poet assumes that she stood at that age somewhat like one of these children in front of him. When he is absorbed in that thought, his imagination runs wild and it is as if he is able to visualize Mud Gonne, the little girl distinctly.

The version of this imagination is inevitably contrasted with Maud Gonne's present day looks. She has grown old now but has so much beauty left in her that yeats wonders whether she was shaped by an Italian painter's deft fingers. Although he himself has not so much of celestial beauty in him, he too was better once-with his hair thicker and pretty. Then all on a sudden, he releases that the is in the midst of company and is expected to smile at the faces in front of him in order to assure them that, after all, he was a nice, old man.

Filled with horror at the contrast between childhood and old age. Yeats moves on to more of philosophic speculations. Which mother gifted with a baby, would consider her child bearing and labour pain worthwhile if she could anticipate the looks of her son at the graying age of sixty? Even the greatest philosophers Plato, Aristotle and Pythagoras, were but scarecrows by the time they achieved the climax of their fame and their achievement suddenly were reduced to nothing. This is, doubtless, a pessimistic attitude which one is bound to have when one thinks of time in terms of physical ageing alone. But Yeats goes further and reaches a sounder philosophic stand when he sees the superiority of art and imagination when compared to the ephemeral nature of life.

What, then, is left? In the next two stanzas, he declares that only images escape the disintegration of age. The mother worships an image of her son (not his flesh and blood) just as the nun worships an image of God. Only such images are real, they are self-born Being perfect and unageing they mock man's enterprise, and they are the symbols of heavenly glory.

In the final stanza Yeats imagines heavenly glory as a state where body and soul are united as he and his beloved seemed to be on that day of the shared sorrow.

The symbolic significance of the poem

We are already familiar with the different symbols that Yeats makes use of in the poem and the significance of each one of them. Let us now scan the poem once again to look at the deeper meaning of the poem.

The poem begins on a note of self-mockery at the expense of Yeats as a public man expands into a reverie of the childhood of Maud Gonne, moves on to some fundamental questions about archetypes, affections, dwells on intellectual wisdom which fails to solve the problem of age and finally ends up with the discovery of the truth that all the agonizing contradictions basic to life could be solved through a duality in vision, a recognition of the complementary relationship between the ideal and the real.

Yeats's response to the problems of life is a response to the problems of poetry too. By invoking the organic images of the chestnut tree and the dances, he achieves this double purpose.

The poem is built round a series of parallel trinities - (1) the three selves of Yeats, the public man, the aged lover and the intellectual poet; (2) the three stages of life, that of the child, the lover and the old scarecrows; (3) the three kinds of love felt by the lover, the nun and the mother, and (4) the three different ways of locating reality as enunciated by Plato, Aristotle and Pythagoras which proved insufficient in the end. The poem strikes the concluding note with the final discovery of truth in the acceptance of the total organism in both life and art through a symbolic evocation of blossoming and dancing.

Here are some questions given below to set you thinking in certain directions:

1. Yeats's ruminations on old age in the poem "Among school Children"
2. The significance of the chestnut tree and the dancer in the last stanza as unifying symbols of the poem
3. Are Yeats's reflections on Maud Gonne central to the theme of the poem?
4. How does Yeats alter Plato's parable to suit his poetic purpose?
5. The irony behind Yeats's description of Plato, Aristotle and Pythagoras

Important passages for annotation

- 1) It seemed that our two natures bent
.....
into the yolk and white of the one shell
- 2) Did Quattrocento finger.....
.....
and took a mess of shadows for its meat?
- 3)O Presences
That passion, piety and affection know

-
 O self-born mockers of man's enterprise
 4) O body swayed to music.....
 How can we know the dancer from the dance?
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FUTILITY

(WILFRED OWEN)

Wilfred Owen was born in Oswestry, Shropshire, in 1893, and educated at the Brikenhead institute, Liverpool and at London University. Very early in life he had ambitions to be a poet and wrote a good deal of youthful verse. After a severe illness in 1913 he went to France for health reasons, and became a tutor at Bordeaux, where he remained till 1915. He joined the Artists Rifles in that year and later the Manchester Regiment. He fell ill after a long experience of trench warfare and was sent to a military hospital near Ediburgh, where he met the poet Siegfried Sassoon, who had a great influence on him and encouraged him to write directly about the war. Plans were made to publish some of his poems.. He was redrafted to France, awarded the M.C.(Military Cross) but was killed on November 4th 1918 a week before the armistice. A very few poems appeared in periodicals during his lifetime. Seighfried Sassoon collected and published them in 1920.

Examples of Owen's pre-war poetry can be studied in Edward Blunden's Memoir of 1931, It began as rather lush and limitative verse very much in the manner of Keats, whom he deeply admired. The radical change in his art came when he met Sassoon, already an established "war poet" who had no illusions about the war and wrote powerful satirical poems against it as well as Memoirs of an infantry Office. Owen had earlier experimented with various new technical devices, especially with half-rhymes and was now able in one magnificent burst of poetry to make his protest at the savagery of war from the bitterest experience of life in the trenches. His range in this short time is wide. He can write bitter satire, touching and delicate elegiac poetry and perhaps at his strongest, poems which speak directly to humanity and put the anguish of the individual soldier in a truly universal frame a sin "Futility"

Edmund Bludner writes that Owen till the last moment was

preparing himself for "a volume of poems, to strike at the conscience of England in regard to the continuance of the war" and among Owen's paper was found a hastily written draft, preface to the volume he was planning in which he writes: This book is not about heroes. English poetry is not yet fit to speak to them. Nor is it about deeds, or lands, nor anything about glory, honour, might, majesty, dominion, or power except war. Above all I am concerned with poetry. My subject is War, and the pity of War. The poetry is in the pity. Yet these elegies are to this generation in no sense consolatory. They may be to the next, All a poet can do today is warn. That is why the true poets must be truthful. These jottings express with a toughing and yet powerful authority Owen's sense of his duty and his sense of own role. It is a thousand miles away from the soft dreaminess of his Keatsian Verses of so few years before. Here is a poet utterly dedicated to a task beyond although its of himself or indeed of poetry for its own sake. "Above all I am not concerned with poetry" is an extraordinary statement for so dedicated a poet to make, and by a paradox it is in the art of forgetting about art and poetry that he wrote his most successful poems. Driven by an experience which he shared with millions of his fellow soldiers, he became a kind of spokesman for them all, and thus used poetry in the most powerful way that it can be used. "poetry is in the pity".

INTRODUCTION

WILFRED OWEN

Wilfred Owen was the eldest of four children. When he was born, his parents were living comfortably with his grandfather in Oswestry, but years later, on his grandfather's death, the family was forced to move to Birkenhead. Here they lived for ten years in poor districts, struggling against constant financial difficulties to maintain a middle-class style of life. The struggle succeeded well enough at least to cut them off from their rougher neighbours, re-

inforcing Wilfred's natural liking for introspection and solitude. The family was very tightly knit, yet their relationships were complicated. Mr. Owen, who held a responsible but badly paid post with the railways, was a devoted and considerate father, but he was an unhappy man and inclined to intolerance; with his eldest son he had little in common, except music and they often found it hard to get on with one another. Wilfred held his mother, however, in adoration, and Susan Owen was devoted to him with a possessiveness that almost excluded the rest of the family. Even from the battlefield he could write in one of the frequent long letters which were invariably addressed to her alone, that while other men were fighting for their motherland he was fighting for his mother.

As a schoolboy, Wilfred was hard-working and satisfied. His parents always gave his education highest priority in family affairs and they expected great things of him, though quite what the set things were, neither he nor they seemed very sure. Occasionally Mr. Owen would lose patience with Wilfred's bookishness and lack of interest in more boyish activities, but his wife's determined championing of her son always overcame his objections. Academic work for Wilfred was always tremendously important but only rarely did he see it as an end in itself. His ambitions of scholarship were based on stronger and deeper drive, one which it took him most of his short life to define and bring under control. Later he accepted an unpaid post as lay assistant to the Vicar of Dunsden, Oxfordshire, in return for board, lodging and tuition.

Mrs. Owen was by upbringing and conviction an Anglican of the evangelical school. An evangelical believes that man is saved not by the good he does but by the faith he has in the redeeming power of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Without faith, nurtured by regular prayer and Bible-reading, man is cut off from God. It is important to be aware of the sort of religion Wilfred was brought up in. It explains much in his poems, the theme of sacrifice, his fondness for Biblical language, the reality of hell. A friend of his remembers how unfailingly regular Wilfred was in daily Bible read-

ing when he was a boy. By 1913 he had rejected much of the orthodox belief of his boyhood, but its influence remained with him.

When he went to Dunsden, then Wilfred was an orthodox evangelical. For a period in the early Shrewsbury days, he had even conducted services at home, dressed in home-made robes before an altar he had built himself. It was a short lived custom, but it perhaps expressed the close links he already felt between ritual and home, divine and maternal love. It is easy to laugh at this odd ceremony, but a boy brought up industrial Brikenheas encounters beauty in church more easily than anywhere else. It was in the language of church ritual that Wilfred first began to recreate beauty for himself.

Wilfred Owen claimed that he was first aware of his poetic calling before the move to Shrewsbury, on a holiday with his mother in the Cheshire countryside at Broxton. The first of his poems to which a date can be ascribed with any certainty was written some years later when he was seventeen. It may be that he started writing poetry simply as one of his many activities...certainly he showed his poems to his cousin. With whom he also pursued interests in archaeology, botany, astronomy and geology; but in the next few years he became increasingly certain that he had talent and enthusiasm but all the time he worked towards finding and shaping his skill as a poet. It was a matter of shaping art, like school work, was for Owen always a matter of hard labour and much revision.

Dunsden Vicarage was not success, but it helped Owen to find his feet. He was expected to work very hard in the parish and he received little of the promised tuition. Apart from the pleasure of living in the countryside, Owen's main enjoyment came from working with that local children, in Sunday School and on outings. Throughout his life, he had a great affection for small children and seems to have attracted them. In his mother's absence, he found orthodox Christianity ever less convincing. His dislike of what he later called "pulpit professionals" began to grow, and a visit to the Keswick Convention strengthened his suspicion that the

evangelicals were preaching a pattern of dogma which had little to do with the teaching of Christ.

Owen found his understanding of religion to be at odds with his understanding of literature. During 1912 he read a life of Shelley. The poet's conflict with orthodoxy impressed Owen profoundly. If he became an evangelical minister, he felt he would have to abandon poetry, both his own and that of others. He would also have to ignore his knowledge of science in order to accept, and preach the strict doctrine of the Fall. He was a beginning to lead a double life, in public maintaining a respectable religious form and in private writing under growing emotional pressure, verse of which indeed, makes no mention of formal religion at all. Owen was faced with the double ordeal of breaking away both from his mother's faith and from the God he had been brought up to worship. He was forced to recognize that he was to be neither a churchman nor a scholar. The lack of money which plagued the whole family prevented Wilfred's settling down to write. Instead he decided to work abroad and to learn as much as he could of France and French culture. By mid-September he was in Bordeaux, as a teacher of English in the Berlitz School of Languages.

The outbreak of war was not greeted in France with the enthusiasm Owen would have seen in England. The war had been going for nearly a year before Owen came to the conclusion that he would have to join. He had considered an extraordinary collection of civilian jobs and had held always to the [principle that the, as a future poet, was more useful alive than dead. He enlisted in the Artists Rifles on 21st October 1915. There followed fourteen months of training in various parts of England. By the end of the year the pale, delicate and perhaps rather affected Sunday School teacher had become a brosn, tough and efficient officer. The physical change was remarkable, but Owen's character did not alter. Owen was drafted to France in the worst winter of the war. It is worth realizing that the battle experience on which all his poems about war are based was contained within the space of four months

of which not more than five weeks were actually spent in the line. His first tasks were to hold positions in No Man's Land in the Beaumont Hamel area, then he was sent behind the lines for a transport course. In March, he fell in to a cellar and spent a couple of weeks in a Casualty Clearing Station with concussion. Later he was blown into the air by a shell and had to spend some days sheltering in a hole near the dismembered remains of a fellow officer. He came out of his unhurt but with neurasthenia, or shell-shock was returned to the C.C.S. and was invalided back by stages to Craiglockhart War Hospital near Edinburgh.

Owen wrote quantities of poetry. It had always had therapeutic value for him, as a disciplined release from tension, and his doctor wisely encouraged him in the activity. The doctor kept Owen busy in all sort of ways, putting him in touch with literary circles in Edinburgh and trying to involve him in what would not be called social work. It was a busy time and by day Owen was soon happy and confident, but at night he was, like most of the patients, the victim of violent nightmares. The war dreams persisted for most of his stay and affected him on occasions for the rest of his life. Remembering war experience exposed Owen to the risk of further nightmares. Writing about was thus took some courage, which may be one reason why most of the verse written before August has nothing to do with contemporary events, but it was the therapy which Owen most needed.

Owen introduced himself to Siegfried Sassoon, who had been sent to the hospital by the authorities after he had publicly protested that Britain's aims in the war had now become those of aggression and conquest. Whether Sassoon really was shell-shocked or not, is not clear, but to label him as such was an ingenious way of rendering his protest ineffective. In the intervals of working on many poems and of discussing them with Sassoon, Owen kept up his other activities in Edinburgh until he was discharged from hospital in October. Through Sassoon, he had already met Robert Graves. He went at once to London, armed with an intro-

duction to Robert Ross, man of letters and friend of many writers. Ross made Owen known to a circle of well known authors and the young poet became, at last an all too briefly a minor literary figure, although few people had seen his poems. Over half a century later, it seems odd that Owen should have been proud to call himself a Georgian, a member of a diverse school of poets which has since been much derided, but the contributors to the contemporary anthology, *Georgian Poetry* included Graves and Sassoon, who both thought of themselves as Georgians in 1917.

FUTILITY-EXPLANATORY NOTES

Move him into the sun
Gently its touch awoke him once
at home, whispering of fields unsown
Always it woke him, even in France,
Until this morning and this snow
If anything might rouse him now
the kind old sun will know
Think how it wakes the seeds,
woke, once, the clay of a cold star
Are limbs, so dear-achieved, are sides,
Full-nerved-still warm-too hard to stir?
Was it for this the clay grew tall?
O what make faluous sunbeams toil
To break earth's sleep at all?

Stanza I

Line 3-At home: This is one several examples in Owen's poems of his avoidance of proper names.

Line-7 The kind old sun: a familiar phrase, suggesting, ironically under the circumstances, that the sun has been an friend, Know a full rhyme with "snow" a paronym with "now" and an assonantly pair with "unsown" unsown in its turn is a paronym

with "sun""sun" is linked with "once" and "once " is a half-rhyme with France - an intricate pattern mingling harmony and dissonance.

Stanza II

Line 9 The sun once brought life itself to the previously dead earth, The local imagery of the preceding lines is now paralleled on a universal scale...fields unsown "become the clays of the whole earth., this snow becomes the coldness of the lifeless planet before the end of the ice Age

Line 11 Stir: persuade to move bring back to life.

Line 12- Was the whole process of evolution from protoplasm to man himself, designed to end with this pointless death?

Line -13 Fatuous: foolish absurd silly

Futility

Wilfred Owen is claimed by some modern poets as an important influence on the poetry, but it is difficult to see how Owen's poetry can influence those who have so much less to say. The poet of today cannot have anything as important to say as Owen had, because his experience is more dissipated and his view of reality generally more superficial. We are not brought today. Suddenly face to face with fundamental values. Values are muddled and deceptive and our activity altogether less intense. So, although we can appreciate Owen's poems to the full, we can learn little that will be of any help in the practice of poetry has not influenced modern poets at all in their search for new poetic matter. The only influence at all discernible lies in the copying of that peculiar half-rhyme which Owen used so much by poets like W.H. Auden. But this device is isolated and used in completely different contexts - different in manner as well as matter.

These half-rhymes of Owen are only one sign of his constant experimenting with technique and his interest in language for itself. His very earliest poems show him fascinated by the manipulation of words, and had not the war turned his attention to other aspects of poetry there can be little doubt that he would

have taken his place among those who were to help in the forging of a new poetic medium. That task is still uncompleted, a fact which gives us one more reason for wishing that Owen's career had not been cut short as it was.

Like so many young poets, Owen began in the Keats tradition. He loved language and played excitedly with its riches. There is more than a superficial parallel between the pre-war Owen and the immature Keats, while the change wrought in Owen by the war can be compared to the change that took place in Keats with the consciousness that he had only a limited time to live. Keats' development is illustrated most clearly in his letters, but the wisdom and maturity that came to Owen with the war is patent in his poems. What Mr. Blunden has called the Endymion phase of Owen's poetical life came abruptly to a close. The early Keats and the more superficial side of Tennyson vanished from his work and gave place to a clear-eyed awareness and a sense of reality that sometimes startle us, as the greatest touches of the greatest poets startle us by the truth. His war poetry shows an amazing advance in expression as well as content. He taught as he learnt. It is this ability to accept the lesson and convey it simply yet with great art, that distinguishes Owen from most other war poets. He kept himself in control, kept his vision undistorted by blind anger or unreasoning despair. Owen sees into things with more genuine insight. His sense of the futility of war is no less than Siegfried Sassoon's. But he expresses it with greater restraint and therefore more effectiveness.

In his short poem "Futility" he is talking of a smashed-up soldier. This is real pathos, genuine emotion with the facts undistorted, it can be put beside other of his lines, to show what Owen meant when he wrote...all a poet can do today is to warn. That is why the true poets must be truthful. In "Futility" however he is able to add sound organizing thought to the graphic details and subjective responses. The poem is not much more than a complex mixture of tones, but it is unusual in Owen's work for being personal without being too subjective and for keeping the de-

scriptive details plain and relatively bare. The organizing though while simple in precise and important it is similar to Wordsworth's *A Slumber Did my Spirit Seal* one of his finest lyrics for the same reasons. Owen's little poem is noteworthy Just as wordsworth's poem moves from an uneasy hope fed by past recurrences to a controlled bitterness, with frustration growing as his thought moves the temporal divisions of the first stanza (from the distant past, to the near and then very near past, to a future prospect) and then in the second stanza through a series of more and more rhetorical questions. We are given the motive and the appropriate and complex emotional response, and while large philosophical questions are asked, they are not pretentious (as "fatuous" brilliantly indicates) They are asked within the confines of carefully and intricately formed stanzas to define the emotion, not to present the poet as a professional thinker. That is, while the context is broader, the poem is successful because Owen does not try for more than he is capable of doing.

The elegiac pathos of "Futility" is too well known to need comment. What is remarkable is the distance covered in a few lines from the intimate quietly dramatized here-and-now opening of the clays of a cold star" and the breaking of earth's sleep. We accept this because of the quiet re-creation of the speaking voice moving rough conversation to inescapable and elegy to cosmic disillusionment supported by the weaving of pararhyme and assonance especially in the first stanza. Even more important in unifying the poem is the pattern of the words and ideas taking us from individual to the cosmic. The particularities of this sunshine, those fields unsown, this snow, outwards to the seeds the clays of a cold star, fatuous sunbeams toiling to break earth's sleep and the one movement from general to particular: from the day of a cold star to this clay (but also other clay that grew tall to the same end)

"Futility" was published in "The Nation" in June 1918 It is a short and intensely moving poem about a dead farm worker, who symbolizes all the killed in the War. Owen speaks of "him" to be

either a farm worker or a soldier who is dead. This dead person was once awakened by the sun, but it remains to be seen if he would be awakened now, from his present dead state. Earlier before his death, at home in England he rose in the morning reminded of his duty. For the fields were unsown. The very same sun woke him up in France, in the battlefield as a soldier, even as recently as that morning. (One must remember that Owen was a pacifist-One who hates war and loves peace. He was also a farmer as a civilian.) The snow suggest winter and the cold clutches of death Normally he rose with the sun but what will the kind old sun do now, for it is not capable of awakening him anymore.

The sun gives plants their vitality they need sunlight to grow The earth was only a cold star but once again the sun gave it warm in and light. When he was alive, he grew tall and strong. There is no use of the sun's rays and its labour, it is futile useless, when we are fated to die. The sun need not have bothered to create, if war is the end of it all, Creation itself a futile, the holder was close to earth, died to the earth, to be warmed back to life, if possible by the sun

OWEN'S USE OF SOUND DEVICES

Half-rhyme and pararhyme

There are over forty terms in current use of these two devices and much confusion has resulted. A full rhyme occurs when two words are identical in sound from the last stressed vowel onwards, provided that the consonants preceding the vowels are different mud /blood, trained/drained. In a "half-rhyme" the words are identical only in their final consonant sounds; bald/old eyes/close. The word "pararhyme" was first coined, apparently, by Edmund Blunden in his "Memoir" of Owen, but it was never clearly defined. The term means a rhyme in which two words are identical in consonant sounds not only after but also before different stressed vowel sounds leaves/lives braiding/brooding. Critics do

not always distinguish between half rhyme and pararhyme. Two further kinds of rhyme, both used often by Owen, are "assonance", in which words are alike only in their stressed vowel sounds and "alliteration" in which words share initial consonants or in which one or more consonants are repeated in close proximity.

Before Owen's first experiments, half-rhyme had occurred often, though never as a regular pattern, in English poetry. Pararhymes had been much less common. In a letter at the end of 1917, Robert Graves, commenting on Owen's recent use of pre-arranges in "Wild with All Regrets" pointed out that they ate features of ancient Welsh poetry. Owen may have known of this already, since he was aware of his Welsh ancestry and did play at one time to write verse on "old Welsh themes". It is also possible that he knew that the ancient licensed poets used half-rhyme, which they called *skothending*. At the beginning of the twentieth century, poets were becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the limitations of *yfill* rhyme and many experiments were being tried. Several American writers, notably Emily Dickinson, had broken away from the strict use of full rhyme. In France, Jules Romains began to formulate his complicated system of "Accords", which included pararhyme. In England Hopkins had discovered. But never used, the licensed rhyme schemes, and other poets, despite the horror with which most critics greeted the slightest breach of the rules of full rhyme, were looking for new methods. Robert Graves himself while still a schoolboy, had written at least one poem partly in half-rhyme. Owen however was the first to use either half-rhyme or pararhyme as a consistent rhyme scheme in English. As soon as his poems were published, his remarkable innovation became famous and was widely imitated.

The first recorded evidence of Owen's interest in pararhyme is a list of such rhymes on the back of a draft of "The Imbecile" a minor poem almost certainly support to Professor Welland's suggestion that Owen first encountered the device in the work of Romanians. On the other hand, he had learnt a little Welsh even as a

child and had studied Old English while at Dunsden, so that he may have discovered enough about ancient literatures to have been aware of the possibilities of partial rhyme before 1913. His first use of Half-rhyme or pararhyme to describe was "probably in the fragment "Bugles Snag" perhaps written at Craiglockhart. The first complete war poem in pararhyme is "Wild with All Regrets" revised become "A Terre" Sending the poem to Sassoon soon after its composition in December 1917, Owen asked him what he thought of "my vowel-rhyme stunt" as though Sassoon had not see any examples of it before. Vowels-rhyme is, of course, an inappropriate term since since Owen's rhymes depend upon consonants. In 1918, however, he became friendly with Charles Scott Moncrieff and encouraged him in his translation of "The Song of Ronsard" The translation produces the original French assonants or vowel rhymes and is dedicated to Owen and two himself seems never to have used assonance for a rhyme scheme. Altogether, half or pararhyme occurs as a regular pattern in about seventeen poems and fragments. This is a comparatively small proportion of Owen's work. but partial rhymes are, of course, used less systematically in many other poems.

The use of half-and pararhyme to describe war is particularly apt, since they produce an effect of dissonance and failure. We expect the rhyme to be completed and it is not. Owen often makes the second word lower in pitch than the first-grained/ground, teeth/death, thereby making the second line sad and heavy. The melancholy effect of this arrangements can be very powerful.

Mixed rhyme

Sometimes Owen used full, half-and pararhyme together in one poem as in "futility" rhymes with hurried but is also a pararhyme with "walled"

Onomatopoeia

The third and fourth lines of Anthem of Doomed Youth are obvious enough examples, more subtle is the clotted jaw wrench-

ing language of "Mental Gases" that forces the reader to imitate the twitching of the madmen

Alliteration and Assonance

Repetition of consonants and repetition of vowels are techniques which Owen developed to a highly sophisticated level. He is particularly fond of the short "u" in his depictions of war, but his lyrical passages are full of evocative sounds. The line

Featfully flashed the sky's mysterious glass

Uses tense alliteration (f .is) and the assonance of the "e" a sound to suggest the nervousness of the men and the sinister menace of the sky.

The wine is gladder there than in gold bowls.

has an obvious assonance in "gold bowls" but there is also a sequence of consonants that is an advanced form of alliteration. s-g-i-d/-i-d-s

Internal rhyming

"The Promises" has a pair of internal full rhymes in each line. Other poems work to a less formal scheme.

Lifting distressful hands as it to bless.

Is one of several examples in "Strange Meeting". There are two pairs here (Lift/s -if-t and -tress/bless) The poem has a pair of some kind in most lines (long/strung, dithered/upgathered, migrants .mire) Anthem for doomed Youth has a superb pun on pallor/pall with the further echo of "shall" in the same line.

Owen set himself, as most poets do, the task of imposing order upon experience and rendering beautiful and because war is a particularly disordered and ugly experience he needed an unusually highly developed control of words in order to achieve his aim, it must be added that those of his poems in which sound-effects are most conspicuous are not always his best. In a poem such as "Spring Offensive" he returns to simple full rhymes for the formal pattern and keeps his other devices under such subtle control that they are barely noticeable.

WILFRED OWEN

Wilfred Owen said I am not concerned with Poetry. My subject is War and the pity of War. The poetry is in the pity.

What do you understand by this statement in relation to English Poetry up to the 1930's?

The Great War 1914 - 18 produced a crop of poets, but their work was not cast all in the same pattern. Some inspired by patriotic fervor, sang its need, others caught in the vortex of its storm, sang its horrors. Just a few were inspired to look after and ahead, and while politicians were talking big of waging a war to end all wars. They were resolved to remodel the world through education propaganda, to appeal to the pity of mankind and effectually to stop it. Rupert Brooke and Wilfred Owen present the two types of those who were concerned with its immediate call to nobility and heroism, and those who at Skyros, and he became the martyred saint of all militarists. Owen went through the ordeal to the end; and struck overwhelmingly by the pity of it. Rupert Brooke laid down his life at Skyros, and he became the beacon of all brave fighters. He died in the thick of battle, and he became the martyred saint of all militarists. Owen went through the ordeal to the end, and struck overwhelmingly by the pity of it, he resolved to be a staunch antimilitarist. He has become the symbol and beacon of a better and newer world order, in which man and nations would live together in bonds of amity and love.

It is usually said that poets are born and not made. Yet, some impetus, some dynamic urge is necessary to persuade the latent talent to exhibit itself. The Great War formed the necessary stimulus in the case of some poets, and Wilfred Owen was one of them, for before 1914, he had written almost nothing. In 1910 he matriculated at London University. He went in 1913 to France, where for two years he acted as a tutor, returning to England in order to enlist as soon as his contract expired and from that time onward he was almost constantly in physical danger and discomfort. His letters which are frank and truthful, as well as

humours, show that horrors he had to endure; but they are full of courage. Posted to a unit of the regular army, he saw the whole war through, he was killed within a week of the Armistice. He was given the Military Cross for great bravery, and as an officer he represents the best type of unprofessional soldier.

He had, of course, written poetry before the War - some of it ingeniously experimental, but it was the war which produced his rapid maturity. Even then it was during his stay in a war hospital near Edinburgh, when Siegfried Sassoon is a born mentor. He watched over the talents of others, firm in criticism but ever kind in understanding, as no other man of his years could do. From Sassoon therefore, Owen at once derived the best possible form of encouragement.

Encouragement was all he needed. His poetic instinct was so sure that he would sooner or later have discovered for himself all that could be taught. Since however time proved so brief, it is to Sassoon that we must give thanks for a friendship and influence which aided the production of Owen's best poems. If Owen had lived, he might have carried into the postwar period and even stronger power as one infers from the magnificent fragments of his poetry. His poems deal chiefly with war conditions and war reflections. And of all the men active at that time, he is the one most accurately described as a poet of the war. But he was not concerned merely with the picturesque renderings of the sights and sounds of it alone.

In the preface to his poems Owen wrote; "My subject is War, and the pity of war.. The poetry is in the pity" The quality of the pity is immediate and sensuous and at its best is pointed by a close comparison between love and violent death.

In saying that the poetry was in the pity. Owen defined the characters of his work. The pity seems to enclose the horror storing it away, saving it up for some future purpose. It does not find the immediate release of indignation, which comes from pure repudiation of the horror. The astonishing thing about the poetry is

that Owen could suffer and reflect so deeply while he was suffering; that he could see what was endurable, and yet wtop an weigh it. Perhaps the impressiveness of his poetry comes finally from this moral quality. He seems to have been strengthened in it by his deep sense of solidarity with all the others who were in the same trip. There is a depth in Owen's poetry even when it is making the most simple statement, an apprehension, no matter what he is dealing with.

Owen said that his poetry might be consolatory to a later generation but that it would not be so to his own. It is certainly true that he did not become widely appreciated until a generation had grown up without the memory of world war. Owen was not one of those, who softened their own consciences by blaming the generals, or the bishops or the civilians or God, or even, indeed, the Germans. He was not a straightforward pacifist and he has eluded those who have on occasion tried to make him an early herald of socialism or of the protest movement. His major poems, the product of one year's writing and twenty-five years experience, are uneven and sometimes odd, they resist generalizations.

TWENTIETH CENTURY ENGLISH POETRY UP TO THE 1930'S

The predominant feature in the poetry of the twentieth century is the search for a new poetic tradition to replace the Victorian tradition. The Victorian Age was noted for its hypocritical, complacent, materialistic and imperialistic attitudes but he new century brought with is disillusionment and the search for new ways of thought, life and new systems of government.

The changes however became apparent only after a decade, since the turn of the century. The beginnings did not bring about any great revolution. The decadent strain of the nineties died out and so did the Imperialist strain, when Kipling finally settled down in England. Otherwise the Victorian Age passed unbroken into the Edwardian. Among the younger poets John Masefield harked back to Crabbe and Chaucer, Wilfred Gibson to Wordsworth, even

in the highly original work of Walter de la Mare one heard faint echoes of earlier dreamers. The Catholic tradition was continued by Mrs. Meynell and pre-Raphaelite by Gordan Bottomley.

Between 1909 and 1914 English Poetry was shaken by a revolution called the New Poetic, which was closely connected with Imagism. This Anglo-American movement was the only poetic movement of the century that has profoundly altered the course of English verse. F.S. Flint in his brief history of imagism (printed in 'The Egoist', May 1, 1915) refers to the poetic opinions of T.E. Hulme which is 'absolutely accurate presentation and no verbiage' and Hulme's poetic theory influenced the Imagists to some extent. The name Imagist was invented by Ezra Pound in 1912, who was the first leader of movement. Hulme and D.H. Lawrence wrote a few imagist pieces, but its chief practitioners in England were H.D. (Hilda Doolittle) her husband Richard Aldington and F.S. Flint, and of these only H.D. kept the faith for any length of time. The American Amy Lowell in her preface to the 1st of the three anthologies called *Some Imagist Poets* (1915-1917) laid down the principles of the Imagist movement. The imagist has absolute freedom in the choice of subjects and to create its own rhythms. He uses the language of common speech but always takes care to employ the "exact" word and presents an image that is hard clear and concentrated. In its use of "vers libre" with cadences (rise and fall of sounds) governed by breath pauses instead of regular meters Imagism owed something to Walt Whitman and much to French Symbolists. It was also much influenced by tiny poetic forms from Japan. After 1918, Imagism ceased to be an organized literary movement, but its direct influence on later poets such as W.B. Yeats and T.S. Eliot was considerable.

The first leader of the imagist, Ezra Pound, though an American became one of the dominant figures in English literary life for a decade (1909-1919) and did more than any other English man to shape the course of English poetry. Among the poems of Pound's 1912 volume, we find two of the most striking lyric poems

of the century "The Return" and "The Alchemist". One of Pound's major adaptation is his *Homage to Sextus Propertius*. (1917) (where his treatment of the subtle and difficult Roman poet of the 1st century B.C. is based on passages from the original elegies) His poetical pseudo-autobiography has the witty and complex intelligence, the agile and multifarious reference, which English poets sought in the following decades. His major poetical work is the "Cantos" published in installments, as it were, since 1919. Its method of presentation is based on Symbolist, Imagist and stream of conscious technique. Pound is unrivalled in sheer poetic courage, in breadth of conception, and in the intensity of his music and imagination at peak moments.

The outbreak of the war in 1914 stirred many young soldiers to poetry. Among them Robert Nichols and Robert Graves survived the war, but Charles Sorley, Wilfred Owen, Julian Grenfell, Francis Ledwidge, Rupert Brooke and Edward Thomas lost their lives in the war. The most remarkable among them were Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen. As the war went on Sassoon's exaltation succumbed to horror and indignation rather than to pity. The subject of his poems "is war and the pity of War". The war did not leave the older men too unmoved. Hardy was stirred to write "Men Who March Away" and Bridges compiled a wonderful anthology, *The Spirit of Man*. The war poets were all, in a sense, romantics, and all except Wilfred Owen wrote in traditional measures. Owen introduced certain innovations the inner rhyme and patahyme, by which he tried to give variety to this verse. (By 'pararhyme' he meant an imperfect rhyme in which the consonants of the final syllables are the same but not the vowels.)

The course of true poetry in this century can be said to have descended from Hardy. Before the war between 1904-8 Hardy had composed his epic-drama of the Napoleonic wars, *The Dynasts*, where the probe of individual suffering merges into the vision of a world in travail. The poem brings out the central theme in Hardy's poetry, that the world and humanity are all part of one vast innocu-

ousness. The Dynasts is the biggest single imaginative work in English literature since the Victorian age and is almost certainly the greatest in conception and in execution. Hardy is repeatedly charged with pessimism but he himself preferred to define it as "obstinate questioning" in "the exploration of reality" and he regarded this poetry of obeisant questioning as the "first step towards the soul's betterment and the body's also. Other collections include Poems of the Past and Present', Lyrics and Reveries and Wessex Poems'.

The tap-root of the new crop of poetry which sprang up just before the war ended was the revolt against Humanism and Romanticism. Hulme supplied its philosophy but D.H. Lawrence went beyond Hulme. He was in revolt not only against Western civilization but against reason itself. Calling on men to return to the life of instinct and think with the blood. It was chiefly as a novelist that he proclaimed his gospel of the feasibility many did believe that his poems would outlive his novels. D.H. Lawrence abandoned conventional metrical patterns and adopted a rhythmical free verse in many of his poems. He excelled in describing states of mind that verge on the unconscious.

WILFRED OWEN AS THE POET OF WAR

Wilfred Owen is the poet of the Great War. His genius flowered in the war and matured in it. His genius which was instinctive was differentiation that of other poets. The poetry of Wilfred Owen, slight though it is in bulk, is a rich contribution to English literature. The farther back the way years recede into the past the more clearly he stands out above the mass of war poets. Not only has his poetry and eternal plangent appeal but it remains at once a monument-small yet perfectly wrought to the English language, and an example of how the mind of the true poet works in the face of experiences that divide him into man who suffers and artist who contemplates and understands and welds into lasting verse. He brought his suffering into his poetry sufficient to make it genuine

but not so that it warped his sense.

The Great War of 1914-18 resulted indeed in a great flourishing of poetry. Some of the poets were non-combatant, like Kipling and Squire. Others were active on the battlefield. They regarded the war either as a glorious adventure or a dutiful self-sacrifice. But Owen saw it differently. To him was given the large vision, the liberal outlook. He therefore did not concern himself immediately with the rifles and cannons of the battlefield, or with descriptions of actual and bloody fighting. His subject was "War and the pity of War." He was concerned with poetry, his whole life proclaims that, but we know what he meant. He was not concerned to decorate fact, to poetize experience for the sake of poetry, to make life and excuse for a theme. He wrote poetry for the sake of life, in order to reach out through the facts of war to fundamental aspects of human thought and emotion. He did not sacrifice truth to indignation. It is by effective juxtaposition and arrangement that Owen gives greatness to his poems, not by wrestling and elaborating the single fact out of all relation to truth under the impulse of an uncontrollable emotion. There is enough real irony in war to make such subterfuges unnecessary, though it is much more difficult to make poetry out of the genuine fact.

"All a poet can do to-day is warn. That is why the true Poets must be truthful." But there are many kinds of truth. Obvious truth of fact-truth to what he saw-is not the easiest to tell, but Owen told it, holding it in his hand, as it were, unbroken and displaying it to all who wished to see. He captured, too, another kind of truth-truth to what he felt. That this was worth recording was due to the fineness of Owen's own character, which guaranteed a value to his sense of things greater than that which belonged to the things themselves, he was no distortion to meet emotion, but interpretation to explain an urgent sense of significance.

We may well ask what a poet can do in the face of such a devoting experience as modern warfare. What, at least should he try to do? Is it his duty to denounce war in stirring rhetoric or to

glorify his cause and his country, or to describe what he sees, or to preach a point of view? There have been poets who have done all these things. But Wilfred Owen did very much more. He came to the war with an intense poetic sensibility, a generous and understanding nature, and an ability to penetrate to the inner reality of the experience in the midst of which he found himself. "Inner reality" is a vague term, but its definition is implied in Owen's poetry, it refers to an ability to relate these particular facts to the rest of human experience, to the life of men and women in cities and field, to see war in its relation to all this, to appreciate just what this activity meant what it meant as a whole and what particular aspects of it meant in a world which was already old before the war, where happiness and suffering were no new phenomena, where men had lived diversely and foolishly and richly and gone about their occupation and were to do so again when all this was over. Owen never forgot what normal human activity was like, and always had a clear sense of its relation to the abnormal activity of war. A sense of the relation of the conditions he was describing to past and future human activity is strong in Owen's poetry and helps to give it meaning and importance for the post-war generation. Owen was no sentimentalist, but on the other hand he did not shrink from expressing the great emotional values brought out in the war. There is a world of [profound-feeling in his "futility. In so much other war poetry personal irritation forces the note and twists the facts: Owen remains calm and clear-eyed and there fore all the more intense.

Unlike most war poetry, Owen's does not belong to a single period, it does not derive its value solely from the background of special emotion against which it was originally set. His genius had not only a universalizing quality, but a quality of insight and penetration that enabled him to pierce to the heart of phenomena by stating them, recording them. His mood was foreign alike to purposeless bitterness and uncontrolled sentimentality. He had something to say, and he said it effectively, poetically, so that years

after the end of the war, his reputation is greater than ever and the power and cogency of what he has written remains as it will always remain.

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IN MEMORY OF W.B. YEATS

(W.H. AUDEN)

INTRODUCTION

Wystan Hugh Auden 1907-1973, the English born poet and critic of the twentieth century is regarded as the most important figure of the 1930's. His voluminous output displays a dazzling variety of style and subject matter. His early tone and manner were peculiar enough to introduce the word "Audenese" while Griegson founded the magazine *New Verse* specifically for him and the attitude he represented. The Auden Group or the Pink Poets as they were called, found the philosophical attitude of their precursor. T.S. Eliot unattractive but respected him and G.M. Hopkins as poets. In general terms his poems show a change from erotic and political to ethical and religious attitude.

Born on 21st Feb. 1907 at York as the son of a medical officer, Auden was given a typical middle-class education at Greatham's School in Hold and later at Christ Church, Oxford. His early poems were written in imitation of Thomas Hardy but he soon switched allegiance to T.S. Eliot whom he acknowledged as the only fit model for a modern poet. His friendship with Stephen Spender and other members of the Pylon School dates from his undergraduate days. On leaving Oxford he was school master for a time but soon began to earn his living as a writer. His first volume *Poems* (1930) astonished the literary world of the time. In the 20's Auden identified himself with Marxist-ideology (Pink Poets) inspired by the search for spiritual order and moral responsibility. The poems of this period were marked by social and political considerations. The obvious influences besides a superficial Marxism were, the rise of Fascism (Spain 1937) Groddeck and Freud. The thirties also produces Brechtian type poetic dramas. He wrote three plays in collaboration with Christopher Isherwood: *The Thirties* also

produces Brechtian type poetic dramas. He wrote three plays in collaboration with Christopher Isherwood: *The Dog Beneath the Skin* (1935) *The Ascent of 76* (1936) and *On the Frontier* (1938). In 1935 he married Thomas Mann's daughter Erika Mann. In 1937 he won the King's medal for poetry.

A new interest in religion becomes apparent in the poetry of the forties. The major influences during this periods were Kierkegaard and Reinhold Niebuhr. *Look Stranger* (1936) and *Another Time* (1940) mirror the current social and psychic unease. In 1939 a few months before the outbreak of World War II Auden left for America with his friend Isherwood. His later life was split between America, Ischia and Austria, where he had a home. Auden's departure seemed like a betrayal to many of his readers. He was even accused of cowardice and his leaving America was seen as an excuse to stay aloof from the war. But he has served as ambulance driver and stretcher bearer in the Spanish Civil War. The shift marked an entirely new phase in his poetic career. Hohn Wain sees it as a change from "active to contemplative" and from "corporate to lonely" "The new Auden has ceased to advocate practical intervention in the world's affairs, henceforth his main message will be that what we do matters less than what we are" (Wain). Many do not view it in so sympathetic a manner. Some of his admirers stated that by leaving for America he has damaged his genius beyond repair and that all his virtues drained away with this emotional surrender. His conversion to Christianity and his abandonment of the humanist stand of the 1930's added to this claim. He was even accused of tampering with his early poems in order to disguise his youthful convictions. But John Press says that such a comparison is unnecessary. In many of Auden's recent poems are slack, trivial and coy, much of his early work is silly, pretentious and needlessly obscure. *New Year Letter* (1941) is regarded, as the transitional poem between the young leftist Auden and the later philosophic X-ian. His long poems were published in *For the Time Being* (1945). During this time he continuously revised and

rejected his poems. Which displeased many critics. In 1946 he adopted American citizen ship.

In an attempt to be philosophical the later Auden is supposed to have thrown away his lyrical and linguistic gifts. His later short poems are mainly stylish light verse while the more ambitious ones show no advancement on his early career. The most decisive single factor in the later Auden was his growing devotion to the art of music. His love for vocal music and exposure to the Italian Opera made his poetry more elaborate baroque and poetic.

Collected Shorter Poems 1927-1957 (1966) Collected Longer Poems (1968) and Secondary World (1968) a series of essays and lectures are among his later works. Auden's greatness was now rapidly fading. He later defined poetry as a "game of knowledge" which has been interpreted as a rejection of its serious concerns. In 1956 he was elected as Professor of Poetry at the University of Oxford, a post he held for five years. He died at Oxford in September 1973.

Auden's main concern was man in society. His poetry was an effort to reform and personal world of the "Maker" as he called himself. It also shows the dualism that animated him-the individual and Society, Freedom and Law, Poetry and Reality, Art and Life, the Aesthetic and the Ethical, the Poet and the City. These irreconcilable dualities expressed themselves in political and theological terminology. Auden is today valued as a spokesman of the scientific culture, a leader of the second generation of modernism, creator of poetic types and a devotee of light verse.

THE POETS OF THE THIRTIES AND FORTIES.

The period between the two World Wars witnesses mass unemployment, great economic crisis and the rise of totalitarianism in Europe. Following the footsteps of the Russian Revolution (1917), all over Europe more and more sensitive and intelligent people were being drawn into Communism which they felt was the only means of uplifting the downtrodden. The poetry of the 1930's

was saturated in the bloody sweat of that decade.

The thirties saw the appearance of a new generation of English poets, among whom W.H. Auden, Stephen Spender, Cecil Day-Lewis and Louis MacNeice received the greatest attention. Being contemporaries at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, the school they formed is called the "New Country Group". They are also known as the "University Poets". They are considered to be the representatives of the poetry of the 1930's. All these poets, for a time held left wing views of varying degrees of intensity which led to their being labelled as the "Pink Pots".

These poets concerned themselves with the social and political aspects of human life, partly because the brutal facts of the day such as unemployment, Communism, Nazism and fascism were inescapable and partly because they belonged to a generation which had been encouraged by its teachers to develop a social conscience. There were certain poetic reasons too, which drove them to look for their material in the world of politics national and international. They felt that the greater weakness of the Georgians (1910-1936) was their preoccupation with individual hopes and fears. Their reluctance to tackle the kind of large scale impersonal problems which shaped the daily lives of most human beings. Therefore from the very beginning they took upon themselves the responsibility of writing for the people and their poetry always emphasized the community. Their poems were marked by a social sense and they preached that poetry divorced from life is of no value. Thus their work is a reaction against the doctrine of "art for art's sake" and what they called "luxury poetry".

These poets tried to be true to their times. They saw the steady decline of the old moral values and traditions and felt that they were living in a society undeniably sick. Two roads seemed to lead out to them. One was the whither that religion might offer, the other was a surrender to progressive forces. The New Country Group took the second road. They preached revolution and so they could not sit idle. When Spain was being ravaged by Fascism

they went to Spain. This event (The Spanish Civil War) 1936-1939) of the thirties was a central traumatic experience for the poets. Some poets died in the war. Auden served with ambulance units. Others like Spender went as reporters.

Along with Marx Freud was not her dominant influence among the poets especially Auden who was deeply, interested in Freudian psychology, psycho analysis and psycho thereby . His elegy "In memory of Sigmund Freud" clearly reveals the Freudian bent in his. Like Freud, Auden believe that the ills of the world came from psychological adjustment.

The concern of these poets was not only philosophic, but also technical, to find effective methods of communicating that analysis. Of the best known figures in the group, only Auden omitted to write a book explaining his poetic purposed. Stephen Spender wrote *Life and the Poet*, Cecil Day Lewis *A Hope of Poetry* and Louise Macneice *Modern Poetry*, all articles on the poet's place and purpose. Auden made his views clear in several articles and in personal statements scattered through out his verse particularly in *Letters from Iceland*. Letters from Iceland also has reference to Auden's use of the much noted machine imagery. Here he has remarked.

Terminals and slag heaps, pieces of machinery

That was and still is my ideal scenery

The poets felt that this kind of imagery was the natural and spontaneous expression of their thoughts and feelings, As a result they were dubbed the "Pylon Poets"

The most prominent among the poets of the thirties was undoubtedly W.H.Auden. His poetic career is divided into four phases and poems during the thirties dealt mostly with love, politics, diseases of the sick society, and of its typical middle class suffers. The poems of this period include *Consider This* and in *Our Time*, "*Our Hunting Fathers*", "*Spain*". "*I Time of War*" and "*In Memory of W.B. Yeats*." Towards the latter part his life Auden abandoned this type of poetry and turned to religious and metaphysical

poems of which "Song for St.Cecillia's Day" and "In -Praise of Limestone" are examples.

By the poetry Of the thirties we generally mean the poetry of the New Country School. Their works are amply illustrated in two representative anthologies, Michale Robers '*New Signatures* (1932) and *The Faber Book of Twentieth Century Verse* (1935). This group contributed something positive to English poetry and raised it from the mire of pessimism and nostalgia. In them we find a growing concern about the society and its structure, an awareness of the inevitability of another disastrous was and a strong faith in the glorious future of man. Above all they saved English poetry from being the possession of few intellectuals and widened its reading public.

The sudden signing of the Nazi Soviet Pact in August 1939 brought to an end the hopes of the these poets. The country to which they had pinned their hopes had concluded a deal with their enemies. Their political idealism burst like a bubble and the decade of the pink thirties came to an end.

In the late forties and early fifties many poets and critics felt that English poetry had come to a dead end or at least a resting place. The forties itself remain a shadowy period where in all is tentative. Elusive and and ambivalent. It was not until the publication of the article entitled "In the Movement" in October 1954, in "The Spectator" that the literary would became aware of the new direction that poetry was to take in the following years.

W.H.AUDEN

IN MEMORY OF W.B. YEATS

JAN. 1939

I

He disappeared in the dead of winter
 The brooks were frozen, the airports almost deserted
 And snow disfigured the public statues.
 The mercury sand in the month of the dying day.
 What instruments we have agree
 The day of his death, was a dark cold day.
 Far from his illness
 The wolves ran on through the evergreen forests,
 The peasant river was unattempted by the fashionable quays
 By mourning tongues
 The death of the poet was kept from his poems
 But for him it was his last afternoon as himself
 An afternoon of nurses and rumors
 The provinces of his body revolted
 The squares of his mind were empty
 Silence invaded the suburbs
 The current of his feeling failed; he became his admirers
 Now he is scattered among a hundred cities
 And wholly given over to unfamiliar affections
 To find his happiness in another kind of wood
 And be punished under a foreign code of conscience
 The words of a dead man
 Are modified in the guts of the living
 But in the importance and noise of tomorrow
 When the brooks are roaring like beasts on the floor of the
 Bourse
 And the poor have the sufferings to which they are fairly

accustomed

And each in the cell of himself is almost convinced of his
 freedom

A few thousand will think of this day

As one thinks of a day when one did something slightly un-
 usual

What instruments we have agree

The day of his death was a dark cold day.

II

You were silly like us; your gift survived it all.

The parish of rich women physical decay

Your self, Mad Ireland hurt you into poetry

Now Ireland has her madness and her weather still,

For poetry makes nothing happen; it survives

In the valley of its making where executives

Would never want to tamper, flows on south

From ranches of isolation and the busy griefs

Ray towns that we believe and die in ; it survives

A way of happening a mouth

III

Earth, receive an honoured guest

William Yeats is laid to rest'

Let the Irish vessel lie

Emptied of its poetry.

Time that is intolerant

Of the brave and innocent

And indifferent in a week

To a beautiful physique

Worships language and forgives

Everyone by whom it lives

Pardons cowardice, conceit

Lays its honours at their feet.

Time that with this strange excuse

Pardoned Kipling and his views
 And will pardon Paul Claudel,
 Pardoned him for writing well
 In the nightmare of the dark
 All the dogs of Europe bark
 And the living nations wait,
 Each sequestered in its hate,
 Intellectual disgrace
 Stares from every human face,
 And the seas of pity lie
 Locked and frozen in each eye
 Follow, poet, follow right
 To the bottom of the night
 With your unconstraining voice
 Still persuade us to rejoice;
 With the framing of a verse
 Make a vineyard of the curse
 Sing of human unsuccess
 In a rapture of distress
 In the deserts of the heart
 Let the healing fountain start
 In the prison of his days
 Teach the free man how to praise

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Stanza I

He-W.B. Yeats, disappeared-died Dead of winter-when the winter cold was most severe. Yeats died in January 1939, January is certainly a cold winter month, but whether it was really cold as Auden imagine it to be, is not known

The airports-being a modern poet Auden draws his imagery from city life and brings in the facts of modern life as airports which are deserted because the planes are all grounded owing to bad

weather.

The mercury sank.....dying day-in the evening as the day ended the mercury fell further in the barometer, thus indicating and increase in the intensity of cold.

All the instruments-the instruments which record weather conditions

Stanza II

The wolves ran on...forests-nature was not at all affected by the death of the poet. Auden thus reverses and treats ironically the convention of pastoral elegy which shows all nature mourning the death. Here nature goes on its course indifferently without caring for the poet who has passed away

The peasant river. The river flows through the countryside.

Unattempted-not attracted by Quays-wharfs or harbours

Was kept from the poems-The poet died and his death was mourned by the world. But his poems, his art, will live on. Art is not affected by the death of the artist. Auden thus stresses the permanence of art.

Stanza III

As himself- as a human being, living in this world

An afternoon.....rumours-vivid rendering of the atmosphere on that sad day. Nurses were running this way and that, and all sorts of rumours were on. People were talking of the sick Yeats and different views were being expressed.

The provinces of his body.his feeling failed-in this metaphysical conceit the dying. W.B. Yeats is compared to an emperor. Different parts of his body are the provinces of his empire which refuse to follow his will 'squares' or different parts of his mind become empty. The suburbs become silent insensitive and the current of feeling like lines of communication in a country ceases to flow. The poet gradually dies. He becomes his admirers-The poet as a person as a human being, died. His poetry will live on, but it shall be what others think of it. It shall undergo the transfor-

mation through successive interpretation and evaluation of his readers. He will be or rather his poetry will be, what his admirers make of it.

Stanza IV

Now he is.....hundred cities-Just as, the ashes of the dead are scattered far and wide, so Yeats Poems are scattered all over the world. They are read and admired far and wide.

Wholly given.....affections-he is now entirely at the mercy of people who did not know him. They were mere strangers to him, but now they will modify and transform his poetry by their own sensibility. Affections-Sensibility like and dislikes.

Another kind of wood-Strange unfamiliar countries.

Foreign code of conscience-rules of conduct and art, quite unknown to the poet himself..

The words....man the poetry of a dead poet, like Yeats .

Are modified...living is changed and transformed by the interpretations which are put upon it by his readers. Thus even his poetry does not love on, as it is, but undergoes a subtle, slow transformation. Just as his body is "transformed" by the grave, so his poetry is "transformed" by his readers.

But in the ...tomorrow-World will continue as usual, despite the death of the poet. "Tomorrow" will have its own activity, noise and rustled, its own problems which are considered important.

When the borkers...Bourse-business will be carried out as usual in the market-place. "Bourse" or the business exchange will continue to hum with activity as usual.

And the poor...accustomed-the poor will continue to be poor. Nothing in life or nature is nature is changed by the death of the poet.

In the cell of himself-a prisoner of his own selfishness and ego.

It almostfreedom-man, a prisoner of his own self seeking. Weill continue to harbour the delusion that he is free.

A few thousand-the few readers and admirers of Yeats.

O'all the ...cold day- This refrain again stresses the fact that the passing away of individuals has little impact on the course of future events. Both nature and humility go on a usual, unconcerned.

Section II

You were silly like us-The poet stresses that Yeats was a human being like us, with common follies and weaknesses. There was nothing extraordinary about him. Throughout, there are ironic contrasts with the conventional elegy. Auden does not glorify Yeats. Your gifts...it all -the poet with his "silliness" is dead. His gift to the world, his poetry, lives on

The Parish of rich woman-Larger number of rich women like Lady Gregory, Olivia Shakespeare, etc, who admired the poet and encouraged and inspired him.

Physically decay-like all human beings Yeats also underwent process of old age, disease and death, Mad -wild easily excited. Mao Ireland hurt you in to poetry-Auden suggests that Yeats became a poet because of his urge to serve his country and bring about a revival of its art and literature. The wrong of Ireland caused him pain and hurt him into becoming a great poet.

Now Ireland....weather still-but his poetry could bring about no improvements in the lot of the Irish people. As we are told in the next line, poetry can make nothing happen. It cannot affect the course of human history.

It survives in .the.....abd die in - poetry is here compared to a river which can fertilize only the "soul", it has no effect on the outside world.

In the valley of saying - The human soul, the source of its being.

Where executivestemper - the human soul is not subject to the action of the administrators of the world.

Ranches of isolation- isolated nooks and corners in the human psyche. A way of happening -simply as a record of possibilities and ideals, way in which things can happen, though they do not actually happen in that" way in the present. A mouth- a lan-

guage; a way of saying things a style poetry survives as a "voice " as a way of expressing the human condition. That is its real significance.

Section III

Stanza I

Honoured guest- The body of Yeats.

Irish Vessel - Yeat who was an Irishman. Yeats is being compared to a vessel which in life was full of poetry, of which it has been emptied in death.

Stanza II

Intolerant of- does not care for.

Indifferent in a week ... physique - destroys In a week even the most handsome body. A week in the grave is enough to decompose even the most beautiful.

Stanza III

worship language - respects only the language, i.e. the way of saying things of a poet, his art.

Pardons Cowardice... at their feet - faults of character like cowardice, conceit, pride vanity etc. of a great artist are forgotten, if he has command over language and knows how to say things well.

Stanza IV

With this strange excuse - because they were masters of language.

Kipling and his views - Kipling, the great Edwardian novelist and poet, is still remembered because of his art. Even though he was an imperialist and colonialist his views.

Paul Claudel - a poet who supported the Fascist cause during the Spanish Civil War.

Stanza V

In the nightmare of the dark-The reference is to the terrible years preceding the outbreak of Word War II in 1939, the year of

Yeats death

The dogs of Europe Bark-selfish blood-thirsty leaders of Europe, such as Hitler and Mussolini

Sequestered-separated and isolated from others. because of its own hatred and selfishness.

Stanza VI

Intellectual disgrace-People hating each other because of ideological and political difference.

Stares from -is to be seen on

And the seas of....each eye-There is absolutely no pity or fellow feeling

Stanza VII

To the bottom of the night-to the innermost depths, the poet should do everything possible to explore hidden truths.

Still persuade us to rejoice-use of poetry, your wisdom, to persuade us to rejoice, despite the horror or war looming large in the horizon. Yeats himself stressed this role of art in times of crisis.

Stanza VIII

With the framing of a verse -with your gift of writing powerful poetry.

Make a vineyard of the course-turn into blessing, make us rejoice despite the curse of war that threatens to destroy humanity . Unsuccesses- failures. In a rupture of distress-Joyfully, despite, distress and failure

Stanza IX

Deserts of the heart-dry hearts dry of sympathy and fellow feeling

Let the healing ...start -through your poetry make the fountain of sympathy start in the heart of people so that humanity may be cured of the curse of selfishness and lack of sympathy. In the prison of his days-Man today is a prisoner of his own selfishness. It is his selfishness which isolates him from others. Teach the free-

man how to praise-First free men from the prison of self, and then inspire them to accept and praise their life, despite its many limitations and drawbacks.

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE POEM

In memory of W.B. Yeats was written to mourn the death in January 1939, of W.B. Yeats, one of the greatest of English poets of the 20th century. It was first published in "Another time" 1940, a collection of poems containing poems about peoples and places and lighter poems. The poem is divided into three sections of different lengths. As the title suggests it is an elegy written to mourn the death of the poet, but it is different from the conventional elegy. Traditionally, in an elegy all nature is represented as mourning the death. Here nature is going on its course indifferent and unaffected. The great poet's death goes unnoticed both by man and nature. Human life goes on as usual and so does nature. The next point to note is that in the traditional elegy the dead is glorified and his death is said to be a great loss for mankind. Auden does not glorify Yeats, he reverses the traditional elegiac values and treats them ironically.

The poem, though in three parts, has to be considered as whole. Each part offers a different approach to the same topic of W.B. Yeats' death and adopts a different stylistic manner.

The first part has an almost prosaic attitude to the death of the poet. We are told factual details such as the fall of snow, the closing of airports because of the stormy conditions, and even the physical manner of his death. The blank verse form that is adopted enhances the matter of fact tone. To offset this effect we also find more exotic references in the second stanza namely, to wolves in "evergreen forests" and "the peasant river".

The imagery of revolt and rebellion that are introduced into the third stanza lift Yeats' death above the merely ordinary. Auden tells us of the rumours of disease and death in the poet's body, of the way the various parts of the body are spoken of as provinces

and 'squares' and suburbs-began to feel the ill effects. Unlike the specific statements of the first stanza the poem now begins to sound compressed and even obscure. We have to search for meaning in such a phrase as he became his admirer. The notion conveyed in that rather pithy statement continues in the next stanza and is repeated in the two lines.

The words of dead man

Are modified in the guts of the living

The concept of artistic consistency is raised here, because we find that Auden's notion of the poet's words being affected by the active involvement of his readers and being liable to change is to some degree contrary to a later notion in part III.

There he sees the words of the poet as being capable of more positive, active influence. Far from being changed they can bring about change. The words may be able to "Teach the free man how to praise".

Part I is less optimistic. Only "a few thousand" will recall this day in January 1939.

In Part II we have it boldly stated that "poetry makes nothing happen" This is not consistent with the view expressed in Part I where at least it was seen to engage the reader in some process, even if only a digestive one. It is in strong contrast too, with the hopes held out for poetry in Part III. Auden is fond of provoking arguments and response. He will do it by presenting, as in this case some quite obviously incompatible statements. He will do it, too by the use of quite vivid and alarming images which shock the reader into thought, as in the reference to the "guts of the living"

The argument in this part is largely academic and remote from real, live issues. Auden adopts the image of remote valley and a river which are relatively untroubled. In Part III, though, he tries in the last five stanzas to relate poetry to immediate issues. War and misery create situations within which poetry can possibly work for the good. Auden hopes so. Given the serious nature of the statement in this part, the rhyming couplet form may appear

inappropriate. The form is, however, suggested by that of an epitaph on a tombstone. The opening stanza is devised as just such an epitaph on a tombstone. The opening stanza is devised as just such an epitaph. But the "Poetic" suggestion that Yeats was a vessel of poetry is abandoned in the next stanza. It is replaced by the suggestion of decay in the statement that time is "indifferent in a week to a beautiful physique. The rest of the images in the poem are not as stark and horrific as that. Rather they are vague and intangible: "nightmare of the dark" "seas of pity" "bottom of the night" "deserts of the heart". They lack the sense of intensely left emotion. they indulge Auden's own "rapture of distress". The personification of time contributes to this lack of a sense of real commitment, to the feeling of artificiality evident in this part of the poem. With this judgement in mind it is interesting to read the following remark made by Auden to his friend Stephen Spender.

I am incapable of saying a word about Yeats because, through no fault of his, he has become for me a symbol of my own devil of authenticity of everything which I must try to eliminate from my own poetry, false emotions, inflated rhetoric, empty sonorities.

Part III of this poem shows plenty of evidence of those false emotions.

SUMMARY

Part I The opening line of Part I tells us simply when the poet died. But the stanza then goes on to show that his death was in keeping with all the many other signs of deaths that were apparent at this time.

The second stanza talks about the continued existence of life elsewhere, unaffected; woe; for example can on through evergreen forests; Like the evergreen forests, Auden suggests Yeats poem will never die.

The third stanza concentrates on what happened to the poet as he lay dying. Auden uses an image of revolution uses an image of revolution here to show how the various parts of the body offered their

own forms of resistance, how his mind went blank and how he gradually lost all sense and feeling. The person that was W.B. Yeats took a new form through the continued evidence of those who admired his work.

Stanza four may appear macabre in expression what it, means is that the poetry of W.B. Yeats is now expressed in many different languages. Some will treat him with respect others will find him objectionable. The famous last two lines of this stanza mean that those who experience that poet's works will give form and meaning to what he intended.

The fifth stanza of this part repeats a sentiment that was given expression in the poem. Here Auden reflects on the simple fact that whilst a sad and tragic event was in progress, the process of living elsewhere continued as usual. Only some will remember it as being an usual day.

Part II

These ten lines celebrate the triumph of Yeats poetry. Auden tells us that it will remain triumphant despite all the personal faults of Yeats himself, and all the various human factors that surrounded him in his native land. Indeed, it was the odd feature of Irish society, Auden claims, that prompted him to write poetry. But Yeats' poetry never changed anything in reality. Poetry is not a force which operates beyond itself. It is satisfied to continue to live once it has been expressed. The poet may live and die in those areas of desolate experience which inspire his word, but the words themselves move beyond that limited environment and continue to live.

Part III

The first stanza talks of the burial of W.B. Yeats in romantic terms. The ground is personified as a host that welcomes visitors. The second stanza shows that not only is the earth kind to Yeats. But that time and history will be equally kind. Time, says Auden, treats all merely physical forms as being of little concern. But time respects language and all those

who give it expression. It will forgive all kinds of indiscretion in those who live by the word. Even more, they will be honoured. The fourth stanza gives two instances of authors who have been well treated by history. It promises that the same will happen to Yeats.

Stanza six talks of the menaces to humanity existent at the time. Europe is at when nations are isolated by mutual hatred. Stanza seven continues this sad theme and tells of the drying up of all intellectual and emotional activity.

Stanza eight makes its appeal now to the spirit of Yeats to banish all this darkness and show the world reasons for happiness. Stanza nine expresses the hope that the seed his poems sow will bear rich fruit. The poet even hopes that it may be possible to transform basically evil things into beneficial ones. The final stanza expresses a similar wish. Auden prays that Yeats poems will bring solace to those who have no hope and no reason for joy.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Give an estimate of Auden as a modern poet

W.H. Auden was born in 1907 and he died in 1973. His first volume of poems was published in 1928, and he continued to write up to the end of his days. His span of actual poetic production extends over a period of more than thirty five years. During this long period he has tried his hand at almost every kind of verse. Lyrics, sonnets, elegies, odes, ballads, long narrative poems, light satirical verse, parodies, burlesques, poetic plays, have all claimed his attention. The abundance and variety of his work is amazing. Indeed, this immense variety is the first characteristic of his poetry which strikes the eye, a one takes up the study of Auden.

The second characteristic which strikes us is the extremely difficult nature of his poetry. This difficulty, even absurdity, arises, from the extreme density and epigrammatic terseness of his styles. He often writes a telegraphic style in which connections, conjunctions, articles,

even pronouns, are often missing. Further difficulty is created by his frequent use of the terminology of modern psychology. However, it should be mentioned that with the passing of time his style became more clear and lucid, and easy to understand.

Auden uses a number of stylistic devices to convey his meaning exactly and accurately. He coins new words, and does not hesitate to use archaic, obsolete and unfamiliar, unusual words if they suit his purpose. Abstract nouns are personified and written with a capital letter. Similarly, adjectives are turned to nouns by the use of 'the' before them. In all these ways he makes his diction concrete and picturesque. The "Auden Simile" has become notorious and so is his use of long catalogues to convey an idea of the complexity and variety of modern life. He is rhetorical and high sounding, when it suits his purpose.

Auden, like T.S. Eliot, is a representative poet and represents the spirit of the age in his poetry. The modern age is spiritual wasteland with the modern man suffering from a sense of boredom and neurosis. He is "lonely" even in a crowd and is spiritually dead. This modern spirit is represented by the use of imagery drawn from the facts of contemporary city life. His landscapes are symbolic of spiritual and psychological states of the modern man, and so are his peoples and places. Decayed machinery, upturned trucks and engines, ugly chimneys emitting foul vapours are all symbolic of the corruption within a human soul, as well as in society. Spiritual desolation of a sick industrial society is conveyed by the use of desolate, rock landscapes.

Auden was a ceaseless experimenter with verse - Forms and stanza patterns. He began with using conventional 19th century meters and he continued to use conventional verse - forms up to the very end. However, gradually he took more and more to the use of free verse i.e., verse which has been freed from the bondage of meter. Often he uses a long flowing line which approximated closely to the condition of prose. In his Christian poetry as his diction grows simpler, his rhythms become

colloquial and conversational

Auden's ideas and beliefs also gradually evolved with the passing of time. In the beginning, under the influence of Marxism he came to believe that a change of environment is essential and it can be brought about only through social action. Then after 1939 under the influence of Christian theology, his views changed further, and he advocated the necessity of faith and universal love for the cure of human ills. Despite its many drawbacks which can be removed through love, life is a blessing and it must be accepted as such. This is the final message of Auden's poetry.

Of Modern English poets, Auden ranks in importance next to T.S. Eliot. No doubt his poetry suffers from a number of faults. There is much inequality and much of his work is flat and dull and prosaic. Much inferior matter mingles with matter of the highest quality. He represented the social and political concerns of the 1930's; so much of his poetry has grown outdated and has lost its appeal for the new generation. Since his migration to America in 1940, there has been a loss in intensity. He has no universally accepted masterpiece as T.S. Eliot's *Waste Land*. But when all this is admitted there can be no denying the fact that Auden is a major poet by virtue both of the quantity and quality of his work and the wide range of his poetic attainment. He has been amazingly prolific and versatile, and if the best of Auden is presented in a selection, such as Arnold's selection from Wordsworth's poetry, it will be seen that Auden takes his stand with the greatest of English poets.

Auden's span of active poetic production extended over a period of thirty five years, during which he was constantly experimenting, changing, becoming and growing. In his early poetry of the thirties his style is characterized by extreme difficulty, even obscurity. With the passing of time his style acquired greater clarity and displays greater control over his language and imagery. He displays greater ease and fluency and less awkwardness. Most of his poems are not poetry

moving toward song. Auden's poetry moving toward talk. The reader must hear it not for the ecstasy of its sensual sound but to catch the voice sounds that will tell him what the words mean.

Discuss Humanism in Auden's Poetry

Auden is one of the most inward and subjective of poets taken individually his poems are often extremely obscure. However, his poems create a cosmos, a poetic universe that its repeated symbolic properties, from landscape to typical characters and recurrent a remoteness are manifest in his attitude. He often views human life from a great distance, concerning himself with the difference between man and the great of nature or with man in the vast perspective of geological or evolutionary time. Often his imagination tends to generalization like that of a scientist. But against this tendency to abstraction there is the vividly specific and concrete quality of his imagination, and against the detachment and remoteness there are the compassion, tolerance and sympathy for ordinary people and things "that have grown more and more marked in his verse".

There is a dualistic idea running through all his work. This idea is symptom and cure. Sometimes Auden's poems are more symptomatic than curative. Sometimes they concentrate with an almost salvationist zeal on the ideal of a cure. The symptoms have to be diagnosed, named, brought into the open, made to weep and confess, that they may be related to the central need to love leading them to the discipline which is their cure.

It is his conception of the cure which has changed. At one time, love, in the sense of Freudian release from inanition at another time a vaguer and more exalted idea of loving, at still another the Social Revolution, and at yet another later stage, Christianity.

Since around 1941 Auden has directed the reader's attention more consistently to the problems of the human individual rather than the collectively human social order.

Auden began to emerge early in the 1930's as a spokesman for a dissatisfied generation. Just what he spoke for and against, or more about was not always clear. But nobody could fail to notice in the early poems that some sort of good and bad forces battled with each other across the ruins of a healthy landscape. If these were vague and general, the reader could then more easily find his own cause embattled there. In each of his early poems. The speaker clearly lives some where near the end of a declining cycle. With their healthy instincts stifled everywhere, men wallow in sickness of all sorts. For them, the life force busy cleansing and purging is a death force.

The most striking characteristic of the considerable body of work which Auden has produced in America, is that in all of it, whether in poems, general essays, critical articles, reviews or lectures, and whatever has ostensibly subject, he discusses religious belief. His most important creditors - as important as Freud or Marx earlier - have been Kierkegaard and Niebuhr. Kierkegaard laid emphasis on the individual soul, its suffering and arrival at faith among importance of moral choice. Niebuhr similarly discusses matters of special interest to Auden, in particular the situation of the time.

The conflict between freedom and necessity and the exact nature of sin.

Auden, towards the late 1930's came to believe not only that poetry does not make anything happen but that it is arrogant of a poet to try to make anything happen but that it is arrogant of a poet to try to make it do so. The poet's business to rise above the, mundane play games with words, entertain unpromptedly unpromptedly lift the heart, minds and spirits of his readers. All those changes came about in consequence of that major transfer of belief, from atheistic Marxian. To existentialist Episcopalian liberation which coincided with his transfer of habitat from London to New York. His views changed from a belief in a planned society to a belief in deterministic forces, historical and psychological, governing from ethical choices for which we are

responsible. One thing that attracted Auden to Kierkegaard was his emphasis on the individual. Auden in fact really knowable. He in fact writes with great compassion and shows no relish for either personal or social disaster.

A kind of eclectic humanism is characteristic of Auden's two volumes. *Another Time* and *The Double Man*. *Another Time* (1940) is Auden's most topical and discursive volume. It is held together, first by theme of man's relation to time and history as in the little poem, "For Us Like Any Other Fugitive" which describes the temptation of escaping into past and future and warns of the need for living in our own time confronting the present and secondly by the gospel humanism.

Auden combines an intense interest in the human heart with a desire to reform and he thinks our psychological is greater than our political. When we recall the powerful moralist in him, we find his anger at mental sickness, at the waste in the twisted lived around, at the increase in the number of those who find it impossible to adjust themselves easily understandable. He is convinced of the urgent need for therapy. He believes that the spread and assimilation of findings of psychology can help society towards good health.

Though he was at first an atheistic Freudian communist later in life he was a Christian existentialist liberal. At least he was metaphysical and materialistic compassionate and cynical orderly and untidy generous and mean, brilliant and foolish, unhappy and optimistic innovative and traditionalist, light and serious. Thus both communism and Christianity are seen to spring from a common source, the wish to improve the world and its inhabitants. He always wished to be a redeemer of the wretched.

Auden's very varied subjects are normally related to one or more of a number of preoccupations such as in the thirties love politics, peace, Leukemia, death, fear and character, or alter the trite love technology social engineering, nature, the good life, man in essence history and the nature of art. These are not dealt with for their own sake, to evoke of freshen what they feel like, but rather for their significance.

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THE SUNLIGHT ON THE GARDEN

(LOUIS MACNEICE)

Louis Macneice was born in 1907 and spent early childhood in Ireland, and although he spent most of his adult life in England. He often seemed something of an exile. He was a university teacher of classics during the 1930's and was friend of and collaborator with W.H. Auden with whom he had been at Oxfors in the 1940's he worked at the BBC, writing and producing radio plays of a high standard.

MacNeice's fate for many years was to be regarde as one of the Thirties poet's therefore political and dated. It is true that his long poem "Autumn Journal" expresses the feelings of a London dweller at a crucial moment in modern European history and that he is at his best in painting the twentieth century city landscape. But he is not a political writer and is in no way dated. Mac Neice had the most, traditional kind of pyric talent of all the poets who became famous during the 1930's. His songs are more genuinely songs that those of Auden. The Irish tilt is their unobstrusively in most of his poems. It is not of joy but of a desperate amusement in the face of a discouraging life. He is a poet of humility, mood and moment, not of abstract or philoophical concerns. MacNeice's poetry is a repeated invitation to the reader to join hands to create some kind of human contract top keep away "the wolves of water who howl along our coast" Time and again he speaks for the reasonable, sensitive man of our time, with taste and restraint and with the dahs of fancy and verbal music which makes his statements poetry.

Louis MacNeice is a central poet of the twentieth century. On the one hand, his poetry has absorbed the communal experiences of four decades, on the other it fully enters our perennial life of the senses and the psyche. Macrieice believed in the poet as a maker and in the human significance of making 'good patterns'. Since he also thought the poet should be a biend of 'critic and entertainer' his patterns involve what he

called 'two pence coloured' all that can be done with language as well as said in it. Perhaps the best way to sum up the advent and impact of MacNeice's poetry is to quote the opening of his well known poem 'Snow' "The room was suddenly rich...." In 1949 Geoffrey Grigson, formerly editor of the great thirties magazine "New Verse", developed his own metaphor for a talent he had spotted from the start:

There is these Juvenile were stretched to tautness
 crisscrossing wires of form with this spangled acrobat
 performing on them, and the cleverness, as one knows
 by this time, grew and strangled itself into a ca-
 pable to MacNeice himself. The wires were still sil-
 very and still glittered. The icicles, the ice-creams,
 the pink and white, the lace and the froth and the fire-
 works were still there, but underneath the game was
 the drop, the space and the knowledge

(Introduction to "The Poetry of the Present")

But not every critic is as alert as Grigson, and for various reasons Mac Neice's reputation has developed unevenly. Chief among these is the tendency to brand one of his literary contexts with the name of another poet. The very titles of the following books marginalize Mac Neice: Francis Scarf's *Auden and Alter* (1942) Samuel Hynes's *The Auden Generation* (1976) *The Macmillan Casebook Thirties Poets...* *The Auden Group* (1984) Mac Neice never resented W.H. Auden's *Shadow*.

Mac Neice's spotlight roves over the previous decade, British History after the First World War, even the history of western culture. The thirties poets had spoken of an end since the beginning, a trope satirized by William Empson in "Just a Smack of Auden" Waiting for the end boy, waiting for the end. However the actual end in sight did not follow either left-wing or right-wing scripts. Hence perhaps the need to go back to the start of the story of myth and reread it with Mac Neice more

than any other writer did Mac Neice's poems from late 1936 to 1938 had already been saturated with valediction and dark participation.

Mac Neice saw origins in Ulster and Ireland as indelibly imprinting his life and work. His personal reserve was the product of profound reservation about the world around him. His poetic reserves is a function of dramatic technique. Admittedly Mac Neice blurred the outline of his lyric theatre because, like Auden he wrote too much. The volubility and generosity which Grigson considers vital to the thirties general can become a pseudo fertility, as if were the poet's duty simply to go on writing. Critics rightly condemn Mac Neice's wordy dullness in some longer poems of the 1940's One sign of poet is that he continually broods on the same obsessions and images, but finds different forms of them. Mac Neice's true energy returned in *Visitations*, more powerfully in *Solitudes* and *The Burning Perch* in the two latter collection. He finally purged an obsolete discursiveness, using techniques of "parable" to dramatize conciseness of "every man" with new concentration.

Mac Neice's Irishness, fundamental to his poetry, has often been invisible to English and American critics or regarded merely as a decorative Celtic ring. Grigson shows greater understanding when he describes Mac Neice as "cut off in some degree and in some ways of his advantage by his Irishness and an Irish childhood, in spite of an English education". Mac Neice's poetry has often been seen the one dealing with matters alien to Ireland - The Second World War for instance, and as Anglicized in manner. His work had a shaky history in anthologies of Irish poetry until the publication in 1986 of Paul Muldoon's Faber book of *Contemporary Irish Poetry* where he shares pride of place with Patrick Kavanagh.

Any danger of Mac Neice's poetry sinking somewhere in the Irish sea has been averted by the fact that a new generation of poets has appeared from what the blurb of *Poems* (1935) called 'his northern

Ireland'. Since 1960 Mac Neice's influence on Derek Mahan, Paul Muldoon' and others has retrospectively helped to define his native context. In the wake of the poets, critics from Ulster or informed about Ulster have begun to interpret Mac Neice's cultural complexity. His own formulations run to paradox; 'I wish one could either live in Ireland or feel oneself in England. He wrote to E.R. Dodds in the 1940's. this conflict can be read negatively the conditions of being and outsider in two countries. Certainly, shifting attitudes to Ireland are integral of Mac Neice's creative self dramatization. Further, because Mac Neice's poetry dramatizes polarities engendered by Ireland such as that between belonging and alienation it has become a focus on the literary wing of current debates about identity in Northern Ireland.

Hope overstates Mac Neice's distance from collective thirties consumes. A Mac Neice - centered view of the decade complicates rather than wholly contradicts the usual picture. During the war years and into the early 1960's Mac Neice pursued the questions of commitment and of poetry's obligation to the contemporary'. English critics have continued to tax him with being uncommitted in a non- political sense. They suspect his acrobatics, morlize over his poetry's brilliant 'surface' and lack a philosophical 'core'. Such analysis often reds conflicts explored by the poetry as literal problems of the poet himself.

Torrance Brown in Louis Mac Neice: Skeptical vision make amends to the metaphysical seriousness of Mac Neice's poetry. Brown simultaneously defends it against a related charge - compromise rather than evasion. He argues that "the central determining factor in Mac Neice's poetry and thought, far from being a decent, liberal, but rather common place agnosticism, was a tense awareness of fundamental questions, rooted in philosophical skepticism". Since Mac Neice himself distrusted the 'a priori'. It is a productive approach to see the positions of his poetry, whether liberal or darkly doubtful, as won through imaginative struggle - at a time of great struggles.

On its aesthetic level Mac Neice's poetry reconciles traditionalism and Modernism. In a curious way he did more than other twentieth century poets to test poetry against the century. He tested it against the claims of politics and philosophy. Against the pressure of cities and war. And he did not take the outcome of these tests or of anything else, for granted.

LOUIS MACNEIE

THE SUNLIGHT ON THE GARDEN

The sunlight on the garden
 Hardens and grows cold
 We cannot cage the minute
 Within its nets of gold,
 When all is told

We cannot beg for pardon
 POur freedom as free lances
 Advances towards its end
 The earth compels, upon it,
 Sonnets and birds descend;
 And soon, my friend
 We shall have no time for dances
 The sky was good for flying
 Defying the church bells
 And every evil iron
 Siren and what it tells;
 The earth compels
 We are dying, Egypt, dying
 And not expecting pardon, Hardened in heart a new
 But glad to have sat under
 Thunder and rain with you,
 And grateful too
 For sunlight on the garden

Explanatory notes

The sunlight on the Garden is a musical piece. The tone is characteristic of the Oxford poets of the 1930's Mac Neice was the least intoxicated by political and humanitarian panaceas, and the most deeply depressed by the signs of the future. "We are dying, Egypt, dying is a

frivolous theft from Antony and Cleopatra: Its only possible relevance here is that Antony and Cleopatra enjoyed their hours together before the ultimate defeat and separation.

Stanza I

The rhyme scheme is a, b, c, b, b, a pattern. The run-on rhymes are garden are garden/hardens,, minute/within its. Note the variation in the run-on rhyme that is suffixational.

Garden/Harden/s/
 Minute/within its/s/

The example of irregular rhyme is gold/tols. Garden in the first line rhymes with "pardon" in the last line of the first stanza.

Stanza II

The rhyme scheme is d, e, f, e, e, d pattern. The run-on rhyme lances/Advances, upon it/Sonnets. The suffixational variation is upon it / Sonnet/s/, the regular rhyme is descend/friend. As in the previous stanza 'lances' of the first in rhyme with dances in the last line.

Stanza III

The rhyme scheme is g, h, i, h, h, g. The run-on rhymes are flying/ Defying, iron/siren. The regular rhyme is tell/rhyme is tells /compels. There is no suffixational variation. Once again flying in the first line rhymes with dying in the last line.

Stanza IV

The rhyme is a i, k, j, j, a. The run-on rhymes are paradox/ Hardened, under/Thunder The suffixational variation is pardon/Harden ed/. The regular rhyme is you/too. Pardon rhymes with "garden" in the last line of the poem. Note in Stanza I "Garden" at the end of the first line rhymes with "pardon" in the sixth. In stanza IV 'Pardon' in the first line rhymes with 'garden' in the end of the poem.

The poem's rhyme pattern corresponds with the stanzaic rhyme pattern. regular rhyme with a few variations are used. The run-on rhyme

is use for continuity and theorematic expression with variations namely suffixational.

The theme is ephemeral sansient, and in irrevocable, expressed by the implacable quality of time and the irrevocability of human action.

THE SUNLIGHT ON THE GARDEN

Louis Mac Neice would be appeared particularly well qualified to question the assumption of intellectual surrender. Critics think of him as the least political of the political poets of his generation. He was never a party rhemne nor a self proclaimed communist. He professed no intellectual attachment to Marxist theory not is his poetry ever propagandist in the manner of Cornford's nor habitually a poetic transcription of Marxist thought. He was vary both of parties and or systems. He honestly enjoyed the material pleasures of his class and wrote most attractively about them. Still, his political colour was deep pink/liberal. He thought of the great issues of the day, the rise of Hitler, mass unemployment, the Spanish war, as A Uden, Day Lewis and Spender thought of them. The subjects of his poetry were simple and so was his notion of the right poetic methodsim as is side in his Modern Poetry. The poets first business is mentioning things. What ever musical or rather harmonies he may incidental evoke, the fact will remain that such and such things, and not other, have been mentioned in his poem.

A poem will give its reader the pleasure of recognition, to the clarity of a new context he will identify sciences and objects inexplicitly familiar to him. Mac Beice himself wrote to achieve this recognizability. He is a poet of the shape and substance of what is actually happening around him. This is more consistently his subject than it was Auden's even Day Lewis's whose poems also have often the same kind of social documentation. It interests Mac Neice too, for itself, not as the staple of mythm so that we do not very often find his pictures of people, places and events distintegrating into surrealistic riot or parable as Auden's characteristically do.

Louis Mac Neice's poem. The sunlight on the Garden is a love poem. The theme is ephemeral and it focusses on the irrevocability of human action, Share are ample instances of juxtaposition of the abstract and the concrete For e.g.,

Sunlight/minute

Pardon/cage nets of gold

Freedom/lances, sonnets, birds dance

Flying/iron, siren, earth

Pardon/thunder, rain garden

It disciplines internal rhyme into a dramatically pointed punctuation. the feminine rhyme which ends/begins sucessive lines rhetorically stylizes the compulsion of historical and natural processes. The earth compels upon it/Sonnets and birds descend... There is the regular rhyme with a few variation.

The sun's rays fall on the garden gradually it subsides and grows cold. The reference to "we" suggests more than one person, perhaps one of the opposite sex too. Since time is transient we cannot cage or freeze the minute to remain the same or as it was within its bright light or the sun's rays. When everything is overone cannot simply be excused.

The poem is better understood it the first and fourth stanzas are read together though they beg for pardon, they cannot expect to be pardoned. The time it is not the garden that hardens but is the heart that hardens. At the same time, thought time has passed, and knowing fully well, it is irrevocable, they rae satisfied that they have stood together not only in the sunlight but in the thunder and rain. They have been together both in good and bad times.

In the second stanza once again "our" suggests two or more people, and 'dances' a sugestion of the opposite sex. They are awre that their freedom come to a close, and it is an acceptable conclusion on their part. Sonnets, songs of birds, come down and they will have not time for dances as before, but will have to face

reality in its crude form.

The third stanza is important for its correlative references to the historical past of Anthony and Cleopatra. The internal rhyming, parallel the gravitational pull of The Sunlight on the Garden Louis Mac Neice who retained a slightly grating time in his own voice. Adapted to the pronunciation of internal rhymes like rhymes like every evil iron/Siron it does not matter that we re unable to disentangle the literal from the mythic, the prospective form the retrospective in Mac Neice's accounts of his imaginative cosmos. The objective and objective components of his imagery are equally inextricable. Church bells, for instance, first made their mark as the sound so regularly heard from the rectory. But this recurrent image also encodes childhoods feeling. Similarly the evil iron/Siren begins as a foghorn and ends as an omen of war Mac Neice's most affirmative love poem, The Sunlight on the Garden twists the image by exploiting its visual aspect. The elemental symbols of this poem, with its apt quotation from Arthony an Cleopatra "we are dying. Egypt dying" powerfully realizes the threat to the world of personal emotion from the world of war. Our freedom as free lances/Advances towards its end.

The sky which was once good enough to fly freely in, defying the purpose of the church bells for what it has to say or warn, and the message of the evil iron siren; everything has come to a stand still or a frozen moment. They have of ace the reality of war and its aftermath.

Louis Mac Neice, confesses that he prefers to satisfy his own cultivated appetities. Mos of his poetry comes into being between perfectly sincere humanitarian sentiment and honestly selfish pleasure writing from a quite thorough going acceptance of the Marxist account of social change. Perhaps it stemmed from a sympathy between the Marxist, philosophy and the Aristotelian, which Mac Neice found congenial.

In the thirties, the class in which power was vested seemed to have lost the understanding of its nature and the energy to apply it. Mac

Neice assented to the idea of a dynamism of the human will whose working regulate man's control of his environment.

Louis Mac Neice's poetry does not much develop its range of ideas or method over his career: a small talent and a limited achievement "the Times Literary Supplement" pronounced reviewing his Collected Poems, when of course, much that was new had still to come, John Press gives a more generous and truer assessment. Still it is true that all the poetry Mac Neice wrote during the thirties clusters round the ideas and stick to the manner, apparent in the few early poems he wrote. Though the interest of this account, it's fair to add, diminishes the personal matter, and the gaiety that flashes through all his writings. This gaiety, the doubts, the play of ides and circumstance, the sparkle of words, find their happiest composition in his best poems.

TWENTIETH CENTURY LITERATURE

THE MODERN AGE

Twentieth century literature is a strange mixture of the traditional and the experimental, of the old and the new. It is complex, and many sided. It is very difficulty to decide as to when the Modern age began and when the Vistorian age ended. English Literature before the First World War was firmly rooted in the Victorian Age. Poetry, drama and fiction were in a flourishing state. The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 shattered all this brilliant activity. The world suffered a furious succession of horrors and lust. There was anarchy and loss of faith in the existing values. Religious, moral and ethical values were no longer considered as absolute values. Vistorian optimism gave place to modern pessimism and skepticism. It became an age of disillusionment, disinteration and anxiety. Imperialism and nationalism received a great jolt. During the Victorian age, great Britain's power and might was undisputed, but after the World Wars the great British Empire was under gradual liquidation and it became a second - rate power.

T.S. Eliot said, "A great poet, in writing of himself, writes of his age". This statement is applicable to him and to the other writers of his age. In the twentieth century there has been abundant production of literary works of all kinds, resulting in the lowering of quality. Other means of mass media like the cinema, radio and television were exploited for commercial and entertainment purposes. Human relationship became vulgar and coarse. The lowering of public tastes left its mark on the literature of this period. Poetry, drama, novels, magazines, newspapers reflect the decline of public morality and public tastes. Moreover modern poetry is a poetry of revolt against tradition. It is experimental, ephemeral and puerile. Modern poetry is elusive, more indirect and highly dramatic. Symbols and images heightened the power of the language. Moreover, literary devices like pun, paradox, irony, satire, dramatic monologue, juxtaposition and other modes of expression made poetry subtle and complex. Modern writers' frequent use of mythology, philosophy, psychology and anthropology to convey their ideas, and their liberties in the use of grammar and syntax and telescoping of words and thoughts added to the confusion of the reader. Many writers in the twentieth century showed signs of individual tendencies in their work.

Twentieth century literature can be roughly divided into poetry, novel, drama and literary criticism.

POETRY

Poetry of the twentieth century can be divided into: (1) Traditional Poetry (i.e.,) - Edwardian Poetry (2) Georgian Poetry (3) War Poetry of 1914-18 and (4) Experimental Poetry. In the beginning of the twentieth century Poetry was mainly traditional. As its name implies, Traditional poetry, continues the time honoured. English traditions of clarity, shapeliness, and melody. The Edwardian poets dealt with contemporary theme in a language intelligible to the common reader. Some of the Edwardian and Georgian poets are Rudyard Kipling, Hilaire Belloc, G.K. Chesterton, John Masefield and Alfred Noyes. Some of the other

important poets of this decade are Robert Bridges, Laurence Binyon, Thomas Sturge More, Lascelles Abecrombie and Rupert Brooke. Thomas Hardy also wrote in this decade and his poetry is class by itself. G.M. Hopkins belonged to the Victorian Era and his poems were published only in 1918. Georgian Poetry was published in five trained selections from forty poets. The following poets have made a significant contribution - John Drinkwater, D.H. Lawrence, W.H. Davies, Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Graves and Richard Hughes. They discarded the subject matter style of the Victorians and tried to revive the tradition of Wordsworth. They dealt with simple themes, in a simple manner. The gentle aspects of nature were admired. Pictorial and musical elements of nature were highlighted in their verses.

The First World War stimulated many young writers to vent their patriotic feelings and whipped up emotions. The horrible realities of war were described in a realistic manner in their poems. War induced a neurosis. There was a sense of loss, disenchantment and frustration. Victorian ideals, standards of life, art and literature were scoffed at. Wilfred Owen, Rupert Brooke, Siegfried Sassoon, Isaac Rosenberg, John Masefield and Edmund Blunden highlighted the horrors of war and the destructive element of war. Wilfred Owen's "Strange Meeting" is perhaps the most tragic poem of the time.

EXPERIMENTAL POETRY

Modern poets experimented with new verse forms and poetic techniques. "Impressionism", "Imagism", "Symbolism" and "Surrealism" are some of the innovations in the twentieth century poetry. The impressionists seek to convey the vague, fleeting sensations passing through their minds by the use of novel imagery and metaphors. The imagists aimed at clarity of expression through the use of hard, accurate and definite images of convey their intellectual and emotional complexes. Symbolism is a literary movement which began in France early in the

twentieth century. By Symbolism it is meant that every physical and natural object, may represent an intellectual or moral idea. In T.S. Eliot's "The Waste Land", the "rock symbol stands for God or Church or Love and it also stands for spiritual barrenness and disintegration. Such use of symbolism often results in ambiguity and obscurity. The surrealists try to express whatever passes in the by-conscious or even the unconscious, without any control or selection by the conscious.

NEW TECHNIQUES

Modern poetry has also been influenced by the techniques of Mexican sculpture, painting and other fine arts. I.A. Richards calls his poetry. "The music of ideas" The modern poet uses the vocabulary and techniques of the other parts. English Literature of the twentieth century has come under the influence of continental writers in terms of themes and techniques, Ibsen's impact on the drama, the French novelist Guy de Maupassant and the realist Emile Zola and the Russian writers Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and Chekhov influenced the English novel. The technique of modernist poetry heralded by T.S. Eliot has been borrowed from the French symbolists Verlaine, Mallarmé, Baudelaire and Laforgue, English Literature has been profoundly affected by the philosophy of Bergson (French) the psychology of William James (American) and the analytical psychology of Freud (Austrian) James

conception of consciousness as a river or stream, resulted in the stream of consciousness technique used by Virginia Woolf and James Joyce in their novels. Freud's theories of infantile sexuality (Oedipus Complex) suppressed sexuality, dreams, the unconscious and the sub-conscious, gave a new dimension to the novel.

The important poets of the twentieth century are W.B. Yeats, G.M. Hopkins, Thomas Hardy, Robert Bridges, Walter De La Mare, Siegfried Sassoon, Rupert Brooke, Wilfred Owen, Houseman, Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, The Sitwells, W.H. Auden, Cecil Day Lewis, Stephen Spender, Louis

Mac Neice, Thom Gunn and Ted Hughes.

LOUIS MACNEICE

Louis Mac Neice born in Belfast, son of the Protestant Bishop of Down, was educated at Marlborough and at Merton College, Oxford. During the 1930's he was associated with the Marxist poets W.H. Auden, Stephen Spender and Cecil Day Lewis, but was not committed to left-wing ideology as they were. He claimed that the poet is only an extension of the ordinary man. Mac Neice's verse is distinguished by its colloquial idiom and contemporary ideas and images. His themes are as various as his technical range is astonishing. A classical scholar, more romantic than the others of his time, and more traditional than the others, he combines a keen analytical observation of contemporary life with a strong common sense and a very definite sense of humour. His poetry is often didactic and lyrical.

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THE EXPRESS

(STEPHEN SPENDER)

The thirties the years in which Spender grew up and earned his reputation as a poet, were indeed years of unprecedented crisis. The peace after the war had grown into a nightmare more horrible than the war itself. Perhaps never before had humanity faced such total threat to civilization as it did at this time when it encountered political oppression, economic depression, large scale unemployment and misery which overtook almost the whole world. Even the poets who had sheltered themselves from social responsibility in their ivory towers to spiritual isolation, began to feel that the completely isolated individual was nothing but an outmoded myth and that without concerted social action individuals and their values have no chance of survival.

A number of sensitive individuals has felt that the modern world had been transformed into a huge abstraction by science and technology. Economics had become a matter of facts and figures and politics and impersonal machine treating individuals as pawns of the chessboard of power. Men, they felt, had become a cipher, and the reality of living experience. There seemed to be apparently no difference between the creative and destructive powers of the modern world. Persons who had the good fortune of living in comparative comfort and ease felt guilty and responsible for the large scale misery which had been produced by the forces around them. They could not forget the worth of individualism where alone the creative values of life could be fostered and preserved. This was the predicament of many individuals. Stephen Spender describes this predicament by symbolizing in the image of Shakespeare's Hamlet.

"I could be bounded in a nutshell and count myself a king of infinite space"

Moving between two worlds the personal and the impersonal cleft by the violent impact of modern history, Spender illustrates in his life and poetry a major predicament of the times and through conscientious

striving attempts to answer the abiding question of a poet's relation to his society

Spender's childhood is a significant prelude to the predicament of his life and times. Born in 1909, he was but a child, when World War I broke out. At the beginning of the Second World War, he was a young man of thirty. Brought up between two wars, his life became a ceaseless struggle to achieve what he calls "wholeness" of living in a crisis of civilization.

His struggle however, began in the immediate surroundings of the family. As Spender grew up in a family whose outstanding interests were poetry, art and politics, he found that his most difficult task was to choose between the glory of art and the glamour of public life. His great grandfather had left his native Rhineland to settle in England, simply because it was the homeland of William Shakespeare. His maternal grandmother, Hilda Schuster, was great influence during his childhood in shaping his mind and character. She took him to the theatre and the art galleries and discussed the most recent novels with him. Stephen's mother possessed a hyper-sensitive mind and was deeply interested in the arts of embroidery, painting and poetry. His uncle was the editor of the "Westminster Gazette" and he frequently brought to their home poets and writers whose presence itself seems to have inspired the young boy with poetic ambition. To Spender poetry was not just a game of words but the most serious aim in life. At seventeen, he was already dedicated to poetry as a vocation to be followed even in poverty and neglect.

But the seed of poetry had been planted in him when he was only nine. His parents had taken him on a journey to a place called Skelgill Farm, near Derwent water. Spender remembers this occasion as the first experience which produced love for poetry in his mind. Spender's taste for poetry was perhaps inherited from his mother, whose love of art had filled the house with beauty. Thus poetry came to him in a flush of first love driving him to a whole hearted dedication to its pursuit and practice.

Against the first-born love for poetry was a rival claiming him with equal persuasion. It was politics, Spender's father was an active politician and a liberal candidate for Bath in the 1923 election. Stephen Spender and his brother Humphrey went to help their father in his election campaign. But their father lost the election by a substantial margin, and they were disappointed. This defeat stimulated the fancies of young Stephen, who resolved to redeem his father's failure by becoming Prime Minister himself. Later Spender realized that politics should not be considered as an instrument of power but an opportunity for love and service. With this new awakening, he found it difficult to live a life of isolation, sheltered from social obligations.

Spender found it difficult to surrender whole heartedly to the dictates of his social conscience; he was both by heredity and environment, inclined to nurse the inner world of imagination. The beauty of nature, by which he was surrounded made a deep impression on his mind.

Thus we see that Spender's childhood reveals an extremely sensitive mind formed by conflicts of many kinds. They are, primarily seen a tension between the purity of idealism and the crudity of real life. In his unbounded enthusiasm for great things. Spender had conceived high ideals of love, poetry and politics, which he wished to preserve from the compromising contacts with reality.

His early life had been spent in an exclusive atmosphere of aristocracy, which had made him so shy and proud that he felt extremely uncomfortable in the company of the lower classes. In spite of his avowal of socialism, he found it hard to make friends among the poor. Thereby his idealistic temperament kept him away from the company of the privileged boys of Oxford, but his early upbringing barred him from intimacy with her poorer classes. He could neither conform nor rebel but could only nurse the tensions within his own mind.

The most fruitful experiment of Spender in the reconciliation of opposites for achieving wholeness was his friendship with W.H. Auden.

By his dominating intelligence and masterly self-confidence, Auden had already established himself among his Oxford contemporaries as an acknowledged leader in literary taste. Dazzled by the supremacy of this young genius, Spender felt like a discipline in his presence. Though, he did not surrender his individuality and independence, he was obviously influenced by Auden's views. Auden was major influence in the formulation of Spender's views on poets and poetry.

Spender took his vacation to Germany with a determination to devote his time entirely to creative work, but he found himself at the storm centre of perhaps the worst crisis in human history. This country, like the rest of Europe was passing through a political and social crisis produced by the aftermath of war. But this crisis was not an exclusive feature of post war Germany. It seemed to affect the whole western world and imperil its entire civilization. To Spender, young and idealistic, it was a startling revelation. He was deeply moved by what he saw at such close quarters, realizing its fearful prospects for civilization. It intensified the tensions which he though he had resolved and deepened his cleavage in personality.

Spender witnessed tragedy of post war Europe unfolding itself in the lives of the people, their poverty, their suffering, their anger, their despair, their unashamed sensuality, and even their pretended unconcern. The life that he was the product of war and seemed to be pregnant with the monstrous progeny to tomorrow - Fascism and War. Spender watched the theatre of war where each side was engaged in the destruction of the other, he was moved not by the justice of the side he had intellectually espoused but by the futility of it all. He could not close his eyes to the atrocities committed by his party and regarded them with the same disapproval as he did those of the enemy.

A politician is generally committed to uphold his party, whereas a poet may be bound to none but considerations of humanity. Spender involved himself in politics but refused to be partisan like the politician. In the most of politics he remained a poet. So the main problem in poetry

for Spender was "to relate the public passion to my private life".

Soon after Spender joined the Communist Party, he realized to his bitterness that in politics, honesty is never the best policy. He came to the conclusion that the best thing for the poet is to keep out of partisan politics and preserve the freedom to criticize and to expose. He realized that it is necessary for the vitality of poetry to get out of the ivory tower and strive towards identify with the life around him, no matter how dangerous it is to make art the hand-maid of politics, for it can be done only at the expense of truth, honesty and humanity. For Spender identity meant transformation of public events and passions into private, personal experience which alone is fit subject matter for poetry. His greatest regret was his failure to achieve this transformation. He refused to accept the impersonal public point of view regarding this crisis in the life of his time and age. But he was also reluctant to remain locked up within his world of personal sensation. His problem was to fuse these two worlds into.

THE POET SPEAKS

An extract from an interview with Stephen Sender by the Press.

Press: Have the other arts, apart from poetry either influenced you in your daily life or directly correctly in your poems?

Spender: Well, I think painting probably although I've hardly ever written about painting directly a matter of fact the thing (to be almost was to be a painter tremendous interests form a writer because of paintings.)

Press: Some very deeply personal experience or on some wider public theme? Well, I think most of them have been about personal expenses I feel very hesitant about writing about public themes. Because although I think about them quite a lot and I even the newspapers with interest, all the same I am very auspicious whether

one doesn't flatter oneself when one thinks about even the most dreadful things like concentration camps and so on, and I think that one can only really test oneself by what one really does feel in a personal way. Therefore I am very suspicious of things like the Theatre of Cruelty and so on because I think just the cruelty gets across but the deeper experience gets across in a purely metretic kind of way.

Press: As an editor, do you find there is a sharp distinction between cointemporary American poetry and contemporary English poetry?

Spender: I think that the great tradition of English poetry is to a very large extent amateurism. I mean that poetry was always been looked English as a kind of exercise of a courtier or a lover. One might almost say amateurism was the main line. Or the parallel English poetry. The poetry of gentlemen comes from the Elizabethans, and continuous right through the seventeenth century. There is a certain sort of professionalism in the eighteenth century, of course, but amateurism apart from the great pros. Tennyson and Browning recurs again in the nineteenth century. On the whole, one can find oneself preferring the amateurs in the nineteenth century to the great professional like Browning and Tennyson. One can think it was a mistake of their to try to be so professional. Hardy looking at them considered himself an amateur. One can really think of Shelley as an amateur, a gentleman like Byron But I think that the Americans have never had this attitude. The Americans have always been deadly serious; have by thinking that their professionalism consisted in following English models and being American writers within the English language. In

which there was no really great distinction between the nineteenth century American and the English until there was Whitman's revolt. Now, of course they have developed the idea that American poetry is different from English poetry, and they are highly professional at their own kind of writing. By professional I mean academic to a great extent and the English are tagging along afterwards. The English are now trying to be as American as they can, I think especially the young poets.

Press: Do you think that this is a bad thing, the imitation of the American, that it is something alien to our traditions?

Spender: I think we have learnt something from it. We have learnt something from the professionalism of American poetry. Just as the English printers learnt something from the professionalism of French painting. But on the whole I don't think it is very good for us, I mean, I think that probably English poetry and the whole English attitude to poetry is different from the American and that although one can learn a great deal from studying Wallace Stevens and writers like that, on the whole I think that one ought not to try to imitate them.

Press: Do you have any audience consciously in mind when you write?

Spender: No. of course, with one side of my mind I would like to be successful, and I would like to get a big prize and to be able to go away and to devote myself to living the kind of life I want and writing the kind of poetry I want instead of having to earn my living. But this is absolutely unimportant. For instance, if I thought that by publishing a poem that I was writing, but which I wasn't affect me; I wouldn't publish it. I wouldn't publish it until I thought I had done what I wanted to do.

This interview is from the book *The poet Speaking* edited by Peter Or.

THE EXPRESS

After the first powerful, plain manifesto
The black statement of pistons, without more fuss
But gliding like a queen, she leaves the station
Without bowing and with restrained unconcern
She passes the houses which humbly crowd outside
The gas works, and at last the heavy page
Of death, printed gravestones in the cemetery
Beyond the town, there lies the open country
Where, fathering speed, she acquires mystery
'The luminous self-possession of ships on ocean
it is now she begins to sing - at first quite low
Then loud, and at last with a jazzy madness-
the song of her whistle screaming at curves
Of deafening tunnels brakes, innumerable bolts.
And always light, aerial, underneath
Retreats the elate meter of her wheels
Steaming through metal landscape on her lines.
She plunges new eras of white happiness
Where speed throws up strange shapes broad curves
And parallels clean like trajectories from guns
At least, further than Edinburgh or Rome
Beyond the crest of the world she reaches night
Where only a low stream-like brightness
Of phosphorous on the tossing hills is light
Ah, like a comet through flame, she moves entranced
Wrapt in her music no bird song, no or bough
Breaking with honey buds, shall ever equal.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Line 1. first powerful plain manifesto - the express, train is associated with communist revolution

- Line -2: queen is a reference to the express train, combining the two qualities beauty and might.
- Line -3: She leaves the station - The express train leaves the station
- Line -4: Without bowing-Though referred to as the queen yet unlike the queen she passes without bowing...
- Line-5: She passes the houses..heavy page. As the train passes we think of Communism quickly abolishing the poverty and the poverty and the misery of the worker symbolized by the humble houses and the gas works.
- Line-7: Cemetery-suggests a dead civilization
- Line-12: a jazzy madness is that of her (train) music
- Line-13: Scramming at curves the loud hoot of the engine
- Line-16: the elate meter of her wheels-to express the madness and the joy of victory.
- Line-17: metal landscape on her lines-refers to the railway track on which the train moves.
- Line-18: She plunges new eras-discovers something new
- Line-19: Where speed throw up strange shapes-speed ignores the things it passes
- Line-20: trajectories from guns-the steel from guns
- Line-21: further than Edinburgh and Rome-the destination of the express train is not just the two places mentioned
- Line-22: Beyond the crest of the world-makes it clear to the reader that one is not just the two places mentioned.
- Line-24: of phosphorous on the tossing hills is light-the light seen over the hills, shows positivity
- Line-25: Ah, like a comet through flame-the comet stands out in the darkness and is conspicuous in itself, the express train is compared to be the comet passing through flame which is also bright with different light.
- Line-26: Wrapt in her music...shall ever equal-nothing will
- Line-27: equal the express train in its speed or almost flight.

THE EXPRESS

Stephen Spender's poetry appears to be, like the literature of his times. "time obsessed, time tormented, as though beaten with rods of restless days" Spender's interest in the times is evident in all his volumes of verbs, but it is noteworthy that this preoccupation is revealed in different volumes in varying degrees of intensity. Spender printed his first volume on his own hand-press and published it under the title of "Nine Experiments" In 1928. Even in this book we find the poet determined to dedicate his muse to seemingly unpoetic themes of external reality.

Spender starts his poetic career with an avowal that he will interpret faithfully, the life and times in which he is living, however unpoetic they might appear to be. Yet Spender appears to be temperamentally subjective and introspective and politics seems to be something foreign to his nature forced upon him by the sheer compulsion of events.

The method of imagery usually employed by Spender is best illustrated by his famous anthology piece: "The Express" in this poem Spender describes the express train speeding out of the station and leaves the symbolism to take care of itself. There are, of course, a few clues which are fixed in various places like sign-posts, inviting the reader to follow a barely trail of meaning. The fact that train leaves the station and travels to Edinburgh then to Rome and finally beyond the crest of the world itself is a sufficient indication that it is not an ordinary train we have been reading about. The opening sentence with its "first powerful, plain manifesto alerts the reader to its possible symbolism and associates the express train with communist revolution. The image of the queen combining qualities of beauty and might appears to be an apt metaphor which brings to mind the power of communism and the beauty of its ideals as envisaged by its ardent followers. The train glides out of the station and passes the crowded houses of the poor, the gas works and the cemetery. "The heavy page of death printed by gravestones. The image of the page takes us back to the "manifesto" in the first line, and as the train passes we think of Communism quickly abolishing the

poverty and the misery of the worker symbolized by the humble houses and the gas works. The cemetery suggest a dead civilization and "the metal landscape" Its mechanical character. The gravestones usually marked by Biblical promised of eternal life stand contrasted with the plain manifesto assuring betterment here and now. The jazzy madness of her music, the song of her whistle and the elate meter of her wheels express the madness and the joy of victory. Soon "She plunges new eras of wild hapiness" and see the vision of the "streamline brightness of phosphorous on the tossing hill" She is then compared to a comet moving through flame. The revolution through blood and fire brings to humanity an era of happiness. The music of the train which "no bird song... shall ever equal" declared the worth of Communism as capable of establishing an order superior to that of nature. The final image of the "bough breaking with honey buds" is suggestive of a land of plenty overflowing with milk and honey and is a proclamation of man's entry into promised land.

It is possible to read into this poem also the symbolism of science and technology conquering nature. Abolishing man's poverty and misery, mastering even death and bringing to humanity an era of perfect happiness.

The poem is remarkable for the successful manipulation of its diction and imagery. Throughout the poem there is striking juxtaposition of realistic and the technical vocabulary with highly romantic terms. The black statement of positions and plain manifesto are placed close to the giving queen. The heavy page of death printed by gravestones is not far from the luminous self possession of ships on ocean. The jazzy madness with which the train sings and screams is part of the light, aerial, elate meter of her wheels. The metal landscape and the steel of guns are followed by the ra of wild happiness and the streaming brightness o fphoxphorus. The comet moves through flame, and close by a bird and a bough breaks with honey huds. The contrast in imagery is accentuated by contrast in diction. Words like pistons brakes bols, wheels and guns are mixed with terms like queen luminous honey

song brightness etc. The diction seems to be irrecoverable but a unity is achieved by the unity of significance which itself a harmony of opposites the present misery and future of happiness the realism represented by technical and me4chanical vocabulary and the idealism made evident by romantic words. The same harmony is realized through an manipulation of imagery. the subsidiary images of the divided but they are all reconciled by single express train. Louis Macneiece highly appear and compasses it to the practice of the describes as "parataxis" This method by also by W.H. Auden.

"So Auden, Spender, who live in a concern lend to use their images neither as merely algebraro purely aesthetically for the skae of the image itself. They approach therefore the parataxis of the early Chinese poets. They verge sometimes on allegroy bus as they are primarily interested in what idealist philosophers used call the concrete universal, they do not often used particular images as counters for generalities. Cowely M."

The Express may be cited as an example of concrete universal, and its method, as that of parataxis.

Spender has made his choice, and he would say it is love. Whether he encounters a personal problem or a political crisis, his answer has always been love. Love may be described as the central design of his poetry. Love has been revealed in many forms and varieties, but we may say that the evolution of love shows, a definite pattern is Spender. Love came to him initially in the image of a friend later in many forms. It is a common pattern of evolution, but it is revealed in significant forms in Spender's poetry.

Spender never cared for the church or theological systems of Faith. The political God of Communism which he worshipped for some time and from afar, failed him and the world miserably. The vicissitudes of 'spenders faith may be described as a retreat from the eternity of God. The fixity of historical necessity into the flux of subjectively. But here is regained his faith in love. The still centre of his personality, which gave

him a tower of strength from which he could encounter the violence and the chaos of "his now"

STEPHEN SPENDER: THE POET OF THE THIRTIES

Spender understands the modern poet's insistence on the necessity of beliefs as something more than a mere desire to put order into experience. The poet's hungry search for belief is in reality an attempt to integrate his inner self with outer reality by means of a spiritual purpose which can organize the universe into a vital unity.

Even Spender's personal life confirms the same view point. A study of his autobiography reveals that his life has been a ceaseless search for values which might resolve his spiritual conflicts and bring together the opposing stands of thought and feeling into a harmonious unity. Spender was trying to resolve his tensions between poetry and politics, ideals and reality and above all, his sense of responsibility towards himself and duty to society.

Spender wanted to unite poetry and the world and liberate himself. The other poets of his generation were following the same trail. The poets of the thirties - Auden, Spender, MacNeice, Day Lewis and others formed a single group. Roy Campbell who disliked them and their poetry coined a strange name for them "Macspanday". It serves the purpose of focussing attention on the close similarity in theory and practice of poetry and displayed the cogency and coherence of a literary movement. Spender himself noticed clearly the common features that bound them together into a group. These writers wrote with near unanimity, surprising when one considers that most of them were strangers to one another of a society coming to an end of the revolutionary change. Spender was also aware of the difference in the talents of his fellow poets. What is really significant is the common background against which they posed their problems and the common outlook they developed towards the material and method of their poetry. Those poets were largely the products of their age and they were conscious of it.

The qualities which distinguished them from the writers of the previous decade lay not in themselves, but in the events to which they reacted. They were, unemployment economic criticism nascent fascism and the war.

In the generation that followed the thirties, the situation changed. Fascist regimes began rising and the concentration camps emerged in Europe. The sensitive poet could no longer sit back and watch the growing deterioration of the political and economic life of the people in his luxury of unconcern. Moreover, the emergence of communism gave him new hope as a powerful weapon to withstand the fascist menace and avert the political doom which threatened to overtake the world. This consciousness of the altered conditions was an important factor in the formulation of the poetic theory of the thirties. Poetry which discarded social obligations came to be regarded as a kind of luxury - writing.

Louis MacNeice said: "poets today are working back from luxury writing and trying once more to become functional" The choice had to be made between the ideas of artistic autonomy and social obligation, and the poets of the thirties chose the latter. They asserted that the poet is a human being in a community in which conditions his behaviour by what is given and by what it expects to receive in return. The poet, besides being a poet, is also a man, fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons as other men. Where there is agony, he will feel it. He must feel as a man what he reveals as a poet. Thus these poets were trying to put the poetic and the human self together on a basis of political responsibility. For poetry always draws its strength from life. The poet draws life, not only as a human being but as a part from the community. And nobody objects to the poets when they say that "the essential spirit of poetry fulfils its nature not by purging itself of grosser prose elements, but by accepting and controlling them".

The problem as Spender and his friends saw it was the marriage

of poetry with politics. The sense of commitment to the politics of the times is apparent in their attitude. Political commitment to many young intellectuals of the thirties meant advocacy of communism. Communism seems to have broken upon their bleak horizon with a ray of hope, offering the world a weapon against fascism and an assurance that knowledge and culture would be distributed to all and that art would flourish in freedom. The fascination for Communism can be accounted for in many ways. It answered the needs of the age in a despair and its philosophy seemed to be intune he growing spirit of materialism and science. It seemed to possess the qualities that could make it into a religion of the twentieth century. that is perhaps the reason why some of the young idealist were dazzled by its assutance and they even sacrificed their lives in its cause.

Naturally Maximum seemed to be an answer to their long search for belief. But spender and his group maintained a core for resistance in spite of their general acceptance of Marxian principles. Most of them stayed warily on the periphery of its active politics as critical sympathizers. Stephen Spender was the only one among them who really got involved in the party politics of communism. Thus it is clear that it was not the strength of belief that drove Spender into the fold of communism but the force of events and the pressure of a guilty conscience. He discusses Communism as a political creed in order to prove that it concerns itself with, what he call enduring political and moral realities. He goes on to argue that "the most fundamental of all beliefs illustrated by drama and poetry in all history is the idea of justice" and that Communism " offers a just world-world in which wealth is more equally distributed and the grotesque accumulation of wealth of individuals is dispersed".

Stephen Spender's life has been a hungry quest for belief as a basis for life and poetry which could save him and world from chaos. His search began with a study of the various phases of modern literature which were found to be inadequate in facing and transforming the

"destructive element" Standing before the shrine of Communism, Spender felt for a little while that his search had came to an end. It did not take him long to realize the danger involved in upholding political dogma through poetry. He came to know that taking up arms against evil in the name of political dogma is as fangerous to poetry as escaping from life's realities into the towwers of personal faith.

SPENDER'S POETRY AND NATURE

Spender felt that all preconceived notions, opinions, beliefs and attitudes, help only to confine the scope of poetry and reduce its real stature. Poetry should indeed be co-extensive and coterminous with nothing less than life and should not exclude any aspect of its, on the ground that it is ugly, mechanical unspiritual, or false. Thus it is clear that Spender would define poetry in relation to two realities - the truth of the poets nature and the truth of the world about him. In fact he might define it as the fusion of the two-the self and the not-self. If the poet rejects the self, he is likely to become "absorbed into the past, or into the passions of the present, into time instead of time lessons.

Nature was one of Spender's earliest passion. During his childhood he was taken away on occasions from the city on visits to the countryside where he lived in close contact with nature. For Spender, familiar with the sights and sounds of the ity. Nature provided a thrilling experience. He played with the flowers, sang with the finds, and dreamt with the distant hill and clouds. With this childhood passion for nature is associated Spender's first experience of poetry and when his mkind awoke to the beauty of nature and the joy of poetry. A war was going on in Europe. The child's world to fancy and dream was rudely disturbed by the knowledge of the war which reached him in bits from various quarters. The crisis of the time seems to have been an unchanging background of his life, and its awareness to have split up his entire

consciousness. To knit it up together has been a major problems in Spender's life. His whole life appears to have been a struggle to balance opposing forces like nature and was town and country beauty and ugliness, ideas and reality hope and despair. This struggle makes his poetry a starting and intense experience. At times nature's indifference stands contrasted with the poet's intense feeling. His passion seems to break through in every stanza in as succession of strong images suggesting the poet's restless state of mind.

In quantity nature does not seem to be a dominant theme of Spender's poetry. But nature is never far from his consciousness, and whatever the subject matter, it seems to peep through a simple. Metaphor or symbol with a pleasing suddenness and surprise. Whatever the quantitative measure of its importance, there seems to be no doubt that Spender's concept of nature provides an important clue to our understanding of his view of man and the world. Spender's picture of nature comes closer to the vision of the romantic poets. He does not exhibit my music longing of Wordsworth for the "visionary gleam" but he was driven to the worship of nature, like Wordsworth, by the "inhumanity of man to man" he landscape as Spender paints it, is almost always a picture with the ravages of man's inhumanity presented in close proximity to nature's beauty and charm.

Thus it is clear that nature is an important element which supplies Stephen Spender with a measure of beauty, humanity and eternity with which he evaluates the world about him and which sharpens our awareness of the ugliness and misery in the world of men. Spender does not use nature as a means of escape into the comfort and quietness of isolation, and therefore we do not find him singing of nature in pyrrical rapture. Whenever he sees or thinks of nature, he invariably remembers what man has made of man and his world. Therefore the impression made by his poems of nature is one of tension sometimes relieved by symbols of spring and summer, signifying the poet's hope for mankind.

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ROBERT BROWNING

PORPHYRIA'S LOVER

Robert Browning, one of the most significant poets of the Victorian era, was born on 7 May 1812 at Southampton Street, Camberwell. His father the elder Robert Browning was a clerk in the Bank of England. And he occasionally took to drawing and writing verse, and being fond of books and a good reader himself, had a good library at home. His mother, Sarah Anna Browning, was an accomplished pianist and a love of music. And Browning had a sister Sarianna (born in 1814) two years younger than him.

While neither of his parents was rich, Browning enjoyed, all the same, a pampered childhood. Having been born as the only son, he was doted upon by both of his parents. They never tried to conceal their admiration at his Juvenile verses. Nor did they deny him anything that he desired. Browning was treated as a "child prodigy" and was never punished. Because of his father's gentle and generous nature, Browning grew up without any real urge to stand on his own financially. With his marriage to Elizabeth Barrett in 1846. Hence, he merely shifted his dependence from his parents on to his wife.

For about five years, till he was 14, Browning was a weekly boarder in a school at Peckham. When he left school in 1826, his parents took care to engage private tutors to teach him French and Italian. In addition, he was taught music and dancing. After two years he started attending classes at the new London University. But his romantic spirit found the university education boring and he became soon discontented and impatient. As a result, he discontinued his studies and this rebellion of Browning was also tolerated not surprising though, by his parents.

It has been observed that Browning's literary career falls into three distinct phases the years before his marriage to Elizabeth

Barrett in 1846. The years of marital life, between 1846 and 1861 (during this "Italian" period only Browning wrote what was to be by common consent his finest collection of poems. *Men and Women* and the years after the death of his wife at Florence between 1888 and 1889.

However, it is not difficult to trace the permanent interest of Browning even in his early works. His keen interest in music and painting and his perceptive observations on the many-sidedness of human nature are manifest in his early poems themselves. In this sense it is said that Browning's maturity as a poet was complete even when he was only 30.

It was in 1832 that Browning watched Edmund Kean an actor, perform Richard III on stage. The power that an artist can attain to and thereby sway his audience struck Browning and he was motivated to write plays. In the process of his attempts at play writing was born *Pauline* (1833) This was his first work to be published and the publishing was funded by an aunt. Two years later, after a visit to Russia on a journey overland, Browning completed *Paracelsus* (1835) and the publication of this work and nearly all the publication of his works that followed this, until his marriage was at his father's expense. However, *Paracelsus* took him into the literary circle and Browning met Wordsworth. Later he cultivated literary friendship with figures like Carlyle, Leigh Hunt, Tennyson and Matthew Arnold.

But Browning's attempts at writing play were unsuccessful. He could not conceive of characters in a design and involve them through action. Despite his exceptional ability in writing successful Dramatic lyrics, the dream of becoming a playwright remained elusive. Perhaps this strange paradox only made. S. Eliot conclude firmly that drama and the dramatic monologies are forms which "must be essentially different" In short Browning's *Strafford* (1837) had no successor on stage until *A Blot in the Scutcheon* (1843) Browning's ambition of becoming a dramatist was frustrated thus.

During this short-lived period of writing plays Browning brought out *Scordello*. The poem was begun in 1883 but was constantly reworked upon till it was published in 1840. It was received quite unfavourable and was described as a "received quite unfavourably and was described as "bewildering potpourri of poetry. Psychology, love, romance, humanitarianism, philosophy fiction and history on the other hand he was disgusted with and unable to bear another criticism against works. thus, later we find him commenting that criticism of his works amounts to "miconception at ignorance at middling, and malice at worst".

Browning met Elizabeth Barrett though John Keyon (to whom later Elizabeth Barrett dedicated her *Aurora Leigh*) Browning proposed marriage to Elizabeth though he hardly had any income of his own to keep himself, and since Elizabeth's father was of a stern nature and never overrated poetry even in the case of his daughters the affairs between Browning and Elizabeth had to be clandestine until in 1846 and secretly married. Elizabeth had three or four hundred pounds a year and they managed to earn a little more by their twin effort at literary output.

Biographers detect a curious discrepancy between Browning the man and Browning the poet. While the former seems to be short, fallow skinned and conceited, the latter sounds positive, strong and confident. Browning the man not self-assured enough to admit weaknesses, and he was constantly complaining that he was not understood correctly. But he was never clear as to how he was misrepresented or misunderstood. Perhaps, it is surmised, because he lacked a self of his own, Browning was able to assume such varied identities with so much ease in his monologues.

The death of his mother in 1849 and that of his wife in 1861 seem to have affected Browning's literary fervor considerably. thus, after *Dramatic Personae* in 1861 his works show a sharp decline in his literary writing. What seemed to be his idiosyncrasies earlier, now grew to be tiresome mannerisms.

With the death of his wife. Browning left Italy and came to live in England along with his son Penni or Pen. Gradually he became a "socialisation" and the Browning Society was founded in 1880.

In November 1889, he visited his son and daughter-in-law and Browning died on the 12th of December that year (the same day his last collection of poems *Asolando* was published in London) His body was brought to England and he was buried in Westminster Abbey in Poet's corner.

"PROPHYRIA'S LOVER"

"Prophyria's lover is a poem of sixty lines, written in iambic tetrameter. Originally the poem appeared in the *Monthly Repository* of January 1836, simply as "Porphyria" along with another poem "Johannes Agricola" But later, in *Dramatic Lyrics* the two poems were combined to have a general, common title "Madhouse Cells" and when the poem appeared again in 1849. It was rechristened a "Porphyria's Lover" and retained still the position as "Madhouse Cell No. II" Only with the publication of *Dramatic Romances*, the poem appeared independently and the general title "Madhouse Cell" was dropped.

"Porphyria's lover" was actually written, it seems, during Browning's stay in St. Petersburg in April and May of 1834 and hence, technically, it belongs to the Romantic period. The setting of the poem is undoubtedly English, though the biographers seem to trace a slight aura of Russia in the poem. Ever since this first appearance the poem has remained mostly unchanged, except for some alternations in punctuation and those made in connection with its title.

However the modifications made in the title of the poem give rise to an important question: whether Browning seriously intended, by giving a general title for the poem as "Madhouse Cell" crazy it was the one wish that has possessed him now. And he, as a result, fails to realize the ethical or moral issues involved in such a deed of murder.

The lack of an identity for the persona and the extreme objectivity employed in his recounting of the crucial, terrible murder have puzzled the critics and made them conclude that the poem is more a dramatic lyric than a monologue. Unlike the widely known "My last Duchess" by Browning, this poem gives no clue to the presence of an audience other than Porphyria herself who dies in the middle of the poem itself: the subject of the recounting being Porphyria, the persona could not be said to address her. Hence the argument that the persona is crazy fits here and it is easy to picture him as talking to himself. However, another reading of the poem holds that the persona need not be mad as the motive for such a heinous act demonstrates his ingenuinity very much like that of Browning's other poem "A Forgiveness". The persona's ingenuinity is involved in his effort to eternalize a particular moment.

While J.M. Cohen has brushed aside the poem as a "Juvenile and unrepresentative horror poem" some other find that it does not unfold the character of the persona in keeping with the conventions of a dramatic monologue. Yet another view holds that the poem's theme and its lyrical form effectively keeps it out of the question if the piece is a monologue. The regular iambic tetrametre and the rather consistent rhyme-scheme of ABABB throughout the poem helps one to conclude that "Porphyria's Lover" is a dramatic lyric.

Coming to the actual poem, we find that Browning has quite remarkably contextualized the crucial act of strangling Porphyria. It is not entirely difficult to perceive the cleverness behind the conception of such a solution of murder.

The poem can be said to have a six-part structure. The first part lines 1 to 15, describes the atmosphere of rain and storm outside and pictures how Porphyria enters the cottage wet and drenched. After poking the fire in the hearth and rekindling it in order to make the house warm, she removes her wet cloak and shawl and gloves. Untying her hat, she lets her hair loose and free. After adjusting herself thus, she approaches

her love, the persona and sits besides him.

The second part, lines 15 to 25, explains how Porphyria offered herself to him. When he did not respond to her call, she takes him arm around her waist and makes his cheek lie on her beautiful shoulder with all her yellow hair spread over. She whispers to him of her love for him and how she would like to give herself to him forever. She is aware of her own social standing which is above the lover's own. She does not have the strength to make a decision in favour of her passion and snap her ties with her own class of the society thereby.

The third part, lines 25 to 35, tells how passion sometimes overrules and how after a jolly time of feasting that evening she could not resist herself from the thought of him. She was moved by the thought of his yearning love for her. Thus she came to him through wind and rain to give herself to him. The persona confirms her words by studying her eyes and knows that she is speaking the truth. He was able to see that she "worshipped" him. This is so unbelievable and overwhelming for the persona that she is desperate to do something to retain her thus for himself forever.

The fourth part, line 36 to 45, discloses the persona's resolution to keep Porphyria from changing her mind. He knows that she was his that moment for true. And to arrest that moment from passing, he finds a way. He takes her own hair around her neck and strangles her with it. She feels no pain and he cautiously opens her eyes, lest the happiness that was in the eye before may be lost by his carelessness. He feels reassured that her eyes are still laughing. They have no stain of tears.

The fifth part, lines 45 to 55, describes how after he releases the neck from the noose of hair, the colour comes back to her cheeks. The smiling little head of Porphyria now droops on his shoulder. The persona is certain now that Porphyria is happy because the fear of her own social ranking coming the way of her love for him is at last alleviated and, furthermore, because she has got him now.

The sixth part, lines 56 to 60, concludes the poem with, the persona sitting with the dead Porphyria all through the night and regretting that Porphyria had gone without ever guessing even how her wish, to unite with them him would be fulfilled. The poem ends with an ironic line from the persona that god has not said a word throughout. And this line probably reflects Brownings own brief flirtation with atheism.

Browning has very subtly brought out the conflicting social positions of Porphyria and her lover. The name Porphyria itself is to suggest that she was "born of the purple". In addition to the choice of her name, Browning quite unobtrusively records that she belongs to the upper class by making her come to the persona after a "gay feast" parties and feasts being the easily affordable pretensions portrayed to reside in a cottage, a humble type of accommodation.

Interestingly a striking similarity between the persona here, Porphyria's lover, and the duke in "My Last Duchess" can be noted. The duke, in the latter poem, seems to have done away with his last duchess, his dead wife, because she gave the same smile to outside (and strangers) which she gave him. The duke was possessive and wanted his wife exclusively for himself. This intense and jealous possessiveness can be detected in Porphyria's Lover too.

"Porphyria's Lover" Model Question and Answer

Q. Examine critically "Porphyria's" as a dramatic lyric.

A. Browning's poem "Porphyria's Lover" first appeared simply as "Porphyria" and the poet gave the altered, present title of the poem only when it reappeared thirteen years after its first appearance, in his collections *Dramatic Lyrics* (1849).

The poem was probably written in 1834 when Browning made a trip overland to St. Petersburg, Russia. From the data of its genesis, the poem can be said to belong to the Victorian age with Tennyson, and Matthew Arnold. In addition the poem belongs to by Shelley. The atheistic

turn at the end of the poem perhaps testifies to this.

In one of its early appearances, the poem bore a general heading. "Madhouse Lover" In view of this fact and in the light of what Browning writes in his *Paracelsus*, it would appear that the poet here is trying to reveal the exalted spirit of a mad man in the person of Porphyria's lover.

One man shall crawl!

Through life surrounded with all stirring

things, unmoved; and he goes

mad: and from the wreck of

what he was, by his wild talk

alone, You first collect how

great a spirit he did

(*Paracelsus* 770-4)

Does Browning intend the persona of the poem to be a mad man? Porphyria's lover, by killing her in order to eternalize a particular moment with her, shows himself to be maritally unbalanced. But critical opinion in some quarters holds that Browning has used the suggestion of madness on the part of Porphyria's lover to escape critical remonstrance for depicting such a hideous act otherwise. His jealous possessiveness goads the persona of the poem to kill Porphyria.

"Porphyria's Lover", the present title for the poem seems more appropriate than its earlier one bearing simply the name of the lady love. For the persona in the poem is Porphyria's lover and the poem is a reflection of his point of view. The unnamed persona dramatically recounts the events of a single night. The poem dramatizes the tension that arises as a result of the love which is between a socially unequal pair—the persona and Porphyria. The poem seems to be a structure akin to that of a play. It consists of rising action, climax and denouement of falling action.

The poem begins with Porphyria's entry into the cottage where, apparently, the persona of the poem, her lover, resides.

Porphyria has come in through rain and storm to visit her lover. She is wet and dripping. Hence as soon as she enters the cottage, she pokes the fire in the hearth and makes the cottage warm. And when this was done, she removes her rain-drenched cloak, shawl- and gloves. Untying her hat, she lets her hair loose and approaches her lover and calls him.

Porphyria has come to see him after attending a party (feast) Perhaps moved by the thought of her humble lover spending his time alone and pining for her at the cottage. She is overcome by passion and decides to visit him.

When the persona does not respond to her, Porphyria takes his arm and puts it around her waist and takes his head on her shoulder. She whispers her love for him and tells him that she has come to give herself to him. The persona looks at her eyes and knows that she is speaking the truth.

The persona feels so elated that he wants to do something to make that moment permanent. To keep Porphyria from changing her mind and going back to her own aristocratic social class, the persona seeks to do something. He decides to kill her that very moment when she has confessed her love for him.

The conflicting social status of Porphyria is resolved by the decision of the persona: By killing her now her unmissed feeling of love for him can be made permanent. The persona takes the hair of Porphyria and encircling her neck with it three times, Strangles her. the tension has glided to his climax and Porphyria is dead.

The lines that follows the death of Porphyria depicts the falling action with the persona sitting with the body of Porphyria and reassuring himself that she did not feel any pain and still remains his own. the speaker in the poem expresses a sense of uncertainty while he states that God has not said a word not prevented him from stringing Porphyria.

This sixty-line poem is more a lyric than a monologue. The poem

employees iambic tetrametre and has a uniform rhymescheme of ABABB throughout. It is a reflective lyric in that the poem is arecounting of a single nights from the persona's point of view.

There is no evidence within the poem, unlike Brownin's "My Last Duchess" for the presence of a listener. Porphyria herself is dead by the time the recollection begins. this indirectly supports the view that the persona of the poem is insane and signifying this particular characteristic only. Browning initially gave a general little "madhouse cell No.11" for the poem. However there is some truth in the widespread opinion, regarding this poem, that the character of the personas hardly revealed and that the poem therefore is less a dramatic monologue.

Prepared by
DR. N. POOVALINGAM
M.S. University, Thirunelveli

SECTION B-DRAMA (DETAILED STUDY)

T.S. ELIOT'S

MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL

POETIC DRAMA

Verse used to be the medium for drama (both tragedy and comedy) right from its inception in ancient Greece. In England it reched its most popular form during the Shakespearean age. In course of time however, verse came to be reserved for tragedy while prose became the medium for comedy. With the advent of science, verse was completely discarded and prose became the sole medium for drama.

It was during the twentieth century that attempts were made to receive verse drama. Yeats, Eliot and Fry were in their own ways attempted to write verse plays. These writers were in revolt against the 'realistic' prose plays of Ibsen and Shaw. However much they differed in themselves. Their adoption of verse was not a mere change of medium but it was the result of their convictions as to what really mattered in human life. While prose generally speaking, confines itself to the ephemeral and superficial, poetry is concerned with the permanent and the universal. While a prose play is limited to the social life around us a verse play can make the audience transcend the narrow shrewdness of the modern city and comprehend human life in the wider perspectives of ancient sources. Unlike Ibsen and Shaw, these verse play wrights are not concerned with social problems or with mere material issues: but are influenced by deeper issues of the spirit, like man's place in the universe, how to save the soul, and meaning of existence.

Abercrombie in his "The Function of Poetry in Drama" observes, "now the greatest difference between prose, drama and poetic drama is

that the first concentrates itself on the outermost reality, the second on the second on the innermost. 'Poetry directly seeks to imitate the core, neglecting the outer shells of reality. It is instinctive and organic unlike prose, which is logical and rational in a poetic drama, according to Wilson Knight, "the persons ultimately are no human at all, but purely symbols of poetic vision transcending as it were time and space".

Thus poetic play is not merely a drama done in verse. It is a dramatic poem or poetry put into drama according to T.R. Barnes. This is also what Eliot implies when he says that to work out a plan in verse is to see the thing as a whole a musical pattern.

Poetry is most suitable medium for depicting the kind of deeper vision and for achieving the unity of effect. In fact, poetry alone can communicate what is essentially incommunicable. In a poetic drama several plans of reality are communicated at the same time - sensuous or physical; emotional intellectual and spiritual upon which life is lived. hence poetry, says Eliot, is the natural and complete medium for drama. In his "the use of Poetry and the use of Criticism", Eliot says, "the ideal medium for poetry and the most direct means of social usefulness for poetry is the theatre. For the simplest auditors, there is the plot; for the more literary, the word and phrasing for the more musically sensitive, the rhythm and for auditors of greater sensitiveness and understanding a meaning which reveals itself gradually. The sensitiveness of every auditor is acted upon by all these elements at once though in different degrees of consciousness".

The greatest advantage of poetic drama is that it is able to create that sense of deep inner connection between human beings and their universe. to quote Eliot again, "what distinguishes between verse drama from prose drama is a kind of doubleness in the action as if it takes place on two planes at once. Underneath the action, which is perfectly intelligible, there should be a musical pattern which intensifies our excitement by reinforcing it with feeling from a deeper and less articulate level. It

dramatizes in a way the human soul in action. Verse here is not decorative, but organic - "a medium to look through and not at". In a verse play, therefore, the audience is not passive spectators but active participants.

Eliot considers Shakespeare's greatness and popularity a hindrance, a kind of Chinese wall as he calls it to modern verse dramatists. In his attempt to get away from Shakespeare's influence he went back to the root of drama - the ancient Greek drama with its chorus, myth, folk traditions etc. He also used many of the elements from medieval morality and miracle plays. But it goes to the credit of Eliot that he adapted and made changes on the conventions to suit his purpose. Besides, Eliot was also influenced by the contemporary music halls and ballets for his verse plays.

Generally speaking, Eliot's dramatic period lies between the 'Waste Land' period and the final period of the 'Four Quartets'. The verse forms of his plays marked a departure from the conventional forms employed during the 'Waste Land' period and prepared the way for his final period of the 'Four Quartets'. Rejecting blank verse, Eliot went back to the root principle of English prosody, namely stress, for his versification. Though the lines may vary in length, they have a fixed number of stresses usually 4. The line is often broken in to two parts by a caesura, between the 1st and 2nd and between the last two stresses. The lines are generally run-on lines. His verse is believable as dialogue while at the same time conforming to the rigid requirement of verse form. It has been acknowledged by all critics that Eliot's major achievement in verse has been the creation of a verse from the modern idiom, that is capable of being both verse and believable dialogue at the same time. Words, phrases and rhythm are all dramatically relevant too.

In his search for a natural style, Eliot was indebted to 'Everyman', a popular morality play of the 15th century.

Apart from these, the theme of his plays is suitable for verse treatment. The dramatic theme of all his plays has been the plight of the individual who perceives the order of God, but who is forced to

exist in the natural world, must somehow come to terms with both realms'. Of all the plays of Eliot, 'Murder in the Cathedral' (1935) is most suited for verse. Incidentally, this play was Eliot's first full-fledged play and perhaps the best. True, he wrote 'Sweeney Agonistes' (a fragment of an Aristophanic melodrama) and 'The Rock' before this play. His subsequent plays are 'The Family Reunion' (1939); 'The Cocktail Party' (1950); 'The Confidential Clerk' (1955) and 'The Elder Statesman' (1959).

A religious tragedy, written on the occasion of the Canterbury Festival of June 1935, the central theme of the play is the martyrdom of Thomas Becket, the Archbishop of Canterbury between the years 1162 and 1170 and perhaps the most famous of all English saints. Although the play depicts the historical, political, and individual conflicts, it is mainly about the conflict between good and evil, between the right end through wrong means and the right end through right means. Salvation is presented not by talking about it by Becket, but by the attitudes of the priests and the knight and the eloquence of evil as in the defence of the murderers - all these are naturally and dramatically brought out by the verses they use. As Eliot tells us, the theme of the play suits poetic treatment.

Verse plays, says he, should either take their subject matter from some mythology or else should be about some remote historical period. Further, my play (Murder in the Cathedral) was to be produced for a rather special kind of audience, an audience of those serious people, who go to festivals and expect to have to put up with poetry. And finally, it is a religious play and people who go deliberately to a religious play at a religious festival, expect to be patiently bored and to satisfy themselves with the feeling that they have done something meritorious. Thomas, the tempters, the knights all speak in verse that perfectly express what they are and the choric passages are always modulated to their changing experiences. F.O Matthiessen rightly calls the play "The most sustained poetic drama since 'Samson Agonistes'. Such as the power of the verse in the play that we too, like the chorus in it, pass through "horror, out of

boredom, into glory".

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

It was George Bell, Bishop of Chechester, who requested Eliot to write a play for the Caterbury Festival of June 1935. Eliot accepted the commision and chose the martyrdom of Thomas Becket, the Archbishop of Canterbury between 1162 and 1170 and the most important English saint, as his subject as he found it not only appropriate to the occasion but also quite relevant to the modern times.

This play is based on history and many of the characters and incidents are historically accurate. Even though the play covers the last days of Becket. There are many references made to his early career, as fro instance, his chancellorship and his friendship with Henry II, then the King of England.

Thomas Becket was born in 1117 or 1119 an dgot his higher education thanks to the manificence of the church. He came in to close contct with Theobald, the then Archbishop of Canterbury. The King of England, became fond of him. The king showed his favours to Becket by appointing him High Chancellor in 1155. During his chancellorship period of six years, he led an active, full-bloded life. A popular courtier , an able politician and the chief companion of the King, Becket was at the height of his material glory. Becket, as Chancellor, helped Henry in many ways. he for instance, persecuted the rebel barons and supported the claims of Henry for his son's succession to the throne. Pleased by Becket's action, Henry wanted him to become the Archbishop of Canterbury when The obald died in 1160. Henry thought that as Archbishop the highest religious head, Becket would bring about a smooth relationship between the state and the church. This was necessary, as for quite some time the relation between the two had been strained. Hency wanted to assert the supremacy of the state. He wanted the church to pay taxes, which had so far been resisted by the latter. He thought that Becket would prove to be an infallible allay to him.

Becket was at first was at first reluctant to accept his appointment as he felt himself unworthy of the post of spiritual and religious head. But he yielded to the king's insistence and so Becket was consecrated Archbishop in 1162. Once he became Archbishop, Becket renounced his early lustly life and assumed a life of humility and virtue and became, to the consternation of the King, a zealous champion of the Church.

Becket resisted Henry's attempts to interfere in the affairs of the church and even complained to the Pope of the infringements by the State on the rights and immunities of the church. He also brought about the prosecution and excommunication of some of the barons and land owner who opposed him. Henry's efforts to impose taxes on the church and his move to take away some of the provilleges enjoyed by the clergy were foiled. the conflict between the King and the Archbishop became so intense that Becket attempted twice to flee from England to save himself. But he was prevented from escaping by the King's men. Henry on his part, tried to condemn Becket as a traitor and charges of corruption were levelled against him. Becket finally fled to Flanders and from there he took refuge in France, There he remained for a number of years.

Negotiations for a reconciliation between Henry ande Becket, however, continued. This received a set back when Prince Henry was crowned as successor to the throne by the Bishop of York and others. Becket took it as a clear-cut invasion of his prerogative and at his instance, the Pope suspended York and other Bishops who participated in the coronation. An agreement however was reached, between Henry and Becket by 1170, according tp which Becket was promised of his erstwhile position. So he returned to England after a lapse of seven years and made a triumphant entry into the Cathedral in early December. But soon things took a tragic turn. The King sent his men demanding from Becket an immediate absolution for the bishops suspended by the Pope. Becket refused to oblige, saying that he had no authority to do so. Henry on hearing Becket's refusal said to have uttered a bitter complaint that

no one dared to rid him of an insolent prelate, who caused him perpetual vexation. Whether Henry really said these words or not, the fact remains that four of his knights - Reginald Fitz Urse, William de Traci, Hugh de Morvillie and Richard Britowent to the Archbishop and demanded that he revoke the suspension of the Bishops. Becket once again refused. In the evening of the same day (29 Dec) they came again and threatened to kill him if he continued to be unrelenting. Becket expressed his desire to die for the sake of the church. They thereupon killed him brutally with repeated blows in his own cathedral church. They left the scene shouting that they were King's Men, and that the Archbishop was a traitor who had defied the orders of their supreme overlord i.e., the King.

The body of the Archbishop was buried in the crypt the next day and the grave soon became a place of pilgrimage. Miracles were reported to have been seen in the shrine. Becket was canonized in 1173 and the place continued to remain hallowed for hundred of years. Chaucer's Canterbury Tales shows the popularity of the place. The assassins were forced to do penance for many years. As for Henry, he allowed himself to be punished at the Martyr's tomb in 1174.

In 1538, Henry VIII, in the wake of his struggle with the Papal authority, destroyed the shrine and Becket's name was removed from the calendar of the English Church.

The life and death of Becket was the subject matter of Tennyson's 'Becket'.

Eliot in his play 'Murder in the Cathedral' more or less followed history until the martyrdom is over. Although the play is focussed on the last days of Becket from his return from France in early December till his murder on 29th December references to his earlier days as chancellor and friend of Henry and the subsequent strained relations are made in the course of the play. After the murder, the four knights came forward

and spoke in defence of their action. This, however, is not true to history. They were reported as having left the church shouting that they were king's men.

The play while recreating the atmosphere of the 12th century is also relevant to the modern age and exemplifies Eliot's idea of bringing before us not only the pastness of the past but also its presence, a sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal and of the timeless and of the temporal together.

RITUAL ELEMENTS

Being a religious play, Eliot has successfully used many ritualistic elements. The religious atmosphere is maintained through such elements. David Daiches points out that the play remains the most successful of his (Eliot's) plays because the ritualistic element is implicit in the situation. The theme is integrally related to the rituals. The archbishop's entry in to his cathedral, his facing the tempters, the sermon on the day of Christmas, the interior of the mass, display of banners, the final Te Deum, the concluding invocation of the chorus to St. Thomas all help to unfold the theme. Grover Smith observes that this play belongs to a new genre, which is pre tragic, the ritual drama of sin and redemption. Drama originated from religion and rituals and Eliot in reviving its ancient form, naturally gave them their due place. He is indebted to the medieval plays like 'Every man' although he takes care to depart from them to suit his time and purpose. The echoes and overtones form ecclesiastical ceremonies, the words and phrases from the Bible, the church songs sung in the background, the catechism like dialogue and above all, the rhythmic dythramp like choric passage all go to make 'Murder in the Cathedral' a modern ritual drama.

THEME OF THE PLAY

Eliot's choice of theme for the play, the martyrdom of Becket, is a play for the occasion of Canterbury festival, but is also relevant to the modern day with its spiritual and moral emptiness.

The play, however, can be perceived at different levels. Historically it is conflict between the King and the Archbishop. Personally, it is a conflict between Henry II and Thomas Becket. Politically, it can be seen as a conflict between the State and the church. But dominating all these conflicts is a spiritual conflict between Good and Evil. The religious nature of the play is emphasised by its original title 'Fear in the Way' (quoted from Ecclesiastics)- and its present title 'Murder in the Cathedral'. The play has much in common with Eliot's *Ash Wednesday* and 'Ariel poems'.

Helen Gardner and many other critics are of the view that the central theme of the play is martyrdom; and martyrdom in its strict, ancient sense. For the word 'martyr' means 'witness'. A martyr in this sense is not one who suffers for a cause or who gives up his life for truth, but the witness to the awful reality of the supernatural. According to Christian theology, a martyr is one who becomes a witness to Christ, even at the cost of his life. In doing so, he should not be motivated by any personal interest. A martyrdom is always the design of God. It is never the design of man, for the true martyr is he who has become the instrument of God, who has lost his will in the will of God, and who no longer desires anything of himself, not even the glory of being a martyr. A martyr is a champion of the church and partakes of the suffering of Christ and enacts second crucifixion. His death is in a way a kind of birth to eternal life. Martyrdom is beyond the power of human will. If death is resisted, we have not a martyr, but merely a victim. If on the other hand, death is willed, we have not a martyr, but in effect a suicide. A true martyr is made possible only by the human will yielding to the divine will.

This however makes the play quite different from conventional plays. There is no action in the conventional sense of the term. Neither is there any analysis of character. Becket becomes less a man than the embodiment of an attitude, an instrument of divine purpose. The centre of the play thus is not Becket the man but his state of mind. Patricia Adair rightly observes, the dramatic problem of course is that the more perfect

the saints self surrender, the more difficult it is to keep him a real man since it is by our weakness that we are most human. But this is no blemish to the play. On the contrary, it depends on the religious significance of the play. Becket's passive role is made possible by confining the action of the play to the closing weeks of his life. It is, however, not entirely true to say that Becket is passive. True, he is not moved by the first three tempters. These tempters represent the pleasures of the past, the power and pomp as a Chancellor and the powerful barons, respectively. But the fourth tempter does stir some internal conflict in him even if temporarily. The fourth tempter is the most subtle and hence the most difficult to resist. He represents the glories of sainthood and Becket asks him, "Who are you, tempting with my own desires? As Becket realises.

"The Last Temptation is the greatest treason

To do the right deed for the wrong reason"

The desire for the glory of martyrdom is the greatest of all sins of the spiritual life. He gets over this temptation and both the sermon and the second part of the play amply demonstrate the conflict he faced within him. In the sermon, Becket analyses what exactly the wrong reason is. "The true martyr is he who has lost his will in the will of God; and who no longer desires anything for himself, not even the glory of martyrdom".

Commenting on the wheel image, which is the central image in the play, Conghil says that this image is related to the meaning and mystery of martyrdom. The four knights who turn out to be the murderers, may appear as the four spokes of a wheel having Becket at the centre as the sufferer and the knights as the circumference acting. The knights are the four tempters in disguise.... In other words, the wheel image is used to interpret man's relation to God. Helen Gardner holds a similar view when she says that the attempt to present in Thomas, the martyr in will and deed, with mind and heart purified to be made the instrument of the divine purpose is a bold one..... The Characters of the Archbishop is sim-

ply to give an Addisonian demonstration of how a Christian can die.

The purification of motive and martyrdom of Becket have its impact upon others, especially the women of Canterbury. The chorus gains spiritual illumination as they witness Becket's martyrdom. To begin with, they have been out of sympathy with the seasonal pattern and with the life of nature, Living and partly living they find evil everywhere, "evil the wind, and bitter the sea, and gray the sky, grey, grey, grey". They see death in the rose and for them the seasons are a sour spring, a parched summer, an empty harvest. They complain against the return of Becket as they fear with his return, there will be a doom on the house a doom on yourself, a doom on the world'. Hence they want him to leave.

"O Thomas, return, Archbishop return, return to France Return Quickly, quickly, leave us to perish in quiet."

But this repugnance to spiritual rebirth begins to change from Becket's sermon. They say, "O Lord, Archbishop, O Thomas Arch Bishop, forgive us, forgive us, pray for us. That we may pray for you out of our shame. "In their final chorus, they come to see that the animals and all the created world affirm thee in living, the bird in the air, both the hawk and the finch, the beast on the earth, both the wolf and the lamb, the worm in soil and the worm in the belly." Becket has redeemed the faith and they fully understand his martyrdom as is made clear with the last line, 'Blessed Thomas, pray for us' Thus salvation was presented not by talking about it, but showing it operating in the consciousness of the chorus, "The real drama of the play is to be found in fact where its greatest poetry lies in the chorus. The change is from the terror of the supernatural expressed at the opening to the rapturous recognition of the glory displayed in all the creatures of the earth in the last. The fluctuations of the chorus represents humanity in general, every one of us undergoes the same experience. Since the play is about what happens to the chorus through Becket, critics like Helen Gardner point out that the chorus is the real protagonist of the

play. Here is fine writing : here is real development, for the core of the drama is not in Becket's struggle towards martyrdom (already near completion when the play begins) but in the progress of the Christian community, represented by the women, from fear through sympathy and shared guilt to repentance and thanks giving. It is largely because of the chorus that 'Murder in the Cathedral' becomes a modern, morality play and transcends its historical framework.

Since we identify ourselves with the chorus, we share their experiences. Like them we too pass through horror, out of boredom and into glory - a kind of peripetecia' in the Aristotelian sense.

A CRITICAL SUMMARY OF THE PLAY

The Play opens on Dec. 1170, when Becket, the Archbishop of Canterbury, returns from his exile in France. Like a Greek tragedy, the Chorus, here the poor and simple women of Canterbury, while expressing their sentiments gives much information about the time and setting and of the significance of the scene. The Archbishop was away for seven years as the King of England. Henry II was out to destroy him. Apparently, there has been a reconciliation between the king and the Archbishop. The women of Canterbury express their feelings of both fear and security. "Are we drawn by danger? Is it knowledge of safety that their welfare depends upon the Archbishop, they also apprehend that he brings death to Canterbury. They find death reflected everywhere and the imagery of the cycle of seasons introduces a sense of the impending doom and greater suffering for them. Coghill comments that the chorus' function of setting a mood of fear and doom is achieved by what seems the natural reaction of the poor women expecting more trouble; they seem dimly aware of some rumor of the Archbishops return and have an intuition that all will not be well if he does come, however much they need his presence. They know, however that being poor and simple, they need not fear anything of themselves. (Thomas, however, bothers about them, specially

preached for them.) Although living and party living they see in a shaft of sunlight some malady is about to happen and all they can do is wait and be witness to what is to come.

The association of the coming new year and the impending return of Becket are the first tentative associations of Becket with Christ.

Thus the chorus like their Greek counterpart, not only gives us the background, but also act, as observer and commentor of the action. Besides, they participate in the action, making us aware of the significance of what they witness and say.

The three priests of the Cathedral appear and they comment on the exile of the Archbishops and the unending intrigue and conflict between the state and the Church. No hope can be expected from the political power, they say, but only endless violence, treachery and corruption.

A messenger comes heralding the arrival of the Archbishop. The first priest wonders whether such two proud men as the king and the Archbishop can ever be reconciled. The third priest wryly comments that no peace is possible between the hammer and anvil. In answer to their query, the messenger tells them that the Archbishop comes in pride and sorrow. He was assured of all his claims and was confident in the devotion of his people. He is being welcomed enthusiastically by the people, who are strewing flowers in his path and seeking some relic, if only a hair from the tail of his horse. (This alludes to Christ's triumphant entry in to Jerusalem)

The messenger, however informs them that the Archbishop has no illusions and that he knows peace between the king and himself is a patched up affair. Although the priests are happy to get back their shepherds, they sense some danger as inevitable, and cannot be averted. They however, accept changes as in evitable.

For good or ill, let the wheel turn

The wheel has been still, these seven years, and no good.

The present is bad, and they expect no good in the future,

either.

The chorus on their part finds evil and doom everywhere 'Evil the wind, and bitter the sea. And grey the sky, grey grey grey' and in their agony they even cry to the Archbishop to return to France. Living and party living (i.e both materially and spiritually, they are leading a miserable life), they do not wish anything to happen. They, who have all along been leading a life of unrelieved sorrow and poverty do not want to see the doom of the house, the doom of their lord, the doom of the world. The second priest admonishes them for their foolish way of talking and asks them to put on pleasant faces/ And give a hearty welcome 'to our good Archbishop'

The Archbishop arrives and it is significant that the first word he utters is peace. He asks the priests to let the women be. He tells them that they know and do not know what it is to act or suffer and that action is suffering and suffering action. While Becket speaks with unclosed vision the full import of his words is not understood by the priests and the chorus. What Becket implies is that like Christ he has to suffer in order to be redemptive.

When Becket acts, the chorus too suffer in the sense that they follow him through the agony of understanding. Becket here hints at the true implication of martyrdom. Grover Smith comments His (Eliot's) language, when talks of action and suffering of the still wheel which turns, is that of one whose very sensibility gains mysterious access'.

Becket tells his listeners that his restless enemies—Bishop of York, London and Salisbury - have attempted to prevent his return. Though he has for the time being escaped from their grasp, he knows his end will be simple, sudden and God given. He is only to wait and watch for what is in store for him.

Becket, though greater than all, has now to be tested and proved perfect. For this he has to pass through the final test the test of temptation. According to Maxwell, the scene with the tempters is the focal point of the play. The tempters represent four aspects of Becket himself - personification of his weakness, and a

kind of objectifications of his own mind. Such is the dramatic skill of Eliot that we too are made participants in it.

The first tempter represents Becket's past days of happiness, the life of wit and wine and wisdom'. The good old life can still be regained, the tempter informs Becket, if only he leaves his present ascetic way of life. Becket easily dismisses this tempter telling him that past is past and that everything is ordained by God. The tempter calls Becket proud and warns him of dire consequences.

The second tempter represents Becket, the powerful Chancellor, and urges him to regain his chancellorship. He can thereby establish a welfare state besides bringing glory and fame for himself. But Becket replies that material power and glory cannot make him happy. The tempter urges him to grasp the solid substance of temporal power and leave his spiritual pursuits. Power is present. Holiness thereafter he says. When Becket is told that he can obtain the power and authority of the Chancellor by giving up his priestly power, Becket gives an emphatic no. He refuses to give up his religion even if it is to teach the bishops and barons a lesson and exchange it for the 'Puny power' of the material world. As Archbishop he has the power to condemn kings. Why should he serve among their servants? The tempter now leaves Becket to his fate.

The third tempter who introduces himself as a rough, straight forward English man, represents the blunt, reasonable side of Becket's nature. He is the spokesman of the Barons, who want to check the absolute power of the King. He advises Becket against any reconciliation with the king. He advises Becket to seek new friends in the rebel Norman barons. By allying himself with the barons, Becket could be of assistance to England and Rome at the same time. Both the church and the people have grievances against the throne. Let them therefore unite for their mutual benefit, ending the domination of the King over the bishops and the barons. Becket, however, is unwilling to betray the king. More-

over, the third tempter claims that the Barons fight for liberty. But for Becket, liberty which is not based on submission to the will of God, is not true liberty at all. The tempter departs by warning Becket that before long he will see for himself how the King is going to show his regard for his loyalty.

At this point, the fourth tempter, the subtlest of all, enters. It is apparent that Becket never has expected this tempter (who are you? I Expected / Three visitors, not four') The fourth tempter dismisses the suggestions of the other tempters as worthless and advises Becket to face forward to the end. He wants the Archbishop to maintain his spiritual power and tempts him with the prospect of glory, and asks him to think of his enemies creeping in penance and the pilgrims standing in line before the glittering jewelled shrine, bending the knee in supplication and of the miracles that will be performed in his name. Ironically, this last visitor repeats Becket's own words to the women of Canterbury, "action is suffering/ And suffering action." Neither does the agent suffer/ Nor the patient act. "But both are fixed in an eternal action. It is significant that Becket himself tells him that he is tempting with my own desires. This is the most serious and dangerous of all temptations." To accept martyrdom, not out of Christian humility and obedience and the wish to bear witnesses to God's truth, but out of spiritual pride "(G.S fraser). The four tempters now unite in a fifth temptation, as it were—the temptation to despair. They assert Man's life is a cheat and a disappointment and that everything is unreal. Becket is bewildered for sometime. His doubts and confusion, however, are removed when he hears the chorus speak. He gains new insight and new strength. They implore him to save himself that they may be saved. Becket now moves beyond acting and suffering and speaks confidently. "Now is my way clear, now is the meaning plain". The last temptation is the greatest treason. To do the right deed for the wrong reason. He now gives his will into the will of God for in His will lies our peace.

The first part of the drama ends when Becket with complete self awareness places himself in God's hands and he becomes

His instrument. What does it matter if the course he has set for himself may appear to be madness, the senseless self-slaughter of a lunatic, to the world?

There is once again a close parallel between the experiences of Jesus and Becket. Both were tempted and both came out victorious.

INTERLUDE

A sermon preached by Becket on Christmas morning, 1770 at the Cathedral constitutes the interlude. The text for the sermon is St. Luke: 2:14, Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of good will. This sermon in a way is the quintessence of the play and is the message that Eliot wants to communicate through the play.

"The theme of the sermon is the meaning and mystery of the Christian Day mass, which reenacts the death and suffering of Christ on the day of His birth as saviour" It is indeed a paradox that we celebrate at once the Birth of our Lord and His Passion and Death upon the cross. In other words, Christians mourn and rejoice at once and for the same reason. Becket now explains what the real peace is- the peace that is promised at the birth of Christ and the peace for which He laid down his life upon the cross. Jesus' peace is not to be mistaken for the peace as we think of it. His disciples like him suffered death by martyrdom and the peace he gives is not peace as the world gives.

Now, he explains what exactly is the meaning of martyrdom? Who is a true martyr? Martyrdom, he explains, is like the Mass, a reenactment of Christ's passion. Like the Christmas Day, Christians mourn and rejoice in the death of other martyrs too. For instance, the Feast of Stephan, the first martyr falls on the day after Christmas. In the fourth paragraph of his sermon, many themes of the play like human will, order and liberty and the true meaning of peace and martyrdom are all integrated by submission to the Will of God.

A martyrdom is always the design of God, for his love of men, to warn them and to lead them, to bring them back to his ways. It is never the design of man, for the true martyr is he who has become the instrument of God, who has lost his will in the will of God, and who no longer desires anything for himself, not even the glory of being a martyr. In these words Becket analyses what the end of the part I. In a way, as Becket makes it clear, martyrdom is also his explanation of the peace of Christ, the peace that the world cannot give. Jesus has exemplified it in his own life for others to follow. Like Jesus Becket too was tempted and made perfect on the eve of his crucifixion, Jesus said, 'Not my will, but Thine be done'.

What is the dramatic significance of the Interlude? Some critics are of the view that such direct preaching about the real purpose of the play destroys the dramatic quality of the play. At any rate, Eliot, it is obvious, wants us to fully understand the real meaning of peace and martyrdom'. Only a sermon like the one preached by a true martyr can do it. The sermon moreover, is dramatically appropriate as it is spoken on the Christmas morning and just before Becket's death. Becket seems to be fully aware of his end. He ends his sermon with the prophetic words "I do not think I shall ever preach to you again ; and because it is possible that in a short time you may have yet another martyr, and that one perhaps no the last". Becket in his humility wanted his private insight to be shared by his people too. This itself shows that he has drained out of himself every element of spiritual pride. He no longer claims any exclusive right to his martyrdom. It belongs to the Church which included the laity. This recognition that the laity share in Becket's martyrdom becomes crucial as the play goes on.

It is significant that the sermon is in prose, which adds to its naturalness and makes it different from the two parts of the play.

A CRITICAL SUMMARY OF PLAY - PART II

If a play begins with a conflict and ends with its resolution.

'Murder in the Cathedral' in essence is over at the end of Part I. "What remains in part II is only working out of this resolution" But a study of part II will convince us how essential it is for a true understanding of the play.

This part takes place on the 29th December, 1170 at the Canterbury Cathedral. Like part I, this part also begins with a speech by the Chorus. But the Chorus in this part has gained more spiritual insight. They comment on the bleakness of winter and the impious signs of evil and death. Recognizing the importance of peace based on the peace of God, they realise that death in the Lord is not an end but a renewal. Death in the Lord renews the Wait. They seem to have an intuitive awareness of truth and peace. The Archbishop's message, it appears, has been understood by them to some extent.

The three priests of the Cathedral, bearing banners and chanting chancel verses now enter. They mark the passage of three days after Christmas also the three days before the death of Becket. The first priest carries the banner of St. Stephan, the first Martyr, and comments that the day of St. Stephan is most dear to the Archbishop Thomas. The second priest announces the day of St. John, the apostle. The third priest speaks of the day of the Holly innocents. In the background the ominous words of Introit (a part of the mass, when the prayer is sung) are heard. (These elements like chanting of phrases, and lines taken from the palms etc. constitute the ritualistic part of the play). The feast days of the saints are in fact a prelude to the day of a new martyr. They all prepare us for the critical moment a moment in and out of time, a moment already designed. It is a part of that design. The Knights appear for their preordained task.

Eliot himself calls these knights as tempters disguised as Knights. They come four days after Christmas and they are like the four spokes of a wheel, signifying the eternal design, having Becket at the centre suffering, while they are at the circumference, acting. They are cruel, rough and rude. They introduce them-

selves as servants of the King and they want to have urgent business with the Archbishop from the king. When the priests invite them to dinner, they sarcastically remark that they are eager to dine up on rather dine with the Archbishop. They insist on seeing Becket. Whereupon the archbishop enters. The conflict between the State and the church is intensely dramatised in the scene. "However certain our expectation, Thomas says, 'the moment foreseen may be unexpected when it arrives'. It is obvious that he is referring to his martyrdom. His keen sense of duty is also evident in his talk. (On my table you will find the papers in order, and the documents signed.)

The Knights accuse Becket of betrayal and treachery, which are vehemently denied by the Archbishop. They make an effort to attack Becket, but the priests and attendants interpose themselves and save him. Becket talks of his loyalty and friendship towards the king. But he admits it is subordinate to his dedication to God. When he refuses their demand to absolve the bishops, they ask him to depart from the land. Becket asserts, 'Never again,..... shall the sea run between the shepherd and his folk' The knights become more and more unruly and threaten him with dire consequences if he persists in his refusal. Becket confidently tells them that even if he is killed, 'I shall rise from my tomb to submit my cause before God's throne.' In other words, he is serving the cause of the Church and that as martyr, he is immortal. The knights depart warning Becket that they would return with swords. Grover smiths comments that in the play Becket speaks to the knight sternly without discourtesy or scuffling. He retains dignity and escapes arrogance. In the lines spoken by the four knights, the technique of stichomy this used. It is taken from the Greek plays, a kind of line for line verbal speech, in which the characters speak in lines that echo the words of the others.

The chorus now comments on the event. A further progress in their understanding and their greater involvement in action are noticeable. They are horrified at the decay and evil pervading ev-

everywhere. They have a nightmarish vision of society, where there is nothing but disorder, decay and overwhelming waste and shame'. They too partake of the sin of the community, and so they cry to Becket for absolution. They express their sense of guilt and pray to the Archbishop, "forgive us, forgive us pray for us that we may pray for you out of your shame."

The Archbishop advises them that they have to accept suffering as part of the eternal pattern of sin and redemption. Although human kind cannot bear very much reality. Once they know the design of God, their present suffering will lead them to perpetual glory. His own example is a model for their to learn God's purpose.

The priests now want to conduct Becket to the altar to save him from the armed knights Becket. However, he has his trust in God and knows that he has only to make perfect his will. The priests, have not understood the import of Becket's words and they in their ignorance ask what shall become of us? They do not know that Becket has gone beyond time. They drag him off to the vespers to save him.

To the background of Dies Lare (Day of judgement) is sung in Latin by a choir in the distance. The chorus speaks of the horror, but more horror' the ultimate horror of separation from God. The chorus now in their spiritual insight have almost identified themselves with their Archbishop. They crave the comfort of the Savior's sacrifice, to be renewed in the sacrifices of other martyrs like Becket. They see the final doom close at hand and wonders. Who intercede for me, in my most need?

The priests' efforts to bar the door and so to save themselves are prevented by Becket. He asks them to unbar the doors as 'The church shall protect, in her own way and that the church shall be open, even to our enemies. When the priest argue that the knights are no better than maddened beasts out to kill him, Becket gives himself up to the God's law. Martyrdom is an act made beyond time. It is a decision not taken by man but by God.

We have only to conquer now by suffering, That is the triumph of the cross and so he commands them to open the door.

The knights now enter. In three stanzas marked by the rhythms of jazz, the drunken knights hurl insults at Becket, calling him traitor to the King, the meddling priest and the cheapest brat. Becket stoutly denies all the charges and calmly faces his death, declaring himself to be a Christian saved by the blood of Christ. Their demands to absolve the bishop whom he has excommunicated and to accept the superiority of the King are answered by Becket by his willingness to die for his Lord and he tells them to do with me as you will. While he commends himself to God and his Church, the knights close in on him and kill him. The event of killing Becket too is like a ritual. Thomas is slain by the knights who circle round him with out-stretched swords visually forming for the audience a wheel with Thomas as the still point says Carol H. Smith.

While Becket dies the Chorus cry for purification. The immensity of evil overwhelms them. They can neither endure it nor can they overcome it. The entire universe appears to them polluted and they being part of it are soiled too. 'It is not we alone, it is not the house, it is not the city that is defiled. But the world that is wholly foul, they lament. They however are dimly aware that the blood of the martyrs may refresh the wasteland of barren brought and dry stones.

The knight's defence, which constitutes the next part of the play, is something unusual and is quite different in tone. The knights step out of their twelfth century setting and address the modern audience in the language of modern political expediency. Eliot departs from history in this case. He admits that he has been slightly influenced by the Epilogue of Shaw's Saint Joan for this. His idea like Shaw's is to shock the audience out of their complacency'. Though some critics consider it as irrelevant, others like D.E Jones, are of the view that this constitutes an integral part of the play and that it is in effect the temptation of the audience, corresponding to

the temptation of Becket in PTI. We are made to participate in Becket's martyrdom and are mad to realise the significance of his sacrifice in a negative way.

The Knights in a series of speeches try to justify their actions and win the favour of the audience. Eliot gives the names of the actual murderers to these Knights.

The first knight, Reginald Fitzurse, Cts is the spokesman of the group. He appeals to their sense of honour and requests them to judge their actions impartially. Being a man of action and not of words, he asks the other Knights to speak in self defence. He chooses Baron William de Traci, the eldest of them, to speak first.

The third Knight (Baron William de Traci) wants the audience to realise the fact that they have been absolutely disinterested. They are, he says, four plain Englishmen motivated by love for their country. They had to do the painful duty although they have more to lose than to gain by their deed.

The second Knight (Sir Hugh de Morville) appeals to the Englishmen's spirit of fair play. He asks them whether Becket really deserves sympathy, the King's aim was honourable. He tried to restore order by reforming the legal system and by curbing the excessive power of the local governments. But what did Becket do? He resigned the Chancellorship and became more priestly than the priests' and arrogated to himself a higher place than the King himself. Though they are opposed to violence, they had to resort in this case to ensure social justice.

The fourth Knight (Richard Brito), Whose family is famous for its loyalty to the Church argues that Becket as Archbishop showed utter indifference to the fate of the country. He became a monsteregotism, which led him to an uncontrollable mania. He in fact wanted himself to be killed and used every means of provocation for the purpose. He evaded their questions and when they sought his answers inflamed with wrath, he insisted that the doors should be opened. It was a case of suicide and that he was of

unsound mind.

The four Knights together in a way summarize how the temporal world looks at the martyrdom of Becket. They also reflect our own values, immersed as we are in materialism. The play raises an important question whether we can go beyond these material values and see the spiritual significance of Becket's martyrdom. To the extent we can do, we have understood the play's message. The audience the poor, the dump driven cattle as they are, devoid of any spiritual core, are asked to disperse quietly to their homes and not to loiter in groups at street corners.

The last part of the play is concerned with the reactions of the priests and the Chorus for what they have witnessed. We find the words of the priest that the martyrdom of Becket has indeed strengthened the Church. For the Church is the stronger for this action. He asks the other priests to thank God who has given us another saint in Canterbury'.

But the reaction of the Chorus is still more significant. They have understood perfectly what was implied in Becket's Christmas sermon. All reaction, all experience affirm the creator. They see very clearly their own weakness and their dependence on God's mercy. They accept their own responsibility for the blood of martyrs and so crave for forgiveness. They realise that the sin of the world is upon our heads: that the blood of the martyrs and the agony of the saints is upon our heads'. While in the background The Deum (a hymn in praise of God) is sung, they pray sincerely O Lord, have mercy upon us. Blessed Thomas, pray for us.

We recognise that equal in importance to the story of Becket has been the parallel story of the Chorus' gradual acceptance of the will of God. And we may feel that what the play presents to us is, after all, an image of the limitation of Christ, by Becket and through him, by the women of Canterbury. This is the relevance and significance of part II. Thus while every part of the play has its own importance and relevance while remaining integrated with the other parts. The play does not tell us anything, it makes something happen to us an intuitive vision of spiritual reality.

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DRAMA - FOR GENERAL STUDY**1. RIDERS TO THE SEA****J. M.SYNGE****1. LIFE AND WORKS OF J.M. SYNGE: (1871- 1909)**

John Millington Synge, an Irish playwright was born near Dublin in 1871. He was educated at Trinity college and then for some years in Paris, where he met W.B Yeats in 1896. Following a suggestion from Yeats, he went to the Aren Islands in order to write about Irish peasant life and stayed there annually from 1898 to 1902. His description. The Aren Islands was published in 1907. The first of his plays, The Shadow of the Glen, was performed in 1903. It is a grim one act-peasant comedy in which an elderly husband feigns death to test his wife's fidelity. Riders to the Sea, an elegiac tragedy in which an elderly mother Maurya, stoically anticipates a great rest after the death of the last of her six sons, followed in 1904. Both were published, as was The Well of Sints in 1905. His best known play and in its time the most controversial. The play boy of the World was performed in 1907, the anti-clerical The Tinker's Wedding was published in 1908. He later became a director of the Abbe Theatre in 1906. His Poems and Translations appeared in 1909. His last play Desire of the Sorrows was performed and posthumously published in 1910. He died of Hodgkin's disease in the year 1909.

J.M. Synge was a strange person and few people, even in his close Dublin circle, could claim to know him. Indeed it seems probable that a select few of those he met on his travels came nearer to the essential Synge than any of his friends and colleagues at home. There were one or two peasants in Aren and Wicklow, a few middle aged ladies in Germany, one or two men in Paris and Brittany—these, in their letters which have survived and in his own notes in his notebooks, seems to have shared his secrets and

enjoyed his confidence. He was a lonely man, who enjoyed solitude, and despite his poor health he must have been physically strong and energetic: All his life he had been a great walker and until his last serious illness he could cycle seventy miles a day hilly or even mountainous country. He preferred the company of women to that of men and was susceptible to the charms of girls and young women. He was seriously in love at least three times and his last years were both cheered and saddened by his love for his leading lady, Molly Algood (Maire O' Neill on the stage). Although there was a difference of fifteen years between them they were engaged, first secretly then publicly, although there is no truth in the legend that she used to act scenes from Deirdre of the Sorrows as he lay dying.

It is possible that his solitary childhood - his own choice, since he had no brothers and sisters - and his religious differences with his family, may have helped to foster his instinct for solitude: but it is more likely that it was an inborn characteristic. There was something of the gypsy in his make up: his studies, before he discovered himself as a dramatist, were of the kind that set him apart from people on his own class; but above all he was a sad man. He was not without humour, as his works and his letters show; but the thought of tragedy, of sorrow, even of death was never below the surface. Portraits and sketches are not very revealing; his face was sallow and deeply lined; he had in his prime, very dark hair a mustache and a tiny, tuft of beard; only his eyes suggest pain, or sorrow. It is an Irish face but not, after all, that of a great man, observes a well-known critic.

A NOTE ON IRISH THEATRE MOVEMENT

Dr. Johnson once described Ireland as the school of the west, the quite habitation of sanctity and learning. This implies that in Ireland there were scholars, priests, chroniclers, lawyers and medical men and poets. The Irish poets write in Gaelic language. Irish

theatre has been there ever since perhaps the 9th century. But in all these, there is no mention of drama, not even of folk plays of Europe, of the Mystery and miracle plays of England. Theatre in Ireland came to be known only from the mid-seventeenth century. It was not popular till then. It is the visit of performers such as Garrick and Mrs Siddons that helped to build a connection between the English and Irish Drama. In the 18th century two of the Ireland's greatest play wrights namely Goldsmith and Sheridan came in to prominence. But these two wrote in English for English audience. Even in the nineteenth century there were Irish plays and Irish playwrights. But these were Irish Plays and Irish playwrights. But these were more Anglo than Irish. They had the qualities of English drama that included contrived plots, comic, pathetic or melodrama, characters based on traditions etc. Later in the 1880's there was a revival in the ancient Gaelic language and literature. The reason for the revival was more political than literary.

In 1891, W.B Yeats founded an Irish literary society in London and this was followed in 1892 in Dublin by the National Literary Society. In 1893 Douglas Hyde came out with an anthology of old Gaelic love poems with translations. This was followed by Yeats' play, *The Land of Heart's Desire* in 1894.

Then Yeats began meeting people. He met Lady Gregory, a wealthy Irish lady who had studied Gaelic and was a well informed student of the Irish peasantry. In 1898 she and Yeats met to discuss possible Irish plays for public performance and, with the help of a few sympathisers, founded the Irish Literary Theater and began rehearsals for two plays in London (Since there were apparently inadequate resources or actors in Dublin). The plays were successfully produced in Dublin, but a greater honour came to Yeats and his friends when the Benson Shakespeare Company, on a visit from London, performed some of the Irish Literary Theater's plays at the Dublin Gaiety Theatre.

Their step forward was to form the Irish National Theatre

the idea of attracting public subscriptions, of guaranteeing performance of genuinely Irish Plays of which they approved and of ultimately acquiring their own theatre. This was in 1902 and for two years the society performed a long succession of plays in hired halls. But in 1904 the miracle happened. The previous May, the society had been to London and presented half a dozen plays in one day (two sessions) at a hall in Kensington. Soon people from all walks of life started contributing with an idea of having a theatre for the Irish National Theatre Society. This was the famous Abbey Theatre established.

The moving spirit was undoubtedly W.B Yeats. Not only was he inspired with a passionate devotion to the cause of Irish history and legend, but he sufficiently travelled and well read to avoid any narrow parochial approach. Not only was he a poet and a critic; he was a writer of plays. Best of all, he was known and respected, especially Dublin. G.W Russel, and Edward Martyn, a rich and talented playwright and a devoted Roman Catholic joined Yeats and they were joined by George Moore, a great Irish novelist and critic. Later others in at the beginning were Douglas Hyde, Gaelic scholar and poet, who helped in rewriting and arranging plays, and Lady Gregory who devoted herself entirely to the cause, working all hours, and collaborating closely with Yeats, who relied much on her judgement. Although she had never before written a play she suddenly discovered in herself a gift for comedy and her one-act plays often highly entertaining, were seldom out of the Abbey theatre repertoire and are still very popular. In 1901 Yeats discovered the brothers Fay, who were producing brilliant performances with amateurs. They readily joined them. The aim of the Irish Theatre movement was to raise the level of drama and the theatre in England and Ireland. Plays had to be more realistic, more true to the life or ordinary people in the plot, action and speech. This meant an end to the machine-made plot, the use of recognizably real characters instead of types (e.g. the stage Irishman) and the use of natural speech—natural, that is, to the

time and place of the action. The play itself had to be what mattered; every possible obstacles in between the play and the audience had to be reduced to a minimum if not completely eliminated. This involved a number of minor revolutions. First, the setting often, at a first night' in a London Theatre, there is a ripple of applause when the curtain goes up, before an actor appears or a word is spoken; the audience are impressed by the stage setting. This would have infuriated Yeats and his colleagues. Their sets were as simple as they could make them - dyed curtains and screens, plain wooden furniture (if any), Indispensable properties of shaped and painted paper mache. Next, the actors; who they were was immaterial; it was the character they were impersonating which was all -important., Surprisingly enough, the Abbey Theatre hits predecessors printed the names or the stage names of actors actresses in its programme. This may have been a slight encouragement for the amateurs who were playing and who had no other public or private reward, but to this day certain companies which cling to the Abbey Theatre traditions (e.g. the Madder Market Theatre in Norwich and some University Dramatic Societies) print no personal names against the name of the parts in their programmes. In other respects, the Abbey Theatre discouraged the star' system. For example there was no applause to hold up the show when a leading actor or actress came on the stage for the first time, as there was for living and there still is for famous people on their first appearance in English theatres. And there was no publicity for individuals outside the theatre. Once on stage, no movement or gesture which was not essential to the development of the play was to be allowed. (Synge was one of the author producers who refused to adhere to this rule but even he rigorously ruled out any superfluous action). By standing still to say their words the cast gave the words themselves every opportunity to register, without distraction of setting, costume or-fussy movement, Finally, the speech: this had to be realistically consistent with the time and the place of the play. The time might range from

the dimly realized period of ancient Ulster to the 'present' day: the place from prehistoric earthworks to contemporary hovels or, in at least one play, a nineteenth century workhouse. The near-contemporary was straight forward: Yeats, Lady Gregory and Synge had all listened carefully to Irish conversation. The history and legendery required more profound study and research.

SYNGE AND THEATRE OR SYNGE AS A DRAMATIST

As you have read in the above paragraph from the beginning, Yeats was remarkably responsible for the founding of the Abbey Theatre and he was clear as to the kind of drama he wanted. He could infuse in theatre his ideals of what a drama should be like. He was for scenery and costumes which will draw little attention to themselves and cost little money and for a theatre where preference is given to the spoken word rather than to visual affects. He wanted plays about the life and artisans and country people. He thought that there was a need to make the poetical play a living dramatic form again and the training of actors would get from plays of country life with its unchanging outline its abundant speech, its extravagance of thought would help to establish a school of imaginative acting.

In these thoughts of Yeats, Synge was in full agreement. Like Yeats, Synge too was convinced of the role of the imagination in drama and emphasized the literary character of the Irish dramatic movement. He wanted the plays to be personal sincere and beautiful. He believed that on a good drama one could find poetic imagination and a living language. Once he observed: "In a good play, every speech should be as fully flavoured as a nut or apple and such speeches can not be written by any one who works among people who have shut their lips on poetry." The difference between Yeats and Synge lies in Synge's emphasis on character and incident.

The poetry of exaltation, he thought will be always the highest but when men lose their poetic feeling for ordinary life and can

not write poetry of ordinary things, their exalted poetry is likely to lose its strength of exaltation. Ordinary life and ordinary things were his concern. He did not have any liking or affinity for the melancholy spirituality of the Celtic Twilight or artificiality of poets. To them, the timber of poetry must have strong room among the clay and also in the final scene of *The Playboy*.

He declared, it may almost be said that before verse can be human again it must learn to be brutal. The brutality, in Synge, emerges from the clash of literary language with their vernacular and also from the romantic and the Rabelaisian. Even in the juxtaposition of the comic and the tragic there is the brutality in Synge with the exception of *Riders to the Sea* and *Deirdre of the Sorrows*. Synge's plays are tragic comedies where he deliberately wrenches and distorts the conventions of tragedy and comedy. The aspects of his art only attracted Yeats and he was also puzzled too. "The strength that made him delight in setting the hard virtues by the soft, the bitter by the sweet, salt by mercury, the stone by the elixir gave him a hunger for harsh facts for ugly surprising things, for all that defies our hope"

Synge had a sure sense of the dramatic. His power of visualization was perfect. Synge's power of visualisation could be seen in his extraordinary ability to intensify a scene through gesture and detail as in *Cathleen counting the stitches* in *Riders to the Sea*, or Molly sitting in Mary's seat in the recognition scene of *The Well of the Saint*.....

Synge as a dramatist didn't believe in theorizing. He had a strong sense of the tonalities of experience and was struggling to express their reality and importance. He showed concern over issues of belief. All theorizing is bad for the artist, because it makes him lose love in the intelligence instead of in half subconscious faculties by which all creations are performed. As a dramatist what he was working toward was not the banishment of abstractions but their proper subordination to an emotive unity.

Contrary to general opinion, Synge was quite sensitive to

the religious milieu of his family and deeply concerned that he could not accept their religious doctrines. He did not in fact reject their religious concerns but rather he transformed them into ideas about personality and art. His inability to dissemble or to pretend to beliefs he did not have and his sense of stewardship of the artist as having an obligation to use his gifts are two examples of his translating his family's religious values into his own terms. And rather than being indifferent to matters of belief, he seems to have been super-sensitive to them, so much so that he could not simply debate them as theories. His family's emphasis on doctrine and on the necessity of the intellectual accord, irritated, against Synge's natural sensitivity to affective tone and his inclination to emotive unities over intellectual one. On the Arab Islands Synge lived in milieu governed by received ideals qualitatively different from those he had reared in. This had two main effects, first some of the received ideas of this archaic culture, seemed to him more appealing, more conducive to an organic, wholistic view of life, than had his family's ideas. These provided him with a paradigm of how man and nature should relate and led to a clarification of his own ideas about art. Second the great differences between this assumptions of this culture and in his own precipitated an awareness of how variable and how arbitrary the received notions of any culture may be and of how large a role received ideas play in our own apprehension of reality and the tonality of our experience. As he digested these realizations the variety and pervasiveness of such implicit perspectives became clearer to him and generated themes and devices that became the staples of his drama.

The plays of Synge rises head and shoulders above the dramatic conventions of his fellow-playwrights. They are not purely poetic plays, nor peasants plays-though they have something of both still less are they problem plays. Synge's world is not the conventional world of modern living, but a small precivilized world of imagination. Within this small world, his characters are completely convincing and enormously alive. It is absurd to try to dis-

entangle 'message' from an unpolitical writer like Synge' what emerge is the nostalgia of a lonely and sick man for vital living Synge's major themes of illusory fantasy issues, squalid reality and the transmuting power of language had already been established in his earlier comedies.

SYNGE'S LANGUAGE

Synge is incomparably the greatest dramatist of the Irish literary Revival. To him we owe a new dramatic speech, subtle and dedicated as verse, with a vigour and joy and which many tried to imitate after him. His plays came at a time when verse seemed to have become outworn. This new speech that recalled Elizabethan rhythms and sometimes images, the intimate connections between The Theatre, nationalism and literature in general aroused a certain romantic interest in England and gave a genuine impetus to the work in Ireland. This new world of the peasant was compact offering the most varied material for comic and tragic perceptions, though the vein was narrow and could not be worked for long. Synge has the rare quality of being both poet and dramatist simultaneously conceiving his poetry in terms of the dramatic, and plays in terms of his poetry. He viewed the life about him with a joy in its unsophisticated richness and with a disappointed but a wholly sympathetic detachment.

Synge uses a spare, rhythmic, lyric prose to achieve effects of great power and resonance: both tragedies and comedies display the ironic wit and realism which many of his countrymen found offensive. Commenting on this Yeats has observed: "He was but the more hated because he gave his country what it needed and unmoved mind" and Yeats described him as one who had come, Towards nightfall upon certain set apart in a most desolate story place Towards nightfall up on a race.

All Synge's plays owe great deal of rich success to the language spoken by his characters. At first it seems strange and un-English but the ear quickly gets attuned to it and we are seldom at

a loss to understand it. Scholars have pointed out that much of its strangeness and much of what we have come to think of as its beauty is due to the fact that Synge's Anglo Irish is simply a close translation of the Gaelic equivalent. This is most true of the order of the words in a sentence, the use of words which seems unnecessary (and cannot be translated) like himself and frequent examples of what strike as 'bad grammar'. (We have no right to assume that what is grammatically correct in modern English was or is necessarily 'good grammar' in any other language past or present) We have constantly to remind ourselves that Synge was a Gaelic scholar. He had spent long months in western Ireland and in the Aran Islands, mixing with people who still spoke Gaelic, even if they could also speak their kind of English, and whose parents and grand parents had spoken nothing but Gaelic. In writing his plays he did not deliberately invent a whimsical language which he thought might prove attractive to Irish or English or American audiences. He reproduced the language that he had heard all around him on his visits to these unspoiled people, and that he no doubt uses himself when talking to them. His book on Aran Islands is full of stories and anecdotes which the old people told him with snatches of conversations in the Angle-Gaelic dialect. Synge must have written these speeches in his note book, not because he thought he might one day use dialect in his plays, since he had no idea at the time that he would ever become a playwright, but because he was struck by their expressive power and by the beauty of their cadences.

For Synge, no drama can grow out of anything other than the fundamental realities of life—a principle he followed with exact literalness in the stage presentation of all his work.

Despite his atheism and rejection of revolutionary politics, Synge's work is inseparable from the Irish nationalist movement and Lady Gregory's call to build up a Celtic and Irish school of dramatic literature...to find in Ireland an uncorrupted and unimagined audience trained to listen by its passion for oratory is the

general content for all his plays.

DATE OF RIDERS TO THE SEA

Riders to the Sea was written, along with *The Shadow of the Glen*, during the summer of 1902 in a villa in country Wicklow called Tomilands House. This rented farm house was the usual summer vacation resort of the Synge family and Synge divided the schedule at Tomilands house with his mother and wandering through the glens of Wicklow, finding further inspiration for *The Shadow of the Glen*.

Before leaving for the Aran Islands on October 14 for what was to prove his fifth and final visit, Synge spent from October 8 to October 13 at Coole Park discussing *Riders* and *The Shadow of the Glen* with Lady Gregory and Yeats and submitting his two plays to their scrutiny, major changes were received in January 1903 by several early members of the Irish Theatre Movement. Later, *Riders* got published in the October issue of *Samhain*. It was first produced by the Irish National Theatre Society on Feb. 25, 1904.

Public reaction to *Riders* were varied. James Joyce objected to the brevity of *Riders*: "a one-act play, dwarf-drama, cannot be a 'knock down' argument", he told Synge. But later in the year of Synge's death, he translated *Riders* into Italian because he was attracted by the music of Synge's lives and had memorized Maurya's last speech.

"*Riders*, the patriots felt, might be morbid influenced by the decadence of Europe and based up on ignorance of Irish Catholicism, but it was and not, to their minds so great a slander against Ireland and in *The Shadow of the Glen* (this was denounced as a libel against Irish women). But the London Theatre goes were quite the other way. They received it as a masterpiece.

The central incident of the play and many of the motifs used in it are drawn from Synge's experiences on the Aran Islands on his last visit in 1901. The story on which the play is based and from which the play gets its title is told in part IV of the Aran Is-

lands.

"When the horses were coming down to the slip and old woman saw her son that was drowned a while ago riding on one of them. She didn't say what she was after seeing, and this man caught the horse, he caught his own horse first and then caught this one and after that he went out and was drowned."

THE PLOT

The scene is a cottage kitchen in a small fishing settlement on an island off the west coast of Ireland. Cathleen working at her spinning wheel; she is a young woman of twenty four. Her younger sister, Nora, comes in with a parcel under her shawl and the two walk softly so as not to disturb their mother who is resting in the inner room. The parcel given to her by the priest, contains a white shirt and a stocking and as the conversation proceeds we learn that the girl's brother, Michael, has been missing for days, presumably lost at sea. We also learn that another brother, Bartley, is proposing to cross to the mainland that day to sell two horses at Galway fair.

The girls are thinking of opening the parcel when they hear their mother, Maurya, stirring, so they hide the parcel, Maurya comes in and talk is of Bartley. It seems certain that he will go to Galway fair to sell horses. Bartley himself then comes in, a great hurry, and begins to make a halter for one of the horses so that he can ride it while the other trots behind. Maurya is still bemoaning the presumed death of Michael; Bartley assures her that the men have searched the shore every day for nine days and found no trace of his body. She then turns on Bartley. What would a hundred or a thousand horses be worth compared with a son, and her only surviving son at that? Bartley ignores this and proceeds to give Cathleen instructions to cover his absence. He finishes the halter, changes into his best coat, picks up his purse and his tobacco and leaves with a blessing for those remaining, but receives none in return. Cathleen rebukes Maurya for letting him go with-

out her blessing and suddenly they realize that he has left behind the bread (cake) they had prepared for him. Cathleen takes it from the hearth and wraps it quickly, and then gives it to Maurya and tells her to go to a spot where she can meet Bartley, give him the bread and her blessing.

The moment their mother's back is turned the sisters return to their examination of the parcel. It seems a futile exercise since Michael must be presumed dead: but if it can be established that these clothes, taken from the sea near Donegal in the far north were his, it will comfort the girls and their mother to know for certain that he died by drowning, which they regard as a clean death—even, in that community, a natural and honourable death. The shirt offers no clue but the stocking is different: Nora recognizes her own stitching and can identify the actual stocking—the second one of the third pair knitted. The girls are weeping softly when Maurya returns, and they hastily hide the parcel. But Maurya takes no notice of them. Still clutching the bread she had taken to give Bartley, she goes to her stool by the fire. She seems dazed and does not reply to the girls' questioning. When Nora looks out of the door and says she can see Bartley riding towards the harbour, with the grey pony behind him. Maurya tells how she had seen Bartley, too; but riding the grey pony, was Michael dressed in fine new clothes. Cathleen tries to tell her mother that it couldn't have been Michael, but when the old woman repeats her story they are desolate. They are convinced it was an ill omen and that Bartley will be drowned too.

Maurya then on a long lamentation for her lost men—a husband, and a husband's father, and six sons—in the middle of which the sisters whisper together about sounds they can hear of crying from the sea-shore.

Through the door comes a small procession of old women who kneel at the front of the stage with their heads covered. Maurya asked whether it is Michael's body they have found, but Cathleen assures her that is impossible, since Michael's body has

been found in the far north, and hands her mother the parcel containing Michael's clothing. Nora looks out of the door and reports that the men are carrying a body up from the shore; When Cathleen asks if it is Bartley she is told by one of the women that it is and that he was knocked off his horse by the grey pony and washed into the surf around the rocks.

The body is laid on the table; Maurya kneels at the head and the two girls at the foot, while the men kneel by the door. Maurya makes her lament but ends on a note of resignation: now at last she can rest and sleep well at night, however poor she and her daughters may be. Nora notices how quiet their mother is now, and Cathleen observes that it is no wonder; Maurya is exhausted after grieving for new days. It is Maurya who brings the play to quite close with a final note of resignation which sums up the philosophy of her people; No man can be living for ever, and we must be satisfied.

REALISM IN RIDERS

Synge acknowledged his debt to Yeats and was loyal and grateful; but his approach to drama was different. He had no use for what he called Yeats' 'Cuchulainoid fantasies', referring to his friend's romantic plays of ancient Ireland in which the almost legendary Cuchulain played a prominent part. Synge believed that the drama should be concerned with real people and real life, not with misty or mysterious heroes and heroines living in a dim, almost mythical, past, or in some half-dreamed world of fairy and magic. This did not lessen his admiration for Yeats' work; it merely meant that he could not share in it. He was, in fact, a realist.

A realist, of course, does not believe that 'real people in real life' can talk and behave alike in all circumstances. He realizes that people belong to a certain background—social, national, geographical and so on. His concern is to see that his characters consistently talk and behave in accordance with the background and circumstances in which he has set them. So, in *Riders to the*

Sea, his characters speak and behave like the people, of a fishing community in the Western Islands, and like nobody else. Even if what they say and what they do may occasionally seem strange to audiences in less primitive communities.

But Synge's realism went further than that—something which can best be illustrated by a comparison with Yeats. For his plays about ancient Ireland Yeats hung around the stage curtains and tapestries with abstract designs; his characters were dressed in long plain 'dress' of different colours; there was little furniture, if any and few 'props'. The actors were trained to speak in a kind of intoned recitative, with a minimum of emotion; in fact, as far as possible, nothing was to come between the audience and the words of the play. Synge's method was exactly the opposite. His 'cottage kitchen' must look like a kitchen in a fisherman's cottage on the island, with the furniture and other odds and ends to be found in such a place. His characters were to be dressed in the manner of the district - he even sent to the west coast for clothes and shoes as supplied to the islanders as he had himself seen them wearing them. Even in the story of the play Synge observed the same disciplined realism. It would have been easy - and more popular to contrive a happy ending. Bartley could have survived and returned in triumph. A romantic play after all, with all those smiling faces greeting his return! But that kind of romance did not happen in these tragic islands; that sort of happening would have been inconsistent with the rest of the play; above all, it would not have been realistic.

BIBLICAL ALLUSIONS IN RIDERS

Several events in *Riders* suggests the crucifixion and its aftermath. Maurya's keen over Bartley implies the Pieta, the suffering Mary lamenting the loss of her son.

The procession of mourners toward the cottage might be an anti type of Easter mourning. Commenting on the final moments of the play, Mary C-king observes, "what we are presented within

the final moments of the play is an anti-type of Easter morning, when the woman came and found the tomb empty, though one at last of her son is missing and only pieces of his clothes remain. In place of the seamstress's shroud, neatly folded; she takes and unfolds the machine-made flannel and the home-spun stocking with its dropped stitches and spread them beside the body. When she has done so, she sprinkles the last of the Holy Water upon them. For these riders to the sea there is no second washing in the 'pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. They have sprung from the waters of Maurya's womb, their cup of life is now implied. They have returned to the sea and her personal maternal role is all but consummated as is indicated by her gestures of turning the empty cup mouth downward on the table, and laying her hand on Bartley's feet. "They're all together this time, and the end is come" (111, 25-7).

David R. Clark recognized in Michael the St. Michael who is the patron of mariners in Normandy in Mont Saint Michael, Alen Prince viewed Maurya as a chief priest conducting a requiem service.

The horse in Synge's play also has a biblical source. This imagery adds richness while avoiding an exact allegorical correspondence. Even the term in the title of the play, "suggests the four horsemen of the Book of Revelation." Point out entries. The horses in Revelation are white, red, black and pale. The crown that is given to the rider of the white horse and the white robes that are given to all the slain parallel the new clothes of Michael as he rides the grey pony. While the name Michael seen in connection with the other symbolism in *Riders*, implies the warrior who drove the dragons into Hell. One is also reminded of Exodus 15:1. "The horse and his rider hath been thrown into the sea."

THE FOLKLORE ELEMENTS IN RIDERS

The folklore ingredients in *Riders* can be examined under the following categories: First the nature and mission of dead spir-

its or fairies, who are not the amiable, although, slightly mischievous, creatures depicted by non-Irish commentators; second, Maurya's twice failing to complete the prayer that may have warded off the specter of Michael, which she beholds after her parting benison for Bartley, for the second time, chokes in her throat; and third the lapses in ritual of Maurya and the feast of St. Martin, November 11 is confined in the play with the pagan November festival of Samkain.

The Irish fairies sometimes seen as spirits of the dead, are scarcely benign and it could seem that Michael has joined their host...Danish Johnson argues that the ghostly Michael movements of *Riders* springs from the Irish peasants' deep-rooted fear that the dead at times through loneliness, will return to take one of the living. Similar to the grey pony, a type of paca that appears in the form of a horse to lure people to death. In the folklore context, the boat destined for Galway becomes a Death Ship. With the choice of Bartley as victim being an example of the Aran Islander's belief that the returning spirit will often single out a former partner as his companion in the world of the dead.

The other folklore elements in the play include the injunction never to mention a priest when discussing fishing; the rule that when once embarked on a journey one must not return for a forgotten article, as Bartley does for the rope; and the ironic symbolism surrounding the spring well, in *Riders* is a representation of false hope for rebirth and in Celtic lore often a symbol of Death.

LANGUAGE IN RIDERS

Language in *Riders* is one of an interacting type. It interacts with the dramatized ritual to create the counterfactual truth which is characteristic of Synge's drama. The first half of the oration is dominated by the negatives of the twice-repeated phrase "I'll have no call now" (iii; 23,25). This negative totality is sustained throughout the first movement of her speech. Semantically negation has peculiar appropriateness in the presence of death. But Maurya's

double negatives lend to the negation an ironic edge and at the same time makes of them, potentially the birth place of a new affirmation. She no longer feels the compelling need to walk abroad praying in the long nights after Samakain. The dark nights of wakefulness are transformed into the long nights for great sleeping.

2.7 RIDERS TO THE SEA—A TRAGEDY?

"Riders to the Sea" is not a tragedy in the Greek or Shakespearean sense of the word. In both Greek and Shakespearean tragedy the unhappy catastrophe is brought about by causality related events associated with the protagonists flaw or harmatia. But Riders to the Sea differ radically in that there is no causality which dictates a fitting punishment; Michael and Bartley are the victims of an arbitrary fate and it is because of this arbitrariness that the play is closer to irony than to tragedy" observes Benson.

Greek tragedy and Shakespearean too is based on a system of values. Shakespearean tragedy affords us a complex vision of good and evil; in some cases evil may appear to win out over good, but the action, nevertheless is always conducted within a value system or moral order. Riders to the Sea is not a tragedy because it lacks a significant equivalent of the valued, it fails to give a sense of heightened life. Maurya is an unconvincing protagonist because her sufferings are determined by forces which do not include her will or her character.

And yet it may be argued that there is a value, a good in the play which has been obscured. The good in Riders to the sea is death itself. The play expresses fear and apprehension about living and dying, but never about a death which is attended by proper observance.

WHAT MAKES THE PLAY A GREAT TRAGEDY?

As mentioned earlier, Riders to the Sea has something of the simplicity in depth of much Greek drama and of the Scottish Ballads where the conditions of the essential conflict are known

and accepted as an aspect of the human situation, so that we can dispense with detailed exposition of plot or character. The conflicts between sea and humanity singly and collectively. The human opponents are on three levels; Bartley who must sell his horses at the fair, his sisters who seem to have sacrificial prophetic function, like Antigone and Ismene; Maurya who speaks the two great elegies for the dead, who are the dead, not only for Aran, but of the world. The sea is the tyrant - god, full of mystery and power, the giver and the taker of life and living, the enemy of the challenges of the young.

It's the life of young men to be going on the sea and who would listen to an old woman with one thing and she saying it over?

To the old, it is that which takes, sooner or later, all that women gives:

I've had a husband and a husband's father and six sons in this house - six fine men, though it was a hard birth, I had with every one of them, and they coming into the world- and some of them were not found, but they're gone now the lot of them....

Riders to the Sea is a stark tragedy in the one act, the scene a cottage on an island in the west of the Ireland. Old Maurya has lost her husband and five of her six sons at sea. She and her daughters are still waiting for the body of Michael, the most recent victim, to be washed ashore. The remaining son Bartley can not be dissuaded from setting out in a storm of Connermara and he is drowned before ever he gets afloat. Maurya has epic grandeur as the symbol of suffering womanhood. "The cumulative encroachment of doom gives the work the oppressive fatalism of Greek tragedy".

In the play these are in miniature elements of the Greek tragic pattern; the foreboding of Maurya, the ritual elegies for the single and the many dead, the keening women as a chorus, the release of tension in the resigned acceptance of defeat. But tragedies lyrical in origin and at its great moments it reverts to type. It is through

the lyric language and through the complex and yet never wholly explicable significance of the symbols that the play is elevated to tragedy. Then symbols, set the mind wandering from idea to idea, from emotion' and extend the play from local to universal significance.

Northrop Fry notes that man's entry into nature is an entrance in to the existentially tragic merely to exist is to disturb the balance of nature. Every natural man is a Hegelian Thesis and implies a reaction, every new birth provokes the return of an avenging death. This fact, in itself ironic and now called Angst becomes tragic when a sense of a lost and originally higher destiny is added to it. It is a limitation of *Riders to the Sea* which makes the play a pathetic rather than a tragic experience that Synge's metaphysical nihilism deprives his protagonists of any sense of a lost or higher destiny. Synge did come to understand that the artist might give meaning and pattern to this pragmatical, preposterous pig of the world and with increasing insight he embodied this understanding within this tragicomic perspectives of the succeeding plays. *Riders to the Sea* because of its limited scope cannot be compared to the greater tragedies of the past, but it approaches them in spirit. Achieving this communion because of the setting of the human characters against nature's stern power and because the language based on a rich and still imaginatively vital peasant speech has the strength to soar, harmonizing with the emotions evoked and giving them their expressive form.

In *Riders to the Sea* we are in the presence of elemental things. The sea becomes a living force, a demon hungering after men, the figures in the cottage, weak as they may be in face of the physical power of the ocean, reach greatness in their courage and grandeur. The drama is strong in its primeval intensity, the weakening force of civilization far off distant and unheard. The universality, the strength the majesty of this little work cannot too highly be praised, but these would not have taken such a hold upon us had Synge not gained the medium in which to express his inner

most feelings

WHAT OTHERS SAY OF RIDERS AS A TRAGEDY

Clark believed that *Rider's* as a success as classic tragedy because it does provide a catharsis. Green thought that the play contains the illumination common to Greek tragedy, which in *Riders*, is one presented in a single moment of revelation.

"If Synge's play does not include Aristotle's perception of existence it was not intended to do so", observes Thornton. The world view in *Riders* is "pagan and archaic pre western and pre tragic.....Greek tragedy, Christian theology, scientific empiricism, how ever different in other respects, all present nature as ordered.....we do not find that in *Riders to the Sea*." The play if not Aristotelean, it is pagan, archaic"

CHARACTERIZATION IN RIDERS:

Maurya: How old is Maurya? In a land where, everybody lives hard, where merely to stay alive is a constant struggle against the elements and against poverty and hunger. Only the toughest and luckiest-survive to old age. Synge does not tell us Maurya's age-indeed, he gives us no word of description of her. (This may well have been because he anticipated the difficulty of casting any actress for the part and did not wish to tie down any future producer of the play insisting on specific details). Maurya may still have been in her fifties or even younger, her youngest son being presumably in his twenties, Nor a apparently in her late, teens, and her eldest child would perhaps have been no more than thirty had he survived. The point is that she has brought up eight children in almost impossible conditions and her life has been dogged by tragedy. She is old therefore in every sense but the purely statistical

HER IRRITABILITY

It is not surprising then, that she has grown irritable. Her daughters are to some extent in awe of her and seen to respect

her authority as head of the family. But she is not just an irritable old woman with a lingering sense of dignity. She is more subtle than this. For one thing, she seems to be proud of her tragic life almost to revel in it as some people may be said to 'enjoy' ill health. No woman who has lost a husband, a father-in-law and six sons - all by drowning - would twice in a few minutes recite the list of her bereavements to people who already know the facts; true grief is silent. Our sympathy for Maurya is lessened, not increased, by her repeated efforts to arouse it, and we should be more ready to weep for her if some other character had told us the unhappy details.

A kind of selfishness? At the end of the play we find another fact of Maurya's character which we had not expected. It seems almost as if she had regretted all her married life not so much the loss of her menfolk or the hard and dangerous life they had led, as her own personal loss of comfort and peace. Now at last, she says she will be able to relax, to sleep peacefully at night and not have to worry when she hears the wind and tide rising or get up in the middle of the night to fetch the holy water. Other women will be keening, but not she, it's a grant rest I'll have now' she says, so that we detect a touch of selfishness mixed with her grief. Not that we can blame her for this; after all, she had had a miserable life and well deserves a rest; but we should have been more sympathetic if she had tried a little harder to praise these men she had lost and thought less, or less publicly, of her bereavement. (We hear no word of appreciation, let alone description, of any of these eight men.)

HER RELIGION

Another face of Maurya's character is her superstition. This is neither unusual nor surprising in an old woman of the western islands of her time. Her Gaelic ancestry provided her with a rich folklore. Christianity came early to these parts, with visits from wandering priests, even occasionally a preaching bishop, but it

was never very secure. Even in more modern times the Roman Catholic hierarchy on the mainland could only spare a young priest for a short time on the larger islands, there was work to be done there, but none but the most vigorous young men could bear the primitive conditions for long. (Note that Nora refers to the 'young' priest - for whom Maurya had scant respect).

The religion of the islanders, in fact, especially of the older generation was a blend of the simplest elements of the Roman Catholic faith especially of its practices and the age-old superstitions of the pre-Christian era. Maurya prayed to god for Bartley's safety, but she still believed in her vision of Michael on the grey pony, believed so profoundly, in fact, that it shattered any hope she might have had that her prayers would be answered. Bartley will be lost now', she says, and has obviously given up. The Gaelic superstition has triumphed over the Christian faith.

Maurya as younger woman: We get glimpses from time to time of the woman Maurya must have been when younger. Her comment about the stick Michael brought from Connemara reveals a sort of native wit, even a hint of objective cynicism, which is surprising in the unhappy wretch she has become. There is also a hard contemptuous note in her swift dismissal of other people's abilities which suggests that as a younger woman she must have been difficult to live with and unwilling to suffer fools gladly. How would the like of her get a good price, for a pig? She says of Cathleen; and its little the like of him known of the sea', is the way she dismisses the priest, even when she is in the shadow of tragedy (Cathleen was apparently a good enough business woman to inspire Bartley's confidence, while any priest, however young, did not have to be long in the islands to learn a great deal about the sea).

HER PART IN THE PLAY

On her first appearance Maurya is described as speaking querulously and she rebukes Cathleen sharply for seeming to waste

turf. When Bartley comes in she speaks harshly to him for risking his life for the price of a horse. Bartley more or less ignores her grumbling: perhaps he has heard so much of it; perhaps he feels that Maurya is not so much troubled by what may happen to him as by what will happen to her (and her daughters) if the family is left without a man.

When it is discovered that Bartley has left without his 'cake' and her blessing, Maurya shows an apparently uncharacteristic energy; after all, either of the girls could have taken Bartley his food. Her courage in this emergency is surprising, she admits that she finds walking difficult and the girls are afraid they might slip on the stones, but she sets out bravely enough. When she returns it is obvious that what she has 'seen' has destroyed her spirit. She appears not to keen but her cries bring the play to an end and it is she who speaks the last words.

CATHLEEN

Maurya's part is, of course, the king-pin of this little play. She is the elder of the two girls, she is very much in charge of the household directing, deciding, arranging everything that goes on.

We do not know Cathleen's age, but it seems likely that she was a little younger, or possibly a little older, than Bartley. She must have suffered all her life for being a girl; in that island, daughters were not welcome in working families, and no doubt she was often reminded of her inferiority, obviously a certain tension has grown up between her and her mother. Her defence of Bartley, for example when Maurya complains that he will not need his mother's entreaties, is partly a rebuke for her mother. It is a young man's job, she says, to go to sea, and she adds, with some venom, who would listen to an old woman with only one idea in her head and she saying it over and over again? It is Cathleen, too, who accuses Maurya of headlessness in not giving Bartley a blessing when he leaves the house.

But she is not hard or unsympathetic. When we first meet

her she is anxious that her mother should not be further upset by seeing the clothing that might possibly be Michael's. She is clearly distressed by the whole proceeding (and the two of us crying'). Later, when the girls confirm that the stocking is one of Michael's, she cries out in grief, and we hear an echo of her pagan background in her reference to the black hags that do be flying on the sea'. Also she shows some solitude for Maurya when she tells Nora that they will not mention Michael while Bartley is still on the sea. When Maurya returns from the well, too distraught by her vision to talk intelligently, we see a brief return of Cathleen's impatience with the old lady, but she is shaken by her mother's account of her vision. At first she tries to soothe her (speaking softly), but the full story of Michael on the grey mare is too much for poor Cathleen. 'It's destroyed we are from this day,' she cries and once again she is seized by the primitive fear of the unknown. But almost her last words in the play are full of compassion. It's getting old she is, and broken', she says to the men who wondered why there were no nails for the coffin; and finally, in some of the saddest lines in the play, she explains how Maurya is at last exhausted after weeping and mourning for Michael for nine days.

But there is another side to Cathleen. She has accepted her position as the active mistress of the house, Nora being too young and Maurya old and 'broken'. She works at her spinning wheel, and it is she who makes the cake for Bartley and sees to its baking. It was Cathleen who had hung the rope beyond the reach of the pig when he began to gnaw it and it is Cathleen to whom Bartley turns for help when he has to go away for a day or two. Maurya may not have a very high opinion of Cathleen's efficiency but Bartley - a better judge, we may believe, has no hesitation in relying on her.

Altogether, then an attractive and fascinating portrait for her years and her background, Cathleen, if still unsophisticated, is no simple-minded child of nature. She may fear the black hags' and be destroyed by Maurya's vision; but she respects the Catholic

priests, she can manage the house, and she can bargain over the price of a pig. In many ways she seems a preliminary sketch for that other brilliant creation, Pegeen Mike in *The Playboy of the Western World*.

NORA

It is a tribute to Synge's skill and artistry that, with so little to go on, we so rapidly form a picture of Nora in our minds- and a very attractive picture at that. There is a charming innocence about her and nobody has a hard word to say to her or about her. Her attitude to Maurya lacks the touch of bitterness shown by Cathleen, and even by Bartley, while Maurya herself never seeks to snub Nora as she does the others. This may be easily explained: Nora although a girl and not another son, was Maurya's last born and in a large family a mother will usually show most tenderness towards her first-born, and towards her youngest, and in this family the first-born is dead. But however easily explained this warmth between Maurya and Nora, never stated but always implied, is a comfortable element in a play in which there is little other comfort.

Nora's actual part in the play is slight. She brings to the house the clothes that might have been Michael's and reports the opinion of the young priest. We learn that she had knitted Michael's stockings; and this is the only reference to any active part she plays in the running of the house. For the rest of the play she seems to serve a look-out for the others, running to the door to report on the weather, or as the affectionate companion of her sister. (These two are very close), But at the end we see something of her close sympathy for her mother. When Maurya has returned from seeing her vision and is telling of the death of one of her sons, Patch, she is obviously talking mainly to Nora; 'it was a dry day Nora', she says. And it was Nora who noticed that her mother had met Bartley's death almost calmly ('She's quiet now and easy') Although she had wept bitterly over Michael's. There is something touching about her childish surprise that Maurya seems

to have fonder of Michael than of Bartley.

In a play of such intense tragedy, the simple, almost childish, innocence of Nora, obvious even through her tears offers a slight, but dramatically important, relief.

BARTLEY

He is the only other significant character and we see all too little of him. He combines the vigour and energy of the sea-going islander with a cool head for the management of the house; not a usual role but one that has been forced upon him by the death of all the other men in the family. It is probably this sense of his responsibility for the running of the house, combined with the habitual disregard of his like for the dangers of sea, which drives him to undertake what was a foolhardy errand (surely only an over-confident young man would ride in a high wind with nothing but an odd piece of rope to control his horse, and expect another horse to trot tamely behind him!)

Again, as with Nora, the author has managed to 'create' a character almost out of nothing, Bartley says little, does little, but from this little we can build a character, a human being.

A CRITICAL NOTE ON RIDERS TO THE SEA

Riders to the Sea, Synge's first play, is astonishingly a mature work of art. Like all great works of art it defies definition, seemingly inexhaustible in meaning and complexity. The plot is simplicity in itself. It seeks to reveal the future by naming or predicting the form it must take. *Riders to the Sea* could be interpreted as a drama of revelation. The play explores the tensions which exist between determinism and freedom, between the dark worlds and the worlds of blessing. These tensions are concentrated most powerfully upon and within the person of Maurya, at once their victim and in part their source. The title of the play '*Riders to the Sea*' brings together the connotations of men who ride to the sea by choice and men who are by necessity consigned to the sea because they are riders or journeymen throughout life (riders to the sea;

grass to the oven; dust to dust).

Riders to the sea has been regarded as an archetypal tragedy of a community in perpetual confrontation with nature and untouched by historical change. It could be seen as a drama of a house divided against itself by the pressures of history and time. It explores the conflict between the old gods and the new, old way of life and the new way of life. In the old way of life the pressures or surviving and of maintaining; in terms of family rights and bonds, duties and relationships. On the other hand the new life which is the result of the irresistible encroachment of a commodity based society, the tasks of the island people remain superficially similar, but relationships are changed utterly; they are calculated in terms of prices.

Maurya stands at cross roads between the new ways and the old. She is the mother who gave birth to the young man who must go now quickly, when the fair will be a good faith for horses' (111,9). It is she who knows the human prices that can be exacted by the need to make a living, or the urge to face the new life. Maurya presides over her mens' funeral rites and it is she who takes a special pride in providing for them, on the trailers island, a coffin made from brought-in-wood, and I after giving a big price for the finest white boards you'd find in Connemara' (111.9)

In Riders to the Sea, Maurya's passion leads to a perception of the relative nature of all that exists, making if possible for her to enter imaginatively into a new order of things. It is an order in which she is no longer driven by a desperate compulsion to appeal with words to the word to stand against the voice of change. "Synge has taken the apocalyptic Christian myth of collective death and resurrection as it is presented in Revelation and brought it into engagement with the changing way of life and the dynamic religious vision and folk imagination of the island people. The result is a dramatic reworking of both traditions, in which each is dissolved and new vision is bodied forth. This movement beyond the literal is journey closer to the enigma of the contradictory na-

ture of reality", observes Mary C King.

Whatever may be the differing critical opinions about the central character Maurya and the tragic nature of Riders, it could be said in the words of Kopper that Riders is a hymn of praise to the Aran Islanders who welcomed Synge

Prepared By

Dr. S. VENKATESWARAN
Regional Institute of English
South India, Bangalore

2. JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK

SEAN O'CASEY

SEAN O' CASEY (1880-1964) - LIFE AND WORKS

O'Casey an Irish playwright was born in Dublin of protestant parents, was educated, according to his autobiographies, in the sheets of Dublin. He worked from the age of 14 at a variety of jobs, spending nine years from 1903 as a labourer on the Great Northern Railway of Ireland, meanwhile learning Irish, joining the Gaelic League and the Irish Republican League, and developing an enthusiasm for the theatre through amateur dramatics and the plays of Boucicault. He began to publish articles, songs and broadsheets under the name of Sean O'Cathasaiah; his first plays were rejected by the Abbey Theatre, but he received encouragement from Lady Gregory and Lennox Robinson. *The Shadow of Gunman* was performed in 1923 followed by *Juno and the Paycock* in 1924. They were published together as two plays in 1925. *The Plough and the Stars* provoked nationalists at the Abbey in 1926. All three plays deal realistically with the rhetoric and dangers of Irish patriotism, with tenement life, self deception and survival. They are tragic-comedies in which, violent death throws into relief the blustering masculine bravado of Jack Boyle and Joxer in *Juno and the Paycock*, of Bessie Burgers in *The Plough*, or of the heroic resilience of Juno herself in *Juno and the Paycock*.

O'Casey moved to England in 1926 and settled in there permanently.

The Silver Tassie, an experimental anti-war play about an injured footballer was published in 1924. In this play he introduced the symbolic Expressionist techniques which he employed in his later works. These works *Within the Gates* (1933), *Rosies for Me* (1942), *Cock-a-Doodle Dandy* (1949) and *The Bishop's Bonfire* (1955), although none achieved the popularity of his Abbey plays. O'Casey continued to arouse both controversy and

admiration, on stage and off. He also published a much-praised series of autobiographies, in six volumes, beginning with *I Knock At The Door* (1939) and ending with *Sunset and Evening Star* (1939).

On 18 September 1964 he breathed his last between the sun and the evening star.

Although in his old age he suffered from pain, blindness and the loss of those dear to him, he never gave way to despair, nor lost faith in the future of mankind.

"The world has many sour voices, the body is an open target for many invisible enemies, all hurtful some venomous..... It is full; of disappointments..... Yet, even so, each of us one time or another can ride a white horse, can have rings on..... our fingers and bells on our toes, and, if we keep our senses open to the scents, sights and sounds all around us, we shall have music wherever we go", observed O'Casey.

Admiring the early works of O'Casey, Eric Bentley observes, "It may be said of all O'Casey's later plays that they indicate no clear line of development, only the occasional introduction of a new technique, new poets, a regrouping of elements, a more emphatic doctrine..... In English he had found Communism but not a art. One can not welcome his turning to autobiography.... The sentimentalist, always latent in him, comes to the fore, in *Rosies for Me*, his prose poetry becomes verbiage.

Comparing O'Casey to the American dramatist Eugene O'Neill as a potent user of colloquial speech, Eric feels that both of them lose their touch when they aspire to poetry. Another critic of O'Casey, Tomas Mac Anna invokes the Mystery Play to suggest the positive qualities of O'Casey, that crude sense of color, life, spirit and ebullience that is the medieval stage.

John Arden, another man of the theatre, claims that O'Casey's influences, education and background estrange him from conventional critics. He explains that the apparent confusion of the religious and political has its roots in English socialism in gen-

eral and The Pilgrims' Progress in particular. For him, O'Casey's changing style show a mature development towards a native 'fluent technique' in which the trees and flowers are described as though they were the background of a mediaeval manuscript illumination, with their colours given full chromatic value and perspective *chiaro scuro* deliberately avoided.'

PLAYS O'CASEY CLASSIFIED

J.M. Synge and Sean O'Casey rejected joyless and pallid words of the naturalist drama, but that is as far as the parallel goes. Whereas Synge was bred a country gentleman of small means and educated at Trinity College, Dublin, O'Casey was an autodidact from the Dublin slums. Moreover, a radical change had come in the Irish scene in consequence of the World War I. The Irish fight for independence and the civil war which ensued between those who wished for a compromise within the British empire, and those who like de Valera, strove for an autonomous republic. Each of O'Casey's three great Irish plays. *The Shadow of a Gunman*, *Juno and the Paycock* and *The Plough and the Stars* is set in the poorer parts of the city in which O'Casey was born and in each there is a background of armed fighting and revolutionary catch cries. His theme is the impact of war and of national idea embodying courage and self sacrifice on the lives that words otherwise be merely sordid and without dramatic interest. All these plays verge on melodrama, but the intensity of a real experience which was shared by the author and his early audiences saves them from being quite that. The dominant motif is pity, for suffering humanity. The heroes of these plays are not its soldiers, but their woman folk who show courage of a different sort, who fight without sentiment and without conscious idealism toward the suffering and affected and to protect their own. These plays were followed by the most powerful antiwar play *The Silver Tassie*. The other later plays belong to the central tradition of English pastoral comedy.

The late eight major plays of O'Casey fall into two groups four prophetic, propagandist plays and four satirical fantasies.

The prophetic plays include *Within the Gages* has stylized characters representing contemporary types. The hero in *The Stay Tums Red* represents the virtues of Communism in a symbolic war between fascists and Communists. *Red Roses for Me* has in it nationalism, religious conflict, police charges and other real Irish issues, but its climatic scene is all transformation of the

Dublin quays into a place of job, colour and light in a symbolic dance of life.

Oak leaves and Lavender has semi-realistic scenes with fantastic mosques and stylized episodes and ghosts as well as real characters.

The four satirical fantasies are, *Purple Dust* (1945), *Cock - a Doodle Dandy*. *The Bishop Bonfree* (1955). *The Drums of Father Ned* (1958), and a short collection of *One - Act Satiric Comedies* in 1961. This contained *Figuro in the Night*, *Behind the Green Curtains* and *the Moon Shines on Kyleneamoe*.

These satirical fantasies have elements of force, music-hall, comedy circus and concert. They all take place in rural Ireland. *The Purple Dust* deals with two pompous Englishmen who try to restore an Elizabethan mansion in an Irish Village but are thwarted by comic Irish peasants and a great flood. In *Cock a Doodle - Dandy* the cock is a man-sized fantasy figure, a magician fighting for the forces of life and joy against Irish pretty bureaucracy, Catholicism and Capitalism. *The Bishop's Bonfire* deals with the preparation for the Bishop's visit and is a melodramatic farce. It created a storm of opposition in Ireland for its anti-clericalism. *The Drums of Father Ned* was burlesque about an Irish festival. The drums signify life, love and joy.

O'Casey's comedy and the metaphor nature of its plots follow Bernard Shaw in challenging audience attitudes, rather than attaching a particular target. *The Plough and the Star*, *Juno and the Paycock* and *the Shadow of a Gunman* deal with events that

were still uses of contention when the plays were produced at the Abbey Theatre. The Civil war, the quasic military Black and Tans against the IRA, fighting that followed the establishment of free state in 1922, with opposing factors within the Republican movement struggling for control of the new nation.

JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK - THE PLOT

The original centre of the play was the tragedy of a crippled IRA man, one Johny Boyle.

This tragedy in three acts was first produced at the Abbey theatre, Dublin on 3rd March 1924. The action of the play covers two months of 1922 and takes place in Dublin tenement occupied by Jack Boyle and his wife Juno, their daughter Mary aged 22 and the Son Johny, 20. The civil war in Ireland followed the treaty which gave independence to Ireland - with the exception of the six Ulster countries which had succeeded in adhering to the U.K. the Die-hard republicans repudiated the treaty, maintaining that united, independent, Ireland had been the point of the rebellion. They were at war with the government of the Irish free state which had accepted the 'treaty.'

Mary Boyle who reads Ibsen and belongs to a trade union is reading a paper which reports the killing in an ambush of a neighbours son the Republican Robbie Tancred. Juno comes home and Mary reads some of the report aloud. Johny jumpy and neurotic objects to the grim details and leaves the room. He is lame from a hip wound sustained during the Easter Rising when he was only 14; he has also lost an arm from a bomb explosion in the civil war. Jerry Dvine, a labour leader who has persuaded Mary to go on strike enters with news of a job for Jack Boyle, Juno's useless husband who is nicknamed "the Captain" because he once went to sea briefly. Jack Boyle spends all the time he can in pubs with his crony Joxer Daly, 'strutting' about like a pay-cock.' He is a man beyond redemption - Work-shy, mendacious, cowardly, and vain. Juno is at her wit's end to know how to keep the house

going but struggling is a part of her existence. Jack Boyle will dodge this offer of a job, that's for sure. Jerry, meanwhile, makes it plain that he wants Mary; it is also plain that Mary does not want him, she is more interested in Charles Bentham, a good-looking teacher, who brings the great news that Jack Boyle has inherited a large sum of money from a relative. The will has been filed for probate, buton the strength of it jack borrows from everyone, including their neighbour, Mrs. Madigan.

At an evening during Boyle's new prosperity is vulgarly evident Charles Bentham, Joxer, and Mrs. Madigan are guests. Mary echoes Charles's disapproval of the new gramophone, and it is plain that they have grown very close. Their conversation about ghosts relates to murder and Johny reacts to it in nervous agitation and retires to his room where he screams in terror at a vision of Robbie Tancred's on his knees, bleeding from his wounds. He is consoled by his mother but the party is interrupted once more when Robbie Tancred's mother, who lives in the same tenement, passes on the stairs to go to receive her son's body. Juno, Mary and Mrs. Madigan offer what consolation they can; Mrs. Tancred reflects sorrowfully on the like tragedy of her neighbour, Mrs. Manrin - her son was a Free State soldier, killed in an ambush led by Robbie Tancred; An' now here's the two of us owl women, standing' one on each side of the scales O'Corra, balanced by the bodies of our tow dead sons.' And as the Boyles and a group of neighbours accompany Mrs. Tancred to meet the cortege Johny is left alone. A caller from the Republican Army startles him: he is to report to the Battalion Staff on the next evening, to answer questions about the ambush of Robbie Tabcred.

Two months later Carles Bentham has left Mary, without word, and gone to England. A tailor owed money by Jack Boyle has discovered that the will is wrongly drawn and Boyle has no expectations; the tailor comes to take away the clothes he made Mrs. Madigan seizes the gramophone, since Boyle cannot pay her what he owes. Mary is discovered to be pregnant; it is plain that

Bentham knew about the will and deserted her. Johnny attacks his contemptible father, who hurries off to Joxer and the pub to escape him; then he attacks his mother for allowing Boyle to have his way since the day she married him. Jerry Devine, knowing that Bentham has gone, is hopeful that Mary will turn to him but turn away when he learns that she is pregnant. Johnny reproaches her; she could have deceived him and been safely married. Johnny is alone in the flat when two Republican Army men come for him: it was he who betrayed Robbie Tancred, and he is taken away, babbling his prayers.

Mrs. Madigna brings the news to Juno, who turns her back on Boyle at last; she sends Mary to wait for her at her sister's then they will look after each other and prepare for Mary's baby. She recalls Mrs. Tancred, what does it matter whether Robbie and Johnny were diehard or Free Staters? In the end they are their mothers poor sons, and gone for ever.

When Juno and the Paycock first appeared it was not without critics. There were those who considered its mixture of tragedy and comedy unacceptable; even declaring that the superbly ironic last scene between the drunken Boyle and the equally inebriated Joxer should be cut. Some condemned the play on moral grounds, claiming that the pregnancy of an unmarried girl was a most improper subject for dramatic presentation.

In Juno, the plot concerns the false expectations and pretensions of the Boyle family arising from the misinterpretation of a relatives' will, the motivation is social and domestic the political background is the civil war. Mrs. Tancred's cry as she goes to attend her son's funeral a cry reiterated by Juno when she too loses her son:

'Sacred Heart of the crucified Jesus, take away
Our hearts O'stone... ah' give us hearts of
flush..... Take away this murdering' hate..... an' give us thine
own eternal love!'

Is a message with which, after the senseless fratricide of

the civil war, the great majority of the Irish people would agree.

The background of Juno and the Paycock is the civil war of 1922. It appeared on the Abbey stage in March 1924 and was published with the Shadow of a Gunman in 1925.

The two main characters in Juno and the Paycock are Captain Jack and Mrs. Juno Boyle whose family dissensions, struggles and eventful disintegration parallel the national situation. The play shows clearly the hardships suffered by Dublin's tenement dwellers; though the civil war, seriously exacerbated the situation, it is apparent that the city's slums had long been the setting for a horrifying dehumanizing process in which poverty, malnutrition and disease ravage the slum dwellers.

Also, the action of the play occurs at the height of the civil war between the newly independent Irish free state and the Republican Irregulars, (the Diehards who refused to accept the 1921 treaty between the British and the Free State government). (In classical mythology Juno was the only married wife of Jupiter, the philandering King of the gods. The peacock was her bird; the eyes on its tail represent the hundred eyes of her messenger, Argus, who spied on her husband's infidelities)

CRITICAL EVALUATION OF JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK

Juno and the Paycock juxtaposed the farcical with the tragic while remaining within the convention of nationalist drama. Ordinary Irish speech is given eloquence and dignity in the play, as in,

'Where were ye, Mother of God, when one darling son was riddled with bullets? Sacred Heart of Jesus! Take away our hearts of stone and give us hearts of flesh.'

O'Casey was able to turn nationalism into poetry. Juno is as much comedy as tragedy and scathing about certain features often thought typical of one sort of Irishman. In his work, however, sombre and sordid realism is transfigured by a pathos which thanks to the racy local idioms it manages to skirt without sinking melodrama

O'Casey rejected that kind of realism of which W.B. Yeats had said that 'it cannot become impassioned, that is to say vital, without making somebody gushing and sentimental. He chose highly melodramatic plots, but these were no more obtrusive than Shakespeare's. His vision is pessimistic, but tempered by comic irony; in *Juno and the Paycock* the violence and the horror are continuously redeemed by ebullience and vitality. His indignation and hatred of priestly bigotry later got the better of him; where once his sense of the comic had operated lovingly and affirmatively, as an organising and controlling factor, his later work tends to be either frozen into too consciously expressionist modes or merely chartic. But in *The Plough and the Stars*, he was still at the height of his powers. No play even *Juno*, so successfully describes the peculiar tragedy of Ireland- a tragedy that continued for a long time. His expressionist experiments influenced by film techniques are valuable.

But it is a pity that O'Casey's hatred of the capitalist system led him to embrace the dogma of Communism. The language in his later plays is factitious; too many of the targets are objects set up by the author simply to indulge his rage. O'Casey began as an eloquent, compassionate and comic diagnostician of the Irish tragedy of both the beauty and the terror in the Irish soil. He ended as a victim of violence and hatred, sustained only by the lyricism of his sense of justice and love of humanity. He failed to see that individual members of an oppressive class may be, as, or even more 'human' than individual members of an oppressed class.

In the play, flamboyance and self deception, bitterness and waste, are comically and tragically registered, while *Juno's* charity and fortitude shine out in contrast. Human realities of Ireland are present in powerful archetypes.

Juno and the Paycock, much like his first play, *The Shadow of a Gunman* is a comedy. Everything in it is conventional. It is about man's slavery to his own ideas or false ideals, how the idea of responsibility is presented in a topsy-turvy way by Boyle and

Joxer of whose fertility brings about the terrible state of affairs and it is with a lighter irony.

"What we see in *Juno* is revolution anarchy, society at war and the individual adrift. The world is in a state of charsis. The terror, the horror the breeding madness, the devil self in arms against all the devils established - church, state, morals and traditions - start a phantasmagoric dance before our eyes; it is as if we saw roomful of machinery come to life and destroy itself after impossible miscegenations.

Juno and Paycock is as much a tragedy as *Macbeth*, but is a tragedy taking place in the porter's place. The tragedy that befalls the *Paycock's* son and daughter is felt in repercussion and not at all by the father. The daughter's affair is comparatively commonplace.

Juno and paycock is typically melodramatic in concept and treatment. The guilty traitor is wounded by the trite of self betrayal and his life is linked his life is lurked to a tracking. In crimson votive light which goes on his executiners approach. In *Juno and the Paycock* O'Casey gives casual welcome to the sentimentalities of the melodramatic stage; for it is the story of a family that falls apart because of a shiftless father and necessarily over-managing mother.

In O'Casey there is the continual mingling of the most absurd comedy with the bitterest tragedy. His comedy partakes of great comedy with the bitterest tragedy in this respect at least, that he forces himself to laugh lest he should weep, he is bitter about politics because he realises that man is better than politics. So in his plays we get a mixture of humour and bitterness where sometimes the tragedy overwhelms the comedy. In his plays bitterness is resolved into acceptance. Therefore we cannot term his plays either tragedies or comedies, except comedies in the very highest sense. His plays are perhaps, that very rare things profound. Comedy which goes further than showing how men behave, which is what the comedy of manners does, and goes far

to showing what man is."

SYMBOLISM IN JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK

The symbols in Juno work unobtrusively, from the heart of the action and in the closing scenes when the furniture men remove the unpaid for furniture. They leave behind them a dismantled stage which stands there as a physical symbol of disintegrating family and a disintegrating country. The Paycock himself makes the connection for us as he stumbles drunkenly about in search of the missing chairs. The country'll have to steady itself..... steady itself, Joxer....." It is literally *cahssis*! The symbolic implications give this scene its power, but they arise with nationless out of the plot. The arrival of the furniture men is simply the inevitable outcome of the action set in motion by the will. This is symbolism of which the characters themselves are unaware. The Boyle family fortunes clearly represent the vicissitudes of the Irish people in microcosm.

"Symbolism is in fact, an intrinsic part of the dramatic process in O'Casey's plays, whether it functions in a fantastic or realistic context. It springs from a dramatic imagination that will have nothing to do with this rage for real, real life the stage and demands instead less of what the critics call life," and more of symbolism: for even in the most commonplace of realistic plays the symbol can never be absent," observes Katharine Worth.

O'Casey's plots are difficult to summarise; in a sense it may be said that his plays are without plots and all who think that a play and a plot are synonymous will rule him out of the list of dramatists like O'Neil, Tchechov. His plays depend for their significance upon personalities rather than upon plots; upon Shields Powell in *The Shadow of a Gunman*, upon Joxer Dolly, Captain Boyle and Juno in *Juno and the Paycock*.

Sean O'Casey, in his plays, is dealing not so much with men and women as with his epoch. His characters are there only to illustrate the life he knows and the trees that environs that life. He

is propagandist in two senses; in that his characters are subordinated to his thesis and in that his thesis itself is a partisan one. His whole soul feels violently, a soul in eruption and so his characters are spiritually and of the physically violent and eruptive. He has been known for a great many years as a man in the Irish Movement, to use a vague but well understood term; but as a dramatist he came only after Ireland had known three terrible and changing things and upon the common people of the city of Dublin, the heart and centre of the whole business.

For instance, *Juno and the Paycock* is a document of his epoch. The main interest in *Juno* is in the characters; in *Juno*, her husband, and the wastrel Joxer. The atmosphere of the civil war is worked so cleverly with the character that fit in, and do not spoil each other, which is also perfectly true of the actual time. That the people in this play detested the civil war, unlike in O'Casey's earlier play and took not to the hard, riotous and political bombs is clear in the following lines:

"Mother O'God, O'God, have pit on us all !..... Sacred Heart of Jesus take away our hears; O'stone, and give us hearts O'I flesh take away this murdering hate and give us Thine own eternal love!" As mentioned earlier, the idle drunken father, the heroic mother and Joxer contribute to the success of the play. Juno is a real tragic figure. She is true mental, true mother, true woman, and true to actual life from the hanging till the end. The others are true also, the drunken, but not evil father, the drunken but not evil hanged on. They are recognizable and true types. You can not hate any of them. Even the wastrels - they are there because they can not help being wastrels, these wastrels have no special virtues but also no ugly vices, when they are drunk they are not brutal or vicious but idiotic in their behaviour. Juno is there to do her daily work and routine for her husband and children however unworthy they may be, and she does it fate gives her warm blows, but she meets everything with courageous and fortitude, and the end is nobly dismayed. There are also minor character, true and

illuminating in their way.

Raymond Williams recognised Sean O'Casey as the best Irish dramatist of the generation that followed Synge and his achievement working within the normal nationalist tradition. O'Casey has recorded both consciously and unconsciously the adequacies of nationalism, while retaining what is vigorous of its limited authenticity. He considered his language as the speech of townment that can rarely carry any literary weight."

Juno can be seen as countie-type of to the Yeatsian Cathleen Ni Houllilan: Irelands the archetypal mourning the loss of her sons, in place of the virginal siren welcoming the death of lovers. Even the naturalistic aspects of Juno's characterization have representative significance- O'Casey's description often twenty years ago she must have been pretty; but her face has now assumed.. mechanical resistance. This measures the deterioration of nationalist idealism in terms of its human cost and the lack of material or political benefits for the working classes.

THE SYMBOLS IN THE PLAY

The legacy provides a wind fall stand the newly born national sovereignty. The captain's characteristic confusion and ironic mis-interpretation of liberty as the evasion of social responsibility is a clear criticism of the false expectations engendered by nation hood. These are tangibly illustrated in the cheap and garishly vulgar furnishings the family buys on credit, the pretentious gramophone and the bourgeoisie suit that replaces Boyles' labouring trousers. The pompous school masters incompetence in drawing up, the will, which deprives them of the promised riches, can be scene as O'Casey's comment on the politicians drafting of the constitution, while the Boleys' resulting material destitution offers a graphic image of a moral bankruptcy in the state. The loss of Juno's son teaches Juno Compassion she had lacked. Her leaving her home to foster her daughter's unborn and illegitimate child signifies that the national soul has been abandoned by the

graphing school master who reduced Mary, and rejected by the other contended for the favour, the socialist friend of the family (the Laban Movement) whose narrow, morality makes him incapable of living up to his humanitarian ideals. The moral is incongruously painted by the pair of comic drunkards who proclaim that? ... The Country ... what anyone may..... free....

REALISM IN JUNO

O'Casey has been read in comparison to Synge by many critics. A few critics like A.E. Malone finds no basis for comparisons between O'Casey and Synge. A.E. Malone observes that O'Casey is a photographic artist who retouches his film with an acid pencil to produce an effect of grotesque satire. All his characters are taken directly from the Dublin slums placed in positions and surroundings which give the appearance of caricature. He was a realist of the most uncompromising kind, and a traditionalist who had accepted the realist tradition of the Abbey Theatre. 'He was a finely sensitive artist and responded to experience with what F.R. Leavis, in a different context calls the fullness of imaginative responsibility.

Juno and the Paycock has its superficial qualities but it is uplifted and ennobled by the character of Juno. Juno is the great, the universal mother, as great as the greatest mother in drama, even though her influence be limited to two rooms in Dublin slum. The tragic significance of Juno is worth mentioning here. Her son dead for his country, her daughter betrayed by a worthless liar and deserted by a braggart coward, her husband by a boarding, lying, drunken wastrel. She rises superior to her slum surroundings and prepares to begin her life-struggle anew. There are many other who play minor unimportant parts; but story there is none; they are "slices of life" in the strictest and most literal sense of the term. (The story demands them). In the story there are festivities that are interrupted by the funeral of the son of another resident in the tenement, whose body has been found in the roadside. The

entire party meant to celebrate the Boyles legacy, goes to view the procession. Only Johny, the crippled remains. He too gets a message to attend the battalion staff meeting. He nervously refuses to take note of the message... Later Johny is taken for execution as a spy, he being responsible, it is alleged, for the death of his neighbour's son.... The room is desolate. Towards the end we see Mrs. Boyle saying. "Blessed virgin... own eternal love! and Boyle: I'm telling you ... Joxer...chassis".

The play declares "patriotism is enough". Sacrifices are made for and in the name of the motherland, but the mother of flesh and blood is sacrificed or ignored! Ireland, the Motherland is loved as an abstraction; Juno Boyle is compelled to live in a slum, to see her children sacrificed but she is ignored because she is merely a reality. Even her own son will fight for the abstraction instead of working a reality. Even her own son will fight for the abstraction instead of working for his mother.

The crisis of O'Casey's drama is the working-out a complicated emotion. What is at issue, always is the relation between the language of men in intense experience and the inflated, engaging language of men avoiding experience. It is a very deep disturbance which comes out of the confused history of Ireland. But what seems to happen is the hardening of mannerism which distinction gets dramatized in Juno and the Paycock" observes a critic.

STRUCTURE OF JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK

Juno and the Paycock is Casey's most popular and respected play. In it everything works. It is clearly constructed in three acts round the subject of will. There are four plots and all these plots are held together by the dominating character Juno Boyle.

The first plot concerns Johny the son of Juno Boyle, who has been wounded in the two previous Republican conflicts of 1916 and 1920. This plot only gives the play's tension and suspense Johny betrays his republican comrade Robbie Tancred. Thus be-

trayal is unfolded by his allusion reaction and accusation through the three acts in the play. In the first act, we see the funeral of Robbie Tancred and Johny's hysterical vision of Tancred's dead body. We get an impression of Juno as a person who loots at the civil war as wasteful, destructive and irrelevant to the problem of Irish eye.

The second plot portrays Juno on many levels. It is of the will. The Boyles who were portrayed as poor living on credit in the first act are portrayed in a different way in Act II. Only Juno is earning; her daughter Mary is on strike, Johny has lost his arm so cannot work, her husband captain Boyle is an idler who cannot find a job. Juno can be seen despising over money and despising everyone, particularly her husband who idles away time in the company of his friend Joer Dolly.

But at the end of Act. I Bentham, a teacher turned lawyer tells Captain Boyle that he (Boyle) has been left, between 1500 and 2000 in his cousin's will. In Act II this makes the Boyles life change. They are on a buying cheap luxuries on credit expecting their wealth. But to their disappointment they come to know that the will was incompletely drawn up by Bentham, the Boyles don't get any money. Their creditor's take away all their possessions. The tolerant attitude of Juno to Captain Boyle becomes short lived. She begins to scorn Boyle. All of them again continue to live on credit.

The third plot concern Juno's daughter Mary - a self improver. Two forces work in her mind - one through the circumstances of her life, pulling her back, the other through the influence of books she has read, pushing her forward. She dresses well; she is on strike. Her boyfriend Jerry Devine is an active trade - unionist. Neither of her parents likes this sort of activity. She is seen first an independent girl of intellectual ideas and labour sympathies. Ibsen going on strike quoting trade Union principles. Also she is shown as not in love any more with Jerry Devine. In Act II she has thrown Jerry over for Charlie Bentham; by Act III

Bentham has gone away leaving her pregnant. Jerry comes back to reaffirm his love for her until she tells him that she is going to have a baby, when he rejects her cruelly saying. "Have you fallen as low as a that?" Captain Boyle turns against Mary. But Juno is the only one who has a positive approach to Mary. Juno decides to leave Captain Boyle for the sake of Mary and helps her to make a new home for Mary's baby.

Juno is the only one who makes sure that everyone is fed in the house. Everyone else in the play is either a dreamer or an idealist. This fourth plot, the back bone of the play links these stories of Johnny, the will, and Mary. Johnny as we know is crippled in mind and body by his experiences in the Easter Rising, the guerrilla war and the civil war. We gradually discover that he has betrayed a comrade and is ineffectively on the run Mrs. Boyle and her husband, or Juno and the Paycock. Their relationship moves from antagonism born of poverty to a temporary truce when they think they have money. By the end of the play, Juno renounces Boyle. Johnny has been executed; captain Boyle is out getting drunk with Joxer; Juno and Mary leave in the end, which is tragic and funny. Captain Boyle and Joxer stagger back to the tenement full of bombard and drink and without noticing that the flat is empty, decide that the world is in what to them is its usual terrible state of chaos.

The four parallel plots draw attention to four major issues, some of Irish, some of wider interest, and all matters of deep concern to O'Casey Johnny's republicanism relates to O'Casey's own early rationalist activities, to ingnostic nationalist principles and the true needs of the Irish poor

THE THEMES IN JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK

O'Casey was always interested in the welfare of Irish. He had compassion for the poor, and contempt for the pompous. He had a lack of reverence for shibboleths, a belief the forces of life and joy and a rages against poverty and oppression The two

strands of revolution that drew him were nationalism and socialism. The influences of these can be seen in all his plays and it is true of Juno and the Paycock also. The major recurrent themes in Juno and the Paycock are (i) nationalism (ii) religion; (iii) poverty and (iv) the labour movement. Different in the play view these differently.

To Johnny nationalism means heroism; danger waste and loss of lives to Juno. It is an opportunity for profit, to captain Boyle.

Religion means an unavailing protection against his guilt Johnny. Mary looks at it as an empty promise. For Juno it means something great. It means something ritual and help to her. But in her also towards the end of the play, there is a change in the attitude, she asks, "what can God do again the stupidity O'men?" Religions is no spiritual comfort to anyone in the play and no prayers are granted. Poverty is presented as depriving not only of material things but also dignity, joy and integrity. It posters the characters worst faults - anger ignorance, idleness etc.

In the play Sean O'Casey sets for the highest labour ideals and makes his characters fail to live up to them. Jerry is earnest, dedicated and authoritative but lacks the one vital quality, humanity. Mary loses her emancipated principles in the female dilemma. There are the obstacles in the way of labour, the stubborn idleness of Boyle and Joxer. Juno's disbelief in labour solidarity and Johnny's inability to work.

In London the critics praised O'Casey's play as a master pieces and dismissed them as pretentious rubbish. It was in America that his plays and writings earned him the greater part of his income. In his own country his books were frequent victim of the rigid censorship laws and only nine of his plays were produced there during his life time.

CONCLUSION

As a writer and a lover of life and youth a champion of freedom and the cause of the working classes, he nevertheless find it

necessary to defend the ruthless suppression of the workers and students of Hungary in their fight against Soviet tyranny. Like Galsworthy he shows concern for innocent victims although the events that shape the lives of O'Casey's characters are more clearly political.

"Everything, I have written up to the present has been combative, and the sword I have swung so long is now stuck in my hand and I can't let go. When I take a pen into my hand something comes over me and I can't help being bitter, even when I write letters", he declares. It was this quality of getting into verbal combat without pausing to consider the consequence or weigh his words that alienated him from so many of his countrymen and denied him the rewards that were due to his genius.

His was essentially a dramatic genius. All that he wrote, not only his plays but even his articles and reviews bear witness to his theatrical approach. This compulsion to write theoretically was to lead him to break away from the so called nationalism of the conventional theatre of his time and to venture into new and unfamiliar forms. In doing so he suffers the fate of all who are ahead of their time and like all courageous adventures he was to fail as well as succeed.

In O'Casey the men are irredeemably fainted with futile vision, empty boasting and posturing while the women are the workers and realists. It is a somewhat exist posture, but dramatically effective. In the figure of Juno Boyle -loving nagging and fighting for her family - he created one of the few roles of tragic stature in 20th century literature.

To sum up, it can be said that O'Casey's plays are perhaps that very rare thing profound comedy which goes further than showing how men behave which is what the comedy of manner does and goes far to showing, what man is"

Questions:

1. "Even in the most place of realistic plays the symbol can never be absent", Discuss realism and symbolism in Juno

and Paycock.

2. Juno and the Paycock is a melodrama or tragedy or comedy?
3. There is only one complete character in Juno and the Paycock Juno herself Upon her hangs the weights of the play" comment.
4. "....Sean O'Casey is an exception, and he is in other respects a sufficient phenomenon in Irish drama to merit consideration. "Examine this observation in relation to Irish Drama and O'Casey's contribution to the field of Irish Theatre.

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DR. S. VENKATESWARAN

Regl. Institute of English South India
Bangalore

3. THE LADY'S NOT FOR BURNING

(CHRISTOPHER FRY)

CHRISTOPHER FRY: 1907) LIFE AND WORKS

Christopher Fry was born in Bristol of quaker Stock, worked as school master, actor and theatre doctor before making his name as a play wright with works that were hailed in the late 1940's as a sign of a new renaissance of poetic drama: his musical and religious plays - The Boy with a Cart (1939), The First Born (1946), Thor with Angels (1949), A Sleep of Prisoners (1951) were frequently compared to those of T.S. Eliot though the theatre going, public tended to prefer the ebullient optimism and exuberant word play of his comedies. Eg., A Phoenix Too Frequent (1946) based on Petronius. The Lady's Not For Burning (1946 set in the middle ages) and Venus Observed (1950, a romantic chateau comedy). The Dark is Light Enough was less successful. The vogue for poeti drama proved short lived giving way to the kitchen sink school, and curtmantle (1962) about Becket Struck critics as dated. Fry also wrote several screen plays and successful translations and adaptations of Anouilh (Ring Round the moon, 1950. The Lark 1935) and Giradouse (Tiger at the Gates, 1955; Duel of Angels, 1958). Of these, Thor with Angles, The Boys with a Cart, Sleep of Prisoners are Festival plays. Venus Observed. The Lady's not For Burning, A Phoenic too Frequent and the Dark is Light Enough are comedies Comeddy of Seasons. The First Born is a tragedy.

In the late nineteen forties and nineteen fifties verse drama was represented in the English theatre not so much by T.S. Eliot as by Christopher Fry. His comedies were an intense theatrical fashion, which in the way of fashion, were then suddenly dropped. An achievement which had been greatly exaggerated was then simply pushed aside. But it retains some relevance as an example in which the idea of poetic drama was understood. In his plays for

the West End theatre, Fry added a variation of style to a kind of drama which was popular. This was the comedy of manners in its weakened modern sense (based on the edges of contemporary value). Instead of critical comedy, the form was one of incidental wit, of fshional convention and typically of costume. Fry took this form and added the play of verse to it.

FRY AS A DRAMATIST

After the second world war there was a revival of Eliotian 'Christian Drama'. Some of this was moderately successful in the theatre, but none has survived. Christopher Fry began as a limitator of Eliot, but soon switched to comedy with a Phoenix too Frequent (1946) and the Lady's Not for Burning (1949). He also wrote scripts for Hollywood. Benhur is the most impressive. Fry's verse is perhaps most clearly defined by the adjective non-poetic, his language is in organic, over confident, sclick, pseudo-effervescent, grovelling for the superficial response of an inattentive audience.

His verse has no life in it, as exemplified in the following characteristic passage, presumably composed from suburban theatre goers in search of uplift.

'We reach an obstacle and learn to overcome it;
our thoughts or emotions become knotted, and we
increase ourselves in order to unknot them; a
state of bring becomes intolerable, and drawing
upon a hidden reserve of spirit, we transform it'

Among the obstacles Fry never reached one verse composition or a notion of what vulgarity is. Fry's sense of 'wonder' and 'delight' is an meretricious as his sense of character. One feels sorry for him as a victim of fashion the fecklessness of the middle brow audience is one of its chief characteristics, but on the other hand he has perpetrated an offensive pretentiousness; a smug prosiness snuggles costly at the heart cavity of the false civacity.....in the heart of all right cause is a cause that cannot lose. His skill works most effectively in translation. Where he

controlled by meanings outside the area of his own self indulgent fancy and only his ingenuity is engaged.

It was said of his language "Mr. Fry, can let down his bucket into a sea of dazzling verbal invention where he wishes, and bring it up brimming". But the colour and riches were fairly obviously external and the exuberance not so much intensification as a defect of precise imagination. The cloud of crimson Catherine wheels, the doves padding in the sunshine, the girlish giggles of the water, the caves... blowing bright clouds, the foment of wild flamboyant rose; these are a straining after effect which is seen as straining precisely because no real structure of imagination is achieved in the writing as a whole. They have the air of contrivance because they had so little but a vague diffusion of fancy. The caresses of gold and the shower of broken glass are commonplace romantic incidentals; the valley of the shadow of the moon is a reminiscence of profundity which the image as a whole not only does not sustain, but to which it has no reference. All unhallow Eve is a different kind of phrase, in a manner in which Fry was more often successful than the manner of romantic fancy.

The scatter of verbal jokes was responsible for much of the incidental success of the plays, but there was a persistence about it which became tedious.

Here is an example of extended speech.

There it is

The interminable tumbling of the great grey

Main of moonlight, washing over

'The little oyster-shell of this month of April

Among the raven-quills of the shadows

And on the white pillows of men asleep

The night's a pale pasture land of peace.

And something condones the world, incorrigibly.

But what in fact, is this vaporous charm?

The movement of this passage, if studied closely, is based on what we can call a refusal of the noun. At every point adjectives,

or adjectival phrases, are used to usher in the objects; and their cumulative effect is a relaxed, almost careless rhythm, moving always on the outside of statement. Whether the adjectives are "striking" or not, the effect of this dulling rhythm is an unmistakable vagueness. Its main variant is the persistent.

Anyone would think I had made some extraordinary suggestion or again,

Which were excellent and much to be remembered.

But the general is a loose sliding away speech: a monotone of seeming: with slow, wide meanders into adjective and adjectival phrase. There is hardly any variety in the movement of the plays, so that even the facilities come to be blurred. It has been said that *The Lady's not for Burning* is an April Mood, and *Venus Observed* the mood of November, but both moods sound very much the same.

I can see

The Sky's pale belly glowing and growing big,

Where it crawled with its golden shell into the hills

Branches and boughs

It is all a union of ageing

The landscape's all in tune, in a falling cadence,

All decaying

Fry's distinction is that he makes his dramas float on a constantly moving foam of words and the appeal his works made to audiences in the early fifties, most certainly was due to the fact that early long wearied by the metallic and reiterative prose utterance of the current realistic plays of the time were suddenly made aware of new music. There are some critics now who say that in his writing the words are something superfluous in their excess, as though the poet had become lost in his own melodies, and had almost forgotten the stage and its action - get more than in one more ways than one this excess is in fact a rich and indeed necessary contribution to the theatre. Thinking of audiences were once more taught that the poetic in drama need not mean the dull, the

dullness, resided rather in the relics of realism around them. More over as Fry had advanced in his dramatic career he has tended to make his words firmer, more intimately related to current speech patterns, while still leaving himself the opportunity of moving from this to richer forms.

The combination of two factors, Christian faith and the theatre, served by a sparkling gift of language has helped him produce a group of plays full of ardour, movement and humour. His constant theme is the exploration of the enigma of man's state which leads back its unique source God. His gaiety, the graceful lightness of his banter, his extravagant sallies and the pyrotechnics of his vivid and explosive style make his poetic drama completely autonomous, says Nicoll. Christopher Fry is certainly exuberant. His verse with its tumbling imagery, almost batters an audience into submission. His idiom though appears to have resemblances to those of poet-dramatists like Gordon Bottomley is more fashionable

VERSE DRAMA OF FRY

"Comedy is an escape not from truth but from despair, a narrow escape into faith", observed Fry. And by embodying naturalistic stories of human love he was able to present, a world, which we are all poised on the edge of eternity ... In which God is anything but a sleeping partner in everyday life.

Further, Fry's view of poetic drama got reflected in his plays. The Poetry and the construction are inseparable.....for the poetry is the action, and the action-even apart from the words....is the figure of the poetry". Fry relies on mood to achieve imaginative unity. So each comedy is keyed to a particular season: bitter-sweet April transition in *The Lady's not for Burning*; the sensuality of summer in *A Phoenix Too Frequent* and *A Yard of Sun*; autumnal ripeness and decay in *Venus Observed*; elegiac nostalgia in the winter comedy of *The Dark is Light, Enough*. The integration of po-

etic mood and action corresponds with Fry's thematic aim to infuse life with spirituality. Yet rather than embracing daily existence, Fry's extravagant imagery, and high flown language inherently devalue it. His premise that we call reality is a false god the dull eye of custom leads to an artificial lightening of the dramatic context and undermines individual characterization. Thus the exotic settings of Fry's plays, for instance, the Roman cemetery of *A Phoenix Too Frequent*, the dark between the dark ages and the renaissance in *The Lady's Not for Burning* or a Hungarian mansion during the revolution of 1818, *The Dark is Light Enough*, glamorize figures lacking personal identity. The characters are symbolic, like perpetual reflecting the desires herself as my girl: perpetual/perpetual making no gesture I can call/ My own. and this effect is under lined by the lyricism of Fry's Verse: which makes all his characters' speeches interchangeable.

As the language of spiritual perception, Fry's poetry becomes an end in itself. Verbal pyrotechnics are consciously designed to display the richness of a spiritualized world in contrast to the impoverished materialism of a prosaic urban society, to the point of self-consciousness, as in the misanthropic 'idealists' attack on scientific rationalism in *The Lady's Not for Burning*: "We have given you a world as contradictory. As a female ... How uneconomical the whole things been".

Stephen Spender, commenting on the poetic inflation in Fry observes: "The Fry method is to subdue the action of the characters to the charm and wit of the verse. The temperature of human behaviour is lowered to a point where things like robbery, fornication and murder are made to appear merely verbal, and one soon ceases to care about them."

Fry represents the high point of modern attempts to revive verse drama. His tone is lyrical in the extreme; and Fry flaunts poetry. This is in contrast to Eliot with whom he was closely associated.

It can be said of Fry, that in a Universe often viewed as a

mechanistic, he has posited the principles of mystery. In an age of necessitarian ethics, he has stood unequivocally for ideas of free will. In theatre technique, he has gaily ignored the sacrosanct conventions of naturalistic drama; and on term of speech he has brought back poetry on to the stage with undecorated abandon. The powerful vision of existence he possesses is broad and diffused and cannot be reduced to one imperative command or formula. This vision we find in his plays for instance, when Thomas Mendip, for all his... misanthropy, admits that something condones the world is incorrigibly' and counsels Jennet o reset in the riddle of existence and when he laughs at Jennet's scientific preconceptions.

We have given you a world as a contradictory
As a female How uneconomical

The whole things been. We see this vision in Thor with Angels and A Phoenix Too Frequent. Again in Mendip's remark that laughter is..... irrelevancy which almost accounts to revelation. In this vision of Fry, the metaphysical, the mystical and the comic are intimately related.

THE LADY'S NOT FOR BURNING: A CRITICAL NOTE

The Lady's Not for Burning is the best known and most characteristics of Fry's works. We are back in the early fifteenth century, and the theme is Thomas Mendip's conversion through live. Mendip is a sort of adventure inrospective and melancholy so haunted by longing for death in presence of absurdity that he accuses himself of a crime he has not committed, hoping thereby to get himself hanged. Jennet, a charming young person accused of witchcraft is in grave danger of being burned alive. Mendip begins by trying to persuade Jennet to resign herself to a doom which appeals to him enormously. But when Jennet is offered a chance of avoiding death by the sacrifice of her virtue, he was eventually to acknowledge his love for her and agree to live. In this work, the leit - motif of Fry is the revelation of our duty to think of and to live

life as an absolute good in spite of the elements of cruelty and horror it contains.

This play dazzled its audiences with an exuberance of language suggestive of the less restrained Elizabethans. This medieval comedy concerned the successive attempt of a professional soldier weary of life to save from burning a going woman argued with being a witch, but the skill shown in the creation of plot, character atmosphere was less impressive than the utterly uninhabited display fresh and starting metaphors. Fry regarded the play as his first comedy of the seasons and imbued it with the bouncing vitality of spring.

"The way a man writes for the thetre depends in the way he looks at life. If in his experience, direction and purpose seem to be all prevailing factors, patterns and shape are necessary to his writing the verse form is an effort to be true to what Eleanor, in Curtmantle calls, The silent Order' whose speech is all visible things. No event is understandable in a prose sense alone. Its ultimate meaning is a poetic meaning. The comedies try to explore a reality behind appearance. "Something condemns the world incorrigibly" says Thomas Mendip in the The Lasdy's Not for Burning in spite of the tragic nature of life". The problem a long way fromm being solved, is how to contain the complexities and paradoxes within two hours of entertainment how to define the creative pattern of life without the danger of dogmatic statment. Dogm is static:life is movement" comments Christopher Fry of the nature and function of comedies.

The 15th century characters are intoxicated with fantastic imaginary, which is offset by the irony in their predicament. The lovers stand for contrasting forms of rationalism: a cynical soldier of future who can find nothing beyond the tedium, of the humdrum and the sordid physical facts of eixtence; and the scientifically minded daughter of a mathematical alchemist; who sees reality as limited to 'what I touch; what I see, what I know; the essential fact'. They discover, the mangnetism of mystery through

explicitly contradictory and irresponsible events.

Being disillusioned by the apparent meaninglessness of the world the man confers to murder in order to get the witch hunting towns people to put him out of his misery. But the authorities refuse to hang him simply because he demands it where as the girl is condemned to be burnt because she denies being a witch and does not want to die. Mistaking the man's death-wish as a generous attempt to save her by sacrificing himself, the girl is unwillingly attracted to him, while he unexpectedly finds himself reciprocating her emotion. So when the murdered man whose body she is supposed to have spirited away, turns out to have been merely sleeping off a drunken stupor and the lovers are allowed to slip quietly out of their position their perception of life has completely changed. The sun rise which was to have signalled their execution, becomes the symbol of a new future.

Fry describes how he set out to write this play; envisaging it as the first cousin to an artificial comedy, could see no reason he goes on to say. Through writing such a comedy, why I should not treat the world as I see it, a world in which we are all poised on the edge of eternity, a world which has depths and shadows of mystery, in which God is any thing but a sleeping partner. An artificial comedy with a difference indeed.

It is very difficult for us to look for a common theme in the plays of Fry. However it is true that from such plays as 'The Lady's not for Burning' and 'Venus Observed' it is possible to construct a kind of theme:

Over all the world
Men move unhoming, and eternally
Concerned: a swarm of bees who have lost their queen
Where no one knows his origin and no one
Comes to claim him
Estranged in a world
Where everything else conforms
And of course you're right

I have to see you home, though neither of us
Know where on earth it is.

There are persistent moods, but the plays do not, in their substance, either concentrate on or embody them. The sense of loss is genuine but an element of the drama it is offered differently, almost casually. There is a certain concern with death but it is an essentially genteel eschatology. However, if ever one wished to find the theme of the Lady's not for Burning, one can still find one. The theme in the play is misanthropy converted to a acceptance by love, and rationalism converted to a sense of the mystery of existence by just the same factor. Thomas Mendip, unable to find a meaning in life, gives himself up as a murderer and insists on being hung not until the young rationalist minded, Jennet Jourden Mayne, daughter of an alchemist is convicted as a witch and sentenced to be burnt does he consent to life in the hope of contriving her escape.

Fry in his forward to the first edition of the play has suggested that we might think of this play, in terms of light, of inconstant April sunshine, of sunst, twilight and full moon, of human intelligence in a dance together, sometimes with nothing but buoyancy, sometimes with a seriousness which has been sufficiently mocked by the distress to be able to mock back. April in this play is a cruel and beautiful month. In Fry's plays love necessitates or is accompanied by some mode or other of death; but in the comedies there follows resurrection. That is, Fry's optimism, mocked by distress knows how to mock back. This is true of the Lady's Not for Burning.

Questions

1. Establish the place of Fry in Eliotian era
2. The Lady's Not for Burning as fantasy
3. Fry's use of verse exposes the same of wonder using metaphor

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Prepared by

Dr. S. VENKATESWARAN

Regl. Institute of English
South India
Bangalore

4. SAINT JOAN

(G.B. SHAW)

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHOR AND CRITICAL BACKGROUND

George Bernard Shaw, the great orator and playwright was born at Dublin in 1856. His father was a minor official in the Dublin law courts, but after a few years, he retired on a small pension and went into business unsuccessfully, as a corn merchant. He married the daughter of an Irish landowner. The father, though a drunkard was a jocular person and the mother was a refined lady and an accomplished musician. From his father he inherited the gift of fun, satire and comic indifference to the hardships of life and from his mother he derived love for music and an unshakable faith in his own rightness. When he was sixteen his mother and sisters left Dublin and went to live permanently in London where his mother supported the family by giving music lessons and singing at concerts.

Shaw's early education began under the care of Miss Caroline Hill. Later he was under the care of Rev. William George Carroll, the Rector of St. Bride's Dublin who taught him Latin. His school life ended in 1871 after two years at the Dublin scientific and commercial Day School. He then became a clerk and cashier in a land agent's office until April 1876 when he followed his mother to London. Realizing that his father was unqualified to be the controlling head of the family and that his mother was more devoted to music than to her children, he developed an extraordinary independence of mind and spirit. This enabled him to look upon mankind and its affairs without being swayed either by customs or the conventional opinions of others. As part of laying the foundations for his career, Shaw joined political societies and addressed public meetings. His first experience at public speaking was at a meeting of the zetetical society which made him extremely nervous at facing an audience for the first time. Instead of with-

drawing he was determined to speak at every possible opportunity and thus develop himself into a great orator. It was here that Shaw met Mrs. Annie Beasant, who greatly admired him. Shaw believed that if civilized societies were to be improved there should be equality. For this he felt that the first requirement was good men and women who are righteous in spirit.

Shaw's first attempts at creative literary work produced five unsuccessful novels between 1879 and 1883 and in 1885 he made his first attempt to write a play but left it unfinished. This play titled *Widower's Houses* was completed in 1892 and was performed in London. His first very successful play, *Arms and The Man*, was written in 1894. This is the play that really established Shaw as a dramatist. In the same year came: *Candida*. Thereafter he wrote one or more plays every year. Some of his well-known plays are - *The Devils Disciple* (1896) *Caesar and Cleopatra*, *Plays: Pleasant and Unpleasant* (1898), *Man and Superman* (1903), *Major Barbara* (1905), *The Doctors Dilemma* (1906) *Getting Married* (1908) *Androcles and the Lion* and *Pygmalion* (1912), *Back to Methuselah* (1922), *Saint Joan* (1923), *The Apple Cart* (1929). Some of these have been made into films. The prefaces which he added to most of the plays are among the best prose essays that can be found anywhere in English Literature. Shaw died in 1950 in his ninety fifth year.

Before we consider Shaw's contributions to drama, we should have a look at the concept of drama as it existed in the nineteenth century. English drama of the nineteenth century gave importance to realism. In place of the romantic plays of the earlier centuries, modern dramatists make the reader face rather than escape the hard realities and problems of life. It deals with domestic and socio-economic problems of life. With a frankness that may at first be harsh, but makes the viewer realize the truth gradually. The dramatic personae are common men and women/workers, farmhands, peasants office-clerks etc. Hence it can be rightly said that modern drama is democratic in spirit. Shaw made use of

this new trend in drama to the best advantage. He used his powerful dialogue and comic wit to lash out at the socio-economic problems of the day. He was an original thinker who had his own definite views on the various social and political problems of the day. In his first play *Widower's Houses* he deals with the evils of London slums in which at that time many filthy and decaying houses were owned by landlords, who lived at ease elsewhere on the rents squeezed from poor and wretched tenants. A play on such a subject, that is, a genuine social evil, was entirely something new to the English theatres. It had no success and when Shaw went on to other plays about real human problems such as prostitution (*Mrs. Warren's Profession*), war (*Arms and the Man*) religious intolerance (*The Devil's Disciple*), revenge (*Capt. i. Brassbound's Conversion*) and so on, he became extremely unpopular with many people. Until Bernard Shaw began to write for the theatre, there had been no modern British dramatist who took current social, political and religious problems as subjects for plays. He started out with the conviction that the emotional tangles of men and women had received far too much attention on the stage and he made up his mind to do in English what Henrik Ibsen had been doing in Norwegian, namely to write plays discussing public affairs which touched the lives of very large numbers of people. This he does powerfully and sarcastically through his comedies.

SHAW AS A DRAMATIST

Besides being a thinker and a social reformer, Shaw was essentially a man of the theatre and a skilful playwright. His dramatic technique stands out from the other playwrights in a variety of ways. Shaw's plays are preceded by long prefaces. These prefaces were written because Shaw felt the need to explain why he had published his plays. The elaborate stage directions is another feature of his plays. This is because, he had a wide knowledge of stage direction and technique. The stage directions given by the dramatist reduced the need for long drawn dialogue on the part of

the characters and also enable actors to act out the plays with the same specification even in the absence of the dramatist to supervise the production. This can be understood better if we take a look at the plays of Shakespeare which had absolutely no stage directions since they were all produced under the direct supervision of the dramatist himself. Conflict in Shawian drama is not one which involves physical action or intense emotional disturbances, but the conflict of thought and belief. He brings moral passions to the stage to break the long monopoly of physical and sexual passion.

Regarding his purpose as a dramatist, it was his socialistic views, his rationalism and his iconoclasm that convinced him of the drama which would deal dramatically with the vital urgent problems of life. His purpose was to awaken the conscience of the people by the dramatic presentation of these themes. For example in the play *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, Shaw draws the attention of the public to the facts relating to the use of brothels. Here he is pointing an accusing finger not at the woman but at the society. The principle that the play illustrates is that many fortunes spring from somebody else's degradation and vice. In *Major Barbara* there is a lot of preaching and moralizing. The play centres on the idea of salvation -salvation of the human soul and society. *The Apple Cart* and *On the Rocks* are two plays on the weakness of democracy. Shaw shows that democracy also falls a prey to error and corruption just as any other human institution. Shaw was also deeply interested in the sounds of words as well in their sense and meaning. As a young man he learned shorthand and always wrote his plays in it. This choice of shorthand as a working language was due both to its time saving advantages and to its being based on phonetics. He spent a good deal of time trying to persuade English people to adopt an enlarged alphabet. He also wrote one of his most popular plays, *Pygmalion*, on the subject of correct pronunciation. *John Bull's Other Island*, a comedy about Irish politics was the first play by Shaw that became popular. Man

and *Superman*, called by Shaw 'A Comedy and a Philosophy' is full of ideas which were then new and startling. The discussion between the Devil and Don Juan and the others is a serious philosophical argument such as no other dramatist would have dared to write for the stage. Here we have the best example of Shaw's dramatic genius. In *Saint Joan*, Shaw had no socialist axe to grind. Glimpses of the religious side of Shaw's nature is very clearly seen in *Saint Joan*, where he took Joan of Arc both as a heroine of history and as a heroine of faith. She helped to free the land of France from the English armies in the fifteenth century and she would obey only the voice of God which, she declared, spoke to her privately. She therefore refused to submit to the authority of priests and princes when they wanted her to behave contrary to what she believed God had told her, and she was burned as heretic, as Shaw himself probably would have been if he had lived in Joan of Arc's century, for he had the same stubborn belief in the right of individual judgement based on the voice of conscience. Shaw's *Back to Methuselah* fails as a play, but in the preface he states his gospel of Creative Evolution and his belief in the Life Force and his faith that woman being the incarnation of the Life Force pursues and finally gets man. Herein lies the importance of the play among Shaw's works.

Realism was the key note of Shaw's dramatic art. He presented the essential reality underlying all social institutions, conventions and beliefs. His aim was to expose the social follies and evils, outworn customs and manners, beliefs and behaviours so that they may be reformed or eliminated. He is not only a realist but also a caricaturist; he goes to the roots of conventional beliefs and ideas only to expose them not as reality, but as distortions of reality. Yet some of his plays are very unrealistic; the setting being historical or fantastic. "In the Devil's Disciple, *Arms and the Man*, *Caesar and Cleopatra*, *Saint Joan*, *Back to Methuselah*, and even in the plays with contemporary backgrounds, the characters and their surroundings are invested with an atmosphere of

the unreat or even of the symbolic. Heartbreak House by no means stands unique among his plays. And similarly it is in the sphere of the fantastic that Shaw finds his ideal world. Many of his works may apparently be set in a real environment, but even in these the author seeks every possibility of finding an escape. (Nicholl). Shaw dies in 1950 in his ninety fifth year having produced his last importnt play The Apple Cart some twenty years before in 1929.

Shaw's success as a dramatist largely depends on his power of characterization. His characters often turned out to be his mouthpiece because of his zeal for social reformation. His characters are representatives of his views and ideas on the various problems of life. Hence the characters who appear on stage expound some theory working in their creator's mind. Thus the principal characters are static to a certain extent. In fact "they are protagonists and they must be spectacular extend. In fact "they are protagonist and they must be spectacular and bestride the stage even when discomfort has made them ridiculous. But this is not always true. In the earlier and more important plays many characters have their own individual personalities. Some of Shaw's characters to name a few, Dick Dudgeon, Lady Cicely Wynflete, Louis Dubedat, Candida, St. Joan, Captain Shotover are doubtless authentic personalities on their own right. Hence it is not true to say that Shaw's characters are merely his mouthpieces. A.C. Ward says that "this complaint cannot be upheld if the sayings of Shaw's characters are tairly weighted and balanced. For example, who is Shaw's mouthpiece in Saint Joan? Joan herself? or Warwick? or Cauclion? or the Inquisitor? Each presents a valid case from opposing angles in the Apple Cart is it king Magnus or the Prime Minister that is Shaw's mouthpiece? Each presents his own case and the two are irreconcilable"

The minor characters of Shaw are largely comic characters and they have their own individual personalities. many of these minor characters have become memorable, such as William the Walter in You

Never Can Tell Entry Straker in Man and Superman, Alfred Doolittle in Pygmalion, Louka in Arms and the Man and Ftatateeta in Caesar and Cleopatra. They make a fitting background for the effective expression of their author's views, but they do not loose their personalities in the background. The women characters of Shaw have certain common characteristics worth mentioning. He has drawn his women in unsentimental and unromantic terms. Most of his women are different from the romantic novel reading females of the earlier times. At times Shaw appears as a caricaturist in portraying many of his characters. Like the dramatists of earlier times Shaw relieved that everybody's character is determined to a large extent by some dominant trait. As a social reformer, he has theorized upon and analyzed the effect of the social environment of life and character. At the same time as an artist he is always preoccupied with human nature. Hence he is able to understand the signs that particular social condition leaves on a personality. Therefore his cahracters have acquired an amazing variety and vitality.

Shaw was a great stylist. He had a great mastery over the language which was natural as well as correct without being casual or pedantic. His language and style beautifully express his thoughts and sentiments. This is what has helped his dramas achieve mass appeal. His wit, his resourcefulness,, his command of metaphor and smile are the attractions of his style. Shaw's prose is very powerful, achieving the effect of a direct man to man speech. Epithets are rarely found in his plays. Some of the typical Shavian utterances that come to mind are incorrigible, mendacious, dangeracy, pugnacity, apostasy, irremediable, mischievous, invertrate etc.. Abstract nouns like celibacy, degeracy, pugnacity are used precisely to convey his thoughts. His style is a verbal weapon used powerfully so that it hits the target and leaves the reader complacement.

As a dramatist, orator and social reformer, Shaw acquired immense popularity all over the world. The height of his fame was reached with Saint Joan in 1923 and it is most probable that this

and several of his other plays will always be more highly thought of than *Back to Methuselah* which he himself regarded as his masterpiece. His theory of Creative Evolution and his belief in the Life Force are opposed to Charles Darwin's theory of Evolution by Natural Selection. Shaw's idea of Creative Evolution is based on the principle that the fittest are those who survive by superior intelligence and by their will power. He believed that if we desire with passionate strength of will to be better and finer people, in fact to be changed into Supermen, and if that strength of will is passed on to our descendants, what we desire will be brought about. The nations would then be ruled in wisdom and virtue, and war and all other evils would vanish from the earth. So it is only proper that he came to be recognized and honoured as one of the great intellects of the modern age. In 1925 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. His ninetieth birthday was celebrated all over the world. A few weeks after his ninety-fifth birthday he had a fatal fall while working in his garden. Shaw passed away peacefully on November 2, 1950.

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE PLAY AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

Joan of Arc, Maid of Orleans, was canonized in 1920, almost five hundred years after she had been burned at the stake as a heretic and witch. The play was first performed at the Garlick Theatre in New York city on December 28, 1923. Shaw wanted to tell the truth about Joan. Though Joan had been completely rehabilitated by the Church and secular forces, Shaw felt that the significance of her martyrdom was not yet understood. It was with this desire in mind that Shaw wrote the play. This is one of the finest plays of the twentieth century.

The story of Joan of Arc, the French girl who won back her country from the English invaders, is one of the world's greatest stories. This is not just an old story that happened 500 years ago. In 1920 when she was canonized, she was held in special reverence by France, who was only recovering from the brunt of World

War I. It was during this war that they remembered this girl who had freed their country from the English and this thought gave them new courage and hope. Shaw has not been able to include all the facts of history, but he does keep in mind the real story. He emphasized certain ideas that may not have been so clear during the time of Joans. The fears and suspicions in the minds of those who opposed Joan are now either justified or falsified with the advancement of learning and the passage of time. The story of Joan of Arc is indeed romantic in the sense of being strange and exciting. To think that this peasant girl of seventeen could instil so much of courage and pride into her faltering countrymen, definitely stirs our emotions.

The story began while Jan of Arc was little more than a child still living on her father's farm. She began to see visions and hear voices of Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret and Saint Michael who visited her. She believed that they were sent to give her messages from God and that she must obey these messages. When she reported this, the army officers laughed at her, the priests were horrified and the weak and lazy young King thought her a nuisance. For the priests, the Christian Church is the only channel through which God's will could be revealed. Hence they declared that Joan's voice came from the devil and was therefore evil. If she was allowed to have her way, the Church's authority and orderly rule would be destroyed. The Church was, for the Christians, God's representative on earth and had been established almost 1400 years ago. If Joan of Arc was accepted, the Church would appear to be wrong. Therefore it was inevitable that they declare Joan to be dangerously and sinfully wrong. The conflict between Joan of Arc and Christian Church was a conflict between Private Judgement and Constituted Authority. This caused fear in political circles. These fears were not senseless as was proved by Martin Luther in Germany when he set up his private judgement against the constituted authority of the Church and thus started the Reformation movement. The establishment

of Protestant Churches in opposition to the Roman Catholic Church was the result of this. Such a happening was the greatest imaginable evil that could happen to the Church in Joan of Arc's time.

The Church wanted to preserve the religious unity of Christendom, just as other forces wanted to preserve the contemporary social structure. This is seen clearly in *Saint Joan* through the words of the Earl of Warwick who protests against the use of the word 'Frenchman' saying "A Frenchman! Where did you pick up that expression? Are these Burgundians and Bretons and Picards and Gascons beginning to call themselves Frenchmen, just as our fellows are beginning to call themselves Englishmen. They actually talk of France and England as their countries. Theirs, if you please! What is to become of me and you if that way of thinking comes into fashion?" Warwick being an English nobleman and military leader, opposed Joan's endeavours to make 'Frenchmen' fight 'Englishmen', from the desire that the French should not drive the English out. He was also determined to uphold the feudal system which would break down if the dependents of the feudal lords began to think of serving their country and their King, instead of being tied to the service of the particular lord to whom they were obliged. Later Warwick says, 'If the people's thoughts and hearts were turned to the King, and their lords became only the King's servants in their eyes, the King could break us across his knee one by one', and the Bishop of Beauvais (Cauchons) adds that, to Joan, "the French-speaking people are what the Holy Scriptures describe as a nation. Call this side of her heresy Nationalism...."

Joan had religious and secular enemies. Her religious enemies felt she would destroy the unity of the Church and then the Church would lose its spiritual power and also much of the political power that went with it. Her secular enemies feared that she would destroy their personal power by encouraging the people to unite into nations. It was her unquestioning devotion to God's will that made her a pioneer of Protestantism in religion and National-

ism in politics. She was burned to death in the market place of Rouen on 30 May 1431 when she was barely twenty years old. Yet her spirit lived on and Protestantism and Nationalism spread throughout the world. It is this aspect of her life that Shaw has made the central theme of *Saint Joan*. To him she was much more a channel of ideas than a romantic girl heroine. There are moments in the play which touch us deeply and the wide popularity of *Saint Joan* comes from the girl's wonderful combination of courage and defenselessness.

A playwright has to set aside his own personal convictions and present fair-mindedly the characters and problems he deals with. In *Saint Joan*, Shaw gives us her point of view and also her opponents' reasons for destroying her. By presenting the evidence on both sides, he proves himself to be an imaginative artist and not a mere historian dealing with facts alone. History tells us that the threat of torture and a dreadful death terrified her into confessing that she was guilty of heresy. She withdrew her confession at the unexpected sentence of perpetual imprisonment which she felt was more terrible. Her French religious enemy then gave her up to her English political enemy who sent her to the fire. The several stages of her trial dragged on for months. Shaw compresses these events for dramatic purposes.

The plot of the play was laid down by history. Shaw has only made a few changes as he could not put down the whole of history. The story as it actually happened, was on two levels. There was the visionary level on which she saw and heard the saints and the practical level on which she obeyed the voices and carried out their orders. Shaw joined these two levels cleverly through the 'miracle' of the eggs in Scene I and the 'miracle' of the changing wind in Scene III. These incidents helped to convince everyone that Joan is not an impostor. In scene II, her recognition of Charles as the real king, although they try to deceive her, impresses the other characters against their will. In Scene IV the long talk on religious and political matters is a classic instance of Shaw's abil-

ability to make discussion and argument mentally exciting. Though this is a scene in which there is nothing but talk, the audience sits spellbound in breathless silence throughout this long talk on religious and political matters. The most romantic and emotional part of the play is the trial scene and it had done the most to make Saint Joan popular. Here, a young girl, alone, is seen and heard fighting for her life against the mightiest powers of the world and this definitely appeals to the heart of every reader. The purpose of the final scene (Epilogue) is to show that though Joan was killed and apparently defeated she was in truth Victorious, not only because she helped in the liberation of France, but also because the ideas centred in her went marching on through the centuries. Here Shaw has used his powers as an artist to the best. This scene is in certain respects the best in the play. Shaw liberates himself from the confining framework of fact and becomes a genuine creator. The passage 'My sword shall conquer yet: the sword that never struck a blow. Though men destroyed my body, yet in my soul I have seen God' - is one of the most impressive passages in the play and the triumph of the young girl. Her faith and confidence in what she has done is what gives her the courage to say 'And now tell me: shall I rise from the dead, and come back to you a living woman'.

Shaw was not usually concerned with form. Many of his plays do not come to a neat and well planned end. But this defect is often outweighed by the importance and force of the ideas and the intellectual energy which makes them different. Saint Joan is an exception in this regard. It has form and shape and balance. The reader's attention is caught right from the beginning and the action mounts to a climax in Scene VI and the play is beautifully rounded off by the words of the ghost of Joan: "O God that madest this beautiful earth, when it be ready to receive Thy Saints? How long, O Lord, how long?" Shaw has been criticized as having no sense of style, no poetic feeling, no love of words. He believed that his countrymen, the Irish, were by nature dreamers with an

excess of poetic sentiment. He felt strongly that the world needed doers much more than dreamers and artists. A kind of strangled poetry breaks out from time to time in his plays and passages in Saint Joan have the feeling of true poetry eg., Joan's speech after she hears that she is to be kept in prison (Scene VI). The greatness of Shaw's prose style lies not in emotional power or conscious beauty but in lucidity and clarity. He wrote to open people's minds to new ideas, not to stir their feelings.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Scene - I

- a military squire : a soldier and landowner
- Mullioned : divided into sections by vertical stone bars
- a cowboy : American word for a man in charge of cattle on a ranch, used by Shaw as more familiar to us than cowherd
- lumps : as applied here to the servants the word means slow and clumsy or dull and lazy.
- slut : an untidy, dirty, lazy (or immoral) woman
- 'Be you captain' : Are you the captain. Shaw makes Joan use English country speech, to suggest her peasant origin
- blockhead : a stupid person
- dithering : nervous and confused
- lymphatic : colourless, slow in thought and action; weak in character.
- provost - marshal : head of an army department concerned with discipline, ceremony.
- humbugging : deceiving in a petty manner.
- chattily : talking in a trivial manner
- checkmate : the winning move in a game of chess; in common speech it is used as an admission that some other person's action or statement is decisive and unanswerable.
- feudal : owner of the land in the medieval system to whom the tenant rendered military and other services and was protected by him.

Black Prince	: (1330-1376) eldest son of the English King Edward III
Tcho	: exclamation of impatience or disgust
ransoms	: money paid to secure the release of prisoners of war
plumping down	: sitting down suddenly and heavily
to boot	: also, used when particular emphasis is desired

Scene II

a wineskin of a man	: large and flabby from too much drinking
cool	: used idiomatically in reference to a number or quantity which the speaker thinks remarkable
a war dog	: an experienced and hardened soldier
cheeky	: impudent in a light-hearted way
cracked	: crazy; of low mentality
spunk	: pluck; courage
sinful clay	: the physical body
Aristotle	: (383-22 B.C.) Greek Philosopher who had so strong hold on thought in the middle Ages
Pythagoras	: ancient Greek Philosopher and mathematician of the sixth century B.C. whose discoveries made him in some degree a fore runner of Newton.
halberd	: a weapon combining a spear and battle axe.
her hair bobbed	: cut short so that it hung loose slightly above collar - level
little	: silly giggle
broad grin	: a rude or lolly smile
as well as be hanged	
for a sheep as a lamb	: meaning that if one is to be punished one may as well as commit a big fault as a small one
Occ-oo-oo	: an expression of wonder-struck astonishment at the duchess's extravagant dress

Gruff-and Grun	: Surly and short tempered
her magnetic field	: Joan's personality strongly affected anyone near to her.
St. Louis	: (1215-70) Louis IX, King of France from 1226; went on religious Crusades and lived a holy life; was captured in Egypt (1249) and ransomed on payment of 1,00,000 marks.
Blathers	: dialect word meaning Nonsense!
pawnshop	: a shop where articles of some value may be lodged as security for a temporary loan.
Judas	: the disciple who betrayed Jesus; used as a descriptive word for any traitor.

Scene - III

strumpet	: an immoral woman
kingfisher	: a bird with lustrous bright blue and reddish brown plumage, dives for fish and flies with a swift darting motion.
You blew me up	: You rebuked me angrily
snood	: a hood or net covering a woman's hair
bend sinister	: a sign in heraldry indicating illegitimate descent.
mettle	: courage and brave spirit
breach of promise	: legal action against a person who is alleged to have made a promise
sally	: surprise attack
I have given two silver	
candlesticks	: a gift to the Church in support of prayer.
ripping	: mousing rapidly
Saint Denis	: the first Bishop of Paris was condemned to death by the Roman governor about the end of the third century A.D. patron saint of France
Capers	: Jumping dance movements

Scene IV

Illuminated Book of Hours : a book containing the prayers to be

	said at appointed hours during each day and decorated with small paintings.
bonny	pleasant in appearance
I was born in England :	Stogumbers's insistence upon his superiority is a device often used by Shaw in his plays to make fun of Englishmen.
Cassock	a long robe worn by priests, church officials, and monks.
Holy Land	Palestine.
the Conqueror	William, Duke of Normandy, who conquered the English at the Battle of Hastings in 1066, and became King William I of England.
drab	a depraved woman.
Beelzeub	in the New Testament (St. Matthew, Chap XII, verse 24) the prince of the devils; in Milton's <i>Paradise Lost</i> (Book I line 79) one of the fallen angels next in importance to Satan.
Prince of Darkness	Satan.
The Church cannot take life	when a heretic was condemned by the Church he (or she) was handed over to the secular authorities for execution.
beggar on horseback	pretentious person.
WcLeef	French pronunciation for Wycliffe
an Arab camel driver.	Mahomet
Pyrenees	mountain range between France and Spain.
Gabriel	one of the archangels.
Saint Catherine	Catherine of Alexandria, a Christian princess beheaded in A.D. 307 on account of her religious beliefs.
Saint Margaret	An English royal exile to Scotland, where she married King Malcolm III and devoted herself to good works.
Saint Michael	an archangel mentioned in the Bible.
Saracen	the saracens were a Moslem people

	against whom the Christians crusaded in the eleventh—thirteenth centuries in the attempt to secure control of the holy places in Palestine to which Christian people made pilgrimages.
St. Peter	one of the twelve Apostles who followed Jesus; he is regarded as the founder of the Church of Rome.
Keystone to the arch	architectural term for the wedge-shaped stone at the top which keeps other stones of the arch in position.
Will to Power	the German Philosopher Nietzsche used this term to express his belief that it was the duty of Man to rise to a higher state of being (Superman) by 'willing' to do so and by using his power over others.
Protestant	a follower, active or inactive, of one of the Christian Churches which came into being in protest against the Roman Catholic Church. In <i>Saint Joan</i> , Shaw uses the term Protestantism in a wider sense to embrace its secular form Nationalism which opposed the Church's claim to authority in political matters.
the pink of courtesy	extreme politeness
Nationalist	the claim of individual nations to govern themselves. In Shaw's play the term is used to indicate the growing desire in the fifteenth century to break away from the Holy Roman Empire which combined political imperialism and religious Catholicism.
Sancta simplicities	Holy simplicity
Scene V	
ambulatory	a space or passage in a church where people can walk.
Vestry	the room where church officials' vestments

	are kept and put on by their wearers before a service.
stations of the cross	symbolic representations of the several stages of Christ's walk to the hill of Calvary where he was crucified.
nave	the main part of a church; the central portion between the aisle.
dug-outs	contemptuous expression for elderly persons who return to work after long retirement, bringing back absolute ideas
The pick of the basket:	the best
rancid	rank, gone bad.
glib	smooth-speaking and insincere.
hubris	pride, which in Greek mythology was punished by the gods.
the angelus	the bell rung to call believers to prayer
billy goats	bearded male goats
Caesar	ruler of the Roman republic, a great military leader and historian.
Alexander	Greek warrior whose conquests carried him as far as India.
Agincourt, Poitiers, Crecy	battles in which the English defeated the French; fought in 1415, 1356 and 1346 respectively.
God is on the side of the big battalions	one of Voltaire's great sayings meaning that it is the powerful who win, not the just and righteous
Oareck	Darions' pronunciation of Warwick
Scene VI	
Inquisition	a Roman Catholic organization set up to seek out heretics and bring them to trial and judgement.
Pious Peterpickled pepper	tongue twister used by the page to indicate that Cauchon will have a hard task in dealing with Joan.
the Chapter	the group of Church officials who look after the affairs of the Cathedral

Vulpine	fox-like, crafty, cunning
forensic eloquence	the fluent and rhetorical speech used by lawyers.
Apostolic succession	The Christian dogma that certain powers have been handed down in an unbroken line from the Apostles through a continuous succession of consecrated priests.
counts	charges brought against an accused person.
Trumpery	flimsy and unimportant
blandness	mild and gentle manner
incest	sexual relations with a near relative with whom marriage is prohibited by the law or custom.
The Holy Office	The Inquisition was so called
brazen	bold and immodest.
black death	plague
Moab	a region east of the Dead Sea in Jordan
Ammon	a region east of the river Jordan and north of Moab.
to bleed me	the system of curing certain illness by draining blood from the patient's body.
a rare noodle	a silly person.
surcoat	a loose coat worn over armour.
excommunication	sentence pronounced by the Roman Catholic Church against heretics and other serious offenders forbidding them all contact with the church and its ceremonies.
St. Athanasius	bishop of Alexandria for forty-five years from A.D. 328.
The Shepherd rejoices	'the Shepherd' is a title applied to Jesus.
Epilogue	
lancel window	tall narrow window with a pointed top in Gothic buildings
Fouquet's Boccaccio	Jehan Fouquet, a French painter who made many miniature pictures to illustrate books.

a bee in your bonnet:	an obsession of fixed idea
Charlemagne	: Charles the Great, King of France and first emperor of the Holy Roman Empire
David	: King of Israel
Agnes Sorrel	: mistress of King Charles VII of France
Chaffering	: bargaining
young Judy	: slang for young woman or girl
frockcoat	: a man's long coat, usually in fine black cloth and reaching to the knees worn by the upper classes
canonized	: practice of the Roman Catholic Church to confer upon exceptional persons, after their death, titles indicating the Church's recognition of their spiritual merit while they lived and their faithfulness unto death if they were martyred.
The Mercy Seat	: the throne of God in heaven
Anglican heresy	: the church of England is so described by Roman Catholics.
the nature before	
Rheims Cathedral	: a well-known representation of Joan of Arc on horse back and in armour

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Essay Questions

Discuss the tragedy of St. Joan

Bernard Shaw describes Saint Joan as a tragedy. He distinguishes it from crude melodrama in that there is no villain or bloody deeds which reduced tragedy into a melodrama. The tragedy of St. Joan is that she is done to death not by professional people but as a result of what innocent people do. Thus the murder of Joan becomes a judicial murder and pious murder. She is burnt alive by innocent people in their sense of righteousness. According to Shaw the old melodramas reduce the entire story of Joan to a conflict of villain and hero or heroine. Shaw

wished to change this. He felt that Cauchons and Leviartre have to represent themselves as well as the Church and the Inquisition because they stand for two separate values that have struck roots in religious convention. Similarly Warwick has to represent faithfully the feudal system. These three symbolize three different categories of old values. They have to interpret these fundamental values by their action and character so that they can be interpreted in the light of reason. Cauchon, Leviartre and Warwick were part and parcel of the medieval values and traditions. Shaw makes these characters interpret the peculiar aspects of medievalism with some detachment and intelligence that transcends the limitations of their perspective.. He has made his characters more conscious of their actions. The conscious interpretation of history to the audience of the succeeding generations is what Shaw really means to do.

Joan's history as far as the world is concerned ended unhappy with her execution, but Shaw rekindles it with spiritual light. He gives a picture of the canonized Joan as well as the incinerated Joan. To him getting canonized was the most important thing and he laboured hard in the Epilogue to give his audience the completed and integrated vision of a true martyr in her mystical glory. The tragedy of Joan's burning has a dual significance. It is the tragedy of an individual asserting herself against a mighty Force which even she does not understand fully. She appears to worship this force while she defied it. But Joan represents a greater force, which is much vaster than her own self. She is literate. Yet as King Charles points out, whenever there is any discussion Joan is invariably right. This is because she possesses abundant common sense and illusion. There is an impalpable power which guides her judgement, illuminates her intelligence, fortifies her will and which ultimately triumphs even though its human representative is burnt at the stake. The spirit of Joan conquers although she is physically destroyed. Here the tragedy gives us a sense of fulfillment unlike classic or romantic tragedies because in this play

there is no tragic catastrophe or the sense of finality present in ordinary tragedies.

The tragic pattern reflects the process of continuous evolution of a superhuman heroine embodying far-reaching values and principles. As man progresses, his thinking develops gradually in various categories and he is able to interpret salient events in a better way as one generation succeeds another. This phenomenon is the internal justification of the Epilogue which shows how the world has progressed in this respect. Joan of Arc was burned for heresy, witchcraft and sorcery in 1431, rehabilitated in 1456, designated venerable in 1904, declared blessed in 1908 and finally canonized. These are the successive degrees of development of the history of St. Joan and the stages in the progress of humanity. Shaw was more apt to listen to the brain than to the heart. But this did not prevent him from allowing the heart to put its cause in *Saint Joan*. As A.C. Ward says "His Joan is still the virgin soldier -saint; still a romantically heroic figure; still the called-of-God; still the martyred-by-men."

The tragedy of Joan was that she represented something much grater than she herself knew. This was the Janus-like force with uncertain possibilities. To the individualist or nonconformist, institutional pretension of right and wrong are odd and intolerable in every respect. He believes in his own inner light and finds it difficult to believe in anything that does not come from his own will. He sets up faith in his own judgement which is conditioned by his love for independence. To quote Prof. Ward. "To Cauchon Joan represents a menace to the church, to Warwick a menace to the feudal system and both are determined that the menace shall be rooted out and individual taste will choose between the torturous legalism of the ecclesiastical body and the frank brutalism of the secular arm as the less abominable way with heretics." *Saint Joan* is not a tragedy of plot or character. It is the high tragedy born of Shavian philosophy, conceived on an intellectual plane. This philosophy is echoed in the Epilogue and is intrinsic and organic to

the plot as it determines the cohesive pattern of Shaw's tragic perspective. Shaw could have ended the play with the burning of the Maid. But the history of Joan opens itself to the world with this event. The Epilogue records her belated canonization and ultimate triumph of her spirit. It has been argued that the tragedy of Joan reaches its natural climax with the end of Scene VI, where the executioner comes back after the burning to tell Warwick that as the fire could not consume Joan's heart it had been thrown with the ashes into the river. He concludes: "You have heard the last of her." But Warwick answers: "The last of her. Hm! I wonder." And it is in the Epilogue through Dauphin's dream where Cauchon's ghost praises Joan with the words "The girls in the fields praise thee; for those just raised their eyes; and they see that there is nothing between, them and heaven"—that the real triumph of Joan begins. It ceases to be a tragedy any more as the words of the Dauphin says "The unpretending praise thee; because thou has taken upon thyself the heroic burdens that are too heavy for them"

Short Notes

1. Comment upon Shaw's treatment of history

To begin with, Shaw does not take any liberty with the principal events in Joan's life. Joan's interview with the squire of Baudricourt, the hostility of the noblemen at court, her momentary recantation, her withdrawal of the recantation, her bruning at the stake, her clinging to the cross supplied by English soldiers are events truthfully represented by the dramatist. The romantic character of the maid may have been reduced because Shaw has interpreted Joan's character in the light of her ardent nationalism and religiousness. Shaw's argumentative power is seen clearly in his dialogue. The picture of a maiden who trusted her own personal inspiration, being tortured and burnt by the age which could not tolerate any divine inspiration except the one that came through the Church has been drawn with consummate art. Shaw with acute

subtleness analyses the peculiar attitude of Joan's Protestantism. She was a girl with extraordinary gifts for military leadership, a hard-headed female who fought and conquered in the same way in which other competent generals have fought and conquered. Nor was her mysticism merely part of the enthusiasm of the middle ages. Shaw draws a line clearly between mystical inspiration and her rational calculations. Her successful plans were rational and wise, whereas her faith in her religion was mystical. Shaw has attempted to present the story of Joan in the great frame of conflicting forces. Any such approach to the events of history brings us face to face with some basic facets of human problem and thus gives a universality and timelessness. Shaw has had to readjust and modify history slightly. The picture of the young Maid struggling against the Roman Catholic Church is one of the most artistic experiments of Bernard Shaw. The Bishop of Beauvais is not free from personal motives. He was ousted from his cathedral by the Dauphin and the see of Rouen was especially procured for him by the English so that he might exercise jurisdiction and thus be entitled to lead the trial of Joan. He selected the twenty-two judges that were in charge of the trial and as promoter of the case he selected one Joan d'Estivet who had been driven out of the diocese by the French and was suspected of hostility to the Maid. Hence we find that the personal interests of some discontented and ambitious individuals were at the root of the trial, is represented by Shaw as a mere dispassionate struggle between the champions of the church militant and their young maiden. Thus Shaw moulds contemporary history and reinterprets and reviews the social order and religious hierarchies of the times of St. Joan to unveil the purpose and motif of the play.

2. Short Note-The Trial Scene

This scene is a very good example of Shaw's argumentative ability. He endows the characters namely Cauchon and Lemiatre

with sufficient consciousness to enable them to explain their attitude to the present generation. The Inquisitor says that heresy is the major charge and its detection and suppression is the special business of an inquisitor. Therefore he requests the members not to frame insignificant charges on which they will have to declare Joan innocent. Cauchon agrees with the Inquisitor and remarks that some of the minor charges regarding sorcery and stealth are not easy to be proved. Ladvenu feels that the heresy of the girl is harmless. The Inquisitor analyses the concept of heresy. He says that heresy at first seems innocent then it degenerates into diabolic madness. They are not liars and hypocrites but people who believe sincerely and fervently. He also details the malicious effects likely to be caused by heresy. Cauchon commands the members to try the accused on the charge of heresy which is the most fundamental charge. When D'Estivet questions Joan why she wanted to run away from prison she replies that it is natural for everyone to run away from prison. She also says that she should accept the judgement of God's Church on earth. She answers that if the Church commands her to do things contrary to God she will not do to. This statement of Joan's is taken to be flat and simple heresy. She is accused of having intercourse with evil spirits and that she wears the clothes of men. Joan explains to Ladvenu the propriety of the advice given to her by St. Catherine regarding her male dress and Ladvenu feels that Joan is self-conceited. The fear of being burnt makes her recant her words when the Church offers her forgiveness. But when the sentence is reduced to imprisonment she withdraws her recantation as she feels that perpetual imprisonment is more frightening. She firmly declares her voices to be right and is condemned to be burned. Her last words "He wills that I go through the fire to His bosom; for I am His child, and you are not fit that I should live among you. That is my last word to you"—are very significant. It brings out the religious philosophy as also the Shavian interpretation of the creative force which radiates in Joan only incompletely and rises to

transcend the limitations of mere men for the perpetual amelioration of the human species. Her death is no tragedy but only a rebirth. This scene is very moving, intellectually and emotionally. It reveals the personality. She is naive, simple and courageous. Shaw has discovered an impressive human motive for Joan's final decision. She likes to die rather than surrender personal liberty which is only another name for happiness.

Topics for discussion

1. The character of Cauchon
2. The justification of the Epilogue
3. The character of Joan
4. The philosophy in *Saint Joan*.
5. Discuss *Saint Joan* as a Chronicle play
6. The Inquisitor's opinion on heresy.
7. Nationalism and Protestantism as conveyed through *Saint Joan*

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SECTION C. PROSE AND FICTION

THE MAYOR OF CASTERBRIDGE

THOMAS HARDY

In order to understand Hardy well it is essential to be familiar with his creative range. His range was conditioned by the circumstances of his life which was completely agricultural. Therefore his characters carry the stamp of the field and every facet of their personalities is rustic to the bottom.

Almost all the novels written by Hardy are tragic and his tragedy is village tragedy. His memories of early days in his life are filled with the drama of broken love, wounded girls and the feuds and hangings in the villages. The ballad stories also left their marks in him. There is also a fine touch of the folksongs in Hardy's plots. Hardy fills his world with true lovers, but the life essentially becomes tragic as result of the presence of a few Don Juans whose victims are mostly the innocent rustic maidens.

Hardy's novels speak not only of agriculture but also of village society and the changing patterns in the society. A knowledge of Wessex history and geography is essential for study of his novels. The readers also have to trace the socio-economic changes and Hardy's reaction to them. In short we get in his novels pictures of changing generations. The threshing machine in his novels is a sign of the invasion of industrialization. In short he presents in his novels the past life which he knew as a child.

Hardy's subject is always human life in its most fundamental aspect. He honestly depicts mankind's predicament in this universe. He possessed a speculative mind. His disposition to a melancholic view was in a way, the product of the age in which he lived. The people were already feeling uncertain

about the philosophic basis of Christianity. The result was that, for the first time, pessimism found expression in English letters. By the age of 27 Hardy had already lost faith. He realized that mere material improvement would not satisfy the demands of man's soul.

The background of Hardy's books is the law of nature, cruel and indifferent. Nature was to him the emblem of those impersonal forces of fate with whom he presents mankind as in conflict. Nature is an actor in the play, not a mere background in his novels. However one should not look for any Wordsworthian mysticism in Hardy's novels. The central dogma of his faith was that the universe was a soulless automatic process. He found that it was cruel, indifferent and capricious.

How does Hardy describe the human situation? It is always a struggle between man and an omnipotent and indifferent fate. It tends to impose a pattern on the picture of his human scene. The conflict in his story is not so much between one man and other or between man and an institution. The character in his novels is ranged against some impersonal forces, the forces conditioning his fate. Man appears as an insignificant creature in the vast landscape.

Wessex is shown as a vast and ageless scene of fleeting man's little tragedy.

We can divide Hardy's characters as instruments for good and instruments for bad. But we must remember that this difference is in the hands of fate and fate is only abstraction. It must be personified in some particular incarnation. In short, Hardy embodies Fate in various forms, mainly as a natural force or innate weakness of character. Henchard's bad harvest caused by weather and Jud's intense sexual temperament are good examples of this. Fate also takes the form of chance and love. Hardy is criticised by most critics for his excessive use of chance.

It is quite amusing to see in Hardy's novels how man is

working to one end and Destiny to another. Man is helpless at the will of Destiny. But love is the main motive actuating his character. In love's extreme ecstasy they find happiness. They hope to free themselves from the burden of everyday life through the fulfillments of life. However their hope becomes futile because there is always a blind, irresistible force seizing on human beings, whether they long for it or not. It intoxicates them in the beginning and then brings ruin to them.

To Hardy love was woman's existence. As a writer he is par excellence in depicting her fragility, her sweetness, her submissiveness, and her caprice. Hardy was an honest lover of sex. Of all his female characters Tess remains the most loved and the most sympathized. He is a specialist in woman.

Hardy preferred Wessex for the setting of his novels for various reasons. In such a rustic society, he thought, human existence can be found in its most elemental form, unconnected by the trappings of sophisticated modes of existence. In a place like Wessex he gets the basic facts of human drama in the strongest shape. The basic human passions here are seen burning at their hottest. This heightens Hardy's imaginative range too. Statesman, artists or philosophers have no place here. Hardy's character is simply representative of mankind. In fact every artist has certain conventions and his was that of an early age, probably the one invented by Fielding.

But Hardy was also a man of new age. As an advanced thinker against traditional orthodox views of religion, sex, and so on, he used his novels to preach against old and outworn conventions. He also makes his characters as his mouthpieces. So if intellectually he was a man of the future, aesthetically he was a man of the past.

Hardy was not worried about the everyday affairs of his characters. Probably, his masters were Shakespeare and Walter Scott. It may be recalled that Scott was also inspired by rural life. Hardy possessed a very fertile imagination, a very power-

ful imagination. The aesthetic quality of his creative imagination is really supreme. His novels are not mere photographs but always beautiful pictures. He was also faithful to the truth about life as he saw it.

Hardy considered himself as a poet rather than a novelist. But the craze for story-telling was very strong in him. He does not write anything which he cannot feel emotively. And the result is that his novels look like some essays in pastoral poetry. Strangeness is a silent feature of his romantic imagination. This imagination manifests itself in Hardy's power of visualization. He wants to make use of what he is describing. His book is always constructed in a series of scenes.

His visualizing power burns brightly as the plot rises to its crisis. It is not the dialogue which makes the scene moving but actions; the story is always given in actions. While we admire Hardy's ability to picture the scene completely, we cannot miss his use of arresting similes. This is how he keeps our attention engaged. Thus we can call his novels visual novels. However his power of visualization is based on his vision of nature. He knows that nature controls the conduct of life in an agricultural society. He has an extraordinary talent in vitalizing the characters of peasant like simplicity.

The characters in Hardy's novels have a family likeness. His hero is either selfless and tender hearted or a dashing Don Juan. And his heroines are mostly like Tess "passion-tormented romantic enchantress". Only certain qualities in man strike Hardy as significant. Man is always thirsting for happiness and thinking that life will provide this one day or other. And mostly it is love which makes him selfish or selfless, resentful or submissive.

For Hardy a character must be aware of himself as a victim of human fate. His character must also be able to feel passionately and prolifically. So his range of character is thus limited. However his Wessex characters are solid flesh and blood.

They are not sentimentalized or inflated ones. His sensibility to feminine charm is also very great. It is the tremendous quality of his imaginative genius which conveys the beauty of his female characters.

Hardy has an extraordinary genius for striking the keynote of his story in the opening page. Sometimes the intensity of nature fires his talent. But he is always aware of the movement of the story; it has always an end. His words gather a peculiar power as the cry against the cruel fate becomes more and more intense. Humour, character, landscape, vividly depicted scenes, stories brilliantly opened and ended are the means with which Hardy keeps his readers arrested to his novels.

But, as already mentioned, it is always love which is the dominating theme in his novels. It is blind, irresistible storm and he is less concerned with the lovers than love. His is also not worried about the consequence as with its quality. He wants to show the actual heat and colour of its flame. His approach to love is that of lyrical poet. Hardy is also very convincing in scenes of death or catastrophe.

Hardy is not without any weakness. He is a good artist but not a good craftsman. Some times he manipulates his story so much that our faith in the story is lost. The overemphasis of the part played by chance in producing tragic events creates doubts among the readers. In short, he seems to be twisting the plot to suit his purpose. The result is that the characters at times become mere puppets in the hands of the author or Fate. The imaginative writer thus turns a propagandist.

THE MAYOR OF CASTERBRIDGE

The sources of the *Mayor of Casterbridge* are not clear. Hardy did not leave note books or letters which might help us. He was in a period of transition, Hardy was building permanent residence and this novel was written while the house was

undergoing construction

THE PLOT

Michael Henchard was a hay-trusser in search of work. In a drunken mood he sells his wife and child at Weydon Priors fair. With her grown up child, Elizabeth Jane, his wife returns to Henchard. The man who bought them was supposed to have drowned while coming from Canada. But Henchard's wife now "Mrs. Newson" has not revealed the full story to her daughter. In the meantime Henchard after giving up his futile search for his wife and child, has given up drinking. And he worked his way up to become the Mayor of Casterbridge.

Henchard is only happy at the return of his wife and child. The only difficulty was that in their absence he had promised a girl in Jersey, Lucetta, to marry her. So he writes to her about the turn of events. The girl agrees to withdraw but in order to see that her future is safe she comes and collects all the letters she has so far written to Henchard. There is also another person on the scene, Donald Farfrae. He was appointed as Henchard manager. This young Scotsman comes closer to Elizabeth Jane. Gradually due to a number of reasons, Henchard finds a rival in Farfrae. He therefore tells Elizabeth not to give attention to Farfrae. Soon Henchard is left alone with Elizabeth Jane as Mrs. Henchard dies. So he tells her that she is his own daughter but a letter left by his wife reveals that the baby he sold died long ago and Elizabeth Jane is in fact the daughter of Newson. He keeps this news as a secret. However the newly discovered truth causes strain in his love towards her.

Lucetta by this time, hears of Mrs. Henchard's death and comes to Casterbridge. She becomes friendly to Elizabeth and invites her to live with her. She agrees to do so because Henchard is not as warm in his affection as he was in the beginning. The plot here becomes interesting as Lucetta now takes interest in Farfrae and drops the idea of marrying Henchard

which was her original idea. He commits errors after errors in his business while Farfrae is growing richer and richer. Lucetta marries Farfrae secretly. Henchard loses everything and even thinks of killing himself. Farfrae then buys Henchard's house and occupies it with Lucetta. The cycle becomes complete when Henchard again takes to drinking. He is tenured by Elizabeth. His character degenerates further as he indulges even in physical fight with Farfrae. Some people who discovered Lucetta's earlier affair with Henchard perform a "skimmity-ride" (parading in effigies of adulterers) outside her house and she thus dies from shame and shock.

Henchard and Elizabeth are living a peaceful life when Newson returns. He had spread a false news of his death to facilitate the return of Mrs. Henchard to her husband. But Henchard tells him that the daughter he is seeking is no more alive. Meanwhile Farfrae renews his love to Elizabeth Jane. Newson meets her and tells her the whole story. Finally Farfrae marries Elizabeth and Henchard leaves Casterbridge in pursuit of his own tragic end.

CRITICAL COMMENTS

The *Mayor of Casterbridge* is dominated by the personality of one character, Michael Henchard. So it can be called a novel of character. He has all the qualities of a hero. He seems to be his own enemy. It is difficult to predict his behaviour. He loves and hates most unpredictably. He is bent up on ruining himself reminding the readers of the saying that character is Fate. Henchard is highly wrong-headed and emotional and the result is that he does not require the presence of a villain to bring his misfortunes.

Even if we think that he sold his wife under the influence of liquor, we cannot sympathize with him when he conducts himself impulsively even in his sober moments. The tragic flaw in him is always clear; when he loves he loves strongly and when

he hates he hates from the bottom of his heart. This is what one feels about his relationship with Farfrae. He is not careful in dealing with people and he is more careless in his business affairs. There is but another side of Henchard. When he realize his mistakes he is ready to punish himself. It is then that the readers feel pity for him. Sometimes it seems to be well earned pity because he is shown as a good hearted and straight forward person. This is excellently shown by the novelist at the end of the novel when Abel Whittle follows Henchard very honestly and faithfully.

Probably Hardy wanted to show that however good or great one may be, it is difficult to escape from the deeds done in the past. Otherwise the renewed and refined Henchard should have been given a peaceful life. The weight of his deed, selling his own wife, is not a small sin to be put aside. Hence the return of his wife with Elizabeth. But even that event seems to be insignificant when we compare his careless conduct with Farfrae.

Casterbridge is different from the other novels of Hardy in one sense. Romantic or erotic love is absent here. It may be because Hardy had enough powerful emotions with which the character of Henchard is built. If he had spared a few pages, like what he did in *Tess*, to depict love in its burning flame, the attention of the readers would have shifted from Henchard's rise and fall. So he substituted his usual central topic of love with the powerful personality of Henchard.

Another notable deviation in the novel is his shift from Weatherby or Edgemoor Heath to the urban scene of Casterbridge. In fact one of the major themes of this novel is the contrast between city life and its sophistication and the innocence in the country life. Casterbridge is Dorester, a town very familiar to Hardy right from his boyhood. In one place in the novel Hardy tells us. "Casterbridge was the complement of the rural life around; not its urban opposite"

It is difficult to find sensible, quiet unselfish and unambi-

tious women in Hardy's novels. But Elizabeth Jane is an exception. She is always ready to make any sacrifice. There is no burning passion in her like *Tess*. If at all there is any passionate woman in the novel, it is Lucetta. Elizabeth is kind enough to look after Henchard when he is bankrupt and rejected. She is careful in her relationship with Farfrae, since Henchard has warned her to be careful. However Lucetta freely thinks with him. Both women have the insights to steady themselves. They also exchange advice whenever they find the need of it. Lucetta seems to be very self-centered but their opposite qualities only tend to heighten their character. Both women have their own strengths though the novelist at times sets Lucetta's artfulness and deception against Elizabeth's honesty and sincerity.

Coming back to Henchard on whose personality the novel rests one wonders whether the whole tragedy could be attributed to his eccentric nature. Does the novelist have any other intention whether ideological or philosophical, in portraying a character like Henchard? A close scrutiny would reveal higher motivations, guiding the plot of the novel. Even the names like Farfrae and Newson suggest that Hardy, as in other novels, is taking the whole of agricultural England as a character in his story. The downfall of Henchard is also the downfall of agricultural England. Had Newson not appeared on the scene, the story would not have a tragic end, if not a happy ending. Newson (new son) is the product of the modern, scientific age. He is a sailor coming from a distance. Compared with this Henchard has his life, from beginning to end, rooted in the agricultural set up. If Henchard's child-like primitive conduct led him to sell his wife, it was equally shocking too see Newson buying a wife on sale. Henchard "had not quite anticipated this ending". Newson is a travelled man, travelling back and forth; coming from the sophisticated world. His entry into the agriculture world, coupled with Henchard's self-destructive pride gave the story a wonder-

ful beginning.

In the same way, Farfrae is an alien force in that rural society. Henchard should have permitted Farfrae to emigrate to America. The reader cannot blame Farfrae-the man from off place...for the downfall of Henchard. But if he were not present in Casterbridge, Henchard would have survived in a better way. All these are hypotheses. However the fact remains that the foreigners precipitate the tragedy of the protagonist in the novel. The third outsider is Lucetta and all the three outsiders serve as a collective symbol of new age bent upon making intrusions in to the innocent and traditional life of rustic people.

Taking all the elements into consideration; one may be tempted to classify *The Mayor of Casterbridge* as a classical tragedy. Henchard is not a noble character like Macbeth or Hamlet, but he has the will and qualities to reach such a noble state. He has his tragic flaw: very rash and thoughtless actions. But the greatest classical quality is his realization and understanding of his own weakness though very belated.

The plot of the novel moves in symmetrical fashion. The downfall of Henchard is balanced against the rise of Farfrae. In corn speculation, while Henchard loses Farfrae wins. When Henchard loses Lucetta, Farfrae wins her. This kind of exchange of roles becomes complete when Farfrae becomes the Mayor of Casterbridge. On the whole the impression that Hardy deliberately manipulates his plot is what sticks in the memory of the readers.

In spite of his deliberate manipulation of the plot and the free play of chance in the story, the novel remains a great piece of artistic creation. It is mainly because of Hardy's style which has an honesty and directness that can be seldom seen in other novelists. The style in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* is measured and steady. Dickens would have used the wife selling scene somewhere in the last chapters to give some kind of suspense.

Hardy on the contrary, begins at the beginning and ends with the remark "that happiness was but the occasional episode in a general drama of pain". It is this kind of remarks either at the beginning or at the end or wherever he got a chance which provokes the critics to brand him as a pessimist.

Pessimist or not, Hardy's views of life are basically tragic. He was always trying to illustrate nature's sheer indifference. The message emerging from his novels is clear. We are all victims of some blind forces of chance. Everyone is a Tess or a Henchard in one form or other. So there are no bad characters. And there is no God to test man's soul, no devil to tempt him. Instead, some blind forces or chance work through his characters and Henchard is a fine example of this.

Questions

1. "Character is Fate" Discuss this statement in relation to the character of Henchard.
2. "Happiness was an occasional episode in the general drama of pain" Give your own comment in the light of your reading the novel, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*.
3. Write an essay about the rise and fall of Henchard.

SECTION - C - PROSE AND FICTION

MATTHEW ARNOLD

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS IN POETRY

Matthew Arnold is the foremost critic of the Victorian Age. What distinguishes him as both a critic and a poet is his social mission of the regeneration of his country men. He had succeeded in converting literature into an instrument of social and moral uplift. In the process he has come to be labelled a propagandist.

As a poet he has given expression to the feelings of sadness and seething strife which the Victorians covered up under a placid-looking facade. Interpreting the sadness of the times he lays bare the malady of the century!

"....this strange disease of modern life
with its sick hurry, its divided aims
its head overtakes its palsied heart"

The forte of Arnold as a critic consists in the fact that he is both a poet and critic. He is always a critic and his poetry is predominantly critical in nature. With the solitary exception of Coleridge, perhaps, he is the greatest critic among English poets and the greatest poet among English critics.

The eminence of Arnold as a critic has been acknowledged almost universally. Scott-James has assigned him the prerogative place of Aristotle. According to Herbert Paul "by laying down principles of criticism he taught others how to criticise" For at least half a century Arnold's position in England was comparable to that of the Greek Aristotle in respect of influence, and the number of votaries. Aristotle shows us the critic in relation to art. Arnold shows us the critic in relation to the public. Aristotle dissects a work of art. Arnold dissects a critic. The one gives us principles governing the making of a poem: the other, the principles by which the best poems should be selected and made known. Aristotle's criticism

owes allegiance to the artist but Arnold's critic has a duty to society.

"To prepare a social atmosphere which will stimulate the artist, to make the best that has been written familiar to the public...this was the task of criticism."

According to the famous critic Jones, "English criticism may be said to have begun and ended with Arnold. Before him there was a splendid chaos and after him an over whelming flood" Eliot has something significant to say about Arnold: "Arnold as not man of scholarship but what he did know of books and men was in its way, well balanced and well marshaled"

There are sharply divergent views about the greatness of Arnold as a critic. On the one extreme he is ranked with Aristotle while on the other he is thought to be no better than a mere propagandist, salesman, and advertiser of literature. However it is apparent that Arnold suffers from several drawbacks and vices. But at the same time there are such sterling qualities in him as to raise him far above the common critics, and his defects pale into insignificance. He, by and large, displays a comprehensive view and breadth of culture and fairness of mind. His approach is never narrow minded. He eschews insularity everywhere. His attitude is essentially cosmopolitan and catholic. He is European, continental, in his outlook. His services to English criticism whether as a preceptor or as a craftsman cannot possibly be over-estimated. Tillotson says: "What Arnold say drew a multitude of eyes the way his were looking, and still draws our eyes"

Arnold's view of literature as a "Criticism of life" is of fundamental importance as it epitomizes the critical as well as the social creed of the man. Scott-James significantly remarks that, "we find him now in the capacity of the critic of criticism. or the critic who had a mission to the world to fulfill." Motivated by such an ideal Arnold defines criticism as a "disinterested endeavour to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world, and thus to establish a current of fresh and true ideas."

Arnold's classical taste can be seen in his love and worship of the celebrated Greek and English classics. He had learned from the Greeks that to be good, a poem must be on a good subject, must be beautiful, not in patches, but as a whole, orderly lucid and sane.

By virtue of his unique performance Arnold became the focus of attention. "Instead of shrivelling he knit and suppled his frame till it stood that of a hero, indefatigable...vivid with a passion rather than a love, a puritan passion for making what he saw to be best, prevail"

PREFACE TO POEMS-1953

Arnold's essay....."The Choice of Subjects in Poetry" otherwise known as "Preface to Poem 1853" is a monumental work for the simple reason that it offers a detailed and deep going discussion on the subjects or themes of poetry. Its relevance is for all times since it deals with a matter of perennial interest to the readers and the writers.

In the 1853 edition of poems "Empedocles on Etna" was not included even though in the 1952 edition it has formed part of the title. This exclusion is justified by Arnold on the basis of a strong belief that the choice of subjects in poetry is of paramount importance. The themes of poetry, according to Arnold, should be such that they veer round actions, significant and conspicuous. But in some poems this is not the case. "They are those on which the suffering, finds no vent in action; in which a continuous state of mental distress is prolonged unrelieved by incident, hope or resistance; in which there is everything to be endured, nothing to be done" Empedocles on Etna is of this type. That is why in the 1853 edition it is not included.

Some people wrongly believe that the poem was excluded because the theme belongs to the distant past, and that themes of contemporary relevance alone could be of any significance.

Arnold takes up for discussion the question: What are the

internal objects of poetry, among all nations and at all times? His confirmed conviction is that they are actions. Which are inherently interesting and important, and are communicated in an interesting manner by the art of the poet. An action which is inferior by itself cannot be redeemed by any or all the skills of the author.

The excellent actions, which alone should be the theme of great poems, are such that they powerfully appeal to the great primary human feelings and passions which are permanent to the race. They do not diminish in value owing to change in time.

The modernness or oldness of the action is of no importance. A great human action of a thousand years ago is more interesting and therefore more acceptable than a small action of today. It is no use trying to perfect it by means of familiar manners and contemporary allusions.

While presenting a past action like that of Oedipus or of Macbeth the external details may not be fully available to the poet of our times. But this is not a serious handicap. Because his business is with the inner life of the protagonists, their feelings and behaviour in certain tragic situations which engage their passions as men. There is nothing local or casual about these feelings. Thus, the date of an action has, practically, no significance. Do we ever really worry about the time of the events in Macbeth or Othello? "The action itself, its selection and construction, is what is all-important."

The Greeks knew it very well. On the country, we in our ignorance, attach too much of importance to separate thoughts and images. "They regarded the whole, we regard the parts" Arnold emphasizes the idea further by saying that with the ancients the action predominated over the expression of it; with us, the expression predominates over the action. It does not mean that they were poor in expression. In fact they are great models of expression, masters of the grand style. But the style is subordinated to the subject matter. It gains strength from the action described.

The Greek tragic poets had a limited range of subjects be-

cause they knew that only a few actions could combine in themselves the conditions of excellence. "The action itself, the situation of Orestes or Merope or Alcmaeon, was to stand the central point of interest, unforgotten, absorbing, principal," The underplots and subplots were not to distract the spectator's attention from the principal action. The importance of the parts had to be kept down in order to maximize the grandiose effect of the whole. The old mythic story or plot on which the play was founded stood clearly in bare outlines, on the spectator's mind's screen before he came to the theatre. While watching the details of the play the action got engraved on his memory, never to be forgotten.

Much more than the time of action what matters is the quality of action itself. Persae by Aeschylus did not occupy any high rank among his plays though it was written on a contemporary subject. In fact the Greeks felt that an action of present times was too near them, too much mixed up with what was accidental and passing to form a detached object for a tragic poem. Greek practice and Aristotle's emphasis on plot confirm the truth that action is all-important "All depends upon the subject; choose a fitting action, penetrate yourself with the feeling of its situations; this done, everything else will follow."

We moderns fail to understand this, so we fail to understand what Menander meant when he told a man, who enquired about the progress of his comedy, that he had finished it though he had not written a single line. Instead he had constructed the entire action of the comedy in his mind. The moderns seem to permit the poet to select any action he pleases and to allow that action to go as it pleases, provided he gratifies them with occasional patches of fine writing, with a shower of isolated thoughts and images. But a poet most entirely succeeds when he succeeds in effecting himself and by highlighting a noble action as conspicuous and gripping to all, for all times.

The best possible model in this respect is Shakespeare. He chose excellent subjects, the best the world could afford. When-

ever he found an excellent action he took it; and he found them mostly, in the past times. To this he added his ingenious and excellent expression.

In contrast, you find Keat's Isabella failing to come up to our expectations of excellence. The action is so feebly conceived by the poet, so loosely constructed, that the effect produced by it, in and for itself, is poor despite all the graceful and felicitous words and images. The same story is well handled in Decameron.

Shakespeare is the great poet he is, owing to his skill in discerning and firmly conceiving an excellent action, his power of intensely feeling a situation, of intimately associating himself with character, and not merely owing to his expression. He has the ancient's elementary soundness in conceiving an important action and their large and broad manners, but he does not have their purity of method. What he has is personal and inseparable from his own rich nature. Therefore, he is a less safe model for us moderns.

We moderns can profitably learn three things from the ancients: the all importance of the choice of a subject, the necessity of accurate construction: and the subordinate nature of expression.

Lesson Prepared by

Dr. P.M. CHACKO

Department of English

U.C. College, Alwaye.

EMILE BRONTË

WUTHERING HEIGHTS

THE THEME: THE MAIN CHARACTERS

WUTHERING HELIGHTS, one of the greatest English novels; a story of immense, uncontrollable and almost savage passions, according to some critics, could not have been written by a woman. But on the other extreme, we find critics compare this novel of clumsily-built structure, with incidental faults in narrations the novelist failing at times to kindle the burning impulse, but let it smoulder down, to "King Lear". However, it has come down through generations of readers and established itself as a classic.

When the Bronte sisters appeared on the literary scene, the Romantic sentiment was taking a peculiar turn, where the inner isolation of spirit, which remains immaculate in spite of external contacts becomes a real tangible source of strength. Thus we reach the true source or inner source, that "Secret Power" beneath the hitherto seemingly superficial attributes of romantic sentiment and it is completely and comprehensively expressed by Emile Bronte in "Wuthering Heights"

Emile Bronte's world which edged the sentimental romantic age with its common place melodrama, exaggerated sentiments and violence could have easily prompted a woman to write such a theme of love and revenge and love as this, but here the novelist stands apart. That is, with her unique ability of transforming this sort of romanticism through the operation of a British council Rep. Spain.

(Penguin Books 1958) "The Bronte sisters and Wuthering Heights" Intensely personal imaginative power. What in 1950 Derik Traversis remarked about the novel's "fundamental and accidental qualities", which we can now term as pathological scanning of human mind at various levels. However as noted by Traversi, human emotions are presented in the novel " in a state of purity and

concentration: not mindful of their creative or destructive consequences. Wuthering Heights on the one hand while serving the purgation of the romantic common place served on the other hand a challenge to the much quoted Victorian Morality"

This very attempt to penetrate far into the depth of human passions, this method of dealing primarily with the analysis of men and women in their mutual relationships and their varied reactions to the same external events, had its own novelty. In this unique interaction of the psyche, the moral and social assumptions of the "Victorian morality" are largely ignored. And, there we find ourselves in that simple but severe world of ancient tragedy, the world of "King Lear"

Such purity and simplicity of emotions and the strength of their expressions makes us forget the occasional sentimental stuff, like the scene of Catherine dashing herself against, a sofa as a weak creature, Unlike in the romantic literary world, her emotions and passions are tangible, concrete with clarity and precision. Right in the opening pages where. Mr. Lockwood describes the black eminence of Wuthering Heights, these clarity and precision are apparent. The evocation of the spirit of the place though a bit pedantic.

"The range of gaunt thorns stretching their limbs one way doesn't jar at all the ears of the reader as an unnecessary intrusion. The same concrete imagination is felt in the graphic account of his theatrical dream and it is Emile Bronte's capacity to effect an intimated fusion between the concrete and abstract matter."

The personal level of the theme of "Wuthering Heights" is the familiar romantic, mutual, passionate love of Heathcliff to Catherine Earnshaw. But from the ordinary pedestal it rises to some all-consuming cosmic level. Catherine's confession of the nature of her love stands alone in all English fiction as a masterpiece of intensity of that passion called LOVE; the passage itself becoming classic.

She says

"My love for Linton is like the foliage in the woods; time will change it...My love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath....Nelley, I am Heathcliff! He is....

but as my own being"

The declaration, primarily personal, that of the novelist, has the artistic epitomizing of a relationship which later fatefully transcends accidents of personality. The affirmation "I AM Heathcliff" is an affirmation of the speaker's elemental nature; It dissipates any transitory impulse of fleshy or melodramatic nature that leads us to ponder over this passion and term it as 'religious', being suggested by the critic Traversi. The film-coated romantic sentiment is once wiped off and the questions raised are eternal queries regarding the end of existence and the idea of creation. Can the end be achieved through personal existence and its vivifications? We must remember Emile Bronte's personal life which was 'religious', or mystic in character, in this context. The notion of transcendental existence Versus the demands of outer physical world, the resultant conflicts and its pangs, the final result of metaphysical realization of delusion, that expressed by Macbeth, "full of sound and fury signifying nothing " is in fact the religious desolation hinted by Catherine expressed with and after her death by Heathcliff.

HEATHCLIFF Vs. LINTON

Parallel does run the contrasting characters of Heathcliff and Linton. Linton symbolizes sophistry, tenderness, sincerity and all that we call grace, culture and civilization. These are qualities that are superficial which naturally attract a gentle lady like Catherine, but she is yet made by some stronger, say stranger stuff; they attract her superficially only. A life with him, she knows will not involve the deepest parts of her nature, her very being..."My love for Linton is like...." thus she tells us that an agreeable personal and social life is one thing and the absence of a necessary life is equal to spiritual death. For Catherine, the choice is limited.

She chooses the former and hence embraces the second. Reverse, Heathcliff later on accepts, though as a part of his diabolic revenge, the agreeable Miss. Isabella as his wife but with that he dies his first spiritual death. He has one more such death when Catherine dies in his arms, the first time the eternal implications of that death dawns on him with a bang and towards the end of his physical life, he suffers the final spiritual death and no wonder, no exaggeration, his dead eyes would not shut, they seemed to sneer at Nelley's attempts and his parted lips and sharp white teeth sneered too. Eeck! What a wicked one he looks grinning at death! The duo is sung by Joseph!

The idea of Creation versus the end strikes us again when Catherine cries, "He is more than myself as I am "that is to say " "we both of us are made of the same inner stuff. But normal social and personal reality, that separates Linton and heathcliff stands before her achieving the end.'

The idea of Creation versus the end strikes us again when Catherine cries "He is more than myself as I am "that is to say ' " We both of us are made of the same inner stuff. But normal social and personal reality. That separate Linton and heathcliff before her stands before achieving the end.

WUTHERING HELIGHTS; THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TITLE

No other title suits this classic than the name *Wuthering Heights*. "Wuthering Heights" as narrated by Mr. Lockwood, Heathcliff's tenant, comes to us with all its bleak eminence at one stroke. "Wuthering" is significant provincial adjective descriptive of the atmospheric tumult, "to which its station is exposed in stormy weathers. The north wind blowing savagely over the edge. the few stunted firs at the excessive slant, the range of gaunt thorns-all stretching their arms to one side for sunlight...The very details of topography is arresting bleak. The architect knew of the violence of nature outside and thus, he had fortified the house with deeply

set narrow windows and defended the corners with large outing stones. Readily does the nature of the place match the nature of its occupants, chiefly at the later stage Heathcliff; Heathcliff as Traversi names being its "human incarnation". Like the musky atmosphere in Macbeth. "

(Invernes, being hell, the porter calling himself hell-porter) matches the characters of the play: here is the most appropriate background for the life of bare and primitive passions of Heathcliff who owns a mind, equal to the topography.

But Thrushcross Grange, the very name, sounds soothing to the ear though the house and its philosophy are decadent, yet pleasant and agreeable like the the Lintons who live in there. The Lintons, we find, are refined, kind and amiable but their meekness does not warrant their moral weakness in facing crises and even hard situations of life. It is this meekness that is weakness which makes Catherine contemptuously treat Edgar Linton when he faces the brutal physical threat from Heathcliff. Heathcliff's brutal onslaught is diluted by Edgar's almost feminine resignation. Beneath the surface of the refinement of the Lintons lay the story undercurrent of such moral weakness to oppose the evil, which essentially paves the way for tragedy. Heathcliff and Catherine felt this as early as children at their first glimpse of the strange world of the illuminated interiors of Thrush-cross Grange where they found the Linton children barbarously quarreling over a pet dog. Heathcliff's contempt at this moment rings on in the novel. It rings on not because of its levity or the fellow's envy. It is the expression of a soul whose fundamental passions are so strong and deep that they emerge superior against this cosy, superfluous, trivial, selfish and empty world of the Lintons, the Thrushcross grange: The minute details of the items of luxury at the Thrushcross grange and their bleak contrast at the Wuthering Heights, as felt by the children. Heathcliff and Cathy at their very first view of them, remain in the very heart of the novel. On the other side, Edgar carries the spirit on a same line when Heathcliff to wait in the parlour

by remarking "the kitchen is more suitable place for the fellow." But Catherine who cannot change her character herself, her ego orders to arrange two tables; one for the "gentry" (the Lintons) and the other for "Heathcliff and myself being of the lower order"

Corresponding to this obvious contrast of social distinctions, the novel provides a number of moral points which in fact decide the very substance of the book. Thus we look at the contrasting characters of the novel. Hence, the title and its significance.

NELLEY

Nelley Dean, like her modern counterpart, the Negro-maid Delsey in Faulkner's "Sound and Fury" is a total witness of a tragedy of various dimensions. It is to Nelley Dean, Catherine makes the classic declaration.

"He is more myself than I am..

Nelley, I AM Heathcliff's"

Apart from the role she plays as an external agency to unite the action of the plot, to correlate events, make necessary comments on certain critical junctures etc.. It is through her that Catherine is able to give vent to the spiritual conflicts in her love towards Linton and Heathcliff—her attitude towards two conflicting spiritual aspects i.e., superficial grace of civilization versus brutal selfish elemental stuff. Perhaps, these are too subtle for an ordinary maid. But she serves as a "dramatic property." She has a common sense that offers a sort of counter balance throughout the story. Her reasoning and her comments are though not final, relevant and quite necessary to push the theme. It is through Nelley's reflections that we are presented with the undeniably brutal creature that is Heathcliff as well as the almost effeminate Edgar Linton. Nelley is essentially good-natured and she has in her credit, long experience of rough day to day realities. She is therefore imaginative in the sense of social security of individuals. Thus she maintains that the sophisticated Linton is Catherine's match, not the brutish Heathcliff whose relationship will only bring her disaster and disgrace. And, that proved to be tragically true. However,

when all is said in praise of her, one can't help finding in her the "traditional" features of a typical house-maid, putting her nose, though unobtrusively, in everything, often she brags of her own wisdom in foreseeing evils in character.

Reading List:

1. Derik Travers: (British Council Representative, Spain) "The Bronte sisters and Wuthering Heights"
Penguin Books 1958

Prepared By

PROF. P.V. MOHAMMED IQUBAL
S.S. College, Thaliparambu

JAMES JOYCE
A PORTRAIT

The works of James Joyce represent the most complete break with the entire historical tradition of the novel. The word tradition reminds us of the great importance the novelists attached to plot. And the plot was strictly confined to some moral, spiritual issue. With Joyce we find no such issues but simply a series of everyday occurrences serving as a framework on which the psychic responses are registered. The pleasure of reading this derives not from the plot but from the psychological responses.

A Portrait of an Artist is the lightest work of Joyce. But it is the most significant work because it is this novel Joyce formulated his intention which was to be more completely realized later in his Ulysses. So A Portrait is a forerunner of the famous novel Ulysses. Stephen Dedalus was setting forth for his friend Lynch, the distinguishing features of what he calls "the lyrical, the epical and the dramatic forms" The lyrical form is that "wherein the artist presents his image in immediate relation to himself and others"; the dramatic is that "wherein he presents his image in his immediate relation to others. Of the three, Dedalus feels the dramatic is the final form in literary evolution. And he says the artist, like God of the creation, remains within or behind or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, parting his finger-nails"

The importance of the novel A Portrait must be clear to the students, It marks the death of the old and defines the new with the author totally disappearing from the story. The stress is on the psyche, the stream of consciousness. Time as a linear movement is replaced with an arrested moment within the human consciousness is shown carrying in its stream endless impressions. Though A Portrait covers many years Ulysses is revolutionary in this regard, being a work of great length with a single revolution of the sun

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, published in 1916 is essentially the story of Joyce's own break with the Catholic church. While still in his teens, he was writing an autobiographical novel. He re-wrote this in 1908 but a major part of it was destroyed. Whatever was preserved was later published under his original title of Stephen Hero. Dissatisfied with this book, Joyce composed the story of his youth in a different mode altogether and gave the title A Portrait of the the Artist as a Young Man." Our knowledge of Stephen is now going to come to us mediated through his own developing consciousness. That consciousness is to be theatre of whatever drama the book attempts to present."

Portrait is a landmark in English novel. For the first time the readers felt altogether trapped in the consciousness of the central character, unable to escape. What Stephen takes for granted, the readers have to take for granted too. The absence of an omniscient author and his omission of those painstaking explanations with which it is customary to guide and enlighten the reader have taken the reader by surprise. He is brought closer to the subject without any coloured medium. We meet the hero, or for that matter Joyce's characters in general, in their rhythm and tempo of rumination, unmixed, directly to the very dialect of their thinking. Human instinct of sensations are not scrutinized by the novelist before putting them on paper. The result is that the readers feel a sense of being in immediate contact with life itself.

The growth of Stephen's consciousness does not proceed in a straight line. The growing awareness is, in fact, his increasing awareness of the social world around him. His growth, along with an awareness of the self, develops, with a dislike of his home, family, race, nation and the Jesuit order under which he was bred and educated. Stephen gradually decides to give up the conventional way of life, chooses his own vocation and gives articulation to his own ideals of art and beauty.

His first name Stephen refers to the first Christian martyr. The second name, Dedalus, is known for his pair of wings and a

labyrinth. "Stephen invokes his namesake under both aspects, the hawk-like man and fabulous artificer. Sometime it is symbolized. At other times, soaring, falling, flying by the nets and the Ireland" says Harry Levin . The name taken together indicates the protagonist's desire to break from the material world and soar high to regions where he can cultivate his art as a free soul.

The soul of Stephen grows in a kind of proud isolation. Right from the beginning there is a natural tendency in him to isolate himself from the vulgar surroundings. He hated the squalor and poverty, in the wake of economic crisis, with which his house was almost associated. He was always thinking of big things without ever able to understand anything. "What was after the universe?" "What politics meant?" "Kiss! Why did people do that with their two faces?" So he "felt small and weak" Once looking at his father and two cronies drinking he felt: "No life or youth stirred in him as it had stirred in them. He had known neither the pleasure of companionship nor the vigour of rude male health nor piety. Nothing stirred within his soul but a cold and cruel and loveless lust"

Slowly Stephen finds himself strongly in a desire to sin. "He wanted so sin with another of his kind, to force another being to sin with him and exult with her in sin". His sex appetite, the desire to enjoy the beauty in flesh completely overtakes his faith in religion. He had tried to relieve his soul by confessing in a remote chapel and he felt for some time a blessed soul. But when he finds that the demand of the flesh is too strong to be suppressed or silenced by religion he realized the coldness and the absurdity of the religious mask which man puts on the masquerade on the earth. Thus religious faith is given up in favour of sexual gratification. So he wanders in the streets selling forbidden fruits- a maze of narrow and dirty streets" -till he finds himself being sexuality embrace. "He wanted to be firmly held that he had suddenly become strong and fearless and sure of himself...and between them he felt an unknown and timid pressure, darker than the season of sin, softer than sound or odour. "Stephen's sin-loving soul makes a leap

through "The squalid quarter of the brothels" to soar into region of an artist. The journey through Dante's world, then through Shellean world of loneliness, to the static world of art is the growth of Stephen portrayed by Joyce in his first real novel.

A Portrait, a volume of three hundred pages, is constructed around three climaxes or three crises, in Stephen's Youth. The initial chapters, about two hundred pages reveal Stephen's religious doubts and sexual instincts. The cycle of sin and repentance continues in two more chapters till he has his private apocalypse. The progress of the novel is made in such a way that the outside impressions slowly give place to inner conflicts and speculations. The last chapters are comparatively long. They give Stephen's student days in university college and then comes to the point of exile. So the revolution of the artistic soul is achieved only after the fulfillment of Stephen's sexual, religious and aesthetic desire. The first two desires which Thoma Connolly calls the Kinetic desires, fail to sustain his soul. Only the aesthetic desire, the static one, is capable of giving satisfaction without the acquisition of something or someone outside the self. And aesthetic means always the beautiful. "The instant wherein that supreme quality of beauty, the clear radiance of the aesthetic image, is apprehended unanimously by the mind which has been arrested by its wholeness and fascinated by its harmony is the luminous silent stasis of esthetic pleasure, a spiritual state..Thus at the end of the novel Stephen discovered "the theory of the esthetic"

Stephen's theory of art, like that of his author, is derived from Thomas Aquinas, Stephen first begins his discussion of the good and the beautiful. He borrows two principles from Aquinas.

- (a) Those things are beautiful the perception of which pleases
- (b) The good is that toward which the appetite end

It is on these principles Stephen has based his arguments with his friend Lynch. So a good artist is always concerned with the beautiful, not the good. The end of art is to produce a stasis in the observers, an emotion that satisfies the aesthete sense. Let

us quote Stephen here.

"Pity is the feeling which arrests the mind in the presence of whatever is grave and constant in human sufferings. Terror is the feeling which arrests the mind in the presence of whatsoever is grave and constant in human sufferings and unites it with secret cause. By 'arrest' I mean that the tragic emotion is static. The feelings excited by improper art are kinetic (desire or loathing) Desire urges us to possess to go to something, loathing urges us to abandon, to go from something."

According to Stephen three things are needed for beauty: wholeness, harmony and radiance. The radiance or supreme quality of a thing is realized by the artist when the aesthetic image is first conceived in his imagination. "The instant wherein that supreme quality of beauty, the clear radiance of the aesthetic image is apprehended luminously by the mind which has been arrested by its wholeness and fascinated by its harmony, is the luminous silent stasis of aesthetic pleasure"

After formulating his theory of art Stephen tries to apply it to literature. He divides literature into lyric, epic and drama. In the lyrical form the "centre of emotional gravity is in immediate relationship to the artist". The epic form is no longer personal. The centre of emotional gravity is equidistant from the artist and from others. In the dramatic form the artist is defined out of existence of his work. It is imperative to quote Stephen once again.

"The lyrical form is, in fact, the simplest verbal gesture of an instant of emotion, a rhythmical cry such as ages ago cheered on the man who pulled at the oar or dragged stones up a slope. He who utters it is more conscious of the instant of emotion than of himself as feeling emotion. The simplest form is seen emerging out of lyrical literature when the artist prolongs and broods upon himself and others. The narrative is no longer purely personal. The personality of the artist passes into the narration itself, flowing round and round the persons and the action like a vital sea. This progress you will see easily in that old English ballad Turpin,

Hero which begins in the first person and ends in the third person. The dramatic form is reached when the vitality which has flowed and eddied round each person fills every person with such vital force that he or she assumes a proper and intangible esthetic life. The personality of the artist, at first a cry or a cadence or a mood and then a fluid and lament narrative, finally refines itself out of existence, impersonalizes itself, so to speak. The esthetic image in the dramatic form is the life purified in and reprojected from the human imagination. The mystery of the esthetic, like that of material creation is accomplished. The artist, like the God of creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring in fingernails with this aesthetic realisation. A Portrait comes to an end. He tells Cranly that he is now ready to leave Ireland as he was able to leave church. But the end of Portrait is the real artistic beginning of Stephen. "I go to encounter for the millionth of time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race"

SYMBOLISM

The texture of A Portrait is complex though it is more easily readable than Ulysses and Finnegans Wake. A close scrutiny of the novel reveals that the words, phrases, symbols and images are very deep and complex. Joyce plays with the words like "waning day light" or "back towards the light" to show that the priest's office represented denial of light or nature. The same way "cross-blind" means either blinded by the cross or blind to the cross. The novel is mainly related to the growth of young Stephen. Joyce uses skillfully a pattern of images to correspond to the growing convictions of Stephen. The circling swallows; their flights remind him of the hero, the bird-man, Dedalus. The flight of the birds is thus associated with creativity and the fight and flow (of water) recur throughout the novel. The flowing water is also form part of Stephen's sexual desire. Sea water and waves also form part of

Stephen's creative imagination. "The noise of dim waves and he sees a winged form flying above the waves". Images indicative of flight from the gross world are also images of freedom, freedom to recreate. To live to, err, to fall, to triumph to recreate life out of life. "Joyce sees in the unfolding of the peacock's tail the unfolding of Stephen's soul, sin by sin."

The name Dedalus also reminds the hero's courage and force of the artistic endeavour. Another important image in the novel is rose. From the immemorial the flower rose has been allied with both sexual and spiritual love. And like its association with the beauty of women it has its close relationship with the beauty of art. The novel opens with the annunciation of "O, the wild rose blossoms on the little grass place." The place is obviously Ireland and the blossoming rose is Stephen, the rebellious blossoming artist. Later there is a mention of "a green rose" The rose garden, Dante, Beatrice are all there to give the traditional meaning and significance but the sexual undertone of the word rose is more clear in the novel. In Stephen's mathematics class white rose is defeated by the red rose, probably an indication of his religious desire beaten by his sexual desires. Stephen's lady in the novel is unlike Dante's Beatrice. She can give him only a momentary pleasure. Joyce's hostility to Christian sanctities leads him to Divine artist Dante. Stephen's rose also recalls Yeats' Rose of the world and for both of them it is at once the inspiration of art.

The whole text is woven with traditional Christian symbolism. The end of the novel, in this respect is more Christian than Stephen's earlier anti-Catholic stance. The artist is called a priest of eternal imaginations transmitting the daily bread of experience into the radiant body of every living life. The artist also corresponds to God, the father, seen everywhere but present nowhere. All these point to the fact that how painfully and skillfully A Portrait was composed by Joyce. The complexity and verbal density of the novel, though it has the appearance of a romantic novel, puts Joyce as the first class novelist of the present century. That A Portrait is

only a prelude to his major novels makes it all the more a very important literary work. This also puts pressure on the students because unless all the works written by Joyce are read, it is not possible to understand the real greatness of the novelist.

Suggested Reading

Tindall, William, Y: A Reader's Guide to James Joyce
Litz, Wolten: The Art of James Joyce
Conolly, Thomas: Joyce's Portrait: Criticisms and Critiques
A Case Book on Joyce A Portrait

Some Questions

1. A critical appreciation of A Portrait
2. Stephen's theories of art in the novel
3. The character of Stephen Dedalus

VIRGINIA WOOLF "MODERN FICTION"

A. BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Virginia Woolf (1888-1941) daughter of Sir. Leslie Stephen, ushered in radical changes in the matter and manner of writing fiction. She is well-known as the proponent of a new mode of fiction using the stream of consciousness technique. Also she is noted for her original and bold critical statements, particularly in relation to the art of fiction. Feminism, reassessment of literary works etc. As a novelist she persisted on minimizing the importance of facts, events and character analysis in order to concentrate on the moment by moment experience of living. To a remarkable extent Virginia Woolf reduced the importance of the author as narrator or commentator.

Some of her famous works one voyage out (1915), Jacob's Room (1922) Mrs. Dalloway (1925) To the Light House (1927) The Waves (1931) etc..all novels.

The common Reader, First Series (1925) Second Series (1932) A Writers Diary (1932) etc....(Essays and other works).

"Modern Fiction" is an important essay included in The Common Reader: First series (1925). In a way it is a sort of "Declaration of Independence" as far as modern fiction writers are concerned. Woolf stresses the need for liberating modern English fiction from the clutches of conventional 'well-made' novel. Events, plot and even character analysis, in her opinion, should be made secondary for the sake of lending a fresh lease of life to fiction by focusing on the 'beauty' of living moment by moment, however excruciating (or exciting) the experience might be...

B. SUMMARY

The need to admit the fact that modern fiction owes it a genesis to the earlier novelists is stressed. The desirability of a survey to observe the rise and fall of fiction is also pointed out. Virginia Woolf belittles the importance of writers like Arnold Bennett, H.G. Wells, John Galsworthy and the like for, they 'miss life' They are not able to get hold of the spirit/soul. Unfortunately they are way laid by the body. In short they are materialists. The bitter consequence is: Life escapes and perhaps without life nothing else is Worthwhile (p.1888)

Virginia Woolf then goes on to point out the urgency with which the modern writer should examine life from within with difference. Life is not some thing dull, plain and linear. She asserts, "Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semitransparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end " (p.189). Catching this sort of life in all its complexity means taking hold of the spirit/soul. In this context, she admires the young, upcoming, hold, imaginative and experimental writer, James Joyce. (When Virginia Woolf

published this essay, James Joyce's *Ulysses* was being serialised) Such writers in her opinion are spiritual any theme is opposite, any method is all right.

In this perspective, in the last part of the essay, she comments on the significance of Russian fiction, which primarily and admirably focuses on human soul, and thereby they conquer everything. She is even eulogistic while referring to the Russian writers. Woolf observes, "The most elementary remarks upon modern English fiction can hardly avoid some mention of the Russian influence, and if the Russians are mentioned one runs the risk of feeling that write of any fiction save there is a waste of time" (p.193). After commenting on the compassionate and comprehensive nature of the inconclusive Russian mind, she goes on to make a refreshing, radical statement on the nature and quality of fiction: "The proper stuff of fiction" does not exist, everything is the stuff of fiction, every feeling, every thought: every quality of trained spirits is drawn upon; no perfection comes amiss". Only constant imaginative experiment can keep alive fiction.

C. ESSAY

a. Critically evaluate Virginia Woolf's essay *Modern Fiction*

OR

b. Write a critique on *Modern Fiction*

OR

Assess Virginia Woolf's stature as a critic/Assess Virginia Woolf's contribution to criticism.

(Length approximately 1200 words 3 to 4 pages)

Ans. Novelists often think of the problems of writing a novel too. The creative and the critical mind go often hand in hand. In all periods we have instances for this. When one thinks of the problem of conceiving a novel, the art of writing the same and the style to be employed for it, the critical observations of novelists—critics like Henry James, D.H. Lawrence, E.M. Forster. Virginia Woolf and the like—crowd one's mind. *Modern Fiction*, a veritable critical

manifesto shaped by Woolf easily makes her place as a 'creative critic', quite secure and sound.

Modern Fiction, like many of her other essays. *Jane Austen Jane Eyre and Wuthering Heights, George Eliot, The Russian Print of View* etc. included in *Common Reader* shows her distinction and class as a critic. She has a perceptive mind. She has novel ideas. The inherent tendency in her is to view life from a poetic perspective. Not only her thoughts but even her words attest this. As a critic she adopts a bold and original stand. As far as modern fiction is concerned Virginia Woolf is a trail blazer

At the very outset, in *Modern Fiction* she rightly points out the inescapable like between what precede and the works yet to be shaped, or being shaped. The relevance of a wholesome historical survey is stressed. An unavoidable comparison between the writers of the immediate and distant past compels her to come to grips with a stark but stunning reality. With their simple and primitive materials, it might be said, Fielding did well and Jane Austen better, but compare their opportunities with ours! Their masterpieces certainly have a strange air of simplicity (p.184). The very process of writing suggests 'moving'. But this movement need not necessarily hint a movement forward.

Virginia Woolf's boldness and radical vision as a critic is evident in her rather unkind (So say the conventional critics) criticism of Bennett, Wells, Glasworthy and company. She classifies them as materialists. She does not mince her words as critic. She says: "It is because they are concerned not with the spirit but with the feeling that the sooner English fiction turns it back upon them as politely as may be and marches, if only into the desert, the better for its soul" (186). In all these writers the purity of inspiration is at a discount. They hanker after the nonessential with the net result that they totally miss the spirit/soul. She labels them as materialists. By this she means: They write of unimportant things; they spend immense skill and immense industry making the trivial and the transitory appear the true and enduring (p.187) In her view

these writers totally fail to grasp life. And this entails a sad pale spectacle. Life depicted by them becomes hollow. Their people too become shallow." "Life escapes; and perhaps without life nothing else is worth while" (p.188). Only physical details are given. Life seems to be cut to size to suit the number of chapters and their set plots. The disturbing question Virginia Woolf poses is: Is life like this? (189)

As a writer and critic she wants to call a halt to this worthless exercise of painting the husk of life totally missing its kernel. The seer in Woolf is alerted. She is out with the truth. When one looks inwardly life appears radically different from what poor Bennet and Co.embroider. She insists that a true writer should base his work on his own feeling and not upon convention. There is no urgency for plot, comedy, tragedy, love interest or catastrophe in the conventional sense. Life is volatile, inchoate, complex with its own generative principles even defying logic. Woolf asserts. "Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end". (189). She firmly believes that it is the bounden duty of the novelist to convey this uncensored spirit of life with courage and security, even in an unconventional vein. James Joyce is singled out by her for his bold and truthful rendering of life. Here comes the relevance of technique with its psychological mooring. Be faithful to one's own feeling and experience, seems to be her watch word. It is a challenge to the convention-bound writers of her immediate past. She cautions, "Let us not take it for granted that life exists more fully in what is commonly thought big than in what is commonly small". (190) Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses* (only a part of it was out at that time) are cited as instances where one could witness life: true life. She calls Joyce essentially 'spiritual'. Woolf affirms: "He is spiritual, he is concerned at all costs to reveal the flickering of that inner most flame which flashes its messages through the complete courage whatever seems to him

adventitious, whether it be probability or coherence, of any other of these signposts which for generations have served to support the imagination of a reader when called upon to imagine what he neither touch nor see" (1910-191). Hardy, Conrad, Stowe, Jane Austen, Fielding and many others saw life at moments in the right way. Such moments 'live', such moments count. Quite perceptively Virginia Woolf pleads that no method should be examined in isolation of 'the test of the life' There is no need for glorifying a specific method. "Any method is right, every method is right, that express what we wish to express, if we are writers; that brings us closer to the novelist's intention, if we are readers " (192)

Woolf for that the modern writers will be at home with psychological issues. 'The difficulty and richness of his story' "Gusey". The tragic-comic tensions created in this story are a pointer to the psychological possibilities. All this point she rightly stresses, the significance of the Russian writers in general, who are simply superior to their English counterparts at least in delineating soul related issues. Her advice is : "Learn to make your self akin to people...But let this sympathy be not with the mind...but with the heart, with love towards them. "In her opinion the Russian writers are saints for they give sympathy & love for the suffering and try to reach goals of a very exacting nature. Virginia Woolf as a critic is moved by the humane and philosophic stance of the Russian writers. She feels, "The conclusions of the Russian mind, thus comprehensive and compassionate are inevitably perhaps of the utmost sadness. More accurately indeed we might speak of the inconclusiveness of the Russians mind (194) The suffering and understanding of the Russians are of a different order. But the English strain is to enjoy & fight. English fiction from Stern to Meredith proves this point. With commendable discretion Virginia Woolf points out that it is futile to compare "two fictions so immeasurably apart" at the same tremendous possibilities of art. Except falsity and pretence' any method is good.

Virginia Woolf in her own characteristic way rebellious, radi-

cal and poetic affirms, " 'The proper stuff of fiction' does not exist; everything thought, every quality of brain and spirit is drawn upon; no perception comes amiss" (194-195) In her view, if the art of fiction comes alive and stands in our midst, she will ask us to break her and bully her as well as honour and love her. Only thus her youth could be renewed and sovereignty assured.

Virginia Woolf's literary criticism is not one built on complex theories. Hers is an approach based on an organic, psychological and aesthetic perception of fiction as a pulsating spectrum of life turned inward. Moment by moment experience of life becomes the talisman for her creative and critical writing alike. Concerns of spiritual/soul/heart/mind persuade her to plead for a thorough overhauling of the rather outmoded English fiction modes. Surely she is critical of the soulless materialistic fiction. Virginia Woolf fervently pleads for a change: to make fiction relevant to the complex modern life. When all is said and done she yearns fiction to be poetic, psychological and free flowing.

CHARLES DICKENS HARD TIMES

Author and His Works

Charles Dickens pictures the London of 1820s and thirties. He covers the lower and middle class life in nineteenth century London. Dickens writes with a high sense of moral purpose. He shows an obsession with injustice. Dickens' fictional world concentrates on the impact of industrialisation and its social consequence. He presents an enormous range of characters- men, women and children of all classes with a diversity of aims and habits and dispositions. Dickens' world is essentially a male one. Women in his novels appear as absurdities.

Born at Portsmouth on 7th, February, 1812 Charles Dickens had an unhappy childhood and had to begin earning at an early age of twelve as his father landed in debtor's prison. Due to troubled family circumstances, his education was also disrupted. Frustration of childhood hopes and expectations happens to be one of the themes in his novels. After working as a clerk and then as a newspaper reporter in the Parliament, gradually he became a full-time author. His first publication *Sketches of Boz* (1835) evoked a wide range of English life with all its variety. In the absence of tools to probe analytically, Dickens presented characters through conversation. Dickens was also an amateur actor and the conventions of the play and theatre also crept into his writing mode. The conversational idiom that Dickens used in his writing attracted lot of readers, specially common people. Almost for the first time in the history of British fiction, the illiterate people heard their idiom and accent in fiction.

Dickens was a prolific writer who wrote without break, publishing a novel a year. His *Pickwick Papers* was an instant success. All his novels were serialized in monthly magazines and were quite voluminous. Social injustice and evil were his favourite

themes and specially *Oliver Twist* and *Nickolas Nickleby* deal with these aspects. *Great Expectations* and *David Copperfield* are Dickens' autobiographical novels that remind one of Dickens' own frustrated childhood. Our Mutual Friend attacked economic system, not on the basis of theory, but in terms of its effects on human behaviour. His *Tale of Two Cities* has a historical background and deals with French Revolution.

Dickens' view of life arises from his own conviction born out of experience, and based on abstract thought. Even though he had an unhappy wedded life, he valued primary, simple and benevolent impulses of man. He had the tendency to suspect all institutions, churches and charitable societies, government offices, laws etc. because he felt they were attempting to do good by mechanical means, whereas goodness can result only from spontaneous action of the individual. Each novel is an illustration of this philosophy. In every Dickens novel we find natural human kindness vying with soulless cruelty of impersonal institution.

There is a lot of melodrama in his novels. Dickens put his realistic material to artistic use. He chooses the aspects of life which are viable for fantastic treatment. Thus Dickens, the social reformer enriched the medium of fiction through the fertility of his imagination and the extent of his vision.

Hard Times

Hard Times belong to the later phase of Dickens' literary career. His tragic phase in fact begins with Hard Times which is quite unlike other novels of Dickens. The novel is comparatively shorter one. It was originally serialised in Dickens' own weekly *Household Words* in 20 parts from 1 April to 12th. August, 1845. In the earlier novels Dickens presented the evil nature of individuals; but in *Hard Times*, he exposes the evils of a social system and economic policy. The novel is originally and aptly dedicated to Carlyle. It can be defined as an industrial novel. But *Hard Times* is not a documentary picture of what it was like to be a

working man in the Industrial England of 1854. It is an individual criticism of the ways of thinking about the working and living conditions. In other words, it is an analysis of industrialism, rather than experience of it.

Social and Political Background

Hard Times was written in 1854 when introduction of industrialism and development of factory system resulted in increase in economic wealth. But workers including women and children worked up to 15 hours a day in unhealthy conditions where unfenced machinery became a hazard. The towns that had formed to accommodate industrial workers were over-crowded, dark, insanitary causing epidemics. The factory owners treated the workers as cheap labour - as hands. Free enterprise gave the individual industrialists chance to make maximum profit; but there was no legislation to make them spend part of their profit for the welfare of the workers. Then came the commercial crisis in 1847 with the fall of George Hudson, the Railway King. Widespread unemployment, bad harvests etc. worsened the crisis and the workers were badly hit. The Chartist movement was started and there was widespread revolution until 1848. After 1848, restrictions on trade was removed with the repeal of Navigation Acts. The Factory Act of 1844 and 1847 also protected the welfare of the factory workers. Trade Unions were formed to fight for the rights of the workers. The employees went on strike to get their demands and Dickens was very much interested in these contemporary issues. Under these changed circumstances, unlike Dickens' earlier novels, *Hard Times* instead of presenting specific abuses, engaged in picturing the idea, the system of thought behind the growth of industrialism in Britain.

Ideas That Influenced Dickens' World

The growth of political economy coincided with the growth of industrialism. In 1776, Adam Smith set out his economic theory of the factory system in *The Wealth of Nations*. He propagate

division of labour. The employees contribute their individual skills; the employer provides capital equipment and management and each works for the benefit of the other. Employee works for wages, employer for profits and in effect they contribute towards the welfare of all. On the same principle, free trade was advocated between countries; one country can export material that it can produce efficiently and import things that it cannot produce cheaply. In such a context high profits will attract competitors and reduce the price of goods; high wages will attract men thereby reducing the price of labour. The natural price of labour according to Smith is money enough to support his family.

Malthus put forth the theory that manufacturers must be left to increase production to match increasing population. Or else there will be less for everybody and lower standards for all.

The principles of Adam Smith and Malthus were brought together by Ricardo. According to Ricardo if you increase the size of the labour force, wages must go down. Again wages depend on economic law and so must be left to the fair and free competition of the market and should never be controlled by the interference of those who make laws. Deplorable working conditions are something inevitable. It was wrong to interfere with the manufacturer's aim soundly based on self interest to produce as cheaply as to extract the best terms out of his workers. As per this policy of Laissez Fair as the society advances, the lot of the labourer becomes worse.

But then there is the Utilitarian moral theory propagated by Jeremy Bentham, which states that the test of an action by a man or by nation was the extent which it promoted the greatest happiness of the greatest number. The motives of an action are irrelevant to its moral worth; it depends on its result - its utility. An act of charity, for example, motivated by conventional morality, encourages improvidence among the poor - so good intention does not make it right. But Bentham assumed that all human actions are not motivated by self interest and the pursuit of individual self-interest must produce the good of the whole. In effect the employ-

ers could rationalise or justify their selfishness as a duty they owed to the community.

Dickens is also concerned with mid-Victorian education system in *Hard Times*. Until the Education Act of 1870, elementary education was provided by Charity schools, Sunday schools which facilitate employment of children on week days and industrial schools. There were some schools run by philanthropists like Mr. Gradgrind of *Hard Times*. There were also schools run for profit, like Yorkshire schools, exposed by Dickens in *Nicholas Nickleby*. Majority of the schools were managed by the Church of England and British and Foreign School Society. The pupil - teacher system was introduced in 1846 whereby students were trained to be teachers. It was assumed that education was acquisition of knowledge, and Latin and Greek. Dickens already attacked this concept in his *Donbey and Son*. Later the monitorial system was adopted in school - i.e. the factory system was applied to education. Maximum educational production was aimed at for the minimum expenditure. Actual teaching was done by older pupil where the teacher supervised the monitors. The Utilitarians also tried many liberal experiments. The monitorial system was replaced by the simultaneous method of instruction in a gallery room. Dickens' M. Choakumchild's class room is modelled on this and shows what an oppressive form of instruction it is. Swiss educationalist, Pestalozzi believed that education should develop out of children's natural activities and their experiences of the world around them. Practical subjects were added to curriculum and teaching was based on personal observation. When Pestalozzi's ideas were introduced in 1822, there were some omissions. Instead of the children learnt it by rote. In short methods reduced to dogmas and the spirit behind it disappeared. And Dickens talks about the spirit behind these concepts and ideas in *Hard Times*.

Summary

Thomas Gradgrind is a proprietor of an experimental private

school in Coke Town. The children are taught only facts here and there is no place for finer emotions. Fairy tales and nursery rhymes are banned. One day he catches his own children, Tom and Louisa peeping into Sleary's Circus. Gradgrind is sorry about this which goes against the principles under which they are educated. He traces it to the influence of Sissy Jupe whose father was a clown in the Circus. They decide to send away Sissy Jupe from school. But they find that Jupe has already deserted his daughter, and Grandgrind decides to bring up Sissy Jupe under his roof.

Mr. Josian Bounderby is an industrialist friend of Gradgrind. Thomas works in his bank, and is interested in his sister getting married to Bounderby so that he will have support if he gets into trouble at work place. Louisa marries Bounderby who was thirty years her elder. Mrs. Sparsit, Bounderby's housekeeper is in charge of his young pretty wife.

The sub plot revolves round Stephen Blackpool, a powerloom worker in Bounderby's mill. His is unable to divorces his alcoholic wife and is in love with Rachel.

Grandgrind becomes a member of Parliament. He sends Harthouse to gather facts about the industrial city, Coke Town. Harthouse develops an illicit relationship with Louisa. They plan to elope. When Bounderby comes to know about it through the watchful Sparsit, Louisa goes to her father's house. Harthouse runs away. Tom robs Bounderby's bank. Stephen Blackpool becomes a suspect in the robbery. An unknown annual visitor, an old lady - Mrs. Pegler also is suspected. She is proved to be Bounderby's own mother and Bounderby's true nature is revealed. All his stories about his neglected childhood are found to be lies.

Sissy and Rachel go in search of Stephen Blackpool. They find him fallen into a well. He is rescued but dies after clearing the charge of robbery and identifying the actual culprit. Tom is saved from the clutches of law with the help of Sissy Jupe and Sleary. He is shipped away. Mrs. Sparsit is sacked. Mr. Bounderby himself dies a few years later.

Mr. Gradgrind's great expectations about his two elder children Tom and Louisa are tragically thwarted and he becomes a sadder but a wiser and better man. Tom descends through dissipation into crime and Louisa, through an unhappy marriage is tempted to elopement. Mr. Bounderby publicly exposed as having based his whole personality on boastful lies cuts a ridiculous figure. Mrs. Sparsit, Tom, Harthouse everyone is punished. The bad characters are chastised, but the good ones are not rewarded, like Sissy or Rachael.

Title of The Novel

It is a usual practice with Dickens to give the name of the principal character in the novel as its title. *Hard Times* is an exception. Even when he began the novel, he had a list of titles to select from : (1) Mr. Gradgrind's Facts, (2) The Grindstone, (3) Two and Two are Four, (4) Our Hard - Headed Friend, (5) Rust and Dust, (6) Simple Arithmetic, Gradgrind Philosophy, Heads and Tales. These also appears as key phrases in the text.

Hard Times can be justified at the surface level as the novel portrays hard times people had during industrialization. The picture is one of difficult economic conditions in Coketown. At another level it can be interpreted that what makes the times hard, is the hardness in men's heads. The novel shows that wrong ways of thinking makes time hard. The values of the society portrayed in the novel are also hard opposed to the values of the heart and soul, of fancy and wonder. Grandgrind's trade is in wholesale hardware. It is also significant that his house is Stone Lodge. His actions and utterances reflect the values of this hard world. By the time *Hard Times* appeared, the hardness of conditions had been reduced considerably by reforms.

Hard times is an idea added to all the characters. Bounderby is proud of his own hard times while boasting as a self-made man. He was hard on Stephen - hard in spirit, if not as taskmaster. The workers and the trade union leaders were also hard on Stephen.

Tom was also hard on him, all in promotion of self interest.

Structure of the novel

The novel *Hard Times* has a very simple plot. The main plot and sub plot are well connected. The major title *Hard Times* reflects the industrial society: but the sub divisions or parts derive their headings from pre-industrial society. The novel is divided into three sections namely Sowing, Reaping and Garnering. In the first section Sowing - all bad sowings are recorded. Gradgrind's wrong educational policy with emphasis on hard facts, is one wrong sowing and the marriage between Bounderby and Louisa is another. Gradgrind's encounter with Sleary's Circus is also a sowing awaiting reaping. The section on Reaping deals with the climax in the fate of the participants. Tom, the product of Gradgrind's educational system turns out to be a robber. Louisa's mismatch with Bounderby devoid of emotion and sentiments, ends in her seduction by Harthouse, the harvest of moral degradation. Gradgrind who disapproved of circus, finally is saved by circus. Sissy Jupe who is part of the Circus acts as their saviour in many ways. Garnering represents the final fate.

Symbolism in the novel

Due to limitations of serialisation, Coke Town is only described in passing glimpses. Even that limited description is strongly felt because it represents an objective evil favoured by industrialism. The imprisoning street, stifling air of Coke town symbolize the spiritual malaise of that world. Coketown is the prison that shaped characters like Louisa and Stephen Blackpool and the prison where they will die. The town represents the arid waste of their hearts and lives. From the first brilliant description of the factory world, where the elephant's heads represent the movements of machinery, the factory is treated as a living thing. The industrial smoke is linked with hypocrisy and deception. The fire of the Coketown furnaces and the domestic fire in Stone Lodge

represent natural instincts and emotions. Very names of the characters are symbolic. The characters primarily live for the expression of a theme Gradgrind is an incarnation of utilitarian philosophy. The name reminds one of grading and grinding which is what the mechanical Gradgrind does with facts. Bounderby represents Capitalism. Bounderby means cad or indecent man and that is what he is. Bounderby - banker, manufacturer, capitalist represents himself as self-made man and has cut off all personal relationships. For him all connections are in terms of money or power. Human compassion or affection is not known to him at all. He is a braggart, a liar and a repulsive character. He is the embodiment of the aggressive, money-making, power-seeking ideal which is a driving force of industrial revolution. Sissy stands for vitality and goodness. She is generous and an antithesis of calculating self interest of Bounderby. Sleary's Horseriding symbolizes art and the attitude of Gradgrind and Bounderby represents the position of art in Victorian England. Art is reduced to mere entertainment. Representing human spontaneity the circus-athletes represent highly developed skill and deftness that result in poise, pride and confidence. Similarly human kindness and other essential virtues assert amidst ugliness and squalor. Stephen Blackpool is a personification of a victim. This ideal of an honest workman ends up as a martyr and the choice of the Biblical names is an appropriate one.

There are also symbolic situations like Tom and Louisa peeping into circus tent. This symbolizes Children's natural attraction to fancy and imagination. Later Gradgrind peeps into the circus tent and that represents the failure of Gradgrind's philosophy.

Symbolism in Dicken's novel is rather a dimension than an ingredient. It presents the world as such in new perspective. Symbolism does not augment the meaning but simply changes the nature of the books' picture of life.

Irony and Satire

Hard Times is a satire on utilitarian economy. The novel

shows how the utilitarian philosophy works in Gradgrind household. The novel's main plot discredits Gradgrind's policies by showing how miserably they fail in his private life. Louisa's marriage becomes a mismatch and leads her to seduction. Tom ends up in crime. Gradgrind prophesied once that Sissy would become a "living proof to all." She does not prove his theory but proves the value of a good heart - rather she also proves the hollowiness of his teaching. Gradgrind keeps his children away from circus which is against facts, and for fancy. But finally it is Sleary and Sissy who rescue Tom by disguising him in the circus. Such ironical situations bound while satirising the thoughts and ideas. Through his presentation of M'choakumchild, Dickens is also criticising the educational schemes of that age. Divorce laws are criticised through Stephen Blackpool. There is a slight attack on caste system too. For example in the case of Mrs. Sparsit whose ambition and position in the social scheme are at variance. Harthouse shows the decay that results out of rank, in the absence of character.

Grotesque caricature is one of his chief means of presenting 'evil'. Dickens presents caricature in terms of distortion of natural values. Mr. Gradgrind, Mr. Bounderby and Mrs. Sparsit are some of the caricatures in *Hard Times*. Repetition of the word 'fact' in association with Gradgrind is a device of caricature.

Mrs. Sparsit is one of great caricatures. We do not hear about her characteristic traits; but are shown. Initially her physical appearance is delineated with her Coriolanian nose and contracted eyebrows. This word picture is further coloured by what she is and how she says.

Mr. Bounderby is presented as a caricature in the realistic form of humour. He has the absurd pride of the self-made man. Picture of Mrs. Bounderby illustrates that caricature in *Hard Times* is seen as a man's self - inflicted distortion. At the same time they are also related to the forces and need of the industrial society. Dickens compares the natural man, the corrupt distortion and in between rises a caricature with some implied natural inner life.

However since humour is absent in *Hard Times*, caricature technique fights a losing battle.

Moral Fable

Critics have attributed various descriptive phrases to *Hard Times*: "a moral fable, the romance as radical literature", "a fairy tale with realistic elements." It is a fable as it tells an unusual story in an interesting way. It does not offer a realistic or fair-minded or comprehensive account of industrial life. He is using "fanciful means to express his sense of an important aspect of some facts about his society. *Hard Times* relies heavily upon mouthpiece characters. Mr. Sleary and Stephen are used as didactic commentators and he consciously gives them noticeable speech habits. Mr. Sleary has a kind of lisp and Stephen speaks in broad dialect.

Topics for Discussion:

Hard Times as satire.

Hard Times as a moral fable

Symbolism in *Hard Times*

Caricature in *Hard Times*

Short notes on Sleary's circus, Mrs. Sparsit, M'choakumchild, Sissy Jupe

Books for further reading

F.R. Leavis: *The Great Tradition*

Philip Hobau: *A Readers Guide to Dickens*

Twentieth Century Interpretations of Hard Times,

ed. Paul Edward Gray, 1969

Arnold Kettel in *From Dickens to Hardy*, Pelican

Guide to English Literature: Ed. Brois Ford.

GEORGE ELIOT THE MILL ON THE FLOSS

AUTHOR AND HER WORKS:

George Eliot is considered to be the first modern novelist. Her real name is Mary Evans. Born on 22nd November, 1819 at Warwickshire, she was the youngest child of her father's second marriage. Father Robert Evans was a carpenter. When he married a woman who had been in service with the Newdigate family, he was appointed as their estate bailiff. Four years later, his wife died and he married Christina Pearson, thereby graduated himself into the new middle class created by the industrial revolution. This middle class supplies the characters and background of George Eliot's early novels. Her own mother's family is represented by the Dodsons whom we meet in her *The Mill on the Floss*. George Eliot had an elder sister and a brother Isaac whom she adored as passionately as Maggie adores Tom Tulliver. Her father moved to conventary to spend his retired life. She lived with him and nursed him to the end. Here she made friends with the Brays & Hemetls and this resulted in a change in her religious opinions. After a trip abroad with the Brays, she became the editor of the Westminster Review. In London she met George Henry Lewes, a prolific journalist, critic and philosopher. Lewes was married to a faithless wife, was separated from her, but could not obtain divorce. George Eliot lived with him and that was a step that placed a woman beyond the social place in Victorian society. It is her first-hand experience of the malicious gossip and condemnation by her family and friends that is reflected in the suffering of Maggie. She had also first-hand experience of the sexual passion. She describes as felt by Maggie—a description revolutionary in Victorian fiction which made a lasting impression on D.H. Lawrence. *The Mill on the Floss* is a study of her own childhood and girlhood. Maggie's upbringing in the rural surrounding of the

Mill has poetic qualities. Lawrence applied this approach to Paul Morel's boyhood in his *Sons and Lovers*. *The Mill on the Floss* is considered to be her spiritual autobiography. In fact, all her novels are biographies.

She adopted a pen name for herself partly to avoid the prejudice against women writers and partly perhaps to shield herself from direct criticism. It was Lewes who encouraged her to try her hand at fiction, partly in the hope of alleviating their poverty. She chose 'George' of her pseudonym because it was Lewes name and 'Eliot' was added because it was "good, mouth-filling, easily pronounced word", she says. Lewes died in 1878. Then she married J.W. Cross who became her first biographer. Few months after this marriage she died in 1880.

Her first publication *Scenes of Clerical Life* (1858), came out in serial form in The Westminster Review, was well received. *Adam Bede* is her first fulllength novel. *Silas Marner* (1861) is a Midland story.

In 1863, she brought out *Romola*, telling the story of the Italian Renaissance, mainly set in Florence. *Felix Holt* (1866) is a tale of Victorian Radicalism. *Daniel Deronda* (1876) is a sympathetic story of Anglo - Jewish life. *The Mill on the Floss* (1860) and *Middlemarch* (1872) are her popular novels.

George Eliot creates the middle and lower class England of the nineteenth century Midland out of the world of her own personal experience. With her the novel ceased to be primarily an entertainment. She made it a medium for the discussions of the serious problems and preoccupations of mature life. Henry James remarks that the novel for her was "not primarily a picture of life, capable of deriving a high value from its form, but a moralized fable, the last word of philosophy endeavouring to teach by example" The usual pattern of her novels rests on the unfolding of an individual drama within a copiously rendered social medium. George Eliot resembles Jane Austen in the way her central characters are rooted in their social environment which shapes the

story. But George Eliot's social environment is wider, more complex, made up of greater variety of minor characters drawn from many more social and economic levels. She was also conscious of the ethical, religious and social conventions of the world she presents, as it evolved and changed with times. In her novels, she concentrated on the pressure all these exert on the individual lives and on the problem connected with resisting or succumbing to the pressure. The underlying pattern of her novels consists of an inner circle of a small group of individuals involved in a moral dilemma, surrounded by an outer circle of a social world. In other words, her novels present individual tragedy, surrounded by the life of a community.

She differs from her predecessors in the fact that her books are constructed round an idea. She is an innovator in being an intellectual in her approach to her subject. Her plots are always the logical development of that idea. So much so that there may not be a hero or heroine or a central figure of any kind. She did not begin with the personality that appeared to the outward world, but with psychological elements underlying the personality. We do not remember her major characters by their appearance; she always gave us the portrait of the inner man. If Jane Austen presented the familiar domestic characters, George Eliot indulged in the presentation of extraordinary people. David Cecil remarks; "She could not look at her characters as individuals as Dickens, or as examples of human variety or representatives of a social class like Thackeray. She saw them as thinkers, as politicians, as immortal souls". The philosophical range, moral dedication, powers of characterisation, ability to portray English society with complexity and insight have made George Eliot a leading novelist.

THE MILL ON THE FLOSS: A Summary

Doricote Mill stood on the banks of the River Floss near the village of St.Ogg's. Mr.Tulliver owned the mill. Mrs. Tulliver's sisters, who had married well criticized Mr. Tulliver, Tom was sent to Mr.Stelling's school. Philip Wakem, a cripple, son of a lawyer who

was his fathers enemy also joins the same school. Tom was not very good in his studies whereas Philip was intelligent. Maggie met Philip when she visited Tom and they became friends. Maggie went to school with her cousin Lucy. Tulliver had a law suit, defended by Wakem. He lost the suit and lost all his property. Wakem bought up his debts and Mr. Tulliver suffered a stroke Maggie and Tom could not afford to go to school. Tom took a job in a warehouse and studied book-keeping each night. Bob Jakin, a country lout, offered to help Tom. Tom borrowed money from Aunl Glegg and started business with Wakem. He made Tom swear that he would wish Wakem evil as long as he lived. Maggie was asked to have nothing to do with Philip, for ever. Tom warned Philip also to keep away from Maggie. Mr.Tultiver thrashed Mr.Wakem and suffered another irrecoverable stroke. Maggie, a teacher visited Lucy where she met Stephen Gust, who was to marry Lucy. Philip was their common friend knowing about Lucy's father's plans to buy back the mill for Tom. Philip urges Wakem to sell the mill. Stephen tries to kiss Maggie at a dance. Magie is in a fix. She is indebted to Lucy and cannot allow Stephen to fall in love with her. Her affection for Tom prevented her from marrying Philip. Both Philip and Stephen urged her separately to marry them. Lucy did not suspect Stephen's indifference. Stephen took Magie boating and urged her to run away with him. She refused. The tide carried them far and they were forced to spend the night in the boat. Maggie faces the wrath of her relatives. Tom turns her out of mill, promising her money to keep her. He never wished to see her again. Mrs. Tulliver decides to go with her. Bob Jakin took them in Magie suffers ostracism and wondered whether there could be love for her without pain for others. One day a terrible flood ravaged St.Ogg's. Knowing that Tom will be at the mill, Maggie attempted to reach him in a boat. The two were reunited and Tom took over the rowing of the boat. Flood overwhelmed them and they were both drowned. Temptation is conquered, error atoned, and love reconciled, the life is complete.

MILL ON THE FLOSS, As Psychological Novel

Psychological fiction can be defined in different senses, In some novels the author uses probing methods of introspection and analysis to bring out the mental make up of the characters. In some other variety of psychological novels, the author presents the flow of inner thought through techniques like stream of consciousness. Dickens' *David Copperfield* is also a kind of psychological fiction in the sense that the surface life reflects the inner self of the characters. *The Mill on the Floss* is a psychological novel in a different sense. Here the novelist psychologically portrays the mental development of its characters, Maggie in particular. Joan Bennet sees the novel as "the outcome of a child's memories focussed and selected by mature intelligence". We seen in the novel the feeling and development of the child Maggie not only as the child feels it but also as the mature artist comprehends.

Throughout her life Maggie suffers psychologically. The entire novel is a "struggle towards maturity". Her life is a pilgrim's progress. George Eliot in *The Mill on the Floss* deals psychologically with Maggie's progress from illusion and self love to enlightenment and maturity. Her emotional and spiritual stresses, her exultations and renunciations belong to the different stages of her development. Maggie believes in one set of principles as child. But as adult, she subscribes to a different set of principles. Throughout her life and specially in her childhood, she longs for love and affection. From her father, she gets it to certain extent, being his favourite child. Her father does not understand her mind but she understands that he loves her. Maggie, the child faces criticism from all corners. As a child, she acts as a rebel. She continues to suffer ostracism when she becomes an adult. But in her adulthood she learns to renounce. The novel is seen as an "epic of human soul, traced through childhood, development and temptation".

It is a psychological novel in the sense that it traces the influence of all the home associations on the young girl's mind. Tom has a strong influence on her. She never wants to do anything that

will hurt Tom. Her father's love has a lasting impression on her. She reacts to the opinions of all her aunts. Philip Wakem influences her at the intellectual level. George Eliot not only pictures the inner working of Maggie but traces the effect of one upon the other. Besides the individual impulse, formative influences of childhood memories, hereditary influence of family tradition contribute in the shaping of Maggie's character.

Determinism as Philosophy of Life

The Mill on the Floss deals with peculiar sorrows encountered by a girl of quick feeling and high aspirations under diverse circumstances. George Eliot did not believe in heaven and hell and miracles but she believed in right and wrong and man's obligation to follow right. She was sure that one can not escape the consequence of one's actions. By placing the responsibility of a man's life firmly on individual and his moral choices, she changed the nature of the English novel. George Eliot accepted the belief that.

"The Gods are just, and our pleasant vices Make instruments to plague us"

In her novels, there are occasions in which a character is forced into the action by some internal compulsion. Maggie's moral conflict in the end whether to reject Philip Wakem and Stephen Guest is the best example. The typical George Eliot story shows how a character under the influence of strong social pressures, reveals certain flaws in his character, which in combination with the social pressures, cause his moral failure. But it is important the George Eliot holds him responsible for his own characters and motives.

Determinism for her is not a right depressing system but an aspect of the world she dramalized. She knew that somehow evil was to be avoided and her interest was not in finding someone to blame for it, but in aborting it.

There are three basic levels of determinism.

1. The world is rightly determined and, in fact there is no such thing as human responsibility. The concept of predeterminism suggests some supernatural power designing beforehand the course of things. George Eliot's novels are not fatalistic and do not come under this category.

2. Eventhough almost everything is determined, man is free and therefore responsible for his choice. A man's life according to George Eliot, is at the centre of a web of causes which exert pressures on him from outside and come into direct conflict with his own desires and motives. (e.g.) Maggies's moral choice. She struggles between her individual impulses and social pressures, She loves Philp, but Tom's strictures, her family background, come up before she makes the choice. In her passion to be loved, she finds solace in Stephen Guest's attention. But she resists the temptation when she thinks of Lucy and her own family background.

3. The world rigidly determined cases of human choice; but man remains responsible for his actions. George Eliot's belief in a man, his ability to learn and grow, his obligation to follow the prompting of duty, is the basis of her concept of determinism.

George Eliot condemns coincidence and chance. Nothing according to her happens accidentally. Chance in her novel is always associated with evil. Maggie and Stephen while boating, are driven away from the shore by tides and are forced to spend the night in the boat. Maggie fights with her temptations; she is condemned by her relatives in spite of her explanations and Tom turns her out. Possibility of this kind of occurrence which is out of the working of natural laws became for her signs of moral weakness.

Hardly accepts Novalis in believing "Character is Fate". George Eliot questions this dictum openly in *The Mill on the Floss* by adding.... "But not the whole of our desiny".....the tragedy of our lives is not created from within. She allows for reciprocal action of character and circumstance. In her novel *Adam Bede*, she says "Our deeds determine us as much as we determine our deeds" George Eliot insists that every man should exercise his

will. That does not mean every man is capable of his choice. But man is capable of altering his character by willing to alter it. Maggie does not surrender passively to her impulses. There is interaction between the passion and family circumstances and social pressures. George Eliot accepts the existence of positive evil in this world. The evil becomes operative only when man commits a moral lapse, out of his weakness. Egoism and self indulgence she considers as sources of suffering and Maggie has them in abundance. Man is free to exercise his will. Once he make a bad choice, he suffers the effect or consequences of it. But the sinner does not suffer alone and the evil spreads. There is compassion for the erring soul and hence discretion in the exercise of one's choices. Eliot's world is a world of national order, or mutual aid and responsibility.

Symbolism in The Mill on the Floss

George Eliot proposed various titles for her novel, like *The Tullivers*, *Maggie Tulliver*, *Sister Maggie*, *The House of Tulliver* etc. Finally John Blackwood suggested the poetic title "The Mill on the Floss" which also increases the symbolic significance of the mill and the river. For the first time in the history of British fiction, the novel disclosed the family life of the English farmer and the class to which he belongs. The mill on the river in a way becomes an important element in the novel, as St. Ogg's and the mill are the immediate venues of the novel. But as the focus shifts from the growth of the heroine Maggie in the domestic and social context to her inner life of mind and feelings, the mill and the river act as symbols. "A scene, character or incident becomes symbolic simply by the author's treatment of it or by its place in the context of the total work" says W.J. Harvey. It may be basic to the meaning of the novel or as it happens in *The Mill on the Floss*, it may be recurrent or pervasive.

The river is there in the literal sense. It governs the lives and destinies of all the characters in the novel. It is a source of Mr.

Tulliver's ruin; it is a source of Bob Jalin's livelihood; it is the means of Maggie's death. Mrs Tulliver's refrain "wandering up and down by the water, like a wild thing she'll tumble in some day", gives a symbolic touch to the river. The novel abounds in a large number of images related to the river. "Flood of emotion", "current of feeling", "stream of variety" and such expressions are used freely in the novel. The flood in fact, helps the novelist to round off the plot and that way the river has a symbolic function in the novel. The river is not only there as an actual presence but it provides terms which can illuminate the inner life of the characters. The literal course of the river and Maggie's moral choice are combined in a symbolic phrase. "There was no choice of courses, no room for hesitation and she floated into the current". Psychological or moral states are generally presented in imagery derived from the river. Stephen feels "the stream of his recollections running rather shallow". Philip and Maggei face a situation "when feeling, rising high above its average depth, leaves flood -marks which are never reached again" Maggie's relations with Stephen is defined. "The tremulous delight of his presence with her that made existence an easy floating in a stream of joy".

(In Hardy's novels, the health lives with the readers through and through, and it is closely connected with the characters. But here the river does not act upon the people directly. It is not the life and death symbol. It is not predefined. It is not a character. It is symbolized in the sense that it plays an important role in the childhood of Maggie and Tom, specially Maggie.)

Mill also plays an important role in the novel. There is a superstition that when the mill changes hands, calamity occur. The events in the novel so much depend on this belief. George Eliot also uses a lot of animal imagery in the novel.

Topics for Discussion

1. Family traditions portrayed in the novel
2. Character of Tom
3. Portrayal of Childhood

4. *The Mill on the Floss* as a psychological novel
5. Philosophy of life presented in the novel
6. Conflict between individual impulses and social pressures

Books for Reference

1. Joan Bennet : *George Eliot Her Mind and Her Art*
2. R.T. Jones: *Goerge Eliot*.

VIRGINIA WOOLF : TO THE LIGHTHOUSE

Virginia Woolf belongs by upbringing to an intellectual setup. She is the daughter of Leslie Stephen, distinguished editor of the Cornhill Magazine, friendly with quite a few literary figures. He was himself the compiler of Dictionary of National Biography. Virginia Woolf was born on January 25th 1882, a week before the birthday of James Joyce. She died in the same year as Joyce in 1941. Virginia lost her mother at an early age and this only increased her shy nature and sad mood. Shortly after her mother's death she also lost her older sister in child birth. These life experiences amounted to Woolf's view of life as an arbitrary trickster. Her father also died in 1904. When her sister Vanessa married Clive Bell, they moved to a house in Bloomsbury, the literary district. Virginia Woolf, with Civil Bell and E. M. Forster, Lytton Strachey formed the Bloomsbury group. Virginia married Leonard Woolf with whom she established the Hogarth Press, which published her own novels and other works

Mrs. Woolf began her literary career writing reviews and occasional articles and also fighting for women's rights. Her first novel *Voyage Out* (1915) and *Night and Day* (1920) were quite conventional in content and traditional novels in style. In 1922 *Jacob's Room* came out. She made her mark with *Mrs. Dalloway* (1923) and her *To the Lighthouse* became her masterpiece. *Waves* (1931) is also a significant work written after World War II.

Mrs. Woolf is also better known for her non-fiction writings

like the *Common Reader* and *A Room of One's Own*. She offered her ideas about the novel in her well-known essay entitled "Modern Fiction". *A Room of One's Own* deals with the problems facing the female writer. Even though she appreciated the workmanship in the novels of Bennett, Wells and Galsworthy, she disagreed with them in their portrayal of trivial. She believed that presentation of a plot and tragedy and comedy and love-interest falsify truth.

"Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end".

Adhering to this theory, she changed the structure of the novel and found original ways of presenting new subjects and new feelings.

TO THE LIGHTHOUSE : A Summary

To the Lighthouse has no easily recognizable story. Virginia Woolf, quite unlike E.M. Forster who said in *Aspects of the Novel* "Yes, the novel tells a story" believed that life can not be summarized in "two and thirty chapters." So *To the lighthouse* has no plot; but only a scheme and a motive. Characters are presented in outline. The single main action in the novels is the journey to Lighthouse, which is thwarted in the beginning and is accomplished at the end of the novel. The Ramsay family from London is on their annual holiday in their house on an island in the Hebrides. No particular place is mentioned but the reader gets a general impression of rock, sand and sea. It is a symbolic setting. Mr. Ramsay is a professor of Philosophy, preparing a lecture in Cardiff on Locke, Hume, Berkeley. Mrs. Ramsay, much admired for her beauty, knows life in an intuitive way. They have eight children: four sons and four daughters; Andrew, Roger Jasper, James (youngest), Rose, Nancy, Cam and Prue. Six guests have been invited to spend the holiday with them. Lily Briscoe, unmarried is painting a picture in modern style. William Bankes, a widower is an old friend. Augustus Carmichael is an old poet. Mita Doyle

and Paul Rayley being urged into marriage by Mrs. Ramsay.

The novel revolving round these varied characters is a reflective book, with an ironical or wistful questioning of life and reality. Nothing concrete happened in this household of odd nice people; yet the tragic futility, the absurdity and the pathetic beauty of life is revealed. Temporarily isolated from the society, these people represent the microcosm of the society and the book is a study of human relationships.

The novel is divided into three parts. The first part is almost stationary, in which people are gathered in and around the house. Mrs. Ramsay sits at the window reading a fairy tale to little James. As she reads, she reflects on her children, and her guests. She is worried about Minta and Paul. She and James plan to go to the Lighthouse the next morning but Mr. R. predicts bad weather. Tansley supports him. Mrs. Ramsay is knitting a stocking for the son of the keeper in the lighthouse. Amidst this unconnected exchanges and reflections, characters are discussed from different perspectives. Mr. Ramsay is seen through the eyes of Mrs. Ramsay, young James, Lily and Mr. Bankes. Mrs. R. is commented upon by Lily, Tansley and Mr. Bankes. Mr. Bankes is discussed by Lily and Lily is seen through Mrs. R. Tansley is seen through Lily's and Mrs. R's perspectives. The climax of this part is the dinner given by Mrs. R. Party sits down at dinner and the candles are lit. In effect each solitary ego, with its pretty aggravations and resentments is gradually blended with the others into a pattern of completion and harmony.

Part II 'Time Passes' is a very short but effective section. It portrays the ravages of time on the family and the house. Mrs. R. suddenly dies and the death is simply reported in parenthesis. Prue marries and dies. Andrew is killed in the war. House is devastated. Mrs. McNab, the housekeeper who laments on the disintegration revives the memory of the people and cleans up the building. The section dramatises that forces of destruction are defeated by man's power and will to live

Part III deals with a day after ten years. Surviving Ramsays and two of the former guests are in the house. By way of action or happening the earlier thwarted plan of going to the lighthouse is completed as Mr. R. takes Cam and James to the lighthouse. Lily at home follows their progress to the Lighthouse mentally. As they reach the Lighthouse she gets a vision and completes her picture. James and Cam surrender their antagonism and there is a new understanding between Ramsay and his children. This final section presents the relation between art and life. Surrender of personality results in the achievement of form in human relations.

Autobiographical Element

Virginia Woolf herself declares in her diary in May 1925 that her aim in writing *To the Lighthouse* is "to have (her) father's character done complete in it and mother's" - the centre is father's character. Mr. Ramsay is quite suggestive of Leslie Stephen notable in the habit of shouting poetry, in his dislike of long dinner parties. Mrs. Ramsay is also a replica of Julie Stephen who was a match-maker, who cared for the poor, who knitted when children played cricket and has the habit of exaggerating.

Stream of Consciousness

With *To the Lighthouse*, Virginia Woolf finds a very different narrative voice. Here the author as narrator or acts objectively disappears. Every fact or detail appears by way of reflection in the consciousness of the characters. Writers like James Joyce introduced the stream of consciousness technique to record the impressions of the mind. Woolf improves upon it by using multiple points of view. For example details about the characters and their action are not given systematically, but have to be deduced from what the other characters think or say. Not one person's consciousness but many persons' point of view is presented. There are frequent shifts from one to the other. In the opening scene of the novel the consciousness shifts between Mrs. R. James and the

narrator. The advantage is that we build up a composite picture of the characters from internal and external views of them. The readers also become aware of the reality that life is seen differently by different people.

As Mrs. R. reads the story to James; her mind is filled with thoughts about her children. Similarly external events intrude upon the inner feelings of the character. For example, Mrs. R. is able to relax in her own thoughts, listening to the habitual sound of children playing cricket or Mr. R. Chanting poetry. This shift from inner thoughts to external events, in fact produces a rhythm in the novel. Several thoughts interspersed by simultaneous action, give a life-like account of the characters.

Art and Literature

The relationship between art and literature is stressed in *To the Lighthouse* in its form and content. The presentation of Lily Briscoe, as artist and creator has a significant role to play in connecting life and art, art and literature. Lily Briscoe's canvas and her picture in progress runs parallel to the presentation of Ramsay family, in two phases - with Mrs. R. and without her.

Virginia Woolf in "A Sketch of the Past" says: "the whole world is a work of art; that we are parts of the work art." The work of art naturally is based on patterning. By capturing something of life the artist sees and makes it eternal in literature of art. The whole novel *To the Lighthouse* is this patterning of human relationship, thought, surrender of personality. Art and life are visibly connected in the novel, in the way Lily completes her painting when Ramsays reach the Lighthouse and weave out a pattern of homogeneous relationships shedding ill feelings and hatred. Lily finishes the painting as she feels a kind of sympathy for Ramsay, previously she was unable to give. The confusion resulting from the war and the deaths in the family prevent the shaping of a perfect whole and this life situation is reflected in Lily's art through the space in the centre of her painting.

Lily's canvas can be seen as Mrs. Woolf's view of reality - her wish to make "life stand still". Life is flux and capturing and fixing reality is the artist's activity. Life is kept still in the novel.

The artist works and reworks the same canvas just like Lily. Similarly Virginia Woolf tries to capture significant moments in life through shifting consciousness.

The characters in the novel find literature and art helpful in making sense of life. Mrs. R. reads Grimm's fairy tale "The Fisherman and His Wife" to James. The story probably reflects Mrs. Ramsay's role in the Ramsay family. Mr. R. Finds delight and gains inspiration in reading Walter Scott. Poems like "Charge of the Light Brigade" are also quoted by the characters.

Symbolism in the Novel

Setting itself is symbolic as the locale is not specified - but only an impression of sand, rock and sea is created. David Daiches sees the Lighthouse standing lonely in the midst of the sea, as a symbol "of the individual who is at once a unique being and a part of the flux of history. To reach the lighthouse is to make contact with a truth outside oneself, to surrender uniqueness of one's ego to an impersonal reality". The Journey to the Lighthouse symbolises the journey from egotism to impersonality. At the start of the book, the plan to go to the Lighthouse is thwarted because the characters are all clothed in their own egotistic feelings and contradictions. They are allowed to reach the destination only after travail, war, death and gaining of wisdom. Such experience is necessary to the attainment of balance of mind which is the proof of impersonality. The light house can also be seen as Mrs. Ramsay herself. The Lighthouse is a cynosure of all eyes and it gives direction to all travellers. Mrs. Ramsay also is very much admired for her beauty and she gives direction to everybody in the novel. Mrs. R and the Lighthouse are distant and unapproachable. The body of water that leads to the Light-house is the sea of flux, the river of consciousness or life itself.

Virginia Woolf wrote to Roger Fry in 1927, "I meant nothing by the Lighthouse. One has to have a central line down the middle of a book to hold the design together. I saw that all sorts of feelings would accrue to this, but I refused to think them out, and trusted that people would make it the deposit of their own emotions". From a distance, to the child James, the "Lighthouse was then a silverly misty-looking tower with a yellow eye that opened suddenly and softly in the evening". At close quarters, James could "see the whitewashed bricks; the tower, stark and straight" He asks "So that was the Lighthouse, was it? No, the other was also the Lighthouse. For nothing was simply one thing." Light and shadow of the Lighthouse can be a representation of the rhythm of joy and sorrow, understanding and misunderstanding.

The Lighthouse can also be seen as part of the imagery of light and dark. The long stroke of the lighthouse light represents Mrs. R. David Daiches also dwells on the colour symbolism in the novel. Red and brown he associates with individuality and egotism and with Mr. R. Blue and green represent impersonality.

The characters even though identified as individuals are types. Mrs. Ramsay and Mr. R. represent the union of intuition and intellect. Here in fact intuition reigns over intellect. After Mrs. Ramsay's death, Mr. R's intellect blunders until he regains his equilibrium on the arrival at the lighthouse where he encounters her spirit. The name Lily also suggests purity. Mr. Bankes, the scientific mind prefers solitary perfection to immersion in human involvement, also has a symbolic significance in his name. Myth of Deweter and Persephone explains the seasonal changes in nature and also gives an idea about rebirth and death. The myth can also be related to man - woman relationship in marriage.

Topics for Discussion

1. Narrative technique in the novel
2. Symbolism and imagery
3. Title of the novel
4. *To the Lighthouse* as a study of human relationship:

- (i) Man - Woman relationship.
- (ii) Oedipal complex - James hatred for his father; Cam's love for her father.
- (iii) Mrs. R. as an eternal mother.

Books for further reading

C. Sprague (ed) *Virginia Woolf: Twentieth Century Views*
Case Book Series on *To the Lighthouse*

Prepared by

DR. P. GEETHA,

School of Letters, M.G. University

JOSEPH CONRAD

HEART OF DARKNESS

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joseph Conrad (Jozef Teoder Konrad Korzeniowski) was born a Pole in a land owning class. He was born on 3 December 1857. However when Conrad was born his father had already lost the family estates in the 1830 rebellion against Russia. Conrad's father, Applo, was a translator of Shakespeare and Victor Hugo and he was himself a poet. But his political leaning against the Tsarist Russia lands him first in prison and later leads to exile. The family was deported to a place in northern Russia when Conrad was only four years old. His mother Ewa dies of tuberculosis when he was seven years and three years after his mother's death, father and son are permitted to return and they come to settle down in Cracow.

A Year after their return to Cracow, Conrad's father too dies

of tuberculosis. And left in the custody of his maternal uncle, Tadeusz Bobrowski, Conrad finds the Cracow school to be boring and proposes going to sea. In order to dissuade him, his uncle send him on a tour of Switzerland and in 1874 Conrad leaves for Marseilles with an annual allowance of two thousand francs from his uncle.

At a very early age itself Conrad was intrigued by the science of geography. He was strongly attracted towards maps. In one of his last essays, Conrad observes how he "got no marks at all" for the paper he wrote at the age of thirteen on the Arctic exploration. He further recounts here that he had then the names of the explorers, navigators and travelogue-writers for his friends or companions and not the more usual names of the popular characters in Fiction.

However, Conrad seems to have read with interest Yeats, D.G. Rossetti, Arthur Symons and others of his own time. Thus, critics aver that the forcefulness of his diction he must have derived from them.

Though Conrad took to the sea, even there he switched from one position to another quite frequently. Thus, when he was unable to continue as an apprentice on the ship *Mont Blanc*, and later as a steward with a salary of thirty-five francs per month, Conrad took to gunrunning from Marseilles to Spain for the cause of the Carlist party. But soon he ended up in deep debt and gambled away borrowed money. Finding himself in such a tight spot, Conrad attempted to commit suicide by shooting in his chest. However he was saved and later in that same year of 1878 he joined as a deck-hand on the British freighter *Mavis*. Thereafter he continued for about sixteen years in the British merchant navy until he retired to full-time writing.

Conrad passed the exams as second mate and voyaged to Bangkok, Singapore and Madras. During his voyages as a second mate only the conception of the narrative *Youth and The Nigger* of the "Narcissus" Originated. But in December 1884, he wrote

the exams again and passed as first mate and got the Master Mariner's certificate two years later. In the meanwhile, Conrad was given the naturalized British Citizenship.

Only with the publication of *Almayer's Folly* in 1895, Conrad somewhat settled down to a career of a writer. His first book was well received and with this publication only he got his name anglicized from Jozef Konrad to Joseph Conrad.

In 1896, at the age of 38, he married Jessie George, a secretary fifteen years younger than him. He found his wife to be "a very good comrade" and had two sons - Borys and John - by her.

It was when Conrad started publishing his works that he made friendship with Edward Garnett and, later with Ford Madox Ford. His friendship with the latter turned out to be a long-sustained one until it ended with bitterness in 1909. However, it was with Ford Madox Ford that Conrad collaborated to produce several potboilers. The period of his friendship with Ford Madox Ford seems to have been the most productive one in Conrad's life.

Towards the end of his life, Conrad got involved in the Polish nationalist movement and was disgusted when England refused to intervene against Russia in support of the nationalist struggle. He became pessimistic and later declined the Knighthood offered by the British Government.

Conrad died of a heart attack in 1924 and he was buried in Canterbury.

Conceptual Background / Historical Factors

The novel *Heart of Darkness* was directly born of Conrad's own voyage to and experience in the heart of Africa, the Congo. Having resigned his first only command of the ship *Otago* in 1889 Conrad sought the help of a distant relative of his to find himself a position. Unfortunately this relative, Aleksander Poradowski, dies and Conrad then approaches his widow, Marguerite, to get his command of a steamboat from the Belgian company for commerce with trade for about a thousand miles along the Congo River, Fi-

nally by June 1890, he got a three-year contract from the Belgian colonial firm.

Even as a boy, Conrad somehow had developed a fascination for the dark continent, Africa. His boyhood interest in geography and maps and travel writing of navigators prompted him, at the age of nine, to put his finger at the "blankest of blank spaces" in Africa and say with "an amazing audacity" that "when I grow up I shall go there". Thus almost a quarter of a century after, Conrad had his boyhood wish to go to the Congo realized. However, his experiences on the Congo River were not altogether pleasant. He suffered malaria and attacks of rheumatism and was psychologically shocked by the sight of the cruel oppression of the natives in the name of colonization.

Nineteenth century being the age of imperialism, the dark continent of Africa was focussed upon by the European imperialists. While France, Portugal and Britain were vying with each other to occupy the jungle continent, the Belgian King Leopold II shrewdly took the Congo region of Africa to himself with an excuse to free itself of slavery. Emphasizing the need to eradicate the slave-trade in Africa, Leopold called for the formation of an international African Association. And quite cleverly, the King became the president of the Association and he was entrusted with the Congo region for upliftment. Thus, in 1885 King Leopold II established the Congo Free State.

King Leopold was ambitious of building a richer and more powerful Belgium and therefore carved out the Congo for the purpose. But the Congo was, with the formation of the international African Association, given to the personal charge of Leopold. He was allowed the administrative and legislative supremacy of the Congo region. Thus the Congo which is about eighty times the size of Belgium came under the control of Leopold. And as it was left to the personal estate of the King, and was not made a dependency of the Belgian State, Leopold resorted to encourage colonial firms to exploit the jungle continent. Permission to estab-

lish along the Congo River was sanctioned on personal and concessional bases by Leopold to the colonial firms. Allowing these firms to extort labour from the native and to exploit the land of its natural resources of ivory, rubber and palm oil, Leopold sought profit.

As Leopold's promise of building railway line at his own personal expense did not materialize much, the firms in Congo started extracting cheap labour from the natives. And those who attempted to flee and thereby escape forced labour and those rebels' who refused to work ruthlessly punished. The condition worsened with the colonials adopting more stringent measures to extort profit out of the alien land. It is said that between 1893 and 1901 itself about three million Africans died of European, imperialist abuse. The oppression of the Congolese and the exploitation of the land continued till the death of Leopold in 1908. The revenue collected from draining the Congo of its natural resources was used to adorn European capitals. Conrad's experience in Congo belongs to the year of 1890 which is five years after the establishing of Leopold's Congo Free State. And the attendant evils of Colonial oppression had not mitigated in no way even when Conrad started writing the novel years after his actual visit to the heart of darkness. But the narrative seems to skirt the issue of imperialist abuses and, quite curiously, it is not a direct indictment of colonialism. With the heaving metaphoric sense of the journey and the suggestiveness of the language employed by Conrad, the novel only imparts a generalised, bleakness as to the condition of man.

Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* was initially serialized in a monthly magazine in the year 1899. And Conrad was aware that this novel, though had the colonization of Africa for its setting background, did not deal with imperialism in the main and the narrative had little focus on individual characters. Thus, it appears that the author never intended it to be a statement on imperialism in particular. The narrator - protagonist's chief concern seems to be the

laying bare of mankind's inherent tendency towards cruelty and sadism and the potential towards a certain destructiveness

Summary of the Novel

The novel *Heart of Darkness* is a story recounted by the narrator-protagonist, Marlow, who undertook a journey in the African continent. After several years since the actual journey to the Congo, Marlow is now recollecting the experience for the sake of his friends on board a ship, *Nellie*. His three companions are, a director of companies, a lawyer and an accountant. While these three are playing dominoes, Marlow is reminded of the ivory tusks of Africa perhaps by the sight of the bones used in playing dominoes. Hence he takes a descent into the darkest experience in his life. Marlow seems to be awed by what he saw in Africa and he seems intrigued by that particular moment in history. Also, his attempt to retell the event of his journey in an effort on his part to come to terms with that experience in his life.

While the title of the novel actually refers to the Congo which is the central region of Africa, and the word "Darkness" implies the unexplored wilderness that the continent was at that time, the title, on another level suggests a descent into the underworld or connotes the realm of the unconscious in terms of psychology.

Marlow begins the story with an account of how he managed through a distant relative of his to get assignment from Belgian company to go to Africa. This Belgian firm has trade supremacy for about a thousand miles along the Congo River in Africa and Marlow is promised command of one of the steam boats on this river. However, there is a sense of foreboding that all is not well even before he leaves the corridors of the firm's headquarters. The procedure that Marlow happens to go through to get his papers ready finally are described with a touch of unnaturalness. The narrative hints at the uncommon solemnity of the office and its personnel in such a way that the overall feeling one gets is that of being in a mortuary. The doctor who

certifies Marlow to be medically fit comments on the strangeness (an inclination towards insanity) in the very willingness of anyone to go to Africa. And the doctor wants to take the measurement of Marlow's head so that he can study the common, basic features of those people who volunteer for service in such a backward, primitive place. With these overtures of Marlow, the expectation of his listeners as to what the Congo is actually and what really happened to Marlow there is heightened. Marlow begins building up the suspense thus.

Marlow begins his journey proper. The first phase of his journey is the voyage on the west coast of Africa where he notices the French effort at taming the jungle continent. In the view of Marlow, only the colonial enterprise seems out of place while the Africans themselves are so harmonious with the landscape that "they wanted no excuse for being there". Marlow wonders if he is dreaming. The machinery of colonialism appears so puny as to play with the overwhelming, brooding landscape in the background. It takes a month or so for Marlow to reach the mouth of the Congo River. At the first station, at Matadi, there are signs of a railway line barely begun. The sight of a gang of fettered labourers and a retreat on the side of a hill for the dying workers are enough for Marlow to make him feel sick. However, Marlow sidetracks the demoralising effects of colonization since that would finally point to his own complicity with the imperialists - being a white man himself.

It is at this first station, where he stops for about ten days, Marlow learns about the exceptional achievements of Kurtz. He is piqued by the appreciative remarks in Kurtz's work made by the chief agent at the accountant's office. Marlow gets curious as what sort of person Kurtz would be and he becomes increasingly eager to "hear" Kurtz. He looks forward to his meeting Kurtz. From now on, Marlow's revolution for the prevalent atmosphere of moral degradation is kept under control by this hope of knowing Kurtz.

The second phase of Marlow's journey is on land, for about two hundred miles, from the Coastal Station to the Central Station.

The railway line proposed was to cover the distance between these two stations - connecting the two places, Matadi and Kinshasa. The steamer that Marlow was to take command of is at this Central Station. But it is wrecked and sunk into the river. Marlow finds the job of retrieving and repairing the steamer an engaging one particularly because of the generally unsettling atmosphere he has observed to be there. He feels that work alone will help him to retain his sanity.

At the Central Station Marlow becomes aware of the rumour that Kurtz is sick. He becomes impatient and wants to prepare the steamer for navigability soon so that he will be able to meet Kurtz.

The identification of Marlow with Kurtz becomes now evident. The brickmaster at the station says that Marlow is recommended for the appointment by the same people who recommended Kurtz. Thus Kurtz comes to represent the repressed sexuality and bestiality of Marlow. While the brickmaster is jealous of Marlow's prospects, Marlow himself neither denies nor admits to his surmises.

Marlow happens to overhear a conversation at the Central Station regarding Kurtz's inexplicable return the previous year. He set out with ivory-laden canoes from his trading post (the Inner Station) to the Central Station last year and, changing his mind, turned back to his station in the middle of the journey. Marlow's anxiety to meet Kurtz intensifies. He suspects that it was not the greed to win the ivory himself that prompted Kurtz's sudden return but that made him reconsider his decision to return home.

The third phase of his journey comprises the voyage upriver from the Central Station to the Inner Station, a distance of about eight hundred miles. This part of Marlow's journey is more strongly described to be a regression to savagery.

All along this journey, Marlow has had to attend to the steamer quite diligently. And just before it reaches the Inner Station, the natives attack the steamer. And Marlow learns from the

harlequin-like Russian that the attack was after all ordered by Kurtz himself since he was reluctant at heart to leave his station. However, Marlow was able to cruise through the shower of arrows rained by the natives by cleverly letting the steampipe blow. For he knew the whistling of the steampipe scares away the natives.

While he was brought on an improvised stretcher to the cabin on the steamer, Kurtz appears extremely weak. But, all the same, he makes a second attempt quite stealthily to return to the woods. He retreats to where the natives are beating the drum and where is a fire. Marlow manages to cut him short mid-way and bring him back to the cabin.

Marlow returns with Kurtz at great peril from the Inner Station at last. And on the way back, being torn between an urge to return to the wildness and an inexpressible contempt towards it, Kurtz grows weaker and more exhausted and dies. It was Marlow alone who was beside him at the time of his death, and he was awestruck by the wildness from his dying face. Moreover, Marlow is dumbfounded by the last words of Kurtz: "The horror!" "the horror!"

Meanwhile before his death, Kurtz had entrusted some papers with Marlow to be handed over to the intended, a lady on the home-land. Marlow visits her and out of pity for the mourning woman, he deliberately lies to her that Kurtz died mentioning her name.

MAJOR QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is a political statement on the abuses of European imperialism. Evaluate this statement in the light of your own reading of the text.

The reading of the novel that finds Conrad's depiction of the Congo undermine seriously his overt loyalty to imperialism misses the tonal aspect of the narrative. The bleakness or pessimism pointed out to be present in Conrad's writing springs directly from his perception of man as a helpless being caught in systems which

are blind to the individual. And, it seems, this same perception of Conrad could have led him to a bleakness devoid of human hope or sympathy. But, fortunately, in Conrad, the emphasis seems to be on man and hence his writing is essentially, intrinsically humanistic. Perhaps this is due to his irresistible urge for travel and the wide range of people he came across in the process.

The mood of the novel *Heart of Darkness* seems to be one of sadness. Several years after the journey to the heart of Africa, the dark continent, Marlow recollects the experience in order to relate it to his companions aboard a ship, Nellie. Marlow is moved to recount his own dark experience in the Congo apparently by the gloominess and pensive mood evoked by that evening. Marlow's state of mind, here, seems to be one of fearfulness at the immense and impersonal powers against which man must struggle constantly. Marlow's mental frame reflects that of a romantic here in that he reveals a yearning and a sadness which is undefined.

For Marlow the narrator-protagonist, the conquering of the earth is not to be studied too closely. He emphasizes the idea behind the conquest more than the deed itself.

The conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much. What redeems it is the idea only. An idea at the back of it, not a sentimental pretence but an idea; and an unselfish belief in the idea - something you can set up, and bow down before, and offer a sacrifice to....

He seems, hence, to find the imperialist's attempt to colonize the natives in the dark continent an inescapable necessity. Colonization is viewed objectively since it is the concretization of an idea. And the atrocities and abuses involved in the process are the outcome of a few individuals' failure.

The purpose of Marlow's journey into the Congo, the

"blankest of blank spaces", is to bring back Kurtz, an uncommonly successful trade agent of the Belgian firm for which Marlow is working. Kurtz is sick and he is bed-ridden in the ivory country, at the Inner Station. Kurtz had been raiding single-handedly the neighbouring villages for ivory before he fell sick. He had ruined the trading post by his authoritarian and unsystematic style of functioning. His sense of superiority over the natives had spoiled him and had made him a megalomaniac.

During the first phase of his journey, Marlow is warmly sympathetic towards the natives. He finds that they need "no excuse for being there" unlike the machinery of imperialism. Thus, the French man-of-war firing from the coast at the wilderness seems bizarre and terribly out of place. The event seems weird because the man-of-war is belittled not only by the huge landscape but also by the absence of a visible opponent.

Marlow's sympathy towards the African is simple and direct up to the point in the narrative when he nears the Inner Station. For example, at the Coastal Station when he comes across a group of fettered labourers and a "grove of death" by the side of a hill, he exhibits a sense of pity, if not outrage at such a sight. He observes that labour is not merely cheap here but it is made a compulsion. Work is extorted from the Congolese by the colonizers. And the attendant evils of such condition, unhealthiness and starving, emaciate the workers and a number of them die everyday. The dying workers retreat to the grove of death.

As Marlow proceeds further from the Central Station to the Inner Station, he hires a group of cannibals to go with him on the steamer. His observation of them is that they carried some rotten hip-meat with them for food which stank intolerably. But the cannibals themselves were far from being a physical threat to him. And he notes here that they more than outnumbered the five Europeans on the steamer.

Marlow's attitude to the natives changes only when the steamer nears Kurtz's station. And this change seems to be quite

subtle. Marlow apparently has adopted an unfriendly attitude towards the Africans so as to safeguard himself from the lure of Kurtz's own power over them.

Kurtz has had the whole of Europe within him in the sense that one of his parents was English while the other was French. Moreover, he had travelled widely in Europe. And Conrad, by making Kurtz the most representative European thus, seems to make an unmixed attack on the exploitation of the colonists.

Having stayed in the Congo for quite a while, Kurtz has explored the place sufficiently and has also succeeded in gaining mastery over the natives. He has gradually come to assume the status of a demigod. And Marlow notes that at certain nocturnal dances presided by Kurtz some rites were performed and offered up to him. Such an exalted status in the Congo enjoyed by Kurtz only makes him reluctant to leave the place once and for all. His reluctance to leave the Congo coupled with his last apocalyptic utterance suggest a positive involvement of Kurtz in certain lustful orgies.

In the light of Kurtz's unrestrained revelry, Marlow's effort at self control is seen by psychoanalysts to have sexual overtones. While Kurtz represents sexual abandon, Marlow is afraid of it and is saved by his conscious, civilized self. However, Conrad by juxtaposing Kurtz and Marlow seems to stress the incompatibility between moral uprightness and survival instinct.

Prepared by
Dr. N. POOVALINGAM,
 M.S., university, Thirunelveli

GREENAWAY

JOHN BETJEMAN

JOHN BETJEMAN, THE MAN:

John Betjeman was born in 1906 in London as the only son of E.E. Betjeman, the prosperous third generation owner of a family firm of cabinet makers and furniture manufacturers founded in 1820. His father, originally Dutch, intended him to succeed to the control of the lucrative family business. The story of the consequent tension between the father's ambition and the son's obstinacy and quite a few other things are narrated in his autobiographical poem "Summoned by Bells" (1960). As a child he lived in London on Highgate Hill in what was then still a semi rural area and had early school education at Highgate Junior. Even as a young boy he preferred poetry to family business. (T.S. Eliot was for sometime his teacher at Highgate Preparatory school. Betjeman presented Eliot with a bound volume of his poems, titled "The Best of Betjeman" in 1916.)

After school Betjeman continued his education at Marlborough College Wiltshire (where he suffered a lot) and then at Magdalene College, Oxford (where he enjoyed himself too much). He failed in his examinations in Divinity and left without a degree (in fact, was sent down). It was a terrible disappointment which is recorded in "Summoned by Bells"

I'd seen myself a don.

Reading old poets in the library,

Attending chapel in an M.A. gown

And sipping vintage port by candlelight

On leaving his studies, for a short while he worked as a master at a Prep. School and soon launched himself as a literary figure. He got a job on the staff on "The Architectural Review" His

first prose book titled "Ghastly Good Taste" presents the depressing story of the rise and fall of English architecture. In the introduction he wrote for a new edition in 1970, Betjeman had something to remark on his rebellion against his own class. He felt obliged to be in sympathy with the strikers in the 1926 General Strike: "I was in fact, a parlour pink and bored by politics. I was also Anglo-Catholic and thought I had found the solution of life in the teaching of Conard Noel, the Red Vicar of Thaxted."

In 1933 he got married to Penelope Valentine Hester daughter of Field Marshal Lord Chetwode G.C.B., O.M., G.C.S.I. The Betjemans have two children, a son and a daughter. During the Second World War Betjeman was Press Attache in Dublin (1941-42) and then at the Admiralty (1943) Honours came his way one after another. He was made an Hon.LLD. (Aberdeen) and an Hon.D.Litt. of Reading and Birmingham Universities. He won the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry in 1960. He was made a C.B.E. the same year. In 1968 he was made a C.Litt. and knighted the following year. In 1972 he became the Poet-Laureate of England.

Betjeman's verse collections include

Mount Zion (1933)

Continual Dew (1937)

Old Bats in New Belfries (1940)

Old Lights for New Chancels (1945)

Slick but not Streamlined (1947)

Collected Poems (1958)

Prose collections include

Ghastly Good Taste (1935)

Vintage London (1942) First and Last Loves (1952) A Pictorial History of English Architecture (1970) and London's Historic Railway Stations (1972)

Betjeman has been besides being a poet, a book reviewer, a broadcaster, a writer of guide books and a church-warden. He is considered an authority on Victorian Architecture and Churches. He has edited and contributed an excellent authoritative introduc-

tion to Collins's Guide to "English Parish Churches" (1958)

BETJEMAN, THE POET

Betjeman's obsessive passion for architecture is a profound human concern whose values far transcend those of mere aesthetics. The passion colours his poetry obliquely. The large number of topographical and architectural interest which he wrote or edited are the work of an ebullient and exuberant commentator and critic with strong likes and dislikes and one who has an enormous repertoire of intimate and detailed reference to churches, stations and buildings of all kinds scattered throughout the country. His sharp eye for Victorian grandeur and Victorian finesse has clearly been visible in his poetry—which is of nostalgia.

In the 1960s Betjeman was the best-selling poet in England (after Auden). The "Collected Poems" sold over 1,00,000 copies.

Betjeman's fluency in high-spirited but unadventurous versification is often irresistible. He writes sometimes at a modest level of poetic intensity and there is never a hint of pretentiousness. The idiom never disguises in false dignities and the poet knows exactly what he is doing.

Occasionally he writes satire with a sting. However, he resents being called a satirist:.... I have tried to catch the atmosphere of places and items in different parts of England and Eire. But when I do so, I am not being satirical but biographical....I love suburbs bad gaslights and Pont Street and Gothic Revival Churches and mineral railways, provincial towns and garden cities, They are, many of them, part of my background..... Nevertheless, there is a good deal of strong satire, not of a venomous kind but of a rather urbane good-humoured, genteel sort. About the businessman in the city in "The City" he says

Plump white fingers made to curl
Round some anaemic city girl

About the complacent insensitive don in "The Wykehamist" (A Wykehamist is a pupil, or former pupil of Winchester College, which was founded by William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winches-

ter) Betjeman says:

It's something to become a bore
and more than that, at twenty-four

But more often what he loves and what he makes fun of are one and the same—notably the Church of England whose buildings, practices and internal rivalries he knows just as he knows his palm. Above all, known and loved places are deftly evoked in his poetry—small towns, London suburbs, familiar southern beauty spots etc., etc., Particular places serve as settings for reflective nostalgia and ironic studies of the fast changing human scene.

The serious Betjeman has extensive sympathies too. But poems with a stronger view of humour are responsible for his wide popularity.

SALIENT FEATURES OF BETJEMAN'S POETRY

Betjeman's poetry is one of quiet ordinariness, of landscapes and townscapes that complement each other rather than contradict each other, of a simple Christianity with all its fears, doubts and anxieties, against progressive cynicism of more 'advanced' ideas of distinctive humour and wit, a precise but compassionate and affectionate satire.

The present is contrasted with the past and does not come out well. Using baulful satire he criticises the soulless "planned architectural projects that have come up since the 1920s." He accepts the need, but insists on a feeling for the environment.

His poems are accessible to the general reader and are very entertaining. He uses conventional rhythms, rhymes, stanza forms and 'archaic' diction. He is a master of a wide range of metrical forms.

He is a poet of nostalgia, tinged with humour and pathos. He regrets and moans the fast-receding and sometimes vanishing countryside of England. His poems are the opposite of 'modern poetry' and original. We may say that they are somewhat the opposite of the avant-garde, in which we find obscurity, intellectualism, stridency, vigour, happens, 'concrete' and 'vers libre'.

He moves in the direction opposite to the one taken by his coevals Macspanday. I.e. Macnieca, Spender, Auden and Day Lewis and never takes a reactionary or revolutionary attitude. He is not politically aligned. He is humane, liberal and conservative.

His people and places are real and particular. He is a landscape poet and not a Nature poet like the romantics.

He has a keen ear for music. His poems are melodious and euphonious and so are singable.

His poems bear testimony to his craving for perfection and exquisite craftsmanship

Keeping all the above in mind we shall now enter the world of "Greenaway"

GREENAWAY

Greenaway like all the places and names in Betjeman's writings, is a real place, a shingle beach on the coast of North Cornwall between Trebetherick and Polzeath Bay. Betjeman used to spend a large chunk of his holidays in Cornwall and so he knew the place quite well. The place is washed by powerful, dangerous and sweeping currents at high tide. Nevertheless, Betjeman was conscious of its 'terrible beauty', fascinated by it and at the same time terror-stricken.

The first six stanzas describe the place as it is from what one would call the 'landward perspective'. The fourlined iambic tetrameter stanzas rhyme abab and strictly adhere to metronomic regularity.

The first two stanzas give us a word picture of the place and Betjeman claims: I know so well this turfy mile...

He reiterates: I know this roughly blasted track...

The result is that Betjeman's close familiarity with the place gets reasserted and the locale looms large to get reinforced. The fourth stanza gives us a hint of what is to come: Down on the shingle safe at last...The vicious and brutal strength inexorability of the waves are suggested in: I hear the slowly dragging roar/As

mighty rollers mount to cast....And spurting far as it can reach/The shooting surf comes hissing round...(Note the powerful words and phrases like:dragging roar, mighty rollers, mounting, cast, spurting, shooting and hissing). The battle between the sea and the shore is an everlasting one with neither side winning or losing, yet it continues for ever: Tide after tide by right and day/The breakers battle with the land/And rounded smooth along the bay/The faithful rocks protecting stand

The last three stanzas describe a nightmarish vision that Betjeman seems to have had in which he is out at sea, floundering swimming hard but in vain to reach the safe shingle, the faithful rocks which stand on the shore. The breakers overwhelm him: he is bobbing in the sea. He can see the details of the Greenaway beach—the stile, the turf, the coastline. But: With every stroke I struck the more/The backwash sucked me out of reach.

Betjeman concludes the nightmare:

Back into what a waterworld
Of waving weed and waiting claws
Of writhing tenatacles uncurled
To drag me to what dreadful Jaws?

Perhaps the sea here stands for death, Death is frightening because we know nothing about it. It is the most mysterious of all things in the world. How can the poet be sure that he is not earmarked for eternal perdition, that he is not going to be cast into the abysmal depths of the murky sea of death?

In the sixth stanza we have a pointer to this. The beach (the land) is being protected by 'the faithful rocks'. Let us recall the words of Jesus Christ: I call thee Simon Peter and upon this rock I build my church. We know about the rock-like faith of St.Peter who founded the Christian Church. Sand is the opposite of rock here. We cannot build anything on sand which keeps on shifting (wavering). Thus rock is the symbol of faith and sand the absence of faith. In the absence of protection offered by faith (religion) one is vulnerable and so is always exposed to danger. Here, there-

fore, the "waterworld of waving weed and waiting claws, of writhing tentacles uncurled to drag me to what dreaded jaws" with the "shooting surf comes hissing round" could stand for eternal damnation and inhuman forces. Consider the images; waiting claws, writhing tentacles, dreaded jaws and hissing. We get the picture of a slimy, writhing octopus like seamonster waiting greedily to suck the poet into its dreaded jaws and dark interior.

This is a powerful poem with ominous undertones and quite unlike the humour-rich ones of Betjeman.

Now note the consonantal and alliterative patterns in the poem which contribute to the typical Betjeman music:

brown-breezy; broken-black, clumps-cliff; black-flat-crawl-pool-all; woolice-isolated-roughly; small-smelly; blasted-bay-bladder; smelly-leads-squeelching; safe-slowly; dragging -rollers-roar; small-seaweed; shingle-shore; spurting-surt-hissing; tide-night; breakers-battle; saw-coastline-sea; white-weight-waters-back-wash-what-waterworld-waving-weed-waiting; world-claw-tentacles-uncurled:

CAUTION

The notes given above are no substitute for the text. Read the text as many times as you can and develop the right feel for the poem. Read a few of Betjeman's poems—many are very fresh and entertaining.

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Lessons Prepared by

Prof. G.S. RAMAKRISHNAN (Retd.)

Trissur

'LITTLE GIDDING' (FOUR QUARTETS)

(For detailed study)

T.S. ELIOT

INTRODUCTION

'Little Gidding' (1942) is one of the Four Quartets. It is the last one. The other three, are 'Burnt Norton' (1936), 'East Coker' (1940) and the 'The Dry Salvages' (1944). All these poem were published together in America in May 1943 and in England in October 1943. All these quartets are built on the lines of musical sonata. Each quartet has five movements (sections). Eliot using high poetry gives expression to his pet concerns—time and eternity, the past and present, the moments of contact between man and God. He locates each poem in a particular geographical area and highlights a specific element. In *Burnt Norton* it is air; it is earth, in *East Coker*, in *The Dry Salvages* it is water and in *Little Gidding* it is fire. He also associates each quartet with a specific season. 'Little Gidding' is related to winter. This last quartet is often considered as Eliot's last important achievement as a poet.

Eliot sticks to a specific format in all the quartets. In the first movement he introduces the theme. The second he begins with a lyric and is followed by a rambling move. He devotes the third section for the theme of purgation in this world. The fourth is a lyrical one. In the fifth section Eliot gives us a summary and repeats the theme of the first section.

In 'Little Gidding' the evocation of place and the introduction of the theme—the opposition between time and eternity are done in the first movement. The lyrical section of the second part is devoted to suggest the breakdown of this world. He hints at the disintegration of the physical world into air, earth, water and fire. In the rambling move he presents a conversation with the dead master. Movement III stresses the importance of detachment. The point of merging of the God of love with worldly life is stressed in

Section IV. The fifth section offers the solution. Eliot hints at the way out—the transient time-bound aspects of life can be overcome and a time-less state could be achieved through knowledge of God.

'Little Gidding' is a small village seven miles south-west of Cambridge shire. Nicholas Ferrar (1592-1637) founded a small Christian community here. The objectives were the love of God and the service of man. It soon became a good spiritual centre. Even during the civil war it is believed that Charles I took refuge in Little Gidding. However after the death of Ferrar, the place was destroyed completely by the Puritan followers of Cromwell in 1647. The devotional poets George Herbert and Richard Crashaw used to visit Little Gidding. Eliot did so in 1936. This community laid stress on monasticism coupled with family life. This tradition lasted only for a short while. Still Eliot's attraction to it is evident in 'Little Gidding'.

Eliot wrote this poem when Britain was at its worst in World War II. The poet makes an imaginative contrast between England's past and the significance of Little Gidding in the perspective of the present state of war, horror and death. 'Little Gidding' is given symbolic ramification.

Votes

Lines

Section-I

- Movement U 1..20-Both the season and scene are set. Actual session is mid-winter but Eliot sees in it signs of spring.
- Sempiternal—eternal
- Suspended in time—A purposeful twist. Usual order of seasons/ time does not work in this particular season
- -8 The effect of sunlight on ice. Eliot uses a number of suggestive contrasts—frost and fire, flame and ice; cold and heat
- -10 And Glow ...spirit—A key line - A central idea - divine relation is suggested.
- 0. Pentecostal fire: a sign of religious awareness of Acts 2:24
- 2. The soul's quivers suggests the disturbing nature of spiritual experience.

tual experience.

- 12-14 The unusual nature of this spring is hinted.
- 14-18 Once again the breakdown of normal seasonal/organic activities are suggested
- 19-20 Seasonal overlapping : general disorder
- 21-40 Eliot hints at the historical association Little Gidding
- 27 broken King-Charles I while in fight (during the Civil War) visited 'Little Gidding' more than once.
- 38. in a desert: Eliot may be referring to St. Antony's fraternity founded in deserts of Egypt.
- 41-55 The spiritual import of Little Gidding both as a real place and symbol to the poet. It serves as the meeting point of time and timelessness.
- 44-45 Stresses the importance of being religious to achieve the eternal.
- 45-47 an absolutely mundane (worldly) approach to 'Little Gidding'
- 53-55...the communication...
- Never and always: The timeless nature of the communication of the dead; its universal valid with no time-place frame

Section II

- U-56-79. Evocation of the London blitz during World War II autobiographical: for Eliot was an air raid warden during the war. He broods over the meaning (meaninglessness) of war. The situation prevailing in London reminded him the war of the elements in Heraclitus.
- 80-51 In these lines (second more of section II) Eliot pictures the decay of our transient world and the hollowness and vanity of human wishes. These lines are closely modelled on Dante's Inferno, (XV-22-124) where Dante meets his dead master Brunetto Latini in Hell.
- 83-64- The German war planes returning to the base after bombardment. (In World War I the Germans used Zeppelins [the dove] war planes). Traditionally in Christian mythology the dove is the symbol of the Holy Ghost.
- 130-151 the purgatorial effect is generated by a number of appropriate allusion and cross-references. The works of

Shakespeare (Hamlet) Milton (Paradise Lost) Yeats (Vacillaton & Byzantium) etc. are etched to this section to project a complex and vital experience—purgation.

Section III

Eliot's concern with the past reverberates here. In a cryptic but effective way the poet exhorts the meaning of the past and its significance for the present.

178. three men..scaffold: Eliot makes high poetry out of historical events (actual) and Christian beliefs. Charles I was beheaded in 1649 after executing earlier two of his close advisers. Similarly Christ was crucified between two thieves. Eliot finds a compelling parallel here.

182-183-the Civil War compared to World War II

186 - Spectre of a Rose cf. The Wars of the Roses

Section IV

London blitz is depicted as an inescapable and inevitable scene of purgation. The fire, used as a dominant symbol, is the divine agent of both destruction and creation.

206-208-Eliot suggests that to overcome the all consuming self-love we must immolate ourselves in sacrificial love.

212. intolerable shirt of flame

cf. the story of Hercules. his wife, Centaur Nessus and Deianira. suffering, in these lines is equated with God's love.

Section V

A typical Eliotian summing up of all Quarters. The poet stresses the importance of past, which is more than actual and present.

216-18 cf. 'Eaxt Coker'

218-227 The poet underscored the idea that every poem is an epitaph

230-39 Eliot drives home his pet thesis—history is significant. For building up an actual present remembrance of past is a must. In Eliot's view the relevance of history (past) lies in its embedding of a number of 'still points' where the timeless intersects with time. Little Gidding stands out as such a point (place). He also raises many philosophical and spiritual sec-

tions in his movement.

241-44- The purgatorial experience ends with the earthly practice scene in Garden of Eden leading on to man's fall. It implies the needs to begin a return journey to paradise.

249-50 The voice...apple tree—symbolic of mystic spiritual experience.

257-61 The highest of mystical experience—all seeming, terrestrial contradictions and irreconcilables are resolved into rare harmony in this mystic vision (in God's light) In God sight 'the fire and the rose are one.' Eliot reaches the zenith of his spiritual exploration and mystical experience when the tongues of flame are in folded into the crowned knob of fir and the fire and the rose are one.

Essay

1. Comment on the structure and content of Little Gidding
or
2. Attempt a critique on the last quartet, Little Gidding
or
3. Write a critical appreciation of Little Gidding highlighting its musical structure, spiritual, visionary, mystical layers a symbolic substratum
(Length approx 4 to 5 pages)

Note

[Only one essay touching on these various aspects is gives below. Depending on the question you will have to elaborate the relevant part.]

Little Gidding is the last quartet in Four Quartets. It is the most complex poetically well-wrought urn loaded with multifarious meanings of perennial import. Equally it is noted for its poetic excellence. Weighty thoughts are couched in 'flaming fiery symbols' Eliot makes them flutter and dance in sweet cadences emerging from the music of the 'heart of heart'

Little Gidding (other quartets too) has five movements (sections) as in an Italian sonata. (Refer Helen Gardner, *The Composition of Four Quartets*). Each movement has a definite format.

The first movement generally introduces the theme. In 'Little Gidding' the main theme: opposition between time and timelessness, is very effectively introduced in the first move. Side by side he also evoked the place and locates the poem in the religiously / spiritually hallowed Little Gidding.

In keeping with the musical structure thus Eliot wants to bestow on the poem, the second movement begins with a lyric and is followed by a rambling conversation. In Little Gidding the lyric in the second movement is devoted to spell out the decay of our mortal world. It breaks down into the four basic elements--air, earth, fire and water. In the conversation part that follows we are introduced to the dead master (closely modelled on Dante's *Inferno*, XV. 22-124). The third movement generally is devoted to suggest the idea of purgation in this world. Again it is followed by a lyrical movement. In 'L.G.' too the same pattern is followed. The importance of detachment in the journey of life is stressed in the third movement in 'L.G.'. The fourth movement in 'L.G.' throws light on the moments of merging (points of intersection) of the God of love with our transient mortal world. Last section is usually devoted to give a summary and restatement of the theme of the first movement. 'L.G.' strictly executes this scheme. The last section is used imaginatively to render an evocative summary of all quarters and Eliot savings back to the theme of the opening section with 'charged mystical ease' with all the tongues of the flame 'infolded/into the crowned knot of fire'. And in God's light and sight he asserts, 'And the fire and the rose are one.' It becomes a fitting final to a rapturous and revelatory sonata.

'L.G.' is Eliot's last important achievement as a poet. Though 'L.G.' is packed with religious, spiritual, mystical, visionary and historical ideas it would be read primarily as poetry, "not as substitute for philosophy theology. "It offers what poetry has distinctively to offer, and both its achievement and its limitation are those inherent in the process of poetic creation."

('L.G'. T.S. Eliot. *The Longer Poems*, Derek Traversi, P.181)

This quartet too begins with an evocation of the place (*Ref.Introd: Notes*). The antithesis between time and timelessness is presented right at the beginning. "Fire emerges from the beginning as the master element of the new poem, as air had been in 'Burnt-Norton', earth in 'East Cocker' and water in 'The Dry Salvages'. Eliot introduced incarnation as a unifying concept and in continuation he gives prominence to "the baptism of the Holy Ghost with fire" (Acts of the Apostles, II, iii) Fire is used as a multilayered symbol in 'L.G.'. Its destructive, illusive, purifying, illuminating and ultimately its composite nature as Divine Love are tapped by Eliot. Altogether he strikes an overt Christian vein in this quartet. Divine Love is conceived as an agent to transform our mortal life, totally With this intention a 'season' : a season, however 'not in times convenient' (Give a summary of the lives, Midwinter...Zero summer?). Little Gidding, though now stripped of its vital spiritual hold, serves as a retreat down the memory lane (in a historical sense). In the journey (pilgrimage) towards timelessness LG becomes 'actual and present'. In human history.

There are other places

Which are also the world's end, some at the sea jaws

Or over a dark lake, in a desert or a city

"The essence of the experience/ journey/pilgrimage is submission leading to 'prayer' in a place where prayer has in the past seemed to prove valid" (Traversi 187). The evocation (or even recreation) of a spiritual /religious centre like LG which can at best be realized in prayer becomes vital, for that alone will enable us to transcend the mortal world and touch upon a true consciousness.

In the second movement, in the lyrical opening Eliot perfects a rhythm to be in harmony with the meaning. The theme is that of the apparent collapse of a civilization, the destruction and desolation of war. The fall of LG too is hinted at. It may be relevant to note that the disintegration is subtly linked with the basic elements—air, water earth, and fire. Eliot evokes a pattern of doom in his characteristic way in keeping with the modern condition.

The colloquy (conversation) that follows depicts our meeting with the dead master. (This is modelled on Dante's meeting with his dead master Brunetto Latini in Hell [Inferno.XV : 22-124].) Eliot with great difficulty but with commendable skill uses terza rima (the stanza form used by Dante) in this movement. Dante's Hell & London under the scare in World War II alike bring forth 'the familiar compound ghost'—composed of all the dead poets (cf. Notes-Dante, Milton, Yeats etc.). The meeting combines both intimacy and distance. "The intimacy of the meeting can produce 'concord', can be illuminating, just in so far as it seems to have been situated outside the order of time, to have 'no before and after' and to take place 'nowhere.'" (Traversi, 191). [please elaborate]

Key line: Let me.../dancer (131-148)

At this point Eliot thinks that the end of poetry itself becomes something, beyond itself.

In the third movement the part introduces the vital theme of detachment and its relation to love. Different stages of love are also pointed out. (II There are three conditions...The live and the dead nettle, 152-58) Detachment leads to redemption. Redemption in turn leads to liberation:

'not less of love, but expanding

...From the future as/well as the past'

Little Gidding (the place & its community) as a source inspiring detachment and liberation (in a way keeping intact the worldly life to the monastic life) As in East Coker the poet lays stress on trying, praying and waiting. "To return, with the poet at the end of the 'movement' to the words of Juliana Norwich 'All manner of things shall be well in so far as our motives are grounded, beyond immediate partisan passion or useless self-assertion, in a spiritual conception of love as the foundation of our actions and 'ground of our beseeching' (Traversi, 203)

The fourth movement is a short Lyric interlude. Here 'the raiding dove' of the second movement becomes the Holy Spirit (dove in the modern context becomes the German war planes which drop

bombs). Eliot lifts the quartet to a higher philosophical plane and reckons suffering as a part of God's love.

'Who then devised the torment? Love....Consumed by either fire of fire'

(II 209-215) [Explain]

The value of God's love intersecting our mortal life is highlighted in this movement.

"The final movement of 'Little Gidding' is at once a conclusion to this quartet and a drawing together of the themes and symbols explored through the series as a whole". (Traversi, 210) [Elaborate this point by using appropriate lines from "Little Gidding.V"]

The pronouncement "all shall be well and/ All manner of thing shall be well" asserts the pinnacle of hope and faith in God's light and sight. Eliot underscores the value of comprehensive love. God's love as a creative principle enabling us to transcend time and reach after a state of timelessness. In God's light (vision) (in the mystical vision of the pilgrim too) all opposites are reconciled 'the fire and the rose are one'. The rose-garden and the chapel become one. Desire and love, nature and grace are part and parcel of the 'one' creative force--God. The realisation alone will sustain mankind in a decadent and degenerate modern set-up.

Objective Type Questions

1. What are the sections of Four Quartets?
2. Which is the First Quartet?
3. Which is the last Quartet?
4. What are the elements associated with Four Quartets? Mention the name of the quartet and indicate the corresponding element.
5. Which stanzaic form used by Dante is employed by Eliot in the Second movement of 'Little Gidding'?

(Ans. Terza rima)

(Four all other answers use 'Notes')

Short Questions

1. Musical structure employed in 'L.G' (Ref. the first part of the

essay)

2. Comment on any two symbols: Little Gidding (Place) Fire. (Use 'Notes' and relevant parts of the essay)
3. Give an account of the poet's meeting with the 'Compound Ghost'. Explain second Movement—Second Part—use Notes and the relevant portion of the essay.

For Further Reading

Blamiers Harry: *Word Unheard: A Guide Through Eliot's Quartets* (London 1969)

Gardener, Helen: *The Composition of Four Quartets*. London Faber and Faber, 1978.

Spendér, Stephen: *Eliot*, Glasgow: Collins, 1975

Preston, Raymond: *Four Quartets Rehearsed*. London & New York 1946

Prepared by:

Prof. N. Ramachandran Nair

Calicut University

D.H. LAWRENCE

SONS AND LOVERS

We study D.H. Lawrence not because he introduced any new theories of novel or because he tried to carry out any new experiment in the art of writing. Lawrence sticks as a novelist simply because, for the first time, he as a novelist, wrote very frankly without censoring his experience. Lawrence is the high priest of love. Love is his subject matter. For him there is no question of suppressing the impulses. What a Lawrentian character carries with him or her is not moral qualities, but great energy and a cosmic will. The sexual energy, the life-impulse dominates over all other social or religious impulses. Hence most of Lawrence's works were banned during his life-time and the real greatness of him as a novelist was discovered only after many years of his departure.

The credit for realising the greatness of Lawrence goes to his friend Middleton Murry. Murry carried out a thorough study of Lawrence and his works and Murry's analysis of him is accepted, even today, as the right direction to the study of D.H. Lawrence. We shall discuss this at a later stage. Lawrence was living a tortured life, his forty-five years of existence was a long struggle. With his friends, with his parents, with the police and with the whole society he had troubles in one form or other. But he was gathering his tortured life to use it as a raw material for his art. He wrote about a dozen remarkable novels leave alone his poems, plays and other writings. He was 'crucified into sex' and the world today takes the benefit of it. His novels are now acknowledged as classic and are studied by students all over the world.

Lawrence was not on the side of reason or intellect but on the side of instinct, the flesh. In describing men and women he tried to go too far down into the dark sources of conscious-

ness. So he offers a violent challenge to conventional morality. Lawrence believed that with his heart and soul he must reveal the profound and naked reality of life. When he does so he becomes passionately obscene in the exact word. Obscene or not, he must uncover our nakedness. But the European civilization does not permit this. Thus his novels are in a way the expression of his fury against the European civilization. W.H. Auden says that Lawrence's life and work was a violent crusade against the liberal bourgeois perversion of Christianity according to which:

1. The mind is spiritual. The body is base
2. White-collar work is respectable. Manual labour is low
3. True love between the sexes is the marriage of two mind. The physical relation between their bodies is an unfortunate necessity; a rather ugly greed justifiable only as a means of begetting children.
4. The flesh cannot be redeemed. It can only be kept quiet by repression or indulgence while the mind pursues its salvation.
5. Utopia will be a society in which thanks to the process of science, the production of goods has become so ample and so automatic that the flesh has ceased to be a problem. There will be no need of coercive authority, and every citizen will be able to devote his whole time to contemplation and culture.

In so far as these attitudes claim to be Christian, they imply a gnostic conception of the incarnation. In reaction Lawrence preached the opposite:

1. The body is good. The mind is corrupt.
2. Nearly all intellectual and white-collar work is mechanical and sterile. Manual labour when it is really manual and not just machine-minding is free and creative.

3. True love between the sexes is a creation of Dark God the physical sympathy of two bodies. Spiritual intimacy is always hostile to this.

4. The instinctive flesh must redeem the corrupt mind.
5. Salvation for society is probably impossible, but if it should come to pass. It will be through the authority of an instinctive genius.

Auden says that "Lawrence's Christ is the pre-Adamic hero who rescues Adam and Eve from their bondage in the white Devil of mechanical reason and reflective consciousness". So Lawrence is an elemental force, a great creative force in literature. His works are full of the sap of life.

The dramatic situation in the novels of Lawrence are simply counter balances of erotic impulse personified. We should not look for the dramatic, the sentimental or moralistic situation in his works but for the play of elemental force—the physic-physic phenomena. As Joseph Warren Beach says, his characters are "carriers of fluid energy". No one falls in love in the world of Lawrence by considering the pull of something more elemental, a force springing from the presence of another, opposite body. So love is considered in terms of some chemical pull between a male and a female, something like the positive and negative polarization. What Lawrence is interested in is the feelings generated as a result of an easy fluid flow between the lovers or the lack of such communion as a result of the restrictions imposed on man by the European civilization. Hence the subject matter of D.H. Lawrence is the psychology of sex, the struggle between two individuals seeking 'vital fulfilment'. The physical effect of the physical contact is painted by Lawrence with the brush of an impressionist. He is an impressionist because he "is not concerned with dramatic shape of the thing, but with the living 'feel' of it." "The impressionist painter saw his subject less

in terms of the outcome which is known to be there and more in terms of the mass which strikes the eye".

SONS AND LOVERS

Lawrence's first period of writing career is marked by the final writings of *Sons and Lovers*. He had written the story with a different title, *Paul More*. He was going through a very sensitive period in his life when he wrote the final draft of *Sons & Lovers*. The woman with whom he fell in love was the wife of his former professor. She was the mother of three small children. Her name is Frieda. Her influence on Lawrence and their passionate love relationship gradually changed D.H. Lawrence into a bold novelist in English literature. A brief look at the summary of *Sons and Lovers* sent to Mrs. Garnet by D.H. Lawrence will provide the basic theme of the story from the writer's point of view.

"A woman of character and refinement goes into the lower classes and has no satisfaction in her own life. She has had a passion for her husband. So the children are born of passion and have heaps of vitality. But as her sons grow up, she selects them as lovers—first the eldest, then the second. These sons are urged into life by the reciprocal love of their mother—urged on and on. But when they come to manhood, they can't love because their mother is the strongest power in their lives, and holds them. As soon as the young man comes into contact with women there is a split. William gives his sex to a feeble, and his mother holds his soul. But the split will kill him because he doesn't know where his is. The next son get a woman who fights for his soul—fights his mother. The son loves the mother—all the sons hate and are jealous of the father. The battle goes on between the mother and girl, with the son as object. The mother gradually proves the stronger, because of the tie of blood. The son casts off his mistress, attends to his mother dying. He is left in the

end naked of everything, with the drift towards death".

Now we can turn to Middleton Murry. Murry found in Lawrence a kind of "mother-fixation" which made it difficult for him to make a happy emotional adjustment to women. The main thematic point is what Freud was first to call the 'Oedipus Complex'. Lawrence had not read Freud at the time of writing *Sons and Lovers* though he knew about him. He found that Oedipus complex was not just his own problem but the dilemma of the whole generation, the result of the long Victorian matriarchy. The old son-lover was Oedipus and Lawrence could see thousands of young English men living the same tragedy.

Lawrence admitted that the first half of the novel *sons and Lovers* was all autobiography. The early manuscript *Paul Morel* was really a 'wishful fictionalizing of unpleasant truth.' It was Lawrence's own experience with his father, which was fictionalized. The first chapter of *Sons and Lovers* provides an effectively realistic base for most of the novel. It deals with the early married life of Mrs. Morel. "The next Christmas they were married and for three months she was happy, for six months she was very happy" There ends her happiness. Just after two pages (Mrs. Morel has become only a young mother) Lawrence writes, "At least Mrs. Morel despised her husband. She turned to the child; she turned from the father". From here on Mrs. Morel turn to her children for love which in turn makes her children incapable of giving themselves up to any other soul. As the title of the second chapter indicates the birth of Paul is another battle for the mother. Her hatred for her husband is not only due to the act that he get drunk or because of the miner's culture he represents, but it is also because he is too self-centered to give himself up totally. "She hated her husband because whenever he had an audience, he whined and played for sympathy." And Lawrence is very ruthless in his portrayal of Morel as a brutish person

that Lawrence "is indulging a grudge against his father" by unfairly being partisan in the fight between the husband and the wife.

Lawrence was only trying to be sincere to his own experience. There were moments in the life of Morel and his wife when they "turned to come back somewhat to the old relationship of the first months of their marriage". However the readers attention shifts from father to his sons, as Mrs. Morel comes closer and closer to them. "Paul....trotted after his mother like her shadow". She doesn't want her sons to repeat what their father did. "He is not going in the pit"; instead she wants her son to be a clerk or a book-keeper. Thus William goes to Nottingham to work. Unlike their father the "children were all rapid teetotallers". Paul prayed every night to God to make his father stop drinking and all the children particularly Paul, were peculiarly against their father, along with their mother because Morel continued to come home heavily drunk.

But the novel is not so much about the evils of industrialism as it is about the play of human force. The readers may admire Mrs. Morel for saving her children from 'the pit' and sending them away for better work. However she gradually loses the reader's sympathy when she fails to realize that the physical desire of her children is a natural force in human beings. She is not happy when William falls in love with a girl and this leads to utter emotional confusions in the boy, resulting in a kind of impotency in him. Then comes Paul's infatuation for Miriam. It grows into a strong love and Miriam feels that "there was so much to come out of him. Life for her was rich with promise. But Paul remains bewildered unable to move. He broods "why did he hate Miriam, and feels so cruel towards her at the thought of his mother?" Miriam wants him but he resists. At one stage Paul tells his mother. "No.

...I can love her, I talk to her, but I want to come home to you" Thus the story is woven around the son-mother relationship and Morel, the father and Miriam, the beloved, are pushed aside by the mother-fixation. "Paul was dissatisfied with himself and with everything. The deepest of his love belonged to his mother".

Now we can understand easily why the central study of *Sons and Lovers* happens to be what Freud called the Oedipus Complex. Only a few years before *Sons and Lovers* was written Freud promulgated his theory. Lawrence was a great admirer of Freud but there is no proof to show that he had read him before he wrote this novel. Lawrence had himself gone through the miseries of this terrible complex. "Frieda says that when Lawrence wrote of his mother's death, he became ill with grief, and that he told her that if his mother had lived he would not have loved Frieda" That happens to Paul too in the novel. Miriam tells Paul. "You don't want to love. You aren't positive. You are negative". At the same time Lawrence does not forget to describe the play of physical forces between these young lovers. The physical presence of the opposite creates a spontaneous electromagnetic field around them. The easy flow of energy is disturbed by the moral, sentimental, social phenomena. This insight into the psychology of the body relationship, the blood relationship, what he calls (as novel after novel comes out of his pen) the pull of the "lions" marks him as the greatest novelist of our century. Later in *Women in Love* Lawrence makes his attitude to sex more explicit. But it is in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* that the inevitable and the most primitive play of human relationship is brought to a great philosophical level.

The parts dealing with the mother's illness and her death are equally forceful and natural. They are not sentimentalized. The chapter in which Paul's mother dies is called "The Release" because "it is Paul's release not only from his

mother but also from Clara". Clara lacked Miriam's spiritual quality. Paul returns Clara to her husband. In the last chapter Paul meets Miriam again. She wants him again but will not give her sex without marriage. So Paul rejects her again. Miriam then tosses in her mind these questions—"or was it a mate she wanted; or did she want a Christ in him". None of Lawrence's females seek Christ in their lovers but only a mate who is capable of quenching her physical thirst. That is why Lady Chatterly walks away with Mellors, the game keeper.

It becomes thus clear that D.H. Lawrence offers a great challenge to conventional morality. He makes us look within ourselves, uncovers our nakedness, and takes us to some dark mysterious regions of human life. The mask is stripped off. With the extraordinary power of his natural vision he takes English novel to new regions, which the Victorians failed even to dream of. And all this he achieves through a rich and surging prose. Equally skilful is his treatment of the language of the working class. Another characteristic quality of Lawrence is his feminine hand. No novelist, not even any female novelist, has ever succeeded in depicting a female character, particularly her physical passion, as D.H. Lawrence could.

Lawrence was very much unhappy about the way the industrial growth had its impact on human life. "Ours is essentially a tragic age, so we refuse to take it tragically", this is how his last novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover* begins. The novel ends with a letter from Mellors in which he writes: "If you could tell that living and spending is not the same thing!And that is the only way to solve the industrial problem: train the people to be able to live and live in handsomeness, without needing to spend. But you can't do it. They're all one-track minds nowadays".

Suggested Reading

1. Leavis F.R: *D.H Lawrence: Novelist*, London: Chatto and Windows, 1995

2. Moore, Henry, T: *The Life and Works of D.H. Lawrence*. London: UNWIN Books, 1963
3. Sagar, Keith: *The Art of D.H. Lawrence*, London, Cambridge University Press 1966.

Some Questions

1. A critical appreciation of *Sons and Lovers*
2. The Character of Paul Morel.
3. The treatment of love in *Sons and Lovers*.