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EDITORIAL

In the eighth year of its publication, the Literary Journal has become a regular annual feature. However, the dream of four numbers a year is yet to be realised. The response to the austere discipline of literary writing is not overwhelming in spite of the contemporary thrust towards research and publication. However, the promise for the future is definitely there, as seen in these fruitful excursions into the world of thought.

**Seetha Srinivasan
Sharon D' Monte**

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"The Princes" - History and Destiny

"The Princes" by Manohar Malgaonkar spans the years between 1983 and 1949, between the year when the Maharaj's magniloquent utterance "there will always be a Begwad and there will always be a Bedar ruling it so long as the sun and the moon go round" which silenced his son, and eleven years later, the humour less, bloodless objective report over the air. "The Maharaj of Begwad, Abhayraj III, has decided to abdicate his title and renounce his privileges as an ex-ruling Prince, preferring this course to submitting to a commission of enquiry into his conduct over the violent agitation in Bulwara" and the course of the narrative exemplifies not the hackneyed dictum of history repeating itself but history reversing itself.

The sharp focus of the novel is on the fall of the princely state-the disintegration of Begwad. This is symbolic of the disintegration of the thousand and odd princely states of India-this is evident in the plurality in the title: the novel is not merely the story of Abhayraj and his development into a 'royal princely person' while cherishing the confusions of twentieth century progress, or of his father who is the Maharaj, but of the glittering clan of royalty of which they form the archetypal figures. Of course, the author's prefatory note deliberately sets out to nullify this, but only succeeds in intensifying the obvious parallel. It is thus a novel of and about history, not a novel with a colourful historical backdrop. It is the stuff of which history is created by man and in which man succumbs to the destiny of historical accidents.

The action of the novel can be said to take on a cosmic character. It does not

consist of stray episodes from history loosely strung together. Set on a large scale, the narrative moves from the personal history of Abhayraj to the 'princely rule' of his father, and then proceeds to the complex political relationships between Begwad and the British agent, Begwad and the Nationalists, the British and the Nationalists with colourful infights thrown in for spice. The kaleidoscopic variety that ensures is breathtaking; so to the embroiling of the nations of the world (with the World War for a backdrop) the pre-ordained fall of the princes-for, ironically enough, the Prince fights for the British in Burma and then is made to strip himself of his "princehood" by the same ungrateful ruler whose 'promises' were thinner than air. The geographic shifts, the political upheavals and conniving, the struggle for power at different levels-Maharaj's Kanakchand Bhils, the British, the Nationalists,-all point to the global significance that the disintegration of the states would have-including even the transfer of treasures to numberless accounts in Swiss banks.

As a chronicle novel in which the historical material is part of the texture, "The Princes" is a mini-epic in which the political plot is interwoven with the autobiographical or personal. History is not merely the stuff of the novel, but also of the technique. The novelist's vision of history unfolds through "the point of view" of the narrator, who is the Prince himself. While this would normally lead to a biased 'point of view' or an autobiographical strand, Malgaonkar has skilfully and imaginatively delineated Abhayraj as a ratiocinative individual, a 'critical' and objective commentator on the happenings of his state. The

novel begins as a "drama of double consciousness" with the father providing the conflicting point of view. As the action progresses and the fall of the princely states becomes only a matter of time, the original point of view is in silent agreement with its conflicting stance - Abhayraj realises the princely stature of his father, his political insights, his idealism and faith in his state and dynasty. What is more, he also develops a sense of identity with his father of whom he was so critical earlier. Historical events have made him aware of his own likeness to his father - the parallel of the father's suicide and his abdication rather than yield to the British is too obvious to miss.

That history is intrinsic to the so-called 'personal' plot is seen in the events that take place in Abhayraj's life. It is the tradition of the history of kings, that they are stoically courageous and stand as the perennial symbols of decorum and balance, majesty and 'unemotion'. Hence the Maharaj can callously (by unprincely standards) serve the pet lamb of his son as a special dish and see that he carves it "without tears" in front of royal guests. Again, even in the 'personal' choice of a marriage partner, political concerns prevail and so, Abhayraj has to marry Kamala, the eldest daughter of the Raja of Akheti, even as his mother is made to marry his father. That he marries a princess and not any other girl and least of all an Anglo-Indian is important to the wellbeing of the state with its rigid taboos and conventions - though it does stand to reason that, the future Maharani has to be respected.

Here, it is also relevant to mention that Malgaonkar does not wink his eye over the vulgar pomp and splendour of princely life and its all-time low, sexual morals. The irony of such 'history' is that while Abhayraj

could accept the affairs of his father though not without questionings within him, he could not in Hamlet-fashion reconcile himself to his mother's affair with Abdullah Jan-and all this after his own princely transgressions with Minnie and Zarina. In such a life, "upraj" was no status-term; but one of ignominy and hence Charudutt thas his revenge on the rulers of Begwad as head of the police force, which did not help the Maharaj against the agitations of the Prajmandal led by Kanakchand, the boy who was whipped.

The magnificence of the life-style as authenticated by history is beautifully captured by Malgaonkar-the riding exercises, the tiger hunts, the training in the prince's school, the colourful and loyal Bhils, the grandeur of two palaces, thirty cars, all the partridge and fowl and above all the mystery of the treasury. The effort to maintain this grand style of living and kow-towing to the British through this made the princes inept rulers-their administrative lapses and their refusal to meet the surging currents of change led to their ruin. And in the novel, both father and son realise this. Where the father wants no change-enjoy the life as long as one can as the end was anyhow near-the son desires change but realises that he is a helpless pawn in the hands of not only British imperialism, but misguided nationalism. Wellesly's 'divide and rule' policy triumphs.

This clearly illustrates the 'sense of fate, that is associated with history-that life' death, realisation of defeat, enjoyment of power, will go on in unchanging progression-the pattern may change and each time it is the resignation of man, his decision to accept the mysterious destiny handed to him that remains. "The Princes" exemplifies this-for Abhayraj's 'dream' of progress is shattered-British connivance, nationalistic

causes, his father's unbending nature contributed to this destruction. He is a pathetic but dignified victim of fate and leaves his post heroically without compromising his integrity-the integrity that one would associate with true majesty ; which is anachronistic in an unscrupulous political government which deals "under cover".

The tragedy of the princes seems to lie in their unquestioning and unshakeable faith in their own immortality. Most of them failed to realise that the action of history is time bound and with the cataclysmic changes all around, it was suicidal to cling tenaciously to their outmoded traditions where their rule, in fact, their whim was law. This is true of Begwad, Ninnore and other states. The more pragmatic of them compromised; the others agreed to the merger with a pittance for maintenance. Begwad, doing neither was destroyed (cf. Epilogue).

Malgaonkar's interpretation of history has given us a closely-knit novel which has

a definite plot which moves purposefully to the destined end. The authenticity of history is scrupulously maintained in the time-bound schemata of the novel, the introduction of real historical characters and events - Nehru, Mountbatten, Cripps, Gandhi, the salt march, the meeting with the viceroy; the reference to real documents, proclamations, reports, in the absence of telescoping-there is recapitulation but in orderly sequence and with Microscopic attention to details of present and past.

The plot progresses neatly through a pattern of parallelisms and contrasts, of thematic convergences and divergences, and the attempt is to balance with artistry the accident of history and the will of human actions.

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Love in "Much Ado About Nothing"

"To live and be loved", to the Elizabethans was the business of life. So a lover and his lass, or a lord and his lady were, to them the most engrossing of beings. They revelled in seeing young lovers, come alive in Shakespeare's romantic comedies.

Romantic comedies grew to possess a distinctive character by adapting the world of romance and its implications to the service of comedy.

We see in the Romantic comedies, the romanticism of the middle ages. From the tales of chivalry and knight errantry, evolved the ideal of knighthood. The society of the middle ages being a feudal one, distinctions of precedence created a code of social etiquette. This kind of a social set-up had to be cemented by the strongest of moral and sentimental ties. Hence loyalty was an important virtue in the medieval knight's equipment. Just as he worshipped God and owed allegiance to his king, he owed love to his lady. "Love became the cornerstone of the whole fabric of chivalry".

Classical comedy was preoccupied with amorous intrigues between young men and women and its prime concern was with older men. Wooing was dealt with, only casually.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, new ideas began to evolve. There was a gradual initiation into notions of chivalry. Dante had changed the concept of 'woman'. She was seen as adding to man's spiritual stature. Petrarch too idealized womankind. Italian audiences were now absorbed with youth rather than age. There was a slow

transition to romantic comedy with its youthful lovers.

Elizabethan romantic comedy, while absorbing the features of classical and Roman comedy, developed certain features of its own due to obligations imposed on the dramatist by his own age. Dramatists were required to churn out a play to be comic and romantic at once. So love had to go hand in hand with comedy.

In "Much Ado About Nothing" love and comedy go hand in hand. Many features of it, in manner and in sentiment are traceable to the romantic attitude of man to woman.

The setting is Italy, that "hallowed land of romance". It provides the atmosphere wherein the material trappings of romance may be assembled. Obstacles present themselves and love runs its uneven course, only to meet with a resolution for the best.

Heroes in the romantic comedies, are not 'Super-men' as seen in the medieval romance tradition. They are rendered as human, sometimes even fools in a topsy-turvy world of romance. At first, as with Benedick in 'Much Ado About Nothing' the hero is presented as a 'mocker of love' only to change as the play runs its course, into 'a votary of love'. In this period, before his change he is seen as helpless sometimes stupid, faltering and fumbling his way through, but in this portrayal of his heroes, Shakespeare preserves their essential humanity in depicting their frailties. In contrast, Shakespeare's heroines possess physical beauty and charm and he endows them with all good qualities. His heroines may appear to be tender, romantic and

swayed by passions, but as a spirited, independent lady of the world she will not expose herself by exhibiting common symptoms of her affections. Beatrice in the play is this kind of a heroine.

In 'Much Ado About Nothing' there is a set of lovers who seem human-complex, passionate, proud, intelligent, self-doubting, misguided, frustrated, mistaking, foolish and loving. They inhabit the happy world of a romantic comedy.

Wooing, plays an important part in the affairs of love and is the source of misunderstanding and the 'ado' in the play.

"Tis certain so; the prince woos for himself"

Trust and loyalty in matters of love are treated of.

Love, has been dealt with in a mature fashion and a psychological depth is given to the acts and responses of the characters in love. One is sure of a "happy ending" but the play raises serious problems about adultery, disloyalty and distrust. Concern with adultery is seen in the action involving Claudio and Hero, and in the sensibilities of Beatrice and Benedick. There is too, a preoccupation with sexuality. Many of the jests centre around 'cuckolds' and 'horns' and men who are effeminate and women who are disloyal. Such fantasies and fears are acted out in the courtship of Claudio. The jests focus on the spiritual and psychological implications of love and marriage.

Discussing one pair of lovers-Beatrice and Benedick, we find they are different from Claudio. They do not idealise an object of love. When engaged in dialogue they indulge in a "scrutiny of sexual fashion."

"He wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat" says Beatrice about Benedick.

Beatrice is seen as "the infernal Ate in good apparel" by Benedick.

Kirsch traces the source of inhibitions and this repression of feelings to problems of narcissism-self-love. This explains, quite simply the reason for their unwillingness to profess love directly. They crave affection but fear dependency. This fear is conscious. Being in love seems to them, a state of tension and risk-the risk of loss through rejection or unfaithfulness. The eventual union is inevitable and the audience awaits the moment when Benedick shall "look pale with love". The war of wit between Beatrice and Benedick is more, an expression of their love for one another than a confrontation of two antagonists. The union, finally emphasises the need for women and men to love one another to be physically and spiritually "whole". Egoism, that stands in the way must break down. Freud says 'we must begin to love in order not to fall ill'. The courtship of Beatrice and Benedick embodies this. Their wit has been a means of courtship and acts as a defense against deeply embedded impulses. It makes these impulses fight fears of rejection and betrayal. The pleasure attained through these repartees integrates their feelings. They move to that period where pleasure is simple and narcissism poses no problems. Benedick says:-

"They say the lady is fair.....so I cannot reprove it.....it is no addition to her wit, nor no argument of her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her".

Benedick is now a confirmed "votary of love". One cannot seek to explain the reason behind this change of heart, but there is a feeling of doubt. "This rational scepticism and irrational dilation of the spirit" is what constitutes Shakespeare's treatment of love in his romantic comedies.

Looking at Claudio, one sees a man different from Benedick. He is a conventional idealistic lover, but this idealism is questioned. Inconstancy in love is examined in Claudio's cruel rejection of Hero. He shames Hero in a scene in which the original intent is the "form and solemnization of matrimony". The focus is on the marriage ceremony and it provides the context in which Beatrice and Benedick come together, resolving their inner impediments.

Hero is accused of an act that marriage is ordained to avoid. Claudio accuses her of "pure impiety and impious purity". These do not apply to Hero, but they are an expression of feelings repressed within himself. What is suggested, could be, the repression of his own sensuality. His interest in her is self-centred. So according to Krisch, there is a 'narcissistic impediment' that is detrimental to the fulfilment of love. This problem has to be overcome, in order that an enduring relationship based on love, trust and faith be established.

Claudio and Hero by giving the fears and fantasies of Beatrice and Benedick actual expression, dissipate in the process their "unnatural" energy. Now Beatrice and Benedick are free to disbelieve in the evidence of what they have seen or heard to have better faith in a deeper reality of their experience.

The end provides the conventional note of "Jack shall have Jill" but lovers in this play are united only through a realisation that marriages work on the basis of faith and trust. All inward impediments are purged. 'I' and 'you' are made one. This is the clearest resolution of the problems of selfishness.

The treatment of love thus in 'Much Ado About Nothing' is mature and serious, delving in to spiritual and psychological problems of love and marriage and the working out of a resolution to the mutual benefit of the two sets of lovers.

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Myth in Hughes' Poetry

It has been rightly observed that 'myth' implies a certain transcendence which is not to be found in legend or history. In Ted Hughes' early poetry, myth occurs in a not so transcendent form. The poet propounds a myth in as much as he erects a certain value-energy, in this instance. Such a construction of a less-inclusive myth by Hughes stands in relation to Lawrence's 'Birds, Beasts and Flowers'. Lawrence's pronouncement - 'we want to realise the tremendous non-human quality of life-it is wonderful.....Behind in all are the tremendous unknown forces of life, coming unseen and unperceived as out of the desert to the Egyptians and driving us, forcing us, destroying us if we do not submit to be swept away' - may well seem a Ted Hughes manifests and is in fact very closely related to what he had to say about these dark mysterious forces in March 1965-"Each one is living the redeemed life of joy. They're continually in a state of joy which men only have when they've gone mad.....These spirits or powers won't be messed up by artificiality or arrangement.....Mostly these powers are just waiting while life just goes by and only find an outlet in moments of purity and crisis, because they won't enter the ordinary pace and constitution of life very easily....."

For both the poets, the Eliotian correlative is to be found in the Nature myth, quite devoid of a Wordsworthian anthropomorphism except for the purpose of highlighting the gap between animal and human consciousness. Lawrence contrasts man's 'pettiness' with the integrity, grandeur and the protean beauty of the creature as in 'Snake' or 'Mountain Lion' while for Hughes the fascination lies in the elemental

drive and energy, even the ruthless and violent determinism of Nature, which places him alongside Tom Gunn as a 'poet of energy'.

His vision is never clouded over by that sentimentality which sometimes destroys Lawrence's poetry. We are proffered a stark uncompromising view of reality.

'Terrifying are the attent sleek thrushes on the lawn, more coiled steel than living'.

With their bullet and automatic purpose and an efficiency 'which strikes too streamlined', the Hawk in 'Hawk Roosting' as also the 'Pike' with their aged, malevolent grin are energetically violent, predatory creatures. But by way of contrast we have man's 'heroisms on horseback' and his 'act worshipping itself'. There is no room for sentiment but yet the poet like Lawrence through entirely natural observation enters into the 'otherness' of the creature and even comes up with a little Lawrence-touch as to what the animal's life means to itself-The otter.

'wanders, cries ;

Gallops along land he no longer belongs to ;

Re-enter the water by melting..... seeking

Some world lost when first he dived, that he cannot come at since'.

As in Lawrence, the theme of otherness extends from the otherness of a creature to an apprehension of the 'other' world.

Bull Moses is a force of darkness with a prophetic vision of the 'other' world In 'Pike' towards the end man fishes not for

pike but for the mysterious fears which surface from the dark unconscious. 'To paint a water lily' depicts two worlds-the surface-world of day and the unknown world of darkness bringing with it 'Latin names' from 'prehistoric bedragouned times'. In 'Thrushes' too there is a world beyond human consciousness inhabited by demon forces that 'orgy and hossanah' rendering meaningless man's act that worships itself.

All these poems erect the energy myth of a kind rather reminiscent of Blake's 'Tyger'. They illustrate Hughes' claim that 'Any form of violence-any form of vehement activity-invokes the bigger energy, the elemental power-circuit of the universe'. Such a philosophy like Gunn's return to primitive forces is meaningful in the light of the context in which these poets wrote-the post-war trend of commonplace poetry marked by a monumental lack of vitality. Thus despite the fact that there is no affirmation but on the other hand a stark view of reality, there is yet a deep concern over man's loss of meaningful existence, in as much as the concern is felt in the poetry, through "language spiced with great relish for experience, even when that experience is unpleasant and horrifying", (The Art of Ted Hughes-Keith Sagar), the early poetry of Hughes is not nihilistic and the positive values of myth can be discerned in it.

With 'Wodwo', the tendency to myth-making begins to be accompanied by a concomitant process of myth-breaking. 'I ran and an absence pounded beside me'-declares the protagonist of 'Gog' and one recalls Eliot in 'The Waste Land' and the journey to Emmaus 'who is the third who always walks beside you?' In lines like these there is a deliberate breaking down of structures of existing myths with a simultaneous creation of a new myth. The name 'Gog' is

used presumably to reflect a kind of primitivism. The idea of God is outworn and meaningless. Here, as in 'Thrushes', human qualities are denigrated.

The protagonist has 'seated out' his 'error, of looking for meaning and leads now an animal-like existence. The compensatory image created 'I am massive on earth' negates all that man as 'roof and crown of things' is deemed to be. In 'Pibroch', in what appears an anthisponorphic bleak vision of a meaningless universe, "an old woman fallen from space/unprepared for these conditions" hangs on but only "because her mind's gone completely". This horrifying prospect takes us closer to 'Crow', the surreal nightmare.

'Crow' destroys whatever the self 'a spider's web, tense for the dew's touch ('full moon and little Frieder'-'Wodwo') can sense no beauty. And it achieves this with the sweeping, transcendent destructiveness of a new organic myth. Ted Hughes creates a symbol in the Crow, for the first time a unifying and representative figure in whom all things converge centripetally. To quote Terry Eagleton, "the individual is invested with a freshly representative significance, not the node in which natural forces, historical strands, metaphysical preoccupations converge". Myth thus allows a centripetal unity as well as a liberty spanning diverse dimensions of time and space.

The Crow itself is deemed to have antecedents in Eskimo and Celtic mythology but what Hughes had to say about this lineage is significant-"My main concern was to produce something with the minimum cultural accretions of the museum sort-something autoclithonous and complete in itself.....so the comparative religion/mythology background was irrelevant to me, except as I could forget it. If I couldn't find

It again original in Crow, I was n't interested to make a trophy of it' Crow is several things at once in the poems. The poet described him as 'a childish hanger-on to the events of Creation'. He is the practical joker, outside natural law and Divine power. He is indestructible and like man, kills for survival, and is the embodiment of the alien psychic factor, an ugly, black, paranoid figure, almost a caricature. And yet, he too rises to a tragic poignancy in his very rare moments of despair and loneliness.

The title reads 'from the Life and Songs of Crow', Hughes commences his narration with the birth of Crow and right from the outset as in 'Gog' there is discernible, a systematic subversion of existing myths.

'Conjuring in Heaven' describes the conception of Crow out of 'Nothing'. The myth of Creation is thus inverted and a poem dealing with Birth is most obviously titled 'A Kill'.

In the Universe of 'Crow', God has not been destroyed but he is comatose or cruel in turns while Crow looks on, a clownish prankster. This destruction of the Idea of God goes further in its reduction than Nietzsche's 'God is dead' which meant that our creeds are outworn and only make for a false security and complacency. What every individual needs is to live an authentic existence in recognition of his potential power and life force. In the world of 'Crow', there is no such emphasis on authentic existence as a compensatory creed. In 'A Childish Prank', while God 'ponders' as to how he can inform the body of Man with a soul, he falls asleep with the effort. Crow plays his prank. 'He bit the worm, God's only son/Into two writhing halves' and he stuffs the halves into man and woman. In the coming together of worm, the sexual union of man and woman occurs. 'God went

on sleeping/Crow went on laughing'. In 'Crow Communes', 'God lies agape, a great carcase' in his most typical posture. In 'Crow blacker than ever' at a juncture when 'things looked like falling apart' in the world, 'Crow nailed them together / Nailing Heaven and earth together' - In an act of crucifixion. The Eden myth is rendered farcically in 'Apple Tragedy' wherein all the drama of trouble enacted in Eden is traced back to the cider in the apple.

Not only myths, but cherished values are also undermined. In Crow's 'First Lesson', God tries to teach Crow how to speak the word 'Love'. But Crow's efforts to say the word only bring about Hate and Cruelty in the natural world.

'No, no', said God 'Say Love. Now try it. LOVE' Crow gaped, and a bluefly, a tsetse, a mosquito Zoomed out and down To their sundry flesh-pots'.

Man's incapacity to love as well as God's impotence are exposed here.

Heroism is delegated to mere 'contending'. 'The contender' lies 'crucified with all his strength / On the earth/Gunning towards the sun/.....Sometimes with eyes closed / In his senseless trial of strength'. Man is a passive victim of God and of natural forces. Crow suffers untold humiliation but as Ted Hughes puts it 'he is indestructible, like Horatio'. In 'Crow's Playmates', the hero is left straggling and deserted - he is his own leftover.

'So the least, least-living extant object wandered over his deathless greatness Lonelier than ever'.

He is left with his loneliness and a dubious greatness and he.....contends.

Crow is destructive, he kills relentlessly in his struggle for survival. He is 'Crow

Tyrannosaurus'. In that poem, Hughes psyches Crow and achieves for the first time a truly tragic poignancy in the manner of Beckett. Unfortunately, this is not sustained elsewhere in the work. Every creature that Crow sees, including Man, is an 'abattoir of innocents'.

'Crow thought, 'Alas
Alas ought I
to stop eating
And try to become the light?'
But his eye saw a grub. And his head,
trapsprung, stabbed.
And he listened
And he heard
Weeping.....
Weeping he walked and stabbed
Thus came the eye's roundness the ear's
deafness!'

Man's animality is inescapable and he has to live in the knowledge of it sans moral or spiritual aspiration

The world of Nature is also tainted by entropy. In 'Crow's First Lesson' and 'Crow Tyrannosaurus', Hughes presents the biological world as consumed by Hate. The problem is all pervasive and in this 'Crow's eye view' of reality, one of the most malignant truths is the fact that the seeing eye retains its terrible power of seeing

'there was finally something
The sun could not burn.....
Limpid and black-
Crow's eye-pupil in the tower of its
scorched fort'.

In 'Crow Alights' again Hughes' view of man is confined to what Crow sees. 'Crow blinked' at the horror of Creation spread before him 'He stared at the evidence.

Nothing escaped him. (Nothing could escape)'.
'

Man must live with this 'objective' and disturbing perception of reality in all its meaninglessness.

Thus, the world merely exists and what is left in the end is a figure like the Contender or 'Little blood'

'O little blood, drumming in a cow's skull
Dancing with a gnat's feet
With an elephant's nose with a crocodile's
tail.
grown so wise grown so terrible
sucking death's mouldy tits'.

Little blood - evidence that there is life yet in this nothingness, that Crow though in every way a cypher, at least 'flies the black flag of himself'. This indestructibility of Crow and thus life may be seen by some, says Eagleton, as "a fantasy response to the actual dilemmas of oppression and insecurity in contemporary society" but he rightly insists that "that kind of compensatory myth may work as art when it takes serious measure of the recalcitrant material it confronts" and not otherwise. Jonathan Raban affirms 'Crow's value in that it keeps a self-conscious eye on the real world it subverts'. If so, it is by no means sufficient or consistent enough to erase the impression it leaves behind of a nihilistic view of man.

The myth is built on a caricature and rarely rises to a level of tragic, or, as the case may be, comic profundity. The art is overplayed though admittedly revolutionary-Hughes ignores accretions of every sort, blasts the foundation myths from under whose shadow, Crow emerges, proclaiming his own unlovely identity. But the subversions occur most often for the sake of comicality or for achieving verbal effects rather than out of any deep-seated need. The 'Birth-Kill' inversion is an example, as also 'Conjuring in Heaven'

'So finally there was nothing/It was put inside nothing'. and 'Apple Tragedy'

So on the seventh day/The serpent rested, There are passages of sheer ingenuity which make us want to confirm Hughes' statement that 'he first idea of Crow was really an idea of a style' and that in rejecting the eagle and opting for the Crow his aim was to achieve a 'super-simple, super-ugly language'

'When the eagle soared clear through a dawn distilling of emerald
When the curfew trawled in seadusk thro,
a chime of honeylasses.....
Crow spraddled head-down in the beach-garbage, guzzling a dropped ice-cream'.

—'Crow and the Birds'

But on the whole there is a deterioration in the language. It is no longer "able to cope with the biggest things, or generate energies equal to the great primary energies of the world" (The art of Ted Hughes-Keith Sagar)

A defence may be put up for Hughes, namely, that it is vastly more courageous to penetrate reality and expose to ugliness rather than delude oneself with facile optimism-optimism of the Shelley kind with regard to the Promethean myth 'this like the glory, Titan, is to be' great, glorious, joyous and free.....Hughes' 'Crow' may be acclaimed as great poetry rising out of a 'negative dynamic'.

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Babbitt - A Response

"There was nothing of the giant in the aspect of the man who was beginning to awaken on the sleeping porch of a Dutch colonial House in that residential district of Zenith known as Floral Heights."

His name was George F. Babbitt, He made nothing in particular, neither butter nor shoes nor poetry, but he was nimble in the calling of selling houses for more than people could offer to pay. Babbitt was an American real estate man (or as he preferred to put it 'realtor'). He lived in Zenith which was a fictitious Mid-west town in a fictitious state in the United States of America. An ordinary man, with ordinary hopes and ideals, yet Sinclair Lewis using him as a subject waxes eloquent for 401 pages and in thirty three chapters. But Lewis' "interest is primarily anthropological, he is the student, of a strange tribe that exists in a world that includes all the states of the Mid-West but is none of them, behaves in a way that resembles the behaviour of the actual middle-class world, but in vigor and extreme gesture transcends it". (Frederick Hettmant, *The Twenties*. p. 409).

The Babbitt family is the epitome of the American middle class family of the towns. They live like most of them do in modest localities, like Floral Heights. Every house in Floral Heights resembles the other. Myra Babbitt is ordinary, plump and mainly concerned with 'Vecchia' ice-cream and the lack of pure maple syrup for pancakes. Ted is a typical American youngster, a dandy where primary concern is cars and girls (in that order of preference). Verona, a graduate working as a secretary but "given to solitudes about duty, sex and God," (Babbitt p. 16). The only spontaneous

person in the family is Tinka - the Babbitt eleven year old. She is as yet unaffected by the codes of the Babbitt world but shows all signs of blossoming into a full blown Babbitt.

George F. Babbitt was a shrewd business man but besides being one he was nothing else. He spoke of whole hearted service to the community, appreciated baseball, belonged to all the right clubs the Athletic, the Booster and the Elks, held regular "Sassiety" parties and did everything every other business man did. Consequently he was a hypocrite. So great was his desire to conform that he stifled his other desires. He had no ideals, religious, political, social or otherwise that was't an abstraction. What he wanted to do he never could. As a Good Citizen he believed in prohibition yet purchased liquor when he could from Healey Hanson's. He consciously advocated morality to Reisling his "baa - lamb" yet he himself formed a liasion with Tanis Judique.

Babbitt was never consciously hypocritical. He honestly believed in himself. There is an undisturbed naivete about Babbitt which is occasionally disturbed by his doubts. These doubts he naturally stifles. He drifts through life aimlessly dreaming of his fairy child.

In the first half of the book (that is, until the arrest of Riesling) Lewis parodies every aspect of Zenith life. The objects of his attack range from Glen Oriole the "Glenless" "Orioless subburnt flat" (p. 45) to Louetta Swanson. Zenith's Athletic club called the Union Club "a rotten, shobbish dull expensive old hole...you couldn't hire

me to join" (p. 55). Yet statistics have shown that not one Athletic member refuses to join the Union when asked and afterwards is heard to have said "The Athletic would be a pretty good hotel if it were more exclusive" (p. 55). "Zenith was notoriously law abiding." During its prohibition, "they were compelled to keep the cocktails innocent by drinking them out of tea cups" (p. 97). What Dr. Yavitch, friend of Seneca Doane says could almost be said by Lewis - "I hate your city. It has standardised all the beauty out of life. It is one big Railroad station - with all the people taking tickets for the best cemeteries" (p. 100).

Until the imprisonment of Riesling, Babbitt is a cocksure, self-assured man who is a caricature of the bourgeois American. But Riesling's arrest for attempted murder rocks the foundation of his life. He becomes a different Babbitt. As Hoffman says a 'parody' of Babbitt. He associates with the Bohemian 'bunch', violates sexual taboos, neglects his family, sneers at the Boosters and refuses to join the Good Citizen's League. He is a rebel, Hoffman feels "Lewis creates another, sensitive, humane, Babbitt who in his person and his behaviour nullifies the success of the other." (p. 414).

This view I cannot entirely agree with. 'The caricature' Babbitt, is definitely more interesting than the 'rebel' Babbitt and 'Prodigal' Babbitt. In the first place, if Lewis had made Babbitt a caricature throughout

the novel he might not have succeeded in making an impression on the reader and might have been dismissed by the reader as being extreme (After all much of Lewis' reading public would have been from the 'Babbitt world'). By showing the humane Babbitt, Lewis succeeds in portraying a multi-faceted man instead of a mere hypocrite. Secondly, Lewis' vision - His intention is not just to mock but to satirise. A satire inherently has the intention of wanting to reform. The 'rebel' Babbitt unconsciously expresses his desire to be different. But his return to the fold seems to contradict the vision. But Lewis is not attempting to reform Babbitt the individual but the Babbitt types. The rebellion and reform of the Babbitt type would take a few generations. They still have hope and as Babbitt tells his son "I've never done a single thing I've wanted to in my whole life. I don't know I've accomplished anything except just get along. I figure out I've made about a quarter of an inch out of a possible hundred rods. Well, may be you'll carry things on further. I don't know. But I do get a kind of sneaking pleasure out of a fact that you knew what you wanted to do and did it. Well, those folks in there will try to bully you. Tell 'em to go to the devil! I'll back, you... Don't be scared of the family. No, nor of all Zenith. Nor of yourself, the way I've been. Go ahead, old man! The world is yours!" (p. 402).

NALINI IYER
II B.A. Literature

Postures in the Poetry of Nissim Ezekiel

"A poem is an episode, completed
In an hour or two, but poetry
Is something more. It is the why
The how, the what, the flow
From which a poem comes,
In which the savage and the singular,
The gentle, familiar,
Are all dissolved ; the residue
Is what you read, as a poem, the rest
Flows and is poetry."

These lines from the volume, "A Time to Change," are expressive of Ezekiel's attitude to and conception of poetry.....For him, life was a journey and poetry the chief source of discovering and organising one's self. Poetry was for him a way of life, a continuous flow, and inextricably, related to existence. One does not, therefore consider his collections of verse in isolation but rather in relation to one another, because the poet is under one continuous process of formulating his life in terms of poetry.

With the coming of Ezekiel, Ramanujan and Parthasarathy, prominent Indian poets of the twentieth century, one notes a definite shift from the romanticism of the past. The focus is now on the self, the "I" and the concern is for the existential self of the present, the tone being ironical or skeptical.

Born in Bombay, Ezekiel belongs to the Bene-Israel tribe of Jews and is faced with this sense of alienation;-

"Do I belong, I wonder,
to the common plain?"

"A Small Summit"

As a child he was "a mugging Jew among the wolves" and later the question arose, "how to feel it home, was the point." There

is this constant groping for an identity, "I am here to find my way in it. Sometimes I cry for help."

Nevertheless there is a commitment,

"I cannot leave the island
I was born here and belong"

and an acceptance, motivated by a genuine love for India,

"The Indian landscape sears my eyes
I have become a part of it."

In spite of his deep attachment there is no idealising, Bombay is still that, "Barbaric city sick with slums"; nevertheless there is that realisation, "His native place he could not shun/The marsh where things are what they seem."

Hence with the desire to belong comes his resolution;- "Minding the ways of the island as a good native should/Taking calm and clamour in my stride."

And with 'Enterprise' comes the strong conviction that "Home is where we have to gather grace", and the emphatic assertion in "Background Casually", - "I have made my commitments now/This is one : to stay where I am"

Finally there is that urgent plea :-

"Confiscate my passport, Lord,
I don't want to go abroad.
Let me find my song
where I belong."

The pulsating intensity of city life is poignantly captured in "The city like a passion burns" and there is a longing, "To be of the city/ To feel its hot breath."

But there is also a disgust at the hypocrisy of urban society, of "insidious words, dressed in evening clothes for drawing rooms" and a denouncement of commercial existence of "Posters selling health and happiness in bottles."

However, there is a keen and penetrating observation of environment and a flair for precise and realistic detail with no straining after effect. In "Portrait", he speaks of,

"Cooking on a smoky stove
Shooing beggars from the back-door wall
Bargaining in cheap bazaars."

The ordinary moments of urban existence are casually spoken of :

"Unhurriedly I catch the bus
Must carry on, without a fuss."

"In India" captures the crowds, the din and the atmosphere of city life :

"Always in the sun's eye,
Here among the beggars,
Hawkers, pavement sleepers,
Hutment dwellers, slums
..... all in noisy silence."

He does not deny the stultifying nature of city life, "where only human hands sell cheap" and where the urban man realises, "that everything would be the same, constricting as his formal dress/the pain of his fragmented view."

Such is the predicament of urban man,
who
"knows the broken roads, and moves
In circles tracked within his head."

In spite of this, his mind must turn, "to kindred clamour close at hand."

But there is also the need to withdraw occasionally, from mundane monotonous activities of "plans for group activities",

and a need for, "corners in the mind for quiet sun bathing."

It has been remarked that Ezekiel's ironic mode is a "peculiar off-shoot of the urban ethos." Skepticism, a dry stringent humour and a spareness of expression is Ezekiel's response to the urban milieu.

The highly suggestive lines from "In India", reveal his ironic perception and are an exposure of the superficiality of urban existence :

"She sat in disarray
The struggle had been hard
And not altogether successful,
Certainly the blouse
Would not be used again
But with true British courtesy
He lent her a safety pin."

Ezekiel discovers too, that human relationship is a "charade of passion and possession" and he sees, "the haze of self-deception in our eyes."

In the exploration of the self, Ezekiel craves for a meaningful relationship, but even marriage proves, to be "the worst mistake of all" for "a man is damned in that domestic game" and after a while, "the mark of Cain", begins to show, followed by the feeling of satiation, "the same thing over and over again."

Ezekiel perceives woman in her dual form as "myth and dream" and as "beast of sex", but any relationship based purely on the physical proves to be hollow and sex can become a "turgid drama":

"Sweet sex, not wholly sweet
Even in a day dream."

Ezekiel longs for "the quieter passion" to maintain one's equilibrium."

Love can be a beautiful experience as he recalls,

“To judge by memory alone,
Our love was happy
When the bombs burst in Kashmir ;
My life had burst
And merged in yours.

But even this is shortlived because later on, “you asked to break it up”,

In “Poet, Lover, Birdwatcher” Ezekiel’s major concern with poetry and love are beautifully blended into one unique experience—the nature of which is perceived and recreated in terms of another—that of the birdwatcher. One merges into another, establishing the common identity of the seekers, where,

the hunt is not an exercise of will
but when ‘that moment’ comes, one, “no longer waits, but risks surrendering.”

Bound up with his search for love is the love/creativity” theme where

“the sunshine of a kiss can glow
within a dozen poems, and a body yielding
on the summer grass, with expert fingers
can release
a spring of words as fresh as woman’s
eyes.”

In spite of repeated failures in love and absence of genuine communication, Ezekiel still waits for that moment when he will “know my love reciprocated”.

Ezekiel is also a poet of the body for living is impossible without “the body’s nakedness”, the “body’s daily strategy” and the “body’s noise and scent”.

With remarkable candour he confesses,
“Beneath your dress I find you young,
Rewarding to my explorations.”

The needs of the body cannot be ignored for,

“in the working of his mind,
the body takes a hand.”

“The true business of living, is seeing,
touching, kissing,
The epic of walking in the street
And loving on the bed” – all this is an essential part of life.

Through vivid images, alliteration, and antithesis, he describes the human body as “curved, casual, cool”, as “bird soft” and yet “blazing animal.”

Ezekiel admits however, that physical union can also be a source of blessedness:-

“The limbs are shaped to lock and love—
And lives are welded which exist apart.”

Struggling to find identity, searching for honesty in love, all requires toil, perseverance and devotion and writing of poetry is intrinsically woven with his very existence and requires that patient devotion of a peasant who “breaks the stone, loosens soil, allows the seed to die in it, waits

Patiently.....and even
Finds, on a lucky day, a metaphor
leaping from the sod.”

His mastery of craft, his fusion of music and meaning in the fine proportion, his ability to visually reinforce his idea that there is something elusive about poetry is beautifully expressed in the lines,

“Something comes
Through and through, I hear the music
of it
I hear the meaning too.
I feel the flesh / Of the poem,
Firm / And the bone hard,
It comes to me / Beloved poem,
I love it / And then I let it go.”

The dawning of inspiration is lyrically described through poignant images :-

“From the long dark tunnel
Of that afternoon, crouching, humped,
waiting for the promised land
I peeped out like a startled animal
And saw a friend flapping his angelic
wings.
I welcomed him”.

He is also critical of bad poetry where,

“The lyric impulse frozen,
what is the poet but a bore”.
There is also that violent outburst,
“Damn all you sensitive poets”

who “are in hell/and do not know it”.

Then comes that direct confrontation,
“When did you last write
a real poem?”

He criticises their lack of singularity, of
“mixing metaphors and platitudes” and
admits that he is “counted one among
them”.

The reading public also come in for
criticism for they are the “gullible folk”.

But most important is the discovery that
he makes :-

“I used too many words,
And now I know
There is a point
In being obscure
About the luminous
The pure musical
Phases of living,
Which ought to be
delicately improvised
And left alone”.

Finally however, one must remember, that
for Ezekiel, “The pure invention or the
perfect poem.....are merely dreams;
But I am human / and must testify to what
they mean”.

And it is through testifying that he not
only discovers his self, but also overcomes
this sense of alienation, for poetry becomes
a means of communication.

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Philosophy and Bach

Another book was placed on the rack. It was no extraordinary matter. Books are published everyday and no one gives it a second thought, but once in a while, a book that passes unobserved into one of the numerous bookshops across the length and breadth of the United States acquires world renown.

This book was no different. In less than a year, "Jonathan Livingstone Seagull" hit record sales all over the world, and the focus was on its author Richard Bach. The simple language does not mask, but, in fact, emphasises his philosophy, drawing people from all walks of life-people in a desperate search for a new way of looking at life and its mechanism.

In the summer of 1981, it happened again. The summer saw the publication of another promising best - seller "Illusions - The Adventures of a Reluctant Messiah". It proved not only to be a best-seller, but also provided a new perspective to those in the endless search to understand life.

"Gift of Wings", a collection of the author's thoughts and of interesting anecdotes told the world a little more about the man who strived to provide adequate answers to their questions.

"There's No Such Place as Far Away" was another of his books that took the world by surprise. The few sentences of this book which takes less than half an hour to read, were loaded with Bach's philosophy, as if giving it to the world in a nutshell.

"Not my will, but thine be done, for what is thy will is mine for thee." These words form the basis of Bach's philosophy. There

is nothing profound about his philosophy-nothing of the high metaphysical and mystical school of thought that soars above the heads of ordinary people. It is a simple philosophy insisting that you and you alone are the master of your life and it is upto you to do with it whatever you choose to do with it. "Within you lies the power of consent to health and to sickness, to poverty and to riches, to freedom and to slavery. It is you who control these and not another." "You are never given a wish without also being given the power to make it true. You may have to work for it, however."

"Little Rae is growing up and I'm going to her birthday party with a present." This is the well-known line which forms the basis of "There's No Such Place as Far Away", and on careful analysis, explains Bach's Philosophy. "Why going? If you want to be with somebody, aren't you already there?" This is further elaborated in "Jonathan Livingstone Seagull", where speed is not a certain distance in a certain time, but "being there already."

"It is what you believe it to be." This line has been so dynamically portrayed in "Illusions" that numerous readers have acknowledged the urge they have to try it-try walking on water or through walls or whatever else the messiah claims possible.

The use of an advanced soul explaining this philosophy to a lesser mortal makes it clear and easy to understand.

Optimistic though it may sound on paper, this philosophy seems to kindle a kind of fear in the minds of his readers. They are hit by the realisation that they, and they alone are responsible for their lives, there-

is nothing and nobody they can blame. It poses a challenge which is not readily accepted.

Critics question this philosophy writing it off as a destructive one, but Bach has ready answers. The answers are in keeping with his philosophy and it is only when we accept this philosophy that we can accept the answers.

Bach uses aircraft and birds to emphasise his philosophy. They stand as a symbol of that complete freedom we have to spread our wings. The sky symbolises the vast opportunities and areas before us to be experienced and explored. There is nothing restrictive or limiting about his symbolism. The use of wide and open spaces further enhances this thought.

Where to us, everything, is a place and a time, to Bach, it is unlimited. To us, Heaven is a place, but to Bach, it is "neither a place

or a time, but is perfection." What to us is life, is to Bach, just another space - time dimension in our journey to achieve this perfection.

After saying all this, however, an element of doubt creeps into his mind about the truth of the philosophy. "Everything in this book may be wrong" he remarks, making it more difficult for the layman to accept his philosophy.

All in all, it is an optimistic philosophy and one of great promise, but the element of doubt in its truth and the challenge it poses in the moulding of our lives makes it difficult to accept. We may never know the truth, but in Bach's own words, not being known does not stop the truth from being true!

VINITA PARTHASARATHY
I year B. A. Literature

Rise of Capitalism H. G. Wells' 'Tono-Bungay' and 'Kipps'

(Paper presented at the Literature-Economics Seminar, 1984)

"You are young-but are you sure you have not aged your gums? A bottle of Tono-Bungay mouthwash may be just what you need....." Advertising, one of the biggest phenomena of Twentieth Century commerce and now so much a part of every day life. Wells wrote his novels at the beginning of the twentieth century and he anticipated the new England of trade and big business, advertisement and competition. These are the wheels that turn the machinery of buying and selling and keep the modern world moving. But the grinding wheels also turn out much waste and destruction. Wells sees this as much a part of this emerging world of modern capitalism as the verve and vitality that gave it birth.

The novel, 'Tono-Bungay' is the story of the Ponderevos - George and his uncle Edward and their upward journey through the social strata. Tono-Bungay itself is the name of a patent medicine of dubious worth that Edward Ponderevo invents and which leads to the rise of his commercial Empire. Edward Ponderevo is the quintessential modern entrepreneur. He has that quick spirit of daring and adventure that forces him out of a sleepy village into London the hub of trading activity. He is the modern financial gambler who is speculator, investor, buyer and seller. In an attempt to make a quick profit Ponderevo invests in the stock market but his shares crash and leave him bankrupt. Yet from this state of penury he is able to build a financial empire. He accumulates capital by playing one prospective investor against the other and telling each in turn that the other had come in. The gamble he takes pays off.

'Kipps' is essentially the story of the fortunes of a simple young man. Kipps, from being a mere apprentice, becomes a man of money and leisure. He moves up the social ladder by leaps and bounds when his grand father leaves him a legacy of twelve hundred pounds a year. As in 'Tono-Bungay', a rash investment finds Kipps 'smashed' over night. We see him however recovering from such a disastrous blow to start a successful career as a book-seller.

Wells foresees one of the common intrigues of modern business-the take-over bid. Edward Ponderevo is an unabashed financial parasite. He accumulates his wealth by preying on the unsuspecting and ignorant public. He buys up modest businesses and adds what he calls 'Whoosh!' to them with tongue-in-cheek advertisements and clever salesmanship. At first his advertisements are naive-"Buy Ponderevo's cough Linctus now. Why? Two pence cheaper than in winter. You store apples! Why not the medicine you're bound to need?" Later on he develops "the alluring buttonholing come-on - let-me - just - tell - you - quite - soberly - something-you-ought-to-know - style" of news paper advertisement. We see the emergence of a brash righteous salesmanship-"Are you bored with your dinner? Are you bored with your wife Hilarity. Tono-Bungay like mountain air in your veins." The twentieth century was almost a new renaissance of trade, where men searched for the pot of gold at the rainbow's end. Romance was introduced into trade and commerce. "Commerce," exults Ponderevo" is a romantic exchange of commodities

and property.....and the world lives on trade."

Tono-Bungay is a kind of elixir of modern life-the symbol of new commercial trends. It is a bubbling spirit that turns drab trade into a vital whirlpool. It epitomises the trends of expansion and confidence. "Your modern Commerce is no more buying and selling that sculpture. It's mercy, its salvation. It's rescue work! It takes all sorts of fallen commodities by the hand and raises them. You turn water into Tono-Bungay." Ponderevo shows a keen insight into investor psychology. The public were attracted by the homely familiarity of 'Tono-Bungay'. There was a sudden freedom from restraint and the zest to buy was characteristic of the times.

George is, in his own way, as much a pioneer as his uncle. His fumbling attempts at what has now become common place-air-travel, the adventurous quest for the radioactive substance 'quap', show him as the emerging new man.

In both novels there is a strong under current of socialism. Wells was an advocate of equal opportunity. Yet when he saw the disintegration of the old heirarchical order, he did not rejoice for in its place he foresaw the emergence of a new order which was no more egalitarian than the old. This is illustrated in 'Kipps' where the new economically ascended people hold the same snob values.

'Tono-Bungay' is the magic word that stands for the quick successes of the modern business world. But Wells shows how deceptive it all really is since all speculation hinges on Lady Luck. Both the crashes in 'Tono-Bungay' and 'Kipps' come at unexpected times. Edward Ponderevo is brought down from the peak of a financial empire,

while Kipps is rudely uprooted from the new society whose pinnacle he had just reached. Trade in the modern world is created by an artificial need. Edward Ponderevo acknowledges this deception. "Everybody who does a large advertized trade is selling something common on the strength of saying its uncommon." George Ponderevo serves as a moral point of reference. He realised that his uncle was nothing more than a financial parasite. "For he created nothing, he invented nothing he economized nothing. I cannot claim that a single one of the great businesses we organized added any real value to human life at all. Several like Tono-Bungay were unmitigated fraud by any honest standard, the giving of nothing coated in advertisements for money." Despite the harsh criticism, George Ponderevo allows it to be and is part of it. From 'Tono-Bungay' and 'Kipps' we gather that Wells' moral vision is not optimistic. He is clearly sceptical of an economic revolution. 'Kipps' presents a world where "unless you can crawl or pander or rob, those rich beasts above claw and clutch as though they had nothing." The field of economics is seen as a battle ground, a savage fight for survival. It becomes a matter of doing one better than one's rival, whatever be the means, as Mr. Boom, Ponderevo's arch enemy, delivers the death blow to the 'Tono-Bungay' empire after a long calculated commercial battle. Money seems to justify everything. Thus George Ponderevo casually murders a man in his search for 'quap'. He suffers no pangs of conscience. One wonders if this is Wells' moral comment on the commercialized pursuit of science.

What was characteristic of the age was the sense of change that Wells depicts. From the old system of class and order England moved into a fast, swirling era of

ideas, discoveries and inventions. Wells stands back and watches England swing through into this new epoch. He saw the evolution of a new man and a new age. In these two novels, he depicts a society which was poised on the brink of irrevocable change taking its first tentative steps towards the modern era.

The two books show a strong pre-occupation on the part of the author with the rigid hierarchical society of Victorian England. In 'Tono-Bungay' this society is represented by the social order that exists in Bladestown—a closed and complete social system, a small working model of England. Throughout his life the narrator, George Ponderevo is conscious of this pattern of society, this hierarchy that will put a man in his place and try to keep him there. Change is the order of the day. The old social values give place to a commercial order where money is the arbiter of society and the creator of a new social man and a new aristocracy.

In 'Kipps' the aristocracy makes no real appearance. Nevertheless, the same rigid hierarchy is visible and men and women of all classes are busy trying to maintain it. "The young shop lady in England has just the same horror of having anything that savours of the servant girl as the lady journalist has of anything savouring of the shopgirl, or the really quite nice young lady has of anything savouring of any sort of girl who has gone down into the economic battle field to earn herself a living." But rigid though the order is, it is money that rules the social strata.

The advent of the twentieth Century with modern capitalism and early adventurers like uncle Ponderevo was in effect part of a long process. From the sixteenth Century a new commercial class and a new social order had been making itself felt and every age had its share of the new man's quick meteoric rise from the lower orders through clever dealing and trade. The Industrial Revolution gave an impetus to socio-economic changes and the rise of capitalism. But it was the Twentieth Century that saw the ultimate break-up of the old caste order and the emergence of the commonman. Wells shows this in 'Kipps' and the Ponderevos "journey through an extensive cross section of the British social organism"—by an accident of good fortune and not of birth.

Thus we see in the two novels, the pangs of the birth of a new order. We see a comprehensive picture of the arbitrary capitalistic world of today. He foresees the maladies of this phenomenon and conveys a sense of inevitability. The words of George Ponderevo neatly-sums up Wells own fears.

"I too have a sort of hope but it is a remote hope, a hope that finds no promise in this Empire or in any of the great things of our time ; how they will look in history I do not know. How time and change will prove them I cannot guess; that is how they have mirrored themselves on one contemporary mind."

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III Year Literature

Utilitarianism in Dickens' 'Hard Times'

(Paper presented at the Literature-Economics Seminar 1984)

'Hard Times' brings to a culmination, an orderly development of social analysis that extends in Dickens' work from 'Dombey and Sons' to 'Bleak House'. 'Bleak House' 'Hard Times' and 'Little Dorritt' represent a kind of Dark period in his creative accomplishment—a period in which the serious issues of life came uppermost, in which his novels more completely suffused with a social microcosmic pattern. In 'Hard Times' there is no mistaking Dickens' violent hostility to industrial capitalism and its entire scheme of life. Here he is proclaiming a doctrine not of individual but of social sin unveiling what he now sees as the real state of modern society. 'This' says Shaw 'is Karl Marx, Carlyle, Ruskin, Morris Carpenter rising up against civilization itself as a disease and declaring that it is not our disorder but our order that is horrible, that is not our criminals but our magnates that are robbing and murdering us and that it is not merely Tom-all Alone's that must be demolished.....rooted up..... but our entire social system'. The point for 'Hard Times' is that people had become less a law unto themselves, the stuff of their life less variegated and it is this sense of life clamped under a grid that haunts Dickens throughout his work.

'Hard Times' is about a specific time, the 1840's, it was the age in which cities like the original of Coketown multiplied by three within a life time and Britain changed at once from a rural to an urban civilization within two generations. The historical image of this period is of break neck growth of the railways, congested towns and monstrous mills sweeping across England. Coketown 'was a town of red brick or of

brick that would have been red if the smoke and ashes had allowed it.....it was a town of machinery and tall chimneys, out of which interminable serpents of smoke trailed themselves forever.....it had a black canal in it and a river that ran purple with ill-smelling dye and vast piles of building where there was a rattling and trembling all day long, and where the piston of the steam engine worked monotonously up and down like the head of an elephant in a state of melancholy madness.'

Standards of living fell and encroachments on human freedom increased, living space was curtailed as population grew and the industrial revolution took its toll. Dickens' life time saw the end of the cottage industry, the family which had carded, spun, woven and bleached together was now scattered out into the mills, there to be brought together as a class no longer based on blood ties—the 'Hands' of Bounderby and Gradgrind. 'The multitude of coketown generically called 'the Hands' - a race who could have found more favour with some people, if Providence had seen fit to make them only hands, or like the lower creatures of the seashore, only hands and stomachs.'

Dickens questioned the nature of industrial organisation in which the worker has nothing to do but mind a machine with no psychological outlet and in which productivity is pursued at the expense of human satisfaction it was supposed to serve. This is associated with the basic doctrine of capitalism advocated by Adam Smith and his followers, that the best and most practical way to prosperity is complete economic freedom-laissez-faire. Now,

Dickens thought that this doctrine works very well but only for the business class for when business is let alone it naturally exploits labour. Then Dickens felt that self-interest, uncontrolled, subject to the passions and desires of unworthy men was responsible for the mess that Victorian society found itself in 'Deed we are in a muddle, Sir..... look how you considers of us, and writes of us, and talks of us and goes up with your deputations to secretaries o'state' bout us, and how you are always right, and how we are always wrong, and hence had not no grownen, Sir, bigger and bigger, broader and broader, harder and harder from year to year, from generation to generation, who can look on it Sir and fairly tell a man 'tis not a muddle'-Thus Stephen Blackpool sums up the Victorian condition. This principle of laissez faire was an integral part of utilitarianism.

Bentham's first premise was the assumption that there is no moral or immoral action. Everything is either useful or not useful. The principle of utility is that principle which 'approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever according to the tendency which it appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the greatest number. Nature has placed mankind under the governance of 2 sovereign masters pain and pleasure. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do and what we shall do 'Pursuit of pleasure and avoidance of pain are only motives of human action.' The ends of this doctrine are encompassed in practicality. Dickens defined this as selfishness. 'Hard Times' therefore is not an attack of utilitarianism as a theory propounded by Bentham but of its application in Victorian society. The Benthamite philosophy of deifying utility resulted in the reversion of moral values which is reflected in the

fables of Harriet Martineau. She states that the reward for a good boy is a savings bank account. Dickens makes a reference to this in the novel.

Mr. Gradgrind according to Holloway stands for the Utilitarian seen not philosophically but arithmetically and Dickens concern is with the naive enthusiasm of the early 19th century for undigested statistics of economic and social advance - 'the howling ocean of tabular statements which no diver ever got to any depth in and came up sane'. Dickens in a letter to Charles Knight provides confirmation of this - 'My satire is against those who see figures and averages and nothing else, the representatives of the wickedest and most enormous vice of this time.' Gradgrind therefore more than being a representative of the utilitarian principle is seen as representative of the 'hard facts' Philosophy. He is 'Thomas Gradgrind. Sir A man of realities A man of facts and calculations.....with a rule and pair of scales and the multiplication tables always in his pockets ready to weight and measure any parcel of human nature and tell you exactly what it comes to..... It is a mere question of figures, a case of simple arithmetic.' Dickens attacked what he saw as Victorian society's refusal to acknowledge the human element. The keynote, of Gradgrind philosophy was! 'Never wonder' as Dickens himself explains in Chapter 8, where he goes on to satirise the various institutions of his time - political, economic or social as body No. 1, 2, 3.

In Bounderby Dickens attacks the Victorian ideal of the self made man. For Dickens the self made man was a myth just as Bounderby's rags to riches story is exposed in the end as mere fabrication. Dickens believed as Donne did that No man is an island and a contrast is seen in his

alternative Sleary's circus world in the interdependence of the circus troupe - 'The father of one of the families was in the habit of balancing the father of one of the other families on the top of a great pole, the father of a third family often made a pyramid of both those fathers'.

In *Bounderby*, Dickens also presents the mill owner as he ought not to be, the exemplar of industrial materialism impervious to delicacy and feelings. Dickens unfolds the men and masters' relationship in his sections dealing with Bounderby and his labourers. Bounderby and his workers meet head on in a strike of which we see no more than one meeting. Whatever arguments that the hands present, Bounderby offers the same rejection. 'Their work is the pleasantest work there is...best paid work there is, there's not one Hand in this town...but has one ultimate object in life...to be fed on turtle soup and venison with a gold spoon' Dickens treatment of Trade Unions is very superficial. On this, Leavis comments that 'When Dickens comes to the Trade Union, his understanding of the world he offers to deal with, betrays a marked limitation... Trade Unionism is shown as nothing better than the pardonable error of the misguided and the oppressed and as such, an agent in the martyrdom of the good working man.' The agitator Slackbridge represents the worst sort of demogogy. His inflammatory speeches in defence of union tyranny show that Dickens saw a huge gap between peaceful proletarian demands and revolutionary activity Dickens was no advocate of class confrontation although he has been called a 'radical moralist'. He believed that "into the relations between employer and employed there must enter something of mutual explanation, forbearance and consideration."

Dickens' critique of industries culminates with the concluding chapters of the book

that deal with the death of Blackpool. His accident in the mine shaft is a reflection on the lack of industrial safety in Victorian England.

Another issue of contention in 'Hard Times' is education which Dickens vehemently attacks. Through Gradgrind's school, Dickens wishes to expose the evil effects of an exclusive education of the intellect without the due cultivation of the finer feelings of the heart and fancy. To Gradgrind, the children were 'little vessels... ready to have imperial gallons of fact poured into them until they were full to the brim'. David Craig feels that Gradgrinds' School is modelled on the Manchester Lancasterian school where education was a military drill, where facts were preached as 'the WORD'. Such was the education that was inflicted on J.S. Mill by his utilitarian father James Mill. The Boy Wonder was forced to learn Greek by the age of three. This total exclusion of fancy led John Stuart to the verge of suicide in his early 20's It took the beauty of Wordsworths poetry (Not his philosophy) to help Mill regain his sanity. But Dickens again as in the case of the Preston strike of which he gave us a single account made an exception the rule. Dickens in his attack on the education system drew less on the prevailing system in schools than on books like Charles Knights' 'Store of knowledge' Blitxers definition of a horse as 'Quadruped.' Graminivorous etc. echoes an article in 'Store of Knowledge' which describes in 750 words how to find the age of a horse by looking at its teeth. As David Craig himself has to admit - this Lancasterian system was found only in Manchester and outside Manchester was hard to come by.

There is also a hint of satire on the double faced morality of the Bounderby class. Stephen with a rightful cause for

divorce is unable to do so and is advised against it by the pseudo-idealist Bounderby who later in the novel so lightly sets aside Louisa for he feels he has the cause and money to do so - the money furnished by the 'Hands' and cause by Mrs. Sparsit.

The idealised Sleary's circus world and Sissy Jupe are the alternatives proffered by Dickens to the 'muddle' of Victorian society. Sleary and his emphasis on 'People must be amused. They can't always be a learning, no yet they can't be always a working' is advocating the fancy philosophy. Facts and fancy must go together in life. We see Sleary in the beginning of the novel and he appears miraculously at the end to cut the Gordian knot of tangles in the plot that the author has strayed into. Sleary has no intellectual

side to him and Sissy who bridges the gap between the two worlds is not properly exploited as the 'right balance' between 'Hard Fact' and Fancy' world.

Dickens presents utilitarianism and its effect on Victorian society from angles like education, industry, trade unions, divorce and industrial safety but when mingled with the melodrama in the plot the satire loses some of its pungency. At the end of the novel one can't but help agreeing with Ruskin that Dickens "was entirely right in his main drift.....but could have used a severe and more accurate analysis."

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II year Literature

Robert Frost - A point of view

"About suffering they were never wrong.
The Old Masters; how well they
understood.

Its human position; how it takes
place

- while someone else is eating or opening
a window or just walking dully
along"

-(Ander's "Musee Des Beaux Arts")

Man is a tiny speck in the vast, revolving
planet, residing with his companions,
loneliness and fear. All his sufferings are
his own. Even the "dreadful martyrdom"
has to run its course while the "dogs"
went on with their "doggy life."

Thus as Frost views the wide expanse of
the weavers, the earth and the seas, he
focusses his telescopic eyes largely on the
individual-the lone sufferer who is but a
drop in the ocean. Driven by the yawning
spaces of vacuum, so wide and opaque,
devoid of warmth, the individual finds him-
self withdrawing into a cocoon of loneliness
and fear. But, lonely as the universe is, it
being,

"A bleaker whiteness of benighted snow
with no expression, nothing to express"

—"Desert Places"

Frost is unaffrighted by it, for a more
fearful enemy dwells in himself which is

"..... so much nearer home to scare
me with my own desert places."

From this feeling of insecurity,
germinates fear, which is lodged by man's
knowledge of his isolation in an indifferent
world. This fear takes on myriad shapes.
The night makes threatening gestures.

Frost has watched the dark waters of the
sea battle the 'cliffs of man's continent'
"as if a night of dark intent was coming,"
He feels that,

"the wind works against us in the dark."

Some sinister beast seems to compel man
to flee from his warm niche at home to the
cold dark outside. In the poem "House
Fear", he says,

"Always at right when they returned
To the lonely house from far away,
They learned to rattle the lock and key
To give whatever might chance to be,
Warning and time to be off in flight,
And preferring the out-to the indoor right,
They learned to leave the house door
wide

Until they had lit the lamp inside..."

In "The Fear" the "enormous outer
black" of the night seems to reveal the
woman's sense of guilt-of having to return
home in the dead of the night, with her
lover Joel, while her mind conjured vivid
images of her husband's deep shadows
lurking behind the "enormous pillars of
greater darkness."

"I always have felt strange when we
came home

To the dark house after so long an
absence,

And the key rattled loudly into place
Seemed to warn someone to be getting
out

At one door as we entered at another,"

"Listen! He kicked a stone. Hear that,
hear that!

He's coming towards us....."

Human hunger for relief from the formidable darkness draws Frost's people towards whatever lights are available, like moths to a flame, for in the darkness lies not just a vacuum of implacable silence but also its inmates—loneliness and fear. So it is not surprising that the woman is 'Night light'

".....always had to burn a light
Besides her attic bed at night"

In "An Old Man's Winter Night" we have the unforgettable image of an old man scaring "The Enormous Outer Black" night with a solitary lamp in his hand.

Lights thus offer a sense of security and warmth; of being wanted, and not of just being just another sufferer in a gigantic, indifferent world. This light he believes, can burn only in a home where man and wife provide warmth for each other.

"A flickering, human pathetic light,
That was maintained against the night,
It seemed to me, by the people there,
With a God-forsaken brute despair.
It would flutter and fall in half an hour
Like the last petal off a flower

—"On the Heart's Beginning
to cloud the Mind"

But these engulfing waves of darkness, from which man tends to shy away, not only harbour loneliness and fear, but also terror and beauty. Frost, "acquainted with the night" and knowing what it is to "outwalk the furthest city light" past the security of lighted windows into a question mark, narrates such an experience with the same chilly feeling of one entering the formidable for the first time. The woods are "lovely, dark and deep" but it also seems to pronounce doom on the people who are drawn towards it. They seem to echo Dr. Faustus 'sentiments'.

"Tis magic, magic that hath ravished me"
in their desire to acquire the knowledge of the unknown—as in "Stopping by the woods on a snowy evening—"

"The woods are lovely, dark and deep
But I have promises to keep
And miles to go before I sleep
And miles to go before I sleep"

The Traveller here is mesmerized by the dark trees and yet something draws him back.

In 'Into my Own', the narrator expresses his desire to steal away "into their own vastness",

"Fearless of ever finding open land
Or highway where the slow wheel pours
the sand"—
and thereby achieve an union with the
"dark trees".

With his sensitive feelers, Frost attempts to probe the immense issue of the acceptance or resistance of the inevitable, which is yet another dimension to man's sufferance in the vast universe. Here the cause for sufferance is being emotionally attached. man is born to suffer. Life is a cycle of birth, death and birth again—like the seasons in a year—

"Before the leaves can mount again
To fell the trees with another shade,
They must go down past things coming up
They must go down into the dark decayed.
They must be pierced by the flowers and
put

Beneath the feet of dancing flowers
However it is in some other world
I know that this is the way in ours"

—"Woodpiles"

Man is doomed to "Broker-off careers" as his time in life is terrifyingly limited. So when the time comes one must release the

hold of one's life as seen in "Out, Out--" where a young boy doing a man's job, dies, while the witnesses, look on with apparent indifference.

"No one believed. They listened at his heart. Little-less-nothing! - and that ended it. / No more to build there. And they, since they/were not the one dead, turned to their affairs."

The apparent indifference veils one of the essential philosophies that Frost projects in his poems-the fact that once one is confronted with the death of a close relative, one must sever the umbilical cord of all attachments. Just as the boy has released his hold in life, so must be living loosen its hold on him. This process of life and death cannot be avoided.

So man should "bow and accept the end" and

".....let the night be dark for all of me
Let the night be too dark for me to see
Into the future, let what will be be;"
and not like the women in "Home Burial"
plunge into madness through failure to
accept the loss of her child.

A similar view runs through the poem "Wild Grapes" where the brother asks his sister to "let go" the grapes. But she "held on uncomplainingly for life" for she had not

".....learned to let go with the hands;
As still I have not learned to let go with
the heart,
And have no wish to with the heart - nor
need;
That I can see. The mind - is not the
heart."

Referring to the heart's reluctance to accept the inevitable Frost says:

"Ah, when to the heart of man
Was it every less than a treason
To go with the drift of things,
To yield with a grace to reason,
And bow and accept the end
of a love or a season?"

—"Reluctance"

Whether man accepts or resists the inevitable, the fact remains- that he suffers, alone, the agonies of painful endurance. The vast areas that Frost 'seasoned' therefore become (at times) facets of man's sufferings, which Frost contracted into the skeleton of the individual; for there are moments, as seen in the poem entitled 'Skeptic', when Frost felt that: "The universe may or may not be very immense,/As a matter of fact there are times when I am apt/To feel it close in tight against my sense Like a caul in which I was born and am still wrapped."

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II B.A. Literature

"From the mouths of babes...." - Harper Lee's "To Kill a Mocking Bird"

"I have been young, and now am not too old,

**And I have seen the righteous forsaken,
His health, his honour & his quality taken.
This is not what we were formerly told."**

—Edmund Blunden, in "Report on Experience"

"To Kill a Mocking Bird", by Harper Lee, presents a similar situation - the predicament of two children, Jean-Louise (Scout) Finch and her brother Jem, as they grasp and cope with - the realities of an adult world in a little provincial Southern American town called Maycomb County.

Maycomb Count is "an old.....but a tired old town", where "There was no hurry, for there was nowhere to go, nothing to buy and no money to buy it with", It is an old town historically and because there are very few children in it.

This, then, is the setting of a story that revolves mainly around Jem and Scout, ten and six years old, respectively, when the book begins. Their mother having died when they were young, they live with their lawyer father Atticus Finch, whom they find "Satisfactory. He played with us, read to us, and treated us with courteous detachment."

The novel traces four years in the lives of the children, four years that contribute much to their understanding of the world, during which they see their stable, comforting town, pitchforked into ugly division by racial discrimination.

The change, however, is gradual. The first section of the book sees Scout and Jem in a fairly uncomplicated, carefree child's world, a 'summer passed in routine contentment..... : improving our treehouse,..... running through our list of dramas" making a new friend in Dill, an orphan who comes on holiday to their neighbour Miss Rachel. For Scout there is the event of going to school for the first time, an experience she finds so unpleasant that she never gets reconciled to it, and goes to any lengths to avoid. She even starts cussing fluently: "proceeding on the dim theory apart from the innate attractiveness of these words, that if Atticus discovered I had picked them up in school he wouldn't make me go." For Jem, there is the excitement of "Boo-Radley - balting". 'Boo' Radley is Arthur Radley, Emily Dickinsonesque in his seclusion, seen by the townsfolk not as a benevolent eccentric but as a dreadful ogre. Boo Radley is rumoured, far from lowering fruits in little baskets for children, to poison his pecan trees so that anyone who ate them would die.

Boo has an obvious appeal for the childish fancy. His abnormal isolation, and the wild stories that surround him, make him fascinating. The children's favourite pastimes are enacting a morbid drama based on the legends surrounding Boo Radley, and making various abortive attempts to draw him out. He intrigues them-why would anyone stay shut up inside when there was the whole world to enjoy? Always, they are vaguely aware that social contact must be painful for him, like "striking a match under a turtle" to make it come

out. It is only at the end of the novel, disillusioned by the senseless racial discrimination that he sees, that Jem understands why Boo Radley stays inside- "its because he wants to."

Towards the end of the first part of the novel, Boo Radley slips into the background of Jem's and Scout's lives. Another, more serious experience occupies them - it is the Tom Robinson case. Tom Robinson, a negro, is accused of raping a white girl, Mayella Ewell. "The Ewells" Atticus says early in the book, "had been the disgrace of Maycomb for three generations. None of them had done an honest day's work.....They were people, but they lived like animals". The only thing that was in their favour, according to Maycomb County standards was that if, "scrubbed with lye soap in very hot water", they were white-skinned. Tom Robinson, accused, was black, proved to have been hardworking and honest, and a virtual cripple, unable to use his left arm. Atticus is asked to act as defense counsel for Tom, and he antagonises the Maycomb townsfolk by showing what he means to defend Tom, nigger as he was. The case arouses a great deal of controversy: it arouses the basest racial instincts of the people - Atticus is universally censured for daring to fly in the face of convention. Inevitably, the antagonism rubs off on his children, who are taunted by both adults and children for having a "nigger-lover" for father. Although they eventually learn to take it in their stride, Scout's initial reaction to any criticism of Atticus is swift, speedy and violent. Jem is more balanced, because he understands the issues involved unlike Scout. Scout doesn't see the right or the wrong of the issue -her reaction is rather primitive and animal. When she fights her cousin Francis for calling Atticus a "nigger-lover"

she does it not knowing what the epithet means, but because "it is like he said snot-nose or something."

As the trial of Tom Robinson approaches, the Finch family face more and more criticism. For Scout her woes are compounded when their Aunt Alexandra, the model of propriety who therefore strongly disapproves of her tomboyish ways, comes to stay. In addition to the strain of enduring jibes at Atticus, she has to try and be a "lady" with her Aunt.

The tension in Maycomb escalates; Jem and Scout become more and more involved in an ugly adult drama. Twice, they face direct violence-once when a group of men almost "gang" Atticus outside his own house, and again when he keeps guard over Tom Robinson outside the jail. On both occasions, the children defuse the threat. The first time, Jem calling out to Atticus restores normalcy. The second time, Scout rushes into the group of men, absolutely insensitive to the atmosphere of violence. She starts talking to one of the men whom she recognises. The appearance of the children makes the men withdraw without hurting Atticus. It is only later, looking back on the events of the night, that Scout realises she has witnessed an attempted murder.

Tom Robinson is tried, defended convincingly by Atticus, but convicted. Atticus postulates that far from raping Mayella, Tom was the victim of Mayella and her father: Bob Ewell found Mayella trying to kiss Tom, beat her, and framed Tom. This is borne out by the evidence; Mayella is bruised on the left side of her face, implying a left handed person must have done it. Tom being crippled in his left arm, Bob Ewell is the obvious culprit. Bob Ewell's reasons for this spring from a

heritage of social attitudes; Mayella has "broken a rigid and time-honoured code of society...She was white, and she tempted a Negro."

Violence, bigotry, injustice, hypocrisy- these are the facts of the adult world that the Tom Robinson case exposes Jem and Scout to. Dill, breaking down during the trial when the prosecuting counsel cross-examines Tom, protesting "it made me sick...the way that man called him 'boy' all the time, and sneered at him...It ain't right" passes a severe indictment on "the simple hell people give other people... the hell white people give coloured folks, without even stopping to think that they're people too." Scout, when she goes back to school after the trial, questions her teacher's smug assurance that "We are a democracy." She remembers her after the trial saying "It's time they were taught a lesson." This is her first lesson in hypocrisy - "How can you hate Hitler so bad and turn round and be ugly about folks right at home?" Jem's faith in his "wonderful" Maycomb folk is rudely shaken.

They all learn one thing - "It's a sin to kill a mocking bird." The hopeless injustice of the jury makes them see why it's a sin - it's because "Mocking birds don't do one thing but make music for us to enjoy."

Life returns to its normal routine. The Tom Robinson case dies down, but not out of Jem's and Scout's lives. In the final chapter, Bob Ewell attacks them on their way back from school. Boo Radley, who has not figured in the novel, makes his only appearance as he saves them and kills Ewell; a contrived, if convenient interlinking of the two plots. For Scout, seeing Boo Radley is the culmination of all the experiences she has been through. It is the perfect end to her childhood dreams. "Jem and I", she says "would get grown but we wouldn't learn much, except may be algebra."

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