

HOME IS WHERE ONE
STARTS FROM
BUT AT MY BACK I ALWAYS HEAR
TIME'S WINGED CHARIOT HURRYING NEAR
DEATH BE NOT PROLL

THE MOVING FINGER WRITES: AND
HAVING WRIT, MOVES ON:

THE HEART IS STILL ACHING TO SEEK
BUT THE FEET QUESTION 'WHITHER?'

UN BORN TOMORROW AND DEAD YESTERDAY
WHY FRET ABOUT THEM IF TODAY BE SWEET

THE NOTION OF SOME INFINITELY GENTLE
INFINITELY SUFFERING THING
CHANGED NOT IN KIND BUT IN DEGREE,

FISH FLESH OR FOWL COMMEND
ALL SUMMER LONG
THE INSTANT MADE ETERNITY

I SHOULD BE GLAD OF
ANOTHER DEATH
THE INTOLERABLE
WRESTLE

Stella Maris College Literary Journal 1987-88

IN MY END
IS MY BEGINNING
MINE, O THOU LORD OF LIFE,
SEND MY ROOTS RAIN.....
WHAT ARE THE ROOTS THAT CLUTCH
STONY BRANCHES GROW OUT OF THIS
HUMAN KIND VERY CANNOT BEAR
VERY MUCH REALITY

TWO ROADS DIVERGED IN A WOOD AND I -
I TOOK THE ONE LESS TRAVELED BY
AND THAT HAS MADE ALL THE DIFFERENCE

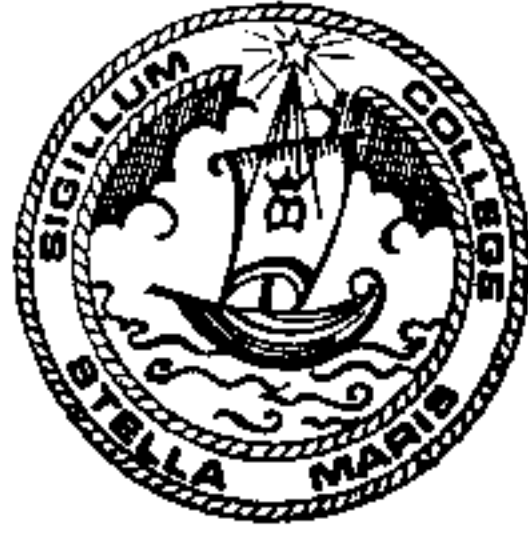
I SAID TO MY SOUL BE STILL AND LET THE
DARK COME UPON YOU

MY NERVES ARE BAD TO-NIGHT, YES
BAD STAY WITH ME
SPEAK TO ME WHY DO YOU NEVER
SPEAK SPEAK!

BUT I HAVE PROMISES TO KEEP AND
MILES TO GO BEFORE I SLEEP...
BECAUSE I COULD NOT STOP FOR DEATH
HE KINDLY STOPPED FOR ME

"WHISPER OF RUNNING STREAMS, AND
WINTER LIGHTNING"
BUT TRAILING CLOUDS
OF GLORY DO WE COME
FROM GOD, WHO IS OUR HOME

WITH WORDS
AND MEANINGS
THINGS FALL APART
THE CENTRE CANNOT HOLD



Editorial

Another year has gone by & it's time again for that, which is as perennial as grass - the annual edition of the Literary Journal. Unlike the phoenix it doesn't rise from it's own ashes! The enthusiastic response of the Staff and Students made this possible. The Muse has had it's own way & the result is a kaleidoscopic view of the literature of the twentieth century. To accommodate "the overflow of powerful feelings" a creative page became inevitable.

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EZEKIEL'S 'BACKGROUND CASUALLY'

Nissim Ezekiel belongs to the Bene-Israel tribe, one of the lost ten tribes presumably to have migrated to India nearly a thousand years ago. This deep-rooted ancestry can affirm "Indian" roots possibly coloured by the 'orthodoxies' of the close Jewish community. However Ezekiel hardly ever refers to the Jewish origins of his 'psyche'. One exception may be the poem, "Background Casually" where a direct ironic reference is made to "a mugging Jew among wolves" with the "shanwan telis" (oil pressers) as ancestors.

While it is an interpreter's paradise to discover 'autobiographical strains' in a poem, in Ezekiel's case, this has to be a minor enterprise for his poetic vision is concerned with the human predicament. "It is that of a permanent expatriate who has freely elected to stay" (Walsh) ; one who did not use art to escape from life but to confront it to discover eternal accomodation. India is in his bones and brain and he never wants to, in fact cannot leave it. "Background Casually" lucidly brings out this desire for integration with the landscape and becomes almost central to his vision where alienation is overcome by his 'sense of belonging'.

In considering his alienness in the context of his Indian domicile a poem like "Background Casually" merits closer attention, written in 1965 and published in the volume 'Hymns in Darkness' in 1976, the poem depicts vividly the tension between the deep urge to accept a none too favourable situation and the needling feeling of isolation. A confessional piece without the trauma and violence of language that are correlates of this mode, the poem expresses his alienness with its contradictions in simple yet forceful language. Though a 'mugging Jew among wolves' he won the Scripture prize in his school where they told him he had "Killed the Christ".

The other students image the subjective fear and horror that the young Jewish lad studious to a fault cherished for them. Irony forces its way through in the sheer simplicity of syntax and diction. His is the paradoxical situations of a Jew winning a prize for knowing well the message of Christ in whom he had no faith and whom his ancestors had crucified. While this can be construed as an unconscious gesture towards integration, Ezekiel is hardly ever troubled by his racial origins. This is the divine discontent of the intellectual whose quest is for perfection and who is constantly made aware of the imperfection of self.

"The more I searched the less I found
I know that I had failed
In everything a bitter thought." (p. 12).

The quest for knowledge in the manner of Ulysses only leads him to a realisation of the self's abysmal ignorance. There was Yoga and Zen to learn and anyway he could still be

a saint in his community if he failed in these. But he feels deeply his failure to learn anything well. So he decides to go abroad to seek wisdom and it is important to note that the decision is not motivated by his being a Jew in India. As is fitting to a metaphorical journey the goal of which is intellectual and human advancement Ezekiel's friends are naturally "Philosophy Poverty and Poetry" three companions who shared his basement room. But nothing tangible emerges from his study of philosophy and to escape from his sense of failure and his loneliness he goes to Indo-China in an English cargo ship:

"So in an English cargo ship
Taking French guns and mortar shells
To Indo-China scrubbed the decks
And learned to laugh at home."

The word "laugh" may suggest a gay and unconcerned attitude to this experience but there is the underlying agony which is expressed simply in the line that follows:

"How to feel at home was the point".

That the line between the comic and the tragic is ill-defined is seen in the example of Ezekiel, a gold medalist in literature and a student of philosophy in London become a deckhand, which reads like a joke. But in reality it is his restless spirit in search of truth that impels him to try his hand at everything - whether it is scrubbing decks or tasting LSD. The problem of rooting out this feeling of insecurity as a result of not feeling at home is an ever present necessity. The realization that feeling at home can come only through one's own efforts and not through the influence of the others or of the environs is implicit here. The feeling of alienation in Ezekiel's case is not because he has been discriminated against for reasons of race, religion or education. It has its origins in his own psyche. It is self-generated and is a "Process by which a self (God or Men) through itself (Through its own actions) becomes alien (strange) to itself." (Encyclopaedia of philosophy. pp. 76.) This condition of estrangement stems from a painful intellectual awareness of the self's own limitations and its keen desire to transcend itself.

This irritability with his own limitations however remains low-key and does not scale despairing Hamletian heights. The reason is Ezekiel's wonderful gift of humour, the Chaucerian ability to laugh at himself through the gentle veins of irony. However, this laughter is not far from, tears, for the incongruity of being a Jew among Hindus, Christians and Muslims has its pathos too, though Ezekiel does not make much of it and deflects it to his lack of physical skills of strength. Therefore he is afraid of the "strong undernourished Hindu lads" and even allowed himself to be boxed by a Muslim sportsman. Surprisingly this boy of meagre bone had the courage to use a knife. This illustrates the irony of life that even the weakest when provoked can raise to unthought of violence.

The poem moves with ease and the flow of words is even. The tetrameter lines fall regularly in place and the absence of inversions in the syntax make the poem progress

casually to its narration of past history. The absence of rhyme gives it the casualness suggested in the title. In contrast, the simplicity of style underscores the significance of the details so imperceptibly given that the details of the background cannot really be taken casually.

The crucial question of "how to feel at home" is not solved in the narration of the personal life of failure and loneliness. How could he, a Jew, feel a sense of integration? and oneness with his milieu His dilemma is made worse by his father's words :

'All Hindus are like that'

was he too then a Hindu of this sort? If so where is the problem of not feeling at home in Hindusthan? Ezekiel constantly confronts such paradoxes as if to show that these are intrinsic to life situations and to belong and not to belong are two sides of the same coin, this individual dilemma cuts across barriers of race caste, religion or nationality.

This rough passage through life has not resulted in a clear definitive self image, an image which projects itself favourably with oneself and with others. Marriage, change of jobs make no difference and he sees himself only as a fool.

The dissatisfaction with oneself gives rise to the feeling of estrangement with one's own self and with one's environs. This results inevitably into an escape into the past especially an honourable past which can boost the deflated ego. Stanzas ten and eleven deal with this theme. His ancestors were aliens crushing seed for bread.

Yet one among them could become a major in the army and inspire warrior dreams in him :

"One among them fought and taught
A Major bearing British arms
He told my father sad stories
Of the Boer war. I dreamt that
fears men had bound my feet and hands".

This dream of achievement in war is natural to a boy of meagre bone who has always been sickly and who therefore never excels in physical feats. So his intellectual prowess and philosophical leanings make him think of himself as a rabbi saint in the future. His irrepressible humour pitches in here :

"I heard of yoga and of Zen
Could I perhaps be rabbi saint?"

This query is puckishly raised after the bland confession & self assessment. "My morals had declined." He realises that he cannot become a saint or military hero and settles to the poetry. "The later dreams were all for words" Poetry had always fascinated him and even the temporary excursions to other fields only serve to bring out the poet in him. As he himself remarks in a recent interview.

The conscious choice of poetry as vocation normally would mean a self-imposed isolation. An artist tends to operate as a lone ranger either because of his Bohemian excesses or because of his elitism. In Ezekiel's case neither is true of his poetry, his life experience is not a means of escape from the vortex of life. Poetry therefore is not the reason for his alienation but is the means of his integration with the main streams of life.

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Structure, Image and Symbol in Katherine Mansfield's Stories

"A marked individual style", present in everything she wrote and instantly recognisable as hers—this is what marks Katherine Mansfield out from other short-story writers. As D. M. Davin says, "... to try and determine in what precisely so individual a quality lies, is probably always impossible...it is...something to be immediately recognized but not described".¹ Nevertheless, her individuality may be asserted even in the more obvious aspects of style such as Structure, Image and Symbol.

As David Daiches says, "Katherine Mansfield's stories do not belong to the literature of PLOT". What does prevail in them is the "idea of apartness". All her stories are structured around "one idea isolated from the rest".² The elements of the story are all geared towards this focal point. This sense of apartness borne out through character and situation immediately suggests different levels of existence, to represent which was one of Mansfield's main objectives in short-story writing.

The basic premise on which Mansfield's stories are based is artistic and psychological, rather than logical truth. This is why her stories do not require a concrete sequence of events, or plot. Artistic and psychological truth in her stories would involve the "creative action of memory" combined with an "instinctive feeling that life is rich, mysterious and good".³ The creative action of memory entails, very often, time-shifts and shifts in perspective. Time-shifts emphasise the distinctiveness of the Past as against the Present; often a Past recalled nostalgically in recognition of some joy that was but will never be again. In "The Wind Blows" the Time-shift is still relatively crude in its manifestation and carries its implications with equal self-consciousness. The structuring principle in the story is the wind itself blowing into the present from long-past childhood cementing and aiding the act of memory. Memory is more sophisticated in "A Dill Pickle." For the woman, recall is easier, but it leads her only into dissatisfaction with the present. For the man, it is more difficult to return to the past even in memory. He recognizes his past existence as one of egoism because life had comprised far too few experiences. With wider experience, he realises now, that indulgence in egoism is not merely futile but harmful. In Mansfield's major stories the protagonists are jotted out of this self-centered egoism into a higher knowledge by exposure to the ironies of reality. The single mood that dominates stories like "Bliss" suffers a reversal. Bertha Young realises that nothing can be taken for granted. Her newly discovered love for her husband, she learns, does not automatically make her the object of his affections. He

1 D. M. Davin, "Introduction," **Katherine Mansfield: Selected Stories** (London: OUP, 1953), p. xv.

2 David Daiches, quoted in N. Hormasji, "The Art of Katherine Mansfield," **Katherine Mansfield: An Appraisal** (Auckland: Collins Bros. Ltd., 1967), p. 53.

3 William Walsh, "New Zealand," **Commonwealth Literature** (London: OUP, 1973), p. 100.

has not waited to be "honoured" with this discovery; but has sought love elsewhere. The impermanence of things which is part of the ironic resolution of the story is highlighted by the "dreadful eternity" of Tomato Soup.

Here it is, said Eddie, "Why Must It Always be Tomato Soup!" It's so DEEPLY true, don't you feel? Tomato Soup is so DREADFULLY eternal.⁴

The use of shifts in perspective to illustrate different levels of existence is best illustrated in "Prelude." For Stanley Burnell, happiness in life is a matter of successful bargains such as possession of a house in the country. For Beryl, sweet success would be the fulfilment of her romantic fantasies. Life is existence under duress for Linda. The children alone display a spontaneous enjoyment of nature and the wonders of their new surroundings without making exacting demands of life. To Kezia, life would be happy if she could give her grandmother a lovely surprise every day. The picture of the little maid reading about superstitions while making water cress sandwiches and suffering under Beryl's "tyranny" adds to the realism of the story and the credibility of the voices that underly the structure. These voices chime together in a kind of delicate music capturing the very tones of human action and thought.

Fantasy and aspiration sometimes become the central point of a story. In "Femille d' Album", Ian French having lost his heart to "the girl next door" and made her the centre of his dream-world is forced to contend with the burning problem of "getting to know her". The element of fantasy is attended upon by a good deal of pathos in "Pictures" where the redundant contralto singer Ada Moss is forced to admit failure. Her fantasies ranging from larger-than-life pageants of sumptuous fare to dreams of a dashing rescue-act for an opera and instant fame are brought through to an utterly ironic reversal with the introduction of the gentleman—hardly the saviour of her dreams—and his all-too-obvious intention's.

With a sensibility almost morbidly alert to detail and a mind delighting in seeking correspondences between the most unexpectedly alike things, it is not surprising to see an abundance of imagery and symbolism in Mansfield's stories. The symbol particularly acquires great complexity in her hands because it work differently on different characters and has different connotation's for each. Further, symbols and images are counterpointed, and pitted against each other gaining in depth and meaning. Through this interplay, they become an integral part of the structure.

Once again, "Prelude" illustrates most successfully the efficacy of Mansfield's use of image and symbol to evoke atmosphere or establish character. The image that dominates "Prelude" is the aloe. It remains a highly controversial one. The aloe has been seen as an image of female sexuality especially attractive to Linda because of its

4 Katherine Mansfield, "Bliss," **Katherine Mansfield: Selected Stories** (London: OUP, 1953), p. 127. Since the same edition is being used, titles of stories will be hereafter indicated within parentheses at the end of the references or quotations themselves.

infrequency of bearing, because Linda presents her enforced maternity.⁵ The aloe is also an image of the life-force—the will behind the appearance. Since a certain level of awareness and delicacy of sensibility is necessary to recognise this aspect, not all characters in the story respond to the aloe. Stanley and Beryl are untouched by it. But Linda, whose dread of bearing children seems to find solace in the tree, and Kezia who is fascinated by its gnarled age and ugliness both share a recognition of the possibility of its flowering. In its flowering is the flowering of their selves. There is a hint in the story that this is not far away. “Are those buds, or is it only an effect of light” asks Mrs. Fairfield. And it seems to Linda that “the grassy bank on which the aloe also rested rose up like a wave, and the aloe also seemed to ride upon it like a ship with the oars lifted. Bright moonlight hung upon the sifted oars like water and on the green waves glittered the dew... ‘Don’t you feel that it is coming towards us?’ ” asks Linda [“Prelude”]. The flowering for Linda in “At The Bay” when she discovers herself in her love for her son. The aloe there justifies and explains the title as a prelude to the events in the sequel “At The Bay”.

The aloe, further, is like life itself—often unlovely and cruel, offering at times only long periods of darkness, yet holding within it the possibility of rare flowering which justifies existence, and which is what we live for.

The aloe is counterpointed by the bird/duck. The bird stands for the Death Principle. Linda dreams of a bird that grows out of her control and overwhelms her as Stanley does. The killing of the duck is like destroying Linda by forcing her into maternity. Pat, whose hangman role is hinted at earlier becomes Stanley’s surrogate.

Earlier in the story, Stanley is referred to mockingly by Linda as a “big fat turkey”—the decapitation of the duck is perhaps then, an expression of Linda’s repressed desire to hurt Stanley. Such a reading is supported by the sudden surge of hatred that Linda feels for Stanley. “For all her love and respect and admiration she hated him [“Prelude”]. The duck focuses on the destructive and aggressive impulse of adult characters and is wholly negative in its implication’s.

“Bliss” builds towards an ironic climax from a judicious abundance of tactile imagery and colour. The white lobster, the cool green of the pistachio ices, the brightness of the red flannel jacket, the silken yellow pears. Mrs. Fulton’s moonbeam fingers, the silver bloom on the white grapes, the burning of “blissful treasure” in the bosom that refuses to be put out—these gravitate towards the final reversal, the “something divine” that she knew with ironic “infallibility” was going to happen. But the pear tree was as lovely as ever and as full of flowers and as still [“Bliss”] testifying to the fact that nothing had changed except Bertha’s perspective perhaps. As always, moonlight turns traitor to the protagonist—it is cold, comfortless.

Flowers, with their vast range of implications are a favourite symbol. Kezia’s childlike wonder, and her capacity for enjoyment in solitude are captured in her response

⁵ Nariman Hormasji, “The Art of Katherine Mansfield,” **Katherine Mansfield: An Appraisal** (Auckland: Collins Bros. Ltd., 1967), p. 85.

to flowers. "In the quiet and under her tracing finger, the poppy seemed to come alive. She could feel the sticky, silky petals the stem hairy like a gooseberry skin, the rough leaf and the tight, glazed bud. Things had a habit of coming alive like that ["Prelude"]. "This passage is distinctly Lawrencian in its amazing tactilism and sensuousness. The child's innate generosity and capacity to give, as against the adult's selfish taking, is part of the implication's of the flower. Kezia plans floral surprises for her grandmother—the deed is its own reward. An immediate contrast may be seen in the floral offering Monica Tyrell plans to make at the grave of George's daughter—an action prompted by the grandioseness of the gesture and not by any real feeling of sympathy.

The completeness of an almost adolescent fantasy is captured in "Feuille d' Album"—"His heart fell out of the side window of his studio and down to the balcony of the house opposite—buried itself in the pot of daffodils under the half-opened buds and spears of green".

As moonlight brings with it unwelcome revelations, so too the wind is a premonition of disaster. "A cold snatch of hateful wind blow into the garden ("Psychology")" with the realisation of the girl that they have failed and that it is too late to change anything. The crises of life seem to occur to the accompaniment of fierce winds.

Matching motif to theme and mood has always been Katherine Mansfield's greatest asset as a writer. In "Je Ne Parle Pas Francais"—a story that has to do with a wasted journey, a sense of insecurity and futurity she writes—"I believe that people are like portmanteaus, packed with certain things, started going, thrown about, tossed away, dumped down, lost and found, half-emptied suddenly, or squeezed farther than ever until finally the Ultimate Porter swings them on to the Ultimate Train and away the rattle".

Mansfield is at her most individualistic and most 'modern' in her feeling for depicting the lack of communication or its breakdown—"That silence could be contained in the circle of warm delightful fire, and lamplight. How many times hadn't they flung something into it just for the fun of watching the ripples break on the easy shores. But into this unfamiliar pool, the head of the little boy sleeping his timeless sleep dropped—and the ripples flowed away, away—boundlessly far—into deep glittering darkness ["Psychology"].

Of inhibitions born out of the false sophistication—

"She felt the strange beast that had slumbered so long within her bosom stir, stretch itself, yawn, prick up its ears and suddenly bound to its feet, and fix its longing hungry stare upon those faraway places, but all she said was, smiling gently: 'How I envy you' ["A Dill Pickle"]".

Ada Moss's final decision is presented cryptically—"And she sailed after the little yacht out of the cafe" ["Pictures"]. From the homely detail of "the washstand jug sitting in the basin like a fat bird in a round nest ["Prelude"], Mansfield is equally

capable of morbidity as in her reference to blotting paper—“incredibly soft and limp, and almost moist like the tongue of a little dead kitten [Je Ne Parle Pas Francais]”. A final example—“...absolute bliss—as though you’d suddenly swallowed a bright piece of that late afternoon sun and it burned in your bosom, sending out a little shower of sparkle into every particle, into every finger and toe?...[“Bliss”]” serves to illustrate the formidable genius of Katherine Mansfield at her best and the loving, dedicated labour with which she made her snatches of memory recall imperishable stuff. As D. M. Davin puts it—“Katherine Mansfield’s imagination stretches back into time, re-creates the figures that the past contained, breathes life into them, and the life passes through into us who read. The artist’s circle is complete. Artist, creation and reader are fused in the temporary eternity”.⁶

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⁶ Davin, op. cit., p. xviii.

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The Religion of Healthy-Mindedness and its 'Optimistic' Followers

In the preface to "Leaves of Grass" Walt Whitman says "For the eternal tendencies of all towards happiness makes the only point of sane philosophy".

If we were to ask the question: "What is human life's chief concern?", one of the answers we should receive would be: "It is happiness". How to gain, how to keep, how to recover happiness, is in fact for most men at all times the secret motive of all they do, and of all they are willing to endure. Men have come to regard the happiness which a religious belief affords as a proof of its truth. If a creed makes a man happy, he almost inevitably adopts it. Such a belief ought to be true; therefore it is true-such, rightly or wrongly, is one of the most "immediate inferences" of the religious logic used by ordinary men.

In many persons, happiness is congenital and irreclaimable. "Cosmic emotion" inevitably takes in them the form of enthusiasm and freedom. I speak not only of those who are animally unhappy; I mean those who when unhappiness is offered or proposed to them, positively refuse to feel it, as if it were something mean and wrong. We find such persons in every age, passionately flinging themselves upon their sense of the goodness of life, in spite of the hardships of their own condition and in spite of the sinister theologies into which they may be 'born'.

It is probably that there has never been a century into which the deliberate refusal to think ill of life has not been idealized by a sufficient number of people to form sects, open or secret, who claimed all natural things to be permitted. Saint Augustine's maxime - "Dilige et quod vis fac" - if you

but love(god) you may do as you incline is morally one of the profoundest of observations, yet it is pregnant, for such persons, with passports beyond the bounds of conventional morality; but their belief has been at all times systematic enough to constitute a definite religious attitude. God was for them a giver of freedom, and the sting of evil was overcome. Saint Francis, Rousseau and Diderot B. de Saint Pierre and many of the leaders of the eighteenth century anti-christian movement were of this optimistic type. They owed their feeling that Nature, if you will only trust her sufficiently is absolutely good.

It is to be hoped that we all have some friend, perhaps more often feminine than masculine, and young than old, whose soul is of this sky blue tint, whose affinities are rather with flowers and birds and all enchanting innocences with dark human passions, who can think no ill of man or God, and in whom religious gladness, being in possession from the outset, needs no deliverance from any antecedent burden.

In some individuals optimism may become quasi-pathological. The capacity for even a transient sadness or a momentary humility seems cut off from them as a kind of congenital anaesthesia. The truth telling Marie Bashkintseff expresses it well—"In this depression and dreadful uninterrupted suffering, I don't condemn life. On the contrary I like it and find it good. I enjoy being exasperated and sad... I cry, I grieve, and all at the same time I am pleased. I find myself happy at being miserable. It is not I who undergo all this-my body weeps and cries, but something inside of me which is above me is glad of it all".

they any such desire to save the credit of the Universe as to make them insist, as so many of 'us' insist, that what immediately appears as evil must be "good in the making" or something equally ingenious. Good was Good and bad was just as bad, for the earlier Greeks. They neither denied the ills of nature.

Whitman's verse, "What is good is perfect and what is bad is just as perfect" would have been more silliness to them.

This integrity of the instinctive reactions this freedom from all moral sophistry and strain gives a pathetic dignity to ancient pagan feeling. And this quality Whitman's outpourings have not got. His optimism is too voluntary and defiant; his gospel has a touch of bravado and an affected twist, and this diminishes its effect on many readers who yet are well disposed towards optimism, and on the whole are quite willing to admit that in important respects Whitman is of the genuine lineage of the prophets!

If then we give the name of healthy-mindedness to the tendency which looks on all things and sees that they are good, we find that we must distinguish between a more involuntary and a more voluntary or systematic way of being healthy minded. In its involuntary variety healthy mindedness is a way of feeling happy about things immediately. In its systematic all variety, it is an abstract way of conceiving things as good as the essential and universal aspect of being, deliberately excludes evil from its field of vision. To the man actively happy from whatever cause evil simply cannot then and there be believed in. He must ignore it, and to the bystander he may then seem to purposely to shut his eyes to it and hush it up.

Much of what we call evil is due entirely to the way men take the phenomenon. Since

you make them evil or good by your own thoughts about them, it is the ruling of your thoughts which proves to be your principle concern.

The optimism is a genuine religious power and is given the title "Mind Cure" by most philosophers. One of the doctrinal sources of Mind Cure is the four gospels, another is Emersonianism or New England transcendentalism, Berkeleyan idealism, spiritism with its messages of "law and progress" and "development" and Hinduism. The leaders in this faith had an intuitive belief in the all-solving power of healthy minded attitudes as such, in the conquering efficacy of courage, hope and trust, and a correlative contempt for doubt, fear, worry and all nervously precautionary states of mind. We can also overlook the verbiage of a good deal of the mind cure literature some of which is so moonstruck with optimism and so vaguely expressed than an academically trained intellect finds its almost impossible to lead it at all.

The great central fact of the Universe is that spirit of infinite life and power that is back of all, that manifests itself in and through it all. This spirit of infinite life and power that is back of all is what is God! or any other term - kindly light, Providence omnipotence, over soul. We are individualized spirits while he is the infinite spirit.

As R. W. Turne says (1899)

"The great central fact in human life is the coming into a conscious vital realization of our oneness with infinite life, and the opening of ourselves fully to this divine flow"

Evil is empirically there and it would ill agree with the spirit of their system to spend time worrying over it as a "Mystery"

or "problem" or "in laying to heart". Dont reason about it, as Dante says but give a glance and pass beyond, to be outgrown, left behind and transcended and forgotten. "Pessimism leads to weakness" and "Optimism leads to power". No one can fail of the regenerative influence of optimistic thinking. Fear on the contrary, and all egoistic thoughts are inlets of destruction.

Thus transcendental idealism bring in their monistic interpretations and tell us that the finite self rejoins the absolute self, for it was always one with God and identical with the soul of the world.

An expression of this belief—

—"If this room is full of darkness for thousands of years, and you come in and

begin to weep and wail, "O the darkness" will the darkness vanish?. Bring the light in, strike a match, and light comes in a moment". So what good will it do to think all your lives, "O I have done evil, I have made many mistakes?. Bring in the light, the evil goes, strengthen the real nature, build up yourselves"—

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3. Walt Whitman — critical essays

“SEEK OUT THESE LIFE ONCE GONE CANNOT BE SOUGHT AGAIN.”
—THE PHILOSOPHY OF OMAR KHAYYAM, FROM HIS RUBA’IYAT.

Eight years, following that eventful night, when the Saljug Sultans first crossed the Oxus river, a heretic was born. Eight years after the invasion of peaceful Persia.

Khurasan had resisted. But all attempts to push back the invading Turkish Sultans were in vain. Aiming to extend and consolidate their power over Persia, their tribal armies came down on the people with merciless savagery. In 1031, Saljug Toghril Beg had occupied Khurasan, the North Eastern Province.

The commercially rich, fertile land, whose cities lay on trade routes, took time to absorb the cultural shock. Its inhabitants were taught painful lessons on the sudden reversals of fortune and bore the rulers’ atrocities with stoic endurance. Their tribal conquerors exploited them and ‘poverty’, the basic requirement of their religion, Sufism, became an inevitable reality.

The heretic grew up on the stories of suffering of his city and the surrounding countryside. He could not succumb wholly to the new Islamic faith that the Sultans professed, not did he enjoy living under the forceful application of rigorous Islamic law. He questioned the ‘Faith’, that saw the world as an ordered whole, while he visualised existence as a chaotic mistake of creation.

(Ruba’i 6) : “I am sick of idolators and the temple
Khayyam, who said that there will be a hell ?
Who’s been to hell, who’s been to heaven ?”

Omar Khayyam’s unorthodox line of thinking was condemned by many. He is described in “News of the Learned, with reports by Sages,” (1249) as a composer of ‘fugitive verses that were ‘a tissue of error like poisonous snakes’ in the eyes of Canon law. Among his ‘tissues of error’ were the ruba’is - heretical verses on the art of living.

(Ruba’i 1) : “Although I have a handsome face and colour
Cheek like the tulips, from like the cypress
It is not clear why the Eternal Painter
Thus tricked me out for the dusty show - booth of earth.”

2 : “He began my creation with constraint,
By giving me life, he added only confusion ;
We depart reluctantly still not knowing
The aim of birth, existence, departure.”

His coming and going, like a ‘fly’ that ‘appeared and disappeared’, seem of no consequence. Life, an aimless drift through time, has cheated him out of many dreams, but he feels most bitter of being cheated out of the ‘pearl of meaning’ - the why of existence.

(Ruba'i 7) : "Neither you nor I know the mysteries of eternity,
Neither you nor I read this enigma,
You and I can only talk this side of the veil,
When the veil falls, neither you nor I will be here."

8 : ".....For what reason does He cast it into diminution and decay ?
If it turned out good, why break it ?
If the form turned out bad, whose fault was it ?"

Khayyam suggests that there is no real answer to 'the riddle', that those that pull the puppet-strings, 'The Powers that Be, themselves are in a spin.' No pattern can be discerned from the endless cycle of birth and death. Khayyam uses the image of a potter's workshop. The 'two thousand jugs' sit anxiously on the shelves, wondering who made them, who will buy them or sell them. Their destiny is a questionmark. He goes further to mock man and his creator :

(Ruba'i 15) : "A bull is next to Pleiadas in the sky,
Another bull is hidden below the earth, * 1
If you're not blind, open your eyes to the truth,
Below and above the two bulls is a drove of donkeys !"

Man can stop attributing his inexplicable turns of fortune, the good and evil in him 'to the wheel of heaven' for the wheel 'is a thousand times more helpless than you.' Such pessimism stemmed from bitter experience.

Khayyam followed the school of thought of Avicenna, another unorthodox philosopher. On three points, they disagreed with Islamic teaching : Firstly, they believed that the earth was uncreated or continuous, eternal, thereby denying the fact of creation by which God made Himself known to man.

(Ruba'i 51) : Oh what a long time we shall not be and the world will endure,
"Neither name nor sign of us will exist,
Before this we were not and there was no deficiency,
After this, when we are not it will be the same as before."

Secondly, they believed that God could only know essences or universals, not the particulars of things. This belief was utterly repugnant to orthodox Muslims. Thirdly, they rejected the concept of the resurrection of the body after death—cardinal muslim tenet.

Man is destined to be 'shrivelled away', "cut down by the sickle of the spheres" but the pity of it all is that he leaves behind nothing of importance. Though he burns to become dust 'where is the smoke ?' If the earth was nothing more than :

".....and old inn whose name is 'the world'
It is the piebald resthouse of night and day
.....the banquet of the left-overs....."

* 1 An allusion to the ancient belief that the world is supported on the horns of a bull.

there is only way for man to live, before he returns 'into the box of oblivion'. He must seize what each moment can offer him, live life to the fullest. Only the pleasures of the present are guaranteed, he has no hold on the future. Thus while Islamic law forbids the drinking of wine, Khayyam defies it. To him, 'the sparkling liquor' is the very source of joy and substance. He asserts his individuality, free from the constraints of faith and tradition.

(Ruba'i 74) : "If I'm drunk on forbidden wine, so I am !
And if I'm an unbeliever, a pagan or idolator, so I am,
Every sect has its own suspicions of me,
I myself am just what I am."

75 : "My rule of life is to drink and be merry,
To be free from belief and unbelief is my religion :
I asked the Bride of Destiny her bride-price,
'Your joyous heart,' she said."

He talks of life in terms of a frivolous party :

"Convivial friends have all gone
Death has trampled them down one after another,
We were in one wine-bout at life's party,
They got drunk a round or so ahead of us." (Ruba'i 38)

He defends his pleasure principles : The potter is condemned for making artificial wine-cups and is called a poor Muslim for his trade, yet God made the gourd, a natural drinking vessel. Paradise, as described in the Koran, contains beautiful damsels (houris) wine honey and the refreshing river or life. He asks, 'what's the harm', of enjoying these on earth, if they are, after all, 'the final recompense ? He prefers to take 'cash and reject that credit' - the fleeting pleasures of 'here and now' as opposed to the 'thousand promises' of heaven.

(Ruba'i 129) : "Before the world forgets your name,
Drink wine - it drives sorrow from the heart ;
And before your limbs fall away joint by joint,
Unwind the beauty's tresses, ringlet by ringlet."

Such seeking of pleasure, the drowning of one's sorrows in drunkenness, may be seen as blatant disregard for the teachings of Sufism, that was practised by the Persians of the day. 'Asceticism, was the basis of the religion. Its motive force was love. 'Ishq' to the passion of love, was to be directed towards God alone. The physical attractions of the world were transient joys that diverted the soul of man away from his creator.

'Many in the East, however, did not draw the sharp distinction known in the West between the physical and the psychical, and the exaltation of spiritual love in Sufism became in its more popular form, a licence for libertinism, believed to be authorized by love's superiority over the law.' (Introductory notes by Peter Avery.) Hence Khayyam explores the rich gift of wine :

(Ruba'i 164) : "Wine is liquid ruby, the flask the mine,
The cup is the body, its wine the soul ;
That crystal goblet laughing with wine
Is a tear, the heart's blood hidden inside it."

(Ruba'i 201) : "Drink wine, that is life everlasting,
The source of youthful delight,
It burns like fire, but puts an end to grief,
It's like the water of life, drink it."

He prefers this kind of life to the rigours of 'ascetic hypocrisy' that has no reward. He writes that if the lover and a drunkard do not see the face of heaven, no one will. In spite of his frank unconventionality, he laughs at the idea of being thought of as a 'philosopher' :

(Ruba'i 210) : "...God knows I'm not what he says,
"I am too insignificant to know what I am."

His last request - that his dust and body be washed in wine, that dizzying, life-giving vintage. And one day : "...When my life's branch is uprooted

And my members are dispersed,
Should my clay be used to make up a cup,
It would come to life as soon as it was filled with wine."

Finally, a note on the ruba'i (plural : ruba'iyat). The word comes from Arabic, meaning 'foursome' and it consisted of a two - lined stanza of persian poetry, each line of which was divided into two hemistichs, making up four altogether. The first, second and last hemistich must rhyme. The epigrammatic stanza was a release from the monorhymed patterns of the long, weary courtly poems that sang the praises of the Sultan or expressed regret over a lost love. Poets needed a means of expressing their own feelings and thoughts, without having to adhere to convention. The ruba'i, whose force lay in its short, telling statements, was the answer. It was direct and simple, it 'thrusts the finger nail into the heart', as a seventeenth century poet, Sa'ib, described it.

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Peter Avery and John Heath Stubbs.

A Reading of J. D. Salinger's 'The Catcher In the Rye'

'The Catcher In the Rye'-the quintessence of adolescent authenticity, which has earned its deserved passport to "Literary immortality" is the sympathetic and genuine tour de force of writer J. D. Salinger—a brilliant piece of fiction (which has for its roots the vagaries of adolescence) which exploded on the literary horizon shedding sparks everywhere—of fame and popularity amongst the high school and college-going youth and those of notoriety among the scandalised parents and principals who damned the book as immoral, going as far as to label (libel?) it "pornographic" on account of its language—crude, profane, obscene and some of its episodes—"scandalous". For the most part the older generation battled—in vain to keep this "crude" book away from the groping, curious hands of their children, as one of those 'forbidden' books. Labouring under this delusion little did they realise that the language of the book was in no way far-fetched or scandalous, imitating as it did the crude jargon of the sixteen year old of the fifties. Nor are the thoughts patterns of Holden and the subsequent episodes in his life shocking and irrelevant. They are prototypes of genuine occurrences and informal prep school speech.

Now that we have established the authenticity of the book as a valid "realistic" representation of the adolescent world, let us briefly sketch the plot. The plot of 'The Catcher In The Rye' concerns the three-day odyssey of Holden Caulfield after he has been expelled from Pencey Prep for bad grades and general irresponsibility. The story commences with Holden in a

sanatorium in California recuperating from a mental breakdown. He intimates us of his purpose—he is not going to tell his life-story but just the story "of this madman stuff that happened to me around last christmas just before I got pretty run down and had to come here and take it easy".

In the final chapter he speculates about what he is going to do when he is released and reflects on "all this stuff I have just finished telling you about...! If you want to know the truth, I don't know what to think of it". Between these important framing limits the story proper is contained. It reads like "an edited psychoanalysis, on illusion which is sustained by the rambling first-person narrative".

On one level — a profound one, to be sure — the novel is reminiscent of medieval times, belonging as it does to an ancient and honourable narrative tradition — that of the quest. In 'The Catcher', the protagonist is simultaneously involved in ostensibly paradoxical quests—he needs to go home and he needs to leave it—a quest, first for "acceptance, stability, a life embossed upon what is known and can be trusted", second for "a Truth which is unwarped by Stability" Holden, who seeks 'Virtue, second to Love, desires to be good, of some use. In his dream vision, when the little children are playing in the rye field on the cliff top, he wants to be the one to catch them and prevent them from falling off. He is driven toward love of his fellow-man and charity. He is a wanderer, who when, he starts back, has no place to go, except a California psychiatrist's couch.

So Salinger translates the old tradition into contemporary terms. Holden is seeking nothing but stability and love - all which seem to have sunk beneath the waves of hypocrisy which he translates as "phoniness" — a condition of malign society which causes Holden to abandon it. So at the end, Holden delights in circles — a comforting bounded figure, but possessing connotations of hopelessness. He breaks down as he watches his beloved little sister Phoebe swirling on a carousel; she is so "damned" happy. From that almost lunatic delight in a circle, he is shipped off to the psychiatrist. Holden's quest takes him outside society; yet the grail he seeks is the world and the grail is abundant with love. He desired the non-phoniness, truth and innocence of childhood, which he can now find only in Phoebe; in Allie's baseball mitt, is a red hunting cap, and the tender little nuns. He refuses to compromise with adulthood and its necessary adulteries and his heroism drives him berserk. For Holden, there is no place to go.

'The Catcher' can also be read as Holden Caulfield's quest for communicability with his fellow-man. Caulfield is in search of the Word. His crippling problem is one of communication — that precious reaching out which is essential to man's existence; as a teenage — a sensitive one—he simply cannot push through the inseparable barriers of the adult world, neither can he correlate with his contemporaries. He, however places prime importance on the sympathetic rapport which must exist between communicators. He asks but one thing, of those he converses with — sincerity — he asks only that they 'mean' what they say. If they tell him, as Maurice does that the price of "a throw" is five dollars, Holden expects to pay only five dollars. If they ask, as Mrs. Antolini did

about the health of his mother, Caulfield expects sincere concern about his mother's health. He expects that the questioner actually wants an answer to his question and will not interrupt him halfway through it. Throughout the novel he is troubled with and disturbed by people who are not listening to what he says—who are merely making polite conversation. Like Hamlet, a "sad screwed-up type of guy" like himself, Holden is bothered by words and words formulates which only "seem", which are "phony".

The innate honesty and sincerity which he fails to find in others, he attempts to maintain in himself. His repeated assertions that something is "really" so visibly demonstrate his attempt to keep faith with the world. He is particularly distressed by the occasional realisation that it is necessary for him to be phony, too, to exist in the adult world. With regard to the insincere "glad to have met you" formula, he laments that "If you want to stay alive, you have to say that stuff, though". All this goes to show that the main reason for Caulfield's communicative debility springs from his undiluted hatred of obnoxious phoniness, which he finds not only in the world of his personal contacts, but in the world of art as well.

He detests phony books, phony movies and plays. He wants Hamlet played the way he sees him "a sad, screwed-up type of guy", not like a goddamn general "like-wise he is bothered and irritated by way people "clap for the wrong things" and hence corrupt the promising artist. Very poignantly he understands the plight of Ernie, the piano player, and of brother D. B. once a sincere writer but now "out in Hollywood being a prostitute". He wants more "Old Thomas Hardy" - Caulfield

calls him endearingly - because the creation of "Old Eustacia Vye" refused to prostitute himself - refused to be phony.

Holden inability to communicate successfully or satisfactorily with others represents itself symbolically in the incompleting telephone calls and undelivered messages, which permeate the novel. On fifteen separate occasions he gets the urge to communicate by phone, yet only four calls are completed and those with unfortunate results. Usually the urge dies out without his having even placed the call; he seems fearful of the consequences and rationalizes "I wasn't in the mood". Likewise none of the several verbal messages he asks others to deliver for him gets through to the intended receiver; he simply cannot succeed in making contact.

"Growing logically out of this prolonged incommunicability is Caulfield's intention to become a deaf mute. So repulsed is he by the phoniness around him that he despairs of communicating with anybody, and in a passage fraught with import, he contemplates a retreat within himself".¹

"I could get a job at a filling station...I'd pretend I was one of those deaf mutes. That way I wouldn't have to have to any goddamn stupid useless conversation with anybody. If anybody wanted to tell me something, they'd have to write it on a piece of paper and shove it...They'd get bored as hell...and they'd leave me alone... I'd meet this beautiful girl...also a deaf mute and we'd get married. She'd...have to write it on a goddamn paper, like everybody else".²

"Significantly, the fact that a message does get through to Phoebe - the only successful communication in the entire novel - leads towards the abandonment of

the deaf - mute retreat. The Rousseauistic - Wordsworthian theme of childhood, innocence and sincerity which Salinger had played upon so effectively in "For Esme - with love and Squalor", works its magic again. It is Phoebe who furnishes the clue to the solution of his problem and when he refuses to ride the carousel with her and this gives up his idealistic attempts "to grab for the gold ring", he has initiated his transition from adolescence to adulthood. He does not of course, capitulate to the phoniness of life, but he attains an attitude of tolerance understanding and love which will make it endurable. There can be no doubt, but that when he returns to New York, he will be in the mood to give "old Jane a buzz".

Closely and inextricably linked with the theme of incommunicability is that of alienation. Nature is 'norm' and ideal and civilization the alien, warping form imposed on this unadulterated innocence. The philosophy propounded by Rousseau and the disciples of naturalism - of the individual born basically good and subsequently corrupted and tainted by societal institution is reflected in this novel. The cause of the consequent alienation lies the door of the engulfing vortex of schools, churches, business establishments, governments bureaus. They are charged with "thwarting human aspirations, frustrating conscience, outraging sensitivity". As one critic pines, Salinger's stand is for the individual and against the world, "for the heaven of inner desire and opposed to the hell of outside circumstance". The alienation is expressed in another way, by Salinger deft contrast of the child with the adult, early innocence and goodness with later cynicism and corruption, based on the naturalistic theory that the father one goes from the purity of the cradle the more drained one becomes from contract with society.

Holden's character is as unusual but healthy mix. He is the classic portrait of the "crazy, mixed - up kid", but with a vital difference. He possesses a "solid substratum of goodness, genuineness and sensitivity" and it is this very conflict between the surface and the substratum that makes the novel's reading such a moving, pathetic and intensely moral experience. Possessed of a keen intelligence and acute sensitivity, Holden has arrived prematurely at the agonizing transition between adolescence and adulthood. He is precocious but badly "seasoned". An affectionate boy yearning for love and movings, he has been cut off during most of his teenage years from the haven of his family. He is a young man adrift in an adult world that buffets and bewilders him deprived of the solace of religion which is an alien and confusing part of his life.

Venturing a detailed analysis of Holden's character we might make the following points. He desires to shepherd the young and to be only 'big' person around: the protector of innocence, the catcher in the rye. He is keenly sensitive to times and places, whether groping his way through a dark foyer in the early hours of dawn, or relaxing in the cosy auditorium of the Museum of National History, where it "alwas smelled like it was raining outside, even if it was'nt....." He is also keenly perceptive of the uniqueness of things. The feel of a roller skate key is unforgettable and everlasting, "shimmering with human meaning". His perception extends to perspicacity as he feels the essential character of others. He sharply registers the unguarded phrase or facial expression like, the prostitute Sunny's childish "like fun you are" on the whimsical beauty of Phoebe's upon - mouthed sleep. His allergic hatred for phonies and phoniners

have already been illustrated earlier. However, to give another example Carl Luce' a past - master in extracting intimate sex conferssions from young boys but an irritated and evasive sorehead "if you started asking him questions about himself" is a phony.

Holden possesses an intelligent mind and has respect for fact and knowledge. He "analyses" and is generous in granting any person his particular points - Harris Macklin, for instance is the biggest bore Holden knows, but he is also an inimitable whistler. But he is not equally understanding with himself. He is the "only rich dumb one" in his family, "very yellow and a sairiglegious athiest". His relentless self - criticism is alerted by the slightest stirring of phoniness in him. His humility ironically reveals his goodness and integrity. The realist Holden is skeptical of men and wary of circumstances. Like other adolescents he cultivates the timely maneouvre and the saving lie to extricate himself from sticky situations.

But the most striking and endearing thing is that in this corrupt world Holden almost miraculously retains the uncorrupted heart - he genuinely loves natural beauty and the socially unspoiled - the nuns, for example. He is haunted by the tranquility of the two nuns he meets, and in several of his actions he unconsciously imitates the compassion of Jesus. "He is an instinctive moralistic democrat whose feelings recall Whitman's "By God" I will accept nothing which all cannot have this counterpart of on the same terms "He sympathizes with the kind - hearted, the suffering and the helpless. In a touching flashback he comforts Jane Gallagher whom he values for her human eccentricities and her real quality - her "muckle - mouthed" way of talking, her

curious way of playing checkers and her love for poetry. To put it in a nutshell, Holden respects human personality and hates whatever demeans it. Unselfish love and spontaneous joy - Holden values these expressions of the uncontaminated spirit above all others. So seldom are they found and so often thwarted in adult life that their slightest appearance saddens him. The little boy singing "Comin Thro' The Rye" is a normal kid, regular, happy fulfilled, innocently insulated from the disagreeable. Holden is happy in a world of innocence that creates its own condition. Desperately lonesome, he reveals his need for human intimacy by using the word "catch".

Holden's acute self-consciousness and his evident neuroticism do not diminish the reality or worth of what he is and feels. He is as he says, "a catcher in the rye" - a preserver and protector of innocence.

Last but most certainly not the least, we must make a few observations of the fluidity and authenticity of the language employed in the novel. Holden's various interpretations of 'crap', 'kill' and 'crazy' his oft repeated like 'a madman' 'like a bastard' are all typical of his age and generations. Of course, there are exceptions as he possesses and can use when he wants to, such words as 'ostracized', 'exhibitionist', 'unscrupulous', 'conversationalist', 'psychic'

and 'bourgeois', all of which are a prodigious cut above basic English. Thus, we see that the language of 'The Catcher In the Rye' is an authentic artistic rendering of a type of informal, colloquial, teenage American spoken speech "It is strongly typical and trite yet often somewhat individual, it is crude and slangy and imprecise, imitative yet occasionally imaginative and affected toward standardization by the strong efforts of schools".⁵ Indisputably, it is the very spontaneity and authenticity of the language that accounts for the book's high standard.

In conclusion, I'd like to quote an excerpt from one of the most penetrating reviews of 'The Catcher...' a sentence which reveals the crux of the book and the reason for its universal appeal - "It reflects something not at all rich and strange but what every sensitive sixteen year old since Rousseau has felt, and of course what each one of us is certain he has felt...The Catcher In the Rye (is) a cause history of all of us". The reviewer was Dr. Ernest Jones, and for the sickness he diagnosed he also prescribed a remedy. His prescription was a line from Auden - "We must love one another or die".

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BLACK POETRY

"My ole mistress promise me
w'en she died, she'd set me free,
She lived so long dat 'er head got bal'
An' she give out'n de notion a — dying at all".¹

The promise was given three hundreds of years ago and still has not been fulfilled. Three hundred years of slavery, bondage, humiliation and pain, enough to make the Blacks, drooling idiots, dangerous maniacs, raving beasts — If it were not for that quality and force within all humans that cries, "I will live".²

It is this quality that was their life force in those primeval days of slavery. Begeinning when the Negroes were stolen from their native land. Phillis Wheatley, the 18th century poetess recalls,

"I, young in life, by seeming cruel fate
Was snatch'd from Afric's fancy'd happy seat".³

causing,

"What pangs excruciating must molest
What sorrows labour in my parents' breast?"⁴

But pain was not only for the people in Africa who had lost their dear ones, but pain in much larger dimensions for the people stolen. For, for them in America, it was a life led to build a civilisation, a civilisation that never let them have a share of the better side, a civilisation that did not appreciate their strength but a civilisation that did their best to keep them bent down at work so hard they never dare rise up. Shows this a folk-song,

"Ol' massa an' ol' missis,
Sittin' in the parlour,
Just fig'n an' a—plannin'
How to work a nigger harder".⁵

And of the unbalanced conditions, here again is a folk—song

"We raise de wheat, dey gib us de corn ;
We sift de meal, dey gib us de huss ;
We peel de meal, dey gib us de skin ;
An' dat's de way dey take us in".⁶

1 folk—song. Courtesy "New Black Voices", Essay—Stuckey.

2 Dilemma of the Negro novelist in the U.S.A.—essay—Chester—Himes, ctsy—Abraham Chapman.

3 & 4 Phillis Wheatley.

5 Folk—song. Essay—Stuckey, "New Black Voices"—Chapman.

6 Folk—song. Essay—Stuckey, "New Black Voices"—Chapman.

Slaves are slaves. There can be no distinction as men or as the weaker sex. If men were bought as slaves, so were the women. And there always was work immense for a slave. Goes a ballad,

“Missus in the big house,
Mammy in the yard
Missus holdin’ her hands,
Mammy working hard
Mammy working hard
Mammy working hard”.⁷

The words above are so simple the hidden pain may go unnoticed. But, pertaining to the style of folk—songs, the repetitions of the last line make up for the lack and show the monotony of hard unrewarding work.

But that’s not all. There are other humiliations that slavery and dependence brings with it. Humiliations, that a later poet has expressed in words very crude,

“ i am my mother
being raped in the corn fields of Georgia”.⁸

Man of any race, of any nation, needs motivation to bring out better work and to be satisfied and happy. But when all motivation he is offered is measly reward, what can drive him on but whips and fear? And so, we find the Blacks turning from clenched teeth hopeful endurance to open mouthed protest. A protest that dare not be taken and uttered on the white face, but uttered to that person to whom one may speak without fear of reprisal and because of whose silence and mystery, revel ever in the pleasure and comfort of hope.

The slaves were spirituals. We cannot say if worldly pain made them spiritual or if the spirituality was inherited from the native land. But this is certain that they took their plaints to God above. Here is a folk—song in the tone of a child promising a big boy, “Watch out, I’ll take care of you when mammy comes”.

Talk about me much as you please
Talk about me much as you please
Chillun, talk about me much as you please
Gonna talk about you when I get on my knees”.⁹

“Chillun, here”, says a critic, Sterling Stuckey, “appears to mean slave holders.” The poet, perhaps, is trying to reduce the powerful slaveholders to mere children for a show of bravado. The slaves thus maintained a comradeship with God against the

7 Folk—song. Essay—Stuckey, “New Black Voices” —Chapman.

8 Poem. “I rode with Geronimo” —Conyus.

9 “Dilemma of the Negro novelist in the U.S.A”. Essay, Stuckey.

Whites. They looked upon Heaven and God as their friends, people who could be trusted. Here's a ballad,

When I get to heaven, gwine be at ease
Me and my God gonna do as we please
Gonna chatter with the Father, argue with the Son
Tell 'um 'bout the world I just come from".¹⁰

When Man is desperate, knowing he is incapable of acting, he sees no reason in living. For the Black spirituals, this mood was fuelled by the belief in the Hereafter, a place full of peace, freedom and friendship. So we see many a folk-song inviting death. Inscribed in a pyramid are these words,

"Death is in my eyes today
Like the desire of a man to see his home
When he hath passed many years in captivity".¹¹

In a folk-song,

"I'll walk in de graveyard, I'll walk through de greveyard
To lay dis body down
I'll in de grave and stretch out my arms,
Lay dis body down".¹²

Can anything be more pathetic than to long to lie in the graveyard and stretch out arms to blackening death? But, yes, there is, cry the modern Black poets, and that is to live. For,

".....It is better to die than
it is to grow up and find out that you are colored".¹³

In the style of writing, in the themes chosen, there is a transition from the age of the folk-songs and today, but how different is the plight of the blacks? Two and a half centuries ago they spoke of death and two and a half centuries later, they still speak of death. Death, with two connotations. Death of the White, Death of the Black.

For now, the Blacks are not the cringing slaves who saw no other way than to be dependent, but are MEN, who have seen freedom in other countries during the world wars and know they are being denied what is theirs.

Therefore, there is an antagonism towards the Whites and desire to kill. Says Chester Himes, the novelist, of the sixties.

10 "Dilemma of the Negro novelist in the U.S.A. "Essay, Stuckey.

11 Introduction, "3000 yrs of Black poetry"—Lomax and Abdul.

12 "Dilemma of the Negro novelist in the U.S.A". Essay, Stuckey.

13 Poem, "Tired" by Fenton Johnson.

"To hate White people is one of the first emotions an American Negro develops when he becomes old enough to learn what his status is in American society".¹⁴

Le Roi Jones, who in a spirit of Black Nationalism changed his name to Imamu Amiri Baraka, writes in the fashion of the old folk chant,

"We lay high and meditating on white evil
we are destroying it. They die in the streets
Look they clutch their throats. Aggggg. Stab him"¹⁵

Why they went to such an extent of praying and chanting for their deaths is evident in the numerous poems that show the subjection and despair. But never in their faces, in front of the whites will they show their pain and their fear of defeat. The guideline, "I will live" through the ages when they had to make their lives happy by pushing in deep emotions of sorrow and fear had given them strength. They have lived,

"For many years for many years
for many thousands
of years
hiding and laughing
hiding and laughing
hiding and laughing".¹⁶

They say,

"We wear the mask that grins and lies,
It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes".¹⁷

And therefore, in lieu with this philosophy, every statement of desperation or protest is followed with defiance and pride.

"Your door is shut against my tightened face,
And I am sharp as steel with discontent ;
But I possess the courage and the grace
To bear my anger proudly and unbent".¹⁸

They know the battle cannot be easily won. But, never for that will they stop trying, nor living

"Open wide your arms to life
Whirl in the wind of pain and strife,
Face the wall with the dark closed gate,
Beat with bare, brown fists
And wait".¹⁹

14 "Dilemma of the Negro novelist in the U.S.A."—Stuckey.

15 "Sacred chant for the return of the Black spirit and Power".

16 "Poem No. 11, Conyus.

17 "We wear the mask"—Paul Laurence Dubar.

18 "White Houses" by Claude Mckay.

19 Langston Hughes.

The distinction that was not offered then for the weaker sex is unoffered even now. But, will the women do less knowing that they need money and that there is a good and strong body easily at hand? They but in their share now, as slaves of money who have to work hard to gain their grace.

“was it four o’ clock or six o’ clock on a winter afternoon,
I saw you wringing out the last shirt in Miss White
Lady’s Kitchen ?”²⁰

Where will these hard working women get their relief from? In the company of their children? Here’s what whipping a small boy can do to her

“ And that woman leans muttering against
a tree, exhausted, purged—
avenged in part for lifelong hiding
she has had to bear”.²¹

Here’s a poem that shows the plight of a child,

“She is the anger of this day and elegant pride that
touched black child who walked three miles
to school and saw white child’s bus leave her
trampling in the dust”.²²

These are poems that deal simply with and hit severely the themes of desperation, of oppression and of protest. There are poems artistic, romantic, ambiguous that make one draw a breath at the subtlety by which the above said themes are brought out.

“I have just seen a most beautiful thing,
Slim and still,
Against a gold, gold, sky,
A straight black cypress,
Sensitive,
Exquisite,
A Black finger
Pointing upwards.
Why beautiful still finger, are you black ?
And why are you pointing upwards ?”²³

The poetess’s tone of slight sarcasm, mockery and wonderment are all combined in that last question : Black, and you aspire ?

20 ‘,Song to a Negro washer-woman’—Langston Hughes.

21 “The whipping” by Robert Hayden.

22 “Trellie” by Lance Jeffers.

23 “The Black Finger” by Angelina Grimke.

And there is Conyus, a poet who uses nature to show Black life.

“Pearl crack
the dawn is leaking,
quiet patterns
on the street.
Cool winds
their thin flagellation,
fragilely
soars across my face.
The sun set
on the ocean
and there was’nt
any confusion”.²⁴

This nature poem, like most of the rest begins with dawn, with the activity of the working Blacks, side by side with children playing, women watching and then ends with night descending. He shows with his downs and dusks the definite beginnings and endings, and what is between is the motion of a single activity hour after hour. Thus their lives are shown as empty, monotonous, dull and subject to subjection, all by a description of nature. If nature shows their bondage and monotony, nature reminds him also of freedom. He writes,

“in morgan hill
sitting next to
the fence post
with grey clouds
clipping the mountains
reminded me of freedom
& i thought that i was flying
& i thought that i was free”.²⁵

A change, away from the themes of oppression, description and protest, comes to us from Countee Cullen who lived from 1903 to 1946. He has lived through two world wars, and so would have known the suffering they caused. For, following the First World War, was the mass migration of Blacks from their homeland in the South to the cities of the North. The Whites fearing the opportunities the Blacks would get, set out to turn the Blacks back to the South, through murder, torture and the like. The Blacks did fight back, which caused more loss. Countee Cullen distances himself from all this and writes poems of Romance. His themes are.

“Of loves and lovers, broken heart,
And wild sweet agony.....”²⁶

24 “The Great Santa Barbara Oil Disaster OR : Part, 6”.

25 “The Great Santa Barbara Oil Disaster OR : Part, 18”.

26 “Fruit of the Flower”.

He will not look back at the past and Africa, for, he says, "the tree
"The tree budding yearly must forget
How its past arose or set".²⁷

But, for that, present Black suffering does not go unnoticed or unpenned. He writes,
"She even think that up in heaven
Her class lies late and snores
While poor black cherubs rise at seven
To do celestial chores".²⁸

It is the distancing that allows the play of Imagination on the problems, as seen above, and that which allows idealism. He is the only poet who has shown the White and Black in a bondage of love, and exalted each. He writes,

"Locked arm in arm they cross the way,
The black boy and the white,
The golden splendour of the day
The sable pride of night".²⁹

Countee Cullen like the old slaves does not seem to have had any conflict in the manner of style or language to be used. But, we see the contemporary Black poets in a conflict, having to choose the folk-style to get to the roots of their pride and strength, or to choose modern, individualistic, pioneering, and rebellious style. The latter is much oftener read.

Poems, with no order, no capital letters, no punctuations, poems in the form of bio-datas :

"Sometimes I stare into an awing of spirit
and the prose of her son
burning my eye into a vacuum
of frozen blisters

"Sometimes my face hanging its tongue
half way between mechanised jaw bones
and ancient skull caps...".³⁰

Poems, as folk chants with all the screaming and whining noises :

"...ohhh ohhh ohhh break
the white thing. Let it dangle dead. Let it rot like nature needs.
MMMMMMMMMMMM
MMMMMMMMMMMM...OOOOOOOOOO...Death fiddle

.....
.....³¹

27 "Heritage—for Harold Jackson".

28 "Heritage—for Harold Jackson".

29 "Tableau", by Countee Cullen.

30 "Sometimes I go to Camarillo and sit in the lounge" by, K. Curtis Lyle.

31 "Sacred chant for the return of Black spirit and power" by Imamu Amiri Baraka.

Poems that have a few words on the left page and a few here and there on the right. For example, "The signs" by N. H. Pritchard. There are poems replete with strokes. Like this :

"when i hear billie's soft
soul / ful / sighs
of "am i blue"
i say
no. Sweet / billie.
no mo".³²

The title of this poem is "liberation / poem".

There are other poems, in which the words are spelt half in one line and the rest in the lines following...

"When a cop
stop
ped me, wanted some
I. D.
Said
"What nationality are
u
I said proud
ly
Amer
I
CAN
he said "No you can'
T
NIGGER"³³

And there is Gerald W. Barrax* who makes a division between colour and nature to show the dominance of colour.

"Nice of you, white
of you to reserve some of the red
land for the savage".³⁴

And finally, poems you do not know where the line begins, where it ends, or if there is a line at all. Examples are, "Vive Noir" by Mari Evans, "self World" "by Clarence Major", "Sometimes I go to Camarillo & sit in the lounge" by K. Curtis Lyle.

32 "liberation / poem" by Sonia Sauchez.

33 "Changed Mind (or the day i woke up) "-Tejumola Ologboni. (Rockie D. Taylor)

34 "The old Gory"—1. (Red)

* Barrax has written three poems on colours. Red, White & Blue.

In every way possible, the Blacks are being rebellious and self assertive. As one poet insists,

“Write YOUR poem
Sing YOUR song
Paint YOUR picture
Be your own Black self”.³⁵

The Blacks are being their own selves. Their poems are ones that cannot be moulded into anything as their lives have been. The language they use now is not the angry, savage, Black man’s language. As Al Young, a poet, novelist, critic says, “Until recently, Black writers were almost required to write something that said, “Charley, Whitey, I’m gonna cut your throat”.³⁶

“In the seventies”, he prophesied, “there’s going to be a rich flowering of Black genius unlike anything that has been seen before.” This we saw in Conyus, Mari Evans and others.

Black Poetry has so far gone through three stages. From spiritual simple balladry to poems of Black anger, pseudo or real, and from there to ingenious artistic poems. What the last two decades have held and what the future holds is yet to be seen. The style and language have changed and improved and it can only be hoped that the themes also undergo changes (for the better).

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35 BE YOU by Norman Jordan.

36 From introduction- “Nem Black Voices”.

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| 2) I am the Darker Brother | — | edited — ADOFF |
| 3) 3000 years of Black Poetry | — | edited — LOMAX AND ABDUL |
| 4) The New Negro | — | edited — ALAIN LOCKE |

'THINGS SEEN ARE THINGS AS SEEN'

"The casual is not enough,
The freshness of transformation is
The freshness of a world. It is our own
It is ourselves, the freshness of ourselves."¹

Wallace Stevens' poems are his creative response to a world which threatens to impoverish man's Imagination. His ideal man was one who could build bridges between all incompatibles, between theory and money, art and life, fact and miracle between two worlds, of 'reality' and 'Imagination' though both were real enough to him. Their consequent interaction becoming his theme, determined both the manner of his poems and their method.

However Imagination is not a vehicle to escape from the world to a better landscape, rather Stevens takes his stand in Hartford, the heart of American reality, confronting it, "a poet striding among cigar stores." To those who in view of his elegance, thought him to be a "poet in an ivory tower", Stevens replied; "The romantic poet now-a-days... happens to be one who still dwells in an ivory tower, but this tower has an exceptional view of the public dump and the advertising signs... he is the hermit who dwells with the sun and moon, but insists on taking a rotten newspaper." He is the Man on the Dump concerned with 'the the' and the "here and now." In his "Three Academic Pieces", he affirms that poetry is a means of grasping reality and the process lies in the creative Imagination. The poet, 'the man of Imagination' is often represented by a performer, a comedian, etc. The sun regularly stands for reality, "the unthinking source", while the moon presides over the Imagination.

As Imagination is a transforming power, the central focus is on 'metamorphosis'. In 'Bouquet of Roses in Sunlight' Stevens capsules in a few lines the metamorphosis of perception ;

"Our sense of these things changes and they change
Not as in metaphor, but in our sense of them.
So sense exceeds all metaphor".

Hence in 'Woman Looking at a vase of Flowers' the bouquet is seen as thunder, in 'An Ordinary Evening in New Haven' chapels as men, and in 'Certain Phenomena of Sound' a name as a person. Similarly the guest at the Palaz of Hoon, recreates the external world in his imagination.

"I was the world in which I walked and what I saw,
Or heard or felt came not but from myself ;"

1 Quote from "Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction"

The poet's job is to create shapes in nothingness and out of it, to make meanings of the rock, so that its barrenness becomes a thousand things and so ceases to exist.

In 'A High-Toned Old Christian Woman' he says, "Poetry is the supreme fiction, madame." Here 'fiction' from its origin in Latin 'fingere' is something shaped, formed or imagined; through which one accosts reality. He was of the opinion that;

"Two things of opposite nature seem to depend,
On one another, as a man depends on a woman."

On this he based his belief in the interdependence of Imagination and Reality as equals."

His "Bantams in Pine - Woods" can be interpreted as an investigation of the relationship between Imagination and reality in an anti - Imaginative society. Critics have found evidence to believe that Azcan is a symbol of the Imagination whose height alone associates him with the 'giant on the horizon' who is used as a symbol for Imagination in 'A Primitive like an Orb.' Azcan is not on friendly terms with the inchling who represents reality and who, "fears not Azcan nor his hoos". On account of their hostility, both worlds remain incomplete. However in 'The Pastor Caballero' the Capitan is a successful exponent of the Imagination, as he knows how to deal with reality and to subjugate it to himself by his abstracting genius. Hence he is able to dispense with the 'formidable helmet' and look forward to:

"the green flauntings of the hours of peace."

Besides the shaping spirit of Imagination is transcendent. In 'A High - Toned Old Christian Woman' both the perspectives of the Christian woman and the 'disaffected flagellants' open at last into similar palm - treed vistas, for,

"fictive things wink as they will."

His theory of the Imagination does conform to that of Coleridge - creative willing together into a new and unified reality [of hitherto seperable quantities. In 'The Man Whose Pharynx was Bad', he laments the temporary cessation of Imagination through which he could penetrate the fragmentary in experience and grasp its essentiality for a

'vivid transperence of peace.'

"Perhaps if winter once could penetrate
Through all its purples to the final state,
Persisting bleakly in an icy haze;
One might in turn become less diffident
Out of such mildew plucking neater mould.
And spouting new orations of the cold
One might."

Imagination gives to our reality whatever order resides therein. In

'That which cannot be Fixed' (Transport to Summer),
"The human ocean beats against this rock
of earth, rises against it, tide by tide,
Continually...what elements unreconciled
Because there is no golden solvent here."

Stevens explains that human experiences are composed of four elements which are unreconciled among themselves, leading to disorder, in the absence of the 'golden solvent' that is the fiery fusing power of Imagination. He adds that the world, life and time are crystallized in the moment of Imagination just as the mid-ocean is eternally surrounded by the radiance of the sky. In 'The Idea of Order at Key West', the singer makes order out of chaos, by creating her own world.

"...there never was a world for her.
Except the one she sang, and singing made".

In poems like "Domination of Black", 13 Ways of looking at a Blackbird, description is equated with perception and perception with conception. In 'Sea Surface full of Clouds' the green of the summer morning is perceived as having given 'suavity' to the ocean which is 'perplexed'. His men and women discover that they must cling only to the world which their rich perceptions have given them. However he affirms in 'Farewell to Florida', 'Lions in Sweden', and 'Mozart 1935' the need to hold Imagination to concrete reality.

His particular starting point is always the sensitive Individual trying to satisfy simultaneously the claims of reality and Imagination of trying to play

"a tune beyond us, yet ourselves".

In 'Credences of Summer' the creative process is thus described,

"the self having possessed,
the object, grips it in savage scrutiny,
Once to make captive, once to subjugate
On yield to subjugation, once to proclaim
The meaning of the capture, this hard prize
Fully made, fully apparent, fully found".

Reason abstracts man from reality but the creative Imagination reveals him to us. In Notes Towards a Supreme Fiction he affirms :

"The major abstraction is the idea of man,
And major man is its exponent".

(Major man refers to 'any man of Imagination') Stevens like Blake sees God and Imagination as one. Though experiences stem in part from a world external and independent. Of the self, they remain the sum of perception and appearance.

"Things seen are things as seen." (Opus Posthumous). Man by remoulding reality with his Imagination was sharing God's creative power. This act is even extended to a rabbit, in 'A Rabbit as King of the Ghosts', who while reducing a cat to a bug, himself grows to, "a self that fills the four corners of the night".

Stevens believed that the world we inhabit is one we 'half create', we make the order we perceive. The poet was the man of Imagination, yet no poetry was possible without the severe discipline of reality. Repudiating imagination as licensed or romantic, rejecting the skepticism of the logical positivists, resisting the Freudian interpretation of fantasy, he made it his primary article of faith. It is in relation to the sense of catastrophic fragmentariness of the contemporary world, that his belief in the unifying power of the Imagination has achieved such rare distinction.

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Mark Twain : "Tom Sawyer" Vs. "The Great Dark"

Mark Twain's later writings form a fascinating area of study. Bizarre plot elements enlivened with Irony & satire characterise these later fictional pieces wherein Twain explores the darker side of life. Known to scholars as the "Great Dark" writings, this group of unfinished narratives offer substantial evidence of Mark Twain's final efforts to create serious stories based on themes which had emerged from years of observation and thought.

These last writings, at his wish were issued several years after his death. Professor Bernard Devoto pioneered the study of these writings, especially the 'Great Dark' manuscripts. Mark Twain wrote them after the disasters of the early and middle Nineties that had included the decline into bankruptcy of his publishing business, the failure of the Paige type setting machine in which he had invested millions, and the death of his favorite daughter, Susy. Devoto, on the basis of an impressive body of evidence, drawn from unpublished manuscripts that what crippled Twain was the series of personal disasters suffered in the 90s.¹ Another critic, James M. Cox, claims that it was life, not personal misfortune that inspired his savage arraignment of life & that the fierce indignation which consumed his heart sprang from sources deeper than bankruptcy & bereavement. He proves through a brilliant analysis that Twain's "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court" anticipates the 'Great Dark' writings though it was published in 1889, when Twain was at the height of his fame, much before personal disasters overtook him. Professor Cox compares Melville's "Pierre" and Twain's "A Connecticut" ...and says "despite a

certain audacity of conception, both works disintegrate into extravagant failures; indeed, their desperate resolutions suggest a desperation behind the fiction as if the writer were involved in destroying a part of himself, thereby breaking an identification with a threatening aspect of his psychic life".² Twain's famous reply to Howell's praise of the novel, is "if it were only to be written again there wouldn't be so many things left out. They burn in me; and they keep multiplying and multiplying, but now they can't ever be said... "They'd require a penwarmed up in hell"... "Two main assumptions animate Twain's hyperbole (i) That the book is an incomplete expression of repressed attitudes (ii) That the unexpressed attitudes are self-generatively threatening the writer's personality".³

Mr. Cox stresses a single salient aspect in which the 'yankee'...anticipates the work to come. A look at the important fiction which Twain wrote after 1889 reveals that a particular figure tends to dominate them — a mysterious stranger. His character is never defined and he remains no more than a shadowy personage, necessary to the plot. The function this stranger comes to assume in Twain's fiction is one of disturbing peace. Into quiet, complacent communities he comes disrupting the society by unmasking and turning it upon itself. Thus, Pudd'n headed Wilson, another yankee stranger, enters Dawson's Landing, drolly observes the community, taking its fingerprints, until he alone can disclose the crime which is hidden at the heart of the society. And the man that corrupted Hadleyburg is a stranger, who, somehow wronged by the community in the veiled past, takes elaborate revenge on it

by means of a diabolically conceived joke which reveals the moral sham of the society. The stranger is finally incarnated in the role of Philip Traum, "the mysterious stranger", who pronounces the universe a dream.

The stranger's different avatars do not obscure certain distinguishing aspects of his characters. He is, first of all, gaining a curious revenge on the world, a revenge usually taking the form of a practical joke second, he has a penchant for philosophy, his thought generally following a pattern of mechanistic determinism. Thus the Yankee, Pudd'n head, and Philip Traum all insist that man is a machine who must obey the law of his make that he cannot fully create anything. The social aspect of this deterministic philosophy is expressed in 'A connecticut'... "Training — training is everything; training is all there is to a person. We speak of nature, it is folly, there is no such thing as nature; what we call by that this misleading name is merely heredity and training. We have no thoughts of our own, no opinions of our own; they are transmitted to us, trained into us. All that is original in us, and therefore fairly creditable or discreditable to us, can be covered up and hidden by the point of a combric needle, all the rest atoms being contributed by, and inherited from, a procession of ancestors that stretches back a billion years to the Adam — clam or grasshopper or monkey from whom our race has been so tediously and ostentatiously and unprofitably developed..."

In 'A connecticut'... "Hank Morgan, hoping to bring light to Arthurian England, ends by concentrating on destruction. We see that Twain chose a situation in which Idealism was bound to fail; established historical fact precludes all possibility of success.

A similar unconscious fatalism clearly dictates his pre-occupation with the Joan of Arc story; she is another idealistic person who comes to redeem a 'sick age', and her ultimate rejection by society is even more inflexibly determined than Hank Morgan's. From the day he first learned of her existence, the story of the french heroine had fascinated Mark Twain. As he grew older and bitterer, Joan attracted him more and more with her faith and courage and simplicity. She seemed one of the few characters in history who could in any way justify the existence of human race. He published "personal recollections of Joan of Arc" in 1896 though he had started it much earlier.

"The tragedy of Pudd'n headed wilson" was published in 1894, and funny though the book is, Wilson speaks forthrightly to the conscience of America about such once forbidden themes as miscegenation and slavery. The novel focuses on 'Dawson's landing, the narrow intellectual interest of the towns people, the pretense, vanity and harsh conduct that made slavery detestable. Although the book was begun as a Farce, it deepened in seriousness until it's main theme emerged as a plea for the humane and just treatment of all human beings regardless of race or national origin.

During the last ten years of his life, Twain became increasingly preoccupied with images of chaos, darkness, purposelessness, the passivity of man before the dark forces of the world and the complete jostness of man. The three sea stories reveal something of his pre occupation with purposeless voyages which end in horror.

'The Enchanted sea wilderness' is the story of a ship which wanders into a great area of the ocean where the compass

suddenly goes berserk and loses all value as a means of steering and plotting direction. First it runs into a terrible nine-day storm which the sailors nickname "the devil's race-track" and then it emerges into a deadly calm or "the everlasting Sunday". Here they slowly drift until they see what they take to be a fleet on the horizon, full of hope they row towards it but it turns out to be a dead fleet which rotted away years ago leaving only the deceptive shells on the surface to mock all who find them with an image of their irrevocable fate. In all this "Universal paralysis of life & energy" the only active thing is the compass which is whirling round in a "Frenzy of fear." The story is fragmentary—ironically.

In "An adventure in Remote seas", a ship gets lost once again but arrives at a strange island. Half the crew go ashore and find, implausibly enough, a hoard of gold instead of penguins which they had come to catch. This turns the captain's mind and the men are employed in weighing and counting the gold, strikes and labour disputes arise and all thought of the original purpose of the voyage is given up. Suddenly they realize the ship has gone—and here the story breaks off. The unknown island which they discover could be America and the penguins, (who are so docile while the Sailors cut their throats) may well be the Indians. The frenzy aroused by the money is Twain's comment on what the Industrial revolution was doing to men and the final situation seems to symbolize contemporary America: busy scrambling for money while the one chance of Salvation, the ship, is finally lost, leaving the men abandoned in a nameless ocean with only a meaningless wealth for consolation.

The long story to which Devote applied Twain's phrase "The Great Dark" is a more prolonged, though scarcely more successful,

attempt to find a fitting parable to carry his feelings. Through stormy darkness and hemmed in by ice, directed by some unknown and malevolent will, a ship sails a terrible sea where no chart can be had and where monsters lurk that may strike and destroy at any moment. The ship sails there forever, there is no plan or sense to its voyage and no hope that the agony will end the helpless passengers are menaced not only by the "Great Dark" without but by mutiny and greed and maniac revenge within.

In May 1899, Twain, in a letter to William D. Howells said that he wanted to "write a book which should take account to no one's feelings, delusions, a book which should say my say, right out of my heart, in the plainest language and without a limitation of any sort...I believe I can make it, tell what I think of man, and how he is constructed; and what a shabby, poor, ridiculous thing he is, and how mistaken he is in his estimate of his character and powers and qualities and his place among the animals" ...

The tale of course, was "The Mysterious Stranger" of which Mrs. Twain, who was his sternest critic said, "it is perfectly horrible - and perfectly beautiful." The mood of the whole tale is evident in the unforgettable closing chapter of "The Mysterious stranger" - a chapter which he later could not remember having written. It was his testament of bitterness; like Malaspina in hell, he shook important but defiant fists at Heaven and cried out "That to you, O God!" "There is no god, no universe, no human race, no earthly life, no heaven, no hell.....It is all a dream - a grotesque and foolish dream. Nothing exists but you and you are but a thought - a vagrant thought, a useless thought, a homeless thought, wandering forlorn among the empty eternities!".

He was probably in the same mood, when in his seventieth year, he wrote a little essay on "old Age" which ended with the picture of life's pilgrim at the close of the journey: White-headed, the temple empty, the idols broken, the worshippers in their graves, nothing left but you, a remnant, a tradition, belated fag-end of a foolish dream, a dream that was so ingeniously dreamed that it seemed real all the time; nothing left but you; center of a snowy desolation, perched on ice summit, gazing out over the stages of that long trek and asking yourself, "would you do it again if you had the chances?" And at the beginning of 1905 he had written in his notebook "Sixty years ago, optimist and fool were not synonymous terms. This is a greater change than that wrought by science and invention. It is the mightiest change that was ever wrought in any sixty years since creation". Professor Tony Tanner draws a parallel between Henry Adams & Mark Twain & holds that Twain's is "not a despair of personal bereavement but of country, ultimately of man." According to Prof. Tanner, Both Adams & Twain "had an unrelenting vision of life as chaos...both of them had ceased to believe in god...god had either fled or diminished to a thing-but a feeling of predestination lingered on just beneath the surface of the conscious mind. It seems that without the one all solving deity the world collapsed into an amorphous, inexplicable mess before which the only reaction was one of sterile horror. Not that either man wanted God back, but they were equally dismayed at America's failure to provide any substitute Ideal purpose or explanation".⁴

Twain's books reflect his view of man as an almost helpless and therefore comic free agent in a still incompletely formed society uncertain of its direction. Civilization seemed a vulgar parade of hypocrisy,

scheming pretense incompetence bungling, pork-barrel politics and boodlery. Yet, Twain was not a thinker, not a philosopher, as ordinarily fiction writers strove to be.

The slogan of the "damned human race" that later became Mark Twain's proverb, and his disillusionment with a philistine culture are spelt out clearly in his work, "Passage from outlines of History, (Suppressed) 9th century".

"...But it was impossible to save the great Republic. She was rotten to the heart. Just of conquest had long ago done its work; trampling upon the helpless abroad had taught her, by a natural process, to endure with apathy, the like at home; multitudes of people who had applauded the crushing of other people's liberties lived to suffer for their mistake in their own persons... There was no principle but commercialism, no patriotism but of the pocket...".

We do not need the psychology of the unconscious mind to understand that the 'Great Republic' is America; and Twain points an accusatory finger at commercialism. One can trace a spectrum of complain throughout the age, Whitman, although he had faith in Democracy—"The unyielding principle of the average"—conceded "the appalling dangers of universal suffrage in the United States". Committed to loving all men, he was yet sufficiently offended by the progress of post-civil-war America to write that "Society" despite or because of "unprecedented materialistic advancement. Is conter'd, crude, superstition and rotten".

Henry James fled to England to avert his eyes from the new generation of Americans dedicated to the "great black ebony God of business"; in the last scene of "The Bostonians" Basil Ransom dismisses the middle class mob at the lecture hall as

“senseless brutes” and it is difficult not to feel that he speaks with the author’s approval.

Henry Adams too complained that “the element of the moral conscience, the most important, the vertebrae to state or man, seems to me either entirely lacking or seriously enfeebled or ungrown”. Near the turn of the century, he pronounced a future “with which I sincerely wish I may have nothing to do”. Twains, more angry because more humane, composed this “salutation speech from the 19th century to the 20th” in which he bitterly arraigns the imperialistic greed of the west ;

“I bring you the stately matron named Christendom, returning bed ragged, be

smirched and dishonored from pirate-lairs in kiao-chow, Manchuria, South Africa and the Philippines, with her soul full of boodle, and her mouth full of pious hypocrisies. Give her soap and a Towel, but hide the looking glass.” Nothing could perhaps convey more poignantly the intellectual pessimism and despair at man’s condition that Mark Twain experienced throughout his life. Hidden as he was behind the facade of being a humorous writer, he could give vent to his inner most convictions about man only in the later years of his life.

ANUPAMA MANDAVILLI
II B.A. Literature

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Notes :

1. B. Devoto’s essay—“The Symbols of despair”
2. James M. Cox’s essay — “A connecticut Yankee : The Machinery of self preservation” pg. : 117
3. Ibid pg. : 118
4. Tony Tanner’s essay — “The host America — the despair of H. Adams & Mark Twain pg. : 159

"THE POETRY IS IN THE PITY"

What is the impact of war on poetry or creative literature ?

This is a pertinent question which had always been asked, and most urgently in wartime and had always been answered best by the creative writers themselves, of all ages, the mythological, the epic or the modern. For the answers, therefore, we should look into such works as 'The Ramayana and Mahabaratha', 'The Iliad', 'Beowulf', 'The Battle of Maldon', 'Reflections on the French Revolution (Burke)', 'French Revolution (Carlyle)', 'A Tale of Two Cities', 'War and Peace', 'A Farewell to Arms', etc.,

The reaction of different poets to the war have been widely different ranging from the romantic idealism of Rupert Brooke through the tragic pathos of Owen, to a nightmare of horror, bitter disillusionment and indignation in Siegfried Sassoon.

The dominant note in Owen's poetry is neither the patriotic enthusiasm of Rupert Brooke and others nor the bitter indignation of Sassoon. Occasionally, the latter feeling can be traced in his poems not the former one. The dominant theme of his poetry is -

"The pity of war, the pity was distilled" -

This quotation is from 'Strange Meeting' one of Owen's best poems and acknowledged by some to be his greatest. Most unmistakably he makes the object of his poetry clear in an unfinished preface to a contemplated volume of war poems, in which he intended "to strike at the conscience of England in regard to the continuance of the war". In that preface he writes :-

"My subject is war, and the pity of War
The poetry is in the pity".

As a military officer engaged in the french warfare under the worst of conditions in one of the worst parts on the war front, he had first - hand experience of the brutalities of the modern warfare, of its "horrible beastliness". He saw with his own eyes how the youthful soldiers, all more or less of his age in their thousands were ruthlessly killed by the enemy fire on the "threshold of their undone years". He realised that there was absolutely nothing noble about the war, on the other hand, everything in it was horrible, everything beastly.

Being greatly moved by the tragedy of the soldiers, his comrades who fell in the war, Owen sought to express through his poetry the suffering agonies and the frustrations of their lives, working in the minds of his readers that pity or the pathos in which lies ; as he declares the essence of his poetry.

He had no illusions about patriotism, which he thought was incompatible with Christianity. 'Pure Christianity', he wrote in a wartime letter, will not fit in with your

patriotism". "Broad humanity" is the single phrase by which Owen's character can be summed up; and it is this broad humanity which is filtered into his poetry. No other poet would suppress his personality in his poetry to such an extent as Owen did in his Own. It is the element of depersonalisation which has made Owen the greatest of war-poets that he is.

Keats was Owen's favourite poet. The influence of Keats on Owen's poetry was profound and can be distinctly observed in the rich sensuousness, artistic restraint and technical perfection of Owen's poems, earlier as well as later. Like Keats, Owen possessed a profound mind and a keen sensibility with which he combined the gift of an artistic conscience. 'He was,' Mr. Blunden has rightly said, "an unwearied worker in the laboratory of the word, rhythm and music of language."

Most of the war - poets followed the traditional patterns of verse with its rhyme, rhythm and structure. Only a limited few made experiments in the verse techniques. Owen's experiments in assonance and dissonance and half - rhymes were of far - reaching consequence in as much as they influenced the modern poets. By the use of his assonance, dissonance and half - rhymes Owen sought to reproduce in his poetry the broken rhythm, the disharmony of the war.

In his poems, Owen, "Speaks as a soldier, with perfect and certain knowledge of war at grips with the soldier". His descriptions of the unimaginable filthy conditions of the dug - outs, trench - life, and the trench warfare as in "The Sentry", "Camped in that funnelled Hole" and 'Self Inflicted wound' formed part of his actual experiences faithfully reproduced.

"The Sentry" for example gives a vivid and realistic description of a trench - a veritable dungeon - with all its squalid conditions, waist high water and mud rising hour by hour as it rains and "Trekking up the steps too thick with clay to climb", -

"With fumes of whizz - bangs, and the smell of men
Who'd lived there years, and left their curse in the den,
If not their corpses....."

The title of the fragment "Cramped in that Funnelled Hole" is an accurate description of a dug - out in which the soldiers lie huddled together as in Hell and which has an opening looking like -

".....a yawn
Of death jaws, which had all but swallowed them
Stuck in the middle of his throat of phelgm."

"Self Inflicated Wound" deals with the suicide of a soldier who was unable to bear the precarious existence amidst the torrid conditions of his trench - life. In this context, reference should also be made to one of Owen's most familiar pieces, "Strange Meeting", in which the converstation between the two dead soldiers (enemies) - one killed by the

other - takes place in Hell. The important thing to be noted in the poem is that the Hell of his dream, where the conversation takes place, is but the reality of the trench - life and trench warfares :-

‘It seemed that out of battle I escaped
Down some profound tunnel, long since scooped
Through granites which titanic wars had granted.
Yet also there encumbered sleepers groaned,
Too fast in thought or death to be bestirred.’

In this descriptions of the tragedies of the youthful soldiers, Owen usually follows two methods. Of these, the first deals with the general tragedy, and the second, with the individual, which none the less represents the general. The first may be illustrated by ‘The Send - Off’, ‘Spring Offensive’, and ‘Anthem for Doomed Youth’, and the second by poems such as ‘Asleep’, ‘Futility’ ‘S. T. W., Dulce - et - Decorcum’ and ‘Disabled’.

In ‘Spring Offensive’, Owen reproduces with photographic realism what he actually saw and felt in the spring offensive of 1917 launched against the Germans on the Western Front. In this poem, Owen conveys, in an inimitably perfect and vigorous language - whose beauty only partially redeems the ghastliness of the scene described, the grimmest spectacle of horror of war, which ended with a heavy loss of lives on either side.

‘‘And instantly the whole sky burned
with fury against them; earth set sudden cups
In thousands for their blood.....’’.

It is interesting to observe that the three poems ‘The Send - off’, ‘Spring Offensive’ and ‘Anthem for Doomed Youth’ form, by a sheer accident, a kind sequence. The first deal with the youths who are going to be doomed, the second with those who are doomed and most fittingly, therefore, the third should be the dirge to these millions of youths who had been doomed and dead on the western front. And in the poem, conceived in a mood of compassion and indignation, Owen in his own poetic way does them honour :-

‘‘What passing - hells - for these who die as cattle ?
Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
Only the stuttering rifles’ rapid rattle
can patter out their hasty orisons.’’

The poems ‘Futility’ and ‘Disabled’ deal with the tragedies of the individual soldiers.

Equally bad or worse on these poems, are the demoralising, dehumanising and the brutalising effects which war produces on the minds and morals of the soldiers, and this aspect of their tragedy is brought out in ‘Insensibility’. The title of the poem is suggestive with astonishing simplicity and directness, the central idea of the poem is most poignantly expressed in the following lines :-

“And some cease feeling
Even themselves or for themselves
Dullness best solves
The tease and doubt of shelling.”

But the matter does not end here. For when after a couple of lines, we come across the idea that his senses,

‘Now long since ironed
Can laugh among the dying, uncontented’,

We can see that brutalisation is complete.

The poem closes with one of the finest and most poetic stanzas in which he suggests why the soldiers made themselves immune to sensibility –

“By chance they made themselves immune
to pity and whatever means in man
Before the last sea and the hapless stars ;
whatever shares
The eternal reciprocity of tears”

The artistic restraint, which he consciously and constantly exercised on his personal feelings of bitterness and indignation, enables him, on the one hand, to see clearly the real issues involved in the war, and on the other to transmute them into material for poetry. It will be further observed that in this process of transmutation, his personal feelings have undergone a change and become universal. He has seized upon these aspects of his emotions which can evoke a sympathetic response in the minds of others! ‘This absolute objectiveness’ in this method of treatment of his personal feelings so as to give them a general and Universal Character, is the most distinguishing feature of Owen’s war poetry.

Owen has been immensely successful as a war poet, infact, he has remained the greatest of the war - poets, simply because he could escape, to quote a well - known expression from Mr. Eliot’s now famous Impersonal theory of Poetry, from his personal emotions. In the year following Owen’s death, giving an outline of his Impersonal theory of poetry in his ‘Tradition and The Individual talent’ (1919) Mr. Eliot says, ‘Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion ; it is not an expression of personality, but an escape from personality.’

The Voice of his poetry, therefore, is not the ~~voice~~ voice of the first person, it is the voice of humanity.

JAYASHREE SUBRAMANIAN
I B. A. Litreature

D. H. LAWRENCE - AN APPROACH

“Every human being will then be like a flower, untrammelled
Every movement will be direct
Only to be will be such delight, We cover our faces when we think of it
Lest our faces betray us to some untimely fiend”.

Lawrence felt that his chief purpose as a poet was to find the most appropriate form for his own highly developed insight into the ways in which the human soul may grow from confusion and fragmentation towards fulfillment and full self realization. The progress of the soul can be seen in terms of a personal quest for identity. How is a man to make harmony and wholeness out of the warring elements that constitute his psyche? It he is David Herbert Lawrence he will be obliged to examine the bitter conflict that dominated his early youth.

“Outside the house an ash tree hung its terrible whips,
And at night when the wind rose, the lash of the tree
shrieked and slashed the wind, as a ship’s
weird rigging in a storm shrieks hideously”.

He was singularly unfortunate in his life and in the period in which his genius developed. The son of a Nottinghamshire miner and an ambitious mother, he turned his back on his working-class world and became first a teacher and then a novelist. Had he been born twenty or thirty years earlier in a period when Victorian society was still stable and possessed a really solid culture, Lawrence might have become a great regional author like Hardy in contact with the world of letters and scholarship, and at the same time drawing strength from a local folk tradition. Unfortunately he grew up in a period of confusion when the old class structure of English life was collapsing in the years immediately preceding the First World War.

In some of his earlier poems like “The Wild Common” the poem demonstrates both the conflict of organic form with imposed form and the concern for the problem of identity

“The quick sparks on the gorse – bushes are leaping
Little jets of sunlight texture imitating flame ;
Above them, exultant, the peewits are sleeping :
They have triumphed again o’er the ages, their Screaming proclaim”.

Far from being a classical Georgian landscape painting, the young poet sees that the world is in constant flux and attempts to give us his experience of this as immediately as possible. Lawrence himself wrote to Edward Marsh in 1913 :

“It all depends on the ‘pause’ – the natural ‘lingering’
of the voice according to the feeling—it is the
hidden ‘emotional’ pattern that makes poetry, not the
obvious form...”

In the preface to his "Collected Poems" Lawrence wrote that most of his early verses "in their fragmentary fashion... make up a biography of an emotional and inner life." The transition from this beautiful but essentially minor poetry of his youth to his major achievements in verse is seen in the memorable sequence of lyrics called "Look We Have Come Through" (1917). The complexity of Lawrence's earlier emotional experience is now simplified into a kind of duel of sex, a "conflict of love and hate" between man and wife. The sequence is a true voyage of discovery in the world of the spirit leading to an exciting culmination in a group of poems that express an annihilation of the ego and a sort of mystical rebirth or regeneration. The first poem "Moonrise" suggests the kind of blessedness in which Lawrence believes.

"And who has seen the moon, who has not seen
Her rise from out of the chamber of the deep
Flushed and grand and naked, as from the chamber
of finished bridegroom, seen her rise and throw
confession of delight upon the wave".

This poem, consciously somewhat bardic in tone, asserts that there is a kind of permanence, or eternity, residing in the perfection of the present moment. The speaker is somehow assured by the spectacle of the moon spread out in bright flux that the full beauty of his own consummation is perfect and can never be lost.

Lawrence is the kind of poet who commits himself to life 'because' he is consciously committed to death :

"My love lies underground
With her face upturned to mine
And her mouth unclosed in the last long kiss
That ended her life and mine
Grief, grief, I suppose and sufficient
Grief makes us free
To be faithless and faithful together
As we have to be."

It is sufficiency of grief, the sufficient reliving of the experience of loss, that makes it possible for him to go on to a new life.

Lawrence had now developed a peculiar kind of free verse which owes something to Whitman and probably also the Old Testament poetry in which he had been steeped in his youth. In this form we wrote the collection of poems called "Birds, Beasts and Flowers" (1923) which represents the full flowering of his poetic genius freed from the autobiographical preoccupation. He gives notable expression to that awareness of "unknown modes of being" which is, perhaps, his greatest contribution to English poetry.

"Birds, Beasts and Flowers" is an exploration of the "other" non-human world. Lawrence becomes Adam in a newly discovered universe, and he seeks to define the world outside himself, not in terms of his own merely "Personal" emotions, but in terms of the

elemental energies he can sense both in himself and in other living things. The first poem "Pomegranate" opens with a Whitmanesque assertion of the authority of the poets' intuitive vision :

"You tell me I am wrong,
Who are you, who is anybody to tell me I am wrong ?
I am not wrong".

Lawrence insists that his reader recognise not only the female nature of the pomegranate but also the world within the world that such an apprehension opens up ; for he believes that certain human qualities or states of mind and body and the qualities of plants and animals are manifestations of the same basic energy.

"Figs" returns to the subject of the female and the qualities that are precious in her. The fig is a "a very sensitive fruit" resembling "the female part" and thus intensely female. The inward life of the fig is seen only when it bursts : "Like a prostitute, the bursten fig, making a show of her secret." Lawrence asserts that once Eve got the fact of her nakedness "in her mind" she covered herself with fig leaves. The modern woman still has sex on her mind ; she does not accept it as a natural and instinctive part of her life, but seeks to control and manipulate it with intelligence. Lines such as these from "Medlars and Sorb Apples"

"A kiss and a spasm of farewell, a moments' orgasm of rupture,
Then along the damp road alone, till the next turning.
And there, a new partner, a new parting, a new unfusing into twain,
A new gasp of further isolation
A new intoxication of loneliness, among decaying, frost - cold leaves"

reveal his passionate and frank (but never ignoble) treatment of sexual themes in a series of magnificent works, which exposed him to a stupid puritanical outcry, and caused several of his books to be banned, thus turning him into an isolated and embittered man. He sees his animals, as Auden has remarked in another context, "neither as numinous symbols, not as aesthetic objects but as neighbours"

Lawrence's "Snake" is a "numinous symbol" only insofar as it embodies and expresses the godlike or kingly quality of sensuous life. There is no attempt to 'impose' upon the creature a significance that it does not already possess. There is no falsification of its nature. Keith Sagar has noted that "Snake" is virtually a dialogue between the poets' two selves-the 'young man' and the 'demon', the voice of education and the voice of the spontaneous self. The strange "otherness" of the creature poses a problem for the man. He sees that the snake belongs to the volcanic Sicilian land itself ; it is closely associated not only with the earth's burning bowels, but with "Etna smoking". However when Lawrence succumbs to the voice of society, the grandeur of the earth's dark door vanishes, and it becomes a horrid black hole that revolts him. As a living creature, the snake must be accepted and honoured, and the human education that suggests such life is evil is, for Lawrence, both presumptions and fundamentally mistaken.

“He lifted his head from drinking, as cattle do,
And looked at me vaguely, as drinking cattle do,
And flickered his two-forked tongue from his lips and mused a moment
And stooped and drank a little more,
Being earth brown, earth golden from the burning bowels of the earth
On the day of Sicilian July, with Etna smoking”

The slightly varied repetition of “drinking... cattle” tend to emphasize the dream-like quality of the encounter as does the insistence on the snakes’ slowness and silence.

Like Yeats and Pound and Eliot, he was extremely sensitive to the deep disturbance, the disintegration of values, the mass madness, and the senseless violence of the time. However his art is not a rejection of this life, or an evasion of life’s complexity in Utopian social theorizing. It is, in the poems, an honest investigation of those biological, psychological and cultural forces that have produced our diseased civilization, and an attempt to realize a better and fuller way of life. In this approach to the problem, Lawrence stands virtually alone. He also sets before English poets that salutary ideal which he described in a famous letter :

“The essence of poetry with us in this age of stark and unlovely actualities is a stark directness, without a shadow of a lie, or a shadow of deflection anywhere. Everything can go, but this stark, bare, rocky directness of statement, this alone makes poetry, today”.

GEETA SUBRAMONIAN
I B.A. Literature

2 Poems, 1 Play and Plath

I Poem: **DADDY** —

is a love poem, also reminiscent of an ode in its personal title ; it is descriptive comment and also direct, desperate plea. The poet seems to suggest that the poem rests on a vast, rock - like plain of childishness. On this bleak land - form, The child's rhyme surfaces in the poem's intention for Daddy not father. The stubborn, sudden, unworked rhyme - (1 verse) do, shoe, achoo. The rhythm jovially shifts and swings like a nursery rhyme, accompanied by repetition "An engine, an engine." The blind intensity and directness is an uncomplicated affection of childish hate. Child's language - chuffing, gobbledygoo, Panzer man. (2).

Evidences of an adult poet are slowly presented after the quick revelation.

"In which I have lived like a foot for **thirty years**, poor and white". Proof of the rough uncouth lover (entangled with the father - figure) and the elaborately learned intelligence demonstrate a weak, grown-up presence. In a contrast to the child's repetition, the adult reiterates "you do not do, you do not do". "O you" is an elder's exasperation.

The poet seems to blame the preceding generation for the fault of thrusting on her the facts of Auschwitz and Dachau and metamorphizing her hinted at childlikeness to this severe childishness.

The poem is a monochrome picture. Idealistically to her white is good, bad-black. Therefore: The daddy is "man in black", with "one gray toe" her lover "the blackman", where she has lived like a foot is "a black shoe", the Swastika is "so black". Therefore also she is white and her heart is a "pretty red". The Atlantic is "beautiful" but she does not explain its beauty.

The company that she keeps have very possibly influenced her attitude "my polack friend" and the men who take advantage — "The Vampire who said he was you". Confusion dictates the emotion in the poem. In spite of the love-hate (That extends to the lover) it is essentially love.

"Daddy I have tried to kill you
you died before I had time".
"I was ten when they buried you
At twenty I tried to die
and get back, back, back to you".

The brutality is mixed and divided between father and lover. The Daddy is embodied in rollers, racks, screws—instruments rather than actual torture.

Perhaps for daddy it is love, for the world hate, because as much as she tries to blame daddy, it is the World that gave birth to Nazism and prevented her death. Viewed

through a microscope, the use of the parent-figure—Daddy could be an allusion to the world—Mother Earth, God the father; She picks on the elongated Nazism because it is historically the most recent outrage.

She acknowledges and exhibits, irreverently—“Ghastly Statue with one gray toe Big as a Frisco Seal”

Why she pretends to sneeze thrice ?

- 1) “Barely daring to breathe or **Achoo**”
- 2) “I used to pray to recover you **Ach du**” (Ah you)
- 3) “**Ich, ich, ich, ich**, (I,I,I,I)
I could hardly speak”

Sylvia summarises : “Here is a poem about a girl with an Electra Complex. Her father died while she thought he was God. Her case is complicated by the fact that her father was also a Nazi and her mother was very possibly part Jewish. In the daughter the two strains marry and paralyse each other” -The role that she takes, assumes the folds of her life—complexity arises due to her parentage, two full blooded Germans, father dead when she was ten “I was ten when they buried you” but unconnected with Hitler-Hitler is daddy “A man in black with a Meinkampf look”. Pursuing this brutish force in father and lover, when love wells, it is bitterly suppressed.

“Daddy you can lie back now” Is gentle, the girl with the Electra complex is sorry for having dredged up daddy, laying him to rest, she believes that she can do the same.

II Poem **LADY LAZARUS** :

“I have done it again
one year in every ten
I manage it”.

Lady Lazarus is Sylvias’ special form of confessional poetry—In it her tortured soul and the soul of the World’s torture fuses and stages the great comeback. But the triumph of “I have done it again” is unhappy and mocking. “One year in every ten is biographically proved—died when 10, father died, Nearing twenty attempted suicide by drowning, This is the pre sentiment of her successful suicide at 31. “I manage it” is an intimated judgement of the rationality of the act and its aftermath.

The poem is celebrated as a suicide poem. Death in the poem is important, it is more horrible due to the life that exists inspite of it. Like Christ’s Lazarus, she is “a walking miracle” back to the living. But unlike him she is unwhole. There is a stage of adjustment, an inverted Liberation of waiting for the arrival of her flesh and mind

Though she rises “out of the ash” she is not actually a phoenix with the surgical sterility of ash, she is symbolic of the experiments of the pathology lab.

“The nose, The eyepits, the full set of Teeth?
The sour breath”

This knowledge of her repulsiveness makes her indulgent.

“O my enemy
Do I terrify?”

By the force of her death, she creates her question—is life worth existing for? She states that it is not. The world does not help when she is sick, (like Lazarus) but only after she is dead. The ugliness is doctrinal, she attempts to influence the reader with the insight that claims, almost an invitation to a miracle-medicine.

“Will Vanish in a day
Soon, soon the flesh
The grave cave ate will be
At home on me”

Coming back to life, is accompanied by this detailed taking interest in one’self, but sardonic laughter is not far from the lines. The cosmetic significance of bright skin is only artificial, it is the shining of the lamp inside it.

The sound patterning of an instinctive bitten off beat and the Nazi link connect it to “Daddy”. The poem recalls the anonymous fusing, of mass torture and Sadism. The lack of identify and the ineffectuality is deeper than the pain.

The humiliation of human artefacts – lampshades, paperweights, linen., She makes the bizarre fact ghastly. The relationship between victim and audience, “The peanut crunching – crowd” — The grand defeat is the violation of privacy. Wide eyes “unwrap me hand and foot.

The big striptease”.

“These are my hands
my knees

I may be skin and bone” This Stripping to the very bones is the biggest Striptease.

Lady Lazarus is the vortex of a vengeful spirit, vengeful because she is wronged.

This comment, which attacks the morals of a voyeuristic world-She counters with a prophetic threat.

“Out of the ash
I rise with my red hair
And I eat men like air”

THE PLAY :

Three Women

A poem for three voices.

Setting : A maternity ward and round.

The play is audial only, the visual is pictured by the mind’s eye. In spite of three characters—The “Three Women” the “three voices”, it is not conversation, but a series of alternated monologues by three pregnant women. The three views are connected only by

way of their' contrast. Each woman's voice tells us of an experience, dragging the reader along the alleys of pain and remembrance.

It is a poem about building and being. The buildings are well made, ill made, not made and the character's desires are continually fixated on changing states. This poem of Sylvia's is not confessional but does rest on two personal experiences of pregnancy.

THE WOMEN TALK

The First Woman feels in herself the universal Womb. The pioneering lines seem narcissistic but on promoting her from woman to pregnant woman, the lines communicate empathetically. The reader agrees that she is delicate, a being's force. The woman is aware of attention "Leaves and petals attend me".

Fright foreshadows pain she moves between hysterical "I am calm. I am calm. It is the calm..." and a swift travelling delirium.

"Voices stand back and flatten.
Their visible hieroglyphs
Flatten to parchment screens to keep the wind off.
They paint such secrets in Arabic, Chinese!"

She clings to the fact that she is special. The preparation before the delivery is "Sacrificial". She is a race specimen pleasing to the gods, she is even an innocent, mother like Mary and the blue that enters the stiff sterility of white hospitals gives her the blue and white backdrop necessary to her portrayal. The pain speaks in sharp cut off sentences.

A characteristic wonder is displayed next, with an unthinking approving acceptance. It is now the child who is special. The blue mantle of her Maryhood is wrapped around blue eyes. Sudden poetry tramples-the metal tags —

"names tied to their wrist
The little silver trophies
They've come so far for"

The responsibility of protection in "how long can I be" ends with a prayer "O let me be." The normality that she prayed for in Physical terms—Ten toes, Ten fingers, she extends to mental and emotional facilities,

"I do not will him to be exceptional.
It is the exception that interests the devil
It is the exception that climbs the sorrowful hill
Or sits in the desert and hurts his mother's heart.
I will him to be common, To love me as I love him,
And to marry what he wants and where he will"
Continuing the Mary and Child fantasy, desert, devil etc.

The Second woman goes through a travesty of birth. The series of miscarriages that she "Confesses" to is tragic. This death is a deprivation" Trains roar in my ears, departures, departures !" She is rigid inactive and angry. The outstretched longing outweighs affection.

Her life is a series of severe, perverse disruptions. She finds herself wanting "I have tried to be natural". She cannot be a man and does not feel a woman. Even as she blames herself she protests "I shall not be accused" She assumes her life in the ritual of lipstick and clothes.

"...My hands
Can stitch lace neatly on this material. My husband
Can turn and turn the pages of a book"
She mocks their life together.
"Grasses crack through stone".
"I am a wife" she says and continues the wait to be a mother.

The third woman is a girl—She is irritated at the sudden intrusion of birth. Her sentences show the pruning of education and she is a student. In the moment of discovery, everything to her is horrible even the sonneted swans have "small, mean, black" eyes "I am a mountain now, among mountainy women" though in her body she is like the women her mind refuses to think like them, she is an alien and alone.

The pain of birth passes unmentioned, between teeth clenched tight.

Though the new-born is my "red, terrible girl", the baby is a parasitic tumour that she has to sever to heal. Healing she finds in a protective forgetfulness.

"It is so beautiful to have no attachments.
I am solitary as grass"
"What is it I miss" is only the aching of an amputated limb.

THE WOMEN :

They share a funny fetish about white. The moon, the nurses, the hospital walls, sheets, coats are sterile. This is unlike their proud capacity. Together their response to flat forms is 1) nothing She is everything 2) Shock, contempt, pity 3) Surprise, indignation, jealousy, Though they all suffer from a disease of bloated stomach the cure is a boy, a girl and a nothing.

Antony Thwaite remarks that she is popular know as the patron saint of nervous breakdown.*

To her confessional poetry is not merely a subjective poetry it signifies a dredging up and a display of what is exploited and distorted. Sylvia anticipates the stock— Surprise of the reader, descends to proud exhibitionism. All her poems centre around herself and even when she states "I am a miner," what is important is not the chronicled truth that she was not a miner, The important word is I not **miner**.

It might have been written of her—
"Above—the face, shaped like a perfect heart.
Below—The heart's torn face."
(Fragment of an ancient Tablet—Ted Hughes).

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* Poetry Today—Antony Thwaite, Pub. U.S.A. Pgs. 62-63

“BACK TO ANIMAL”

“Two eyes serve a movement, that now
And again now, and now, and now
Sets neat prints into the snow.....

.....

Till with sudden sharp hot stink of Fox
It enters the dark hole of head.....

.....

The page is printed”.

The Thought-Fox.

There’s a special kind of excitement here, the extraordinarily fierce power and concentration when the poet first senses the stirring of a new poem in his mind. Gradually it takes shape, the outline, colour, form, finally, the unique living reality of it. This is ‘hunting’ - the poem, a new species of creature with a new life, outside one’s own. It is in this manner that most of the “animal” poems of the ‘leaping-blood’ vitality are written.

Writing about Hughes has been a difficult experience. I believe he is one poet who cannot be treated in that dry detached academic fashion. One still recalls the initial impact of “Thrushes” ;

“Nothing but bounce and stab
And a ravening Second” —

Which shocks by its force and violence.

One feels this energy instinctively, intensely. Both reader and poet are in danger of being overwhelmed by such power and energy. There is this need to harness one’s feelings, of keeping it under control.

Hughes himself explains the basis of the dilemma in his interview with Faas—“If you refuse the energy you are living a kind of death. If you accept the energy, it destroys you. What is the alternative? To accept the energy and find methods of turning it to good, of keeping it under control...rituals, the machinery of religion. The old method is the only one”.

It is interesting to find Hughes exploring the spiritual technique of Shamanism, and seeing a correlation between the Shaman and the poet. Shamanism is basically the procedure of becoming and performing as a witch doctor or medicine man among primitive tribes.

A spirit summons an individual by certain dreams. If he refuses he dies, or someone close to him does. If he accepts he must equip himself for the job.

This often involves ordeals of fasting, self mutilation, until a spirit, usually an animal appears. Through it the man can commune with the spirit world. The "Death—Experience" is crucial. It involves a "dream-call", the individual goes through all possible tortures, and a magical death, after which the Shaman is resurrected.

The Shamanic dance has a cathartic effect on the audience, it is a restoration of cosmic balance and healing. Shamanic Song and dance is a Form of vehement activity which invokes the bigger energy, "the elemental power circuit of the universe", Hughes terms it.

Both poet and Shaman invoke this bigger energy. For the shaman, energy is released in ecstatic song and dance ; For the poet, the same rites take place in his verse.

Hughes, poetry is written for a world that has lost its balance, a world, in which, as Jung describes, "Nothing is holy any longer". Man's mad pursuit after the material has led to a gross negligence and abuse of the natural world and the human spirit. Hughes believes that the story of Western man is the story of the mind exiled from nature.

His poetry portrays this crisis very vividly, yet it also has a healing power, by emphasising the holiness of the natural world and the mystery of the human psyche. My concern is with his earlier poetry where it is instinctive animal life that can generate the true elemental energy. It is poetry, of the will to live through the talon and the claw :—

"I kill where I please because it is all mine.
There is no sophistry in my body ;
My manners are tearing off heads —
The allotment of death".

Hawk Roosting.

This is the power, muscular strength and elemental energy possessed by his animals, which man is in danger of losing, if not having lost it already, with his "yawning stares", "head-scratchings" and 'indolent procrastinations'.

In contrast Hughes animals are "Perfect in all parts" far superior to man",

"It took the whole of creation to produce my foot
Now I hold creation in my foot
Or fly up and revolve it all slowly".

Hawk Roosting.

Hughes constantly stresses the 'otherness' of that world—the animal's.

Modern man is reluctant to acknowledge these instinctual sources of energy deep within his being. This energy is related to the 'elemental power circuit' and it's the animals who are closer to it not man.

His poems also reveal his accurate observation of animals and are a perfect forging of their physical forms, precise movements and habits, you can almost feel them breathing. The very consciousness of the animal is captured in the concentrated stare and suppressed rage of the jaguar's restless pacing :—

“.....a jaguar hurrying enraged
Through prison darkness after the drills of his eyes
On a short fierce fuse.
.....
He spins from the bars, but there's no cage to him
More than to the visionary his cell.....”

The Jaguar.

Beast and visionary are linked in the last line with the visionary's prophesying of new freedoms.

The physical make-up of his animals are often captured with the detailed accuracy of a zoological diagram ;

“Under water eyes, an eel's
Oil of water body, neither fish nor beast is the otter ;
Four—legged, yet water—gifted, to outfish fish ;
With webbed feet and long ruddering tail
And a round head like an old tomcat”.

An Otter.

By concentrating on movement, Hughes is able to convey the sense of the vital potent energies of his animals. The impression is often one of strenuous activity.

The otter, in 'An Otter',
“.....Wanders, cries ;
Gallops along land he no longer belongs to ;
Re-enters the water by melting”.

Hurtling action, with a strong dramatic element conveys

this tremendous vitality as in 'Esther's Tom Cat'.

"A tom cat sprang at a mounted knight,
Locked round his neck like a trap of hooks
While the knight rode fighting its clawing and bite.
After hundreds of years the stain's there.
On the stone where he fell, dead of the tom".

So runs the legend of the Barnburgh knight and Hughes admires the tom cat because it is "unkillable".

A. E. Dyson points out that for Hughes, power and violence often go together but this doesn't imply that he is an admirer of violence. Energy for him has its strength but can also be destructive. Even the animals can be destroyed, the hawk dies (The hawk in the rain) and the pike (Pike) kill and consume each other.

"One jammed past its gills down the other's gullet
The outside eye stared : as a vice locks -
The same iron in this eye
Though its film shrank in death".

Pike.

However there is this difference between man and the hawk in the "Hawk in the rain". Hughes presents to us a vigorous conflict between man and the elements. Nature is a violent active enemy. In contrast we have the hawk who ;

"Effortlessly at height hangs his still eye"

The hawk's mastery of the air, his cool superior calm is implied. The bird is above the struggle that man is engaged in. Man cuts a sorry pitiful figure in his desperate struggle against nature and is doomed, but the hawk retains its masterful composure. Yet even the hawk's mastery can't last forever because "coming the wrong way" it is hurled to the ground. The hawk like man can't escape eventual destruction but unlike man, the hawk can accommodate itself to the forces that threaten its survival. Being a creature of instinct the hawk's will is in accord with nature, not pitted against it. Therefore the hawk is a part of the elements in a way that man cannot be.

Hughes never sentimentalises over his animals. One never finds him clutching his animal subjects in a humanizing embrace. In fact the animals he chooses are those least likely to be befriended by man for example the jaguar, the wolf, the fox, the pike and most of them are essentially predators. The very vitality of these animals makes them least like humans and because they live by instinct they are able to achieve a unity of feeling and action.

In the natural world no consciousness of the self intervenes to manipulate an animal's response to his condition. Man's consciousness (intellect) prevents him from responding instinctually. He has allowed too large a gap to develop between his consciousness and instinctual responses. He has cultivated his rational cognitive powers too exclusively, consequently the inner world of feelings, imagination and instinct has been neglected. Man has divided his own nature cutting himself off from the natural energies of the universe.

In "Myth and Education" Hughes observes that man is obsessed with the "Scientific ideal of objective intelligence", such an intelligence produces only "a rigid and suicidal stupidity". Scientific objectivity is utterly devoid of any awareness of the needs of the inner world and is contemptuous of the human element. Because these 'archaic energies' of instinct and feelings are rapidly being lost, Hughes sees the need to celebrate through animals, the sheer power and energy of the life-process itself.

Another major preoccupation with Hughes is war and violent death. He suggests that it is at moments of extreme suffering that a man may be most alive. Pain can create a sense of purpose and wholeness of response in the individual.

Moments of acute pain can awaken feeling, within man again.

In poems like "Bayonet Charge" and "Crows account of the Battle" he describes the inhuman mechanical way in which nations seize their youth and put them to death.

"The cartridges were banging off.....
The bullets pursued their courses
Through clods of stone, earth and skin
Through intestines, pocket books, brains, hair, teeth...
Shock severed eyes watched blood
Squandering as from a drain—pipe".

Crows account of the battle.

Killing takes place, not for king, honour or country but because the ordinary soldier can subdue his fears and sense of futility only through climatic energy of this sort. False patriotism is exposed here; but more important is Hughes belief that man can get a hold of himself only when he is in touch with climatic energy even if its destructive.

The poem "The casualty" is an interesting study in contrast of the attitude of humans, and the attitude of the animals to an air man who falls 'out of the air alive' from a burning plane.

The rescuers helplessly watch him die. Onlookers are merely sympathetic or curious. The reaction of the animals however appear more positive and involved in the action. They are disturbed by the man falling and react not to his suffering but, to the action, that is, his falling into their midst.

They follow their instincts. Their behaviour unites both feeling and action in a way that ensures their survival, in contrast to the on lookers who can neither prevent the pain nor experience it fully themselves.

While discussing these themes one observes how Hughes style and technique is in perfect keeping with the content.

Mimetic rythms of verse movement is in keeping with the animal movement as in 'An otter'. The audible beat of vitality reverberates in 'The Bull Moses'. Violent movement and miraculous strength not lost even in death is revealed in 'Pike'.

Hughes often inclines to a hyperbole of diction and image to express the intense energy and physical presence of his animals. Images often suggest beauty and terror like the colour of pike in 'Pike'.

“...green tigering the gold.....
.....
of submarine delicacy and horror”.

In conclusion I would like to refer to two poems, the first being “The Jaguar”.

“...but there’s no cage to him.
More than to the visionary his cell
His stride is wildernesses of Freedom”

‘Power’ is a major preoccupation but ‘power’ is thought of not morally or in time but absolutely in a ‘present’ Violence is the occasion for ‘being’ a guarantee of energy and life and paradoxically enough, it is realised in moments of captivity, pain or death.

Finally, these lines from “Skylarks”
“Shot through the crested head
With the command, Not die.....
Up through the nothing
Its feathers thrash.....
And may be the whole agony was this
The plummeting dead drop
With long cutting screams buckling like razors
But just before they plunge into the earth

They flare and glide off low over grass, then up
To land on a wall top, crest up,
Weightless,
Paid-up,
Alert,
Conscience Perfect”.

“In a nightmare of difficulty” the birds conscience is clear—it has followed its inner nature at whatever cost of pain—and death.

It could be an image of man, whose experience of life’s agonies lead to a black despair but who yet resists, and rises believing that endurance is all. Who fights back, if only—to express his existence even in the absence of any guarantee, that existence is purposeful.

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THE ART OF THE INTERVIEWER

In the field of mass - communications, journalism is an exciting profession. It educates, informs and instructs the common man, moulds public opinion, and entertains and educates the human mind. It is, therefore, among the most important areas of human activity. To it, goes the credit of being, the upholder of man's right to freedom of expression, the guardian of democracy, a watchdog of justice and the voice of the people. Hence, it enjoys a state of unparalleled importance in society.

It is not then, a wonder that, there has, in recent years, been a steady increase in the number of both men and women, wanting to take up, and make a career for themselves, in this noble profession! As everyone knows, the sole occupation of a journalist, is to write saleable products.

Human beings serve the writer as one more rich source of information. He makes use of his encounters with them, to either obtain background material for a subject, or to elicit their views upon it, to clarify a point, or to help his readers to understand a thing better, or to interpret, for their benefit, either a prevailing condition or situation, or, to even present to them, the "other side of the story" in a controversy, to evoke greater readership interest.

So, it becomes very important for a journalist to know how to properly organise and conduct an interview. To determine the exact information he needs to know, the immediate task of a writer, is to select, with great care, that person, who is in the best position, to provide him with the material he is after.

Once the process of selecting the best possible candidate is over, it is up to the journalist, to contact him, either by telephone, or preferably, in person, to get him to agree to an interview. Most people, generally, will not mind consenting to an interview, provided, they know why the other party is interested in meeting them. So, it is better for a writer, to always, state his reasons for wanting to see the person. By doing so, he will also be giving the man, enough time, to gather and put together, all the materials required for the interview.

From the time an interview is fixed, and the date on which it finally takes place, there should be a delay of a few days. A journalist, ought to make use of the opportunity afforded to him by this interval, to thoroughly brief himself about the interviewee, as well as the subject. He should, for example, know the man's correct and full name, his exact initials, his titles, if he has any, his accomplishments, and also make a note of any interesting, hobby the man might be interested in and pursuing at the moment. Next, turning to the subject that is going to be under discussion, the interviewer, bearing in mind the circumstances under which the interview is scheduled to be held, must analyse it, and be clear about what he wants to know. He must then, proceed with the job of devising and framing questions that will draw out revealing answers. But it is enough if he writes out only the very important ones.

The writer must encourage his subject to talk about himself and about those things which interest him most. Envincing keen interest in what the other man is saying, a

journalist, must, at the same time, try to very subtly link it with the topic of inquiry.

An interview must be more like a dialogue or a conversation, and less like a mere question - and - answer session. So, the queries posed by the interviewer, must be so framed and worded, that they are of interest to the one who is being interviewed. They must be absolutely clear, and without a trace of ambiguity, precisely worded, to the point, and should be posed one at a time. Those implying a commitment from the other side must be avoided.

The answers, so obtained, can be supplemented by the writer by dropping in a crucial word now and then. If necessary, he can help the other to qualify what he has said. But he must always get the full meaning of the statements that are made.

Respecting the confidence reposed by a subject in him, is very important for a journalist. So, he must clarify with the latter, which of his utterances can be safely used by him, and those that must be "off-the - record". Failure to obtain such a clarification, can result in an important details being missed out by the writer.

Irrespective of his brilliance in his profession, a journalist, cannot remember and recall everything that had transpired during the interview. He has to, therefore, seek the aid of either a notebook or a tape-recorder to aid his memory. But many

people, become nervous and will dry up at the mere sight of either a notebook or the microphone of a tape - recorder. In such circumstances, the writer must use tact. Exercising a bit of his ingenuity, he can exclaim, "Hmmm...That's really interesting! Musn't forget it, you know. So, with your permission....." or "if you don't mind, I'd like to....." and then proceed to either pull out and note it down in his notebook, or press the "record" button of his tape-recorder !

Sometimes, to his utter misfortune, a journalist may be confronted with a person, who insists on replying only in monosyllables. In a situation of this kind, the former will do well to note the play of emotions on the latter's face his physical characteristics and mannerisms, and highlight them in his report !

Finally, the writer must once again go through and re-check all the facts that have emerged from the interview, so that factual errors do not creep into his writing. To do so, he might require a couple of sessions more with his subject ; but it is worth taking the trouble.

In conclusion, it must be said that, interviewing people, is an art, and those who desire to rise to the top - most rungs of the ladder, in the field of journalism, would do well to cultivate, practise, and perfect it.

CHAMPA RANGANATHAN

CREATIVE PAGE

I pushed the pile
of words aside :
an empty house.
The door would have collapsed
with a smash
from my feminine fist.

An antique woman stepped
from out of the jungle
patted her face
into place
switched on the voice
and said everyone had packed up and left.

On the highway
a girl was hot and thirsty
skin crying to be wet
by a summer rain,
and tiredness started up
from a pair of high-heeled shoes.

*

*

*

*

*

My feet are awake
and restless. They ache,
Now, quite incapable
of the warmth that you make
with someone sitting beside you
in the bus,
when the evening rushes in at the window
and the skin tingles helplessly.

There is hope, she said,
carefully sitting bent over
on the good end of the sofa,
unable to straighten her aching back.
We listened to the clock

It reached the hips.
The Bay was a shade of green
between the trees.
Man was a leper grinning roguishly.
And water-melons were there,
sliced and vivid in an open cart.

They were too real.
Does it make a difference
to eat so much colour ?
A slice of the earth
was becoming silent
in somebody's mouth.

Beast of burden
carrying fallen debris
comes with an eerie sway
of the legs.
I stand respectfully aside—
Someone is building a house.

that hasn't stopped
for another decade to pass by.
Three decades of flesh.
What can't you do
with three decades of flesh ?

At the sunlight before the gate
my youth halts,
plainly silent.
Words had to be spoken
before anyone spoke them.
But the wind enters the throat
and the sounds of the mouth
are delayed.

Ms. PADMA REDAPPA
Dept. of English

INTO MYSELF

Force me not towards you
Let me come of my own will
And in my faltering steps
let me find strength
rather than let your strong hand

weaken me.
I come to you to make
my knowledge my reality
and all past suffering my understanding

SURVIVAL

We see them
often pass unseeing
Pass...
Two gypsy men squatting
on green plantain leaves
crusted with sticky lumps
of food and flies
and decomposed garbage.
Between them
an overflowing cement dump
with more green and yellow...

the refuse of a wedding feast
Their fingers rooting among,
grasping any semblance of food -
the mere sight of which
disgusts us, offends.
A question of remaining alive.
Scraping the mottled parts
carefully, flicking away the insect
unmindful of the dog that noses there.
A mere question
of swallowing.

TULSI BADRINATH
III B.A. Literature

THE CROW : A PARODIC OCTAVE

I caught this morning morning's சனியன், king-
dom of daylights' orphan, applecore - thrown - drawn crow, in his waking
And croaking amongst the sticky mess he calls his nest
High there, how his sleepy rattles mastered the light dawning sounds
In his peckstasy ! Then off, off through the day
As he stole, fought and preened on a bent bough his rusty dusty wing
He'd no complexes about himself. My heart in abiding him
Stirred for the nerd — the aplomb of, the cunning of the thing

SUJATHA DEVADOSS
I M.A. Literature

