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**FARHAT ULLAH KHAN**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
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editor\_ajes@yahoo.com

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**S. Viswanathan**

**Class in Shakespeare: 'Teach(ing) Differences'  
with a Difference**

A consideration of the workings of class and class differences in the drama of Shakespeare may do well to start with some awareness of what we may call the duality or double status and function of class in the drama of the times. Broadly, the rise and flourishing of the social institution of the commercial playhouse around Shakespeare's day tended to contribute to a leveling of class and a dislocation of class distinction, a sociohistorical process already on. At the same time, the inherent tendency of drama was to exploit class confrontation as a source of the creative 'tension' essential for its artistic purposes. The distinction of the Shakespearian representation of class, against such a background, may be couched thus. Both his dramatic exploitation of the aesthetic thrust and power of class equations and whatever socio-cultural perception and implied criticism emerges from his dramatic depiction, proceed conjointly in the plays. Hence it is not advantageous to consider the one without reference to the other, even as we may be forced to look at the one to the exclusion of the other on the principle of complementarity.

Many cultural political critics appear to have an exaggerated idea of the extent and impact of the changes brought about by what a cultural historian like Peter Burke identified as the shift from a 'festive culture' to a 'leisure culture' during the Renaissance. These critics assume a complete break in cultural values, and hence do not allow for the sociocultural continuities alongside and despite the change. If the medieval theatre of the 'festive culture' as an institution was, in its own way, as festive or holiday

occasions were in some measure, a leveller of class distinctions, its successor the commercial theatre of the Renaissance was more pronouncedly so. The patronage and auspices that the Elizabethan theatre had, the composition of its audience and a certain common denominator of excellent dramatico-cultural response it evoked on the part of its spectators who constituted a cross-section of the whole community and thus a spectrum of all classes, made the theatre a meeting ground, in more than one sense, of classes.<sup>1</sup>

In an age of upward mobility of the classes, Shakespeare himself participated in the process and made it to the gentleman grade from yeoman. For the cultural critics, identifying the class bias of Shakespeare, now in the text, now in the sub-text, has proved to be an interesting critical pursuit. Also, many of these have by now been long busy historicizing Shakespeare in his *nachblen* or after-life both as theatre and as classroom text as an elitist 'culture symbol', as an ally or spokesman of the dominant class or the Establishment. In an earlier, curiously parallel development, the anti-Stratfordians have for long been claiming class for their 'Shakespeare' with their basic assumption that no less than a noble aristocrat could ever have been the playwright.

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<sup>1</sup> <sup>1</sup> Pace the thesis of scholars like Anne Jennalie Cook, *The Privileged Playgoers of Shakespeare's London* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981) who postulated mainly on the basis of statistical analysis of prices, that the playgoers of London in the Renaissance were dominantly from the upper classes, the earlier belief that the theatre audiences represented a cross-section of almost all the strata of London society holds; there is enough evidence from many societies that people spend as much if not more on circus as on bread.

All the Shakespeare citations in this paper are from the text of the Riverside Shakespeare, ed. G. Blakemore Evans.

In such a critical context it may be worthwhile to approach the question of class in Shakespeare from a slightly different viewpoint and to consider some of the piquant issues of artistic interest it raises as well as those of sociocultural import. Shakespeare's 'inclusive consciousness' reveals a keen awareness of class-based habits of mind and practice and his envisionment of dramatic encounters is founded on a keen sense for the overtones, not to mention the obvious hues, of class. The portrayal captures not only the realities and intricacies of class relations but the ironies and ambivalences underlying the relations as these emerge in the existential transactions of men in drama if not in life. In effect, simultaneously, there results a subversion of some class assumption and stances and a qualified reaffirmation of some of the class values and beliefs, and, above all, the essential values which should govern human relationships.

## I

As our first set of examples of the question of class coming into play, we may take some instances from *King Lear*

Enter Steward (Oswald)

*Lear.* O, you, sir, you, come you hither, sir. Who am I, sir?

*Osw.* My lady's father

*Lear.* "My lady's father" My lord's knave!  
You whoreson dog, you slave, you cur!

*Osw.* I am none of these, my lord,  
I beseech your pardon.

*Lear.* Do you bandy looks with me, you rascal?  
(Striking him.)

*Osw.* I'll not be stricken, my lord.

*Kent.* Nor tripp'd neither, you base football player  
(Tripping up his heels)

*Lear.* I thank thee fellow. Thou serv'st me and I'll love thee.

*Kent.* Come, sir, arise, away! I'll teach you differences.  
Away, away!

If you will measure your lubber's length again,  
tarry, but away!

Go to, have you wisdom? So.

(Pushes Oswald out.)

*Lear.* Now, my friendly knave, I thank thee,  
there's earnest of thy service

(Giving Kent money.)

Enter Fool

*Fool.* Let me hire him too, here's my coxcomb.

(Offering Kent his cap.)

The confrontations in the passage carry, among other things, a rich complex of class associations, ranging from the question of the exact nature of the royalty of Lear after his abdication through the assailed, and uncertain middling status of the ambitious steward Oswald to the voluntary declassing of Kent. The frequent raising of the question in this part of the play of the identity of Lear, including by himself, suggests a preoccupation with it on his own part and the tragedy is that he tends to identify his identity with authority which receives a body blow in what happens in the play. However, for all its being part of Oswald's instructed checking of Lear, his rejection of the angry abuse the needled Lear hurls at him and his defiance of the striking by Lear, have a semblance of proper resistance against haughty and unfair treatment. But the sudden intervention of Kent by way of his very first and eloquent demonstration of loyalty in his newly entered 'service' to Lear brings the confrontation into another perspective. The tripping in a trice and driving out of Oswald by Kent brings

about a reversal of Oswald's defiant stance. Kent has taken the guise of a humble servant in his devotion to Lear. So his calling Oswald 'you base football player' and his offer to 'teach you differences' acquire a piquancy, especially with Lear acknowledging his service with a gift of money and, contrastively, the Fool coming forward to offer him his coxcomb or cap as reward. What emerges overall in the episode is a prismatic blurring of class, in a way a refraction of the rising ambivalences of class relationships in the society of the times.

When Oswald and Kent confront each other as rival messengers in Gloucester's castle (2.2), Oswald pretends not to recognise Kent. Kent could have but little patience with Oswald's henchmanship of Goneril and draws against him, the calculated non-recognition of him by Oswald being the immediate provocation. Not only Oswald but at his word Cornwall and Regan look down upon Kent as a mere servant, and a grossly misbehaved one at that, and set him in the stocks (not an uncommon punishment meted out to recalcitrant servants in aristocratic households of the time). This despite Gloucester interposing that the King's messenger ought not to be thus treated. In Shakespeare's theatre, the figure of Kent in the stocks perhaps remained very much onstage throughout even during the succeeding short scene of Edgar *solus* (2.3), owing to the convention of 'simultaneous settings'. It must thus have presented a sustained, strong visual stage signal. The question arises whether a viewer in Shakespeare's day or a critic today would read the signal as vividly underscoring the declassing of the Earl of Kent and the humiliation involved or, alternatively, in terms of another stage convention and stage short-hand of Elizabethan times that a character set in stocks was invariably to be regarded as denoting virtue and goodness unjustly maligned and punished, and the irony suggesting an implicit criticism of the way of the world.

Which historicizing does one choose—the one with reference to the convention of social history or the one with reference to the theatrical convention?

In the encounter of Edgar and Gloucester with Oswald in 4.6. 227-278, again, there arise certain ironies of class. Edgar, a rightful heir to an earldom, is in peasant guise. Oswald the steward and confidant of Goneril and now of Regan too, probably at the moment carrying rival love messages from both to Edmund, takes him for a peasant when Edgar halts his hand about to take Gloucester's eyeless head as a prize-catch. Edgar, continuing in his vein of protean shape-changing and voice-changing performance in the action, switches to the Welsh border dialect which seems to have been a customary marker of the yokel on the London stage then. Edgar answers the sword thrusts of Oswald with his peasant staff which he calls his 'bat' (4.6. 241, Q) and kills him. At an apparent level, the encounter is also one between court-servant and peasant in which the peasant with his mere staff or cudgel bests the swordsman-courtier. Though the victor here is an earl, in the sequence of the preceding action in the play starting with the defiance and killing of Cornwall, when he is about to blind Gloucester, by Cornwall's own servant and the bold choric remarks and initiative of the servants of Gloucester and the intervention of the Old Man, a farmer-servant, coming to the rescue of the blinded and banished Gloucester at great personal risk, a pattern comes into relief. The pattern is one of active and militant support, however unavailing in the final analysis, coming unexpectedly from ordinary folks in defence of goodness and the decencies of life and against the assaults of sheer brutality.

It is quite known that Shakespeare gives the idea of 'service' in its several manifestations a 'place in the story'

in the play. True, it may partly be a registration of the changes which the idea was undergoing from medieval to modern, let alone the multiple significance the concept of 'service' carried in its heritage. But Shakespeare's first and last emphasis is on an essential human worth, decency and dignity that the members of the servant class as individuals may possess or rarely may not possess, rather than any backward-looking nostalgia for feudal notions of service. Rather, Shakespeare would seem to depict an idea of service projecting it to a level and realm beyond class. Not that the depiction ignores class factors or nuances; while including these, it transcends them.

It is not for nothing that Shakespeare portrays the two protagonists of the play, Lear and Gloucester as coming through a process of bitter suffering and agony of body and mind alike to feel into the hardships of the lowliest who are nakedly exposed to the tender mercies of the elements and the pangs of hunger. Levelled down to their state, both feelingly express the sentiment that the excessive riches and resources of the high and the mighty should be 'undone' and distributed among the poor. One may agree that, for all the implications of socio-economic reformist or revolutionary impulse the speeches may have, the sentiment is essentially a thought of Christian and biblical origin. Yet the utterances take force in the dynamic of thought and action in the play. They bring upon the spectator/reader a reinforced awareness that Lear comes to relate to Edgar as mad Tom, and Gloucester to Edgar as his escort, as a person and thus to all the wretches of the worldly as persons, and that it is primarily a matter of the negative-capability-like fellow feeling of man to man which receiver emphasis, as a counter-balance to the strong enough sense of man's cruelty to man in the play, however perilous the balance may be.

The question of class comes up in another interesting way in one of the little catechisms conducted by the Fool, the one at 3.6. 10-14.

*Fool.* Prithee, nuncle, tell me whether a madman be a gentleman or a yeoman?

*Lear:* A king, a king!

*Fool:* No, he's a yeoman that has a gentleman to his son, for he's a mad yeoman that sees his son a gentleman before him.

The Fool's question provoked by one of the ravings of mad Tom cuts in several directions. It glances at Lear's madness which has by now set in. Lear's quick and ready answer that he the king it is who has been driven mad also suggests that in the gradation of classes it is the highest the king rather than the gentleman or yeoman who is prone to madness. The Fool's answer to his own question is that it is the yeoman who sees his son elevated to gentleman before him that is mad. The Fool thus once again harps on the idea that Lear was mad or foolish in giving away his kingdom and his all to his daughters. The passage is topical to the problem of the times due to the flux of class, to the pronounced advent of the new gentry and, among other things, to the particular generation gap it might cause. Shakespeare himself was an example of a yeoman's son becoming a gentleman. But he took enough care to buy a coat of arms for his father John Shakespeare and came through that route to a position where he could style himself Shakespeare, Gent. Thereby, and as other biographical evidence also suggests, he showed a sense of family and belongingness there, exactly which sense is portrayed as undergoing a cataclysmic disintegration in the tragedy of *King Lear*.

## II

Particularly worth noting is Shakespeare's portrayal across the plays of the relationship between royalty as a class and the generality of the people. The question of what degree of distance from, and exposure to, the public gaze the monarch or prince should maintain is piquantly raised in *Richard II*, *King Henry IV, pt.1* and *Measure for Measure*. King Richard II dwells contemptuously on Bolingbroke's wooing of the masses on his way in his banishment from the land.

*K. Rich.*

... his courtship to the common people  
How he did seem to dive in to their hearts  
With humble and familiar courtesy,  
What reverence he did throw away on  
slaves,  
Wooing poor craftsmen with the craft of  
smiles  
And patient underbearing of his fortune,  
As 'twere to banish their affects with him.  
Off goes his bonnet to an oyster-wench,  
A brace of draymen bid God speed him  
well,  
And had the tribute of his supple knee,  
With "Thanks, my countrymen, my loving  
friends".

*Richard II, 1.4. 24-34.*

Set against this is the account given by the neutral, yet strictly loyalist York of the masses' enthusiastic reception of Bolingbroke after his acquisition of the crown from Richard II and their scornful rejection of the dethroned Richard.

*York:* ... all tongues cried "God save [thee],  
 Bullingbrook!"  
 You would have thought the very windows  
 spoke,  
 So many greedy looks of young and old  
 Through casements darted their desiring  
 eyes  
 Upon his visage, and that all the walls  
 With painted imagery had said at once,  
  
 "Jesu preserve [thee]! Welcome,  
 Bullingbrook!  
 While he from one side to the other turning,  
 Bare-headed, lower than his proud steed's  
 neck,  
 Bespake them thus: "I thank you,  
 countrymen."  
 And thus still doing, thus he pass'd along.

*Richard II, 5.2. 11-21*

The issue of the extent of the 'gaze' the prince may allow and the calibration of its impact on popular estimation of the monarch is brought up by Shakespeare in the crucial private interview between King Henry IV and Prince Hal in *Henry IV, Pt. I, 3.2*. Curiously, Bolingbroke brings the same charge as Richard II in his play mockingly made against him, against both Hal now and Richard then, that of vulgarizing and cheapening his royal presence by mingling too closely for comfort with all sorts of men. He holds that Hal's behaviour in this respect is precisely the same as Richard II's when he was King.

*King.* By being seldom seen, I could not stir  
 But like a comet I was wond'ered at,

That men would tell their children, "This is  
 he";  
 And then I stole all courtesy from heaven,  
 And dress'd myself in such humility  
 That I did pluck allegiance from men's  
 hearts,  
 Loud shouts and salutations from their  
 mouths,  
 Even in the presence of the crowned King.  
 Thus did I keep my person fresh and new,  
 My presence, like a robe pontifical,  
 Ne'er seen but wond'ered at, and so my state,  
 Seldom but sumptuous, show'd like a feast  
 And won by rareness such solemnity.  
 The skipping King, he ambled up and down,  
 With shallow jesters and rash bavin wits,  
 Soon kindled and soon burnt, carded his  
 state,  
 Mingled his royalty with cap'ring fools  
 ... ..  
 ... ..  
 Grew a companion to the common streets,  
 Enfeoff'd himself to popularity  
 That, being swallowed by men's eyes,  
 They surfeited with honey and began  
 To loathe the taste of sweetness ... .

*King Henry IV, Pt. I, 3.2 46-72.*

At first sight it may seem that the accusations of Richard against Bolingbroke and of Bolingbroke against Hal and Richard in this regard are a case of the brush painting the same tar on all sides or the proverbial pot calling the kettle black. But Bolingbroke, and through him perhaps Shakespeare, makes the point that the monarch or the prince should not practise overfamiliarity in the public view as it breeds contempt. More important, he should suitably

infrequently make a display of 'state', the royal presence, taking occasion as it comes, even as he maintains a calculated chariness about too common or excessive exposure of himself. That is the way to duly impress the people with a spectacle of power and glory. It is on some such lines that Shakespeare would seem to explore the psychology and sociology of what Bolingbroke calls the 'extraordinary gaze' (3.2. 78) through which royal power can take and maintain its hold. New historicist criticism has highlighted the importance of this phenomenon for Elizabethan and Jacobean drama, and some critics would view the history plays and plays featuring kings as themselves partly directed to this end. But Shakespeare appears to show an awareness also of the flip side to the doctrine of royal power on display, to which side of the matter contemporary criticism has not much adverted. The evidence of Shakespeare's aliveness to it is to be found, apart from the drift of the Bolingbroke discourse on the question, in the Duke's stance in *Measure for Measure*, and the adoption of the device of disguise by the Duke or, for that matter, by King Henry V in his play.

*Duke:* I'll privily away. I love the people,  
But do not like to stage me to their eyes,  
Though it do well, I do not relish well  
Their loud applause and aves vehement;  
Nor do I think the man of safe discretion  
That does affect it.

*Measure for Measure*, 1.1. 67-72.

Critics who see a resemblance between the Duke in the play and King James II in this, as in some other respects, suggest that Shakespeare may refer to a certain shyness and hesitancy on the part of James II to expose himself to the public gaze. But James was not totally averse to Royal Processions and Royal Entries, and as promoter of the

masque at Court, he specialized in taking advantage of his presence on masque occasions as both prime spectator and himself a spectacle. In a letter to a friend on the accidental fire which consumed the Globe stage during a performance of *King Henry VIII* in 1613, Sir Henry Wotton the diplomat wrote that such plays portraying Kings tended to 'make greatness very familiar, if not ridiculous,' and thus take away from the aura of royalty, and this risk was not something of which Shakespeare was unaware.

Several interesting dramatic debates and utterances relating to the nature of the relationship between royalty and commonalty occur in intriguing situations of the action in *The Winter's Tale*. King Polixenes *incognito* and Perdita, a royal princess reared as a shepherd maiden, now decked as the queen of the sheep-shearing feast, debate art and nature (4.3. 72-108). It is Perdita, apparently a shepherd girl with whom Florizel the prince has a strong love relationship, who expresses her dislike and disapproval of graft flowers, 'nature's bastards'. Ironically, it is Polixenes who just cannot brook his son associating himself with a sheep-rearing girl, much less marrying her, who argues for the legitimacy of the 'pied art' of grafting, insisting, stealing a hint from Perdita as it were that,

Yet Nature is made better by no mean  
But Nature makes that mean; so over that  
art,  
Which you say adds to Nature, is an art  
That Nature makes.

*The Winter's Tale*, 14.4. 89-92.

Even though Perdita grants such an interpretation of art and nature, she would have none of the artifice of grafting and the eugenics implied, and declares, again with complex irony,

*Per.*

I'll not put  
 The dibble in earth to let one slip of them;  
 No more than were I painted I would wish  
 This youth should say 'twere well and only  
 therefore  
 Desire to breed by me.

4.4. 99-103

The two-fold if double-take reality that strikes through at this point is that she is a 'painted queen of the feast in robes' but that artifice is nature because she is a true royal born. Thus uncannily true to the comment of Polixenes that

The art itself is Nature

4.4. 97

and, unbeknown to him, the dichotomy between art and nature vanishes in the situation, even though what nullifies the dichotomy is ultimately a matter of the mediation or supervention of grace and the magic of love. The suggestion comes through that the binaries of the thought of the times, of Art and Nature and of Nature and Grace, with 'Art' in the binary sometimes denoting 'magic', collapse into a unity. However, in terms of the question of class division, the challenge to class or the possible nullification of class, is broached in the play's situations in such a manner that it has it both ways. As though by sleight-of-hand, it at once both nullifies and affirms the division between royalty and commonalty. A good illustration of such a position is Perdita's unspoken yet expressed sentiment immediately after Polixenes storms out of the scene after breaking up the joining of hands of Perdita and Florizel.

*Per.*

I was not much afeard; for once or twice  
 I was about to speak, and tell him plainly

The self-same sun that shines upon his court  
Hides not his visage from our cottage, but  
Looks on all alike.

4.4. 442-446.

In a broader sense, this is an object-lesson or miniature encapsulation of the way of drama and the theatre as an institution in the sociological ethos of the times, in a fashion speaking up but not quite speaking out, serving both to challenge and reaffirm the order of things and thus indirectly participating alike in the changes and continuities from it.

The upward mobility in class hierarchy, a feature of the times, is a point of reference, albeit in suitable comic and ironic terms, in the immense satisfaction which the old Shepherd feels about his now becoming the grandfather of grandchildren who will all be 'gentlemen born', thanks to his having been foster-father to Perdita. His son, 'Clown' as he may be styled, now deems himself 'a gentleman born', as the King's son, Florizel, as he reports

.... took me by the hand, and call'd me  
brother;  
and then the two kings call'd my father  
brother; and then  
the Prince, my brother, and the Princess, my  
sister, call'd my  
father father; and so we wept;

5.2. 140-144.

## III

Shakespeare's portrayal of the mob, its attitudes and behaviour, utterances and actions, has given rise to several questions of class. Among these are whether he shares the contemptuous attitude to the populace of characters who call them names such as the 'many-headed multitude' or the 'rag-tag people' or whether he was more inclined to give them their voice and their due and to register his recognition of whatever legitimacy and validity their stance may have. He may lay bare in several plays the notorious fickleness of the mob, which proclaims itself in the very etymology of the word. But Shakespeare does go beyond a theatrical exploitation of this weakness of the people in the mass. The voice he gives them may apparently be intended to do no more than promote the thrust and counter-thrust, the give-and-take of characters which is the staple of drama. Also, he often so orders the speeches and actions of the populace the immediate effect is one of the comic side to it. However, Shakespeare does not quite leave them to be a mere butt of ridicule; alongside of making the best of the comic potentialities of the mob, he lets their essential decencies as human beings, collectively and individually in their own right, come through. Their individualities may appear to merge into the amorphousness of the mass when they are in a crowd, but still some individual touches on the part of persons emerge in the total picture.

Whether it is the depiction by Shakespeare of the soft-talking by Sir Thomas More of the artisans rioting against the foreigners into submission or of the rise and quelling of the Jack Cade rebellion in *2 Henry VI*, act 4 or of the plebeian mob of Rome in *Julius Caesar* or in *Coriolanus*, the present-day cultural political critics have seen the then contemporary incidence of mob discontent and resentment expressed in Elizabethan or Jacobean

England as bearing a relevance to Shakespeare's way with the mob in the plays. Such findings do illuminate our understanding and enjoyment of what the playwright does. However, the suggestion that Shakespeare wrote in favour of or in defence of the oppositional stand, which comes from some of these critics, does not fit the case Shakespeare portrays the confrontation between the mob and the Establishment or between plebeian and patrician, not so much as a black-and-white opposition but as one which for all its strong enough shades of the two, has many areas of grey and changing shades, as it were.

Two among the interesting points which emerge in Shakespeare's representation of the populace may be noted here in particular—his shrewd diagnosis of the sort of demagoguery or of subtle manipulation from behind-the-scenes through which the loyalty and response of the people is engineered, and a slight yet consistent ambivalence which is traceable in what may be inferred as Shakespeare's attitude to the group in generality of the artisan classes, often prominent members of the populace in the plays.

In *2 Henry VI*, act 4, Jack Cade the self-appointed leader of the rebellion against the existing order initially succeeds to a degree, mowing down many in his progress. What is striking is the absurdity and sheer comicity of his motives, stance and utterances. He is consistently undercut by the asides of his own henchmen who know better but are in his hold. There is irony aplenty in Jack Cade, the would-be abolisher of all class, rank and wealth differences, claiming lineage from the house of Mortimer and his knighting himself and his associate in unceremoniously ceremonious fashion. All this, besides his ridiculous vanity, is meant to make a glancing reference to the ludicrous extent people might go to in their ambition to wangle status

and climb the class hierarchy in contemporary society. At the same time, young Shakespeare presents Iden the small landholder of Kent, in whose garden and at whose hands the fleeing Cade meets his fate (4.10.), as a yeoman turned small-time gentleman, an esquire with a quiet dignity and pride of his status. Cade's demagoguery, his false promises to the gullible and his playing on popular prejudice against groups such as the lettered and the lawyers work their effect on the 'rabblement' for quite some time before old Clifford, like Sir Thomas More in his play, sways the people completely against Cade who now gives up and flees. The point about the changeableness of the mob is tellingly made here and in later plays like *Julius Caesar* and *Coriolanus*. But the way Shakespeare charts the process often brings to the fore the manipulating hand of the leader or the intervener on the scene. The tribunes of Rome who are supposed to be of the people and for the people elected as they are by them would, both in *Julius Caesar* and more in *Coriolanus*, seem to play the exploiters of the situation for the fulfillment of their likes and dislikes and their petty pride. They manipulate the plebeians and their responses, and the tribunes in *Coriolanus* do not stop short of instigating them to play the lynching mob against Coriolanus.

Shakespeare inevitably thinks in terms of the artisan classes of his England and London when he portrays the mob scenes. If those artisans in the plays do not come off with flying colours, Shakespeare also shows tolerance if not sympathy towards them. If in the plays-within-the-play in *Love's Labour's Lost* and *A Midsummer Nights Dream* he shows the artisans as a bungling lot in play production and performance, it is in some measure attributable to his pride in the professional theatre of his time and the distinction it could achieve over the medieval amateur guild theatre as well as the court theatre. Perhaps this sense of

superiority spills over partly into his representation of the artisans as a class in the plays. It is somewhat like his portrayal of schoolmasters in general, and his use of lawyers and tailors as stock objects of ridicule. Shakespeare also refrained from practising citizen drama proper a favourite mode with many leading contemporary playwrights. It may be due to his ambivalent feeling towards the artisan community a major constituent of the London society. The polarities between the new gentry and the old which were among the preoccupations of citizen drama were not exactly those of Shakespeare.

The short mob-scene which Shakespeare, taking him to have authored it, introduces towards the close of one of the very last of his plays, *King Henry VIII* is notable. It is a mob-scene without the mob in the sense that the mob is behind the off-stage and practically unseen, but makes its presence overwhelmingly present. Shakespeare would seem to delight in showing the boundless enthusiasm of the London apprentices on the occasion of the birth of Elizabeth the future queen and their surge forward in order to have sight of the infant taken in procession to the christening ceremony. The playwright equally delights in the helplessness and immense difficulty the Porter and his man have in crowd control despite their vociferous show of authority and threats of force. Overall, the dramatist himself would seem to celebrate the popular enthusiasm, despite the flurry of harsh and uncomplimentary references to the London crowds made, between the two, by the Porter and his Mass.

#### IV

If Shakespeare on the whole handles the classes with an almost prestidigitating even-handedness, is it a matter of the 'matchless impartiality of Shakespeare's

politics' as Coleridge characterized it with reference to *Coriolanus*? Partly so perhaps. But if Shakespeare could make such a dramatically effective and penetrating exploration of class as he did, it was made possible as much by the particular cultural juncture of the age and times, thanks to a continuing survival in part of a kind of cultural homogeneity of the earlier ages, a cultural unity which could in a way supersede social differences between high and low and link them into a cultural community or a commonalty of sensibility which could have obtained for some time in spite of the ongoing process of the change from the older community culture to a market-place culture needs recognition if not stressing in the face of the cultural materialist critics' assumption of a total hiatus between the two. None of the Shakespeare plays is known to have led to rioting among the London apprentices, such as one or two plays by other dramatists are said to have occasioned. For aught we know, Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* in his day did not provoke the sort of riots a Paris performance of the play gave rise to in the mid-thirties of the twentieth century in a politically charged France. In other words, it was a supervening sense of cultural community and awareness still available in the age which served as the enabling factor for Shakespeare to dramatise class difference in such fashion that he and his spectators could *both* enjoy the release of energies in a class 'quarrel' or confrontation, to adapt a Keatsian reminiscence, *and* at the same time record and recognize the element of injustice involved in class inequalities, besides the ironies of class.

Another historical factor is worth noting in regard to any discussion of class in Shakespeare. In Shakespeare's England, the class distinction or prejudice did not operate quite in the way it came to do in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For example, accents were not yet made a fetish of; Sir Walter Raleigh could get away with a

Northern burr in his speech. In one sense, the adversarial relationship between the haves and the have-nots may be universal. It was long, long ago that Adam delved and Eve Span, and there was neither gentleman nor yeoman. But in another sense, the class war has had different rules of the game in different ages and times. In any case, we may have to make due allowance for whatever differences we may suspect to have existed in the operation of class equations in Shakespeare's times and drama and be on our guard against the risk of projecting such equations of later periods including our own on to his drama and age.

Finally, a tail-piece. There is a tradition that Shakespeare the actor played the servant old Adam in *As You Like It*, perhaps doubling as William the shepherd later in the play as has also been suggested. But Shakespeare, curiously, seems to have had a reputation as an actor of kings, as witness the lines of an Epigram of his contemporary, John Davies of Hereford, 'To our English Terence, Mr. Will Shakespeare'

Some say (good will) which, I, in sport, do  
sing  
Had'st thou not plaid some kingly parts in  
sport,  
Thou had'st bin a companion for a king  
and, beene a king among the meaner sort.

*The Scourge of Folly* (1611), 76-77

And

In sleep a king, but waking no such matter.

*Shakespeare's Sonnets*, 87

This shall we say, is a case of king and servant, and a spirit into the bargain (the elder Hamlet's Ghost), made at one in Shakespeare if only Shakespeare the player.

**S. Viswanathan**

32 (Old No. 08)

Parthasarathypuram Extn.

North T. Nagar, Chennai - 600017

Aligarh Muslim University

*Asha Viswas*

### **Henry David Thoreau: A Different Drummer**

The hawks and merchants of death have been telling us that a peaceful world is an impossibility and aggression is innate in human nature. The idealist doves are dubbed by them as 'grailers' – the followers of the illusive 'Holy Grail'. We start wondering whether aggression is really innate or acquired human behaviour. When we talk of human nature, nothing explains it better than the old myth of the dragon - we are all dragons - reptiles with wings mired in the mud of materialism, yet capable of aspiring for the high heavens of Truth, Beauty and Peace - aspiring for the kingdom of God on earth. This eternal conflict makes each soul a battleground. If aggression is innate, so is the desire for peace.

In the present scenario when the arms race has become the biggest business, employing millions of human beings, when it has become the most powerful institution that threatens not only global peace but the destiny of the whole human race, when we are adding more and more deadly weapons and then think that perhaps with yet more deadly weapons we can make ourselves finally secure, Thoreau's spirit warns us from above. He was the greatest American pacifist who tried to make us listen to the voice of our conscience against the evils of war, slavery and injustice. Though Thoreau talked only to the Americans, as Socrates did only to the people of Athens, his message is to each one of us transcending time and space.

As a pacifist the first thing that Thoreau points out is that peace making begins at a grass-roots level. It begins with you, with each individual. The Messiah may be one of

us. His experience at Walden pond from July 4th 1845 to Sept. 6th 1847 may be called a journey into the self. Walden was like a hermitage in the quietude of which he could tap at the doors of eternity, could listen to the voice of his conscience. It was meant for achieving a decentralizing of self, sacrificing the ego in the 'yajna', a kind of death needed for a rebirth. The daily bath in the Walden pond became a ritual that brought in more purity of heart. Thoreau wrote in his journal:

To make my life a sacrament... May I treat myself with more and more respect ... may I so live and refine my life as fitting myself for society... the possibility of my own improvement, that is to be cherished... I love and worship myself with a love which absorbs my love for the World.<sup>1</sup>

There is no narcissism here, no arrogance but greater awareness about the world outside himself, greater awareness of 'fitting' oneself for society. This is not escape from human beings and human institutions, is Thoreau's American critics thought. It is a process of attaining peace within and without. If each human being can reform himself, can empty himself of barriers of communication, pride and prejudices, there would be no need for reforming society. Our ancient Indian seers knew it and practised this contemplation in the solitude of nature. The only person you can change is yourself. If peace is attained at the individual level, peace in the community is sure to follow.

Apart from this, freedom of conscience Thoreau constantly warns us against the slavery to senses and greed. He sees the Americans, even the descendents of the pilgrims in Cape Town, seduced by commerce. The urban ambiance and artificial wants created by the media distract

the individual from following a peaceful and meaningful life. The subsequent feeling of aimlessness in a machine age creates tensions and these accumulated individual tensions destroy peace. Not only did Thoreau preach a simple living, he practiced it too. In fact, he has been rated higher on this count than many of his contemporaries. Calverton (*The Liberation of American Literature*, 1932) writes:

In a sense, he was the best individual product of that petty bourgeois ideology of the frontiers which captured the minds of so many of the literati of his day... he never became interested ... in the acquisition of property, never built up a small fortune and never speculated in stocks as Emerson did. Or built and sold houses as did Whitman in his early thirties.<sup>2</sup>

Thoreau believes that the necessities of life should not become an end in themselves. Modern economy gives riches at the cost of too much labour and moral deterioration. If each individual lives simply, there would be no thefts, robberies, murders, class divisions and class conflicts. This alarm of "simplicity, simplicity, simplicity" transformed Tolstoy and Gandhi. (There is evidence that many of Thoreau's ideas were formed after reading translations from the *Rgveda*, *Mandukya Upanisad*, *The Vishnu Purana*, *Sankhya Karika*, *Mimamsa*, and the *Bhagavadgita*). Gandhi adopted Thoreau's idea of voluntary poverty and declared that the holding of possessions was incompatible with non-violence and fraternity. Leo Tolstoy, a sensitive Russian Aristocrat too was deeply influenced by Thoreau. Thus simplicity, though looks simple, has power to establish a peaceful community.

'Exclusivity' is yet another great obstacle in the path of peace. We are all born different - different colours, sexes, religions, cultures, opinions and ways of life. But instead of celebrating our differences, we are most diabolically intolerant of the 'Other'. *A week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* discusses in detail the relationship between Indian and European settler and the tragedy that resulted from the conflict between two different societies, two different religions and cultures. The former name of Concord was 'Muske Taquid' which means 'Grass-ground River'. This name was more appropriate as the grassy meadows and fish attracted settlers from England in 1635. Concord, the new name given by the white settler, is a misnomer since the Indians are now an extinct race. One race annihilated the 'Other'. Founding of America is bloody in the eyes of Thoreau. What is more sad for him is that the historical record of this violence is distorted through self-serving omissions. The settlers imposed their religion and economic system, Thoreau writes that the white:

buys the Indian's moccasins and baskets,  
then buys his hunting grounds and at length  
forgets where he is buried and ploughs up  
his bones.<sup>3</sup>

As there is no written history of their own, the Indians are obliterated from human history. As agriculture replaced hunting, the hunter became irrelevant, extinct. The conflicts between these two cultures often resulted in monstrous violence. In 'Thursday' Thoreau narrates the story, of Hannah Dustan. This young woman was held captive by the Indians along with her nurse and an English boy. In the night these three white people killed two Indian men, two women and six children, ran away with all the canoes and returned soon after to scalp the dead as proof. The court

paid them fifty pounds as reward for ten scalps." Dustan was praised as a colonial heroine. 'Exclusivity' thus, pulls people apart, they forget their common humanity. Destruction of race occurs when we fail to 'include' the other. Thoreau writes:

There might be seen here on the bank of Merrimack ... in what is now the town of Bedford ... some graves of the aborigines. The land still bears this scar here, and time is slowly crumbling the bones of a race... every spring... the undying race of reed birds rustles through the withering grass. But these bones rustle not. These mouldering elements are slowly preparing for another metamorphosis, to serve new masters.<sup>4</sup>

Thoreau, a deeply religious person, was not hopeful about religion as an institution in bringing peace on earth. He differentiated between a meaningful religion and an institutionalized religion. Early American society had built a uniform and intolerant religious community. Thoreau did not believe that an imposed religious doctrine and a common code of conduct could bring peace. Religious piety and moral earnestness, in Thoreau's view, could never be inculcated by corporal punishment given by the church. He wrote – "Think of a man being whipped on a spring morning, till he was constrained to confess that the scriptures were true."<sup>5</sup>

On one occasion Thoreau was asked to pay in order to support a Clergyman. He refused. He writes:

Some years ago, the state met me in behalf of the church and commanded me to pay a

certain sum toward the support of a clergyman whose preaching my father attended, but never I myself. 'Pay' it said, "or be locked up in the jail". I declined to pay... I did not see why the school master should be taxed to support the priest, and not the priest to support the school master.<sup>6</sup>

Thoreau pleaded that since he was not a member of that church, he could not be forced to pay such a tax. For him human solidarity and peace is not the result of religion. In a 'week' Thoreau talked of the negative aspects of converting the natives to Christianity. Their conversion was a process of destroying them. In *A Yankee in Canada* Thoreau's criticism of the catholic church in Quebec is harsher. He wrote:

It is true, these Roman Catholics, priests and all impress me as a people who have fallen far behind the significance of their symbols. It is as if an ox had strayed into a church...<sup>7</sup>

He describes the nuns as having "Cadaverous faces", "Their complexions parboiled with scalding tears" and looking as if they:

have been dead and buried for a year, and then untombed, with the life's grief upon them, and yet, for some unaccountable reason, the process of decay arrested.<sup>8</sup>

In *Cape Cod* Thoreau is critical of charity houses built along the shore as emergency shelters for shipwrecked sailors. Thoreau discovered one such house on his walk and found that instead of providing shelter the house itself was a wrack. He wrote:

We thus looked through the knot-hole into the humane house, into the very bowels of mercy and for bread we found a stone... We were glad to sit outside", and there we thought how cold is charity! How inhumane humanity! This, then, is what charity hides."<sup>9</sup>

This is a far cry from the warm human solidarity. However, Thoreau's criticism of charity does not mean that all human compassion is always hypocrisy. In fact, if there is no mercy and compassion, nothing can bind human beings together into a community of shared concern. His message is that fraternity is to be developed for peace and fraternity is not a fraud.

When we trace Thoreau's influence on Tolstoy, we find him going farther. Like Thoreau he too studied other religions. During the Russo-Turkish war, Tolstoy was repelled when he heard the priests pray for the destruction of the enemy. In the name of Jesus, the clergy bless preparations for war and hold war not to be against Christianity, Tolstoy was excommunicated on March 5<sup>th</sup>, 1901. To this he wrote that he had renounced the orthodox church not because he was against the Lord but because with all his strength he wanted to serve him. The crux of Gandhiji's philosophy was selfless service to mankind. His religious programme was guided by active love and respect for all the people. It included the removal of all barriers - social, religious and racial that come in the way of brotherhood. He fought for the Harijans and Muslims and attended prayers for community building, for bringing peace of heaven on earth. These three great men understood the true meaning of religion - the brotherhood of all human beings.

For Thoreau enslavement of human beings is, another abominable factor that destroys peace, He felt that by being a slave society, America had distorted its moral character. A compromise between liberty and slavery makes America's founding principle irrelevant. From 1500 to the mid 1860 about ten million black slaves were shipped from Africa. About 5% of them were brought to the U. S. A. in the 1600. By 1860 the South American states had four million slaves.

During Thoreau's life time anti-slavery movement became a burning issue of the civil war. It had, picked up momentum in 1831 with the publication of William LLOYD Garrison's abolitionist newspaper 'The Liberator'. Some of the important events related to the perpetuation of slavery by the government were 1- Annexation of Texas in 1845 that created a new slave state, 2 - the Fugitive slave law of Sept 1850. It meant the return of all fugitive slaves who had escaped to a free state, 3 - The Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854. This Act provided that each state could decide by majority vote for or against slavery. It repealed the Missouri compromise of 1820 which forbade the expansion of slavery.

Thoreau was an active abolitionist who actively participated in helping the slaves to escape to Canada. His parents' home at Concord was an overnight refuge to such slaves. In December 1859 when Captain John Brown, leader of an anti-slavery group was captured and executed, Thoreau even justified Brown's violent Act of attacking the Federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia. His *A Plea For Captain John Brown* is regarded as one of the greatest speeches ever delivered among mankind. In *Slavery in Massachusetts* and *Civil Disobedience* Thoreau has used his pen as a substitute for a gun on the slavery issue. In the

former essay he criticizes the state of Massachusetts, the governor, the Supreme Court judges and the citizens for not grasping the magnitude of the evil of slavery. He regarded the common masses as 'mere figure' heads upon a hulk, with livers in the place of hearts".

Yet another threat to our consciousness of common humanity is imperialism. One may call it unbridled narcissism at the national level. When a group is in the process of developing an identity it takes pride in its roots and in almost everything associated with its history. The black pride of the American blacks in the sixties or the last century is an example of human dignity. But when this pride takes the form of a 'master - race' and disregards the freedom of other nations, it is the most dangerous thing. Senator Fullbright called such pathological nationalism "The arrogance of power". This arrogance results in war. Not many people know the cost of firing a single bullet in war.

Thoreau was filled with a great abhorrence of war. He did not want to be associated with any war unless it were a war for liberty. In 1846 Thoreau was jailed for not paying his poll tax. He did not pay this particular tax because part of it went towards supporting America's war with Mexico. Paying this tax meant a support to an unjust war. Thoreau thought that if a number of people refused to pay their poll tax bills, the government will not shed innocent blood. When a country is unjustly over run by a foreign power, it is time for conscientious men to revolt. In *A Yankee in Canada* Thoreau felt that the English had no moral legitimacy, their only claim to rule over Canada was their huge military power. He regarded the soldiers as "the imperfect tools of an imperfect and tyrannical government".<sup>10</sup> In his own country too Thoreau criticised the imperialistic designs and tried to awaken the conscience

of Americans, who had undue respect for law.

Thoreau's *Civil Disobedience* is America's most influential political tract. He made a distinction between the law of the land and the law of conscience. When there is a conflict between the two, the higher law is to be obeyed and the lower one to be disobeyed. But such a disobedient must be willing to accept the punishment for his disobedience. A Civil Disobedient is peaceful and breaks the law deliberately and publicly to create an awareness amongst the citizens about a particular unjust law. Civil disobedience requires great moral courage.

During the civil war in America, there were innumerable examples when organized groups of Northern citizens repeatedly violated laws that supported slavery in the South. But after that Thoreau's civil disobedience was not only ignored but considered dangerous. He was condemned as an anarchist, a transcendentalist crackpot and phony. As long as the Americans regarded their country as a paradise regained, Thoreau remained a feeble voice silenced under the materialistic prosperity of that country.

Thoreau's most important contribution was made to India. Gandhi elaborated Thoreau's ideas into a national programme of non-violent, non-cooperation. He integrated it with Satyagrah. At the second round table conference in London, Webb Miller, an American reporter asked Gandhi if he had read Thoreau. Gandhi's reply was:

Why, of course I read Thoreau. I read *Walden* first in Johannesburg in South Africa in 1906 and his ideas influenced me greatly. I adopted some of them... I actually took the name of my movement from

Thoreau's essay "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience".<sup>11</sup>

In Miller's view Gandhi received back from America what was fundamentally the philosophy of India after it had been distilled and crystallized in the mind of Thoreau.<sup>12</sup> Though it would be an exaggeration to say that it was Thoreau who toppled the British Empire in India he certainly was the greatest American writer who exercised such a great influence over world affairs.

Thoreau's peaceful weapon of civil disobedience, perfected and successfully practised by Gandhi took yet another 'U' turn during the reform impulse of 1960s in America. At the 1956 Meeting of the Thoreau society Herbert F. West, of Dartmouth College gave a lecture on the younger generation's response, to Thoreau. Eighty percent of the students regarded *Civil Disobedience* harmful. Thoreau was a threat to these short haired, clean shaven, jacketed Americans' values. Dissension was not in fashion.

But the same year this fashion changed suddenly. A black woman Rosa Park boarded a bus at Montgomery, Alabama and obeying the dictates of her conscience, refused to give up her seat to a white man. Rosa Parker was arrested, but her refusal started the movement of sixties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote in *Stride Toward Freedom* that all his doubts about the morality of the boycott were removed after reading Thoreau's *Civil Disobedience*. King was the most prominent black to connect Thoreau to the civil rights movement. Thoreau now represented non-violence and human struggle for freedom. Critics, who in the thirties of the last century, had criticised Civil Disobedience as unworthy of the poet who sang of nature in *Walden*, changed their tone in the sixties.

Atkinson wrote:

The pacifists who scramble aboard nuclear submarines are acting on the same principle (of Civil Disobedience), also the, Quakers who defiantly sailed into the port of the Pacific isolated by the united states administrative order for the explosion of nuclear bombs.<sup>13</sup>

The rowboat that used to picket nuclear submarines in Connecticut was named 'Henri David Thoreau'. Thus the American Govt. that had driven Thoreau into a corner of the jail for one night, was now driven into a corner by peaceful resistance. At the New York Hall of Fame Thoreau's bust was unveiled in 1962. President Kennedy selected Braj Kumar Nehru, the Indian Ambassador to U.S., as the principal speaker for this occasion. It reflected *The Joint Appeal of Thoreau and Gandhi*. In 1962 Civil Disobedience was reprinted as a 'peace calendar'. In 1970 Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee wrote and staged a play entitled "The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail". The preface recounted the injustices of the Mexican war. Within a few weeks of the play's performance at Ohio State University, U.S. invaded Cambodia. The peaceful demonstrators refused to believe that North Vietnam was a threat to the national security of America. This enemy formation is an excuse given by all war mongers. An imaginary enemy becomes a real one - chemical weapons, a particular community, a religious minority - these are all different faces of enemy formation. It was against this that Thoreau appealed to the people to be alert, to listen to their conscience, to oppose laws that are threat to peace.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century the greatest threat to peace comes from the weapons in the hands of the terrorists. Pacifists

like Gandhi, Kennedy, and Martin Luther King were all assassinated. It is a challenge to those who desire peace. We don't have time as Andrew Marvel had, to wait for his 'Coy mistress' "till the conversion of the Jews". We cannot hope for peace by religious conversions. It is time that there were more Thoreau's before it is too late. It is time to march as Thoreau and Gandhi and King did, to the different drum. Let us hope there will come a time when lots of people will be left to march to different drum.

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Dr. ASHA VISWAS  
PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH  
B. H. U., VARANASI.

Aligarh Muslim University

**Renate Sarma**

## **ACCEPTANCE OF LIFE - THE CASE OF THE BUDDENBROOKS**

*Buddenbrooks – Verfall einer Familie*, Thomas Mann's first novel, was published by Samuel Fischer in October 1901 and became an immediate success with the reading public. Within the first two years of publication ten thousand copies of the novel were sold and the 'Volksausgabe,'<sup>1</sup> a specially low-priced hard-cover edition, sold more than a million copies within a few months after the Nobel Prize for Literature had been conferred in 1929 on the author of *Buddenbrooks – The Decline of a Family*. Concerning Thomas Mann's Nobel Prize, the discerning critic James Cleugh wrote in 1933:

It was stated in the imposing document with which Mann was presented by King Gustav that the award was primarily due to the affection felt by the Scandinavian peoples for *Buddenbrooks*, that tale of a community settled by the northern sea. And, indeed, this work, with its Nordic setting, rivaled the masterpieces of non-German Baltic lands in its homely ease, rich content and passages of austere eloquence. But there can be no question that if Mann had produced nothing else he would not have found himself in the select company of Anatole France, Rudyard Kipling, Sinclair Lewis and Gerhart Hauptmann.<sup>2</sup>

By the time of Thomas Mann's birth centenary in 1975, the novel had been translated into many languages<sup>3</sup> and a hundred years after its first appearance *Buddenbrooks* remains one of the few works of high literary value that is popular across a wide spectrum of society, in the original German and in translations.<sup>4</sup>

Thomas Mann always spoke with affection about *Buddenbrooks*, the novel of his youth which he began writing in Italy, while living with his elder brother in Rome and Palestrina. Heinrich Mann was trying his talent at painting at that time, while Thomas had vague plans of a career in journalism. Eventually, both brothers became novelists with Heinrich Mann's first novel, *Im Schlaraffenland* (*In the Land of Milk and Honey*), appearing in 1900, followed in 1901 by *Buddenbrooks – Verfall einer Familie*. What had been first conceived as a short story about a precocious boy of delicate health, mediocre pupil, and introvert youth had become a full-length novel depicting an age.<sup>5</sup>

As the tale grew in the telling, the 'school story' stands as the long second chapter in the eleventh, final part of the family chronicle and is followed by the short, penultimate chapter of the novel containing the staccato report of the death from typhoid of young Hanno, only child of Senator Thomas Buddenbrook. Many of the characters and many events of the novel are taken from the history of the author's own family, patrician merchants of Lübeck whose firm, founded in 1794 by Johann Siegmund Mann, prospered in the 19th century. When insolvency of the old firm had to be declared upon the death in 1892 of Thomas Mann's father, Senator Thomas Johann Heinrich Mann, the Senator's widow Julia Mann, of North German – Portuguese – Creole descent, left the Hanseatic city on the Trave, close to the Baltic Sea, to settle with her

children<sup>6</sup> in the South, making München, the cultural centre of the newly founded German Reich, their home.

In the novel, life in the North German Free and Hanseatic City of Lübeck<sup>7</sup> is shown with a wealth of realistic detail. Traits of character and events from the lives of Lübeck's citizens can be traced throughout the chronicle which touches upon the rise and fall of the fortunes of various merchant families, focusing in particular on the Buddenbrooks of the fourth generation: Senator Thomas Buddenbrook and his wife, enigmatic Gerda née Arnoldsen from Amsterdam, correspond to the author's parents, while Senator Mann's sister, Elisabeth Amalia Hyppolitha Mann and his youngest brother, Friedrich Wilhelm Lebrecht Mann, also appear as Buddenbrooks of the fourth generation, namely as decadent Christian and twice divorced Antonie, younger brother and sister of Thomas Buddenbrook. Thus, the major characters and also innumerable minor characters could be recognized by contemporary readers as closely modeled on prominent members of society of the author's native Lübeck. The novel about the decline of a family was read as a *roman à clef* by the citizens of the old Hanseatic city and became a *cause célèbre*, although the name of the Buddenbrooks' city is never expressly mentioned. Lübeck's proud patricians felt ridiculed by Thomas Mann's ironic portrayal of their way of life.<sup>8</sup> Resentment against the young author's scrutiny was felt all the more because his style was characterized by a skeptical, analytical intelligence. In *Buddenbrooks*, as in Thomas Mann's life, it is the critical observer who is the judge of the norms of society. The timeless importance of Thomas Mann's first novel stems from this critical scrutiny of accepted norms and from fact that the author used the biography of his ancestors and their city for the portrayal of the transition from the stable

bourgeois life of the early 19th century to the *fin de siècle* modern uncertainty.

In outline, the contents of the novel may be told briefly: Founded in 1768, the firm of Johann Buddenbrook, wholesale grain merchants, prospered even in the difficult times of the Napoleonic wars at the beginning of the 19th century. By 1835, when the novel opens, the Buddenbrooks of the second and third generation, Johann Buddenbrook senior and his second son, Consul Jean Buddenbrook, are the joint owners of the firm which also represents the interests of the Netherlands in the Hanseatic city. Consul Buddenbrook's heir is his firstborn son Thomas. With Thomas Buddenbrook's election to the Senate, the highest governing body of the Free Hanseatic City State, the Buddenbrooks of the fourth generation reach the peak of success. This is reflected in the splendor with which the 100th anniversary of the firm is celebrated as an important event in the history of the old Hanseatic city. As members of the proud patriciate, the Buddenbrooks stand for the norms of the society to which they belong, and they accept the responsibilities that go with their social position. In the spring of 1875, after Senator Thomas Buddenbrook's sudden, premature death the firm is liquidated as stipulated in Thomas Buddenbrook's testament. After the death of the late Senator's only child, Hanno - Justus, Johann, Kaspar Buddenbrook - the male line of the Buddenbrook family of the fifth generation is extinct and half a year later, in October 1877, the Senator's widow Gerda returns to her father in Amsterdam.

In his chronicle of the Buddenbrook family's rise and fall Thomas Mann depicts a world that was no more even at the time of his writing. And even a hundred years later, the novel is of absorbing interest because the human experience as such is made tangible in the Buddenbrooks'

rise to eminence and the decline of their fortunes. By telling about the deterioration within a close-knit community of burghers the novel had heralded encompassing changes of society. Thomas Mann's contribution to life and letters of 20th century Germany was discussed in a succinct tribute to the author's outspoken criticism of the Third Reich. Published on the occasion the author's birth anniversary, this essay, "The Writer as a Critical Citizen," also touches upon his role as an artist:

Thomas Mann was born four years after the Second German Imperial Reich and died five years after the establishment of the Second German Republic. This has to be kept in mind when we speak of him as a contemporary. He began as the legitimate successor to Tolstoy and Fontane and ended in freely admitted proximity to James Joyce. This has to be remembered when we speak of him as an artist. He was the only man of his time to span in his own development the entire development of the modern prose epic; and everything which has happened to the world, men and art in the first half of our century can be read from the passages of his work.<sup>9</sup>

Towards the end of his life, the famous author admitted candidly that he achieved more in his first novel than he had aimed at.<sup>10</sup> This frank statement on Thomas Mann's part brings into focus one more aspect from which the work's immediacy of appeal derives: *Buddenbrooks* is the first full length novel in modern German literature. In 1774, Goethe had gained an international reputation at twenty-five when his novel in letters, *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (*The Sorrows of Young Werther*), had

swept though Europe. But even so, the 19th century of German literature had belonged to poetry, drama and philosophy. True, there were Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* (begun in 1777, completed in 1820), and Gottfried Keller's *Der grüne Heinrich* (1851), both novels about the central character's formative years, i.e. Bildungsromane, but they were exceptions and, moreover, these novels found limited response, even within Germany. Only towards the end of the 19th century, with Theodor Fontane's *Effie Briest* (1895), the prose narrative depicting an age had been raised to the level of a work of art in German literature. *Effie Briest* is a slim volume, corresponding in length and depth more to works that are classified under the term Novellen<sup>11</sup> in German speaking countries, in contradistinction to novels, termed Romane. However, if presentation of believable characters in believable relationships is accepted as the basic demand in the definition of the novel, then the story of *Effie Briest* must indeed be considered German literature's first short novel and Fontane's best, with keen observation of nature and use of leitmotifs. Thomas Mann admired Fontane's prose with its long, drawn-out sentences minutely recording details of the outer world so that inherent inner truth becomes transparent.

In his own writings, from the early stories on, Thomas Mann mastered that German prose style so ideally suited to use of the anticipatory technique. His family chronicle is a straightforward, well-told story with true-to-life characters and incidents spanning an "actual" time of thirty-two years, from 1835 to 1877. The many strands of the long narrative<sup>12</sup> are held together with the help of leitmotifs in which outer and inner reality are fused. References to nature, to light and darkness and the passage of time, to hours of the day and the seasons of the year carry deep significance in *Buddenbrooks*.

The ocean, in particular Travemünde, the port and resort on the Baltic, stand for freedom as opposed to the norms of the conservative, staid Hanseatic society: during summers at the seaside, the shy, dreamy, late-born heir of the Buddenbrooks, little Hanno, can forget his burden of living up to the expectations of his teachers and his family;<sup>13</sup> in Travemünde, Mademoiselle Antonie Buddenbrook can be young Tony, falling in love with the harbor pilot's son, Morten Schwarzkopf, student of medicine;<sup>14</sup> during his last visit to the Baltic Sea, Senator Buddenbrook, exhausted, tired of success, and weary of life, can attempt to find inner peace.<sup>15</sup>

References to the sky and clouds occur at decisive events as markers of the importance of the scene, as, e.g., in the brief chapter about the affair between Consul Jean Buddenbrook's elder son and the young salesgirl, little Anna. At their farewell, the motif of the clear sky and a remarkable sunset stand for the acceptance of both partners that their relationship would not withstand social pressures, that their love was meant to remain something apart from reality, elusively beautiful:

Thomas Buddenbrook walked down Meng Strasse as far as "Five Houses." (...) The sky was a cold, bright blue, and the air had a sharp, crisp bite to it, twenty degrees – still, clear, wintry weather, a perfect February day.

Thomas walked past Five Houses, crossed Becker Grube, and entered a narrow alley that came out onto Fischer Grube, which ran steeply downhill to the Trave, parallel to Meng Strasse. He followed it a short distance before stopping at a small house – a flower shop with a narrow door

and a window decorated with a few meager pots of lilies arranged in a row on a shelf of green glass. (...)

It was warm in the shop, the damp odor of soil and flowers hung in the air. Outside, the winter sun was about to set. Dusk glowed in the sky beyond the river – delicate, pure, pale, like something painted on fine china. Their chins hidden in the turned-up collars of their overcoats, people hurried past the window, not even noticing the two of them saying their goodbyes in one corner of the little flower shop.<sup>16</sup>

Here, the fading light of the setting sun accentuates the beauty of the sky for a brief moment before the early darkness of Northern winter days. The very nature of the glow that is cast on this parting indicates that the end of this relationship is as inevitable as the passage of time: beauty is thus shown to exist only for fleeting moments, as a play of the reflection of light. Moreover, beauty is not of this world and, when present, is exotic and fragile: “Anna was wearing a white apron over her simple black dress. She was extraordinarily pretty and as delicate as a gazelle. Her face had something almost Malaysian about it:(...).”<sup>17</sup> Ethereal beauty is bound to suffer in a harsh climate. Left behind here are a submissive young woman, strangely out of place, and some precariously positioned lilies “a few meager pots of lilies (...) on a shelf of green glass,” for sale in an unfashionable neighborhood’s old flower shop, accessible through back-lanes and side-alleys leading to the river. That is to say: there is little time left for the experience of beauty and love in a decadent world in which the loss of innocence has become merely a topic of discussion between lovers who suppress their emotions and seek solace in faded memories. Adjusting to reality and

disowning passions, these are the lessons a true Buddenbrook learns early in order to succeed in the world and take his rightful place in society. With Thomas Mann, the Romantic notions of love and beauty are *passé*.

Throughout the novel, light and darkness are used as symbols for life and death. The sudden death of Consul Jean Buddenbrook is anticipated by the gathering of dark clouds and absolute, oppressive stillness before a storm.<sup>18</sup> Senator Thomas Buddenbrook's longing for an active life is shown in his fascination with light: as a special feature the luxurious house he built for the Buddenbrooks of future generations has a spacious entrance hall with a "vast open stairwell, which on the second floor was framed by a continuation of the wrought-iron railing and on the third by a gallery of white-and-gold columns; it ended in a massive burnished chandelier suspended from the dizzying heights of the 'skylight.'" <sup>19</sup> A later scene shows Thomas Buddenbrook alone at night in his elegant sitting room, summoning up his courage to take a risk:

A great uneasiness came over him, a need for movement, space, and light. He pushed his chair back, crossed to the salon, and lit several gas jets on the chandelier above the center table. (...) Then he pulled himself together, returned by way of the sitting room to the dining room, and lit the gas jets there, too. (...)

Now the whole floor was illuminated by a few gas jets, as if a party had just ended and the last guest departed. The senator strode the length of the grand hall, stood there at the window opposite the den, and stared out into the garden.<sup>20</sup>

Only after careful deliberations he takes the decision to accept an offer which goes against the business traditions of the old firm, namely the purchase for a lump-sum payment of an estate's entire crop in the blade, a deal that means invariably a loss to the farmer, but is highly profitable for the merchant, if the harvest turns out to be plentiful. Yet before the Buddenbrooks' harvest can ripen, it is totally destroyed by freak weather -- a brief hailstorm. That this misfortune occurs on the day of the celebrations of the 100th anniversary of the firm and that the head of the house of Buddenbrook had watched the clouds without any forebodings makes the irony more pronounced:

Thomas Buddenbrook had joined Stephan Kistenmaker, Senator Gieseke, and Voigt the architect at the back of the stairwell, between the door opening onto the smoking room and the flight of stairs to the third floor. He stood leaning against the wall, contributing a comment to the conversation now and then, but for the most part gazing silently and vacantly out over the banister. The heat had increased and become even more oppressive; but rain was no longer out of the question, because, to judge from the shadows drifting across the skylight, the skies were clouding over. The shadows were moving so rapidly, in fact, one after another, that the almost constant flicker of light in the stairwell hurt his eyes. The bright gilt trim of the plasterwork, the luster of the chandelier, the gleam of the brass instruments below would vanish one moment, only to flash brilliantly in the next. Only once did the shadows linger a little longer than usual, and then five, six, seven

times, with short pauses in between, there could be heard a soft clatter as something hard struck the skylight – a little hail, no doubt of it. Then sunlight filled the house again from top to bottom.<sup>21</sup>

In his brilliant study of Thomas Mann, *The Ironic German*, Erich Heller pointed out that *Buddenbrooks* is part of the tradition of European realism and, at the same time, also a philosophical novel.<sup>22</sup> There are passages reminiscent of Schopenhauer's pietism and yet the dominant note struck in the telling is not pessimism. Rather, severing of relationships, premature deaths, natural calamities, and even the bad fortunes of a patrician family are portrayed as inevitable, as part and parcel of life. That is why the decline of the family is given prominence in the novel's subtitle: the end of the Buddenbrooks' good fortunes is to be anticipated. From this perspective, Tony Buddenbrooks' veneration of the family and her refusal to come to terms with reality is seen as futile, as behavior that is frequently quite improper and ridiculous. However, if generations laughed about Madame Permaneder, the former Madame Grünlich, who remains young Tony Buddenbrook all through, the readers also always loved her naiveté, finding themselves in full agreement with her brother Thomas' analysis of her dominant trait of character trait, childlike simplicity:

"She is priceless, Mother! There's no one like her for playing the hypocrite. I'm simply mad about her, because she's simply incapable of disguising her true feelings, doesn't come within a thousand miles of it."<sup>23</sup>

The novel's sustained appeal to German readers has to do also with the author's use of the subtle irony and dry humor of *Plattdeutsch*, the Low German dialect which was the language of the common man and was, in the 19th century, also the language of Lübeck's aristocratic Hanseatic society. Writing in 1924, the gifted Helen T. Lowe-Porter who understood translating as 'the bold task of transferring the spirit first and the letter so far as might be' stressed the great difficulties she encountered while rendering into English Thomas Mann's original:

*Buddenbrooks* (...) a German classic (...) is one of those novels – we possess many of them in English – which are at once a work of art and the unique record of a period and a district. *Buddenbrooks* is great in its psychology, great as a monument of a vanished cultural tradition, and ultimately great by the perfection of its art: the classic purity and beautiful austerity of its style.

The translation of a book which is a triumph of style in its own language, is always a piece of effrontery. *Buddenbrooks* is so leisurely, so chiselled: the great gulf of the war divides its literary method from that of our time. Besides, the author has recorded much dialect. This difficulty is insuperable. Dialect cannot be transferred.<sup>24</sup>

Throughout his life, Thomas Mann enjoyed the wry humor of *Plattdeutsch*, the dialect of the northernmost part of Germany. Low German as a literary language was pioneered by Fritz Reuter<sup>25</sup> in his autobiographical writings. Imprisoned on the allegation of seditious activities as a member of a student's fraternity and democrat, Reuter began writing during his long years of solitary

confinement. After his release, he led an unsteady life of wandering, but continued writing and gained literary fame during his lifetime, his works becoming classics of German literature. Thomas Mann acknowledged the influence of Reuter's work as one of his first literary impressions, tracing the importance of Low German humor in *Buddenbrooks* to his mother's habit of reading aloud to her young children from books like *Ut de Franzosentid*, and *Ut mine Festungstid*. Mann's remarks in a radio discussion on 'Humour and Irony' are revealing:

Irony, it seems to me, is that spirit in art (Kunstgeist) which draws a smile from the reader or listener, an intellectual smile, I might call it; while humor induces the laughter that wells up from the heart. This I personally rate higher as the effect of art (...).

I don't think that readers will find irony predominant in *Buddenbrooks*, the book of my youth which in a sense laid the foundation of everything that was to follow. Rather, it is a book of pessimistic humor – forgive the perhaps paradoxical combination – a book whose sources and ingredients are not only Schopenhauer and Wagner and the French, Russian, and English novel, but not least the Low German sense of humor as it is expressed in the work of Fritz Reuter, one of my very first literary impressions, which left a definite mark on this book.<sup>26</sup>

There are clear echoes in *Buddenbrooks* of Reuter's life and the lost hopes of 19th century German democrats when young Morten Schwarzkopf, idealistic dreamer of equality and the sovereignty of the people, sitting with

Tony on the shores of the Baltic, swears her to secrecy while admitting his membership in a Burschenschaft. Irony and humor blend perfectly in this scene where young innocents, close to acknowledging their mutual attraction, first seek clarification of an earlier conversation, then postpone the question since it might be construed as a declaration of love, and finally talk instead about another secret, only to realize that they belong to different worlds, and that words fail them:

"Do you remember", Morten began again, "how I once told you that there was a question I wanted to ask you? (...) Don't guess. You can't possibly know what it is. I'll ask some other time, (...) for today I'll just let you in on a secret...something quite different. Look at this."

Morten pulled out the end of a narrow, gaily striped ribbon from his jacket pockets, and gazed with both expectation and triumph into Tony's eyes.

"It's very pretty," she said, not understanding. "What does it mean?"

"It means that I belong to a fraternity in Göttingen – and now you know. I have a cap with these colors, too, but while I'm on vacation, my skeleton is wearing it along with his police uniform. Because I wouldn't dare be seen with it here, you see. I can depend on you not to say anything, can't I? If my father ever learned about this, it would be a disaster."

"Not a word, Morten. No, you can count on me. But I don't really know anything about what it means. Have you all

sworn to overturn the nobility? What is it you want?"

"We want freedom!" Morten said.

"Freedom?" she asked.

"Why, yes, freedom, you know, freedom," he repeated, gesturing somewhat awkwardly but enthusiastically toward the sea --- (...).

They said nothing for a long time. And while the sea murmured ponderously and peacefully below, Tony suddenly felt herself united with Morten in a great, vague, yearning, intuitive understanding of what "freedom" meant.<sup>27</sup>

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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<sup>1</sup> The story of how this 'folk edition' came about is included in Frau Katia Mann's 'unwritten memoirs', the book of reminiscences narrated within the family circle, which Thomas Mann's wife agreed to get published towards the end of her life. See Katia Mann, *Meine ungeschriebenen Memoiren*, edited by Elisabeth Plessen and Michael Mann, (Frankfurt 1975), pp.40 - 42.

<sup>2</sup> James Cleugh, *Thomas Mann, A Study*, (New York 1933), p. 65. Frau Katia Mann also stresses that the publication in 1924 of *Der Zauberberg* (*The Magic Mountain*) must have been an important factor in the deliberations of the Nobel Prize committee. See Katia Mann, *op. cit.*, pp. 62 - 63.

<sup>3</sup> The first works of Thomas Mann to be translated into English were the novel of his courtship and early marriage, *Königliche Hoheit* (1910), i.e., *Royal Highness* (1916) and the stories about the author and his dog, published in German as *Herr und Hund* in 1919 and four years later in England under the title *Bashan and I*. For insightful comments on this 'idyll' see James Cleugh, op. cit., pp. 47 - 48.

The authorized translation of *Buddenbrooks* – *The Decline of a Family* by the eminently capable Helen T. Lowe-Porter was brought out by Martin Secker and Warburg in 1924 (copyright Alfred Knopf) and was, from 1957 on, available in Penguin Books also. Helen T. Lowe-Porter made it her life's work to translate Thomas Mann's oeuvre. The recent edition of her translation of *Buddenbrooks*, in Penguin Twentieth - Century Classics (ISBN 0-14-018138-5), has a particularly well-executed cover, showing a detail from Edvard Munch's painting 'The Linder Children' in the Munch Museum, Oslo.

A new translation, by John E. Woods, was published by Alfred Knopf in hardcover in 1993 and in paperback as First Vintage International Edition (New York 1994, ISBN 0-679-75260-9); in the present paper, quotes from *Buddenbrooks* are to this edition.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Kindlers Literatur Lexikon im dtv*, München 1986, p. 1676. See also the survey regarding the favorite novels of young German readers and Marcel Reich-Ranicki's canon of the twenty most important novels in German, published in *Welt am Sonntag*, Nr. 21, 26. Mai 2002, p. 56. The first column with the year of publication has been added for easy reference:

1774 *Die Leiden des jungen Werther* von Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

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- 1809 *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* von Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
- 1815 *Die Elxiere des Teufels* von E.T.A. Hoffmann
- 1854 *Der grüne Heinrich* (Erstfassung) von Gottfried Keller
- 1892 *Frau Jenny Treibel* von Theodor Fontane
- 1895 *Effi Briest* von Theodor Fontane
- 1901 *Buddenbrooks* von Thomas Mann
- 1924 *Der Zauberberg* von Thomas Mann
- 1905 *Professor Unrat* von Heinrich Mann
- 1905 *Unterm Rad* von Heinrich Hesse
- 1906 *Die Verwirrungen des Zöglings Törless* von Robert Musil
- 1925 *Der Prozess* von Franz Kafka
- 1930 *Berlin Alexanderplatz* von Alfred Döblin
- 1932 *Radetzkymarsch* von Josef Roth
- 1941 *Das siebte Kreuz* von Anna Seghers
- 1951 *Strudlhofstiege* von Heimito von Doderer
- 1951 *Tauben im Gras* von Wolfgang Koeppen
- 1959 *Die Blechtrommel* von Günter Grass
- 1975 *Montauk* von Max Frisch
- 1984 *Holzfällen* von Thomas Bernhard

<sup>5</sup> In 1898, the famous publishing house of Samuel Fischer had brought out a collection of novellas by Thomas Mann under the title *Der kleine Herr Friedemann*. Subsequently, Fischer also asked the young author to write a full-length novel. However, when the collection of novellas had not sold well, Fischer was reluctant to read the bulky, handwritten manuscript of *Buddenbrooks*. There followed a battle of wits between the publisher and his budding author, with the manuscript of the future best-seller being accepted only after Thomas Mann's refusal to submit an abridged version of the novel. Cf. Renate Sarma, 'Thomas Mann and

the *Buddenbrooks*,' in: *The Aligarh Magazine* 1992-93, (Aligarh 1993), p. 41.

The first edition of the *Buddenbrooks* was published from Berlin by S. Fischer in 1901 in two volumes, volume I ending with Tony Buddenbrook's second divorce (Part Six, Chapter 11). Concerning the immediacy of the impact of Thomas Mann's first novel see also the essay by Hedwig Fischer, wife of Samuel Fischer, entitled 'Als ich Thomas Mann zum ersten Mal begegnete ...' ('My first meeting with Thomas Mann ...'), in: *Die Neue Rundschau, Sonderausgabe zu Thomas Manns 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Gottfried Bermann-Fischer, (Stockholm, 6. Juni 1945), pp. 78 – 81; reprinted as a facsimile edition in March 1975.

<sup>6</sup> Senator Thomas Johann Heinrich Mann (1840 – 1892) and his wife Julia Mann, nee da Silva-Bruhns (1851 – 1923) had five children: Luis Heinrich (1871 – 1950), Paul Thomas (1875 – 1955), Julia (1877- 1927), Carla (1881- 1910) and Viktor (1890 – 1949).

Thomas Mann and his wife Katia Mann, nee Pringsheim, had six children: Erika (1905 – 1969), Klaus (1906 – 1949), Golo (1909 – 1994), Monika (1910 – 1992), Elisabeth (1918 – 2002) and Michael (1919 – 1877).

A recent long documentary on the Mann family, entitled *Die Manns*, by Heinrich Breloer and Horst Königstein, which was broadcast on German television on three successive evenings, namely the 5th, 6th and 7th December 2001, was a great success and was followed by the book to the film.

<sup>7</sup> The North German city of Lübeck lies on the Trave which flows towards the Baltic Sea. Founded in the early 13th century, Lübeck has been an important trading centre since the Middle Ages. As members of the 'Hanse', the

Association of Free City States, Lübeck's patrician merchants enjoyed special privileges of export and import and owned fleets sailing to Russia, Scandinavia and England. By the end of the 19th century only the three Hanseatic cities of Hamburg, Bremen and Lübeck retained their independence. Lübeck had the status of a Free and Hanseatic City until World War II; Bremen and Hamburg still have the special status of City States within the Federal Republic of Germany and are governed by an elected senate.

<sup>8</sup> The reconciliation came about only towards the end of the author's life. Among the many honours bestowed on Thomas Mann was, on the occasion of his 80th birthday, the honorary citizenship of his native Lübeck.

<sup>9</sup> Peter de Mendelssohn, 'The Writer as a Critical Citizen,' in: *Thomas Mann 1875 / 1975*, (Bonn - Bad Godesberg, Inter Nationes 1975), pp.5-31, the quote is from pp.27-28.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. the lecture, entitled *Meine Zeit (My Times)* first delivered in Chicago and published by S. Fischer (Frankfurt 1950).

<sup>11</sup> Theodor Fontane (1819 -1898); North German of Huguenot descent, trained and worked as an apothecary before establishing himself as a journalist and independent author. From 1851 on he published poems and autobiographical sketches of people and places, writing from London, Berlin and the Mark Brandenburg, Italy, and as a correspondent from France during the Prussian-French war of 1870-71. The long prose narratives in naturalistic style with use of leitmotif technique and fine nuances in the portrayal of character development for which Fontane is remembered by German readers were all written after 1876:

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*Vor dem Sturm; L'Adultera; Schach von Wuthenow; Irrungen, Wirrungen; Stine; Effie Briest; and Der Stechlin.*

<sup>12</sup> In the Vintage paperback of 1994, the novel has 731 pages.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *Buddenbrooks*, Part Ten, Chapter 3, pp. 610 – 619.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. *Buddenbrooks*, Part Three ('Dedicated to my sister Julia, in memory of our bay on the Baltic'), Chapters 5 – 12, pp. 113 – 152, esp. pp. 140 – 141.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *Buddenbrooks*, Part Ten, Chapter 6, pp. 640 – 649, esp. p. 648.

<sup>16</sup> *Buddenbrooks*, Part Three, Chapter 7, pp. 163 – 166, the quote is from pp. 163 & 166.

<sup>17</sup> *Buddenbrooks*, Part Three, Chapter 7, pp. 163 – 166, the quote is from p. 164.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. *Buddenbrooks*, Part Four, Chapter 11, pp. 238 – 242.

<sup>19</sup> *Buddenbrooks*, Part Seven, Chapter 6, pp. 418 – 422; the quote is from p. 418.

<sup>20</sup> *Buddenbrooks*, Part Eight ('Dedicated to my brother Heinrich – to the man and to the writer'), Chapter 4, pp. 458 – 467, the quote is from pp. 462 & 463.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *Buddenbrooks*, Part Eight, Chapter 5, pp. 468 – 484, the quote is from p. 481.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Erich Heller, *The Ironic German. A Study of Thomas Mann* (Boston 1958); German translation: *Thomas Mann. Der ironische Deutsche* (Frankfurt 1959), pp. 9–60, the chapter on *Buddenbrooks* was reprinted in: Jost Schillemeit, ed., *Interpretationen III: Deutsche Romane von Grimmelshausen bis Musil*, Fischer Bücherei Nr. 716, Frankfurt 1966, pp. 230 – 268. In this connection, see also Jethro Bithell, *Modern German Literature. 1880 – 1950*, (London 1959), p. 310.

<sup>23</sup> *Buddenbrooks*, Part Six, Chapter 1, pp. 301 – 305, the quote is from p. 305.

<sup>24</sup> H. T. Lowe Porter, 'Translator's Note', in: *Buddenbrooks*, Penguin Twentieth Century Classics edition, p. v.

<sup>25</sup> Fritz Reuter (1810 – 1874); sentenced to death for alleged seditious activities as a member of a Burschenschaft which participated in the "Hambacher Fest," held on 27. 5. 1832 in Thüringen, where more than 30 000 democrats met to speak up for fraternity, equality and sovereignty of the people, demanding republic governments for a unified Germany in place of rule of hereditary princes in the much-divided small German monarchies. Granted mitigation by royal decree of the death sentence to 30 years of solitary incarceration, Reuter received a pardon only towards the end. Began writing diaries while imprisoned and led an unsteady life of wandering after his release, settling at the end of life in the foothills of the Wartburg, the medieval castle near Eisenach in central Germany, where the "Hambacher Fest" had been held.

Fritz Reuter is considered the pioneer of dialect as a part of the literary tradition, and his autobiographical works

in *Platt*, i.e. Low German, are classics of German literature and include *Kein Hüsung* (1858), *Ut de Franzosentid* (1859), *Ut mine Festungstid* (1862), and *Ut mine Stromtid* (1864).

<sup>26</sup> Thomas Mann's remarks in a radio discussion on "Humour and Irony," aired on September 15, 1953, included in: Henry Hatfield (ed.), *Thomas Mann: A Collection of Critical Essays*, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 1964), p.171.

<sup>27</sup> *Buddenbrooks*, Part Three, Chapter 7, pp.125 – 137, the quote is from pp.136-137.

Dr Renate Sarma  
Robert Koch Strasse 11  
34576 Homberg  
GERMANY

Current Address:  
c/o Prof. S. R. Sarma  
Department of Asian Studies  
The University of British Columbia  
Vancouver, BC, V6T 1Z2  
CANADA

*Ismail Baroudy*

## **PROCESS AND PRODUCT: A CUMULATIVE APPROACH TO ESL / EFL WRITING PEDAGOGY**

### **Abstract :**

Recently, composing is theoretically viewed as a dynamic process via which student writers discover what they already know. They, in fact, experience writing as a process of creating meaning to be recreated by real audiences. By contrast, student writers, following the traditional approach, were formerly trained to practise reproducing different types of paragraphs and texts; thus, focussing mimetically, on the form of the finished product they use and produce. Despite the historic paradigm shift; from product to process, it must be pointed out that student writers still need structures and models to emulate writing by process for real audiences and real purposes. The present study investigates the possibility of rationally integrating process and product in L<sub>1</sub> or L<sub>2</sub> writing classroom settings. In view of the fact that process and product are technically described to appear sharply contrastive; almost mutually exclusive in properties and principles, a consecutive type of eclecticism, to make up for the failure with a simultaneous agenda was justifiably proposed to experimentally comply with. Two options of consecutive eclecticism were hypothetically speculated. They might categorically serve to function as a) product to be followed by process or b) process to be followed by product. Taking the contextual and the learner factors into consideration, the analysis of those two eclectic options, based on indexes and parameters provided, can effectively contribute to help writing practitioners justifiably come up with a final decision as to stress one of the eclectic options over the other.

**Background:**

The process/product dichotomy in the teaching and the learning of ESL / EFL writing is seen to have been hastily interpreted to bear, embedded within its plausible corpus, mutually exclusive components. Accordingly, based on the standards advocated, the process paradigm in vogue is dramatically celebrated to have been stressed over the product - model based writing. Conversely, the dichotomy in focus, on having been inquisitively inspected, is seen to have been confidently asserted to reflect inherently a case of complementary distribution implicitly assigning tendencies; process and product, a fair chunk of pedagogical labor. Hence, the process / product bias is integratively worked out to have student writers' untapped potentialities activated and liberated; to have the pre-allocated instructional objectives accomplished and implemented.

Admittedly, concurrent, or simultaneous eclecticism whether intuitive, practical, theoretical or of a systematic genre is inquisitively experimented with to adversely turn out unproductive; almost a failure the research is to shoulder heavily the consequences. Interestingly, a quite different version of eclecticism denominated and specified by Marton (1988) as that of a 'consecutive' category is proposed to undertake, wrapping up integratively the prototypical dichotomy of process and product, or product and process, respectively.

Further, this project is seen to have been academically assigned to betray demonstrating and proposing two separate options of 'consecutive eclecticism' category. As stipulated in advance, the first informs writing teachers of a privilege to adopt an eclectic enterprise schematized as 'the

product approach to be followed by the process advocacy'. Whereas, the second option, is directed to recommend the other way round i.e. ' the process approach to be followed by a product advocacy '.

This article, with a view to helping writing teachers come up with a decisive conclusion, explicitly elaborates on both the consecutive options. But, writing teachers are invited to make a choice of ' the process to be followed by product ' version based on pedagogical implications diligently honed and provided. Student writers are expected to have their writing abilities appropriately entertained and developed. By far, indexical parameters such as those of 'student writers' and 'contextual factors' are categorically accounted for to help ESL / EFL writing teachers, so as to attain maximum efficiency, justifiably capitalize on one relevant option rather than the other.

Based on the above outline, this study also discloses, that a biased approach to writing, even when the process is stressed over product, is not anticipated to come up, at least, with some optimal rewards. To make up for all that, writing teachers are advised to work in favor of an integrative approach, comprising both process and product activities. Such a compromise is expected to have maximum efficiency in the domain of EFL / ESL writing pedagogy triumphantly secured and accomplished, and to have the expectations and requirements of the contemporary millennium practically recapitulated and successfully fulfilled in some authentic writing classroom contexts.

### **Process and Product: Proposals for integration**

The dynamics of writing cannot be realized and approached unless the features of both the writing process and the written product are formally investigated, which means the student writer and the text are assumed to invariably function as mutually interdependent components. By inference, writing teachers are, instructed not to conform themselves to the idea of detaching the act of writing from its target; the process of writing from the type of discursive text the student writer aims to explore and create. Ulla Connor (1987) cited in Chaudron (1987: 674) has pointed out how various approaches to the description and evaluation of writing products take into account the processes student writers consciously or unconsciously undergo while constructing texts. Moreover, she demonstrates that justifiable inferences about student writers composing processes are seen to depend on adequate analysis of the written product as well.

When writing is referred to by both composition and composing, or by both the text and the activity (Arndt, 1987) concomitantly, the finished products and the processes underlying their production are essentially included. This outlook reflects the alternative foci made available to those shouldering the assignment of teaching such a "highly specialized type of communicative competence" (Arndt, 1987: 257). Zamel (1983: 176) developed intelligent awareness about her skilled ESL student writers, to have gone too far with their focussing separately on meaning in isolation. Hence, they have been kept away from carefully attending to, or inquisitively examining certain surface features of the writing. If student writers are noticed to have been focussing on meaning,

teachers accordingly, should consider the urgent need to take both product and process into full consideration. Student writers " should be taught not only heuristic devices to focus on meaning but also heuristic devices to focus on rhetorical and linguistic features after the ideas have found some form " (Raimes, 1985: 248). Zamel (1983) finds that first revisions usually address very general issues such as those of content, organization or purpose of the entire piece, while each subsequent revision turns ascending to more formal considerations and finally to sentence polishing. By the same token, Nattinger (1984: 3906) sums up a perspective that stresses merging process and product so as to promote the efficiency of the two modes of writing. Of course, this can be accomplished by reiterating that " fluency - letting ideas flow - is an immediate result and happens in the context of goal and reader expectations. " As the revision gets closer to the intended meaning, accuracy of form begins to be attended to " (Nattinger, 1984).

"This is also of particular importance, given the fact that many ESL teachers still do not view process approach as applicable to or appropriate for student writers whose English is distinguished to be limited". "Teachers, in this case, may be found inclined to give up English writing as an instructional activity and to stress considering the formal aspects: spelling, vocabulary and grammar as essential requirements of language"(Ammon, 1985:83,cited the in Zamel, 1987:709). Process writing teachers do not prepare student writers to experience real writing, to take essay exams, to write highly structured assignments, to write about impersonal topics, to get involved in all academic activities. Hence, Liebman - Klein (1986: 784) finds the dichotomy of process and product, or product and process " false and unproductive ". She thinks " such a dichotomy leads those who are concerned with teaching writing to

university students to prematurely reject some valuable insights and methods ". Hairstone (1982) cited in Hamp - Lyons (1986: 974) points out that Kuhn (1970) considers new paradigms to be " crude and uninformed ". Since they seldom possess all the capabilities " the best part of the earlier paradigm must be preserved ". Hamp - Lyons (1986: 794) contesting the views of Horowitz (1986), declares that " attention to writing as product is essential ", if successful functioning in academic discourse community is aimed at. But, she strongly opposes the idea to achieve the objective proposed, by rejecting, denying or ignoring the process paradigm. Hamp - Lyons (1986: 794) argues against competing paradigms for teaching composition and in favor of the search for a descriptive model, which attempts to reconcile the 'product approach', and the ' process approach '. Such reconciliation would be, of course, to "the support of teachers and the benefit of learners ". So as to avoid a prospective crisis, proponents of process writing are invited to conform themselves to the essentials of the academic life and the student writers' needs in the same manner as they behaved realistically when they reasonably complied with " their learners affective and developmental needs ". So in order to avoid pushing process approach to be identified as an outmoded paradigm, it should not be associated with " rigid rules and inflexible attitudes ".

Bizzell (1982) cited in Hamp - Lyons (1986: 793) perceives that the two modes of writing: process and product, are moving toward integration. She considers teaching composition to focus on " authentic voice " directed to discovering and describing successful writing as the primary session in the new experience. She goes further to state that " college writing teachers frequently have found themselves at odds with the institutional goal of initiation into academic discourse ". Eventually she finds those

writing teachers once more emphasizing " the traditional discourse values ".

Zamel (1987: 708) explains how " misunderstandings about process oriented instruction dichotomize the organic and integrated nature of writing into process and product ". She reveals, depending on classroom studies, how product goals can be accommodated in non- traditional student - centered environments.

Diaz (1985) and Hilderbrand (1985) are in favor of engaging their student writers in a great deal of subjective and personal writing but also assisting them in preparing themselves for " expository writing exam ". She refers to Newkirk (1984) describing student writers involved in writing about topics of their own choice, but they were also required to produce a research paper. Diaz (1986) proclaims some "Limited English Proficient student - writers engaged in writing activities that promoted self - generated knowledge", but they were supposed to have been prepared more efficiently for " school based writing ". Finally, Ammon (1985) observed children in classrooms. They were " expected not only to write but to demonstrate their mastery of technical features of writing in their texts ". Ammon's (1985) student writers achieved the required skill, which was expected of them. His student writers' " superior gains " if compared to those student writers supervised by traditional writing concepts underscores how practitioners in writing can readily acquire " knowledge, skill and language ", if they are provided with rich ", multiple and integrated experiences that help them understand how language makes meaning ".

What Zamel (1987) tries to assert can be traced in those researches she refers to, unveiling an example of

integration of some indirect category; thus, enhancing the accomplishment of what has for long been expected. A pure process model of writing that can be independently complied with, actually, can not even be theoretically imagined. There are no such students writers who will be found unilaterally engaged in process writing activities. Student writers cannot be expected to get inoculated against possible product additions or interferences. The dream of isolating student - writer in a process vacuum is a far - fetched hope, which never comes true. Writing teachers as well as student writers have no choice accordingly, but to voluntarily submit to a rational eclecticism. Leibman - Klein (1986: 785) illustrates the reasons behind such an outlook:

*People who criticize the process approach seem to treat it as some sort of monolithic entity, complete with canons and commandments . . . the process approach is not an approach, it is many approaches. There will never be a process approach because writing the process of writing is such a complicated and rich process, involving many facts of being: cognition, emotion, sense of self, sense of others, situation, background experience, development . . . process is not a dogma, but a concept that enables people to see writing in a new way and thereby ask questions that were not asked as long as people saw writing simply as finished products.*

In fact, what Zamel (1987) alluded to, implies that writing process can be sophisticatedly celebrated in the presence of attending to a logical incorporation. She believes in what Shaughnessy (1977) and other theorists

have claimed. Shaughnessy (1977) reiterates that ", in the context of creating, sharing, and valuing meaningful context; in the context of encouraging exploration and risk taking, product concerns can be addressed ":

In 1970's, the shift of emphasis in research from product to process had important bearings on the composing activities through which initiatives and meanings evolve into written texts. Thus, it is rendered unadvisable and definitely unjustifiable to let the two modes of writing: process and product, be detached from each other in teaching or research. This advocacy is well defined in Arndt's (1987: 258-259) contribution, while elaborating to neutralize or suppress the crisis by declaring that:

*... at the heart of effective writing lies the techniques for successful fusion of thought and language to fit the rhetorical context - rhetorical, that is in the fundamental sense of gearing message to audience. Such techniques are responsible for matching content with form, and for ensuring that the writing is under the control of a purpose whereby an intended meaning is successfully conveyed to an intended reader. The tantalizing question, however, is whether these matching techniques are actually accessible to consciousness, and hence to observation, and hence perhaps to being taught.*

All the approaches facilitating teaching and learning writing do overlap. It is rare to find a teacher supervising a class to be mainly devoted to one approach at the cost of excluding the others. A process-oriented teacher " will still

use techniques drawn from other approaches as the students need them; model paragraphs, controlled compositions, free writing, sentence exercises and paragraph analysis are useful in all approaches . . . since most teachers and books are eclectic, drawing from everything that is available to them " (Raimes, 1985: 11) ". There is no one way to teach writing, but many ways. Writing in process or product stems from the basic assumption that writing means a connected text, not just single sentences, that writers write for a purpose and a reader, and that the process of writing is a valuable learning tool for all our students " (Raimes, 1985: 11).

Brown (2001: 337) documents rational eclecticism embracing the process / product dichotomy. So, he informs writing teacher that

*the current emphasis on process writing must be of course be seen in the perspective of a balance between process and product. As in most language - teaching, it is quite possible for you to go to an extreme in emphasizing process to that extent that the final product diminishes in importance. Try not to let this happen! The product, after all, the ultimate goal ; it is the reason that we go through the process of prewriting, drafting, revising and editing. Without that final product firmly in view, we could quite simply drown ourselves in a sea of revisions. Process is not the end; it is the means to the end.*

On having closely inspected the tension between process and product, and having realized that both are realities that cannot be ignored, a tradition of writing is seen

to have been authentically documented to declare the legitimacy of a proposal sought to accomplish integration. In writing about literature, this has long been experienced. When a pre-established form (e.g. expository essay about literature) is involved, the knowledge of the literary text itself is accounted for to serve as a significant variable in the configuration of the essay. So as to achieve a more successful essay product, synthesis and conscious rendering of information is a vital requirement. Student writers, so as to manage and express their understanding of literature in a prescribed way, have to learn to depend on their linguistic repertoire. Surely, it is unfair to have the student writers convinced that product does not matter. The glamorous wit emerging before vanishing in the course of writing process is not significant to the writer.

Admittedly, what the reader actually cares about is not what it is that is changed or the fluency in terms of which composing is carried out by the writer. Phelps (1986), arguing for a unified theory introduces an "overarching process" as a cooperative enterprise whereby writers and readers undergo dynamic meaningful interactions. What is shared in the real world is the product, nothing else but that. So, if product is what it is that is shared in the real world, it is a hard luck not to be shared by student - writers. In sum, writing cannot be segregated from its destined target, whether fixed or open in form, anymore than life can be disunited from death. Only in a writing environment that complies with studying the tension between process and product, a phenomenon the discovery of which can be interpreted, assessed and considered to be real and lasting will practically exist.

Since these two writing modes reinforce and strengthen each other; since student writers frequently function in an English academic setting where the ability to

comprehend and express complex ideas with oral and written language is an indispensable requisite; and since more abstract ideas and complex concepts can be handled and revealed in written forms, writing and oral skills should be learned integratively or acquired simultaneously. Indeed, all language modes are rendered highly communicable and interrelated, drawing on many of the same creative processes. Thus, it is not possible or even advisable to teach writing in a discrete - point manner, non integratively, as a single skill in isolation from the others. This does not mean, on following an integrated procedure to work on, the same text in each of the four modes is processed in turn, but it claims that student writers recognize in the real world that they seldom exercise one skill at a time (Brookes and Grundy, 1990). The aim of an integrated approach is to enable the student writers, by depending on their ability to demonstrate their integrated multiskill competence to naturally transfer between one mode and the other. Writing demands an integrated approach just as much as the four skills: listening, reading and speaking do, as well.

In short, teaching each mode of writing, process or product, in isolation, very often brings about unbalanced second language writing performance. Writing as process and writing as product provide a non-stop enduring and steady subject for debate and argument. This tension is not denied to exist in most aspects of language learning and teaching. Such over-simplistic distinction between writing as process and writing as product due to the significant role the interaction existing between the two modes of writing play, lost color and got faded and it can no longer be supported in the absence of a convincing rationale.

The proponents of both the modes of writing, process and product approaches introduced some distinctive

dimensions which for further progress in style and strategy, cannot earnestly be entertained. Adequate supportive reasons are found missing as to reject the idea of integrating process with the practice of studying and even imitating written models in the classroom. But, Rodrigus (1985: 26-7) cited in Nunan (1991) has skillfully provided the rationale behind such a stance in asserting that

*The unfettered writing process approach has been just as artificial as the traditional high school research paper. Writing without structure accomplishes as writing a mock structure. Learners [Student - writers] need structure, they need models to practice, they need to improve even mechanical skills and they still need time to think through their ideas, to revise them, and to write for real audiences and real purposes.*

Rosen (1994), as well, is seen to primarily grant the writing processes due significance. At the same time, he favors maintaining unity between process and product in declaring that

*It is my experience that student will use, find, create and share forms of their own accord provided these other processes are in place. This is, of course, quite threatening to many teachers who thought that their role in encouraging writing was to teach writing. After all, what were all those college hours spent doing, if it wasn't learning how great writers write? I am suggesting that this approach denies the creative base of*

*writing. Writers need to find both the 'what' and the 'how' of writing at the same time.*

Finally, despite dichotomies such as those of product or process, writer-based or reader-based; creative or functional, linear or recursive, technique or purpose, controlled or free, quantity or quality, activity or text, composition or composing; finished product or work in progress, oral or written, cognition or insight, writing teachers should believe that these seemingly diverse, contrastive or non conforming notions are justifiably rendered constructively complementary rather than adversely serving as hostile concepts. Consequently, many a binary dichotomy as such, to promote efficiency and support productivity, are converged into one, pair-packed to form the contemporary philosophy of teaching. Reid (2001), claims that 'a false dichotomy between 'process' and 'product' classrooms arose in the L2 literature'. In the meantime, Seow (2002) declares that 'the term 'process writing' has been bandied about for quite a while in ESL classrooms. It is no more than a 'writing process approach' to teaching writing. The idea behind it is not really to dissociate writing entirely from the written product and to merely lead students through the various stages of the writing process but to construct process writing instruction that affect performance'. Besides, Nunan (1999) contributed to the same advocacy,' as White and Arndt point out, the process approach is aimed at helping the learner to develop a set of skills. As such, there is no reason why it needs necessarily be consistent with approaches that focus more on the development of an acceptable final product. What we need in writing classroom are both modes and appropriate procedure. In other words., we need both process and product'. Fortunately, no segment of a dichotomy has ever been left aside due to those emerging dichotic crises

and tensions. Of course, a merging tendency as such does not cause the researchers, scholars, teachers as well as student writers, however, to revert to the purely traditional product oriented, narrowly focused instruction (Chaudron, 1987: 674).

### **Process and Product :**

#### **An Eclectic Proposal**

Owing to the frustration and disillusionment caused by Audiolingualism encountered and experienced in the late sixties, and the detachment with the concept of universal method proposed by some language teaching theorists, the notion of eclecticism got strongly popularized and widely circulated with myriad prompts and adaptations among practising teachers who devoted themselves to the writing skill. Undoubtedly, the emergence of new trends and opinions in the domain of language pedagogy brought about some confusion among language teachers, particularly among those who were involved in developing student writers' potential abilities. Some of these writing teachers found themselves reluctantly and ignorantly clinging to whatever vogue or bandwagon trend they had blindly run across. Such teachers enthusiastically cast their votes for an 'eclectic' solution, to whatever problems their minds had been obsessed with for long. But, unfortunately, the eclecticism they were temporarily cornered by to choose was mainly an urgent product of impertinent fussy intuition, which has, been evoked to wriggle by inconsistent counter-effective thinking. The rationale behind integrating the various approaches of writing is seen to stem from such a kind of thinking. It asserts that training good writers is nothing but a kind of melting pot into which a little of everything can be added, thus fulfilling the requirements of a method expected to emerge on the scene. Logicians dealing with the concept of maximum comprehensive efficiency

have told us that any purposeful complex activity comprises a set of actions, which must be consistently coherent, typically matching each other. That is, each of them should be reinforced by the preceding one and should in turn support and reinforce the following one, so that all of them are to be found unanimously striving for a single unitary shared common goal.

Most of the flawed and futile language teaching haphazardly entertained in classrooms today is evidently ascribed to those teaching language theorists who advocate contributing to a so - called infertile, hypocrite, counter productive or practical eclecticism; a dogma mostly argued, but not rendered apt to meet the criterion of efficiency. Language pedagogy today suffers from such a deflecting shortcoming. Practical or intuitive eclecticism is accordingly seen to be exploited to fulfil the requirements of meeting a norm - referenced, optimal, pedagogical solution. Educational expertise involved in training writing teachers aiming at relieving student - writers' clamorous endeavors to accomplish their course objectives should be made conscious of such sterile fantasies and futile pipe - dreams. We are not confident about the instructions injected by some theorists into the minds of practicing teachers, as to be intuitively, creatively or democratically elective. An advice to keep away from methodology may foster prescriptivism which may unintentionally bring about unexpected, hazardous, deterring or adverse outcomes.

The idea that teachers need to be creative is indispensable advocacy, but this creativity on demand, should be based on a set of explicitly formulated educational principles, derived from the multiple variables manifested in the pedagogical fundamentals. Consequently, based on some scientifically supported underlying principles, the

teachers' experiences can be rendered justifiably interpretable; thus, invigorating the teachers' capacities to develop their own narrow procedures for every specific unrecycled situation they may look forward to encounter. Having the writing teachers merely exposed to the scholastic knowledge of Linguistics, Sociolinguistics, First and Second Language Acquisition as well as an outline of the History of Teaching the Writing Skill cannot, of course, be accounted for as something adequate enough to encourage them to work out their own private hand - made, mind-woven, self-serving teaching theories in tandem with which qualified, potential professionals are supposed to be practically trained.

The eclectic approach to language teaching, as it is commonly practised today, is reasonably rejected as an optimal solution. Practical eclecticism, as it has been formerly stated, is found to drastically suffer from inefficiency whereas theoretical eclecticism is seen to be deprived of the privilege of logical background.

The idea of theoretical eclecticism is found to stand analogous in destiny with the intuitive or practical eclecticism as falling short to embody a premise that can be logically or scientifically maintained. Scholars in such circumstances are left with no choice but to develop a new theory or to modify the theories, which they hold, bone - dry in possession. This may occur, too, when they earnestly aim at mediating in between or reconciling a couple of plausibly contradictory advocacies of almost two or more than two 'rival expedients' (Palmer: 1921) or in our case, almost two exclusively independent theories, say, product-based and process-oriented biases in writing. As a result, initiating or formulating a theory on the basis of eclecticism fails to inform any scholarly thinking of distinct value, of unique quality or of significant teaching or learning strategy.

There does not exist any type of eclectic strategy that can be rendered constructively helpful in pushing the writing industry forward.

Admittedly, all those methods and approaches emerging as fashionable vogues or even dubious fads carry embedded in themselves some valuable insights and procedures which can be coherently and systematically matched, or integrated to function as a comprehensive composite system of pedagogy. Consequently, the language educators' role can be redefined as flexible and on the move, steadily busy with the act of revising, modifying and expanding the system of language teaching. Obviously, as far as our dichotomy, process and product, is concerned, it is not accounted for as an exception. This can only be accomplished when the new functions brought into existence by the new procedures are analyzed, defined and described to have them get suitably adjusted and coherently incorporated in the most appropriate phase or stage in the chain of language teaching / learning process.

Systematic eclecticism is expected to yield some favorable learning and teaching experience, though some deficiencies are observed in practice, due to its resistance to be accurately and explicitly defined in compliance with theories of learning. Teachers training student writers are confused regarding what procedures are apt to develop the required writing competency considerably anticipated to be accomplished by students as writers. Since teachers try their best to use the classroom time in proper way, they resort to choosing only the most essential procedures nucleated in the language and in our dichotic case in writing pedagogy. The proponents of systematic eclecticism will inevitably face the problem of feeling decapacitated in selecting the most efficient procedures to cherish the required level of writing

competency. Therefore, the hazards of appealing to blindfold predictions purely as subjectivism besides exercising the most radical type of idiosyncrasies is potentially existent. Chastain (1988: 110) claims " both productive and unproductive activities are possible in any classroom, and teachers should not excuse ineffectiveness as eclecticism ", or an advocacy, a pretext and a propagation for a kind of eclecticism which can be nothing but " an excuse for irresponsible ad-hocery " (Widdowson, 1979: 243). Needless to say, adherents of systematic eclecticism will find it seriously problematic to implement their strategy in the absence of required guidance and stipulated principles. In fact, the selection and combination of an elective set of derivative aspects of diverse approaches; say, process and product biases and somehow the injection of genre and academic stylistics will be sluggishly processed. This occurs when consciously or unconsciously directive guidance and rehearsed principles are not reverted to. Rivers (1981: 54) refers to Palmer (1925) recommending the multiple line eclectic approach. She advises teachers to pick out without prejudice all that is likely to serve as facilitating factors in teaching.

Concurrent combination of approaches with the purpose of enhancing the development of language learning abilities is said to have been openly judged, and justifiably rendered unacceptable. Consequently, the idea of a simultaneous combination of two basic teaching approaches: product and process, or even product, process, genre and academic approach is reluctantly rejected. Actually the whole case, due to its failure to invigorate and promote maximum teaching efficiency is cynically treated. The three types of eclectic proposals are proved to fail, informing conclusive solutions for the possibilities of merging diverse approaches to writing: process and

product, academic or genre. Language pedagogy, resists approving such concurrent combinations. 'Practical' or 'intuitive' eclecticism is found not only dubious but also non-dependable, too. 'Theoretical' eclecticism, although potentially imagined in stock, does not practically exist. Moreover the 'systematic' eclecticism is theoretically rendered inadequate, since in practice it fails to fulfil the pre-stipulated objectives.

Still, eclecticism is not expected to be disregarded or given up. It is regarded as very advantageous with teaching programs, shouldering the ideas of combining two, three or four approaches to writing. Some teachers "cannot afford the luxury of complete dedication to teach a new method or approach which comes to vogue" (Rivers, 1981: 54), as "knowledge indicates that no single approach is the most productive for all students in all situations" (Chastain, 1988: 110). To Stern (1983: 29), consistency does not necessarily mean "the exclusive application of a particular pedagogic, linguistic or psychological theory". He concludes that many teachers are eclectic and they are of the kind that do not "subscribe to distinct language teaching approach". Of course he takes up such a stance without denying the idea that different eclectic choices exist among "different schools of thought".

Ironically, Sweet (1899) believed that a good method must be "comprehensive and eclectic . . . a mean between unyielding conservatism on the one hand and reckless radicalism on the other". Accordingly, so as to unite product and process in teaching and learning writing, the "rival expedients" (Palmer, 1921), process and product, can be separately incorporated in the curriculum so that each may serve in an orderly manner to fulfil the well anticipated functions. Despite the fact that integration is occasionally

untenable and incapable of a " prudent eclecticism " (Marckwardt, 1973 cited in Celce - Murcia, 1979), the idea in question, can be optimally worked out to have the teachers training student writers fashion their own method in consonance with the present interpretation of what language is and how it is learned. Ann C. Newton's words (1962) cited in Celce - Murcia (1979) can be displayed here to focus on the intentional attitude adopted about eclecticism. She extends her view declaring that

*An approach that is truly eclectic makes the greatest demands on teachers. It requires them to know enough about various sources, systems, and styles of teaching to choose wisely between what is good for their particular purposes and what is useful. It requires of them an intelligent skepticism and a ready enthusiasm; a willingness to reject both old and new techniques that seem unsuitable and an eagerness to refresh their teaching with useful adaptations of techniques both new and old. To do this intelligently they must be well informed about the methods and techniques that are available to them. Then they can wisely adapt, not adopt.*

In view of such awareness acquired through close observation of multiple attitudes towards eclecticism, proposal for integration to embrace process / product dichotomy is advised to be put forward. The eclectic alternative that is proposed to serve the purpose is the ' temporal consecutive version ' of merging thoughts and theories. On this ground, the notion of various consecutive combinations of our two approaches of writing is explicitly

introduced. Variations of such combinations can be readily worked out to have its validity, reliability, and practicality besides its applicability examined and cross-checked. Here, it has to be emphasized, however, that they are combined only in the consecutive sense of planning a writing course. This is conducted in such a way that for some period of time one of the approaches is applied and then, the writing teacher reasonably in the proper time, shifts to another, which in turn is relatively applied for another segment of time. Each of these possible sequential binaries; 'product to follow process' or 'process to follow product' will be briefly described and analyzed hereafter. Configurations of the student writers and contextual variables can serve making a constructive temporal / eclectic combination which is rendered more efficient than a pure, unmixed approach. Eclectic strategy, as proposed to adopt a provisionally sequential turn, can be profitably applied to remedial teaching that in turn is found justifiable by the information-processing schema as well.

This is acceptable and undeniable that exclusive use of one definite approach creates its momentum and produces a snowball effect. In this sense, the student writers become increasingly proficient in a certain way of learning and thus can gradually improve the utilization and the manifestation of their learning writing experiences.

But this growing effectiveness of learning is seen to make sense only if a given way of teaching / learning writing contributes to the emergence of L<sub>2</sub> writing competency. This is usually supposed to happen when the combination of particular approaches is meticulously and dexterously examined with one another. Sometimes, it can be inferred to be incompatible with each other in principles. So, in this sense, when found counteracting the purposes previously

prescribed, it causes demotion rather than promotion in teaching / learning efficiency. It is obvious that product - based writing is incompatible by analysis, definition or description with the process oriented approach to have them simultaneously applied. The student writers are not allowed to develop a type of writing competency, which enables them to express themselves freely and fluently. It may enable the student writers to produce correct sentences in the reconstructive sense, but, it hampers their communicative prospects as to create a conceptually driven, textually cohesive product. In fact, on the discourse level, the texts are expected to be holistically interpreted in a top - down process of understanding. Sadly, such student writers are found sententially dynamic whereas intersententially, decapacitated and almost impaired.

We are thus left with the experimental possibility of trying to consecutively combine the product paradigm with the process scheme. This combination is proved to be practically feasible. Teachers who are inclined to have some kind of compromise between the traditional orientations and the innovative concepts of teaching and learning are naturally inspired by L<sub>1</sub> and L<sub>2</sub> research in writing. However, on closer examination, this particular combination does not make much pedagogical sense since it does not guarantee any increased efficiency of teaching, but possibly, the vice - versa. It may even downgrade the effectiveness of these approaches when used separately in isolation, respectively. This is because the reconstructive activities will get confused at the beginning and will tend to treat one of the two types of writing activities as their real learning writing experience while the other type is treated as a purely academic exercise of little consequence. In this way, the 'careful' student writers will put their utmost efforts into

product whereas the adventurous type will mainly focus on communicative process of functional operations.

### **Some integration models**

The idea of incorporating process into product, or product into process is said to have been rendered parallel, almost to a certain extent, with the proposal of integrating grammatical and functional components in communicative language teaching. Also, it is manifested in the initiative of matching structural and functional aspects of language so as to fulfil the objectives of a certain kind of program (Richards and Rodger, 1986: 66). It is claimed to serve as a true cognate of integrating 'reconstructive and communicative strategies' in language teaching (Marton, 1988). The reconstructive strategy of learning is seen to stress controlled, gradual development of competence in the target language. It is based on a text, spoken or written, which provides the learner with the linguistic means in the form of syntactic structures, lexical items, phrases, collocations, etc . . . needed for the accurate and successful implementation of a productive task assigned by the teacher. But the communicative strategy considers a learning style with attempted communication; not only to tap meaning from the outset to enable learners realize messages produced by the speaker but also to produce utterances properly expressing their meanings and their ideas.

Process / product merger can also be analogically compared with Brumfit's (1984, 1985: 77-8) celebrated pedagogical schema. He claims that language teaching / learning process comprises a sequence of 'fluency' and 'accuracy' type of activities, which predominates the early stages of learning. The 'fluency' activities are seen to enjoy the same privilege in the later stages when 'accuracy' activities are subordinated. In fact 'fluency' work is found

to correspond with the concept of communicative language teaching, whereas the 'accuracy' wise type of work though partly coinciding with reconstructive learning activities usually carried out by learners, is mainly accounted for to be realized in agreement with monitoring. This conforms to Krashen's (1977, 1981, 1982, 1985) model regarding second language acquisition / learning.

Merging the product and the process approach to writing is also seen to have been brought into approximate resemblance with Krashen's (1977, 1981, 1982, 1985) 'Monitor Model' as well as 'Acquisition / Learning Hypothesis'. Based on this, "adult second language learners undergo two means of target language internalization" (Brown, 1987: 187) i.e. developing communicative competence (Richards and Rodger, 1986: 131). Children in terms of such a view are expected to properly acquire and learn a second language.

By acquisition, Krashen meant a subconscious process abiding by the naturalistic first language development in children. Learning, by contrast, is defined as the effort exerted to develop conscious rules about the formal aspects of language. The possession of such a kind of knowledge, which can be recalled, rehearsed and applied on demand is expected to evolve in a formal context of learning. According to such a theory, learning "cannot lead to acquisition" (Brown, 1987: 187). In tandem with this, the consecutive temporal eclectic option that proposes product activities to be followed by process demonstrations will be treated in such a way that it fails to eventually lead to process. But, the whole theory can provide adequate amount of justification to advocate and sponsor a pedagogical attitude, which claims that varying degrees of learning and acquisition in second language will occur. In

other words, as a conclusion, the student - writers are found to require training in both process and product writing activities so as to acquire some kind of adventurous fluency type of mastery in writing via a conductive, consecutive, alternate; product and process, or process and product respectively.

Actually, what Krashen's theory suffers as a "bold but brash" (Brown, 1987: 189) advocacy is that acquisition and learning are classified and interpreted as mutually exclusive categories. Brown (1987: 189) thinks that such "dichotomies serve simply to define the end points of a continuum, not mutually exclusive categories". Whereby product and process approaches to writing are not supposed to be separately treated to manifest a cumulative effect, but advisably, it can be viewed as a continuum. This continuum is supposed to begin with the inherently unleashed process orientations ranging up to the highly product calculations, monitoring linguistic activity via metalinguistic awareness.

Krashen's simplistic, fuzzy distinction between unconscious acquisition and conscious learning due to its inadequacy and inefficiency as a model for learning is seriously called into question and intensely debated by McLaughlin (1978) and Bialystok (1978, 1981, 1983). This eventually led to viable provocative dichotomies according to which plausible second language acquisition models were brought into existence. McLaughlin (1978) conceptualized a second language acquisition model through which a temporarily controlled and a relatively permanent automatic processing can be viewed. Such a binary conceptualization is said to occur both with focal or peripheral concern. On this basis, product oriented writing is accordingly viewed to serve a controlled focal type of processing whereas the

process scheme generally entails an automatic peripheral focus.

In view of what has been referred to as regarding McLaughlin's scholastic views, a strong claim is put forward to stress the inseparability or indivisiveness of process oriented and product based approaches to writing. Undeniably, writing of whatever kind it may be is inherently inclined to abide by a process / product oriented procedure in which two sets of biased techniques consciously or unconsciously are successfully implemented to let a finished product tactfully emerge. Abiding by such an inescapable genuine predisposition in writing as a language skill, our hard attempt to aggregate the prototypical tendencies of process and product in writing is nothing but just practically flying with the true nature of things invisibly surrounding us. Writing teachers are unintentionally driven to betray bias for one of those two approaches in developing writing capacities. Despite their being unskeptically biased, whether process driven or product bound, student writers are subconsciously and non - defensively involved in a process / product kind of interactional writing activity (Pica, 1986). The question, which still remains with us, is the problem how to activate, harness and enhance those frequently processed authentic potentialities.

One more dichotic modelling for second language acquisition worthy of mention is Bialstok's (1978). She draw a distinction between explicit and implicit kind of linguistic knowledge. Explicit knowledge, according to Bialstok, are those facts that are loomed and honed about language whereas implicit knowledge constitutes that type of information, which can be automatically, and spontaneously processed on demand. Process and product, in view of this, as implicit and explicit reservoir of

knowledge, are found to function supportively; thus facilitating student writers the task of writing. Student writers depending on streamlining a twin - reference type of knowledge will eventually create meaning to be recreated as geared to potential readers (Chastain, 1988: 244). Teachers are invited to reconsider their approaches to the teaching of writing; consequently, students' writing behaviors and written products are to be found both accordingly improved. Intuitions and initiatives are to be seen beneficially fostered to merit a constructive, consecutive, cumulative fusion of both process and product. This will naturally alleviate or relieve the dichotic tension and will inevitably elevate the urge of writing as a process of learning and discovering. Student writers are seen then to write composing uncritically and effortlessly for meaningful culmination. As such, by creating the momentum-required, means and ends meet at prosperous, conductive and strategic confluence cumulatively.

To conclude, the approaches to writing: process and product, as described, are seen to have been distinctly and radically rendered contrastive in surface properties. The approaches mentioned are sharply diverse in planning, syllabus, and classroom procedures; therefore, if they are simultaneously mixed, the outcome fails to lead, ending up with increased teaching or learning efficiency. Moreover, the procedures and techniques manipulated by teachers in the classroom are not clearly defined with reference to detracting contrastive properties existing between the process and the product. The fact is that almost all teachers involuntarily tend to be eclectic and non - deliberately more or less, avoid procedural consistency when seen practically exercising teaching. The two approaches, due to the absence of compatibility to exist between them if simultaneously interfused, conflict in meeting their purpose

and will inevitably deteriorate, lowering the accomplishments planned for. Student writers who constantly have to shift from product to process and back to product activities will be consequently found perplexed in managing themselves and will eventually come up with a decisive choice of one of the approaches as their preferred scheme in writing. Obviously, the other alternative will be nothing but a component of a little academic value. Besides, student writers, when simultaneously involved, will turn out to get technically metamorphesized. The careful student writers are seen to put most of their efforts into product oriented activities whereas the adventurous type will do the opposite. In such circumstances, the two types of student writers can certainly do better if they are taught to abide by the writing performances which suit their true behavioral nature, based on their personal, academic or psychological preferences.

### **Process and Product : Consecutive Eclectic Proposals**

The concept of the prototypical teaching approaches: process and product, as presented in the project does not only have a prescriptive value but also a descriptive one as well. Accordingly, whatever procedures are made available in real - life teaching situation can be categorized as to be referring to one of those trends. These procedures, having been prototypical, are accounted for as wholly product-based or wholly process - wise. Some of the procedures may only have some ties with the prototype, which will be categorized as predominantly product-based or predominantly process-wise. Accordingly, those procedures exploited by a classroom teacher are to be considered as purely process wise or purely product-based when most of the procedures employed by the writing teacher belong to the prototype in question. Otherwise, they should be

culminated as predominantly product based or predominantly processes-wise or as a merger approach displaying an eclectic advocacy. Regrettably, having the criterion allocating higher effectiveness to a uniform approach rather than to an eclectic one considered, the predominant product based or the predominant process wise is said to fail, granting maximum teaching or learning efficiency. With this type of attitudinal accountancy, the last hope for a simultaneous application of the two approaches proves to be sterile without any academic accomplishment in view. As it has been pointed out before, the optimal solution which can be found serving to constructively integrate process and product approaches is the 'consecutive' eclecticism, (Marton, 1988). By means of such an option, teaching and learning gradually and patiently, or consciously and unconsciously sets out creeping, moving forward, from one into the other, thus accomplishing an integrated inflated oneness. Such a proposal, to consecutively weld process and product, can be theoretically realized and manifested with the following possible experimental alternative combinations:

- (1) The product approach followed by the process approach.
- (2) The process approach followed by the product approach.

#### **Consecutive combination I.**

##### **The product approach followed by the process approach**

The combination 'product approach followed by the process approach' is readily distinguished for being somewhat irrationally matched. The point is that the process approach enthusiastically strives for a deliberate attempt at

encouraging the student writers to diligently develop and promote their awareness to catch up with the internalized tendency of language, accommodating the universal process that is equally shared in L<sub>1</sub> and L<sub>2</sub>. By the same token, writing as a skill is seen to abide by those universals already found and specified to exist among languages. In the process approach student writers are reported to capitalize on negotiating, exploring and creating meaning rather than caring for the formal or the metalinguistic aspects of the language. Student writers complying with the process approach start their productive attempts experimenting with an extremely concise type of writing which can be reduced into a number or series of isolated or connected words. Having undergone this, they try their hands with some skeletal sentences stuffed with content words as well as function words, which can be continuously done, generating a concise chunk of discourse. The errors which are made by the student writers are not corrected but tolerated or ignored, provided that the sentences produced make sense to the audience, not deterring communication to occur effectively. The sentences that are produced, accordingly, may be recognized as malformed, but they are rendered acceptable to establish communication. Product approach, on the other, hand discourages the student writer to adapt themselves to the natural flow as developing writing competency. They are demotivated to cherish the experience of making meaning in their creation of a written discourse, but they are encouraged to develop conscious awareness about the formal details of language. Following the product approach, student writers are not only expected to generate semantically equipped well - formed sentences; rather, they are to produce grammatically correct forms, considerably monitored by explicit feed back reflected by the teacher as well. The product style of writing maintains accuracy work whereas the process version considers the

fluency type of activities as part of their procedural preferences.

The student writer's factors along with contextual features as variables, which properly agree with product styles of writing, are distinctly regarded as unfavorable for application in the process school of writing. Therefore, it is obvious that some warming up, preparatory sessions of experiencing product tactics in writing is the most inhibiting kind of applicable procedure student writers may be required to undergo. Student writers will be rather deterred and blocked for the subsequent turn they are supposed to be introduced to i.e. process writing. This conflicting - deflecting emerging attitude approves how product tendencies strongly contradict and terribly defeat suppressing communicative process writing expectations. Adequately, the combination in question: 'product to be followed by process' seems to fail to stride along coherently, coping neatly with the logical reasoning.

Although the hostile reasoning implied regarding combination I is seen to have been just rendered justifiable, it can be assumed that, in the fulfillment of a simultaneous eclecticism providing a consecutive eclectic configuration which may cumulatively end up with concurrent integration of both approaches at hand is strictly conditional. In some situations such composite can be implemented in writing classroom contexts to achieve some favorable accomplishments. A situation which favors the use of a product style of teaching just within short course duration can develop that type of competence that allows student writers to function conveniently in some basic communicative process writing situations. Our combination in question is proposed to be employed for a short period of an intensive course where the main purpose of the product

preparatory stage is to teach the essentials of the language required. Student writers then can be trained to put the little that they have learned to the best possible advantage and to the broadest possible range of use in their classroom writing activities rather than insisting on error - free type of sentences produced to secure meaningful contacts.

As regards the allocation of time, since the product teaching session in this consecutive eclectic combination ' is seen to have been carefully shouldering the nucleation of that kind of competence according to which the process activity can be typically realized and activated, most of the time provided will be inevitably allocated for product activities. Almost, a quarter of the whole duration allotted will be devoted to process the writing teacher's priorities within the errand of a consecutive continuum.

To work out a conclusion regarding the consecutive eclectic combination I, as it has been expected, the proposed, gradual, temporal sequence fails to be positively implemented as an appropriate, unparalleled solution for such a kind of a case in writing. Of course, the reconciliatory choice of congregation regarding the two approaches can be rarely put forward. Unless the situation formerly mentioned is adequately provided, it is rarely expected to accomplish maximum efficiency in teaching and learning the writing skill. As pointed out earlier, due to the scarcity of favorable situations, it cannot be effectively implemented. Such a combination is to be strongly supported and confidently recommended as one of the optimal solutions for the case we have so far embarked on. This, of course has long been patiently and meticulously inspected and detected in an initiative research on exploring to find an indisputable and decisive solution for the enigma - ridden writing enterprise.

**Consecutive Combination II :****The process approach followed by the product approach**

That the product stage is an inescapable outcome of the predisposed, prewired, blueprint of process writing activities cannot be denied altogether. So as to find some reasonable justifications for adopting such a kind of an attitude, the details of the activities which have been introduced and recommended to meet the advanced behavioral requirements of the process scheme can be wisely alluded to. When student writers come close, approaching the product phase, they naturally give up abiding strictly and unceasingly by process strategies, styles and performances. They no longer deliberately emphasize intensive meaning – negotiated, interactional efforts. They do not show much of that will and interest in creating longer texts, based mainly on large amount of background reading. Certainly, interactional writing activities in the earlier stages of process experience may come up with various types of writing specimen which may primarily serve just as warming - up or starting point for spontaneous, extemporaneous, unprepared type of experiment. Of course, teachers training student writers to have them oriented to process scheme behaviors will be eventually found satisfied on finding their trainees successfully preoccupied with authentic writing, developing a totally unpredictable piece of product i.e. a genuinely unplanned chunk of functional discourse discovery ( Brumfit, 1984 ). Student writers as handling advanced process assignments, their nature and policy take up a different strategic communicative outlook. Student writers, involved at such a level of process writing behavior, are required to individually or collectively shoulder the writing projects as reports or arguments so as to have them presented for peer response in class. Such types of

assignments actually entail reading preparation based on various texts, providing the necessary background knowledge. These writing activities, as a matter of fact, require a lot of preplanned discourse whereas some others may not call for preparation of any kind in the production of some non - premeditated or predestinated type of discourse. Naturally, these writing activities are no longer claimed to be specifically identified as to have been exclusively process labelled ones. Interestingly, they can be utilized as to have been integrated in the second phase of writing within the skeleton of a product schedule according to which the production of L<sub>2</sub> written discourse by the student writer should be based on language models extracted from some typical well - formed written texts. However, this factor is not consciously considered, since within the process framework, accuracy is not treated as an ultimate, or stipulated goal which must be strictly entertained. Besides, errors are deliberately tolerated. If accuracy happens to be achieved, it is involuntarily and effortlessly occurs but not as a result of teachers or student - writers' purposeful trials.

Additionally, this type of writing is admittedly seen to mark a shift of emphasis from fluency activities to fluency abiding by accuracy requirements, as well. Exactly at this point, a concurrent, simultaneous process / product interaction is claimed to start when both fluency and accuracy turn out to serve as immediate constituents of the writing enterprise. To achieve this, the writing teacher may openly announce to student writers that they are, for the time being, entering a new stage in their learning cycle during which they have to pay more attention to accuracy as compared to the former requirements of the process stage. In order to have the student writers motivated to earnestly strive for accuracy, the process writing teacher may initiate sociolinguistic arguments focusing their attention on their

career and the social role they are supposed to play in the target language. Student writers, then, are instructed focus on up their efforts, directing their awareness to the significance of well - formedness of their sentences, so as to achieve purposeful communication with real audience for real purposes. The accomplishment of such a goal, requires systematic correction of the student writers' errors due to the deterring interference they exert on the type of fluency required for communicative activities. Process writing teachers are advised to avoid providing immediate or direct error correction. Accordingly, so as to make up for this, some techniques may be devised to delay the act of error correction. Student writers are urged to be more careful and to get their final drafts less decorated with errors when they spend some of their time "unhooking themselves from the demands of audience and inviting themselves to get to writing" (Elbow, 1985: 288).

During the process / product stage, teaching the L<sub>2</sub> grammar is readily seen to serve perfectly in accord with the product - oriented approach to writing. Of course, the process-writing teachers, having embarked on such an assignment, are seen to mean nothing but implicit endeavors at furnishing their student writers with conscious - raising and awareness - promotion chances. In other words, assisting student writers to involuntarily convert the implicitly acquired knowledge during the process stage into a concrete type of accomplishment a higher degree of accuracy is expected to be attained in applying grammatical rules in writing. Student writers dealing with blind spots in L<sub>2</sub> grammar need to submit themselves to some due exercises of this or that category. Although, grammar is not rendered fully qualified to fight, neutralize or suppress the fossilization emerging due to error tolerance, error ignorance, delaying access to immediate feedback,

providing limited type of response to product along with the primary process stage, some highly motivated but careful type of student writers can benefit from the exigencies of circumstances emerging in the act of writing to attain a higher degree of accuracy in the writing performance as well.

The temporal consecutive combination, 'process to be followed by product' is distinguished to boast the prestige of a high pedagogical value as maintaining the requirement of securing maximum teaching efficiency. The combination forwarded is seen to have been biased toward using the principles of product writing which are accounted for as natural, effortless, down to earth consequences of process writing procedural applications. Undeniably, the exposure to circumstantial obligations while undergoing the writing experience as a mode of 'discovery learning' is seen to promote the long-awaited, peaceful dichotic co- existence in due course.

As the farfetched integration dream draws near, some hopes of reconciling the conflicting procedures to constructively coordinate out of the happy epiphany of process / product fusion as to becoming a united one. This additive, cumulative momentum cannot be harnessed unless the process writing phase as an essential prerequisite is primarily met. The product activities as previously alluded to are the inevitable by - products, which cannot be discarded. Student writers' process immersion stage is the right fitting experience without which the skill of functional writing may not flourish or invigorate at all. Obviously student writers abiding by the inherent nature of language acquisition should voluntarily commence writing in compliance with process syllabus and to involuntarily end up with product procedural operations.' This investigation

believes, once product erupts as a natural outcome, following process styles in writing, the act of dichotomizing process and product will not occur, but on the contrary, luckily, their collateral presence will be sustained as a result. Process and product will be kept inseparably flowing happily united in a consecutive manner forever. Our mature combination is to serve as an effective method in teaching and learning writing, the denial of which, turns the sweet experience of writing unwillingly sour. The consecutive eclectic combination II. ' Process to be followed by product, is claimed to evolve into a concurrently, simultaneously embedded eclecticism i.e. the temporal version turns hard into a permanent one.

As to other dimensions product principles when introduced to complement the process journey are basically viewed to comply with a reconstructive strategy or to function as a neutralizing agent specifically prescribed for student writers abiding cooperatively and non - defensively by process writing procedural implications. Student writers, when undergoing the consecutive combination II, due to exercising an unfettered type of communication in writing, due to the failure to receive corrective feedback and due to benefiting from true chances to exercise unfrustrated, stress - reduced communicative writing, are expected to get deflected with a serious predictable type of phenomena as pidginization or fossilization. When those student writers' process inclinations are entertained with product precision preferences, a defossilized and dipidginized interlanguage system can be eventually internalized based on which student writers can work out fruitfully their unimpaired language faculties incorporated with rich intuitions to let that level of typical product eventually stem out.

The question of allocating adequate amount of time to either of those stages cannot be resolved by a blind prescription. This is an open - ended case, which can only be judged by the exigencies of those upcoming, germinating circumstances. Basically, this should be pointed out that student writers would not be introduced to product activities unless they are patiently immersed in process writing formalities and demonstrations. Every writing curriculum is enthusiastically seen to deliberately strive to accomplish, without any type of hesitation or delay, the desire of experiencing or undergoing the process scheme.

As far as favorable teaching condition required to have combination II meeting maximum efficiency is concerned, and due to absolute precedence granted to process over product, and the obligation to secure successful functioning, the process paradigm in teaching and learning writing compared to the product style is found less broadly defined and described. Student writers factors in collaboration with contextual factors provide them with the ability of constructing and communicating freely and meaningfully through well - formed sentences, cohesively and coherently congregated as to communicate via discoursal chunks. Once product oriented activities are introduced to be complied with by the student writers, they are advised to keep themselves in touch with the very end of the formally stipulated course. Even when no syllabus of any kind is in view to comply with, process details can be logically and reasonably found integrated to create cumulatively that far expected maximum momentum. Contextual variables dominated by process communicative tendencies are seen to have been accounted for to facilitate the logical adoption of combination II as an optimal reconciliatory settlement for a crusade project sincerely

meant to develop student writers' abilities in writing for L<sub>1</sub> or L<sub>2</sub> indiscriminately.

Depending on student writer's factors and contextual variables, what combination II aims at fulfilling, can be systematically inferred and approached. Accordingly those contexts characterized by low intensity of teaching, large classes, predominance of careful student writers and writing teachers with rather poor proficiency in L<sub>2</sub> cannot be regarded as something appropriate for the application of combination II: 'process to be followed by product'. Conversely, in case of combination II: 'process to be followed by product', a context characterized by high intensity of teaching, a predominance of adventurous learners, teachers with adequate level of proficiency in the L<sub>2</sub> and a small class are essentially and indispensably required to have the paradigm successfully dramatized.

Combination II 'process to be followed by product' is implied to have been practically actualized within the braces of consecutive eclecticism. Having been honestly observed, it inevitably extends over doing away with the requirement of deliberately attending to the particulars of the concrete product. The whole combination as a point of fact then is expected to turn out, serving to the extent of a unitary combination that the components of which as process and product can never be segregated. Such merger enterprise will have its ingredients so excessively melted in the writing pot that a typical oneness might come readily in access. The combination in question is accordingly reformulated appear as:

microprocess → product → macro process . . . (product invisibly embedded in process)

This means that the end continuurn of 'process to be followed by product' option is a macro type of process which has the product as an abstract component inherently incorporated as silent monitor supervising rendering thought into well-formed written language, thus establishing effective mute communication.

In conclusion, the analysis done so far with combination II is claimed to have brought forth the discussion of an eclectic integration of product and process or process and product to some kind of an end. A conclusive description raising the question of what particular context of language teaching best suits each of the two combinations. II or I is summed up in the Table below. It is worked out to comply with the student writer's factors and the contextual variables. Depending on such a classified characterization, writing teachers based on the circumstances in access are privileged to conform themselves to one of the options provided to face up the exigencies of the writing classrooms, cognitive requirements and functional preferences in the contemporary millennium, in question.

Factors			Consecutive Combination: Product followed by process	Consecutive Combination Process followed by product
A.		Student writer factors		
	1	Personality variables		
	a.	the careful type	+	-

		b.	the adventurous type	±	+
B.			Contextual factors		
	1		Intensity of teaching		
		a.	intensive teaching	+	+
		b.	non - intensive teaching	-	-
	2		Size of class		
		a.	small classes	+	+
		b.	large classes	+	±
	3		Teacher characteristics		
		a.	teachers with low proficiency	+	-
		b.	teachers with poor stamina	-	-

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***Dr. Ismail Baroudy***  
*Department of English*  
*Shahid Chamran University*  
*Ahvaz, Iran*

**Seemin Hasan**

**Bharati Mukherjee's *Wife*: The Gender Experience**

Bharati Mukherjee's *Wife* embodies not only the search for identity by Dimple Dasgupta, the protagonist but also traces the evolution of the female identity. Mukherjee's narrative technique in **Part One** gives the plot a linear progress, defining first Dimple's life with her mother and then her life in the external world. This impulse is diffused into generalizations in **Part Two** where a variety of immigrant women are discussed. Dimple's progress is marked by the achievement of a feminine individuality in the context of American society which she internalizes through the understanding of separation from her original connections, like her mother and through the creation of substitutes for these connections Dimple's aculturation can be read as a woman's autobiography describing a self defined and formed, through gender experience.

*'If we do not define ourselves for ourselves, we will be defined by others-for their use and to our detriment'*1 says Audre Lord, a gynocritic. In recent times a major thrust of gynocriticism has been on the identification of the role of women in literature written by women. Explorations of entirely feminine pursuits like giving birth, nurturing, keeping house, study of woman to woman relationships, the privacy of thought processes, priorities, feelings and perceptions have been their concern. This has resulted in the enlargement and the reorganization of the literary canon by reducing or even negating patriarchal biases. According to Simone de Beauvoir, *'One is not born a woman but rather becomes a woman... It is civilization as a whole that produces this creature... which is described as feminine.'*2

Mukherjee's writing is a conscious and deliberate act. She claims that fiction is '*metaphoric and synecdochic* - ... *every little detail must carry an enormous weight*'.<sup>3</sup> Her vision of ideal art is a Mughal miniature painting where '*the corners are as elaborated as the centers*'.<sup>4</sup> Mukherjee's subject is primarily the status and condition of Asian immigrants to North America. Her focus rests more particularly on the trials and traumas experienced by Asian women. Asian men, according to her, are immediately absorbed in the whirlwind of new exciting jobs and subsequently pleasures of lifestyle. Women, on the other hand, subjected to the restrictions of dependent visas, travel through a gamut of emotions to find themselves. Their experiences, in the words of Mukherjee herself '*transcend the straitjacket of simple psychologizing*'.<sup>5</sup>

Her narrative includes extra-rational and extra-logical spaces that bring together the violence of American city life and the spirituality of the Hindu epics. She upholds and admires American values but at the time exhibits pride in her own Indianness. Mukherjee's women, thus, appear familiar and exotic at the same time. Mukherjee's attitude is a bold one. She analyses the predicament of the Indian woman who has opted to settle in the west and redefined her ties with her homeland and is making attempts to make a home in the new land.

Dimple, Mukherjee's protagonist in *Wife* searches both for a self and for a home. The national identity symbolizes a psychological state. Once an immigrant, Dimple's 'Indianness' is not the only definition she can adhere to. The mythico-history of pagan India which had been a feeder to her pre-marital personality, is now

confined to the framed wall-hangings in her American apartment. Her faith in Sita's fire-test as the ultimate proof of feminine identity is shaken. She has to prove herself as an Indian-American. The upper middle-class Indian values collapsed in the new set-up. The requirement of enacting the role of mistress of a household, patron of the city's poor simply did not have a place in the new context. Self-sacrifice, Dimple is galled to discover midst other forms of cultural shock, is to be replaced by self-improvement. This is a lonely and stressful process and Dimple suffers from alienation and exhaustion. Her faith in her Indian values is heavily eroded. The realization that she has to relinquish her roots and to bend her personality confronts her as a stark reality.

Back in India, America had been a psychological state. It had been a promised land made up of delightful dreams that paved pathways to fluid, dynamic upward mobility. Dimple, then, like all other prospective immigrants had experienced the exuberance of the adventure ahead. The arrival in New York and then the ensuing struggle to re-root herself in a hostile community, to preserve her identity to stake her claim on America create within her stress, rage and turmoil severe enough to goad her to murder her husband.

Amit Basu, Dimple's husband, represents the patriarchy. The murder presents a wounding conclusion that rattles the readers. Dimple's choices were limited to either obliterating her personality or ending her life. Her resolve to her dilemma is shocking. Mukherjee brilliantly uses violent and extreme action to jerk the readers out of their apathy towards the sufferings of a well-placed, well-provided for Indian wife. The title of the novel draws attention to this aspect.

In the opening chapter of the novel, we meet Dimple Dasgupta, a twenty year old girl, waiting for a husband. She is unhappy and worried-

*... she thought of premarital life as a dress rehearsal for actual living. Years of waiting had already made her nervous, unnaturally prone to colds, coughs and headaches. Wasted years- she was twenty-lay like a chill weight in her body, giving her eyes a watchful squint and her spine a slight curve. (Wife, 3) 6*

This extreme nervousness results in a chest pain and she is rushed to hospital. She contemplates suicide as the only way to avoid a spinster existence. Marriage to Amit Basu, an engineer who has applied for a job in the USA, extricates her from these tensions but brings many more. Life with her in-laws, discovers Mrs. Dimple Basu, is not any easier. The apartment is crowded, the environment unfamiliar and the new role extremely taxing. The requirement of stepping into a role prefabricated by tradition and perfected by practice in society and celebration in literature becomes too much for her. Her mother-in-law changes her name to Nandini which Dimple considers '*old-fashioned and unsung*' (Wife.30) Life as Nandini seems unreal and not her own. Dimple discovers she is pregnant and decides to discard '*whatever it was that blocked her tubes and pipes*' (Wife 31). Bitterness frustration and anger merge as she finds an outlet in a horrific incident where she chases and smashes a mouse's head. Soon she skips hard and long enough to abort her baby.

This inversion of the maternal principle by Mukherjee can be read in many ways. At a level, Dimple

attempts to obliterate her roots. The dreamy excitement that she experiences regarding the impending American immigration leads her to discard any so-called burden that may get in the way of this exercise. At another level, this represents an attempt to liberate herself from the constraints of womanhood. At a third level, it voices a protest against the patriarchy. Dimple wants to quit the conservative mode and find herself. Motherhood was something she was not ready for and abortion would not have been permitted by the family. The naïve, childish solution that Dimple settled upon suggests that in spite of being highly sensitive Dimple Basu lacked maturity and intelligence.

In the second part of the novel Dimple comes to New York. Soon her excitement gives way to a terror of the violence-infested American society. Amit, pressurized by the demands of the new work culture recedes into the background, unable to be of any help to his wife. Confused and traumatized, Dimple turns to the television for company and comfort. Continuous viewing of melodramatic and aggressive soap operas upsets her further. Caught in a vicious circle, she becomes depressed and begins to consider ways of suicide and murder. The media plays havoc with her fragile mind.

When Dimple considers the other Indian expatriates, they seem happy and prosperous enough. Women like Jyoti and Meena are content to live within the island of the Indian community and render domestic duties in a manner befitting middle-class Indian wives. Ina Mullick, on the other hand, is a woman who is '*more American than the Americans*'. (*Wife* 68) She is frankly contemptuous of her arranged marriage and is liberated and is a flirt. Dimple is fascinated by her. She admires Ina's short dresses, Ina's attitudes to smoking, drinking and attending night school. However, unlike Ina, Dimple never

collects enough courage to connect with mainstream American society. Commitment to tradition, and enormous guilt in betraying them constantly fracture her resolve to establish an American identity.

Another anxiety that interferes with Dimple's Americanization is the eroding of the parental bond. Her mother, who had been her friend, philosopher and guide throughout her girlhood days, now becomes remote. The mother-daughter bond is a primary one. Daughters do not need to break it the way sons need to on understanding that they belong to different sexes. However, Dimple has to sever herself from this ancestral and traditional commitment when she migrates to a country that her mother has never visited. Here, her mother can no longer branch into her life. As is archetypal, her mother, back in India, had passed on her female heritage to her daughter. The truth of this heritage was visible and sufficient while Dimple was in India. Dimple's simple dream then had been for.

*... an apartment in Chowringhee, her hair  
done by Chinese girls, trips to New Market  
for nylon saris.*

*(Wife .3 )*

In America Dimple discovers another kind of truth. To find her own identity she has to define the differences between her mother and herself. Creating a separate identity for her mother is one way to find herself. Observing her mother's truths turn to lies in the American context, plunges Dimple into despair. Ultimately, she comes to discover not so much which hometruths are lies but why they are lies. Dimple's realization of these truths as lies is complex and pathetic-

*She was not missing Calcutta really, though it would have been nice to wear new saris and go the skyroom and order iced coffee. It was something else, like knowing that if she were to go out the front door, down the elevator (she was frightened by self service elevators with their red Emergency buttons and wished there were a liftman on a stool to press the right buttons for her), if she were to stand in the lobby and say to the first ten people she saw 'Do you know it's almost October and Durga Puja is coming? They would think she was mad. She could not live with people who didn't understand about Durga Puja.*

*(Wife.*

114 )

The narrative structure of *Wife* helps to define the dynamics of the mother-daughter relationship. Even after Dimple delinks herself from her mother's guidance, she retains an imaginative empathy with her by translating her brooding silences into thoughts and ideas in her letters-

*She wrote her mother that Amit and she had moved into a fantastic apartment belonging to NYU and that there were two bathrooms and bright orange shower curtains and a floral waste basket so pretty that she hated to throw trash into it, and a stereo and sixty-two plants (some were very small but she had to water them all) ...*

*(Wife. 110)*

In New York, Dimple attempts, in her own way, to adapt to what she considers an American lifestyle. Her association with Ina Mullick and her white American sister-in-law Marsha, ignites dreams. She dreams of going to night school, of working, of throwing parties and of owning a flat. She reads a pamphlet advocating feminist ideas but decides that there are limits she should not go beyond because Amit would like her 'to keep quiet and not make a fool of herself'. (*Wife*. 89 )

In the third part of *Wife* Dimple realizes her dream of setting up her own house. In the Greenwich Village flat she spends most of her time watching television because she becomes progressively more frightened of the violent outside world. She gets more lonely, more bored and more frustrated. She feels 'like a star, collapsing inwardly' (*Wife*. 109 )

She contemplates different ways to commit suicide and also different ways of attacking Amit as he symbolizes all those factors and forces that trap, alienate and isolate her. Simultaneously, she develops some attraction for Marsha's brother Milt who at a stage becomes her lover.

The patriarchy, in Dimple's life is represented by three relationships viz. father, husband and lover. Back in India, Dimple had little or no interaction with her father. This lacona is indicative of the fundamental separateness between father and daughter. In the novel, he fulfils the role of provider by planning, arranging and executing her wedding. To her prospective in-laws, by way of persuasion he declares of his daughter 'She is so sweet and docile, I tell you. She will never give a moment's headache'. (*Wife*. 15)

Having paid the dowry money, he expects his daughter to lead a dutiful, subservient life with her in laws with no other desires in life except to please them.

In the conventional Indian set-up, the father, in the life of a daughter is often so remote that at she has to invent him. The father-daughter separateness is often bridged by the imagination or the fantasy mode. The fantasy mode is characterized by idealization and love but is never emphatic. The primary male relationship in a female's life thus remains abstract. Hence the female understanding of the masculine experience at this stage is nebulous and poetic. Dimple's recollections of her grandfather are as a side character in an often told story of her own childhood experiences.

*That night before she fell asleep, she said to Amit, "When I was a little girl I pulled a snake by its tail. I pulled it straight out of its hole! Can you believe that?"*

*'There aren't any snakes in the city'.*

*'It was in Bihar. My grandfather was the manager of a colliery or something. I was two and a half and I was very brave'.*

*.....*  
*He did not believe that she had pulled the snake. She had no memory of the incident but she knew she had done it because she had heard the story many times from her parents.*

*(Wife. 39)*

The anxiety of severing the parental bond which had taught her the merits of conformity and safety in the patriarchal system plunges Dimple into despair and confusion. The task of remaining brave in the alien land

and vanquishing ghosts both old and new wrecks absolute havoc on her.

Dimple's addiction to television further stimulates her neurosis. Her progressive inability to organize herself and her life is reflected in the chaos that permanently reigns in her apartment. Clothes lie around in disarray and stench of stale dishes and rotten food permeates the entire apartment, causing her to vomit frequently. The various television shows corrode into her grip over reality and she permanently begins to fear the deep and sinister. A complete nervous wreck she attacks Amit with a knife when he attempts to playfully hold her from behind. She frightens herself into believing that he is a rapist. Although, she is shocked by her own attack of nerves, she also begins to think that '*perhaps she was capable of unimagined, calculating violence*'. (Wife. 130)

In contrast to this, Dimple experiences both excitement and security in the company of Milt Glasser. Milt, she feels, understands her and respects her as an individual. She takes on a new identity by shedding her Indian clothes and wearing Marsha's western outfits. On an outing with him she is '*amazed*' to find that '*the in human maze of New York become as safe and simple as Ballygunge*'. (Wife. 196)

He makes love to her when they return and promises to look after her. He leaves her soon after admitting that he was only '*halfway serious about things*'. (Wife 199) This encounter leaves her as lonely and isolated as before and convinces her further about her inability to achieve self-fulfillment in America. The union with an American served as the end of the road and she cracked under the weight of guilt, remorse, dejection and helplessness.

Maintaining a normal relationship with Amit at this juncture in this frame of mind is a stressful and tension-ridden exercise. Amit is deeply occupied in the public world juggling the professional, social and domestic demands on himself, leaving him with no time to humanize the middle ground between himself and his newly-wedded wife. He is sympathetic but lacking in sensitivity and intensity. Sympathy is not empathy and the distance between the protagonist and her husband is created because of this separatedness.

Dimple's loneliness translates itself into fear and anger. She spends her days in ignorance and brooding silence, filling the void with her own imagination. These trips into the imagination become an alternative to life itself. The frustration creates in her the urge to destroy. She destroys all feminine associations that chained her to her Indian roots. She has an affair with Milt. Finally, she attacks and kills her husbands, the symbol of patriarchy.

The savage conclusion shocks the reader. Dimple's resolution of her problem is inspired by television. She believed that *Women on television got away with murder* (Wife 213).

Dimple's extreme action, at a level, can be interpreted as an assertion of independence. Rather than negate her personality and recast herself in a mould to suit the requirements of an insensitive and apathetic context or perhaps commit suicide, she opts to kill the enemy. At another level, it is a pathetic cry for help from the inmate of a gilded cage. The act also suggests a reversal of roles. Dimple had been dying slowly throughout the novel. Amit's death was swift sudden and shocking. The finality of death stuns the reader and leaves him with no option but

to acknowledge the oppressions of the patriarchy and of expatriation

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Dr. Seemin Hasan

Reader

Department of English

AMU, Aligarh

*Asim Siddiqui*

### **An Image of the other: The Indian in the Scarlet Letter**

The status of *The Scarlet Letter* as an important canonical text has been established firmly by successive generations of readers and critics right from the time of its publication in 1850. The criticism on *The Scarlet Letter* has focused, almost as a rule, on either the character of its protagonist Hester Prynne—she is an important subject in romantic and more recently in feminist criticism of the novel—or on showing the supposedly evil nature of the first generation puritans in New England. Yet another area of critics' attention is the issue of moral isolation of an individual realized through a common motif in classic American fiction: an individual pitted against a powerful community. Also the letter 'A' which is heavily foregrounded in the novel through the devices of repetition and capitalization, lends itself almost naturally to a semiotic and deconstructive reading.

What is, however, not emphasized in Hawthorne criticism is the fact that *The Scarlet Letter* is a subtle assertion of the dominant political ideology of the nineteenth century America in relation to the native Indian. An attempt is made in the following pages to understand the nature of this ideology by relating the novel to certain relevant aspects of the history of the Amerindians.

The Indians came to the American continent many millennia ago and in the early seventeen century when a sizeable number of Europeans were migrating to America; more than five million Indians inhabited what is now The United States of America. The white-Indian encounter had

disastrous consequences for Indians who were afflicted with the diseases which the white settlers brought with them. This resulted in the dwindling of the native population a typical phenomenon which can be seen at work in the white colonialists' encounter with the native populations in countries with a colonial past.

The white colonialist also started grabbing the land and property of the Indians, the process continuing unabated in the eighteenth and the nineteenth century. In fact the final victory of the colonialists against their British masters revived their open hostility against the Indians as, following the disappearance of a formidable enemy, the white colonialists no longer felt the need to enlist the support of the Indians. Consequently, despite Congress's ratification of the North West ordinance in 1789 which had promised the safety of Indians' land and property and expressed goodwill towards them, Indians were victims of a very aggressive move by Whites to dispossess them of their land and property. Thus between 1814 and 1824 Indians were made to sign as many as nine treaties in a bid by the white government to legalize their migration from areas where the white Americans wanted to grow cotton. In a major decision in 1823 the Supreme Court denied Indians any title to hold their land. The final blow to their hopeless battle against a ruthless American government came in 1830 in the form of Indian Removal Act. The Act, passed under the leadership of Andrew Jackson gave full rights to the federal government to force the Indian tribes to move west of Mississippi. These details of Indians' removal and the efforts of Andrew Jackson would appear more meaningful when one realizes that Hawthorne was a Jacksonian in politics. Talking about Hawthorne's political orientation, Mark Van Doren remarks:

Democracy, he felt, was what let people be. It was the quieter and honester faith and it as the faith of Andrew Jackson, whom Hawthorne never ceased to consider the one great figure of his time. In Jackson's name he chose his political friends: not only Pierce and Bridge, but such men in Salem as Roberts Burch, and Pike. The fact that a section of aleam dismissed Democrats as "rowdies" recommended then to Hawthorne.<sup>1</sup>

The view that Hawthorne never ceased to admire Andrew Jackson is significant. Jackson stood for new American thought, American idea of progress, spirit of the frontier and above all the ideology of expansion. He was largely instrumental in effecting the relocation of Indian tribes. There is no evidence to suggest that Hawthorne did not share these beliefs just as there is no reason to suggest that he could see beyond the stock image of the Indian. Studies on Indians and Indian literature appeared in print only in the twentieth century and Hawthorne, writing in the period when Andrew Jackson was being eulogized for his political acumen, could hardly differ from his contemporaries who considered the Indian an obstacle to their American dream of success and progress.

They viewed him as one monolithic group without realizing that Indians were divided into as many as three hundred cultural groups and spoke no less than two hundred languages and a great variety of dialects. For them the Indian was a 'savage' to be civilized, 'a heathen' to be converted to Christianity, an enemy to be defeated and an 'other' to be stereotyped.

A recontextualization of *The Scarlet Letter* in relation to the cultural beliefs, social practices and the political circumstances that produced them, would suggest that the

novel rendered a cultural service to the dominant ideology by further stereotyping the native Indians. He is referred to in the text primarily because Hawthorne was interested in providing a fictional representation of the earliest period of the colony of Massachusetts, but also because the references to the Indian in the text would invoke the images of violence, wildness and otherness. They are reduced to one monolithic group in the text.

The first important reference to the Indian is in the third chapter of the novel when the narrator introduces Chillingworth, the antagonist in the novel, and essentially an evil character whose entry at this point of the novel introduces an element of complication in the plot. It is part of Hawthorne's technique that before introducing an evil personage, he presents a 'savage figure' a stereotypical Indian with whom Chillingworth shares some kind of relationship: "By the Indian's side, and evidently sustaining a companionship with him, stood a white man, clad in a strange disarray of civilized and strange costume".<sup>2</sup> It is significant that the Indian is not shown talking to any other person in the novel. This implies that he can find some affinity only to the evil characters, in this case Roger Chillingworth.

It is interesting to note that Hawthorne's villains, obsessed as they are with some idea, lead an almost solitary existence. In their obsession they break the magnetic chain that binds all humanity. The magnetic chain of humanity" in some ways corresponds to the christian idea of a mystical union among the faithful"<sup>3</sup>. Chillingworth is one such figure who is obsessed with the idea of revenge and who breaks this chain. But the narrator's emphasis on showing a nameless Indian sharing a relationship with only Chillingworth and not with any one else in the novel, reveals Hawthorne's ignorance of the world view of the

Indian which is characterized by "a strong sense of communality and cooperativeness, reflecting native Americans' belief in the importance of harmony".<sup>4</sup> In fact, because the Indian represents evil, hostility and a disrespect to the institutions of the white man, he is associated with the wild and irreverent aspects of the otherwise positive characters. Thus Pearl who represents "the wild heathen nature of Hester's and Dimmesdale's love"<sup>5</sup> is attracted by the presence of an Indian: "She ran and looked the wild Indian in the face; and he grew conscious of a nature wilder than his own"<sup>6</sup>. At another point in the text when Hawthorne records his thinly disguised criticism of the speculative faculty of Hester which estranges her from the magnetic chain of humanity, he notes:

For years past she had looked from this estranged point of view at human institutions, and whatever priests or legislators had established; criticizing all with hardly more reverence than the Indian would feel for the clerical band, the judicial robe, the pillory, the gallows, the fireside, or the church.<sup>7</sup>

Here too the wild and irreverent in Hester is identified with the Indian. The supposed wildness and irreverence of the Indian character finds its almost perfect parallel in the equally or more irreverent class of sailors; "Nor, wild as were these barbarians (Indians), were they the wildest feature of the scene. This distinction could more justly be claimed by some mariners"<sup>8</sup>. The identification of the Indian with mariners---- a thoroughly evil class in the eyes of Hawthorne--- marginalizes them fully.

What the self considers the other is always imbued with a kind of mystique. Hawthorne's Indian, like the black of popular white imagination is attributed some strange and incomprehensible characteristics. He is shown to have

some inexplicable knowledge of medicinal herbs and roots which he taught to Chillingworth. The inexplicable in the Indian is also attracted by the inexplicable appeal of the scarlet letter and he draws his arrow against the badge. Here Hawthorne also invokes the popular image of the hostile and ignorant Indian with his always ready arrow. Not only their bow and arrow but also their dress establishes their otherness. Their "savage finery of curiously embroidered deer skin robes, wampum belts, red and yellow ochre, and feathers and armed with the bow and arrow and stone-headed spear"<sup>9</sup>, while perpetuating some stereotypes, is contrasted with the civilized code of the puritan fathers who deemed it necessary to have "deep ruffs, faithfully wrought bands and gorgeously embroidered gloves"<sup>10</sup>. It is interesting to know that the films about American West popularized this very image of the hostile Indian in his skin robes and armed with bow and arrow.

The language used by Hawthorne in describing the Indian has the echoes of the nineteenth century imperialist discourse. He always uses words like barbarian and savage in his description of the Indians. At one point in the novel the Christian angle of imperialism which emphasized the necessity of bringing the blessings of civilization to the inferior races, is invoked by Hester. Counseling Dimmesdale to put a stop to his false life, she urges him to either become a scholar or "the teacher and apostle of the red man"<sup>11</sup>. The condescending attitude of Hester towards red man is significantly brought about when she is allowed to be her real self for the first time in the novel. The forest scenes in the novel where these words are spoken are the only scenes where, Hester, in the exclusive company of her lover away from the punitive gaze of the puritan community, is her true self. Ironically this true self is not the product of puritanism but of a supposedly liberal England or the other side of the Atlantic where "the human

intellect, newly emancipated, had taken a more active and wider range than for many centuries before".<sup>12</sup> Hester's words further acquire significance in the context of the nineteenth century imperialist ideology when missionaries were used as tools of imperialists in their pillage and plunder of the land and property of the natives in colonies.

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*Dr. Mohd. Asim Siddiqui*  
*Reader*  
*Department of English*  
*Aligarh Muslim University*  
*Aligarh.*

**Sami Rafiq**

## **AMITAV GHOSH'S THE GLASS PALACE: A FANONIAN READING**

The novels of Amitav Ghosh probe the ideology of colonialism in its various shades. However, they do not stop at the description of a dominant ideology; rather they voice the silent anger and dissatisfaction of a colonized people at their being considered inferior to the colonizer. Many of the heroes and heroines of Ghosh's novels are the native people from India, Burma, Malaya or South Africa, the tragedy and triumph of whose lives is narrated against the backdrop of colonial history. The history which unfolds along with the progress of the individuals is not the History of colonial events; rather it is a history of the dominance of a ruling ideology. The conflict of this ruling ideology with the colonized people as they become aware of the superiority of their own culture is a theme that has been treated in Ghosh's novel *The Glass Palace*, one novel which has received hardly any critical attention.<sup>1</sup>

A reading of *The Glass Palace* in the light of critical paradigms introduced by Franz Fanon's influential book *The Wretched of The Earth* (which highlights the inequalities between the colonizer and colonized) would reveal the complexities of a hidden ideology as they are dealt with in this novel. In his book *The Wretched of the Earth*, Franz Fanon has uncovered the intricate and mysterious world of the colonized people, their betrayal, suffering and suppression at the hands of the colonizers; their stage by stage attempt to reclaim their culture which the colonizer considered abhorrent and inferior and conceived of it as his culture's 'other'. Hinting on the superiority of the native's culture in Fanon's book, where

finally the colonizer's superior culture begins to dim, Jean-Paul Sartre in his preface to *The Wretched of the Earth* writes:

Europeans, you must open this book and enter into it. After a few steps in the darkness you will see strangers gathered around a fire; come close, and listen, for they are talking of the destiny they will mete out to your trading-centres and to the hired soldiers who defend them. They will see you, perhaps, but they will go on talking among themselves, without even lowering their voices. This indifference strikes home: their fathers, shadowy creatures, your creatures, were but dead souls; you it was who allowed them glimpses of light, to you only did they dare speak, and you did not bother to reply to such zombies. Their sons ignore you; a fire warms them and sheds light around them, and you have not lit it. Now, at a respectful distance, it is you who will feel furtive, nightbound and perished with cold. Turn and turn about; in these shadows from whence a new dawn will break, it is you who are the zombies.<sup>2</sup>

The ideas from Fanon's book which explicate some multivalent issues in *The Glass Palace* are broadly related to cultural expression in the form of violence in the native, the importance of myth and magic as a psychological necessity for the suppressed native, and the divisive tactics of the colonizer to break up their national movement towards self determination.

The novel is set in the delicate time period when India and Burma were both colonies of the British Empire. However, it does not begin to tell us simply the woes of being a native in Burma or in India. It goes further than that. While talking about the British dethronement of Burmese royalty, it unfurls the culture and richness inherent in the other. The other that the novel talks about has integrity, an unshaken faith in itself and a commitment towards realizing its true nature.

The novel opens with the symbolic booming of a canon, which (according to Raj Kumar, an eleven year old serving boy at the food stall in Mandalay in Burma,) belongs to the British. The symbolic booming of the British canon evokes (through its stark colonial supremacy) the native's awakening to his identity. It awakens the native by shaking him up and astounding him as can be seen in the following lines from *The Glass Palace*:

The noise was unfamiliar and unsettling, a distant booming followed by low, stuttering growls. At times it was like the snapping of dry twigs, sudden and unexpected. And then, abruptly it would change into a deep rumble, shaking the food-stall....<sup>3</sup>

The royal pronouncement on receiving the threats reads thus (in preparation for war):

To all royal subjects and inhabitants of the Royal Empire: those heretics....If, notwithstanding, these heretic foreigners should come, and in any way attempt to molest or disturb the state, His Majesty who

is watchful that the interest of our religion and our state shall not suffer, will himself march forth with his generals, captains and lieutenants with large forces of infantry, artillery ....<sup>4</sup>

The booming of the canon and the preparation of war by the Burmese King reflect Fanon's idea of the oppressed native who prepares to fight back as the colonizer tries to impose his superior culture and identity over the native's culture. It is pertinent to quote a few lines from Fanon's book in this regard:

The symbols of social order – police, the bugle calls in the barracks, military parades and the waving flags – are at one and the same time inhibitory and stimulating; for they do not convey the message 'Don't dare to budge'; they cry out 'Get ready to attack'.<sup>5</sup>

The victory of the British over Burma through the betrayal and conspiracy (of the King's so called supporters) is a death blow to the centuries old monarchy in Burma. The treacherous defeat and suppression of the *other* at the hands of the colonizer has been tellingly portrayed. The glasses of the Glass palace as they show a pregnant Supayalat (at the moment the royals are taken captive) ironically present the mute and invincible power of the *other*, and her pregnancy is a kind of hope that defies time and reflects the power of an unseen future in the form of the unborn child. Her pregnant image as she stands for perhaps the last time in her palace chamber, which is fitted with mirrors, is telling in this regard:

The chamber was lined with mirrors. As she approached the centre an army of Supayalats seemed to materialize around her; they were everywhere, on every shard of glass, thousands of tiny women with their hands clasped on their swollen waists. She walked up to the stout old Kinwun Mingyi, sitting sprawled on his stool. Thrusting her swollen belly into his face,, she said. 'Why, grandfather it is you who should wear a skirt and own a stone for grinding face powder.' Her voice was a whisper but it had filled the room.<sup>6</sup>

Here Supayalat rivals the power represented by Kinwun Mingyi, a minister in the royal palace and a puppet of the colonizer.

The Glass Palace, which is a proud monument of Burmese history and culture, is ransacked and looted and the King, Queen and their retinue are exiled in far off Ratnagiri in India. It is from this point that the novelist begins to tell us the stories of lives that were split up because of the British occupation of Burma. The lives of King Thebaw, Queen Supayalat, the young princesses, and Dolly, one of the maids in waiting, and Raj Kumar, are to go on, branch out, intertwine and mingle at various moments in colonial history, to bring into light the rich culture of the Orient which the colonizer considered irrational, immoral and abhorrent.

Through the life of Raj Kumar, as he grows from a penniless youth into the wealthy owner of a rubber plantation, and the contrasting life of the exiled royals who

despite all odds bring to their exiled existence a rare cultural beauty, Ghosh also reveals the nobility inherent in the *other*. Sailing towards India on the steamer, the king realizes that many of his valuables had been stolen by his captors. Thus in the following lines the grandeur and the nobility of the King is hinted at, as he overlooks the hypocritical ethical and moral standards of his British captors:

He had asked about his lost things and the officers had stiffened and looked offended and talked of setting up a committee of inquiry. He had realized that for all their haughty ways and grand uniforms, they were not above some common thievery.<sup>7</sup>

In Ratnagiri the King and the Queen and the royal household gradually make a place of respect for themselves in the public eye. The King attains an unusual position as guardian and guide:

In Ratnagiri there were many who believed that King Thebaw was always the first to know when the sea had claimed a victim. He spent hours on his balcony everyday, gazing out to the sea with his gold-rimmed glasses....Nothing happened in Ratnagiri, people said, but the King was the first to know of it.<sup>8</sup>

Echoing Fanon's description of the inherent vitality, courage and individuality in the native, the royal household--- for whom travel is a rare thing and who had never lived a common life--- emerge as people with extraordinary will power and exceptional courage. This is

courage and will power not merely to survive but to survive with a unique culture intact. This cultural exclusivity lives on even when members of the royal household are forced to split up. It is this cultural exclusivity which challenges the ethnocentric attitude of the British with violence at various points in the novel. This particular form of violence is suppressed rage and anger in the native which must manifest in ways other than direct, such as energetic dance, possession, ritual and even furious verbal exclamations. The following exchange between the collector and the Queen reveals two embittered opponents, where the response of 'the other' is a kind of suppressed rage. The cause of this anger is the issue of the supposedly illegitimate relationship between the princess and a commoner.

The love relationship between Mohan Sawant the coachman, a local boy and the princess and the resultant pregnancy challenges the British standards and ethics on love and marriage. According to Christian morality, married love has sanctity, but pre-marital sex is a sin. There is a sharp contrast between the importance Christianity gives to hallowed or sanctified love within marriage and the queen's infuriated assertion towards self determination in living their lives. When the collector urges her to consider the fact that the first princess has created a scandal the queen responds with such pent up fury that he is taken aback:

'Scandal? The Queen's eyes hardened as she repeated the English word.... We have heard so many lectures from you and your colleagues on the subjects of the barbarity of the Kings of Burma and the humanity of the Angrez; we were tyrants you said, enemies

of freedom, murderers. The English alone understand liberty, we were told; they do not put kings and princes to death. They rule through laws. If that is so, why has King Thebaw never been brought to trial.<sup>9</sup>

It is at this juncture that the rift between the collector (who is a representative of the colonizers' values) and his wife widens, because he blames his wife Manju for hiding the fact of the princess's pregnancy from him. Homologically the rift between the husband and the wife can read as a rift between the colonizer and the colonized:

She began to sob, covering her face with her hands. The wifely virtues she could offer him he had no use for. Cambridge had taught him to want more; to make sure that nothing was held in abeyance to bargain for a woman's soul with the coin of kindness and patience. The thought of this terrified her. This was subjection beyond decency, beyond her imagining. Anything would be better than to submit.<sup>10</sup>

Besides highlighting the conflict between the two cultures, Ghosh also delves deep into the presence of magic and ritual in the native Burmese culture. It is now common knowledge that myth and magic, an important component of religion and literature, have been the subject of much of the writing in the twentieth century. In fact C.G. Jung, one of the foremost exponents of the relevance of myth and magic in the twentieth century, considers religion an essential feature of life without which the full integration of the human personality is not possible.

With his advanced knowledge of anthropology and interest in the local Burmese traditions, Ghosh is rightly placed to talk about a certain ritual in which a dead native (in order that his soul may find peace) has to be officially released by his master from earthly ties. This incident about an *oo-sis* and an assistant (a white man) while talking about the conflict between the colonizer and colonized, also brings into sharp focus the power of myth and magic in the life of the native. The life that the reader is introduced to, is of the teak forests, the elephant handlers called *oo-sis* and *pe-sis* and the *tai*, an elongated wooden house on stilts in which the white assistant lives, in a clearing of the teak forests. The leader of the camp's *oo-sis* is called *hsin-ouq*. Their master, a representative of the white man is the assistant by the name of McKay-thakin

The event which is narrated by Saya John to Raj Kumar is that McKay-thakin the assistant, had dared to contradict and disrespect the beliefs of the *oo-sis* and *hsin-ouq*. It was his first experience of running a teak camp on his own. Because he was eager to get away on his holiday quickly, he drove the elephant handlers to disaster. The job of getting elephants to roll off logs into the river had got held up because a huge log had jammed the chute. McKay-thakin brashly and callously ordered one of the *oo-sis* with his cow elephant into the slippery waterfall. The man accidentally slipped into the path of the log and his body was retrieved, crushed in every bone. The death of the *oo-sis* was followed by the murder of thakin. Had the assistant perhaps believed and respected a particular death rite in which the body of the dead must be officially released from its earthly ties (before it is buried) by a signature of his employer, (the assistant) his terrible end might have been averted. The white man was not only guilty of murder but also of making mockery of their customs related to

death, because they did not fit in with the European concept of death and death ceremonies

Elephants are known to have a strong attachment for their mounts and so the cow elephant was visibly disturbed by the death of the *oo-sis*. Aware of her nervous state that night the *hsin-ouq* tied her securely to two trees and double chained her instead of freeing her into the forest for the night as was the custom. Eerily enough when the other *oo-sis* had fled, aware of some sinister result of the body being buried without the signature of the employer, the cow elephant, loosened from its tether, killed the assistant that night. The presence of a mangled human footprint near the dead assistant reveals the possible truth that it was the soul of the *oo-sis* that had avenged its murder and that it was on the loose because it had not been formally released from its earthly ties. That the master who has failed to fulfill this ritual, is ultimately killed, could be explained as a derivation of an ancient myth that Frazer discusses in Chapter 24 of his book *The Golden Bough*. Frazer writes:

Now primitive peoples, as we have seen, sometimes believe that their safety and even that of the world is bound up with the life of one of these god-men or human incarnations of the divinity.... The danger is a formidable one; for if the course of nature is dependent on the man-god's life, what catastrophes may not be expected from the gradual enfeeblement of his powers.... There is only one way of averting these dangers. The man-god must be killed as soon as he shows symptoms that his powers are beginning to fail... Frazer <sup>11</sup>

Fanon also perceives myth and magic as a binding force for the native and the following lines from his book further throw light on the workings of myth in the native's world. Fanon's description therefore holds true for the world of the Burmese native which is not in touch with the outside world and not governed by the laws of the colonizer:

The atmosphere of myth and magic frightens me and so takes on an undoubted reality. By terrifying me, it integrates me in the traditions and the history of my district or of my tribe, and at the same times it reassures me, it gives me a status, as it were an identification paper.... By entangling myself in this inextricable network where actions are repeated with crystalline inevitability, I find the everlasting world which belongs to me, and the perennality which is thereby affirmed of the world belonging to us. Believe me, the zombies are more terrifying than the settlers. And in consequence the problem is no longer that keeping oneself right with the colonial world and its barbed-wire entanglements, but of considering three times before urinating, spitting or going out into the night.<sup>12</sup>

As should be clear from this passage, Fanon touches upon the cohesive and close knit world of the native which enables him to fight the colonizer's oppression.

The divisive tactics of the colonizer which have been mentioned by Fanon in a separate chapter entitled "The Pitfalls of National Consciousness" are aptly explicated in

the story of the destruction of Raj Kumar's fortunes. Raj Kumar's prosperous life is upset because he happens to be an Indian living amidst Burmese people. It is around the year 1929 when Uma, a friend of Dolly from the Ratnagiri days, pays a visit to Morningside, their rubber plantation home in Malaya. Uma is a member of the Indian Independence League. She and her fellow members who visit British colonies like Malaya, Burma and Rangoon notice unrest everywhere and a widening chasm between Indians and their Burmese neighbours which has been created by the British to further their own economic interests. She even detects a spark of rebellion in the rubber trees of Raj Kumar's plantation which will not do what they are expected to do, because according to the natives 'every rubber tree in Malaya was paid for by an Indian life'. Uma senses the rumblings of rebellion and change in the marriage of Dolly and Raj Kumar too, which represents the Burmese-Indian unity. She farsightedly sees in all these changes the growing insecurity of the British. There is an uprising in Burma (which reminds Uma of the Indian mutiny of 1857) in which the Burmese want to drive out Indians who they feel are foreigners and are usurping what is rightly theirs. Uma sees this as the pattern of imperial rule and its policy of ensuring its necessity through the division of its subjects.

After the riots in Burma, Uma and Raj Kumar have a violent altercation and part in anger. But it is not the end of their relationship for it is through the contact between Uma's and Raj Kumar's families that the reader is introduced to Lankasuka, Uma's house in Calcutta where she lives with her nephew and niece, Arjun and Manju. While Arjun's good-for-nothing life takes a turn for the better when he joins the army, Manju gets married to Neel, Raj Kumar's son and partner in business.

The British involvement in the war sends Arjun's battalion to the whereabouts of Burma and Malaya and through him; the reader witnesses the rumblings and realization of discontent in the Indian soldiers. The rising tide of Nationalism in India awakens in the soldiers a pride for their culture and validates Fanon's ideas on Nationalism and the role it plays in creating a national culture. The following lines from Fanon are meaningful in this context:

We believe that the conscious and organized undertaking by a colonized people to re-establish the sovereignty of that nation constitutes the most complete and obvious cultural manifestation that exists. It is not alone the success of the struggle which afterwards gives validity and vigour to culture; culture is not put into cold storage during the conflict. The struggle itself in its development and its internal progression sends culture along different paths and traces out entirely new ones for it. The struggle for freedom does not give back to the national culture its former value and shapes; this struggle which aims at a fundamentally different set of relations between men cannot leave intact either the form or the content of the people's culture. After the conflict there is not only the disappearance of colonialism but also the disappearance of the colonized man.<sup>13</sup>

Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour and the bombings on imperialist armies in Malaya where Arjun barely escapes with his life one particular incident has been

dramatically illustrated by Ghosh. The realization that the British are their real enemies makes the young soldiers in Arjun's regiment, as in many others, break with the British and they know that it is a bold step to join the Japanese instead. In this escape these soldiers take Col. Buckland into custody, but Arjun insists on freeing him because he is a good and kind man. The following dialogue between the once boss and once obedient soldier reveals through Arjun an awareness of national culture:

Colonel Buckland looked at his hand and then at him. 'I'm not going to shake your hand Roy Lieutenant,' he said quietly, in an even, emotionless voice. 'You can justify what you're doing to yourself in a thousand different ways, but you should make no mistake about the truth, Roy. You're a traitor. You're a disgrace to the regiment and to your country. You're scum. When the time comes you'll be hunted down. Roy. When you're sitting in front of a court-martial I'll be there. I'll see you hang, Roy. I will. You should have not a moment's doubt of that.'

Arjun dropped his hand. For the first time in many days he felt completely certain of his mind. He smiled.

'There's one thing you can be sure of, sir,' he said, 'On that day, if it comes, you'll have done your duty, sir, and I'll have done mine. We'll look at each other as honest men – for the first time. For that alone this will have been worthwhile.'<sup>14</sup>

The fact that Arjun is almost an archetypal figure representing the colonized Indian caught between two worlds, one imposed on him and adopted by him and the second his own which he tries to reclaim, brings forth Fanon's conception of the native's reclaiming his identity, and the collapsing of the colonialist framework:

The scandalized attitude with which the settlers who live in the colonial territory greet this new departure only serves to strengthen the native's decision. When the colonialists, who had tasted the sweets of their country over these assimilated people, realize that these men whom they considered as saved souls are beginning to fall back into the ways of niggers, (it can read as natives in this context) the whole system totters. Every native won over, every native who had taken the pledge not only marks a failure for the colonial structure when he decides to lose himself and to go back to his own side, but also stands as a symbol for the usefulness and shallowness of all the work that had been accomplished. Each native who goes back over the line is a radical condemnation of the methods and of the regime; and the native intellectual finds in the scandal he gives rise to a justification and an encouragement to persevere in the path he has chosen.<sup>15</sup>

Interestingly enough James Lough, writing in *The Denver Post*, sees Arjun as being featured after Arjun the reluctant warrior in one of India's most sacred texts, the *Bhagavad Gita*.<sup>16</sup>

Neel, Raj Kumar's other son, is killed in a bombing raid by the Japanese in Rangoon. He and his family like other Indians are forced to flee Rangoon which is in the grips of war. They are suddenly reduced to a state of homelessness. The trek across the mountains into India by Raj Kumar and his family along with thousands of others is starkly and poignantly described. Ironically enough with the Japanese advancing behind them even the trodden mountain paths are divided into white and black routes. The sheer grit with which Raj Kumar and his family survive despite tragedy, starvation, deprivation and fatigue is a statement of the invincible power of the other. The novel comes full circle when Raj Kumar returns to the country of his birth and Dolly to hers. Amitav Ghosh has thus, in line with Fanon's ideas, revealed the inherent value, power and vitality in the 'other' and has convincingly voiced a reclaiming of its true identity.

### **NOTES AND REFERENCES**

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**Dr. Sami Rafiq**

**Lecturer**

**Department of English**

**Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh**

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