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## *Ravenshaw Journal of Literary and Cultural Studies*

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# Shakespeare's Management of the Marina-Lysimachus Episode in *Pericles, Prince Of Tyre*

Dharanidhar Sahu

The last four plays of William Shakespeare such as *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *Tempest* known variously as Dramatic Romances or The Last Plays or simply Romances, while sharing certain tendencies as a category, are distinct from one another in their own way. The whole corpus of this author's plays, numbering 37, have been subsumed under different categories based on chronology, genre and content by different editors beginning with John Heminge and Henry Condell, who had jointly and most assiduously edited *The First Folio* in 1623, seven years after the author's demise. While giving due regard to the grouping of the plays such as Comedies, Tragicomedies, Histories, Tragedies and Romances, it may be said that each play wears its own distinct dynamics insofar as its theme, characterization, dramatic situation and plot structure are concerned. But in the case of the play titled PERICLES, PRINCE OF TYRE, this distinctness is carried to such lengths as to encourage a good number of Shakespeare scholars to call it apocryphal, that is to say, un-Shakespearean. Famous editors of the 18<sup>th</sup> century such as Alexander Pope and Samuel Johnson did not include this play in their editions of Shakespeare not simply because it was not included in the First Folio considered to be most authentic. It actually contains some passages that are obviously faulty and certain scenes that cannot be written by Shakespeare at the peak of his ability. The reasons for such discrepancy have already been sorted out, [1] but a number of scholars refuse to admit this play into the Shakespeare canon.

Pericles, Prince of Tyre is an example of how bibliographical reasons contribute to the textual interpretation of a play and which, in its turn, becomes a determining factor of its authorship. By bibliography, it is meant the study of the history of this play and its production in the printed form as well as in its theatrical form. This play is considered special for some valid reasons that are stated as follows. It is the last play to be admitted, that too grudgingly, into the Shakespeare canon. Critics and scholars are still divided on the question of its single authorship. It, however, stretches one's credulity to the limit to accept the fact that Shakespeare decided to collaborate with a lesser playwright for the first time in his career to write this play. This is the only play attributed to Shakespeare which is presented to the audience by a medieval English poet (John Gower) who happens to be one of the source-authors of the play's plot and story. It is the only play in which choral songs are written in imitation of the archaic medieval style typical of the said source-author John Gower. These choral songs have been presented in the forms of advance information, commentaries, apologia and moral judgments rolled into one and they are frequently followed by the dumb-shows. Both the choral songs and dumb-shows are intended to inform the audience about the events about to take place on the stage. These choral songs and dumb-shows also fulfill the dramatic function of glossing over the passages of time and sudden change of localities with an apologetic familiarity of tone. This is, perhaps, the only play of Shakespeare in which pagan gods are accommodated in a deeply Christian tradition and the pagan sufferers are indistinguishable from Christian martyrs. Finally, there is no other play of Shakespeare where some mediocre and clumsy passages that are unworthy of Shakespeare even in his apprentice years share the scenes with the passages whose supreme poetic quality is universally acknowledged. In spite of, as well as because of, so many special qualities, this play, as a whole, fails to convince some astute Shakespeare scholars that it is entirely written by Shakespeare. This essay is an attempt to foreground and critically discuss one particular episode involving Marina, the daughter of Pericles and Lysimachus, the young Governor of Mytilene. While admitting that the playwright has borrowed the broad, even gross, outline of the plot from other sources, it is at-

tempted here to show how he altered it in a manner suggestive of superlative dramatic resourcefulness and subtlety.

The Marina-Lysimachus episode in Act IV Scene 6 of *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* is undoubtedly as unique as it is intriguing. It is also emblematic of how Shakespeare fine-tunes some of his borrowed material to suit his creative concern for verisimilitude. The scene is intriguing because it bends both ways and sends out different signals to different scholars. Some scholars find the hand of an inept collaborator in the making of this scene, because Shakespeare cannot possibly pair Marina off with Lysimachus, a man so utterly unworthy of her. Though the Governor of a country, he visits a brothel and claims he had come there with some other motive, adding falsehood to his lecherous nature. Marina is an accomplished and virtuous young woman, royally born and aristocratically brought up. Shakespeare takes great care to portray the princess. Her angelic innocence, her beauty, her artistic accomplishments, her precocious resourcefulness in the brothel scenes and above all her extreme misfortunes, they all combine to endear her to the audience and readers. Many of the Shakespearean heroines pass through adversities, but none of them have been so grossly treated by circumstances. She survives by the skin of her teeth from the hired assassin Leonine; the pirates who saved her from death treat her as a commodity and auction her as a slave in the market place at Mytilene; the brothel keeper Bawd who buys her, his assistants Boult and Pander use violently bawdy language to her. Realizing that her fortune and her parents have deserted her, she summons up her own inner resources and invokes goddess Diana to save her chastity and honour. She succeeds in changing the heart of her customers and her keepers by the sheer power of her eloquence on, and her adherence to, virtue. Her life of woe is a tear-jerker; and she is a fully realized character. Gower calls her “absolute Marina” (Act IV Chorus 31). [2] This play, as the contemporary records show, had always been a great crowd-puller whenever it was staged and it still continues to be a favourite among Shakespearean plays because of the presence of Marina. Some scholars go to the extent of saying that the play should have been named after her, not after her father Pericles.

And yet such a paragon is made to marry Lysimachus who is bereft of any matching quality. He is punctilious about his position as the Governor of Mytilene. That is perhaps why he visits Bawd's brothel disguised as a common man. His disguise is so careless that the brothel owner immediately recognizes him. "Here comes the Lord Lysimachus disguised," says Bawd (Act IV, Scene 5, line 16). Neither he nor the brothel-keeper is surprised by that sudden discovery. That naturally means he is a regular visitor to the brothel. Unbothered by his exposure, he talks familiarly with Bawd and Boul. When they wish him good health, he asks them to provide him some healthy stuff ("How a dozen of virginites?") so that he can continue in good health and also enrich them by his frequent visits. When Marina is presented to him, he comments: "Faith, she would serve after a long voyage at sea." It means the young prostitute may be the right stuff for a sex-starved sailor, not for him. That is certainly ungracious of him. But it may be surmised that he deliberately conceals his fascination for the offered girl in order to snub the brothel keeper and reduce her rate.

After listening to admonishing sermons of Marina, he tells her that had he come to that place with a lustful mind he would have become a morally reformed man after listening to her, but actually he has not come with any such motive. His protestation sounds like a cover-up, and is as obviously inept as his disguise. It is difficult to know what other intention could have brought a man to a bawdy house. It may be argued that he was moved to compassion when he found a young and extremely beautiful virgin expatiating on virtue with eloquence and force. When his compassion overwhelmed his amorous intentions, he perhaps tried to save his honour by telling an unconvincing lie.

Then again, such change of heart affected all other customers who came with lecherous intentions. In that case, Lysimachus's change of heart cannot be attributed to his innate goodness and aristocratic breeding. Bawd informs Marina that the present customer is the governor of the country, hence a man of power and money. That information offers Marina an opportunity to manage the situa-

tion. She raises the issue of honour to embarrass her customer and to dissuade him from using force to violate her chastity. The man, according to her, becomes worthy of the eminent position he occupies by behaving in an honourable way. She implies that a man loses his honour when he steps into a bawdy house. She says:

If you were born to honour, show it now;  
If put upon you, make the judgement good  
That thought you worthy of it (IV iv 91-93).

She again plays on her customer's conceit by referring to her own high birth, noble training and present wretchedness. Hoeniger states that he threw away his mask at that moment. But that may not be entirely convincing. He is not wearing any mask at all. He has only a nagging libido that overwhelms his better sense and makes him forget his moral responsibility as the governor of a country and the custodian of values. The line of control separating the dignity of his office and his cavalier escapades has become so porous that mutual infiltrations are hardly noticed. That's why he visits the brothel in disguise and seems to have been pleased when he is easily recognized. His ego is flattered when the owner of the bawdy house introduces him to Marina. Then he puts on airs of nobility in order to raise his prospects by rising in Marina's estimation of him. It could have been more becoming of him to level up to her and say that he was a morally transformed man after hearing her words, and was ashamed of being such a brothel-monger. But, instead, he declares:

“Had I brought hither a corrupted mind,  
Thy speech had alter'd it...  
For me, be you thoughten  
That I came with no ill intent” (IV iv. 105-106, 108-109).

By saying that, he may have hoped to save his face, but it is too much to expect. Marina does not believe him when she bids him farewell with: “The good gods preserve you!” He might have appeared to her as a spoilt and lecherous young man unworthy of being the Governor of a city; one who tells a couple of inept lies to

escape from an excruciatingly uncomfortable situation. That may be precisely the impression Shakespeare has wanted to create in the minds of his spectators and readers when he introduced improvisations to the old versions of the story on which he based his play.

As regards the contention- whether Pericles, Prince of Tyre is a “bibliographical catastrophe or an experimental marvel”- the handling of the Marina-Lysimachus episode can be illustrative of the latter. It is a fact that the plot of Shakespeare’s play is entirely dependent on the story of Apollonius of Tyre, a tale handed down from ancient times beginning with the late Greek literature and has been variously rendered by John Gower in the Eighth Book of his *Confessio Amantis* and Laurence Twine’s novel *The Patterne of Painfull Adventures*. For that matter, most of the plots of Shakespeare’s plays have been borrowed from different sources. But when he takes them up for dramatization, he changes them in such a way as to suit his mood, genius and craft, supplying compelling motifs for action and adding a psychological realism while portraying characters without tampering with the overall structure of the story. Even when the dramatic situations are fantastic and characters are not human, the dialogues and characterization are realistically convincing. [3] He might have done the same in this case as well. The immediate sources of the brothel scene in *Pericles* are Twine’s prose novel *The Patterne of Painfull Adventures* and Gower’s verse narrative *Confessio Amantis*. Shakespeare, for some recondite reasons, changed the names of characters of the old tale while retaining the overall plot structure. Thaise or Tharsia becomes Marina, Apollonius becomes Pericles, nurse Ligozides becomes nurse Lychorida, Athanagoras the Prince of Mytilene becomes Governor Lysimachus. But interestingly, he dispensed with Twine’s realistic account of the Marina-Lysimachus (Tharsia - Athanagoras) encounter. Twine describes the event as follows: Athanagoras, while strolling in the market-place, saw Tharsia who, along with other captives, was being auctioned by the pirates. He was attracted by her virgin charm. It was a case of lust at first sight. He wanted to buy her at all costs. But Bawd out-bids him by declaring that he would pay “an hundred sesterces of gold” to procure that virginal beauty for his

brothel. He suffered Bawd to buy her, and “bethought him secretly in his mind: ...when he (Bawd) setteth her to hire, I will be the first man that shall come unto her, and I will gather the floure of her virginitie, which shall stand mee in as great steade as if I had bought her” (Hoeniger 167). That secret resolution, though pragmatic convincingly explains why he pipped other customers that night by visiting the brothel in disguise.

By omitting the auction scene, and bringing Lysimachus to the brothel as the first customer of Marina, Shakespeare seems to have replaced a scheming event by a fortunate accident, thereby endowing Lysimachus with a motive which is patently amorous. Whereas Twine’s Athanagoras was a married man with a daughter probably as old as the girl set for hire, Shakespeare’s Lysimachus is young and unmarried, hence footloose and fancy-free.

It is reasonable to believe that Shakespeare introduces such improbabilities, contradictions and gaping voids in his text not inadvertently. He perhaps knows what he is doing. He might have easily filled in those gaps and systematized those improbabilities with a few more lines or through his choral narrator Gower. He might have made Lysimachus tell her that when he saw her at the auction place he fell in love with her; that he had come to the brothel with a lover’s heart, not with a lecherous mind. But he deliberately desisted from doing so in order to sculpt out a romantic love story out of that episode of unromantic carnality ending in wedlock. Whatever he has left unsaid, whatever he has covered with a thin mist of ambiguity contributes to his final exoneration and makes him less reprehensible aesthetically at least. His declaration that he has not come to the brothel with amorous designs could be a poignant cover-up that uncovers his all too human quality. He is not a “piece of virtue” like Marina, but he is not depraved either. His unconvincing lie reveals his innate simplicity that prevents him from lying convincingly. His moral lapse and his ability to be chastised into good sense humanize him and turn him into a more believable character. The situation would have been different had he confessed his initial amorousness and his consequent transformation after meeting her and listening to

her. That a cavalier and youthful lord can be chastened and chastised into virtue through a change of heart is not out of place in a love story. But that might have been less convincing than what Shakespeare's Lysimachus has actually done. Though morally indefensible, it is quite natural for a young man, pampered by power and spoiled by youth, to offer an awkward excuse or tell a transparent lie to escape from a shameful situation. [4] The answer is shrouded in a subtle irony, and the spectators and readers are free to imagine and find out the actual reason that brought Lysimachus to a brothel to meet the new recruit Marina. His words may be interpreted like this: Had I come with a corrupt motive, I would have been transformed by your innocence, your beauty, your eloquence and your commitment to virtue. Now, Marina, I have no need of being transformed. Your look and your qualities, which could have been utilized to change a corrupted mind, have fired my mind with admiration and love. I am only telling a lie to save my face. I know you do not believe me.

In the source story Athanagoras (Lysimachus) marries Thaise/Tharsia (Marina). So Shakespeare could not have found another match for Marina, but he succeeded in making a better man out of that "borrowed" character by introducing an area of ambiguity, allowing it to sink slowly into the consciousness of his spectators and readers. Barbara Everett calls it "darkness" that conceals Shakespeare's hidden motive found in the Romances in general and *Pericles* in particular. She writes: "This kind of darkness is a place Shakespeare is happy to use in his last plays, like the death or supposed death at the centre of tragic-comedy" (Everett 14). But the darkness she talks of is of a visible kind. It is not deliberate mystification; it is getting into the skin of the character with a view to bringing out his irreducible humanity, thereby enhancing his worth as a recognizable human being. Shakespeare is not doing it for the first time. He has paired off many of his accomplished heroines with apparently nondescript men with dubious credentials. In *Measure for Measure*, Angelo, a crook and a blackmailer, is unfit to be the husband of virtuous Isabella; in *The Merchant of Venice*, Bassanio is no match for Portia; in *All's Well That Ends Well*, Bertram, a

worthless young count, is unworthy of being the husband of Helena.

“I cannot reconcile my heart to Bertram,” writes Johnson; “a man noble without generosity, and young without truth; who marries Helena as a coward, and leaves her as a profligate; when she is dead by his unkindness, sneaks home to a second marriage, is accused by a woman whom he has wronged, defends himself by falsehood, and is dismissed to happiness.” [5] In such instances, feminine virtues are extolled and men are presented as errant and wild, but capable of being pestered into virtue by their worthy wives. These male characters are shamed into sense; their moral lapses are condoned by generous and loving women who tower over them so far as qualities are concerned, and yet agree to marry them. These male characters are accepted warts and all, and finally, are “dismissed to happiness.”

As stated in the beginning of this essay, Shakespeare has introduced a good number of innovations and improvisations in this play, some of them for the first time. So it is quite in order to expect that he wanted his spectators digest human frailty in a young unattached ruler and get the joy of seeing their long-suffering and much-adored princess Marina tying the knot with a man who is royally born and who has nobility enough to spare a helpless virgin in a brothel.

To sum up, *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, like the three Romances that follow, accommodates Shakespeare’s conscious intention to disport himself with perspective to surprise his spectators and readers by offering the unexpected: the happiness of the good and the not-so-good at the end. As in the real world, rewards and retributions are not always proportionately meted out to humans in accordance with the virtues and vices they act out, so in the happening world of this pagan play pervaded, as it were, with the liberal spirit of ancient Greece, love-related adventures are easily forgiven. When Vulcan tried to expose his wife Venus’s escapades with Mars and trapped the naked lovers and invited all the gods and goddesses to get the proof, he became a laughing-stock; his witnesses, instead of giving him sympathy, enjoyed the love scene and admired the beauty of the

trapped lovers. Venus, the goddess of love and Jove, the king of the gods were great performers as well as facilitators of amatory acts, mostly extramarital relationships. Interestingly, Diana, the goddess of chastity is genially disposed towards her sister Venus. The consummate artist that he is, Shakespeare perhaps wanted to give his audience a taste of the classical Greece where the play is located. He achieves that end with least effort and casual craftsmanship. As Kenneth Muir puts it: "Shakespeare is aware that his story is too good to be true, but such fables are a criticism of life as it is, and ... a statement of faith." [6] This play, to use a modern term, was a box office hit in the Elizabethan and Jacobean England. That attests to the timeless popularity of an unrealistic, episodic play which is presented with true fidelity to life and which holds "the mirror up to nature," shows "virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure" [7].

## Notes

[1] Interested readers may read an essay, written by this author, titled "Pericles, Prince of Tyre: The Problems of Authorship, the Play as Narrative and the Just Gods", which contains an elaborate discussion on this issue.

The Atlantic Critical Review Vol.7, No.01 (January-March 2008 issue.)  
Pp. 01-29

[2] When the hired assassin asks her to say her prayers so that he will kill her to satisfy Dionyza, she speaks:

Why would she have me kill'd?  
Now, as I can remember, by my troth,  
I never did her hurt in all my life,  
I never spake bad word, nor did ill turn  
To any living creature; believe me la,  
I never kill'd a mouse, nor hurt a fly;  
I trod upon a worm against my will,  
But I wept for't (IV i 72-79).

This little speech, spoken in desperate earnest, attests to her child-like innocence, and is meant to be a sure tear-jerker. Her account of her birth at sea in the previous speech reminds the audience about the dire reversal of her fortune: the daughter of Pericles pleading for her life to a hired killer.

[3] Dr. Johnson, whose unsparing eyes never miss an opportunity either to admire or to condemn Shakespeare, writes: "Shakespeare has no

heroes; his scenes are occupied only by men, who act and speak as the reader thinks that he should himself have spoken or acted on the same occasion. Even where the agency is supernatural, the dialogue is level with life. Other writers disguise the most natural passions and most frequent incidents; so that he who contemplates them in the book will not know them in the world. Shakespeare approximates the remote and familiarizes the wonderful..." (Dr. Johnson on Shakespeare, edited by W.K. Wimsatt, Penguin Shakespeare Library, 1960). P. 61

[4] Lysimachus tells another lie in Act V. It is a lie that reveals his kind and considerate nature. He seems not to mind telling a lie to please a psychologically unstable man or to come out of an embarrassing situation.

Pericles: ... (Music) But what music?

Helicanus: My lord, I hear none.

Pericles: None? The music of the spheres! List, my Marina.

Lysimachus: It is not good to cross him; give him way.

Pericles: Rarest sounds! Do ye not hear?

Lysimachus: Music, my Lord? I hear. (V i 224-230).

[5] Dr Johnson on Shakespeare edited by W. K. Wimsatt, Penguin Shakespeare Library, 1960, p.113.

[6] Kenneth Muir considers the meeting scene of Pericles and Marina to be one of the best in Shakespeare. The effectiveness of this scene, he writes, "and the effectiveness of the whole play is due partly to Shakespeare's creation of a kind of myth which he could set up against the changes and chances of this mortal life. He is calling in a new world in which the designs of evil men are frustrated and in which everything comes right in the end – the beautiful queen is not really dead, the beautiful princess is saved from murder and rape and contamination of the brothel, and the hero, after more trials and tribulations than are normally the lot of man, is rewarded with unforeseen and unimagined happiness" (The Reader's Encyclopedia of Shakespeare, edited by Oscar J. Campbell, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1966). Page: 628.

[7] Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. Act III, Sc.2, ll.23-25.

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# Imagined Identities: J.M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*

Bijay K Danta

What are we waiting for, assembled in the forum?...

Because the barbarians are coming today  
and the emperor is waiting to receive their leader.  
He has even prepared a scroll to give him,  
replete with titles, with imposing names....

Because night has fallen and the barbarians have not come.  
And some who have just returned from the border say  
there are no barbarians any longer.

And now what's going to happen to us without the barbarians

They were, those people, a kind of solution. (Cavafy, "Waiting  
for the Barbarians")

## I

Constantine Cavafy's "Waiting for the Barbarians" (1904) and Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980), have more in common than the titles. Each text addresses the confusion and tension arising from waiting for the barbarians, though the implications of the wait and the likely outcomes differ significantly. Cavafy's poem offers two images that need further attention: the image of the scroll that the emperor has prepared for the barbarians, and the disappointment at the realization that "there are no barbarians any longer." The poem shows how the barbarians gave a sense of unity, however morbid, to the citizens and their rulers. The fact that Cavafy calls the barbarians, "those people, a kind of solution" suggests how threats to a certain ideology, whether real or imagined, give the ruler the wherewithal to control his people through a contestatory worldview. Given that such captive worldviews are used to form

national or racial identities, any search for identity is a search as much for sameness as for difference. In countries like South Africa, and India, for instance, the search is multi-layered and multivalent, primarily because we have groups speaking on behalf of conflicting ideologies, and confusing identities. In consequence, what is on one's side of the wall is one's own, and therefore already always understood; what is beyond the world is an other or the other that needs to be understood, and must be epistemologically located in such a way that it is neither too close nor too far from the wall that secures us. The wall, however, is a source of power and restraint to the self, and hence remains inescapably bound to social contests, epistemological dislocations, and cultural fictions.

Understood this way, Coetzee's fiction can be said to explore figurations of identity in ethical and epistemological terms. His best novels—*Dusklands* (1974), *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980), *Life and Times of Michael K* (1983), and *Disgrace* (1999)—compellingly deal with the self's perceptions of itself and the other, as most novels on self and identity do, but equally importantly, these novels also offer haunting spectres of the other perceiving the self's perception of itself and the other. In an essay titled "The Novel Today" (1988), Coetzee makes a distinction between a mode of writing which "supplements" history by and for "its principal structuration," and another mode that "rivals" history and seeks to "occupy an autonomous place." Coetzee suggests that the latter mode "operates in terms of its own procedures and issues" and, in the process, is able to "show up the mythic status of history" ("Novel" 2–3). Though he does not specify it here, this view owes substantially to Paul Ricoeur's *Time and Narrative*, and to the post-historicist thinking of Hayden White. To a student of this kind of historical thinking, history is available as a series of emplotments and pre- and con-figurations, as put by Ricoeur. This field of convergence between history and theory, available in what Linda Hutcheon calls historiographic metafiction, shows the fictionality of history and, inevitably, the historicity of fiction (Hutcheon *Poetics* 122-23; see White 1-25, 168-84).

*Waiting for the Barbarians* allegorizes the transformation of events into narratives, thereby underlining the ambiguity of all historical

undertakings. This essay addresses the complex network of what Duvall in his book on Toni Morrison calls “identifying fictions” (see *Identifying* 1-24), an aspect hinted at but generally ignored by Coetzee’s critics (see Ashcroft 102-116; Head 48-55). In this formulation, cultural fictions are transformed into social facts, and legitimized through accounts of self-fashioning that seemingly deal with and draw from facts. The essay further examines how the border legitimizes the free play of fact and fiction in *Waiting for the Barbarians* which, in turn, is the key to the subject-object division and the formation of authority. To my mind, the importance Coetzee’s narrative lies in the fact that even as he presents the self and the other doubling and de-doubling on themselves, acquiring in the process a sophistication, even density, it insists on retaining its status as narrative. This is something that cannot be sustained either by the overly political vocabulary of postcolonial criticism or by the epistemological concerns of phenomenological or ontological inquiry.

Given “the profound consequences” of the transformation of cultural fictions into social facts (Appiah “Race” 277; also see *In My Father’s* 28-46; Anderson), it is useful to have the distinction between fact and fiction. In an interesting primer on fiction, Robert Scholes says that fact comes from *facere*: to make or do. Fiction, he says, comes from *ingere*: to make or shape. The privileging of fact over fiction is ironical, to say the least.

For, a thing done no real existence once it has been done. It may have consequences and there may be records that point to its former existence (think of the Civil War, for example) but once it is done its existence is finished. A thing made, on the other hand, exists until it decays or is destroyed. Once it is finished its existence begins (think of a Civil War story like Stephen Crane’s *Red Badge of Courage*, for example. Fact, finally, has no existence, while fiction may last for centuries. (*Elements* 113-14)

Erving Goffman’s famous take on this issue is worth another look: When we decide that something is unreal, the real it isn’t need not itself be very real, indeed, can just as well be a dramatization of

events as the events themselves — or a rehearsal of the dramatization, or a painting of the rehearsal or a reproduction of the painting. Any of these latter can serve as the original of which something is a mere mock-up, leading one to think that which is sovereign is relationship — not substance. (Frame 500-1).

In other words, we can explain the relationship between fact and fiction by suggesting that each could be the consequence of the other. While each gives the other a certain identity, interestingly, each simultaneously feeds, and feeds on, the other. To put it differently, the historian and the material with which he or she works through are bound in a paradoxical host-parasite, specular relationship. In this, however, nobody can say for sure who is in the mirror and who is in front of or outside it. In other words, what we call identity is a product of certain historical relations between the viewer and what he or she views, between the self and its other or constructed other. Given that identity as much a social fact as an epistemological marker, it is necessary to examine how there is politics before there is identity, not just what we call the politics of identity.

It is necessary therefore to return to the site of identity formation itself. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* deals with the very act of identity formation by defining the nature of the barbarian from the point of view of the state, under siege as well as seizure, to start with, but problematizes its own definition by inserting into the discourse of the state a critical resistance that is situated within and validated without. One is asked to look at action and reaction (without knowing what is what, one cannot temporalize them), not only in view of the circularity of interpretation but also of all hypotheses: "Every interpreter labours under the handicap of an inevitable circularity: all his materiel evidence tends to suggest his hypothesis because much of it was already constituted by his hypothesis" (Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* 166). Given that interpretations are validated by assumptions or what we could call frames of interpretation, interrogating ideologies will be grounded in ideologies, though of some other kind.

As argued by Asad and Clifford, postcolonial and postnational

critiques of the colonial ethnographer's definition of the barbarian or the native seize on the figurations that legitimize the grand narratives of colonial powers (Asad, *Anthropology* 1-12; Clifford, *Writing* 1-26; Rabinow 234-61; Desai 62-81; Said 205-10). It should be clear that any attempt to critique or interrogate the legitimacy of colonial subject formation must, in turn, engage in subversive strategies to de-universalize links between state and governance that are taken for granted. What is at stake here is the invention of the state and the subject and the role of the state when it battles its own subjects. It follows that attempts to counter the state's hegemonic practices by exposing its excesses—both of fears and/or fantasies—get subsumed in discursive practices that are meant to protect the state from its own contradictions. In other words, counter-discourses or resistant fictions must look away from protest or subversion, two of the most familiar modes of resistance. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* seeks to show the inadequacy not only of cultural fictions but also of their critiques.

It is certainly not my intention to establish that the choice of a certain mode of resistance is somewhat like toggling, like switching from one mode to another in a mechanical manner. Resistance is at once the condition and consequence of what I call, in the absence of a better expression, the epistemology of the wall. This paper is on the making and breaking of walls in all kinds of social formations, more particularly social imaging through inclusive and exclusive self-fashioning in colonial encounters. Given that social imaging uses desire and fear for specific ends, it legitimizes itself by walling-in and walling-out identities. That identities are not selfsame fixities but portable representations makes them part of and indeed products of national, racial, sexual, anthropological or anthropocentric imaginaries. In other words, identities are both imagined and peripatetic, but once imagined, they hypostatize and acquire validities of formation that refuse to go away or even refer back to the moment or instance of formation. Fictional texts show the futility of attempts both by the victim and the oppressor to avoid the horror of encounters repeating themselves *ad infinitum*, *ad nauseum*.

II

She lay under me whimpering.  
I plowed into her hard  
kept thrusting and thrusting  
felt him watching from the mesquite tree  
heard him keening like a wild animal  
in that instant I felt such contempt for her  
round face and beady black eyes like an Indian's.  
Afterwards I sat on her face until  
her arms stopped flailing,  
didn't want to waste a bullet on her.  
The boys wouldn't look me in the eyes.  
I walked up to where I had tied her man to the tree  
and spat in his face. Lynch him, I told the boys.

This is a poem on torture and the body in pain in Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (87), a poem that reinscribes the happenings of the border. In *Waiting for the Barbarians* torture and killing go side by side. As Peter Brooks says, "The allure of the exotic is of course in the nineteenth century bound up with the extension of European colonialism" (Body 161). Brooks has a point when he says that such trips by artists such as Gauguin, Chateaubriand, Nerval, Maxime du Camp, Flaubert, Delacroix, and Gerome, among others, were mostly "in search of an exciting other of European civilization, one that in particular promises a more free sexuality" (164; also see Cheyfitz). If artists are responsible for the construction of the exotic allure of the other, nineteenth century ethnographers created the condition for an unmistakable convergence between narrative and the physical violation of the nomadic girl "adopted" by the old magistrate's is unspeakable, and the girl refuses to speak about it, apparently because there is nothing that she can speak, or speak of. On the other hand, her refusal to speak is caught in a narrative doublebind: she is neither willing nor unwilling, but is unsure of the reception of her part. When she eventually comes out with her version of the scalding, the loss of eyesight, and possibly of rape, the story is greeted with angry and unhappy outbursts of the old magistrate. The girl's refusal to speak is a teasing evidence

of the inevitability of unspeakable human tragedies getting subsumed in “narrative emplotments” (Ricoeur 9). *Waiting for the Barbarians* is apocalyptic, and critiques the ethno-romanticism of nineteenth-century travel writing on South Africa and its colonial desideratum.

Coetzee’s portrayal of the sleepy imperial outpost with a dying oasis at its heart is in itself a telltale commentary on the narrative “taming” of borderlands. The old magistrate is an anthropologist, topographer, archaeologist, archivist, curator, writer, that is, diarist and chronicler of the empire—all rolled into one. It is instructive to note that he derives much needed security from his routine, which includes, among other things, inspection of the city gates, short hunting trips to the lake and the surrounding desert, walks along the river where the fishermen catch fish, sleep between meals, have sex with obliging native women in the dark. He digs sand dunes and finds, and archives, art objects from long-forgotten pasts; even digs out from sacred sites inscriptions that he cannot decipher but must store for posterity. Women work and gossip and give birth to sweet children who chase him occasionally when he is on his outings. Men work and drink and do farming and fishing encouraged and patronised by the old magistrate. His station is peaceful; at least that is what he thinks. His primary work is keeping peace in the border. The whole outpost looks peaceful, almost drugged. While peacekeeping in this border post may involve trips and negotiations beyond the limits that he has set for himself, he ignores that need. This need, it must be recognized, is based on fear, fear of what is beyond his domain, and domain knowledge.

It would be interesting to have a look at his trips to the world beyond the gates. On the one hand, he seems familiar with the terrain, its flora and fauna, the rhythm of seasons. On the other hand, this border post draws its security from his familiarity with local and indigenous knowledge. Interestingly, we see him advising the locals on healthcare and herbal medicine, crop patterns, ways to stop the desert from invading their crops and their homes, etc. It is necessary that we also look at his scatological obsessions, and his obsessive references to knowledge of the human body, though he only has

himself and his numerous lovers as objects of study. In a way he seals the border by setting limits to his fear, by, one, domesticating the unfamiliar and the uncomfortable, and, two, by drawing symbolic and symbiotic parallels between two self-fashioned cosmologies: of the body and of nature. Threats to one are preconditioned or prefigured or to recall the Ricoeur expression, con-figured by threats to the other. To this extent the old man is the colonial naturalist pleading for the lake and the animals. What is not always obvious is the fact the while protesting the humiliation and disfiguration of the prisoners, he also becomes an apologist for the human body. However, if one was intent on showing through these instances Coetzee critiquing the complicity between power and knowledge, *Waiting for the Barbarians* challenges the security one derives from critiquing the violent politics of the colonial state.

### III

Exterminate the brutes. (Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*)

While it may not be accurate to compare Conrad's Kurtz to Coetzee's old magistrate, the ironical and intertextual allusion to *Heart of Darkness* in *Waiting for the Barbarians* is an interesting issue missed by the novel's commentators (see Atwell, Attridge). Whereas Marlow is sent by the Company to rescue Kurtz, his ambivalent attitude towards the mission notwithstanding, the old magistrate's Kurtz-like existence in the border post is threatened by the arrival of Col. Joll. Joll is apparently sent from the capital to verify reports regarding attacks on the empire by barbarians from across the mountains, and stop them. Joll makes several expeditions to the mountains and brings in nomadic villagers from the border, demanding that they divulge whatever information they have on the barbarians. The inquest as well as the torture becomes an end in itself. It is to be noted here how the old magistrate refuses to ignore the violence unleashed upon the old villager and his nephew, and yet remains alienated from the feelings that would indicate guilt or protest.

The element of torture is inserted into a long frame, broken up by clusters of smaller frames involving the old magistrate's official and

private selves. We see, on the one hand, a series of reflections that tell us as much about the sheer brutality of Joll's assignment as the irrelevance of the old magistrate's border-keeping, and the inconsequentiality of both, viewed together or otherwise. For, the old magistrate seems to have forgotten the art of governance. In fact, he has slid into a kind of passivity that rules out the confrontation quotient of colonial rule, significant both as an administrative motor and as a principle of governance. He is no longer alive to the signs of change or danger around him that would jeopardise his authority. Even more importantly, he is either reluctant to or incapable of generating instruments of change, let alone demanding it, in order for him to justify the colonial enterprise, his presence in the border outpost to be specific. This puts him in opposition to Joll who demands change, and is constantly on the look-out for signs of change whether of subversive activities by the barbarians or of progress in putting together an administrative machinery, however feeble or ineffective it may appear to the initiated or interested observer.

Having said that, both Joll and the magistrate are given to their peculiar and specific interpretations of signs before them. Joll proactively responds to what he thinks are vital signs, and tries to factor these signs into an evidentiary archive. The old magistrate, on his part, ignores the very signs that his adversary uses to justify or consolidate the surveillance that he or the likes of him simultaneously represent and embody. I want to argue that it is necessary to see these men as interpreters of vital signs. Clearly, both men fail to interpret, even as they accumulate large amounts of evidence to further their respective interpretive missions. Their reading of the silence, for example, tells us more about what they need than what they see. Whereas the old magistrate would want to present the silence as a sign of the normal silence of the mountains, a natural thing, Joll sees the silence as a portent of conspiracy and future unrest on the border, a sign that the barbarians are coming. Each piece of evidence that he uses, now we see, has either been ignored by the old magistrate, or will be discarded by him as inconsequential. Every sign, Joll holds, is a vital clue to political instability that in his reading will overrun the land sooner or later, and it is his duty to stop

or contain it in his capacity as a military officer.

It is not difficult to see that these men are consumed by their interpretive projects, which, I argue here, are grounded in political epistemologies as well as epistemological politics. Each brings to the fore a theory of being that is simultaneously a theory of thing: the perception of who or what people are cannot be separated from the reading of signs, that is, seeing how in any interpretive situation the subject viewing the object gets dramatically transformed into an object viewing another object in another frame. Once we accept that any perception of identity is a necessary adjunct to walling-in or walling-out things or people, the earlier description of identity formation as an epistemology of the wall makes sense. Identities are walls that protect as well as imprison selves, communities, and nations. Identities are inclusive insofar as they ignore signs of difference among people, and call for imagined genealogies, exclusive in their obsessive pursuit of an autochthonous entity or racial purity, which, in turn, is attributable more to location and longing than to proof.

What has made it impossible for us to live in time like fish in water, like birds in air, like children? It is the fault of Empire! Empire has created the time of history. Empire has located its existence not in the smooth recurrent spinning time of the cycle of the seasons but in the jagged time of rise and fall, of beginning and end, of catastrophe. Empire dooms itself to live in history and plot against history. One thought alone preoccupies the submerged mind of Empire: how not to end, how not to die, how to prolong its era. (133)

This is a plea for living in a world that is as yet unmediated, much in the manner of American Adam, that oft-abused metaphor of yore. Talking about the South African Coetzee finds disturbing a certain rhetorical absence in what he calls the “Discourse of the Cape:”

Idleness, indolence, sloth, laziness, torpor—these terms are meant both to define a Hottentot vice and to distance the writer from it. Nowhere in the great echo chamber of the Discourse of the Cape is a voice raised to ask whether the life of the Hottentot may not be a

version of life before the Fall (as Bartolome de las Casas suggested in respect to the Indians of the New World), a life in which man is not yet condemned to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow, but instead may spend his days dozing in the sun, or in the shade when the sun grows too hot, half-aware of the singing of the birds and the breeze on his skin, bestirring himself to eat when hunger overtakes him, enjoying a pipe of tobacco when it is available, at one with his surroundings and unreflectively content. The idea that the Hottentot may be Adam is not even entertained for the sake of being dismissed. (White Writing 18)

In a way this is a plea for living outside of history, the history of empire, the history that is secured in its constructed teleology. For the old magistrate this is a history that cannot ever be realized. The only escape from this dilemma offered by Coetzee appears fleetingly in the guise of the magistrate's imagined flight from history: "I wanted to live outside history. I wanted to live outside the history that Empire imposes on its subjects, even its lost subjects. I have never wished it for the barbarians that they should have the history of the Empire laid upon them" (154). The text pushes us to see how South Africa or for that matter India or the US may have "progressed" from the teleological historicism of Hegel to the anti-teleological historicism of Nietzsche. History does not end with the objective realization of the idea of liberty in the form of the State, but with the vertiginous recognition that the State is merely a particular and inevitable expression of Will to Power that is beyond good and evil. That the state is now beyond good and evil should be chillingly obvious:

What, after all, do I stand for besides an archaic code of gentlemanly behavior towards captured foes, and what do I stand against except the new science of degradation that kills people on their knees, confused and disgraced in their own eyes? Would I have dared to face the crowd to demand justice for these ridiculous barbarian prisoners with their backsides in the air? Justice: once that word is uttered, where will it all end? Easier to shout No! Easier to be beaten and made a martyr. Easier to lay my head on a block than to defend

the cause of justice for the barbarians: for where can that argument lead but to laying down our arms and opening the gates of the town to the people whose land we have raped? The old magistrate, defender of the rule of law, enemy in his own way of the State, assaulted and imprisoned, impregnably virtuous, is not without his own twinges of doubt. (108)

As the remaining inhabitants of the defenceless town await the onslaught of the barbarians, the magistrate conceives the project of writing a record of the settlement for posterity. But his anti-teleological version of a cyclical local “history” turns out to be a conscious fabrication: “No one who paid a visit to this oasis failed to be struck by the charm of life here. We lived in the time of the seasons, of the harvests, of the migrations of the waterbirds. We lived with nothing between us and the stars. We would have made any concession, had we only known what, to go on living here. This was paradise on earth” (154)

Clearly, this is a constructed paradise, much like the “city on the hills” paradise of the pilgrims and puritans of America. This is necessary for starting a new life, whatever the cost, whatever indeed. What is interesting is the legitimacy communities derive from ethnic or ethnocentric mythographies that transform history into myth. It is important that one looks at the process of transformation of history into myth because this transformation holds the key to social and indeed racial stratification, illustrated by what Louis Dumont calls *homo hierarchicus* (239). Identities are related to both, to facts and figurations of what was perhaps an originary violence in human relations that created hierarchies out of ordinary relations, secure in their horizontal spatiality, and independent of mythic depth that brings in the idea of weight and importance (and hence the vertical scale of evaluation), into what was perhaps a world of *homo aequalis*. To ensure that the hierarchy is protected and perpetrated, communities engage in periodic cleansing, that is, doing away with that which is not consistent with the mythography of the *homo hierarchicus* or the *homo sapiens*. The barbarian (supposedly the savage or the alien or the wild or the dangerous or the marginal), belongs to the dis-re-

membered phase of an already sanitized space.

It is necessary, therefore, to show how Coetzee, one, interrogates the erasure of the other that creates the secure world of the homo sapiens and, two, foregrounds the many histories of otherness that await fleshing-out as markers of critical negotiation or difference. One is pleading for an anthropology of asymmetrical acceptability, in that it could be more acceptable both philosophically and politically than the excessively ethnocentric proposition of an essential equality. For, this search for equality is not only no longer utopian but also the most destructive form of oppression of one group by another. One may not necessarily see the other as foe, as that that must be eliminated because the self cannot live with it (or rather that) yet.

This same point receives amplification in the novel through a dialectical play upon culture and barbarism: Coetzee's magistrate, self-consciously setting himself up as the liberal - humane - alternative to the State-empowered Colonel Joll, is forced to the awareness that he, too, shackled as he is to the progressivist logic of (Western) civilization, is an agent of Empire: "For I was not, as I liked to think, the indulgent pleasure-loving opposite of the cold rigid Colonel. I was the lie that Empire tells itself when times are easy, the truth the Empire tells when harsh winds blow. Two sides of imperial rule, no more, no less." (108) The magistrate's assumption of his privileged role as "defender of the rule of law" leads Colonel Joll mockingly to bestow upon the would-be rebel and martyr the title of "the One Just Man" (108). He says that he is already operating in complicity with the empire when he fails to stop the public killing of the barbarians brought back from the second expedition by the soldiers after he is seen as an enemy of the state.

To be sure, opening up the gates of the town to the barbarians can assume the semblance of justice -even if it means the annihilation of the civilization that has produced the likes of the magistrate. But what form can justice take if not that of new laws, new writings, new histories, new Empires? How will the State that follows establish its claim to justice except by discriminating itself, its form, from

the Other which lies outside it? ... Whom will that other girl with the blind face remember: me with my silk robe and my dim lights and my perfumes and oils and my unhappy pleasures, or that other cold man with the mask over his eyes who gave the orders and pondered the sounds of her intimate pain? . . . Though I cringe with shame ... I must ask myself whether, when I lay head to foot with her, fondling and kissing those broken ankles, I was not in my heart of hearts regretting that I could not engrave myself on her as deeply. However kindly she may be treated by her own people, she will never be courted and married in the normal way: she is marked for life as the property of a stranger. (135)

He is helpless, surely, as he has no power, severely maimed by Mandel and his troopers because of the beating, and nearly killed by what is presented as a playful kind of hanging. The episode is reflective of the torture presided over by Joll during and after the first expedition, where the girl he loved was scalded, possibly after sexual battery. It is significant that many of the nomadic men were killed because they could not say who or where the barbarians were. The silence of the ignorant is interpreted as conspiratorial silence, and the old magistrate is incensed by this:

I know that they commit an error in treating me so summarily. For I am no orator. What would I have said if they had let me go on? That it is worse to beat a man's feet to pulp than to kill him in combat? That it brings shame on everyone when a girl is permitted to flog a man? That spectacles of cruelty corrupt the hearts of the innocent? The words they stopped me from uttering may have been very paltry indeed, hardly words to rouse the rabble. (108)

This time the unspoken pains and brutalities are publicly acknowledged as the old magistrate roars in pain, and then is compared to the barbarians. This is an ironical convergence of the barbarian as victim and threat. Here the magistrate cannot bring himself to abandon his devotion to the idea of civilization. Discovering, through his own experience, the truth of Benjamin's dictum that "There is no document of culture which is not at the same time a document of

barbarism” (Illuminations 258), he nevertheless displays an unshakeable commitment to the protocols of imperial legality, and to recording and documenting, the inscribing of civilization. He does so even though it is, as he himself candidly concedes, very likely that, after the revolution, “the barbarians will wipe their backsides on the town archives.”

The magistrate’s reflections in *Waiting for the Barbarians* highlight the ambiguity that surrounds the race-writing discourse, whether ethnographic or epistemological, disowning, in the process, anything that seeks to provide a one-window address. Each description of the border involves the act of producing selves and others, enemies and friends, especially enemies who live outside or beyond the wall. *Waiting for the Barbarians* allegorizes the waiting, and dramatizes the ambivalence of the game and the rules. The old magistrate’s narrative resistance to ethnographic and epistemological productions of the barbarians already implicates him and his tormentors in a self-begetting theatre where those who play the game are themselves playthings.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> There are two interesting books that bear eponymous affinities to the novel: Samuel Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot* (1957), and the American anthropologist Vincent Crapanzano’s *Waiting: The Whites of South Africa* (1985). The reference to Beckett’s book is necessary to play on the epistemological crises that haunted the racist South Africa as it painted a grim and nightmarish future of the country once it passed on to the blacks. Crapanzano unwittingly touches on the political aspect of the Beckett play, by suggesting that the South African whites are stunted by waiting for the end, either with too much hope or with too much fear.

<sup>2</sup> If this reading of Coetzee’s novel carries traces of Emmanuel Levinas and Michel Foucault, it is not incidental. I have relied mostly on insights from Levinas’ *Totality and Infinity*, more particularly the collection of essays on otherness titled *Entre Nous* and Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish* as well as *The History of Sexuality*.

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# Appropriation, Coloniality and Ethics of Translation: Madhusudan Rao's *Nirbasitara Bilapa* and William Cowper's *The Solitude of Alexander Selkirk*

Ashok K Mohapatra

In this paper I will compare with William Cowper's *The Solitude of Alexander Selkirk* (1782) its Odia translation, "Nirbasitara Bilapa" (1873), by Madhusudan Rao in order to show a defining moment of Odia translation as a process of cultural empowerment on the part of the Odia language and literature in its colonial history. The empowerment was facilitated by Odia poetry that appropriated the resources from the English original and modifying them for its own enrichment. The comparison attempted in the paper, which is a cross-cultural one, involves my translation of Rao's poem back into English, since the back-translation method that proves quite helpful to compare the original work with its translation within the framework of the same language, i.e. English.

First of all, in a cross-cultural study of translation, which calls forth appropriation of a set of linguistic and cultural resources of the source text and their modification into those of the target text, it is necessary to understand the ways in which translation negotiates linguistic and cultural differences within the similarities and equivalences. Secondly, one has to note that the varying measures in which a translation shows fidelity to the original can correlate with the degrees in which it appropriates the latter and the varying latitude of autonomy it enjoys. Indeed, the greater the autonomy, the lesser is the fidelity to the original, which is to be estimated not in terms of

how much the translation differs from the original, but in terms of how much newness of themes, imagery, tonalities and prosody it acquires to claim distinctiveness and autonomy.

The above propositions assume that translation is basically an act of appropriation, and this assumption is all too commonplace unless one tries to understand why and how such appropriation is carried out. Therefore my paper looks into the reasons for the appropriation that Rao did. However, the second proposition made above seems to beg the question about the nature of newness and difference, since there are already many conflicting views available as to the intent and effect of translation with different theoretical persuasions.

While one group of theories with an attitude of permissiveness in translation grants newness to the target text, another group professing faithfulness to the original argues that difference between the original text and the one in the target language should be maintained, notwithstanding equivalences between them through translation. So, there is no consensus among the theoreticians and translators as regards difference. Cortés describes this situation in terms of two opposite trends as regards difference and goes on to say:

One – mostly theoretical – aims to highlight the difference and go beyond the devouring, allegedly ethnocentric attitude that naturalizes (domesticates) the foreign text. At the other end, texts from so-called “exotic cultures” (such as specimens from Arabic literature) are translated in such a way that exoticizing practices and expectations are consciously avoided or counteracted. (2010)

Both these trends have been underscored by Lawrence Venuti when he debunks the politics of the humanist theories of translation propounded by John Hookam Frere and Eugene A. Nida. Both, as Venuti would argue, inflict ethnocentric violence on the source text because these deny cultural distinctiveness to it and iron out whatever difference it may have from the target culture in the act of translation. While Frere valorizes transparency and fluency in translation as a virtue, Nida prefers to produce what he calls “dynamic

equivalence” that “aims at complete naturalness of expression and tires to relate the receptor to the mode of behavior relevant within the context of his own culture” (Venuti 73). To counter the domesticating strategies, Venuti postulates the oppositional strategies of foreignization that foreground discontinuities at the level of syntax, diction, or discourse, so that the translation would be read as translation, showing where it foreignizes the domesticating translation by departing from the target-language cultural values, or by showing where it domesticates a foreignizing translation by depending on them (*italics mine*, 76). Venuti thus takes an ethical position of candor and initiates a politics of opposition.

There are some others who would veer away from the aforesaid debate by granting to translation a ‘third position’ and the status of new writing as Sujit Mukherjee(1994) does:

Whether one translates or transcreates, the original work is renewed by being rendered into another language. This is the least we may expect when we regard translation as a new writing...(58)

For his part, George Steiner (1970)describes translation as creating “a third language” through “a synthesis of conflict and complicity between a poem and its translation into another poem” (quoted in Mukherjee, 58-59). These views emphasize newness rather than difference and favour synthesis, resolution and transmutation as the semantic results of translation. Here the debate would well have ended but for Doris Bachmann-Medick, who takes a post-modernist position and shifts the ground of the debate to a new ethics of the provisional nature of meaning in the ‘third space’ of translation as a process of intercultural relation. Translation does not “resolve itself in dialogue and understanding, but is by its very nature a conflictual field of tension within which intercultural encounter is driven on by a constructive negotiation of misunderstanding” (2009: 37). The third space (à la Homi Bhabha) is a liminal space where differences are de-essentialized, and a newness that comes about is not final, but provisionally constituted through endless negotiations at different points of time by different translators. This being so, translation can be a profoundly liberating process.

The debate can now be re-configured in the context of my comparison of the texts in question. Even as we grant that Rao's translation "domesticates" Cowper's poem, and produces effects of transparency, fluency, naturalness to mask itself as translation, is the intention of Rao unethical? Should he have 'foreignized' his poem as Venuti thinks a translator ought to do? If the answer is an unequivocal 'yes' in deference to the postcolonial/postmodern ethics, we would miss a vital point about the historical necessity for domestication through translation and Rao's pragmatism in doing so. Rao translated into the Odia vernacular a text written in English, the language of the colonial masters, within the framework of asymmetrical power relations between the languages in question and their respective cultures. It was a time when Odia was struggling to seek from the colonial government the recognition of its distinctive cultural identity as a modern language and an endorsement of its political status. Given its slender base of print literacy, fledgling educational institutions in the late nineteenth century and lack of adequate number of academic texts, the Odia language often needed to draw on the exotic literary resources of themes, imagery, forms, sentiments to energize itself and stand on equal footing with Bengali, its main cultural and political rival. The urgency of the moment of colonial modernity was to assimilate and domesticate as much of English poetry through translation as was possible, and Rao yielded to it.

Also, as we will see, the English text of Cowper was not available in the school textbooks in one particular form. Therefore, the ethical issue of protecting the sanctity of the source text, which Venuti passionately argues for, seems to lose ground. A text may have an originary form and provenance, but these do not solely guarantee its formal integrity and wholeness. In the process of its transmission even during the life-span of the author through several editions, the text undergoes quite a few changes that are not necessarily authorial, but are made by the general editors, copy-editors and printers, owing to various reasons that can be trivial or profound. When the author is already dead, the possibilities of un-authorial and unauthorized changes are higher. Indeed, the changes cross all limits if the text, because of its cultural importance and popularity, traverses a

long distance in many non-definitive editions, re-told versions and garbled translations. Many like me did read in the childhood garbled Odia translations of *Oliver Twist*, *Don Quixote*, *Gulliver's Travels* and *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea*. These constituted the young readers' staple of reading a few decades ago. In the contemporary times many Odia translations of short stories and poems that have appeared in the literary sections of Odia newspapers and literary journals are themselves translations of Hindi or English translations of Indian and European language texts relatively unknown to the Odia readers. Nevertheless, for years these translations have enjoyed cultural acceptance and enjoyed literary status in the Odia reading circles. In such cases the notion of the purity and integrity of the original underpinning Venuti's theorization does not appear to be valid. In our case, Cowper's text was re-structured in its transmission and reception across the colonial empire through the grids of many cultural and religious beliefs, and the Odia translation was one among the major instruments of such restructuring. If we follow the trajectory of the cultural encounter of the Odia language and culture with their English counterparts in the colonial period, we will see that Rao's translation exemplified a moment of empowerment of this vernacular.

The tradition of the translation from English into Odia, which began in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century with the production of the Odia versions of the Bible and various Christian tracts, the texts in translation were required to be faithful and serviceable to the original in the manner a slave was obliged to be so to the master. This was because Christianity, particularly of the Protestant variety, often in collaboration with the colonial British government, arrogated to itself great moral and political authority to set its own terms of articulation in Odia, without paying heed to inherent principles of syntax and lexis of this language and its various socio-cultural registers. The Odia language had to contort itself to be the vehicle of Christianity, as it were, in the translations done by the missionaries.

But during the late nineteenth century, with the emergence of the western-educated native elite, the tradition of secular Odia translation started. Pattanaik and Dash in their essay "Missionary Position: The Irony of Translational Activism in Colonial Orissa" (2005) ex-

plain the nature of the irony of translational activism in terms of its result: “this effort consolidated the study of Oriya language, literature and national identity and an increased religious and cultural allegiance, which were against the wishes of the missionaries” (108). This was the moment of Odia modernity, and it was predicated upon not so much the opposition to British colonialism as to linguistic and cultural Bengali sub-colonialism. In the first conference of the cultural forum Utkala Sammilani, which was held in 30 December 1903, it was resolved to promote the Odia language and literature as the rallying point of a distinctive Odia cultural identity, so that the political process of the formation of a state for the Odias could be possible. While Fakirmohan Senapati, Gouri Shankar Ray and Gopal Chandra Praharaj, among others, pioneered the modern prose idiom, infusing it with native linguistic and cultural resources, Madhusudan Rao, Radhanath Ray, Nanda Kishore Bal etc. explored new poetic themes, modes, stanzaic patterns and meter. During this period of Odia national resurgence, which was characterized by establishment of vernacular schools, production of text books in Odia, emergence of Odia newspapers as well as literary journals, an educated and articulate elite emerged to spearhead both linguistic and political movements for national identity. During this period translation from English took place in a way entirely different from Missionary translation of English texts of mid-nineteenth century. The Odia language now made its presence felt, with its enormous cultural baggage in academic textbooks for schools, and modern Odia poetry either in original composition or in translation drew on English poetry for the poetic forms of lyric, sonnet and ballad that could be pedagogically manageable. This is, however, not to deny the prevalence of the epic form in early modern Odia poetry. But slender volumes of poetry anthology for schools seemed to favour relatively short translation pieces, and the choice fell naturally on lyrics, sonnets odes and ballads. In respect of translation this choice was all the more well pronounced.

Although Sisir Kumar Das observes that translation of English poetry into the Indian languages in the late nineteenth century “was not very seriously taken by the publishers, editors and the reading

public” and that there was “neither any policy in the selection of works nor any conscious thinking on the methods of translation” (176), we still find translational proclivity of Odia poets towards short descriptive and reflective pieces in English with simple meter and euphony. Short pieces from the Romantics and Victorians, namely Wordsworth, Shelley and Tennyson were popular among translators. Besides, Walter Scott, Thomas Gary and William Cowper too drew the attention of the Odia poets. In their translation, the poets took liberties the original pieces more than they made a faithful rendering. Adaptation or *chhâyânuvâda* or *marmânuvâda* was more in vogue than faithful translation, differing only in degree from the latter rather than in kind. In fact, notwithstanding whatever appellation we may use to describe the renderings in other tongues that conspicuously deviate from the original like Guruprasad Mohanty’s *Kâlapurusha* from Eliot’s *The Waste Land* or Godabarish Mishra’s “*Laita*” from “*Lucy Gray*”, there is good reason to regard these as a new category of translation in a very broad sense. Appropriating the source texts as it did and assimilated them into the indigenous linguistic and cultural matrix this category of translation stood at the opposite extreme of the Bible translation. By way of appropriating the source texts the Odia translation interpreted them in terms of the native cultural ethos and episteme in using traditional imagery, tropes, local colours and sentiments.

In trying to find why and how Rao appropriated Cowper’s poem into Odia poetic tradition and enriched it we cannot but notice the fact that this cultural appropriation was enabled as much by the similarities between Rao’s Brahma religious beliefs and Cowper’s Puritanical Evangelic faith as by their differences. While the similarities prepared the ground for appropriation, the difference accomplished it.

Though Madhusudan Rao (1853-1912) composed *Prabandhamala*, an anthology of prose pieces and a famous Odia primer titled *Barnabodha* (1895), he is hailed as *bhakta kabi* in the Odia poetry canon. He is known for many reflective poems with devotional and moral content that found place in the anthologies like *Chhandmala*, *Sishubodha*, *Balabodha*, *Sahitya Kusumahe* that he prepared for use

as school textbooks. The official positions of Deputy Inspector of School Education and Inspector of Schools' Association which he assumed in 1880 and 1906 respectively helped include the poetry texts in the school syllabi with a view to edifying the minds and morals of the youngsters. In these anthologies many were translations from English poems and had already been published in the Utkala Darpana, the journal Rao had founded at Balasore together with Radhanath Ray and Fakirmohan Senapati. For example, in 1873 "Nirbasitara Bilapa" came out in this journal and also found place in an anthology under the title Kabitabali later in the same year. One can clearly see that preponderance of moral contents in the poems like William Jones's "The Infant" and Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind" was the main reason for choosing them for translation into Odia. Rao translated or rather trans-created them under the titles "Atmasmarpana" and "Naba Basanta-Bhabana" for the anthology Kusumanjali(1903), and these were never mentioned as translations or adaptations of the English original. But intriguingly in the anthology Kabitabali, Rao chooses to mention "Ayodhyaprtaygamana" as a translation from Kalidasa's Raghubansa. Irrespective of whether these poems are regarded as instances of plagiarism or trans-creation to be read in their own terms, it is certain that Rao's Odia rendering of the culturally unfamiliar English poems was an unacknowledged act of cultural appropriation perhaps partly under the pressure of the urgency of producing in large number school texts in a short span of time and partly for the purpose of overcoming the colonial anxiety of the influence of English literature by maintaining the guise of originality and novelty. As for translation of texts from the indigenous Sanskrit tradition into Odia, given the shared cultural tradition between the two languages and the unchallenged superiority of Sanskrit as repository of ancient Indian literature, culture and wisdom, there was no embarrassment on his part to acknowledge the indebtedness of Odia to Sanskrit by way of translation.

William Cowper (1731-1800) the popular Per-Romantic poet and well-known hymnodist understandably appealed to Rao. In Cowper's poem "The Solitude of Alexander Selkirk" the protagonist's faith in God's mercy has enough to improve the morals of young students.

That is why it is one of the most commonly found poems in school textbooks, although with many variations. A random sampling of the text in many academic anthologies suggests that the following stanza with overt reference to Christianity was deleted in many cases:

Religion! what treasure untold  
Resides in that heavenly word!  
More precious than silver or gold,  
Or all that this earth can afford.  
But the sound of the church-going bell  
These valleys and rocks never heard,  
Nor sighed at the sound of a knell,  
Or smiled when a Sabbath appeared.

The poem contained this stanza when it was first published in the anthology *Poems by William Cowper, of the Inner Temple, Esq. in 1782 under the title "Verses Supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk, During His Solitary Abode in the Island of Juan Fernandez"*. A manuscript of it exists in the British Museum, though not handwritten by Cowper. But in some of the anthologized versions in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, namely *Collection of Poetry for School Reading: Selected and Arranged with Notes (1899)* and *English Poetry II: From Scott to Fitzgerald (Harvard Classic Series, 1909-14)*, the stanza was excised. The Macmillan India edition of *English Poetry Selection (1978)* too does not have this stanza. Although I cannot say with certainty why the stanza was dropped from the school texts of the poem, I only suspect that the overriding reason of a secular character that English education acquired in the post-Macaulay era in the Empire may have stood in the way of the stanza in question.

As for Rao's "Nirbasitara Bilapa", it does not skip this stanza. Both in Cowper's poem and Rao's translation the stanzas present religion as a way of life by which the people define themselves as a community and culturally produce their topos. The speaker rues that in the absence of humans and their religion, the landscape has remained savage when judged in humanistic terms. However, in translating it he replaces the Christian way of life with that of the local religion. It reads in my English translation thus:

What priceless treasure is Dharma!  
Unsurpassed by jewel and gold,  
Ever radiant in beauty celestial,  
Nonpareil in the earthly realm;  
This gem of faith, homage to God,  
Is not native to this profane place.  
The holy sound of drums and cymbals  
These mountains have not ever heard,  
Nor has this wilderness witnessed  
Festivities in God's glory.  
Futile is man's life bereft of divine faith,  
Mere beastly existence it is and gross.

Rao's Brahma faith was part of a reformist movement within the fold of Hinduism, and it was dominant in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Bengal. As an offshoot of Bengal Renaissance it synthesized the supposedly pristine Vedic values with those of Enlightenment under the impact of western education. The Brahma faith, a form of rationalist monotheism, was based upon the idea of both immanent and transcendent God. For that reason it was close to the Christian faith. In both the stanzas what is common is the speakers' denial of spirituality in the island on the ground that it is uninhabited by humans. The stanzas also underscore the idea that human existence alone embodies righteousness, intelligence, sentience, reason and free will in tune with the 18<sup>th</sup> century Christian rationality as well as the Brahma faith. The anthropocentric self-fashioning of the Puritans as the people providentially chosen to establish the dominion of Christian humanity in the wilderness and sustain their faith in a merciful Providence in the face of adversities perhaps impelled Cowper to appropriate the true story of the Scottish adventurer Alexander Selkirk (1676-1723). Besides, the faith in God's mercy which he invoked to overcome nervous breakdown, economic crisis, terrible sense of sinfulness and suicidal urges may have drawn him towards the compelling story of the survival of a castaway and his reconciliation to a precarious fate on the strength of faith in the mercy of God. Though the idea of adventurism or a sense of guilt is not even remotely linked to Rao's sensibility, what appealed to his Brahma sensibility is Selkirk's exercises in rational theism that open him up to God's mercy.

And yet, Rao goes a step further in divinizing man, since the Brahmos believe human being to be the manifestation of the Brahma. The equation established between man and divinity by Rao in the following stanzas is all too obvious:

The beauteous face of man, god-like,  
 My eyes will see never again;  
 Here the lamp of my life will burn out forsooth,  
 And the news will still not reach the humans;  
 The honeyed human voice will not  
 Ever delight these ears of mine.

\* \* \*

Where is friendship and affection tender  
 That can make man divine?  
 If I had wings of a bird  
 Over fierce mountains and seas I could fly,  
 Gaze upon the lotus-faces of my loved ones  
 And calm the ferment of this fevered heart.  
 (italics for emphasis)

This idea of human-God equation is totally absent in Cowper's poem since his Calvinist belief that sinfulness is an inherent in humans precludes such deification of man. In the phrase "treasure untold" in Cowper's poem, the word "untold" deriving the inherent idea of 'counting' from its Anglo-Saxon root *tellen* extends to the idea of the shepherd counting his sheep as in Milton's *L'Allegro*: "Every shepherd tells his tale" (63-68). It suggests the Christian meaning of religion as the binding of sheep into a flock, with Latin root of *re-ligare*. Further, "precious than silver and gold" is drawn from Solomon's proverb: "Receive my instruction and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold" (Proverbs viii: 10). These phrases and the Jewish idea of Sabbath fill the stanza with distinct biblical resonance.

Rao replaces "silver and gold" with the word *mani-knchana* ("jewel and gold" in my English translation), a conventional phrase in colloquial and poetic registers of Odia. It also signifies a concept of perfect harmony in collocating with an additional word *yoga* to

form the phrase “mani-kanchana yoga”. What the Odia version means is that dharma or divine faith is more harmonious than the earthly objects signifying harmony. His word *mahee*, which means the terra firma in Sanskrit and all its derivative Indian languages has distinctive cosmological meaning in the Puranas as opposed to *swarga* and *patala*. Elsewhere, in stanza 5 quoted above, Rao’s substitution of “wings of a bird” neutralizes “wings of a dove” again and gets rid of the biblical echo of “And I (David) said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away and be at rest.” (Psalms, lv:6). He could have appropriately translated dove as “*kapota*” (ka- pota: the one who can sail across the sky like a boat) only at the risk of inflecting the reference of the bird with the associations of unrequited romantic love and innocence and disturbing the tonal and emotive qualities of the poem. One more very conventional metaphor in Indian poetry and culture for face that Rao uses is the lotus that accords the divine adjuncts of beauty, purity and spirituality to man.

Indeed, one focusing on many more interesting phrases in Rao’s poem that culturally appropriate Cowper’s poem and nativize it without major deviation from the main theme of the original. One last point I wish to make is about the ending of the two poems. The poem of Cowper hints at the idea of predestination, pressing upon the faith in mercy:

There’s mercy in every place,  
And mercy, encouraging thought!  
Gives even affliction a grace  
And reconciles man to his lot.

Alexander Selkirk knows that he is irretrievably lost in the godless island, and the knowledge that he cannot alter this fate or lot afflicts him. Even so, like those who enjoy the gift of faith are predestined to be saved by God, he perseveres in the faith that God’s mercy and grace will end his affliction. His faith alone helps Selkirk get reconciled to his fate. But the key words of Christian vocabulary bearing the ideas such as reconciliation and the discovery of grace in affliction, with the necessary reminder of Christ’s suffering on the cross are absent in Rao’s translation. He has replaced them with

the words of a more general semantic range pertaining to the faith in the ubiquity and magnanimity of a personalized God who will mitigate one's afflictions:

All pervasive is The Lord of the universe,  
All my miseries He will remove.  
How unstinting is His mercy  
That lessens the burden of the grieving heart;  
The contented spirit of man swells  
And the gems of peace adorn the realm of heart.

Although my English translation becomes cumbersome while unpacking the conventional and somewhat poetically clichéd morphological compounds like “*duhki-hrudaya-bhara*”, “*hruda-rajya*” “*shanti-ratane*” into English syntax, the 19<sup>th</sup> century Odia poem struck its readers as fresh in ideas and feelings, culturally distinctive and profoundly affective. Belonging to the genre of Odia religious poetry it has been rightly acknowledged as striking a markedly modern note and has earned Rao great literary fame. As an example of cultural appropriation the poem expresses new poetic sensibility and flavor that actually came from the source language and culture.

What my paper has attempted is a cross-cultural study of a translation vis-a-vis its source text through back translation. It is a method that comparatists and literary historians in India can apply to make rigorous textual comparison of Indian and English texts as well as those of European languages in the cultural contact zones in order to have better understanding of the nature of literary modernity of vernacular literature in the colonial period.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> By the second decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century missionaries had started preparing school text books. On 3 September, 1842, the Vernacular Society of Orissa, planned for Oriya translation of English texts by the Educational Council towards the purpose of preparing of textbooks that could be prescribed by the Board of Education, Orissa. The translation was shoddy,

with a heavy use of Sanskritized Oriya and English syntax. See Report of the Council of Education (1842-43). 26-27.

<sup>2</sup> The Brahma faith is based on the monotheistic principle of the worship of Barhma and values of humanism, reason, liberality and distrust of rituals and concepts like sin, salvation, heaven and hell.

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# The Concept of Eternity: Emerson and the East

Khagendra Sethi

One of the major literary movements which began in new England and later swept the whole of America, spanning from 1830 to 1860, was Transcendentalism. It was initiated by writers and thinkers such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Amos Bronson Alcott, George Ripley, Orestes Brownson, William Henry Channing, Samuel Johnson, Moncure Daniel Conway and a few others. Being the members of the Transcendental Club, they instilled into their writing a new strain that was chiefly philosophical, theological, political, individualistic and often mystical. This new strain tinged with idealism was both outlandish and exotic against the backdrop of protestant and puritanical form of Christianity. These writers accepted the professions that suited them the most. Some of them were philosophers, clergymen, poets, critics, political activists and social reformers. The period of Transcendentalism was a period of renaissance in American thought in which the Transcendentalists assimilated new ideas from other cultures to shape their intellectual make up and their chief source of borrowing ideas was that of the Orient, more specifically, that of the Hindu and the Buddhist India. They were also directly and indirectly influenced by the great writers and thinkers of the West.

Emerson was the leader of the movement of Transcendentalism who followed his own intuitions, trusted the impulses of his own nature and borrowed concepts from other sources which for him worked as stimulus and not as final guides. The concept of Pantheism, inherent in Transcendentalism, turned out to be a major force in building up Emerson's thought-pattern. This is basically a Hindu concept, as in Isa Upanishad, in which the matter and the spirit of the

entire universe is conceived to be the divine manifestation of God (Radhakrishnan, 1968 : 167). The pantheist believes that everything in the phenomenal world, including man, is a miniature universe, a microcosm or *imago mundi*. This microcosmic idea can be well realized only through mystical experience. Mysticism, a common trait both to the Transcendentalists and ancient Indian-thinkers, stresses on an egoless state, in which the soul transcends the limits of individuality and identifies himself with God and with his limits of individuality melting down, he feels himself a part of the whole. This experience leads to an eternal mode of existence crossing the bounds of space and time. The experience is also pantheistic in nature in which the experience of God in all and all in God is realized. The mystic feels that God is the universe and the universe is God. Emerson was disposed towards mysticism on many occasions in his life. Many expressions of mystical experience are found in poems like 'Brahma' and 'Hamatreya' and essays like 'Illusion' and 'Over-Soul'.

Emerson was concerned with the fundamental issues of life. He endeavored to find a viable and practical way of life out of the ideals in contrast to the idiosyncrasies of the greedy, expanding young nation of America. He was not equipped with the great mysterious whole of Melville, the ambiguous scarlet letter of Hawthorne, a small house by a pond of Thoreau, nor of the bold barbaric yaw of Whitman. In his probing to find answers to the problems faced by materialistic modern man, Emerson turned to Neo Platonism, Roman philosophy, Christian theology, ethical wisdom of Confucius and religious commandments of the Koran. But, both in time and in importance, Emerson was much obliged to the mystics of the ancient East, especially the Indians for his source of knowledge. Writing before Plato was born and before Christ preached, the unknown authors of the Hindu scriptures, described a philosophical idealism and religious faith more deep and enduring than the Western spiritual thought. Emerson went through Hindu philosophical writings which widened his horizon of thought, freed him from provinciality and enabled him to achieve the universality and timelessness characterizing his writings.

In his quest of a comprehensive solution to the mystery of the

universe, Emerson studied Plato, Montaigne, Goethe, Shakespeare, Coleridge along with a host of other philosophies and theologies. He became the undisputed leader of the transcendentalists, a group of poets and writers turned into thinkers, who aimed at transcending the worldly limits to reach an idealistic state. They quenched their thirst for knowledge in the time-tested ancient oriental philosophy, especially that of the Indian philosophers. Indian thinkers had already gained their foothold on the American soil through translations, thanks to a communicative link that had been established between the east and the west through different channels. Transcendentalism, as an idealistic movement, gathered momentum with its members building up their respective philosophical systems drawing inspiration from varied sources, both eastern and western. Emerson was not a theologian, nor a preacher, nor a prophet. He was essentially a poet, who embodied a vision of man freeing himself from all bonds, including those of time and space, drifting towards eternity. He found his views most congenial with the views of the east, especially that of the Vedas and the Upanishads. He borrowed the ideas from the Hindu scriptures and tried to fit it into the Western spiritual system and materialistic mindset of the Western people. By his sheer genius, he could achieve a harmonious synthesis of the east and the west in his philosophy.

Emerson was always concerned with temporality of human condition and its allied ills. He longed for a state of eternity which abolishes all the concepts of time and space. In his attempt, he gave up his intellect which had a limited approach, and relied more on the mystical appreciation of the enigmas of the universe. In the absence of the intellectual application, his mystical approach turned into a spiritual experience, in which, a narrow and rigid space stretches into ever-expanding universe and the bondage of time, mutability and death snaps as time intersects with timeless; and time annihilates space and vice versa making it a journey of the soul, a spiritual Odyssey from mortality to immortality, from here and now to eternity.

Against the backdrop of narrow and exclusive New England puritanism and intellectual unitarianism, Emerson dared to advocate for the liberal, intuitive and an all embracing soul-culture. Emerson

found remedy in the oriental largeness for a self-conceited modish life, made up of trifles clinging to corporeal civilization.

Emerson tried to discover a universe striving towards unity, yet characterized by variety. For this reason, the thinking men, the men of literature, and the scientists find utility in Emerson even today. Those, who are desirous of rebuilding the world in their partial image, may find him an embarrassment and an encumbrance, because in Emerson's imagination, the real world gets submerged in an idealistic vision, mirroring eternity.

When we probe into Emerson's views on time and space, we find a striking similarity between his conceptions of time and space and those of the Vedanta, Buddhism and Mysticism of the East. Time and space, in general, are two basic concepts to have an understanding of the world around us. The Vedanta preaches that time, space and causation are constructs of the mind, hence they are ultimately unreal. Like all other intellectual concepts, these are illusory and relative. These categories are used to describe the aspects of reality and to believe in their ultimate truth and validity. The illusory nature of space can be best illustrated in the following example of the difference between the map of a country and the country itself, as there is a difference between the ultimate reality and its map which is a mental construct. Time and space are part of the map, indicating reality, while actually not constituting its reality. Vedanta denies the real existence of time and space. They are only names and forms of thought. "Time, space and causation are like the glass through which the Absolute is seen...In the Absolute, there is neither time, space or causation." (Swami Vivekananda, 1972:109) When an individual attains a state of Samadhi (stillness), the notion of time and space vanishes resulting in the presence of eternal 'now' and the seeker bathes in the glow of eternity. His views are similar to those of the Hindus and the Buddhists. He asserts, "The soul circumscribes all things. As I have said, it contradicts all experience. In like manner, it abolishes time and space." (Emerson, 1903: 294-95) He continues, "...the soul's scale is one, the scale of the senses and the understanding is another. Before the revelations of the Soul, Time,

Space and Nature shrink away.” (Emerson, 1903: 273)

There is a striking similarity between Emerson’s and Hindu view that time and space get obliterated in the state of spiritual enlightenment; with that of the view of Buddhist philosophers. “Madhyamika karika Vrtii” have the following lines, epitomizing the Buddhist view of time and space. “Space, Time and Nirvana were mere forms of thought or words of common usage...If time too is conceived to be variable, it would be nonexistence at times, or be impermanent like the seed. And for this, it would have to be dependent on conditions on the occurrence of which it would happen and without which it would not.” (Murty, 1960: 198) Again we discover an astonishing similarity of views held by the Indian mystics and Emerson and modern physics. Classical physics defined space as absolute, three dimensional reality, being independent of the objects of the world. Time, like space was also regarded as absolute. Einstein’s theory of relativity believes that time and space are relative and time constitutes the fourth dimension.

In order to abolish the notion of time and space and to live in the glow of eternal present, one will have to achieve spiritual enlightenment. Thus spiritual enlightenment and eternity are inter-linked. How Emerson’s concept of eternity coincides with that of Hindu thought would be the objective of my next analysis.

The word ‘eternal’ is taken from the Latin ‘aeternus’, a contraction of ‘aeritenus’, which in turn is derived from ‘aveum’ a word from the same root as the English words ‘ever’ and ‘aye’. The corresponding adjectives in Greek, more clearly connect themselves with the notion of everlasting existence. This is the sense most common in ordinary language. But in philosophical contexts, the word ‘sempiternal’ denotes the notion of everlasting existence, ‘eternal’ being reserved for the ‘timeless’.

In English as well as other Indo-European languages, there is a grammatical usage known as the timeless present. For example, when we say, ‘Seven is a prime number’, we have no intention of

using the present tense distinguishing it from the past and the future. That is why statements like, 'Seven was a prime number' or 'seven will be a prime number' seem odd to us. Existential statements of mathematical kind do not refer to the time of speaking. The entities discussed in mathematics have a timeless existence. It would not be correct to say that they have a sempiternal or omni-temporal existence, because this way of taking might suggest that they should at sometime exist as an absurdity we want to exclude.

Besides Mathematics, there are also other studies in which the use of timeless present is appropriate, such as studies that are concerned with necessary truths as distinct from matters of fact. It may occur in empirical studies when the propositions we formulate involve the notion of necessary connection. For example, we say 'The hydrogen atom contains only one atom', by which we rule out the possibility of hydrogen atom containing more than one proton either in the past or in the future. But this use of timeless present does not suggest that hydrogen atoms exist out of time. What we wish to call timeless is simply the connection between being a hydrogen atom and containing a single proton. Such connections are called eternal verities, most commonly when it has been thought they could be known a priori, as in mathematics.

Before going over to Emerson's link with Vedantic mysticism, let us take a look at the central concepts of the Vedanta, that are 'Brahman', 'atman', 'maya', 'avidya' (ignorance), 'karman', 'knowledge', and 'moksha'. Brahma is the unchanging reality underlying the variety and multiplicity of phenomena. Brahman is eternal, unborn, uncreated and immutable. It is beyond names and forms and is not thought of as creator or God. Brahman is neither a He nor a She, but is the It. 'Atman' is the inmost Self of man. It is eternal, unborn, uncreated and immutable and is not to be confused with the empirical ego whose distinguishing feature is constant change. Moreover, 'atman' and 'Brahman' are identical, that is, they are two different labels for one and the same ultimate reality. 'Maya' is the power of Brahman by which It manifests itself as the phenomenal world. Maya is beginningless and endless, being coexistent with Brahman itself.

But we should not construe that there are two ultimate realities, namely Brahman and maya, because maya has no existence apart from Brahman. By translating maya as illusion and unreality, many have interpreted Vedantism claiming that the phenomenal world is illusory and unreal. This is wholly unwarranted. Vedantic philosophy does not deny the phenomenal world or its reality. It denies its ultimacy. Reality is that which exists without depending on anything other than itself for its existence. Thus Brahman is the reality while the phenomenal world or maya, being dependent on Brahman is not ultimate. Such non-ultimate existence is described as neither real or unreal, nor both, meaning thereby that it is neither ultimately real nor wholly unreal, illusory, and non-existent. Vedanta also affirms that there can be no such thing as pure illusion-every illusion is grounded in reality. Ignorance consists of our thinking, on the one hand, that the empirical ego is ultimately real and, on the other, that our knowledge of the world obtained through senses and reason is the knowledge of ultimate reality. Ignorance is beginningless, but it can be put to an end by realizing the identity of atman and Brahman and thereby understanding the non-ultimacy of individuality, characteristic of phenomena, including the empirical ego. 'Karman' is the state of bondage arising out of man's ignorance generated by his own thoughts, words and deeds; through rebirth Karman acquires a psychomoral continuity. Karman can be exhausted and brought to an end by attaining the knowledge of ultimate reality through realization of the identity of atman and Brahman. Knowledge and truth are of two kinds: the lower and the phenomenal (Vyavahara) and the higher and supraphenomenal (paramartha). The first kind of knowledge and truth are the product of the senses and the intellect; name and form are its warp and woof. Opposition, relativity and limited validity are of the essence of such knowledge and truth. On the other hand, the higher knowledge and truth are not the product of the senses and intellect, but of primordial intuitive insight into the nature of existence. Unity, non-relativity and absolute certainty are their distinguishing features. Such knowledge and truth surpass all distinctions and oppositions. Unlike the lower knowledge and truth, the higher knowledge and truth are soteriological, in that they bring about

a total transformation of him who attains them. They bring to one peace, wisdom and freedom. 'Moksha' is freedom from karman and bondage of ultimate reality. Man can attain moksha here and now. He who so attains is known as 'jivanmukta', one who is absolutely free even while existing as part of the phenomenal world. Our task is now to co-relate these major concepts of Vedantic mysticism with Emerson.

The higher knowledge and truth which lead to absolute freedom can only be obtained through spiritual enlightenment. This enlightenment is connected with the concepts of time and space, which has been described by Emerson, much like the Hindu mystics. According to him;

A certain tendency to insanity has always attended the opening of the religious sense in men, as if they had been 'blasted with excess of light'. The trances of Socrates, and 'Union' of Plotinus, the vision of Porphyry, the conversion of Paul, the aurora of Behmen, the convulsions of George Fox and this Quakers, the illumination of Swedenborg, are of this kind... that shudder of awe and delight with which the individual soul always mingles with the universal soul. (Emerson, 1903: 281-282)

The highest spiritual experience in the awakening of Kundalini in 'samadhi' and 'nirvana' has always been described by Emerson in the manner of Indian mystics. The Vaishnava devotee, at the peak of his devotion, reaches the summit of emotional intensity, approximating madness. In *Bhagabad Purana*, a verse narrates a spiritually enlightened person as mad:

*evmvratah swaprriyanamakirtya  
jatamurago drtachitta uchchiah  
hasatyathou roditi rauti gaya  
tunmadabannrtyati lokabahyah.*

[His heart melts through Love as he habitually chants the Name

of his beloved Lord in this way, and like one (mad person) he now bursts into laughter, now weeps, now cries, now sings aloud and now begins to dance in a singular way.] (*Bhagabad Purana*, XI : II : 40)

Hence, in this state of frenzied madness one obtains the glimpse of ultimate reality which makes him apprehend timelessness or eternity. These concepts have been illustrated in many of his poems. One of them is 'Brahma'. I mention some lines from the poem for the convenience of interpretation:

If the red slayer think he slays,  
Or if the slain think he is slain,  
They know not well the subtle ways  
I keep, and pass, and turn again. (Emerson, 1903: 195)

It should be borne in mind that by 'Brahma', Emerson actually means the universal soul, the Absolute or 'Over-Soul'. The poem contains all the attributes and qualities of "Brahma" the ultimate reality.

It is probable that Emerson acquired the central idea of the poem from his reading of *Katha Upanishad*. It says:

*hanta cen manvate hantum hates' cenmanyate hatam.  
ubhau tau na vijanito nayam hanti na hanyate.*

[If the slayer thinks I slay, if the slain thinks I am slain, then both of them do not know well, it (the soul) does not slay nor is it slain.](Kennedy, 1976 : 6) Again we find the same thought with a slight modification in the *Bhagabad Gita* which says: "The Atman is neither born nor does it die. Coming into being and ceasing to be do not take place in it. Unborn, eternal, constant and ancient. It is not killed when the body is slain."(*Bhagabad Gita*, 139) The second stanza of the poem is influenced by an Upanishadic verse, which indicates the paradoxical nature of the Brahman which abolishes time and space and attains eternity. It says : "It moves and it moves not; it is far and it is near; it is within all this and it is also outside all this".(Radhakrishnan, 1968 : 231). In the Supreme Being, the Brah-

man, the ordinary mental constructs such as distance and nearness implying space; past and present implying time and others like light and darkness, shame and fame, victory and defeat disappear. The opposites and conflicts vanish in Him. The concept of good and bad is based on human reasoning, and suggests contrasting principles. We realize the ultimate truth that comprises dichotomies like pleasure and pain, success and failure and life and death etc. In their ultimate analysis, they are all illusory notions. The melting of time and space reaching ultimate truth, that is, eternity, is reflected in the poem "Celestial Love":

Where good and ill,  
And joy and moan,  
Melt into one,  
There Past, Present, Future shoot  
Triple blossoms from one root;  
Substances at base divided,  
In their summits are united.(Emerson, 1903 : IX, 115)

In another poem "Wood-Notes" also he gives expression to such a concept:

Alike to him the better, the worse,  
The glowing angel, the outcast coarse.(Emerson, 1903 : 59)

We may say that the comprehension of the ultimate reality, that is eternity, can be achieved by our awareness of the presence of the soul, which is spaceless, timeless and eternal. Again, the belief in the Absolute God is also the objective of arriving at the final reality. The idealism of the Vedanta is so affirmative that it discerns the presence of God as much in Picadilly Circus as in the most immaculate Madonna.

The above dialogue with a number of philosophical implications has a vague parallel to Emerson's thought when he says: "Wherever is life, wherever is God, there the Universe evolves itself as from a centre to its boundless irradiation,"(Emerson, 1903 : 321) he wrote in his Journals. Then he added even more provoking nouns to

his bricks and barber shop : “Whosoever therefore apprehends the infinite,-and every man can, -brings all worth and significance into that spot of space where he stands, though it be a ditch, a potato-field, a work-bench...”(Emerson, 1903 : 39) In formulating his doctrine of the Over-Soul, he also paralleled the Vedanta. This is again reflected in his following words:

A wise old proverb says:

“God comes to see us without bell”, that is, as there is no screen or ceiling between our heads and the infinite heavens, so is there no bar or wall in the soul, where man, the effect, ceases, and God, the cause, begins. The walls are taken away. We lie open on one side to the deeps of spiritual nature, to the attributes of God. Justice we see and know, Love, Freedom and Power.(Emerson, 1903 : 345)

With this knowledge all beings of man and God become ineffable. There is the influx of the better and universal self into man. Emerson discovered that life of man was unfortunately limited to time in succession and division and then to space; that is, parts and particles. Man can only redeem himself when he understands the timelessness, the eternity in him. Emerson says : “within man is the soul of the whole; the wise silence; the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related, the eternal One.” (Emerson, 1903 : 361)

Emerson, in his conception of eternity, firmly believed that throughout the universe there is a mystic affinity of the positive for the negative. Science also supports this view when we find in Chemistry, negative valence combining with the positive and in algebra, we compute with positives and negative signs. We realize that the minus quantity is as real as the plus. Emerson found this bipolar existence in all worlds and all planes. In his concept of eternity, science and philosophy mingle for the laws of physics and the moral laws are one. He says:

The first quality we know in matter is centrality,- we call it grav-

ity,- which holds the universe together, which remains pure and indestructible in each note as in masses and planets, and from each atom rays out illimitable influence. To this material essence answers Truth, in the intellectual world,- Truth, whose centre is everywhere and its circumference nowhere, whose existence we cannot disimagine; the soundness and health of things, against which no blow can be struck but it recoils on the striker; Truth, on whose side we always heartily are. And the first measure of a mind is its centrality, its capacity of truth, and its adhesion to it.(Emerson, 1903 : 362)

Then, there is the hint of ‘neti neti’ ratiocination of the Indian mystics in Emerson, and the ‘asat’ or non being doctrine. The Hindus insist that the Brahman cannot be comprehend in terms of finite experience. It is not whatever one knows as this and that- neti, neti. Prof. James describes it:

Their very denial of every adjective you may propose as applicable to the ultimate truth,- He, the Self, the Atman, is to be described by “No ! no !” only, say the Upanishads,- though it seems on the surface to be a no-function, is a denial made on behalf of a deeper yes. Who so calls the Absolute anything in particular, or says that it is this, seems implicitly to shut it off from being that- it is as if he lessened it. So we deny the “this”, negating the negation which it seems to us to imply, in the interests of the higher affirmative attitude by which we are possessed.(James, 1962 : 319)

Thus, the Absolute is described in negative terms- it is without number, order and magnitude; it is no littleness, equality, inequality, similarity or dissimilarity. It neither stands, nor moves, nor rests. Thus it ignores, defiles, abolishes all concepts of time and space. It is the essence of eternity. Absolute is super-lucent, super-essential and super-everything.

Emerson came out from the confines of the library and focussed on a larger study in the woods. He saw that light glanced, the flower unfolded and the shadow passed. The solid substance of the rock was crumbling and vanishing under the tooth of air and erosion of

natural elements, to pass into soil, seed and man. He realized that all life was flowing, even the inanimate, that the world was in endless creation. Shadows and mountains were present one day and gone the next. But the Real cannot change. It is unchangeable, indestructible and timeless. This Universal Fact is Emerson's 'Over-Soul' and the Hindus call it the 'Brahman'.

To arrive at eternity and to be a part and parcel of it, we must know that Brahman is Atman or the universal Self and Brahman is all-knowing, changeless and one. It is the ground of the self of everyone. The existence of the self, according to Sankara, is self-proved, 'Svaolassidha'. Sankara says:

The self being precisely Self, however, any notion about the possibility of its repudiation is not reasonably sustainable. So far as any person is concerned, the Self cannot be adventitious; because its existence is Self-established. This self-establishment of the existence of Self does not depend upon any means of proof...The Self being the substratum is supposed to be fully established prior to such employment of the means of proof.(Daniel, 1986 : 40)

The Vedantins believe that Self has a dual aspect-the empirical, phenomenal, changing or apparent and the transcendental, eternal, changeless or real. The phenomenal self is the individual self, or the self in association with the ego which feels, suffers and is affected by experiences. This self is identified with body and mind and is characterized as the doer and experiencer. This individual self is 'antakaranah'. As Svetasvatara says:

Whatever body he takes to himself,  
With that he becomes connected,  
By the delusions (moha) of imagination, touch and sight,  
And by eating, drinking, and impregnation there is a birth and development of the self (atman).

According unto his deeds (karman) the embodied one successively. Assumes forms in various conditions"? (Hume, 1921: 207)

On the other hand, the transcendental self is the inmost self which

is the changeless principle of consciousness and which underlies and presupposes all kinds of thinking, feelings and physical actions. This principle of consciousness is Atman and it is identical with Brahman and we find, therefore, both the terms being used synonymously in the Upanishads. While 'antakaranah' is subject to change, Atman is free from evil, free from death, free from sorrow, free from hunger and thirst.

But Emerson distinguishes between antakaranah and atman, some of his passages clearly indicate the dichotomy between the empirical self and the inmost self. Emerson writes :

Whilst I feel myself in sympathy with nature, and rejoice with greatly beating heart, the course of Justice and Benevolence overpower me. I yet find little access to this me of me. I fear what shall befall : I am not enough a party to the great order to be tranquil. I hope and fear. I do not see. At one time I am a Doer. A divine life, I create senses and persons around and for me, and unfold my thought by a perpetual, successive projection. At least I say so, I so feel, but presumably I return to the habitual attitude of suffering. (Emerson, 1903 : 248)

But then he continues:

A certain wandering light comes to me which I instantly perceive to be the cause of causes. It transcends all proving. It is itself the ground of being; and I see that it is not one, and I another, but this is the life of my life. This is one fact then; that in certain moments I have known that I existed directly from God, and am, as it were his organ, and in my ultimate consciousness am He. (Emerson, 1903: 248)

In his ultimate consciousness, Emerson felt identified with the cause of causes and the ground of being and this consciousness transcends all proving.

Again, for Sankara, the Self is the Knower: "One who does the act of knowing, he is so by his very nature by mere Existence, not

through any action of his; just as when the Sun illumines things, it does by its mere presence- and not through by any action".(Hume, 1921 : 283) For Emerson, the soul which is the Doer is the Male principle in man; the beholder is the Female principle. Emerson writes, "I bask in beauty; I await; I wonder; I wonder; where is my godhead now ? This is the Male and Female principle in nature. One man Male and Female, created in him. This is the habitual posture of the mind- beholding."(Emerson's Journal, 248-249) So for both Sankara and Emerson, the true self is not a doer, but a witness, and the light of all seeing, and the principle of illumination. The mode and content of experience change, but the witness, the looker-on of all this doing and knowing never changes. This real self is thus the principle of illumination in experience, the revealer of all objects of knowledge and is identical with the pure manifesting unity of all consciousness.

This self-luminous Atman, according to Sankara, is not conscious of the internal or subjective world, it is not conscious of the external or objective world, it is not a mass of sentiency, it is not simple consciousness and it is not related to anything. It is incomprehensible by the mind, uninferable, unthinkable and indescribable. It is essentially of the nature of consciousness constituting the Self. It is alone and negates all phenomena. It is the Peaceful, all Bliss and the Non-dual.

Then both Sankara and Emerson believe that the world should be conceived as a soul, Atman, a Universal Soul of which the individual self is the miniature. With the introduction of the concept of Atman immanent in self and non-self, in the subjective and the objective, the correspondence between the individual self and the cosmic self was conceived. The two world grounds, Brahman and Atman, objects of retrospection and introspection, merge and coalesce. These two concepts are synonymous and interchangeable. Thus Self is Brahman and Brahman is Self.

When Emerson declares that he is only a form of the Universal Mind, that he is God and it is himself, he agrees with Vedas, which holds that the inmost self and the highest self are one. There are no

walls that separate man from the Universal Soul. The Upanishads say: "That which is named 'Akasa', is the revealer of name and form; and that inside which these two lie is Brahman; that is the Immortal. That is the Self"?(Hume, 1921 : 268) Emerson's thought is similar, though expressed in different words. He says: "There is one mind common to all individual men". (Emerson's Journal, 293) In the essay "History" he further adds: "Every man is an inlet to the same and to all of the same", and then, "Of the universal mind each individual man is one more incarnation". (Emerson, 1903 : 293) Like the Universal Mind, the self is birthless and immortal. Emerson says, "It does not die, it was not produced from any one. Nor was any produced from it. Unborn, eternal, it is not slain, though the body is slain".(Emerson, 1903 : 271) Thus Emerson arrives at a plausible and viable and valid concept of eternity beyond the limits of space and time. Emerson remarks : "that all things subsist, and do not die, but only retire a little for sight and afterwards return again".(Emerson's Journals, 271)

Thus, Emerson, being deeply concerned with the Ultimate Reality, was guided by his inner voice and opened up new vistas of spiritual experience. Darwinian understanding about the universe is now insufficient. The branches of physics such as high energy, subatomic or particle physics are beginning to accept idealistic and mystical world view propounded by Emerson and the Indian philosophy. Modern physics, to be more specific, branches like quantum theory and the theory of relativity, has found startling findings, which takes physics away from the realm of technology to the realm of philosophy. In modern physics, the concept of matter has undergone a complete change. The concepts of space and time, in a scientific view, have a close resemblance with that of the concepts of Vedanta. If self is unborn and indestructible, then eternity can be proved and accepted by science sooner or later. For Emerson, Time does not stop. The caravan of life moves on. His delight in the commonplace objects becomes a part of the soul, the Atman, the Brahman. His experience becomes a reflector, through which gleams eternity. In a grain of sand, the universe expands; half an hour can be stretched to merge with eternity.

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# The Real within the Hyper-real: Identity and Social Location in *Vernon God Little*

Himansu S. Mohapatra

There are signs indicating the exhaustion of the logic of postmodernism in contemporary American literary culture. By this I do not mean that the ersatz world of fictionality and hyper reality has lost its currency or appeal. What I mean is that the long trek back from the image to its referent might probably have got underway after the excesses of illusionism. D.B.C Pierre's debut novel *Vernon God Little* (2003) is nothing if not a hint about the retreat of the postmodernist juggernaut that started rolling in the 1980s with Don DeLillo's *White Noise*, published in 1984.

DeLillo's brilliant postmodernist tour de force in this novel was to show that we were caught in the aura without the possibility of ever getting outside it. It told us wryly that we could never presume to know what the 'most photographed barn' in America was like before being photographed, because 'we have read the signs, we have seen people snapping the pictures' (13). Now it is not that *Vernon God Little* aims or dares to reach back to the pristine purity of the object, as it existed before being packaged, imaged and photographed. What it does is to play off the process of being thus packaged against the finished product, thereby revealing the hiatus between the two. And it does so by moving away from the monochromatic and static world of DeLillo's 'killers and dyers' to a more complex and dynamic world of causation, the novel's dig at causers and effecters notwithstanding, where identity and social location have consequences for the way we are in the world.

The theoretical alternative to postmodernism being contemplated at the moment by the minority studies scholars in the US academy insists precisely on the reality of identity. Known as the realist theory of identity, it was first formulated in Satya P. Mohanty's book *Literary Theory and the Claims of History* (1997) and then was given a substantial elaboration in the multi-author volume *Reclaiming Identity: Realist Theory and the Predicament of Postmodernism* (2000), edited by Paula M.L. Moya and Michael R. Hames-Garcia.

The theory seeks to reclaim identity, experience and knowledge from the postmodernist assaults on these categories. And it does so notably by not considering them as fixed and stable essences or as arbitrary manifestations or by deploying them merely strategically. It is predicated on the postpositivist assumption that the theory-mediated nature of experience and identity does not rob them of epistemic significance. Identities, it asserts, are constructs, but these are constructs that make possible better explanatory accounts of our social existence. To put it in the words of Mohanty, our racialized, gendered and class identities do help us identify the 'causal joints' of the world by revealing the central relations of power and privilege that sustain it. It constitutes a rejoinder to the postmodernist or the multiculturalist claim that all identities are equally valid by entering the necessary caveat that, to paraphrase Paula Moya here, not all but some people in this world live well or have the opportunity to develop 'expressivist selves' and that not all but only some people in this world have to worry about getting pregnant or raped.

To be a realist about identity then is to realize that identities cannot be multiplied or replicated endlessly, as some postmodernists would have it, because there is a 'nonarbitrary limit' (Moya 70) to the number of identities an individual can assume at a given point in history. This radically challenges the postmodernist thesis about the arbitrariness of identity. But more specifically, it challenges the relativist stance of the postmodernist-inspired multiculturalist argument which, as Mohanty has pointed out in a recent essay, is founded upon the notion of the 'radical alterity of other cultures' (831). The alterity argument is the very instrument of othering.

A genuine multiculturalism, realists argue, is fundamentally nonrelativist and is quite compatible with cultural diversity. What it means is that while the local or the culturally specific is accorded due respect, its connections with internationalist ideals and goals are never occluded. This is to say that an abjected ethnic or minority identity, of the kind we encounter in *Vernon God Little*, for instance, is also an abjection of a normative human identity. If the novel has placed a child at its center, it is because a child's unclouded vision, besides registering the dehumanization inherent in the adult culture of consumerism, can also see through the dominant version of the multiculturalist argument by showing its genuine lack of tolerance for difference and diversity. *Vernon God Little* then is a novel that a realist about identity would particularly favor for its positing of the 'epistemic status of cultural identity.'

The claim might seem somewhat exaggerated because realists have usually tended to cite or use minority literary texts such as by African-Americans or Mexican-Americans or Asian-Americans or Latinos as test cases. In a standard course pack on postpositivist realism, for instance, texts such as *Beloved* by Toni Morrison, *Bordelands La Frontera* by Gloria Anzaldua and *Under the Feet of Jesus* by Helena Maria Viramontes will likely figure prominently. While this is a perfectly legitimate move, it is also somewhat predictable. It may, however, be more challenging to press the so called mainstream postmodernist text to the service of the realist theory by reading it against its own grain, by showing how it sabotages its own postmodernist leanings and inclinations. The strategy cannot, of course, work with every kind of postmodernist text. Delillo's *White Noise*, for instance, will clearly not fit the bill. It is too preoccupied with a postmodernist vision, tinged with irony though it may be, of a universal sameness to gesture in the direction of, say, racial difference. One needs to identify texts which press up against their own postmodernist agenda by a kind of internal, organic pressure. And here the case of *Vernon* is instructive. It is a novel which uses identity categories to put forward competing explanations of the contemporary American society poised to go the high-tech, postmodern way.

The novel features a Columbine-type mass murder of sixteen school students of Martirio in Texas, perpetrated by one of their persecuted and abused class mates. The boy pulls the trigger on himself after the murders and his only friend, Vernon, who has just arrived at the scene of the crime, becomes the scapegoat, the sole focus of the small Texan town's need for revenge. Vernon is on the run. The plot twist and turns as Vernon is captured in Mexico, tried and convicted in Martirio and is miraculously saved from the gallows by the fortuitous discovery of his strongest alibi, the bowel movement he had had near a bush away from the scene of crime, but synchronizing with the crime.

Those concentrating on the sensationalism of the shooting, the sexual perversion and the mass hysteria and the farcical elements in the plot are likely to miss out on something much more vital, namely the novel's deep critique of the American racial divide and of the culture of the simulacrum. It may be in order to spell things out now. The perpetrator of the mass murder in the novel is Jesus Navarro, a Mexican, slightly called a 'Meskin boy' not only by the so called normal people but also by the authorities in charge of law and order who could not care less about political correctness. The turn of the events in the novel makes it quite clear that he is demonized by a society which is ruled by a white supremacist ideology. The ideology is, of course, expressed covertly but is none the less effective for its covert operation. It is this ideology which accomplishes the 'othering' of Jesus and makes him vulnerable to being sexually exploited by his white Physics teacher at school, Marion Knuckles, and the psychopathic shrink, Goosens, who trades in child pornography. This, coupled with the deep homophobic bias of the society, in a sense completes the estrangement of Jesus and marks him out for doom. The excruciatingly painful classroom humiliation of Jesus on the fateful day that pushes him over the line separating sanity from insanity reminds us of the bitter truth that in a racist society, as Elizabeth Martinez puts it, 'a brown skin (along with other skin colors) can cost lives' (1). In this particular instance, of course, it drags down other lives along with it in a curious boomerang effect, a telling instance indeed of the realists' claim that an unequal society is

undesirable both for the privileged as well as the underprivileged in the sense that it degrades and reduces both.

Identity in Jesus's case is not presented as an arbitrary manifestation or as an accident. It gives us access to white separatism as a systemic ideology. The realists about identity have grasped the point very well:

The significance of identity depends partly on the fact that goods and resources are all distributed according to identity categories. Who we are – that is, who we perceive ourselves or are perceived by others to be – will significantly affect our life chances: where we can live, whom we will marry (or whether we can marry), and what kinds of educational and employment opportunities will be available to us (Moya 8).

So it happens that in Martirio, as in any small American town, the racialized other will find himself/herself demonized or victimized, as it happens in the case of Jesus.

The classroom scene, as sensitively and graphically portrayed by Pierre in what may be termed as the 'total recall' chapter, needs to be recalled here.

As soon as the class settles down on that fateful Tuesday, barbs begin to fly thick and fast at Jesus from his white class mates belonging to Martirio's white majority society. Max Lechuga leads the attack on Jesus by commenting upon his 'dripping ass' and the others join in. The Physics teacher Marion Knuckles' interventions in the form of pleas to Max for elaboration and tongue-in-cheek references to constitutional rights only serve to confirm and reinforce Jesus's victimization. Finally in an awesome display of near consensus the majority community's right to do as they like with the members of the minority community is publicly affirmed. Notice this exchange which acts as the last straw that breaks the camel's back:

Nuckles sighs. 'What makes you people think the constitution

upholds your interests over those of Mr Navarro?’

“On accounta he’s a diller-wippy,” says Beau Gurie. Don’t even ask.

“Thank you, Beauregard, for that incisive encapsulation of the issue at hand. As for you, Ms Brewster, I think you’ll find that our illustrious constitution stops short of empowering you to breach a person’s fundamental human rights.’

‘We’re not breaching any rights,’ says Charlotte. ‘We, The People, have decided to have a little fun, with whoever, and we have that right. Then whoever has a right to fun us back. Or ignore us. Otherwise, if they can’t take the heat ...’ (232)

Notice here the normalizing, naturalizing reference to people and notice how in the twinkling of an eye the universal term bares its particular, majoritarian fang:

‘You cannibals dare to talk to me about the constitution?’

‘The constitution’, says Charlottle, ‘is a tool of interpretation, for the governing majority of any given time.’

‘And?’

‘We are that majority. This is our time.’

‘Bambi-boy, Bambi-boy!’ sings Max Lechuga (233)

I think what saves this exchange from being treated as ‘fun and games’ is the dreadful consequence it leads to and the convincing demonstration by Pierre that in Martirio the children are made in the image of the adults through continuous emotional blackmailing which Vernon likes to call ‘psycho-knifing’ (51).

If the white boy Vernon is being used as a scapegoat by the Martirio community, it is because being the buddy of the ‘Meskin boy’ (60), he is a convenient stand in for Jesus. No one is more aware of it than Vernon himself, as witness the statement he makes to Goosens in whose custody the judge remands him: “See, first everybody dissed me because my buddy was Mexican, then because he was weird, but I stood by him, I thought friendship was a sacred thing – then it all went to hell, and how I’m being punished for it, they’re twisting every regular little fact to fit my guilt ...’ (66).

He has an instinctive understanding of how identity categories function in the real world, in 'this bit of concrete' in which we grew up, as the realists would say. Vernon thus has what the realists would call the epistemic privilege of the oppressed. His oppressed condition is indeed compounded by his association with the underdog: 'I hung out with the underdog, moved out of the pack, that's how, and now I fill his place, now anything original I ever said or did has turned a sinister shade. I understand him for the first time' (150)

The narrative of Vernon God Little, it must be pointed out, shares in this epistemic gaze of the irregular child (57) in order to critique an important aspect of postmodernist culture which is epitomized in the culture of reality television. Seen largely through Vernon's eyes, this is shown for the profoundly unreal, though suggestible, thing it is. As Vernon himself observes, things in this mediatized, digitized world have value not in themselves, but in the way they are packaged and positioned: 'What I definitely learned just now is that everything hinges on the words you use. Doesn't matter what you do in life, you just have to wrap the thing in the right kind of words. ... Products and Services, Branding, Motivation. I already know I'll be offering a Service. I just have to Package and Position the thing' (135). A truly sardonic encapsulation of the mantra of postmodernism indeed! And the irony of it all is that it is Vernon who gets positioned in this way by people who are more adept at the postmodernist art of packaging.

The novel has a small time TV reporter, symptomatically named Eulalio Ledesma, represent these other people who have tapped into this collective mindset fixated on the fifteen minutes of fame. It is Eulalio who, equipped with his 'mediaspeak', consisting of cutting and airing reports and painting paradigms, is responsible for catapulting Vernon from a boy who cannot fit into a serial killer of truly awesome proportions. He does this while unabashedly carrying on an affair with Vernon's mother right under the noses of the small community whose grief he has allegedly come to share. It is he who goads Vernon's flame, Taylor Figueroa, into betraying him by promising her her quota of fifteen minutes, although she is quick to capi-

talize on this break by going on to become by the end of the book a 'roving reporter' (261).

Pierre does, however, undercut the power of the media in his novel by strategically placed hints which question the attempt on the part of Eulalio to create a 'lifestyle show' (134) from what is after all only the barbeque sauce capital of Central Texas. He holds, unlike Delillo, that it is possible to breach the system of hallucinogenic images constituting postmodern culture in order to get at the reality beneath. His version of Murray Jay Siskind, Delillo's image-glorifier, therefore, is Eulalio, the reckless paradigm spinner, who turns his postmodernist conundrums into power and dime. As Vernon's attorney rightly points out,

'What I propose to show you . . . is the breadth of human suggestibility. Media arrive at the scene of every murder, with a picture of one suspect alone: the defendant. And not just any media. Media under the direct employ of the man who most stands to gain from these proceedings. A man who has built an industry – no, a virtual empire – on the relentless persecution of this single, hapless youngster. A man who, before the tragic events of May twentieth, was nobody' (208).

These lines spoken by the attorney hint at the reality of causation that Vernon's confused and inarticulate thoughts have all along alluded to.

I am not saying that Vernon is realist in the sense of maintaining a belief in the transparency of the medium and in the recoverability of the world. The critique of postmodernism cannot be posited in these naively realist terms in these post empiricist times. If Vernon is realist, it is so in the sense of putting forward a developed theory of reference which is based on the post positivist premise that our theories, concepts and values refer outward. This outward movement or orientation is in the nature of things because we have to reckon with the existence of a mind-independent world. The political salience of any theory, on this view, is, therefore, to do with that

theory's ability to take cognizance of the causal features and powers of the world. Satya Mohanty puts the matter succinctly in a recent essay:

At bottom, my epistemological defense of values is based on the specifically realist claim that some of our deepest evaluations refer to (properties) of objects that exist independently of our local social and cultural beliefs. ... Unlike Foucault, I argue that (some) our values track real "objects" of inquiry. It is possible to be objective in our evaluations because our deepest evaluations are often about complex objects in the world, objects which we are attempting to understand and know and which cannot be reduced to our ideological constructions' (815-816).

One such object is, of course, identity and social location. In showing a specifically social identity as having consequences for its holder and for all the others ineluctably involved with him in our shared social space, Vernon can be said to have at its core a realist epistemology even if it may not be realist in terms of its mode of composition.

An important aspect of this realist epistemology then is the recognition that for all its grave tipping of the hat in the direction of multiculturalism American society is yet to evolve a 'hetero-topic' space where multiple identities may be imagined. The overlay of postmodernist self-fashioning fails to conceal the restriction of identity that is the pervasive experience of the marginal men and women. An epistemic cooperation across cultures, if the realism of Vernon God Little is anything to go by, is still a far cry in contemporary America. It does, however, posit those voices, the voice of the young adult and the voice of the marginalized other, which enable one to 'gain epistemic access to reality.'

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> I gratefully acknowledge the help of my niece, Lisa Leona Bedbak, in making possible access to Vernon God Little by rushing me a copy of the book from Maryland, USA in the nick of time.

<sup>2</sup> My review of Mohanty's book under the title "A New Realism for These Times" was published in *The Hindu Literary Review* dated 6 December 1998. I recorded my sense of exaltation with this new theory of realism, deriving from breakthroughs in science, philosophy and linguistics, which promised to move the debates beyond the sterile opposition between realism and modernism.

<sup>3</sup> This book was the focus of an international colloquium on "Realism, Identity and the Comparative Study of Indian literatures" that I convened at Konarka, Orissa on December 14 and 15, 2001 as part of the Baroda-based Forum on Contemporary Theory's fourth annual international conference on theory. Michael Hames-Garcia and Satya P. Mohanty attended the colloquium and made presentations at it. My own fairly long and detailed engagement with the book, which grew out of the colloquium, has recently been published in the form of a review essay in *IJOWLAC* (1):1, January-June 2004 under the title "Welcome Return of Life to Theory."

<sup>3</sup> The idea of causation is a thread that runs through the work of the postpositivist realists. This is the basis of their claim about a mind-independent world, about the way in which the causal powers of something condition the social uses of it. Mohanty has explained it elaborately in his *Literary Theory and the Claims of History*. The coinage, causal joints, encapsulating this entire explanation, occurs in a paper titled "Reclaiming Internationalism" that he gave at the MLA convention in December 2001.

<sup>4</sup> One of the appeals of postmodernism lies in its promise to fashion what John R. Gibbins and Bo Reimer have termed 'expressivist selves' in their book *The Politics of Postmodernity* (1999). To quote them, 'Expressivist selves, we conjecture, will emerge as the dominant form in the postmodern future; selves dedicated to the endless task of reinventing themselves in line with the new cultural forces in their environment' (149). My only problem with this formulation is that it reads like the standard eulogistic description of the life style of the rich and the famous, plucked from the corporate sectors in this era of globalization.

<sup>5</sup> Paula Moya is instructive on this subject of how postmodernism turns difference into sameness. To quote her in *Reclaiming Identity*: 'Typically, postmodernist thinkers either internalize difference so that the individual is herself seen as "fragmented" and "contradictory", or they attempt to "subvert" difference by showing that "difference" is merely a discursive illu-

sion. In either case, postmodernists reinscribe, albeit unintentionally, a kind of universal sameness that their celebration of difference had tried so hard to avoid' (68).

<sup>6</sup> George, the friend of Vernon's mother, for instance, calls Jesus the 'psycho Meskin' (36).

<sup>7</sup> The term 'Meskin boy' (5) is first used by the investigating officer Vaine Gurie and is thereafter used as a matter of course by other officers who also imply by this that he was a faggot, as in this remark directed at Vernon by officer Barry: '... You ain't porkin the preacher there are ya? Ou ain't tossin the ham javelin all night long thinking of your Meskin boy?' (60)

<sup>8</sup> This is from the epigraph to Paula Moya's introduction to *Reclaiming Identity*.

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# Mowgli's Hybridity: Both Imperialist and Ideal Native Subject

Sujit Mohapatra

Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Books* reinvented an archetypal figure in Mowgli, the feral child, who grows up with wild animals and tames them. Kipling's archetype has endured to become a readymade formula for literary success, which has been effective till today. The success of the Tarzan novels and the Phantom comics bear testimony to the success of that formula. Kipling was flattered by the imitation, and, in his response to the novels that followed the *Jungle Books*, said,

My *Jungle Books* begat zoos of them. But the genius of all the genii was one who wrote a series called *Tarzan of the Apes*. I read it, but regret I never saw it on the films, where it rages most successfully. The author has jazzed the motif of the *Jungle Books*, and I believe enjoyed himself thoroughly. (Something 215)

Kipling suggests that Edgar Rice Burroughs, the author of the *Tarzan* novels, was a genii with a magic wand. But till he wrote *Tarzan of the Apes*, Burroughs had led a life full of failures. As Burroughs confessed in the "Preface", "If I had striven for long years of privation and effort to fit myself to become a writer, I might be warranted in patting myself on the back, but God knows I did not work and still do not understand how I happened to succeed." (v) Burroughs did not have to work hard because he had hit upon the magic wand in Kipling's *Jungle Books* as he has himself acknowledged. The magic wand was the feral child in the jungle reinvented as *Tarzan*. This magic wand worked for Lee Falk, the creator of the *Phantom*

comics, as well. Falk admitted, “The Jungle Book of Kipling and Tarzan of the Apes influenced me, as you can imagine.” (King Features)

Apart from bearing testimony to its continuing popularity, the legacy of The Jungle Books suggests how powerful and potentially influential its representation has been on the imagination. Kipling was the most popular writer in English in the last decade of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century. As David Gilmour says in his biography of Kipling, *The Long Recessional*, Kipling had quickly acquired an audience and a status that no other English poet, “not even Tennyson, has enjoyed in his lifetime.” (203) He was also the last English author to appeal to readers of all social classes and all cultural groups. He was so admired that in 1892, just when the Jungle Books was coming out in serialized form, Henry James proclaimed Kipling “the most complete man of genius” and emphasized his tremendous appeal to both the sophisticated critic and the common reader. (Green 59-60) At the same time, he was seen in many important ways as the spokesman for his age. In 1899, W T Stead, an outspoken imperialist, praised Kipling as the “interpreter of the popular consciousness and the inspiration for the popular imagination”. (Rutherford ‘Preface’ xiv) Further, he was also the first writer in English to win the Nobel Prize for literature. His Nobel citation in 1907 hailed him as “the greatest genius in the realm of narrative” that England had produced in those times. (Wirsén 64)

Although the imperial strain in The Jungle Books had been pointed out as early as in 1902, when Cameron read it as a sustained treatise on the “claims of the commonwealth”, (Green 275) most readings have glossed over the imperial strain in it. As an admirer wrote in *Macmillan’s Magazine* in 1898, the allegory in the book is not resented because the story itself is ‘interesting’. (Green 246) Since imperialism has been presented within a beautiful packaging of the beast fable, most readings of imperialism in Kipling have ignored The Jungle Books.

It is still Kim and not the beast fable, which has been the favoured text for readings of imperialism. However, with the current focus on

imperialism since the 1980s, the imperial discourse in the *Jungle Books* has come under scrutiny. John McBratney has shown that the space inhabited by Mowgli is contaminated with notions of imperial rule. (278) John McClure has read *The Jungle Books* “as a fable of imperial education and rule with Mowgli behaving toward the beasts as the British do to the Indians.” (99) But the tendency has been to read it merely as an allegory.

In this paper, I shall look at the figure of Mowgli in Rudyard Kipling’s *Jungle Books* and look at how the narrative of man’s taming of the jungle gets celebrated in figure of Mowgli. I shall then interrogate the hybridity implicit in the figure of Mowgli, a brown boy, often read as a metaphor for the white imperialist.

### **Evolution Of Man And The Taming Of The Jungle**

In the jungle in the *Jungle Books*, Man establishes his dominion immediately on his advent. In the first story of the *Jungle Books*, “*Mowgli’s Brothers*”, Mowgli is introduced as a “naked brown baby who could just walk”. But even such a frail and weak human specimen proves to be more than a match for Shere Khan, a tiger. The superiority of the man-child to any animal, even the most ferocious of them, is blithely stated. This baby does not cry but rather laughs in the face of Father Wolf’s deadly spring and to feed himself, brazenly forces his way past Mother’s Wolf’s feeding cubs. The story establishes the point at the very beginning: Mowgli is dauntless because he is born a man, a superior being. Mother Wolf acknowledges this superiority: she is proud to be able to boast of a man’s cub among her children. To be associated with man confers on her a higher status.

This decision to present Mowgli as a wolf-child also illuminates an important dimension of the history of man’s relation with the natural world. The wolf was the first animal to be tamed, though the dog was the first to be domesticated. The primitive hunter used to hunt with the wolves and though they hunted like comrades, as Mowgli

also hunts later with his four wolf-brothers, there was no question as to who the master was. However, the comradeship was an act of condescension on the part of man. In the *Jungle Books*, it is the wolves that first acknowledge Mowgli's superior pedigree and mastery.

As a man-child, Mowgli gives ample evidence of this superiority. Bagheera and Baloo find an extra-ordinary pupil in him. Man's superiority to the other animals according to the theory of survival of the fittest suggests that man has been a better learner. Mowgli is different from the other animals who learn as much as was required by their own packs. Being a man-cub, he learns all the laws and masters words of the jungle, and this protects him in crisis. Thus, Mowgli represents the prototype colonizer. To be an effective ruler, one must become thoroughly familiar with the ways of the ruled. Sir William Jones learning Sanskrit to avoid being tricked by the pundits in the courts acquires a special resonance in this context. (Majeed 65) Strickland, the police officer in several of Kipling's stories, also tries to know as much about the natives as possible, so that he could police them better. (*Plain Tales*)

Mowgli eventually knows even more than his teachers do. Mowgli, however, has not been taught the monkey language. But this hardly seemed necessary as the monkeys are the biggest cowards. Because Mowgli is more evolved and superior being though only a child, the monkeys want him as their leader and kidnap Mowgli in "Kaa's Hunting". He, however, does not feel scared. He is not reckless; he does not fight, knowing it to be futile. He relies on his power of thought. He thus uses a superior faculty: the mind. Mowgli's starting to think marks the first stage in his education and the education of man. This is illustrated by the fact that when Bagheera comes to save him from the monkeys, it is he who actually ends up saving the panther. He plans a strategy and instructs Bagheera accordingly. Again and again in the stories, Mowgli is presented as a thinking being, and it is due to his superior intelligence that he eventually becomes the lord of the jungle.

The next stage of Mowgli's education is the most significant. His

discovery of fire and his learning to use it becomes the turning point in his relationship with the animals of the jungle: he does not need anyone's help any more. Even Bagheera accepts Mowgli as his master and Mowgli now treats Shere Khan as a dog and commands him to defer to him, the master. Mowgli's discovery of fire assumes significance on account of its parallels in human history, and in the history of European colonization. The discovery of fire was the first great discovery in the history of man, for with the help of fire, man could protect himself from other animals i.e. become the fittest to survive. Fire also signifies firearms and guns by means of which the white man was able to tame the jungle and recalcitrant natives.

Mowgli's realization of his power comes with the realization that he is 'man' and not a wolf after all. So, he leaves the jungle and goes to man, the village people. But he never feels any kinship with the village people. He considers himself to be superior. He regards the villagers as uncivilized creatures and in his words, "only the gray ape would behave as they do." The allusion is so obvious that it cannot go unnoticed: the natives are uncivilized and are as incapable of evolution as the monkeys. However, having left the jungle, Mowgli has little option other than allowing himself to be adopted by a native, Messua. This does not deter him from asserting his superiority. When he is asked to take the cattle and bull to graze, he makes it clear to the children accompanying him that he is the master. He is not just the master of the animals, but also the master of the native children. Taming the jungle leads logically and effectively to taming of the natives.

Mowgli's mastery is challenged when Shere Khan plans to kill him. But Mowgli is determined to prove his mettle and the hunted switches roles with the hunter. He devises a foolproof preemptive strike on the tiger. Mowgli is now the astute general, who engineers a dog's death for Shere Khan. Mowgli has become a man and therefore, the lord of the jungle. Whereas earlier, he was referred to as a man-child, now the idea is reinforced that he is a man. When he automatically steps into the role of a man, he behaves as the lord; he is not accountable to anybody. It is the turn of the native adults now

to submit to Mowgli's authority. Buldeo, who had bullied Mowgli earlier, is not allowed to skin the tiger and is spared only when he proclaims Mowgli as "Maharaj". When the villagers plan to kill the lord of the jungle, the lord on his part has no second thoughts about destroying their village by letting in the jungle on it.

Mowgli's relationship with the other animals has also changed. Like a real king, he now commands Bagheera in an imperious tone to bid Hathi to come to him. Bagheera cannot imagine Hathi, the master of the jungle, obeying Mowgli like that. However, when he sees Hathi hurry like a bullock at Mowgli's bidding, Bagheera recognizes the new master of the jungle. Mowgli has now become the absolute lord of the jungle as he has the entire jungle at his command. During the killing of Shere Khan, he had taken the help of the dying leader of the wolves, who also had an axe to grind against Shere Khan. But now, he commands the former master of the jungle, the elephant, to destroy the village.

After letting in the jungle on the village, the happiest part of Mowgli's life begins as he has become the absolute ruler. The only human challenge he faces is from the Gond tribal represented as an inveterate killer. Mowgli gets the better of him and demonstrates that there is no human left for him to conquer. However, in "Red Dog", Mowgli faces his acid test as the Lord of the Jungle. He has to protect his subjects from the rampage of a pack of wild dogs. The news of the coming of the wild dogs spreads like wildfire in the jungle. Mowgli can save himself. But he is the lord of the jungle and it is his responsibility to protect his subjects. Mowgli refuses to flee and let the wolves die. It is a challenge to his authority. He does not believe in the invincibility of the rampaging beasts because only he, a man, is invincible. Therefore, he decides to attack them. As he himself says, he likes nothing better than "to pull the whiskers of death and make the jungle know that he was their overlord".

It marks a further development in Mowgli. He does not command the other animals to fight for him as he used to earlier. That is also not possible as even the Hathi is frightened of the red dogs.

Mowgli fights them himself and after his terrible attack, “of all the pack of two hundred fighting dholes, whose boast was that all jungles were their jungle and that no living thing could stand before them, not one returned to the Deccan to carry their word”. They had met their nemesis, i.e. man. After the killing of the wild dogs, there is no room to doubt Mowgli’s status as the veritable lord of the jungle, and the “mere whisper of his coming clears the wood paths.” He has proved that he has strength as well as intelligence. So, now he comes to be feared for his strength, as he had been feared for his intelligence.

With his absolute authority, it is surprising that Mowgli should ever wonder if he is really the king of the jungle. This is because animals, who are busy enjoying themselves in the first flush of spring, neglect him. He starts feeling that his authority is being questioned as none obey his order. Mowgli fears that his strength is on the wane. For the first time, he feels scared. He becomes reckless and even breaks the law of the jungle. He attacks a wolf without provocation simply because it disturbs him but he never kills. The wild buffalo and the cow heap insults on him. They do not consider him a man because he does not kill. Mowgli has all along been seen killing only at the utmost provocation to save himself or others and hunting only for food. The reader is made to see that man (read the white man) is not a wanton killer, and kills only when he is forced to. With his identity as a man at stake, the master of the jungle goes back to man. However, he has not been dethroned. The jungle makes it clear that they have not cast him out. Mowgli knows he does not enjoy the respect that a man merits. He goes to the white man now and not to the natives as he does not identify with them.

“In the Rukh” presents the final development in the evolution of man to a stage of superior civilization. This occurs with Mowgli becoming a forest guard in the service of the Imperial Government. This story was the first of the Mowgli stories to be written and is published in *Many Inventions*, not the *Jungle Books*. But it reads like the final story in the Mowgli series. In it, Mowgli is no longer perceived as a wolf-child. He has become a man and is absorbed into

the superior civilization of the white man, when he becomes an employee of the “most important” department (Forestry) of the imperial government. It marks Mowgli’s and man’s highest development.

As a forest guard, Mowgli is the *de jure* lord of the jungle. His taming of the jungle is complete. His identity as a man is no longer at stake. The evolution of man is complete because the evolution of man required the taming of the jungle. The imperial project is also complete. If the jungle, the most chaotic place of the colony is tamed, the entire colony is subjugated. The Jungle Books thus can then be read as an allegorical presentation of the evolution of man and how man asserted superiority over the animal world through his taming of the jungle.

Kipling’s selective appropriation of the evolutionary theory is strikingly suggestive. He has put Mowgli’s story in an evolutionary framework, yet in the representation of the monkeys, he also betrays the popular reaction of his time to the Darwinian theory. The idea of man being the most evolved was reassuring, but the idea that the ape was an ancestor was too shocking to be accepted. At the same time, evolution has also been equated with masculinity. Each stage in his taming of the jungle also celebrates a higher order of masculinity, from being able to beat the jungle through intelligence to being able to beat the jungle through direct physical prowess. When the Inspector General of Forests, Muller meets Mowgli for the first time (“Rukh” 344), he considers him to be one from before the Iron and the Stone Ages. He is in the beginnings of the history of man- Adam in his garden. Mowgli could stake his claim to be the first Adam because he has tamed the jungle into a garden.

### **Mowgli As Ideal Native Subject**

Mowgli, the young boy at home and in control of the jungle was the model scout for Lord Baden-Powell when he started the scouting movement in India and the boy scouts were named wolf cubs after Mowgli. The scout trained to work in the jungle was the model

English boy, the future imperialist at home in the colonies.

The scouting movement began after the Boer war out of a growing concern for the future of the empire, to save England from the decadence threatening it, and to instil English Boy like qualities such as “dash, pluck and lion-heartedness”, the very qualities that were celebrated in the boy books of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Kipling like Baden-Powell was much concerned about the future of the empire and the self of the future imperialist, and inspired and assisted the establishment of the Boy Scout Movement. In fact, the *Jungle Books* was rewritten by Baden-Powell with Kipling’s permission as a motivational book with morality lessons for the young scouts, the *Wolf Cubs*. Kipling was also delighted with the scouting movement, which he called, “the best thing for boys outside boarding schools that (had) ever been invented.” Baden-Powell has also expressed his indebtedness to Kipling in the *Wolf Cubs’ Handbook*, as one ‘who has done so much to put the right spirit into our increasing manhood.’ (Malett 145) Baden-Powell’s gratitude to Kipling was for creating in *Mowgli*, the figure of the future and ideal imperialist and an embodiment of the masculine self on which the British youth could fashion themselves.

Kipling was deeply concerned about the new generation of imperialists. The future imperialist for him was one born and brought up in India so that he would have no fear of the colony and the unknown, and can thus become an effective ruler unlike those who had been ‘cast in an alien corn’ or to use Kipling’s phrase, ‘thrown away’. *Mowgli* has been read as representing such a second-generation imperialist as he grows up in the jungle and has no fear of it. This anxiety about the future of the empire was shared by many in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. There was the fear of the British Empire reaching a similar end to that of the Roman. It is in this context that Elliott Mill wrote *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire* on the pattern of Gibbon’s famous history and Mill’s book was the basis for much of what Baden Powell wrote on patriotic instruction in *Scouting for Boys* (1908). (Warren 238) Charles Kingsley had already voiced the same anxiety in *The Roman and the Teuton* (1864), which con-

trasts the degenerate Romans with the Teutons, who are “Forest Children” and grow up to a young and strong race. (M. Green 235)

The supreme masculine figure, therefore, is one who is of the jungle and who can tame it as well. In a time, when sex was being repressed in Victorian society, hunting offered an acceptable domain for the testing and the celebration of masculinity in which the more difficult the game, and the barer the hunter, the greater the demonstration of one’s masculinity. Fashioning an ideal masculinity has been a concern with Kipling and not only in *The Jungle Books*. Kipling in his most popular poem, “If”, enjoins the young boy to discipline himself and ends by underscoring the benefits of such disciplining.

“Yours is the Earth and everything that’s in it  
And- which is more- You’ll be a Man, my son”.

It is ironic that Mowgli, who tames the jungle and in his taming becomes the mascot of masculinity, is presented as ‘brown’ and not ‘white’. In fact, in all the recent criticism, which has read an imperial allegory into the *Jungle Books*, Mowgli has been taken to stand for the white colonizer, who behaves with the animals the way the white man behaves with the natives. But Mowgli is not ‘white’ even though he tames the jungle. Orwell has commented on Kipling that “While in India he tended to mix with ‘the wrong’ people, and because of his dark complexion he was wrongly suspected of having a streak of Asiatic blood.” (“Rudyard” 273) But Mowgli was probably not a prototype of Kipling, not a white man in brown skin.

Apart from the fact that there is no way that a white man’s baby could get into the jungle for the adventure to begin, it is significant that in the first Mowgli story to be written, “In the Rukh”, Mowgli is introduced to us as a native, a brown man. He is a fleet-footed tracker; one who knew tigers as others knew dogs and therefore Gisborne remarks that in him they had found “at last the ideal ranger and forest guard for whom he and the Department were always looking...he was a miracle.”

Although it was a common strand running through most colonial travel narratives and fiction to present the native as ignorant of his own landscape, as we discussed earlier, Mowgli knows the jungle better than anyone else. Mowgli seems to be symbolic of the ‘idealized native subject’. This idealized native subject, however, belongs neither to the natives nor to the white man. Mowgli leaves the world of the natives for the superior and civilized world of the white man but he does not belong there. He is not made into a Forest Officer and he does not take any of the positions reserved for a white man. He cannot even be made into a gun-boy. He remains very much the native, but he is different from the villagers, who are perceived to be the kinsmen of the bandar-log. He is also different from the evil Gonds, the tribals.

Mowgli is the idealized native subject because he upholds the law and does not question it. He says, “it is the Sahib’s rukh” and so takes no reward for his work. He knows his place in the order of things. He is not like the Bengalis, whom Kipling despised and who were allegorized through the bandar-log as commonly understood. Unlike them, Mowgli never aspires to be a white man. He is not agonized by his hybridity either. The ideal native subject has no agony, no anxiety. He knows the jungle better than anyone else because he is a part of it. Hence, he is the best deputy a white man can have to lord over the jungle and by extension the colony. It is probably because Mowgli is also a “noble savage” that he caught the imagination of American authors such as Burroughs and Lee Falk, who could see an American Adam in the figure of Mowgli. Kipling on his part seems aware of such suggestiveness and has the Muller, the Inspector General of Forests see Mowgli as an Adam.

As the idealized native subject, Mowgli seems to have an ancient and mythical prototype in the figure of Enkidu, the friend and foil to Gilgamesh in the eponymous Sumerian epic. In the epic, Enkidu appears as a mythical wild-man raised by animals. Described as shaggy and hairy, Enkidu wears no clothes but lives as animals do. His beast-like ways are finally tamed by a courtesan, who seduces him. After being exposed to the pleasures of human sexuality, Enkidu is unable

to run with the beasts of the field and the forest any more. The courtesan takes him back to the city of Uruk. There, he first fights with Gilgamesh and then becomes his friend. Their most famous adventure together is in the cedar forest, where Gilgamesh with the help of Enkidu, kills Huwawa, the demon guardian of the trees, and then cuts down the trees, an act that will immortalize Gilgamesh.

Although Kipling nowhere mentions the influence or possible inspiration from Gilgamesh as a feral character, Mowgli definitely has his earliest antecedent in the figure of Enkidu. It is interesting that Mowgli is first introduced in "In the Rukh" as "naked except for the loin-cloth" and he dreams of a 'shaggy hide'. In the epigraphic poem to the story, Mowgli repeatedly asks, "was I born of womankind?" which could as easily have come from the mouth of Enkidu for the latter was not of woman born, but of clay by a goddess. The transformation of Enkidu has been commonly interpreted as representing the seductive power of the Mesopotamian city-states over the nomadic tribes. Mowgli's leaving the natives for the world of the white man also represents the seductive power of the colonial master over the natives.

The fact that a woman finally tames Enkidu, the wild man, throws up further possibilities for pursuing this line of inquiry. Mowgli is also finally tamed by his marriage to a Muslim girl and to allay her father's fear that she was marrying a wild man, Gisborne reassures the father, "she shall make him a Mussalman." ("Rukh" 346) Gisborne can reassure him with confidence because Mowgli has to follow his mythical archetype and the story does end with Mowgli as a tamed householder. Kipling makes Mowgli's transformation by the girl into a universal myth of man in the story "When the Cat walked by itself" in *Just So Stories*. In this story about the origins of the world, Kipling suggests that in the beginning Man was also wild like the animals till he met woman. In his modelling on Mowgli, Tarzan also seems to follow the mythical prototype of Enkidu. Hence, Tarzan, the wild man who tames the jungle gets tamed himself when he meets a woman. He tells Jane, his love, "I have come across the ages out of the dim

and distant past from the lair of the primeval man to claim you- for your sake I have become a civilized man...for your sake I will be whatever you will me to be.” (Apes 186)

It is highly unlikely that Kipling would not have been aware of the story of Gilgamesh. When the discovery of the epic of Gilgamesh was announced to the public in 1872, Kipling was in England. The news had created a sensation because it was the discovery of the first epic of the Western World and it had revived the controversy started by Darwin by bringing into question the accuracy of the Bible. (Foster 6) The first translation of the epic into modern English also came out in book form for the first time in 1891, the year Kipling returned to England. It is again unlikely that Kipling would have missed reading the first epic. Kipling has never mentioned Enkidu as one of the prototypes of Mowgli, but he makes enough suggestions about Mowgli’s mythic origins. Hence, Gisborne calls Mowgli a “*lusus naturae*” and says that he is like the illustrations in the *Classical Dictionary*.

But in the face of such coincidence and evidence it is surprising that there has hardly been any discussion on the possible influence of the epic of Gilgamesh on the writing of *The Jungle Books* and the figure of Enkidu as a prototype of Mowgli. Probably, the reason for such oversight is that most discussions of the origin of the *Jungle Books* have taken off from Kipling’s own detailed mention of his inspirations. We have already discussed the process in which the stories that constitute the *Jungle Books* got written; there were inspirations from many books he had read and heard about, and when he wrote, he let his *Daemon*, his guiding spirit take over. Thus, it seems very likely that when Kipling wrote his first Mowgli story about Indian Forestry, which was published in 1893, the figure of Enkidu loomed large on his imagination.

Enkidu is also an ideal native subject. He is a wild man, most likely belonging to the nomadic tribes, who grows up as a beast and knows all about the animal world. Hence, he is the best deputy to the Mesopotamian emperor Gilgamesh in the emperor’s endeavour

to slay the forest guardian and cut down the trees. The very act of slaying the forest guardian and cutting down trees is also revisited in the project of forestry where the jungle is first cleared for a plantation to come up. Moreover, Enkidu does not question the suzerainty of Gilgamesh though the latter has not defeated him and willingly subjects himself to Gilgamesh's lordship just like Mowgli. He does not even complain when he has to be sacrificed to atone for the killing of the forest guardian.

### **Mowgli's Hybridity**

Although Mowgli is the ideal native subject, he has often been read as an allegorical figure of the white man in the colony. This is probably because Mowgli as a wolf-child has another famous antecedent in Romulus, the founder of the Roman Empire: Romulus, too, was suckled by a she-wolf. This lineage acquires its suggestive potency from the fact that the British Empire then was being seen as the sequel to the Roman as we have already discussed. This had not failed to fascinate Kipling, the bard of the Empire and his fascination with the Roman Empire found him writing *Puck of Pook's Hill*. Mowgli then seems to start out as an Enkidu but ends up as a Romulus.

We know that Kipling had first written "In the Rukh" without probably having thought of developing it into a book. Later, however, he did develop it. As we have discussed earlier, "In the Rukh" could not go into the *Jungle Books* because it had been published before Kipling started writing the other Mowgli stories. But if one reads "In the Rukh", the first Mowgli story to be written, and "Mowgli's Brothers", the next Mowgli story to be written and the first story in *The Jungle Books*, one does not notice any difference in the biographical details of Mowgli. "Mowgli's Brothers" seems to be an elaboration of the origins of Mowgli mentioned in "In the Rukh". "In the Rukh" also reads as a continuation of the last story of the *Jungle Books*, "Spring Running" in which Mowgli finally leaves the jungle for the world of the white man.

Since the first story written works as the last of the series, the writing of the Mowgli stories then happens as a kind of authorial flashback, where the author develops the character presented from his origin. So, Kipling probably meant Mowgli to be the idealized native subject, an incarnation of Enkidu, as he appears in the first story "In the Rukh". However, in the process of writing as his "pen took charge" and he "watched it begin to write stories about Mowgli and animals, which later grew into the *Jungle Books*", the figure of Romulus seems to have captured Kipling's imagination and his Dae-mon developed the Enkidu figure into the Romulus, the emperor, who becomes "the absolute lord of the jungle."

It is here that the problem arises and the narrative fails to convince. It is in Enkidu becoming Romulus that there seems to be a slip in the narrative. The Mowgli, one sees developing in the *Jungle Books*, hardly seems the Mowgli in "In the Rukh". Moreover, the end of the Mowgli story in the *Jungle Books* seems contrived to suggest the continuity into "In the Rukh". It seems paradoxical that Mowgli should give up all his lordship over the jungle to become a mere informer for the white man in "In the Rukh". He is not to do anything with wild animals except inform on them to Gisborne. So, contrary to his claims of not wanting to hurt the jungle and contrary to the role he dons in the *Jungle Books*, where he is the protector of the jungle, he actually informs the white man on game so that he can shoot them. The former Lord of the jungle becomes a servile guard at Gisborne's house.

One may argue here that Mowgli giving up his suzerainty of the jungle he has lorded over can be read allegorically as the native king accepting the suzerainty of the colonial master, the white man. A native king might try to please his white master by facilitating shikar. But he would not act so subservient by guarding the white man. However, if one reads Mowgli as a figure of Enkidu at the beginning of the *Jungle Books*, who then develops into a figure of Romulus, and if one reads the *Jungle Books* as continuing into "In the Rukh", there are bound to be some gaps. This is because it would mean Romulus ending up as Enkidu, the Emperor ending up as the ideal

subject. To explore any such gaps, we shall have to look at the “Spring Running”, the last story in *The Jungle Books*.

In this story, suddenly, Mowgli feels sad because in spring, all the animals are self-preoccupied and are not concerned about him. But what is strange is that every spring the same thing happened. It had never affected him before. It is ironical that just when he is at the prime of his energy and power and “the mere whisper of his name clears the jungle paths”, as Kipling has indicated at the beginning of the story, he should start thinking that his strength has gone towards the middle of the story. When Mowgli leaves the jungle, the animals protest that he belongs to them and reassure him that he is still the Master of the Jungle. It is surprising then that Mowgli still leaves the jungle and ends up betraying them in “In the Rukh”, and that Romulus, who founded an empire in the jungle, has become Enkidu. One way of explaining this is that Enkidu had overstepped the original designs of its author and become Romulus and he has to be brought back to a position, where he can become Enkidu again. The taunts of the wild buffalo and cow calling him a mere herder of cattle in “Spring Running” seems to force a connection with the cattle-herding Mowgli of “In the Rukh”.

Mowgli is thus, both white man and ideal native subject, both Enkidu and Romulus. It is this kind of a hybridized space that Mowgli occupies. He is Kipling’s ideal native subject. He is also the ritual white man of the jungle for the colonial reading public because it is the white man, who protects the rest of the jungle from the predators, Shere Khan and the wild dogs. In the white man’s imagination, the native could never be the protector of the forests. It is this ideology, which informed the institution of forestry and later the conservation movement in colonial India.

Although Mowgli is a hybrid, a cross between the white and the brown, he is not a hybrid as allegorized by the bandar-log. It is the hybridity of the likes of the bandar-log that has received significant postcolonial engagement, most notably by Franz Fanon and Homi Bhabha. The hybrid Indian according to Bhabha can mimic but not reproduce English values to satisfaction and it is the awareness of

that gap which constitutes his hybridity and ensures his subjectivity. This gap creates a psychic trauma according to Fanon: an agony that animates the bandar-log in the Jungle Books.

But Mowgli is a different hybrid, a double hybrid. He is first a hybrid between the human and the animal and then between the white and the brown. He is born with a brown skin but he does not feel he belongs to the world of the brown skins. He feels more at home in the white man's world but without any aspirations of becoming the white man. Hence, he does not experience the agony of the bandar-log. His hybridity is in the gap, vacant space between the prototypical Enkidu and Romulus, in the gap between the origins of his story and where the act of narration takes it. So, he ends up as both the white man and the ideal colonized subject, both Romulus and Enkidu. That is how Mowgli becomes the idealized native subject, a hybrid character without the agony this entails, who is loyal and the best subordinate to govern the colony, and perfectly content to merely aid the project of governance of the empire.

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# Koili Poetry: An Exploration of the Transformation of Poetic Form

Priyadarshi Patnaik

Fifteenth to 16th century AD in Orissa was a period of ferment and experimentation in philosophical concepts and their assimilation, primarily through poetry. Using verse to communicate ideas is not uncommon, but to interpret poetry and transform it into philosophy certainly is. We have at least one extant example of this kind of an effort in the hands of one of the most eminent writers of 16th century in Orissa – Jagannâtha Dâsa. Orissan literature had a popular form (Koili) that belonged to the *dutakâvya* genre. Jagannâtha Dâsa took one of them, *Keçêaba Koili*, a poem of lament, and interpreted in philosophical terms in his *Artha Koili* or ‘The meaning of the Koili. Apparently, such a method of interpretation might sound strange, but if one looks at the Tantric-Buddhism of Orissa and its influences, one can trace Jagannâtha’s attempts back to them, especially to their tradition of esoteric writing known as *sandhâbhâsa*. After Jagannâtha, the form was again modified to suit a different purpose. This paper focuses on the way that a poetic form was transformed in an age that was engaged in a quest for *gñâna-bhakti* (knowledge mixed with devotion). It points to the way there was an amalgam of disparate philosophies in such a poetic tradition. Finally, it presents translations of both the poems discussed above along with a few early poems (10th-11th century) written in the tradition of the Tantric-Buddhists and fragments of later poems to show how poetic forms performed different roles based on socio-cultural and philosophical contexts.

Orissa was a land of unrest and ferment in the 15th and the 16th century AD. Brahminism dominated the land (not that this dominance was ever reversed) and Oriya as a literary language struggled

to flourish. Most scholars of Orissa still wrote in Sanskrit. However, with Sârala Dâsa's Oriya Mahâbhârata (14th -15th century AD) , a vast and powerful work, the language found a voice, uneven, restless; colloquial and grand in the same breath. If one looks at Utkal (Orissa) of that particular time, one also finds significant traces of Vajrayâna Buddhsim (Tantric) and Nâtha tradition (which was strongly influenced by Buddhism). So in the Pancasakhâ (the five soul-mates or companions) who wrote in the 15th-16th century, one finds the influences of Buddhism, of Nâtha cult as well yoga, both in their writings and practices.

The Panchasakhâ wrote simple verses, but dealt with complex ideas. The ideas needed to be communicated as simply as possible because they were to a certain extent new, welded together through their intense experiments in and experiences of spirituality. One of the most influential and lucid among these writers was Jagannâtha Dâsa, who wrote the Oriya Bhâgabata (based on Bhâgabata Mahâpuraða) and at the same time wrote a number of works which constituted the amalgam of the various religions and philosophies mentioned above. It was Jagannâtha Dâsa who wrote Artha Koili, the pivotal work around which this paper revolves.

But before we proceed, "Koili" must be defined. "Koili" is the Oriya for the bird 'cuckoo.' It also stands for a poetic tradition that can be traced roughly back to the 14th -15th century in Orissa – Markanda Dasa's 'Keshaba Koili', a poem in the chautisâ form (34 stanzas) where each stanza starts with a consonant and exploits its alliterations. In the poem, Yaúodhâ laments the departure of Lord Krishna to Mathurâ and in an intense moment of longing addresses her feeling of sadness and pining to the cuckoo bird with the hope that it would be able to take the message to her son. Such a messenger is not unusual. In Sanskrit we have many such messengers or dutas and the form – dutakâvya (messenger-poem) – has many instances, starting with Kâlidasa's Meghadutam that uses clouds as the messenger to communicate the protagonist's pining and intense sadness at separation from the object of love. In Oriya literature, this tradition continues till the 19th century. In fact, it becomes a

very popular tradition. Today we have more than 20 poems of considerable merit written using this form over the ages. Sometimes it is the pining of Sita for Rama (Kânta Koili), the longing of Kausalyâ for her son (Sri Râma Koili) or the longing for Yæodhâ for Krishna, but in a literal sense, it is not an unbroken tradition. In the 15th-16th century something happened (Artha Koili) which, for a period of at least one hundred years, transformed the form, adapting it for a different purpose altogether. Our paper focuses on this transformation and for its possible reasons. Before we proceed, let us look at some lines of Keœaba Koili in order to get a feel of the form:

### **Keœaba Koili**

*(Krishna Cuckoo)*

**Poet Markanda Dasa**

O Cuckoo, Keúaba has gone to Mathurâ,  
on whose bidding has he gone,  
my son has not come back yet, O Cuckoo. (1)  
O Cuckoo, whom shall I give milk of my breast?  
my son has gone to Mathurâpuri, O Cuckoo. (2)  
O Cuckoo, my son has not come back,  
the dense Brundâvana looks beautiful no longer, O Cuckoo. (3)  
O Cuckoo, Nanda doesn't enter the house,  
the lovely palace is desolate without Govinda, O Cuckoo. (4)  
O Cuckoo, King Nanda made a stone of his heart,  
putting collolium to the eyes placed his son in the chariot, O  
Cuckoo.(5)  
O Cuckoo, how the jewels on the girdle at his waist rang,  
bewitching the maidens of Gopapuri, O Cuckoo! (6)  
O Cuckoo, at night Hari would ask for the moon,  
the mere lift of his eyebrows – Nanda would be at his bidding, O  
Cuckoo. (10)  
O Cuckoo, he would brim with laughter on my lap,  
swaying from side to side moving upon the swing, O Cuckoo. (11)  
O Cuckoo, beautiful the two liquid eyes,  
Cheating and lying he went, crossing the bounds, O Cuckoo (12)  
O Cuckoo, wherever the she-parrot's voice carries,

You can see Hari floating like a parrot, O Cuckoo. (13)  
O Cuckoo, on his body is smeared sandal wood paste,  
With him plays his brother Balarâma, O Cuckoo. (16)  
O Cuckoo, bruising my nipple I gave him milk to drink,  
in my old age I cannot see my son, O Cuckoo. (17)

Koili had already established itself as a popular form by the time Jagannâtha Dâsa used it. One suspects that this popularity was one of the chief reasons for his taking it up. But two important points need to be kept in mind. One, although he took up the Koili form, he did not write a poem in the Koili tradition. The second point is linked to the first. He wrote a tikâ or commentary on the Keceaba Koili – his Artha Koili (The Meaning of the Koili) – a poem which apparently needed no elucidation. This partly shows the influence of Sanskrit tradition, but in the use of the tradition to something which apparently makes sense at a surface level, he uses a radically different tradition altogether. If one looks at the Sanskrit tradition, the work that requires a tikâ is usually a philosophical work of high merit and difficulty and it is usually cryptic. It is because of this difficulty that one writes a commentary. In the modern context, one might point out that it is the ambiguity (often) of the text that generates the commentary, which is also an interpretation. In fact if one looks at Brahma Sutra, one finds distinctive schools of philosophies based on the same sutra but different bhâsyas or tikâs written by Samkara, Ramânujam, Mâdhava and others. However, Keceaba Koili being a straightforward poem, one immediately sees no merit in a commentary upon it. Nor does one see much of precedence in the Sanskrit tradition of elucidation of lucid poetic works. So why does a simple poem need elucidation? Probably because its simplicity is deceptive and there is something beneath that cannot be seen by the uninitiated eye.

Jagannâtha works with such an assumption and beneath the mother's lament, sees profound spiritual significance. So what inspires him to write in this tradition? If one is to find an inspiration for such a trend, one might have to look closer at home, to a tradition of Buddhist Tantra – Sahajayâna – the way it was practiced in Orissa,

and to an esoteric cult that deliberately made its texts inaccessible so as to keep out the uninitiated. Strategies of using a coded language were known as *sandhâbhââ* in the Buddhist tradition. In the region that now constitutes Orissa, between the 10th and 14th century, certain Buddhist monks wrote such poems in a language that came before Oriya (to which Oriyas, Bengalies and many others lay claim). They were later discovered in Nepal with Sanskrit commentaries (Kar).

Before looking at *sandhâbhââ*, it is perhaps necessary to look at a few early poems written in this tradition. The poems below are from a compilation of verses known as *Charyâchaya* or *Charyâpadas* which were written in a language to which Oriya can trace its origin (as can Bengali and a few other languages) and which was discovered in Nepal in the early part of the 20th century.

### **Luipâdânaam**

*(Ka Tarubara Pancha Bi Dala)*

#### **Poet Luipa**

The body is a tree with five branches <sup>1</sup>.  
 The ever restless mind is the seat of *kâla* <sup>2</sup>.  
 Strengthen the mind, achieve great bliss.  
 Lui says, ask your guru and realize this.  
 Why follow the path of *samâdhi* <sup>3</sup>,  
 When in sorrow and happiness one must die!  
 Avoiding these traps and entanglements  
 Trap the bird of *sunyatâ* in a silken cord  
 And draw it to yourself.  
 Lui says, he knows this in meditation,  
 Sitting on the mounds, *dhamaâ* and *chamaâ* <sup>4</sup>.

The notes at the end of the paper would help elucidate this poem and the ones that follow. But as can be seen above, this poem only has a few metaphors (five branches for the five senses) but other-

wise is pretty straightforward.

### **Kukuripâdânânam**

(Duli Duhin Pita Dharina Na Jai)

#### **Poet Kukuripa**

The milk of the tortoise cannot be held in a vessel <sup>5</sup>.  
The crocodile eats tamarind from a tree.  
Be attentive about your household  
O Daughter-in-law<sup>6</sup>!  
The thief stole away the earrings  
At the dead of the night.  
The father-in-law is asleep,  
The daughter-in-law is awake,  
The ring stolen <sup>7</sup> – where to go, whom to ask?  
As the day breaks she busies herself cooking rice.  
As night falls, she takes leave of her work <sup>8</sup>.  
This is the charyâ Kukuripâ sings.  
Twenty listen, at least one understands.

This poem, on the other hand, is more subtle. It distinctively operates at two levels. At the surface level it is about an event in household life. But the last two lines suggest that meaning has to be derived at a deeper level. This is aided by the fact that the events described are puzzling and do not make complete sentence.

### **Gunduripadânaam**

(*Tiaddâ Châpi Joini De Ankabâli*)

#### **Poet Gunduripâ**

‘I will press the three veins,  
Open your thighs.  
Churning your lotus flower with my lingam  
Would give me the ultimate pleasure <sup>9</sup>

O jogini, I cannot live a moment without you!  
Kissing your lips I will drink the lotus juice.’

Angry, the jogini, would not go to bed.  
Yet her breath comes out harsh.  
The mother-in-law has locked the door.  
Rip open the two lips, the solar and the lunar.  
Tells Gunduri, he is a king among the handsome  
Standing naked amidst the beauties of the town.

This poem, the final of the illustrations presented here, is the most significant. It is an erotic poem by its own merit. It is complete without loose ends, and at the same time there is no reference to another level. Here, the concealment is complete.

Most scholars agree that the technique used here is that of *sandhâbhâ* (samdhabhâ, samdhibhâ) or the language of twilight. However there is no agreement as to what exactly this is. One of the popular interpretations of this term is in the sense of a coded or esoteric language. Some others interpret it as a language that connotes something distinctively different from what it says. But if one assumes that it is the language of “twilight” then the associations of twilight come in significantly - indistinct, ambiguous, indeterminate. In that case it cannot have one definite meaning. Alex Wayman, discussing these issues quotes from *Saddharmapundarikâ*, where *Sârîputra* says:

And having heard this buddhadharma, I thought ‘indeed, this is expressed in the manner of twilight; at the tree of enlightenment the Jina reveals the knowledge that is inaccessible to logic, subtle and immaculate. (Wayman 130)

*Chandrakirti* defines *sandhâbhâ* in the *Pradipaddyotana* as that which reveals the true nature for sentient beings having superior zeal and by the method of ambiguous discourse (Wayman 129). *Tson-kha-pa* explains that *sandhâbhâ* is intended for candidates who aim at the highest *siddhi*, but the words for that goal as ambiguous. (Wayman 129)

Thus, two things become clear. One, this is a technique where what is said is not necessarily what is meant. Secondly, what is meant is not one definite thing. In fact, it is so subtle that one might experience its meaning, but cannot say it in words or commentaries. Thus, there is the possibility of layers of meaning, as well as meaning as something that is inexpressible, very akin to the Zen “koan”.

The poems cited above have commentaries attached to them (by later writers) and this is an accepted convention in Tantrik Buddhism where the meaning of the standard symbols, concepts and implements used are explained in terms of their symbolic or metaphysical significance. Hence, although interpretation is necessary at a linguistic and conceptual level, at the highest levels of siddhi, one is expected to experience the meaning rather than just interpret or understand.

The most complete of charyâ poems are the ones, in which a second layer of meaning is totally hidden. In other words, the poem looks innocent of deeper layers of meaning (please refer to the third charyâ poem quoted here). The Keçeba Koili is such a poem that looks innocent to the eye of deeper layers of meaning. And this is what is taken up by Jagannâtha Dâsa in quest of a hidden meaning (artha) and hence he writes the Artha Koili. Thus, the sandhâbhââ of the charyâ poems seems to have been revived in Jagannâtha Dâsa’s poem in the sense that he assumes that Keçeba Koili to be written in sandhâbhââ. As in sandhabhasa, according to Jagannatha Dasa, Kesaba Koili also makes sense at two levels. At one level it is about Krishna’s journey. At another level it is about the philosophy of pinda and brahmanda. Secondly, though the poem is placed in a predominantly Vaishnava setting, framed within a discourse between Krishna and Arjuna, it contains disparate elements from different traditions – namely, Tantra, Yoga and Buddhsim. We shall now look at a part of Artha Koili and then analyze the diverse philosophical traditions embedded in it.

### **Artha Koili**

(The meaning of the Koili)

## Poet Atibadi Jagannâtha Dâsa

O Cuckoo, Keçëaba has gone to Mathurâ,  
On whose bidding has he gone,  
My son has not come back yet, O Cuckoo. (1)

Arjuna speaks:

Arjuna said, 'Listen, O Mighty Armed,  
Give me leave to ask you a question,  
What does one understand by Keçëaba Koili?'  
– To this question of, O Srihari, give me an answer.

Krishna speaks:

Hearing Pârtha's question, Bhagavân said,  
'You asked a very noble question indeed.  
By Cuckoo, the jiva is meant.  
That life force is me, pervading everything.  
The jiva came by itself and went by itself,  
Hence the son did not come back and  
Mathurâ, the body, lay empty.' (1)

O Cuckoo, who shall I give milk of the breast?  
my son has gone to Mathurâpuri, O Cuckoo. (2)

Again Arjuna prostrated himself at Krishna's feet,  
'Clear my doubts, O Bhâbagrâhi.  
Explain to me the discourse about the mother's breast.'  
Srihari said, 'Listen O Arjuna,  
Inside the pinda the jiva gets great happiness.  
Again it disappears and goes elsewhere.  
It dissolves into ether and enters another pinda,  
To relish the nectar of Hari - mother's milk.'  
Hearing this Arjuna was delighted  
And Krishna explained on and on. (2)  
O Cuckoo, my son has not come back,  
the dense Brundâvana looks beautiful no longer, O Cuckoo. (3)

What is the meaning of dense Brundâvana?  
Explain this to me, O Bhâvagraji.  
Kamalalochana looked at Arjuna's face,  
And said, 'Hear the answer, O son of Pându,  
By dense Brundâvana, jive is meant,  
Gopa, the body, without jive is no longer beautiful.  
When abandoned by the ultimate (parama)  
The body fell on the ground.  
This is the meaning of the word ga,  
Listen with all your heart, O son of Pandu.' (3)

O Cuckoo, Nanda doesn't enter the house,  
the lovely palace is desolate without Govinda, O Cuckoo. (4)

Touching Pârtha, Bhâbagrâhi continued,  
'Hear this, what is meant by the house?  
What is the meaning of the ultimate soul?  
I shall explain the views of the Scriptures to you.  
When the harmonious puru<sup>o</sup>a abandoned the abode  
For Nanda (the body) existence was meaningless.  
As long as the jiva was there, the body was beautiful.  
But the harmonious principle went, never came back.  
Because of this, the empty house looked ugly.' (4)

O Cuckoo, King Nanda made a stone of his heart,  
putting collolium in his eyes placed him in the chariot, O Cuckoo. (5)

Arjuna asked, 'O listen Jagannâtha,  
From where did Nanda's body emerge?'  
To Arjuna's question, Bhagavân said,  
'By Nanda's body, understand the body.  
When the jiva went into space  
The body dried up and it did not come back,  
When the soul separates from the body  
From both the eyes tears drop down.  
By collolium that is meant in the scripture.'  
Again and again Arjuna made salutations. (5)

O Cuckoo, the jewels on the girdle at his waist rang,  
bewitching the maidens of Gopapuri, O Cuckoo. (6)

Hearing Arjuna's question, Kamalalochana said,  
'Hear your answer, O Pandu's son.  
When the jiva was playing with the body  
The body-mechanism worked smoothly  
When the jiva went off with the ultimate,  
The machinery became silent.  
The body was working efficiently only with the help of the jiva,  
Hear this carefully, O Subhadrâ's husband.' (6)

O Cuckoo, at night Hari would ask for the moon  
on lifting eyes Nanda would do his bidding, O Cuckoo. (10)

'By night the eye is meant,  
The moon is the abode of all bliss.  
Know as Nanda the ultimate the left eye.  
Hence, when the eye is closed there is darkness.  
Understand the meaning of night thus.  
This is my answer, O brother of Judhithira'  
Hearing this Arjuna was delighted,  
Keen to hear more, he again starts asking. (10)

O Cuckoo, he would brim with laughter on the lap,  
swing from side to side moving upon the swing, O Cuckoo. (11)

'By the swinging bridge, O Pârtha, the nose is meant.  
The soul waits expectantly to abandon this.  
In the middle of trikuta he holds his seat.  
That is referred to as the lap, O Arjuna  
On top of that you can hear the chant Hari bol, ringing.  
Taking the ultimate, jive resides in the sunya.  
The nose and eyes frequent the sunya,  
And the body would fall without their support.' (11)

O Cuckoo, Beautiful the two liquid eyes,

Cheating and lying he went, crossing the bounds, O Cuckoo. (12)

‘Hear the meaning of the letter ‘tha’ O Falguna  
I shall explain the ways of the Sâcêtras to you  
Beautiful refers to the jive ultimate  
It never came back finding other support –  
The beautiful body goes in a moment, O Pârtha.’  
Hearing this Arjuna makes obeisance. (12)

O Cuckoo, wherever the she parrot’s voice carries,  
You can see Hari floating like a parrot, O Cuckoo. (13)

Hearing Arjuna’s words Kamalochana said,  
‘Hear the meaning of the branch of emerald –  
Four branches guard this jiva.  
The way the parrot resides within its cage,  
In the body, the ultimate jiva resides the same way.’  
Hearing this Arjuna was appeased.  
Gopinatha explained thus the meaning of the letter ‘da’. (13)

O Cuckoo, on his body is smeared sandal wood paste,  
With him plays brother Balarama, O Cuckoo . (16)

‘In trikuti the swan glides,  
From the cliff of tribedi water flows down.  
On coming down it gathers at the bridge.  
The waist, thin, fades in a moment.  
Balarâma, the ultimate, plays with the soul.’  
This is your answer, O brother of Judhithira. (16)

In the fragments sited above the following symbols emerge as significant.

jiva	: self, individual soul
pinda	: the body
cage	: the body trapping the self
purusha	: jiva, self
eye	: moon, ida and pingala, tantric symbolism

swinging bridge	:	nose, the swing of breath, ida, pingala, susumna
trikuta	:	three, the three veins, the culmination of yogic penance
swan	:	breath
sunya	:	the Ultimate Principle, Paramâtmâ, void.

The poem above is not strictly in the chautisâ form. But it attempts an explanation of the esoteric meaning of each consonant. It is not a dutakâvya, but a commentary on one. It breaks the form, interrupts it, and in the generation of a second layer of meaning, disrupts the meaning at the primary level. Read at the second level, the function of the “cuckoo” becomes problematic. It is no longer a vehicle for communication, nor is it the subject of address. At a philosophical level it attempts to explain the pinda-brahmânda theory (the body as the microcosm of the world, containing the world therein) where the body is of vital importance through which, using which, the highest reality can be achieved. Similarly, the Buddhist concept of sunya is very significant here. It not only signifies space in this context but also implies the highest principle, the ultimate goal. For Orissan santha poets, sunyavada of Buddhism is transformed into the concept of ‘sunya purusa’ or the highest principle. For the initial understanding of the lay-person it is given some sort of graspable form - sunya-purusa (male force). Yet as the philosophical poems start exploring the issues, the impossibility of grasping these concepts through language is brought out by use of paradoxes. One is finally given to understand that these concepts are beyond language.

In Orissan literary tradition, more Koili poems follow. But for some time, at least, there was a transformation of its function. It must be remembered that Jagannâtha Dâsa’s poem was “not” a Koili. But some of the Koili poems that followed were no longer dutakâvyas but mystical poems. It was this text— Artha Koili – that problematizes the Koili form and creates a need for a transformation. The mystical tradition continued during the 17th century and we find at least three more poems in this tradition which addressed metaphysical issues and resolved the form of Koili in the context of a transformed tradition where Koili (as a form) was no longer con-

cerned with “lament”, but with a “quest.” The function of the bird in these poems was transformed. It was no longer the vehicle, the messenger, a passive transmitter. The cuckoo became a symbol of the darkness and ignorance of the self (jiva). It became the subject of address. The poem retained an element of sadness, but this time, the goal was spiritual union or salvation. The cuckoo or the “ignorant dark self” was being given a lesson through which it could follow the path to self-realization. Interestingly, if self-realization is achieved, the addressed cannot be called a cuckoo any longer. This is so because the bird, through the physical attribute of its dark colour and hiding among the trees, is compared to an ignorant soul. If the soul is transformed, it would turn bright, lose its ignorance – no longer remain a dark cuckoo or koili.

Brief illustrations from two such poems from the 17th century would perhaps illustrate these points.

### **Gñānodaya Koili**

(The Cuckoo of the Awakening of Knowledge)

**Poet Lokonatha**

(Verse 1)

O Cuckoo, on the top of mount Kâlindi,  
The lotus has blossomed.  
Inside the lotus is triveni while  
The swan flies in the sunya.

Some say the swan is at the mouth of mahimâ  
Plays the swan in at the top of amana.

O Cuckoo, what the mendicants search for  
That which the wise search for and never get  
At the zenith of the thin tube/passage  
The swan plays in the sunya temple.  
Devote you mind at the swan’s feet  
And let your sins be destroyed.

## **Sisurveda Koili**

### **Bairagi Dasa**

(Verse 9)

O Cuckoo, that earth hides in sunya,  
The syllable aum resides in secret,  
If you can, know it,  
You will be able to make the sun and the moon  
Fetch water for you, O Cuckoo.  
When the windless merges with the wind  
The spirit will reside in the cage, O Cuckoo.

But after a few such poems, namely Dayâsâgara Koili by Trilochana Dâsa, Gnânodaya Koili by Bairagi Dâsa and Sisurveda Koili by Lokanath, the tradition faded, along with a weakening of the metaphysical strain in Oriya poetry. Koili poetry was written again, but never with any deeper philosophical implications. This is the story of Koili in the Orissan literary tradition; a story of adaptation, transformation, of radical shift of style and ideas; a story of how literary forms and philosophical orientations are inseparable and colour one another. It is also the story of how texts influence texts.

## **Notes**

- 1 All the translations in this paper are by the author.
- 2 The five senses.
- 3 Time, death, end. The root of the karmic chain.
- 4 In any yogic practice (Tantra or Hattayoga) this is the highest goal. Here its meaning is ambiguous. Is it an ironic expression or does it imply that one must go beyond samâdhi?
- 5 Idâ and Pingalâ veins. The sun and the moon. According to yogic practice three veins traverse the entire body via the spinal cord, Idâ, pingalâ and sisumnâ. The idea is to develop control over Idâ and Pingalâ and to elicit the opening of the subtle middle vein – sisumnâ – in order to achieve transcendence.
- 6 It is popular in Tantric texts and practices to make use of coded language (sandhâbhasâ). Since the emphasis is on the initiated or the process of initiation, the poem is supposed to make no sense to the uninitiated. In this sense it comes very close to a Zen Koan. This strategy persisted in later Orissan tradition. A significant example is Artha Koili (Jagannâtha

Dâsa) which is a philosophical commentary or explanation of Keçēaba Koili (Mârkanda Dâsa).

7 All these might refer to lack of control over the senses.

8 Interpretations may vary, but this could refer to the loss of control over one's mind.

9 Again this is a matter of interpretation. During day the mind is restless, at night it is free in sleep.

10 Eroticism and erotic practices made Tantra highly suspect among both religious and philosophical schools of India. However, without going into its implications, one can point out that very often they were meant symbolically and not literally.

One might read the poem for its erotic content, but one cannot neglect the reference to lotus (female sexuality as well as the highest state of meditative consciousness) or to Idâ (sun) and Pingalâ (moon). In yoga the consciousness or meditative practice moves through six (according to some seven) stages. The lowest is kundalini, at the base of the loins, and the highest is at the top of the skull, known as sahasrâra, represented by a thousand lotus and implying the highest state of consciousness.

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# Clarissa And Feminine Subjectivity: Situating the Poetics of Experience in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*

Bibhash Choudhury

The interrogations and many of the positions taken in response to the marginalizing of the experience of the female characters in Woolf are conditioned by the mechanism that situates them as women. This is not to say, however, that a one-to-one dichotomy or relationship is adequate to account for the practice that is textualized in Woolf's novels. In this paper I would like to explore some of these aspects in the context of *Mrs Dalloway*. The problematic inherent in such a consideration also involves the recognition that 'one's identity' is 'a construction yet also a necessary point of departure.' (Alcoff 1988:432) A reading of the novels of Virginia Woolf which foregrounds its gendered standpoint involves an acknowledgement of 'the particularity of various women's histories in opposition to an Enlightened, general account supposedly applicable and accessible to all human beings.' (Hamilton 1996:189)

In the representation of Clarissa Dalloway in *Mrs. Dalloway*, there are possible sites of discursive resistances that are simultaneously incorporated in her production of her self as an ensemble of practices. For example, in her visualization of Peter Walsh, Clarissa is at pains to apprehend him in order to contextualize him in her present. The process of interpretation, to which Clarissa subjects the relationship, is an attempt on her part to actualise and render her apprehension in visible terms. Interestingly, the very process constitutes for Clarissa the real, which in the given context, foregrounds her experience in a form available to her. On the other hand, her efforts to situate and abstract the nature of her feelings regarding

Peter Walsh is not neatly ordered, but presented through discursive practices that accommodate such an endeavour. Roland Barthes' analysis of discursive structures demonstrate how individuals in love are subject to the functions of discourse of the lover/s, which, in its very constitution is a distinct problematic. Barthes' analysis of a lover's discourse assumes significance, for it is simultaneously read as a manifestation of a deeply personal experience and as an intensively discursive practice. (See Barthes 1990, 6-21) In order to be intelligible, the experience of love is expected to conform to certain end-directed markers, the mapping of which is conditioned by its exclusivity. The element of the 'personal' that marks out such an experience is a test of one's power of expression: one must be distinctive and 'different' for the personal to acquire meaning, while at the same time there must be a recognition of the discourse which permits such enterprises. This is the problem Clarissa faces. That this awareness of difference is constitutive of her vision, and of the limits of mutuality, is indicative of the complexity inscribed into her experience. The exploration of the inaccessible is nuanced by a teasing cultivation of distances, physical and otherwise. Patricia Moran finds Woolf exploring the memory of difference in Mrs. Dalloway, which is representative of the agency of the moment of being; but there is also a further dimension which the text accommodates – that of Clarissa's memorialised image/s of the past being merged into her awareness. (Moran 1992: 96-97) The nurturing of textual devices to encompass strategies to distinctly posit a gendered perspective is manifested in Clarissa's process of remembering and restoring a fragmented reminiscence. Meeting Peter Walsh again, she 'was torn between self-protective condescension and desire for new intimacy.' (Lee 1999: 379)

Now of course, thought Clarissa, he's enchanting! Perfectly enchanting! Now I remember how impossible it was ever to make up my mind — and why did I make up my mind — not to marry him, she wondered, that awful summer? (Woolf 1992: 53)

Even within the prototypical matrix of what is seen as representative of a woman's response to her past, the complicated setting

accentuates the semantic potentiality of such a situation. The realm to which both Clarissa and Peter subscribe is the almost nostalgic yearning for the loved one to be unique, and yet the switch between perspectives of a woman's (and/or man's) attitude to love governs that subscription. The sense of aura which becomes characteristic of Clarissa's response is made subject to the literality that marks its rendering. Clarissa's absorption of her role as mother and wife and her simultaneous appropriation of Peter Walsh's presence is engaged in the narrative, not as a simple act of observation, but as a collusion of different psychic matrices (visual, verbal, kinaesthetic). Reading and realising her relations is also a self-reflexive act, wherein the attempt at approximation is an interpenetrative strategy directed towards a figuration of her self. The sense of movement that provides her the perspective, in its composition, has some connection to the process of contemplation. Thus, 'she participates in scenes even as she stands apart from them.' (Caughie 1991: 74) By accentuating the limitation of Clarissa's unifying mechanism, Woolf engages the problematic that situates her both as a woman and as an individual. It has been suggested that Clarissa, along with other women in Woolf, 'are, to an extent, oppressed or marginalized by institutions and ideas which are associated...with masculine power.' (Reid 1993: 18) This, however, does not acknowledge the constitution of her experience which is characterized by unpredictably alternating moments of illumination and periods of vacuity, ones that are difficult to define. While she is struggling to acclimatize Peter Walsh into her self-contained and routine world, there is also an interrogation of potent mechanisms to account for the complexities of her consciousness. Hence, where the narrative situates Clarissa's response to Walsh's return in terms of enchantment, as cited above, this is preceded by the following sense of chaotic, multi-dimensional flux, which at that time seemed to disturb her ordered life:

Now the door opened, and in came — for a single second she could not remember what he was called! so surprised she was to see him, so glad, so shy, so utterly taken aback to have Peter Walsh come to her unexpectedly in the morning! (She had not read his letter). (Woolf 1992: 51-52)

The range and multiplicity of emotions ('surprised', 'glad', 'shy', 'utterly taken aback') that inhabits her perception is her attempt to naturalize and familiarize the elements of recognition into the constitution of Peter Walsh. The mixture of the re-emergent introspection to which she had been subjecting herself, and the immediacy of the personal, fails to overwhelm the conscious display of her self as Mrs. Dalloway when Peter Walsh makes his entry. The evocation of intimate, personal memories fails to extinguish the correlative emerging from her present appropriation of the notion of womanhood as the wife of Richard. It is in the course of the conversation that she becomes fully aware of the potential limitations of her current construct that is at work to circumscribe her as the Clarissa who did not marry Peter. In trying to understand the concentration of energies as far as a re-placement of her current position as Mrs. Dalloway is concerned, Clarissa confronts her figuration of Peter Walsh in a new light. Clarissa's awareness of her fascination and the simultaneous pressure of her social function problematizes her response to Peter Walsh. The text places the struggle both face in the narrative terms of a battle description. This process of externalising also represents Peter Walsh's exhibition of masculine accomplishment:

So before a battle begins, the horses paw the ground; toss their heads; the light shines on their flanks; their necks curve. So Peter Walsh and Clarissa, sitting side by side on the blue sofa, challenged each other. His powers chafed and tossed in him. He assembled from different quarters all sorts of things; praise; his career at Oxford; his marriage, which she knew nothing whatever about; how he had loved; and altogether done his job. (Woolf 1992: 57)

The enterprise of Peter Walsh here is directed towards achieving his aim of reinterpreting and re-scripting his past so as to counsel Clarissa in a way that subjects her in his discourse. By making his discourse context-bound, Peter Walsh is being attentive to the prescribed model of femininity as a social construct. This is borne by his desire to present himself as the better alternative to the Richard she has been made to wife – the other in a scale of choice she did

not make ('Tell me', he said, seizing her by the shoulders. 'Are you happy, Clarissa? Does Richard – ' Woolf 1992: 61). The difference in response to one another not only illustrates a distinctively gendered orientation but also shows how the constitution of interactive relations are subject to perspectives that may not be prescriptive. When Peter Walsh tries to engage Clarissa he scripts his version of femininity as a mediated relation that is representative of his need. Sara Mills has pointed out that to see power, as the centre of enactment in a relationship is to open it to contestation in every interaction. (Mills 1997: 88) Walsh's reading of Clarissa, in this sense, serves a model of apprehension, which despite aiming to be persuasive is embedded in a restrictive functional paradigm. It has been suggested that women partake in the processes that envisage them as being representative of femininity. Dorothy Smith sees woman as a text that makes herself available for such a reading:

...she presents herself as text to be read using doctrines of femininity as interpretative schemata. They are read back into her as the underlying pattern to the "documents" of femininity she exhibits. (Smith 1990: 177)

But such an interpretation requires modification, for this presentation of femininity is essentially a heterosexual one. The assumption that the interactive practices engaged in an enterprise as the one carried out by Clarissa and Peter is decipherable through gender-based indicators does not account for other potential spaces. Thus, the femininity that is being spaced in Clarissa's re-visioning of her relations with Sally, or Miss Kilman requires a different reading than the one that was at work when she interacted with Peter Walsh. David Bell, John Binnie, Julia Cream and Gill Valentine, in an article on gay and lesbian space argue thus:

The excessive performance of masculinity and femininity within homosexual frames expose not only the fabricated nature of heterosexuality but also its claims to authenticity. The 'macho' man and the 'femme' woman are not tautologies, but work to disrupt conventional assumptions surrounding the straight mapping of man/mascul-

line and woman/feminine within the heterosexual and homosexual constructs. (Bell et al 1994: 33 cited in Mills 1997)

The challenge faced by Clarissa in reading and being read by Sally is not posited within the heterosexual framework that encapsulates her in Peter Walsh's vision. Thus what the feminine comes to embody in Clarissa is not constituted in a convergence of meaning, but can be seen as having various effects and functions, which are dependent on the operating contexts. A performative strategy that works towards the registration of complexities in the relationship between the two women – Clarissa and Sally – is grounded in Clarissa's accommodative process of revision. Woolf's playfulness is inscribed through the project of reassessment that Clarissa explores. Clarissa's reading of Sally can be seen, in this sense, as an erasure of history as text. It is also a reiteration of enthusiasm as simulated in that text at the same time. The complex interplay of these elements that are committed to her experience does not emerge in a non-polemical simplicity of a then/now binarism, but is suffused with connotations that punctuate the entire process of reading. Woolf acknowledged the relativism inherent in reading processes (see Woolf's letters to Ethel Smyth, especially those in the fourth volume in the Nicholson Trautmann edition) and in Clarissa's assertion and subsequent retraction there is a hint that a declaration is not always indicative of positioning strategies. The essentiality of Clarissa's awareness of the difference between the Sallys that she implicates in her reminiscence is attested by the functioning to which that awareness is related. Although there is ample room for a hierarchized slotting of the image/s of the past Sally with the present one, it is subtly drawn into her vision as manifesting change but not obliteration. However, the change in point of view reflects a move towards the discursive contexts of placement, which are designed to encompass her figuration in the narrative. This appropriative gesture in the narrative not only admits of the different relationships inscribed into the text, but also interrogates the given states of the same. By accepting what seems to be absent (Sally in her imaged past, for example) in its capacity to situate her present, Clarissa is made to undertake the space that the novel's semiotic matrix facilitates. In

its operative nature Clarissa's narrativized femininity shows distinct differences when associated with Sally and Peter respectively. The many scenes that work in Clarissa's memory regarding her impression of Sally are subjected to modifications, and the recognition that the originary plenitude associated with that impression cannot be regained, conditions her awareness. Thus:

But this question of love (she thought, putting her coat away), this falling in love with women. Take Sally Seton; her relation in the old days with Sally Seton. Had not that, after all been love? (Woolf 1992: 41)

By situating her 'love' for Sally in a feminine space, Clarissa is marking her emotion through a purposeful functionality. By its very rendering this function seeks to reaffirm that love. When she re-evaluates her feeling for Sally by constituting it in the language of difference ('It was not like one's feeling for a man, Woolf 1992: 43') she is trying to overlay it with a condition of non-being. It becomes necessary for Clarissa to be engaged in this process of distinction so as to situate and dissociate this experience from the one related to Peter Walsh. As Gadamer has suggested, the 'metaphorical essence of language makes distinction necessary,' (Gadamer 1992: 352) and Clarissa's strategic placement of this relationship on gendered lines works towards a definition that functions within a feminised matrix. For Clarissa the similarity in gender becomes a marker to critique and to articulate the relationship. By bracketing the relationship in this manner, Clarissa's engagement acknowledges the complex and shifting interaction of her worlds, the past and the present. For Clarissa, 'meaning' is only available through difference. Linda Hutcheon has pointed out that meaning 'can be created only by differences and sustained only by reference to other meaning.' (Hutcheon 1995: 65) At the same time, one must also be alive to the dangers inherent in 'some feminisms' gynocentralizing of a monolithic concept of Woman as other than Man.' (Hutcheon 1995: 65) In Clarissa's envisioning, the difference that she accepts is taken for granted and it is valued in and for itself:

The strange thing, on looking back, was the purity, the integrity,

of her feeling for Sally. It was not like one's feeling for a man. It was completely disinterested, and besides, it had a quality which could only exist between women, between women just grown up. It was protective, on her side; sprang from a sense of being in league together, a presentiment of something that was bound to part them (they spoke of marriage always as a catastrophe), which led to this chivalry, this protective feeling which was much more on her side than Sally's. (Woolf 1992: 43–4)

The space wherein Clarissa works here is also a pattern of resistance ('marriage is a catastrophe'), but it is equally important to note the limitations of this structuring, for it is practised and subjected within a given paradigm. For Clarissa, fear of separation accounts for her particular 'protective feeling;' in the process of finding a position for herself within the matrix she has adopted, Clarissa, however shifts the onus back upon herself. More than a question of effectiveness, this mapping of her world engages a matter of identification. It is the supposed condition of sameness that forces Clarissa's perception into focus. This emphasis is occasioned by the admission that association with the male does not represent 'being in league together.' This process of appropriation accepts the centrality of gender distinction, which functions to place the relationship. This marking, and re-conceptualisation of difference, to borrow Alice Jardine's words, is 'gendered as female.' (Jardine 1982: 60) Significantly, the pluralizing rhetoric of postmodernist poetics does not admit the abstract category of single otherness. In this light Clarissa's rendition can be seen to set divergence in the midst of homogenous grouping of the class of women. Clarissa's awareness of her difference from Sally as a woman contests the assertion of similarity that the label 'women' encloses. This ironic textualizing, in spite of it being part of Clarissa's project of homogenisation, inhabits her imaging of herself as the chivalrous one. By following the terminology conventionally associated with the practice of patriarchy, Clarissa subscribes to the authority of what Derrida has called the 'pseudo-whole.' In Derrida's terms '[m]asculine and feminine are not even the adverse and possibly contracting parts, but rather the part of a pseudo-whole.' (Derrida 1984: 89) In this enunciative situation where

Clarissa places herself with Sally and identifies the community as that of 'women,' the implications of shifting perspectives work to approximate her experience:

No, the words meant absolutely nothing to her now. She could not even get an echo of her old emotion. (Woolf 1992: 44)

The perspective here moves within the matrices of a self-conscious and detached accommodation to social and time-directed awareness of historical conditions. In a sense, this usurpation of Clarissa's marked 'idea' of her experience with Sally becomes a re-definition; but this only posits another configuration, not an overwhelming erasure. The oppositionality is not characterized by an either/or or now/then dialectic but each appropriation becomes suffused and impregnated in an interpenetrative cross-play of experiential revision. Although she acknowledges the loss of emotion, Clarissa cannot but admit the excitement generated by Sally's proximity:

But she could remember going cold with excitement and doing her hair in a kind of ecstasy (now the old feeling began to come back to her, as she took out her hairpins, laid them on the dressing-table, began to do her hair), with the rocks flaunting up and down in the pink evening light, and dressing, and going downstairs, and feeling as she crossed the hall 'if it were now to die 'twere now to be happy.' That was her feeling — Othello's feeling, and she felt it, she was convinced, as strongly as Shakespeare meant Othello to feel it, all because she was coming down to dinner in a white frock to meet Sally Seton! (Woolf 1992: 44)

This appropriative gesture just cannot be seen as a negotiation process. It is also a refiguring of her own sexuality, a referential accommodation that seeks to apprehend Sally, not as a pre-determined Other but as a site that admits her potentially fluctuating apprehensions. The excitement manifested in Clarissa's discourse cannot, therefore, be categorized simply as an exemplar of 'mannish' behaviour, as suggested by Edward Carpenter. (See Carpenter 1902) Carpenter, whose writings were known to the members of the

Bloomsbury group, associated lesbians with 'mannish' women whose maternal instinct was not very well developed. However, this view ignores Clarissa's relationship with Elizabeth. On the other hand, Clarissa's reading of Shakespeare camouflages her appropriation the experience arising out of her interaction with Sally. In Woolf's narrativized presentation, not only does the character's perspective shift from Clarissa herself to her access of Sally's personality, but the temporal perspective too becomes implicated as the past experience is interpolated into the present of Clarissa's awareness. Besides functioning thus as a potential register, Sally is also engaged in the text in a participatory role where she emerges as one of the agencies responsible for Clarissa's stimulation. This foregrounding of her experience in terms of a 'feminine' matrix seeks to situate a finer-grained interaction between consciousness and the distinction of the same in the light of her other figurations. The mobility of Clarissa's mental projection, in this sense, is marked by the assumption that what is being differentiated against is not as mobile and fluid, but apprehensible. Again, such a collation – the experience, and its situation – by its very functionality, introduces a problematic of the relative motion of consciousness, wherein the perspective and the viewed subject become simultaneously implicated. The simulation of a fluid, moving world, according to Brian McHale, in major modernist fiction is strategically bound to 'openness.' He suggests that 'modernism's centripetal strategies of inwardness simultaneously function as centrifugal strategies of "openness" to the world outside and beyond consciousness.'<sup>20</sup> (McHale 1992: 44) Although there exists an interactive function between the 'inwardness' and the 'world outside' in Clarissa's approximation of the relationship with Sally, it just cannot be reduced to a simply manifested correspondence of a straightforward nature. When Clarissa tries to account for her excitement, the strenuousness of her reading process involves a transference mechanism that does not cancel out her 'present' awareness. The inadequacy of constitutive strategies within which Clarissa tries to re-situate her experience, becomes apparent when the narrative punctuates her intimacy through a bathetic formality attributed to a sincere Peter Walsh. Since the movement of consciousness cannot be isolated in the flux of textuality, Peter Walsh emerges

as the whipping boy, subjected to a wrathful response, which Clarissa (as a woman) is made to generate:

Peter Walsh and Joseph Brietkopf went on about Wagner. She and Sally fell a little behind. Then came the most exquisite moment of her whole life passing a stone urn with flowers in it. Sally stopped; picked a flower; kissed her on the lips. The whole world would have turned upside down! The others disappeared; there she was alone with Sally. And she felt she had been given a present, wrapped up, and told just to keep it, not to look at it – a diamond, something infinitely precious, wrapped up, which, as they walked (up and down, up and down), she uncovered, or the radiance burnt through, the revelation, the religious feeling! – when old Joseph and Peter faced them:

‘Star-gazing?’ asked Peter.

It was like running one’s face against a granite wall in the darkness! It was shocking; it was horrible! (Woolf 1992: 45-6, emphasis added)

This initial misreading of Clarissa and Sally’s activity by Peter Walsh is a disruption, where the very labelling process in which Peter becomes engaged exemplifies his backsliding into rhetoric. It is another matter that this rhetoric comes as an affront to Clarissa and her situatedness as a woman. The prospect of being read in such formalized terms comes as a shock to Clarissa, for the poetry of her experience is rendered redundant and prosaic by Peter’s explication/annotation. In other words, Peter’s phrasing is a transgression, which by its inadequacy of communicative logic fails to apprehend her situation. This intervention of Peter can also be seen as a kind of programme, aimed at structuring Sally and Clarissa’s walk in terms of pre-recorded codes that inhabit formalized discourse. Since Peter is excluded from Clarissa’s fascination, the sense of first-hand apprehension (‘something infinitely precious,’ ‘the religious feeling’) is denied to him. In the light of her epiphany, Peter’s words become a pseudo-dialogue, artificial and lifeless. Once the disruption takes place, Clarissa’s experience becomes in a conversational paradigm

that accommodates Peter Walsh and Joseph Brietkopf. The shift in the adopted strategy by Clarissa and Sally works in a deferral that revises and trivializes Peter's phrasing ('Star-gazing?') in a literal re-articulation: '[Sally] laughed. She made old Joseph tell her the names of the stars, which she liked doing very seriously. She stood there: she listened. She heard the names of the stars' (Woolf 1992: 46). What Sally is doing here is a re-presentation in the terms of Peter and Joseph. However, this is also a process of underwriting that implicitly weighs the women's perception of their own positions. This is in relation to the discursive practices/norms against which they assume Peter and Joseph to perceive their position to be. In this sense, the process of finding or identifying a position for oneself within a discourse is not fully achieved, but is subjected to revisions and re-presentations in contexts other than just that of 'women.' Sara Mills has suggested that mixed sex conversations may be viewed as sites of discursive practice where role-playing becomes significant. Mills writes:

There are institutionalised constraints here which serve to silence women in terms of public speaking. This is not to suggest that women are simply incompetent speakers, but that discursive speakers are sites where power struggles are played out. For example, it has often been noted that in mixed-sex conversations which take place in the public sphere, certain discursive rules prevail and they are generally those which are more in line with masculinist competitive norms of speech. (Mills 1997: 97-98)

In order to accept a transformed situational paradigm, Sally and Clarissa compensate their awareness by a projected framing that recognizes the shortcomings of articulation and its correspondence. By sliding their awareness into the rhetoric of acceptable discourse, the desire to foreground their relationship in exclusive terms becomes pronounced. This problematic occupies the space that absorbs the manifest discourse of Peter and Joseph, which (by its very narrativized nature) re-orient the feminine subjectivity. This feminine space that Sally and Clarissa occupy becomes punctuated by the norms prescribed by Peter and Joseph, and positions itself on the brink of

prescribed discourse, fading and sliding underneath. Again, it is important to note that a discourse of gender does not and cannot claim a 'proper' status, but must be actualised in a given context by its manner of incorporation. Thus, any assumption that men operate within one set of speech norms all the time, which is distinct from women, is bound to be reductionist. The deployment of certain strategies to deny access to Peter and Joseph become for the women a mode of differentiation, which is applicable only in that context.

The constant revision to which the complexities of relations between men and women are subject may not always be based on an oppositional matrix of oppression. Clarissa's sense of shock and horror gives way to the recognition of Peter's contribution, and this exemplifies how certain structures of heterosexual desire may be pleasurable. In other words, the narrative does not permit Clarissa to rigidly adopt a role that is mapped out for her positioning as a woman by a particular kind of discourse. This not only raises questions of her perception of 'self,' but also constraints the fixity that seeks to map her personality. The responsiveness to and acceptance of shifting sensitivities work to place Clarissa in her relations with the other characters. Patricia Waugh has pointed out that any rigid adherence to a matrix that makes distinctions on gender lines cannot fully account for a definitive feminine experience. In her essay "Stalemates?: Feminists, Postmodernists and Unfinished Issues in Modern Aesthetics" she writes:

The concept of a 'women's identity' functions in terms both of affirmation and negation, even within feminism itself. There can be no simple legitimation for feminists in throwing off a 'false consciousness' and revealing a true 'female self.' To embrace 'difference' in essentialist terms is to come dangerously close to reproducing that very patriarchal construction of gender which feminists have set out to contest. (Waugh 1992: 343)

Clarissa's admission of Peter's role is complementary to his current image ('Star-gazing?'), which is brought about by the response

of horror in him. Thus:

‘Oh this horror!’ she said to herself, as if she had known all along that something would interrupt, would embitter her moment of happiness. (Woolf 1992: 46)

It shows how her ‘moment of happiness’ is decentred by an insensitive intrusion, one that is immediately followed by this comprehension:

Yet how much she owed Peter Walsh later. Always when she thought of him she thought of their quarrels for some reason — because she wanted his good opinion so much, perhaps. (Woolf 1992: 46)

The interweaving of reminiscences where stretches of continuous narration mingle to situate Clarissa works to document her experience in a process of interrogation. The assimilation of different temporal scales subsumes her exploration to manifest the problematic of identity. More than only being shaped by particularized circumstances that provided centrality to her epiphany with Sally, Clarissa’s awareness of womanhood is related to her associations with men. A change, or shift in perspective, however, is not an escape-way. Thus, the re-absorption of her own position in the context of her changing vision is not a simple determinant of identity. The experience of uniqueness and difference is remembered not only in terms of the possibility of change but also in relation to the pain of loss, for some coexistence of familiarity and difference is inherent in Clarissa’s process of visualization. The interrogation of her priorities and the reassessment of her self, which the narrative immediately accommodates (following her reminiscence involving Sally), works to overwhelm any static embeddedness that that representation may have indicated. Clarissa’s experience involving Sally is neither marginalized nor essentialized as the One, but is underwritten into her constituted subjectivity. That this position alone does not emerge as a consolidation is attested by this processing mechanism to which Clarissa subjects herself:

How many million times she had seen her face, and always with the same imperceptible contraction! She pursed her lips when she

looked in the glass. It was to give her face point. That was her self – pointed; dart-like; definite. That was her self when some effort, some call on her to be her self, drew her parts together, she alone knew how different, how incompatible and composed so for the world only into one centre, one diamond, one woman who sat in her drawing-room and made a meeting-point, a radiancy no doubt in some dull lives, a refuge for the lonely to come to, perhaps. (Woolf 1992: 47-48)

By being alive to the functionality of her ‘identity’, Clarissa is admitting the rhetoric of societal performance, and this implicates her operative effect as a woman. It has been suggested that a recurring identification of the female with certain associated features is actually a ‘revalorisation of traditional “feminine” stereotypes.’ (Stanton 1980: 86) Is Clarissa the traditional feminine stereotype? If viewed from the perspective that envisions her as an instrument of male socialization, then Clarissa can be shown to succumb to such a project, but it is quite evident that an either/or dialectic won’t do. Any pre-constituted circumscription would only organize and render whole a fluid shifting process. On the other hand, Clarissa’s figuration as a woman is further contextualized by her interactions with Miss Kilman and her daughter Elizabeth. In her recollection involving Peter Walsh there is an absenting process to which she subjects herself, but such an orientation is neither available nor desirable when Clarissa confronts the experiential world presented by Miss Kilman. By envisioning Miss Kilman in a conspiratorial mode, Clarissa prefigures an actuality for herself, which by its very formative and functional nature is designed to oppress her. Clarissa’s experience has been defined as a ‘lesbian erotic, as Clarissa’s initial experience seem[s] anchored in her love for Sally, and such reflections on love are so repeatedly cast in terms of loving women.’ (Burns 1988: 17)

Yet, when it comes to Miss Kilman, proximity is refigured in associative patterns where a socially coded and structured response governs her behaviour:

Year in year out she wore that coat; she perspired; she was never in the room five minutes without making you feel her superi-

ority, your inferiority; how poor she was; how rich you were; how she lived in a slum without a cushion or a bed or rug or whatever it might be, all her soul rusted with that grievance sticking in it, her dismissal from school during the War – poor, embittered, unfortunate creature! For it was not her one hated but the idea of her, which undoubtedly had gathered into itself a great deal that was not Miss Kilman! (Woolf 1992: 14)

Clarissa's response to and relationship with these two women defies the imposition of any stereotypical label. The placement mechanism that she activates in order to negotiate her position (*vis-à-vis* Miss Kilman's supposed projection) situates her in a set up that includes Lady Bexborough in a distinguished social echelon. Interestingly, such a condition functions to combine Clarissa's awareness of social role-playing with her sense of insecurity which Miss Kilman generates. Far from being the subject of a tailored lesbian erotic, Clarissa's manifest dislike marks her in an opposite extreme. The very thought of Miss Kilman is enough to subsume her consciousness in a manner which would have been unthinkable in Sally's case. This variability that the text facilitates in the characterization of Clarissa is a demonstration of the inadequacy of clichés, and a reading of her womanhood would have to include these fluctuations adequately. On the other hand, Clarissa's idea of femininity finds its own register in the narrative. It facilitates her experiences, the resonance of which penetrates her consciousness. Again, as Reginald Abbott has pointed out there is an element of consumerist orientation which differentiates Miss Kilman from Clarissa. In marking out Miss Kilman's personality in terms of her dress, life-pattern and attitude, Clarissa is subscribing to her own consumerist position which is at a remove from Miss Kilman's. Thus, what is a manifestation of an orientation appears to Clarissa to be a posture and an advertisement of rusticity. Abbott notes:

Miss Kilman's need to buy a petticoat at the Army and Navy Stores instantly sets her apart from the ladies of the era who always ordered their lingerie custom-made....Miss Kilman's petticoat is a mass-produced, unfashionable garment soon to be completely re-

placed in the commodity spectacle by new colours, fabrics (rayon, nylon), and actual garments (bra, elastic girdle) for women. Within the context of commodity culture, Miss Kilman's need for a petticoat is in direct opposition to the needs being met, encouraged, and created by modern consumerism. (Abbott 1998: 204)

Clarissa's subjection to the pluralistic positioning in the text is a significant pointer towards an appreciation of her narrativized status as a woman. Her experience with Sally, by its very nature, is not an example of conformity, and its disruption by Peter was looked upon with disdain. Yet Miss Kilman's position becomes the subject of derision for its departure as it implicates her and validates her social non-status. Both these attitudes – one regarding Sally and the other regarding Miss Kilman – situate Clarissa's femininity. As Cora Kaplan has pointed out '[I]terature has been a traditional space for the exploration of gender relations and sexual difference, and one in which women themselves have been formidably present.' (Kaplan 1997: 958) Here, in Mrs. Dalloway, the constitution of Clarissa's experiential world is not only a site where a patriarchal inscription is sought to be applied (Peter Walsh's intrusion cited above is one instance), but also a status where female sexuality is implicated by Clarissa's assertion of gender complementarity.

When Clarissa implicates Miss Kilman as not being the norm she is reading Miss Kilman's sexuality according to her notion of societal accommodation. In this context of gender differentiation and identity, Stephen Heath observes:

We exist as individuals in relation to and in language, the systems of meaning and representation in which, precisely, we find ourselves—try to imagine the question of who you are and any answer outside of language, outside of those systems. Sexual relations are relations through language, not to a given other sex; the body is not a direct immediacy, it is tressed, marked out, intrinsically involved with meanings. Of course, we can shake our heads, appeal to the fact that we know the direct experience of the body, two bodies in love, making

love. Yet “direct experience,” “the body” and so on are themselves specific constructions, specific notions; the appeal to which is never natural but always part of a particular system. (Heath 1982: 154)

If an alternative is not recognized as being a possibility – not in a patterned, privileged mechanism – but as capable of being equally valid, then how can Clarissa claim authority for that structure? Thus, which femininity or ‘women’s tradition’ is Clarissa subscribing to? What becomes apparent, in this sense, is that a categorization or subscription as the ‘female experience’ merely or the ‘women’s tradition’ won’t suffice to read Clarissa’s experiences. (See for instance, Smith 1988)

Clarissa’s world is further subjected to a re-visioning when the spectre of Septimus emerges during her party. In her Kristevan reading of Mrs. Dalloway, Minow-Pinkney has pointed out that there is no need for Clarissa to draw together the different parts of her being, for she is presented in that manner most of the time. (Minow-Pinkney 1987: 62) However, the mention of Septimus’ death works in the novel as an activating agent for Clarissa as it conditions her response in the light of that news. Much more than a critique of ‘accepted’ social etiquette, Clarissa’s situation becomes a self-examination, an attempt at explication seeking to interrogate her experiential world itself. The potential, which Clarissa’s awareness reveals and straddles, emerges for her as a previously unexplored territory. One where the male/female duality is transcended to parenthesise her thoughts in a very formalized set-up:

They went on living (she would have to go back; the rooms were still crowded; people kept on coming). They (all day she had been thinking of Bourton, of Peter, of Sally), they would grow old. A thing there was that mattered; a thing, wreathed about with chatter, defaced, obscured in her own life, let drop every day in corruption, lies, chatter. This he had preserved. Death was defiance. Death was an attempt to communicate, people feeling the impossibility of reaching the centre which, mystically, evaded them; closeness drew apart; rapture faded; one was alone. There was an embrace in death.

(Woolf 1992: 241-242)

Here the key issue is not sexuality. Clarissa's reading is neither gendered nor accentuated by a consciousness of sexual privilege. Her understanding is positioned in the narrative as an already-read, for she is reading both Septimus and his interpretation simultaneously. What becomes significant is that this works to inaugurate for her a problematic implicating her awareness itself. Interestingly, in the preface to the Modern Library edition of 1928, Woolf states that Septimus did not originally exist in the first version of the novel, and it was Clarissa who was supposed to have committed suicide:

...in the first version Septimus, who later is intended to be her double, had no existence; and that Mrs. Dalloway was originally to kill herself, or perhaps merely to die at the end of the party.<sup>31</sup> (Cited in Ferrer 1990: 9)

Although death permeates the last stages of the novel, there is no indication at all that Clarissa is contemplating it. Her reading directs her attention towards the complexities life has to offer, and the understandable anxiety that sites her polemic manifests the interrogation of her own position. At the same time, she is also conscious of her societal obligation. It inscribes her figuration and composition of her experience. The society of which she is an integral part does not facilitate any articulation, which may lexically render her understanding, and consequently she has to subscribe to the posited mechanism of social behaviour. The movement towards a predictable direction in the social sphere, more so in one as formally orchestrated as her party, makes her aware of the constrictions within which the manoeuvres must be made. And, unlike Septimus, she has access to a mechanism of self-introspection within which she can attempt to accommodate the disjointed impressions that confront her. (Apter 1984: 91)

The sense of release that accompanies her realization functions to situate her self in the context of the social performance that is expected of her. The distance that she manages to work out is a function of the view, born out of her experience resulting from the

news of Septimus' death. In the text this process is narrativized in the following manner:

She must go back to them. But what an extraordinary night! She felt somehow very like him—the young man who had killed himself. She felt glad that he had done it; thrown it away while they went on living. The clock was striking. The leaden circles dissolved in the air. But she must go back. She must assemble. She must find Sally and Peter. And she came in from the little room. (Woolf 1992: 244)

The apocalyptic scenario that presented itself to Septimus, here emerges in Clarissa's reading as a facilitating agency. By its very engagement it situates her private experience in a context of a socialized setting. In the paradigm determined in the narrative to represent Clarissa's consciousness, the room for the fluctuations pre-empt any reading aiming at a distinct and confined situatedness.' In this context it is significant that the aesthetic in which her femalehood is positioned enacts a complex fabric that withstands singular identity reading mechanisms.

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# Verbal Reports as Data in Learner Strategy Research

Susmita Pani

Learner strategies are techniques that learners use consciously to enable themselves understand and memorise new information. These are cognitive processes (Wenstein and Mayer) besides being complex mental procedures. According to Rubin, learner strategies “are strategies which contribute to the development of the language system which the learner constructs and affect learning directly” (22). To Oxford, “...language learning strategies (are)... specific actions, behaviours, steps, or techniques that students (often intentionally) use to improve their progress in developing L2 skills. These strategies can facilitate the internalization, storage, retrieval, or use of the new language. Strategies are tools for the self-directed involvement necessary for developing communicative ability.” (18) Learner strategies are important because research suggests that training students to use these strategies can help them become better language learners.

In order to train learners to use appropriate strategies, teachers need to know and be informed about the different strategies that competent language learners use. While some of the learning strategies like ‘asking questions’, ‘underlining a text’ etc. may be visible, most of the strategies learners use remain under the tip of the iceberg. This is because learner strategies are essentially mental operations. In order to access such mentalistic data, one needs a set of valid research tools that can make the invisible cognitive processes visible. Verbal reports which are generally used in studies in Cognitive Psychology to tap the mental processes, can be useful in the

learner strategy research studies. Besides, verbal reports have a further role in assisting in classroom teaching.

This paper will examine the background of verbal reports as data in research and the objections that have been raised towards the use such as data for research. It will further focus on its significance in research as well as in teaching.

### **History of verbal data**

Verbal reports as data are not of recent origin, having been a procedure in Social Science for more than half a century. Such data became suspect from the time the behaviourists started to have dominance over the introspectively oriented viewpoints. Behaviourists and schools with similar view points seemed to be what White calls “schizophrenic about the status of verbalisation as data.”(216). Even much earlier, psychologists have felt that while introspection as a tool might yield data for preliminary survey, it cannot possibly verify facts. Additionally, because introspective data was not considered as a primary data collecting device but was seen as a secondary tool, not enough information was available on the data collecting procedures, thus reducing its acceptability. This resulted in its being discredited as an unscientific process. Such criticisms had continued in the 70’s with Nisbett and Wilson’s widely discussed article on the review of literature on verbal data.

The current upsurge in the use of verbal data has come with the works which have put it in the information processing framework. In Problem Solving Theory, verbal report has an unquestionable role where the protocols have also been used to analyse a wide range of cognitive processes. In different branches of psychology, however, verbal protocols are still a point of debate.

In reading strategy research, verbal report through think aloud technique was developed as a tool in the studies of Olshavsky on first language reading and Hosenfield on foreign language reading. While in the learner strategy studies introspective procedures were

initially met with disfavour, these two studies changed the scenario considerably and several studies since then have used verbal protocol as data.

In fact, so frequently used did these means of data collection become that Rankin, finding no standard procedure for data collection, prepared clear cut instructional procedures for data collection and training in collecting verbal reports. How well verbal reports have cut ground can be seen from Faerch and Kasper's list of studies in second language using verbal reports as data through introspective research procedures.

### **Objections to verbal data**

There seem to be two basic objections to verbal data and both are closely related. The first one is what the behaviorists called the "epiphenomenality" (Ericsson and Simon 110) which means that the processes involved in verbal reporting and the processes that generate the task behaviour of the subject are totally independent of one another. Therefore it is not possible to use one to report on the other process.

The same objections to verbal reports as data in recent times have come from Nisbett and Wilson who view opinions similar to the behaviourists. Referring to the origin of verbal reports about cognitive processes, they sub-title their paper as the fount that never was. They summarise that people have "little ability to report accurately on their cognitive processes." (206). Related to this is the question that is often posed, which is, the unlikely possibility of accessing unconscious behaviour for verbal reporting. Nisbett and Wilson (233) have said:

People often cannot report accurately on the effects of particular stimuli on higher order, inference based responses. Indeed, sometimes they cannot report on the existence of critical stimuli, sometimes cannot report on the existence of their responses, and sometimes cannot even report that an inference process of any kind has occurred.

In response, Ericsson and Simon have invalidated the truth of this idea by saying that while Nisbett and Wilson cite a large number of cases to support their observation; they do not go to the details of the conditions. Neither do they propose a definite model of the cognitive process for the interpretation of the findings. Their findings are therefore quite informal. After all, the accuracy of the verbal report depends on the procedures employed to elicit them. Invalid reports may be due to lack of access to thoughts, inadequate procedures, or asking for information that could not be accessed. So rejecting a procedure without ascertaining the conditions under which data was collected shows a biased stance. In fact, they state that thinking aloud is not a new experience in everyday life. We often work out problems aloud when we encounter a block. Thus, reporting on ones thought processes is not an unusual procedure.

The second objection to verbal reports is that the accuracy of verbal reports is reduced because there is a time gap between the actual process and its reporting. Nisbett and Wilson describe research to support this claim saying that in studies using verbal data, subjects were asked about their cognitive process immediately after its occurrence. However, the subjects were unable to do so. They add that it is possible for ‘vagaries of memory’ (252) to allow factors to be invented but the reported explanation is not real.

Nisbett and Wilson’s paper is based on the assumption that the processes that generate the products of the mental processes are beyond the reach of introspection which again is similar to the behaviorist’s view. White’s main idea in his article is to reanalyse the work of Nisbett and Wilson and produce a re-description of the position that is being tested by them. He provides experimental data to furnish evidence that “accuracy can be improved for memory by the events of the process under question”(105). While accepting the truth of the observation that the accuracy of the report will be reduced if there is a time gap between the event and the reporting, he reanalyses the tasks used by the subjects in Nisbett and Bellows’ experiment and reiterates that if one considers the series of tasks these subjects had to go through in those experiments before they

were asked to report on them, it is no wonder that their report is no better than that of an observer. On the other hand, other studies have shown subjects' ability to verbalise as seen in the studies cited in Ericsson and Simon where none of the subjects experienced any task interference because of verbalisation.

Ericsson and Simon's model of concurrent verbalisation indicates that when the subjects verbalise information directly available to them, thinking aloud will not change the course and structure of the cognitive processes. This is what they call level -I verbalisation. Nor will the verbalisation slow down the processes reported on. When the information required is not verbal, the task performance may slow down and verbalisation may be incomplete and the data sketchy, but task performance process will remain largely unchanged. They call this the level II verbalisation. When subjects are not merely asked to think aloud but also to asked to give specific kinds of information, say, asking them to give reason for an action, this extra effort to heed the instruction would have substantial effect on the task performance. This they call the type III verbalisation. They make similar reports in regard to retrospective verbalisation. The conclusion of these studies is that the internal structure of the thought process is not changed as a result of type-I and type -II verbalisation though type III verbalisation can change it.

The information processing model differentiates between the Short Term Memory (STM) which has limited capacity and the Long Term Memory (LTM) which has vast, unlimited storage capacity. While information in STM can easily be accessed, that in the LTM cannot be accessed unless it is first brought to attention. Ericsson and Simon have compiled adequate evidence for a simple hypothesis that is at the core of the information processing model. This hypothesis states that "the information that is heeded during performance of a task, is the information that is reportable; and the information that is reported is the information that is heeded"(167). They believe that the result of the process of recognition can be reported but not the intermediate stages in the process. However, this inability to recognise the cues should not be confused with failure in re-

porting. Gaps in reporting can be due to memory failures and confusion. This does not justify the assertion that verbal reports are incomplete data. In fact, because verbal reports can be taken as data, researchers are justified in drawing inferences based on them, more so when taken along with the performance of a task.

What about the incomplete reports then? Ericsson and Simon in their article “Verbal reports as data” identify three reasons why information could be incomplete:

1. If the information was not heeded hence was not available in the STM,
2. Not all information available to the STM is reported,
3. Not all information previously available to the STM has been retained in LTM or is retrievable from the LTM.

Failure to report the contents of the STM also happens when the subjects are under heavy cognitive load such as while doing a difficult task. Other forms of incompleteness take place when the information is to be retrieved from the LTM. We know that memory retrieval is fallible and sometimes may lead to information which though related is inappropriate. Incomplete retrospective report may be produced when the questions asked are too general to elicit the information. Under such circumstances, subject may use inferential processes to fill out and generalise incomplete or missing memories.

Yet another objection to verbal reports is the question of the relevance of some of this research for language learning, coming as it does from a particular area of Cognitive Psychology. But surely we need to add to our research resources and at the same time acknowledge the contribution to research methodology made by Cognitive Psychology, a contribution which has provided a significance resource for language researchers and language teachers.

While one can counteract the objections to verbal reports as data for research, we also see that there is some truth in these objections. But the question here is, should we reject a valuable data

collecting tool because of its limitations? Smagorinsky, admitting that protocol research has its “own share of growing pains” (475) says that: “to discount protocol analysis as a method is to ignore its many contributions it has already made to our understanding of written communication, and to dismiss the knowledge it is bound to uncover about composing in the future” (476).

The major limitation of verbal data is its incompleteness. Informants cannot verbalise everything and hence need to select information, as a complete verbalisation would over charge informants’ processing capacity. As said earlier, incompleteness of report is also influenced by the difficulty level of the task; ‘easy’ items and items that come late tend to generate shorter protocols than ‘difficult’ ones and the ones that come early. But as Ericsson and Simon say, incompleteness of report may make information unavailable, but it does not invalidate the information that is present.

### **Verbal reports as data for research**

Several studies have used verbal reports as data in both first and second language research. Cavacanti, favouring the use of verbal reports as data collecting tools sums the changed attitude to verbal reports when she says “I view these techniques as promising as they are likely to encourage questions about aspects of ‘cognitive processes in operation’ which are usually ignored when other techniques are used” (233).

More recently, language testing research has also been making use of verbal reports as data . Most of these studies have reported success with verbal reports as data. The brief discussion of one of the selected studies in reading in a second language presented below supports the inroads verbal reports have made as a data collection tool in research.

Block’s study entitled “The comprehension strategies of second language readers” is being reported here as it is probably the first study to collect verbal data to identify the reading process of ESL

readers. Such studies were already popular for studying the composing process of learners but hers was a pioneering study in reading. The purpose of Block's study was to provide a description of the comprehension strategies of less proficient ESL readers. Block used think loud protocols to examine the reading strategies of college students- both native speakers of English and non-native speakers who were enrolled into a remedial class. After being oriented to the process of thinking aloud, the informants read through material from a college text book while verbalising their mental process simultaneously. The think aloud protocols were matched with the product of their reading i.e. the amount of information understood and remembered. The reading strategies arrived at were also compared with those of native speakers with low proficiency in reading. After the think aloud session, the subjects had to recall all that they could of the text and then answer 20 multiple choice questions. The result of each was compared with the strategy use from the protocol to check the amount of information remembered and the amount of information understood. The protocols were transcribed and coded and finally all data was analysed. Block found that all the subjects were successful in thinking aloud while reading. The difference in language background of the informants did not seem to account for different patterns in strategy use nor did the ESL readers' use of strategies differ from that of the native speakers. She concluded that strategy use is a stable phenomenon which is not tied to a particular language.

The interesting finding of this study was that think aloud procedures, though used as a research tool, seemed to have functioned accidentally as a learning device. It appeared that that task of thinking aloud focused the reader's attention on what they needed to know and what was it that they had understood. One participant had this to say:

I get to practice with my reading skills. I get to learn and understand what I am reading. ..I think I am doing a little better when I am reading...I learned how to relate one sentence to another , how to take conclusions and how to use my own experiences related to

the article or book that I'm reading...I know these will help me in future. (487)

This study shows how certain research practices have a spin off effect of extending beyond the research process. The next section will focus on this aspect of verbal reports.

### **Verbal reporting as a teaching technique**

While verbal reports have primarily been used to collect research data, informant learners have successfully used it as a learning device. A large number of strategy training models have suggested using think aloud as a teaching procedure which is more often in use in the L1 context. However, there is much less work in this area in the EFL and ESL contexts. Hosenfield's study is path breaking in this area.

Her case study is of a single FL student 'Cindy' who was asked to think aloud as she read a passage. This study involved a diagnostic session and a remedial session. The verbal transcripts were prepared from the verbal reports (one before instruction and one after) and analysed qualitatively along with the two essays describing her before and after the instruction. The purpose of this exercise was to identify her use of reading strategies before and after the remedial session. The study demonstrated that it is possible to identify the reading strategies of informants through verbal reports. More importantly, the study also showed that it is possible to teach an inefficient reader efficient reading strategies. Before the instruction, Cindy guessed the meanings of the words without looking at the context, translated word by word and forgot the meanings of the sentences as soon as she decoded them. After instruction, she was able to guess from context, remembered the meanings of the sentences, read in broad phrases and used other sources of information for decoding such as illustration, side gloss, grammar and her knowledge of the world. What was remarkable was that she used the glossary only as a last resort.

This study as well as the case study of Ricky used verbal reports not only as a research tool but also as a diagnostic measure to identify the strategy use of a learner in order to assist him in improving his strategies. Hosenfield suggests using think aloud as a teaching technique in reading and composition class where volunteers can be asked to think aloud as they do a task and classmates can observe and record their strategies. She emphasises the need for using think aloud as a classroom technique though her main focus is diagnostic. It is unusual that this suggestion, based on empirical data, does not seem to have been used as teaching device in many published studies of second language reading. However, think aloud procedures as a teaching device seems to be popular in the L1 classroom.

One article which does not present a data based research but is worth mentioning here is that of Duffy, Roehler and Herrmann. This article describes the usefulness of modelling the mental processes as a classroom technique, especially for the poor readers. It presents a clear cut account of mental modelling with a rationale for it and recommends the use of verbal reports in teaching. To model a mental activity like reading, the expert reader's reasoning must be made transparent to the novice. This is what the writers call mental modelling which is based on research on mental rehearsals.

Mental modelling involves two processes. The first is to transfer the metacognitive control, with which one directs the reasoning process, to the students. The second process is to model the mental processes and not the steps.

This idea of transferring metacognitive control is especially important to make students strategic readers because it gives the students an ability to see the reasoning process involved in reading. The authors give the example of a routine procedure in the reading class, i.e. asking inferential questions. Teachers in a reading class routinely ask inferential questions and check if the learners' answers are correct. But if they do not explain the mental processes involved in answering this, the students do not get the necessary metacognitive control. Therefore, they are not able to infer on their own when

reading independently. As a result, it is the teachers who are in control of the reasoning involved in reading, be it activating the right background knowledge or monitoring meaning during reading. The students must infer the teacher's reasoning in choosing certain items. Poor learners are not able to make this inference, hence remain confused readers.

In contrast, mental modelling makes the expert reader's comprehension explicit before the students. The teacher by giving the students opportunities to look into her own invisible mental process lets them see her reasoning as she works through a text and thus gives them metacognitive control. This, say the writers, is in sharp contrast to modelling the procedures which give students directions in doing things but not how and when to do it.

The writers suggest that mental modelling must be infused with giving students opportunities for expression. Even if the students are able to see the mental modelling of the teacher, it is not necessary that their restructured understanding is just what the teacher intended it to be. Therefore students should be encouraged to discuss and ask questions during and after the modelling. Pani (2004) reports success with use of this procedure in a teacher education set up in India.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, we can reiterate the assumption here that verbal reports as data are valid research tools as they rest on Ericsson and Simon's model of Protocol Analysis. This re-enforces the assumption that information recently attended to by the central processor is kept in STM and is directly accessible for producing the reports. Ericsson and Simon established that verbalisation does not affect task procedures as long as both are verbally coded. Think alouds differ from other forms of report because readers report their thought without theorising about them. Thus, they give the listener an insight into the mental activity of the reader, a sort of a window into those processes which are usually hidden. It is observed that several re-

searchers have recommended the use of think aloud as research tools and have used those successfully.

The brief review of verbal reports as data, intends to establish the ground for using it as a data collection procedure and as use the protocols as data. There are however, several constraints in collecting such data such as limited of availability of time and the level of training needed to make informants verbalise. Such constraints are common also to many other research procedures. But when we reflect on the result verbalising procedure is likely to yield, it is worth using it as a data collecting technique. Considering the fact that it gives us an access to processes that would otherwise remain invisible in itself, is a very strong point in favour of using verbal reports as a research tool. While it is true that there is a possibility that verbal data may not be complete because of cognitive load or any other factor, it does not invalidate the data generated through verbalising. Even when the data is incomplete, inference can be made based on such data, keeping the expected outcome of the task in mind. We have repeatedly observed samples of studies that have been successful in using verbal reports as research data.

Studies reported above also provide a legitimate ground for trying out verbal reports as teaching devices. Considering the seeming benefits of this procedure, it is valuable as a part of the language classrooms. What is needed is to make it a part of the teacher training components in the training courses. However, it has been observed in practice that considerable difficulties are faced by researchers in making informants verbalise to the desired level of accuracy. Extensive teacher training in this field with training on procedures is the need for using this procedure effectively. The teachers need to be trained in the process first to enable them to impart such training on to their learners. The ultimate benefit in exploring and identifying the un-chartered area of cognition would be exciting for any practicing classroom teacher. Both for research as well as for teaching, verbal reports have the potential to generate data that is rich and worth exploring.

## Notes

1 Not all accept that learner strategies are cognitive processes but see Weinstein, C. and M. Mayer. 1984. The teaching of learning strategies. In Wittrock, M. and C. Merlin, eds. (3rd ed.). Handbook of Research on Teaching. New York: Macmillan, 1984.

2 In problem solving theory, think aloud (TA) protocol is referred to as verbal protocol. In the present study, think aloud, retrospection and mental modelling are clubbed under the term verbal reports and the data thus collected called verbal protocols because of the fuzzy borderline between introspection (TA) and retrospection. See Cavalcanti, M. "Investigating foreign language reading performance through pause protocols." Introspection in Second Language Research. Eds. Faerch and Kasper. Bristol : Multilingual Matters, 1987. 230-250.

3 For further details of these objections see Nisbet, R. and T. Wilson. "Telling more than we know: verbal reports on mental processes." Psychological Review 84 (1987): 231- 259.

4 Verbal data is referred to as 'think aloud' in problem solving theory where it was first introduced and the subjects had to verbalise their thoughts while solving a problem. See Ericsson, K.. "Concurrent verbal reports on text comprehension: a review." Text (1988) 8.4 (1988): 295- 325.

5 For a review of how protocols have been used to study the cognitive process, see Ericsson, K and H, Simon. Protocol Analysis: Verbal Reports as Data. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1984/1993.

6 See Olshavsky, J. "Reading as problem solving: an investigation of strategies." Reading Research Quarterly 12.4(1976-77): 654- 674.

7 See the pioneering study Hosenfield, C. "A preliminary investigation of the reading strategies of successful and unsuccessful language learners." System 5 (1977): 110-123.

8 For the detailed procedure, see Rankin, J. "Designing think aloud studies in ESL reading." Reading in a Foreign Language 5.2 (1988): 128-134.

9 See Faerch and Kasper, eds. Introspection in Second Language Research. Bristol : Multilingual Matters, 1987. This is entirely devoted to research on introspection.

10 For details of the objections, see Nisbet, R. and T. Wilson. "Telling more than we know: verbal reports on mental processes." Psychological Review 84 (1977): 231- 259.

11 See Ericsson, K. and H, Simon. "Verbal reports as data." Psychological Review 87 (1980): 215- 251.

12 For instance, Nisbett, R. E. and N. Bellows. "Verbal reports about

casual influences on social judgments: Private access versus private theories." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 35 (1977): 631-624.

13 For a response to Nisbet, R. and T. Wilson. "Telling more than we know: verbal reports on mental processes."

*Psychological Review* 84 (1977): 231- 259., see White , P. A. "Limitations on verbal reports of internal events: A refutation of Nisbett and Wilson and of Bem." *Psychological Review* 87 (1980): 105-112.

14 Several successful studies have been cited in favour of verbal reports in Ericsson, K and H, Simon. *Protocol Analysis: Verbal Reports as Data*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press. 1984/1993.

15 For details on models of verbalisation, see Ericsson, K. A. and H. A. Simon. "Verbal reports as data." *Psychological Review* 87 (1980): 215- 251.

16 For details of the reasons for the incompleteness of verbal data refer to Ericsson, K. and H, Simon. "Verbal reports as data." *Psychological Review* 87 (1980): 215- 251.

17 One of the sources that raise objections to verbal data on this ground is Nunan, D. *Research Methods in Language Learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

18 This is discussed well in Haastrup, K. "Using thinking aloud and retrospection to uncover learner's lexical inferencing procedures." In Faerch, C. and G. Kasper (eds). 197-211.

19 The following are some of the major studies quoted in second language research on studies on learner strategies:

Alderson, J. C. "Testing reading comprehension skills (Part One)." *Reading in a Foreign Language* 6.2 (1990 a): 425-438.

Alderson, J. C. "Testing reading comprehension: getting students to talk about taking a reading test." *Reading in a Foreign Language* 7.1 (1990 b): 465-502.

Cohen, A. and E. "Aphek. Easifying second language learning." *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 3.2 (1981): 221-236.

Hosenfield, C. "A preliminary investigation of the reading strategies of successful and unsuccessful language learners." *System* 5 (1977): 110-123.

Hosenfield, C. "A learning teaching view of second language instruction." *Foreign Language Annals* 12 (1979): 51-54.

O'Malley, J., A. Chamot, and L. Kupper. "Listening comprehension strategies in second language acquisition." *Applied Linguistics* 10.4 (1989): 418-437.

Vann, R. and R. Abraham. "Strategies of unsuccessful language learners." *TESOL Quarterly* 24 (1990): 177-198.

20 See Sasaki, M. "Effects of cultural schemata on students' test-taking processes for cloze tests: a multiple data source approach." *Language Test-*

ing 17 ((2000): 85-114. Yamashita, J. "Processes of taking a gap-filling test: comparison of skilled and less skilled EFL readers." *Language Testing*, 20.3 ((2003): 267-293. and Rubb, A., Ferne, T., & Choi, H. "How assessing reading comprehension with multiple-choice questions shapes the construct: a cognitive processing perspective." *Language Testing*, 23.4 ((2006): 414-474. among others for their success with verbal reports as data in studies in test taking strategies.

21 This is discussed in Hosenfield, C. Case studies of ninth grade readers. In Alderson, C. and A. Urquhart, eds. *Reading in a Foreign Language*. London: Longman, 1984.

22 See Hosenfield, C. Case studies of ninth grade readers. In Alderson, C. and A. Urquhart, eds. *Reading in a Foreign Language*. London: Longman, 1984.

23 For a comprehensive account of how mental modeling could be used in the classroom see Duffy, G., L. Roehler and B. Herrmann. *Modelling mental processes helps poor readers become strategic readers. The Reading Teacher* 41.8 (1988): 762-767.

24 These ideas are based on mental rehearsal (Bandura 1986) and think alouds (Whimey 1985), both cited in Duffy G., L. Roehler and B. Herrmann. 1988.

25 Pani, S. "Mental modeling in a teacher education course." *ELTJ* 58.4 (2004) : 355- 362 has shown how mental modeling can be used effectively in teacher education contexts in India.

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