Assignment meg 5

Dhvani This word means " sound" literally, but does not deal with the fhction of sound in the musical sense. The theory was first propounded by Anandavardhana, the ninth century thinker, in his treatise, Dhavanyaloka (Dhvani+aloka). The Dhvani theory considers the indirectly evoked meaning or suggestivity as the characteristic f a e of literary utterance. This feature separates and determines the literary from other kinds of discourse, and is an all-embracing principle which explains the structure and function of the other significant aspects of literary utterance: the aesthetic &e, d or rasa, the figural mode and devices (alamkara), and so on.

In Kapoor's words, " all the subsequent literary theorists in the tradition found the combination of rasa and dhvani theories both adequate and sufficient to analyse the constitution of meaning in Indian literature. " In his treatise I have mentioned before, Anandavardhana has given a detailed description of structural analysis of indirect meanings. According to him, if we can explain how indirect meanings arise systematically, we can claim that all potential meanings inhere in a text. Anandavardhana uses the term dhvani to designate the universe of suggestion. The soul of kmya is dhyani, he says). His preference for the term sprang from the fact that grammarians before him had used the term to denote several concepts. First, to denote the sound structure of sabda or words; second, to denote the semantic aspect of sabda; and third, the complex of the now revealed suggested meaning and the process of suggestion involved. Thus drvuni theory is a theory of meaning (an Indian hermeneutics or sorts), ofsymbolism. The thrust of this theory is towards claiming a greater value for thepoetryof suggestion.

Anandavardhana integrates the theory of the rasa with his dhvani theory; that is, he says that dhvani is the method through which the effect of rasa is achieved. Rasa is the effect of suggestion. Mimesis For Plato (429-397 B. C.), 'poiesis' or what we call literary theory or even criticism was an imitation or, 'mimesis'. ('Poiesis' (GK) translates into poetry, in English, but the focus of these two term is very different, for the Greeks lyric poetry had a very small part to play as compared to the epic or drama. Plato and Aristotle moreover theorised not about lyric oetry, but about tragedy and comedy, about drama, so Richard Harland suggests the more appropriate use of the terms literary theory/criticism for the Greek 'poiesis'). Plato called 'poiesis' an imitation or 'mimesis' because he believed drama to be a reproduction of something that is not really present, and is therefore a 'dramatisation of the reproduction' (Richard Harland, p. 6).

What he means is that in a play or an epic, what happens is this - the poet recreates an experience, the audience watch that re-created experience, they are in fact encouraged to live through that experience . s if they are physically within the time and space of that experience. Not only this, Plato, also goes on distinguish between 'mimesis' and 'digenesis'. " Mimesis' is the speech of a character directly reproduced,' whereas 'digenesis' is 'a narration of doings and sayings where 'the poet speaks in his own person and does not try to turn our attention in another direction by pretending that soineone else is speaking . ' [Plato, quoted in Harland, p. 7). With this distinction between 'mimesis' and 'digenesis', it is easy for us to discern that drama is entirely 'mimet~c' , whereas epic is mi metic only where dialogue is reproduced rii t e%:! t. where the poet t r l l s (lie ~ [O I, il I , d i 'r IV. / $C' . I

!] . iiurt, this is what larv called ' s h c ~111 ~:' , 1 1 1 t i 'tcllii~g'r e:, pet> l~l; . l1l*zi~h owever disapprt . imitation, and i)1 tit~ln, ltiscdd ~alogue. 'Mimesis', in Greek thought primarily meant 'making' of one sort or another. This is well recorded in Plato. Plato gave a new metaphysical and epistemological perspective to mimesis, enlargening its meaning from 'making' by human hands to 'making' by universal force.

Yet, mimesis, not only in Plato's definition but in the use of the concept in the whole of western tradition, always retained the sense of not only 'making,' but of 'making' a copy of some original which was never totally independent of the model. (Gupt 93). In Platonic theory, all art (techne) has been taken to mean some kind of manipulation close to craft. In the Sophist, Plato has divided techne into acquisitive, productive and creative categories of which the last brings into existence things not existing before.

However, the highest art, in the scheme of Plato is notmusicor poetry, but statecraft, which is compared to the making of a tragedy in the Laws (817B) and to sculpture in the Republic (420C). All production, in a general way, is 'mimesis'. In the Greek usage, there was not only the term 'mimesis' but others such as mithexis (participation), homoiosis, (likeness) and paraplesia (likeness) and which were close to the meaning, of mimesis. These terms were also used to show the relationship 'between an im age (eidolon) and its archetype.

Moreover, not only are objects imitated by pictures of them, but the essences of things are imitated also by names that we give to those things. For example, the essence or the dogness of a dog is imitated by the name 'dog' given to that creature (Cratylus 423-24). Similarly, reality is imitated or

mimetised by thought, eternity by time (Timaeus 38b). The musician imitates divine harmony, the good man imitates the virtues, the wise legislator imitates the Form of God in constructing his state, god (demiourgos) imitates the Forms in the making of Ws world. With Aristotle the concept of mimesis undergoes a major transformation.

It retains the condition of being a copy of a model, but the Platonic denigration is reversed. This reversal is based on a metaphysical revision. The permanent reality is not transcedental in Aristotle's opinion. When an artist makes an object, he incorporates certain universal elements in it but he does fall short of any absolute model of dniversality. Because of the universality contained in art, in Aristotle's view, art, as all other imitation leads to knowledge. The pleasure that mimesis provides is on account of knowledge that is acquired through mimesis, even though this knowledge is of particulars: And since learning and admiring are pleasant, all things connected with them must also. be pleasant; for instance, a work of imitation, such as painting, sculpture, Toetry, and all that is well imitated, even if the object of imitation is not pleasant; for it is not this that causes pleasure or the reverse, but the inference that the imitation and the object imitated are identical, so that the result is that we learn something. " (Rhetoric I, xi, 1371 b; trans. Freese qtd. by Beardsley 57) Besides possessing didactic capacity mimesis is defined as a pleasurable likeness.

Aristotle defines the pleasure giving quality of mimesis in the Poetics, as follows: " First, the instinct of imitation is implanted in man fromchildhood, one difference between him and other animals being that he is the most imitative of living creatures, and through imitation learns his earliest lessons;

and no less universal is the pleasure felt in things imitated. Thus the reason why men enjoy seeing a likeness is, that in contemplating it they find themselves learning or inferring, and saying perhaps, 'Ah, that is he. ' Imitation, then, is one instinct of our nature. (Poetics IV. 1-6) As a corollary it follows that the artist is no liar, but on the contrary, leads us to Truth. However, Aristotle seems to have limited his vision when it comes to enumerating the objects of imitation. In Plato, all creation was an imitation of Forms, which were transcendental. For Aristotle, though the Form (eidos) of every object existed, it was not a transcendental reality but something within Nature which Nature itself tends to attain. Further, it is said that for Aristotle, Art helps Nature in this endeavour of attaining the perfection of Form.

This interpretation of Aristotle's metaphysics has been based upon his two oft-quoted sayings, " Art imitates Nature" (Physics iii. 2 I94a 21.) and " the artist may imitate things as they ought to be" (Poetics XXXV: I). Amplifying from this Butcher has concluded: " If wekxpand Aristotle's idea in the light of his own system, fine art eliminates what is transient and particular and reveals the permanent and essential features of the original. It discovers 'form' (eidos) towards which an object tends, the result which nature strives to attain. (150) There is little in the writings of Aristotle that can explicitly sustain such a conclusion. This discovery of the form (eidos) in objects tends to make Aristotle into a shadow of Plato. Aristotle admits that there is something permanent and enduring in art, but that something could be called eidos, is beyond substantiation from Aristotle's writings. Similarly, the dictum, art imitates nature, has given rise to many interpretations over the

centuries. " It has been argued that the irrner principle of Nature is what art imitates.

But if we follow out his thought, his (Aristotle's) reply would appear to be something of this kind. Nature is a living and creative energy, which by a sort of instinctive reason works in every individual object towards a specific end " (Butcher 155). The teleological and structural pattern of tragedy seems to have been transferred on to Nature by Butcher. This was a typical nineteenth century view of Aristotelianphilosophy. Since the Renaissance, different definitions of Nature have been foisted upon Aristotle's dictum, art imitates Nature.

For the purpose of drama, the most disastrous one was that of realism, which having captured fiction by techniques of portraiture, landscape, and caricature, transferred these on to drama. Aristotle was clear that a e purpose of imitation in drama, was to provide proper pleasure by imitating action. Mimesis of men in action was mimesis of all human life. Through music, the artist imitates, anger and mildness as well as courage or temperance (Politics v. viii. 5. 134~1 8) and ethical qualities and emotions. Similarly, he says, " Dance,'imitates character, emotions and action" (Poetics 1. 5).

We should be content to note that in drama he applied the general theory ef mimesis, which he thought, was both for the s&e of pleasure and knowledge. But even the Aristotelian affirmation of pleasure in art was not sufficient to free art from being constantly compared with its original, that is the worldly objects. This originally Platonic habit, has been strong throughout western criticism which repeatedly gauges art in terms of how truthfully or

realistically it represents the world, how much of an understanding of the world can it bring to us, one way or another.

THE MEDIA OF MIMESIS

Rhythm, Language, and Haniony After stating that epic poetry, tragedy, comedy, dithyrambic poetry, flute or lyre playing are all 'modes of mimesis,' Aristotle states that mimesis in different arl forms is achieved differently, and that the object and manner of mimesis is different in each case (Poetics 1; 2-4). He states that the three media for all arts are as follows: For there are persons who, by conscious act or mere habit, imitate and represent various objects through the medium of colour and fonn, or again , by voice; so in the arts above mentioned, taken as a whole, the imitation is produced by rhythm, language and harmony, either singly or combined. Poetics 1: 4) Leaving aside painting and sculpture which use colour and other forms (materials), the arts of performance like music, dance and drama, use rhythm, language and harmony.

Flute and lyre use rhythm and notes only, and dancing uses only rhythm. But for Aristotle, rhythm is not a mere beat or a division of time, but movement with regularity, be it theemere movement of the body or that of notes. That is why, dancing, he says, imitates characteG emotion and action by rhythmical movement (15). -Poetry or verse whether creative or informative imitates through language alone, but dithyrambic and elegiac poetry, tragedy and comedy use all three means. In dithyrambic and elegiac poetry all three means are used together, but in tragedy and comedy now one means is employed, now Aristotle's Theory of Imitation Classical Cdtkisrn another (15). What is true of tragedy and comedy can be taken as true of all

drama, satyr plays included. Aristotle's brevity of plan has prevented him from saying anything further about the manner in which rhythm, language and harmony are employed in drama.

About the details of language (lexis) one can gather quite a few things from Aristotle's comments on language which he categorised as one of the six elements of tragedy. But the nature of harmony (which he called melopoiia and enumerated as another element of tragedy) is hardly touched upon by him. So is rhythm never mentioned again in the Poetics. No wonder, then, that one has to look elsewhere to gather information about the use of music in the Greek theatre. Aristotle perhaps took musical employment in drama for granted and, therefore, refrained from stating anything further about it.

But the result of what may have been for him a redundancy, was disastrous for the post-Renaissance readers of the Poetics. The practical art of theatre-music being extinct, the Europeans reconstructed a picture of Greek drama in which there was hardly any place for rhythm or music. Greek drama was envisaged as a primarily rhetorical affair (an impression reinforced by Roman tragedies) far removed from the balance of visual and aural channels of theatrical expression that ancient drama depends so much upon.

But if Aristotle left out the details of musical application he was at least explicit in stating it as a medium of mimesis. However, he not only neglected but left out from his description of tragedy the visual content of Greek performances constituted by the physical movements and complex gestures of the actors and the chorus. More than their mask and costume, the Greek actors had a repertoire of highly emotive gestures, just as the chorus

members had a repertoire of a variety of dances to create complex visual effects. Catharsis

There has been a sustained attempt to postulate that catharsis could be a common and basic aesthetic experience. But the very meaning of catharsis has been a source of conflicting interpretations. In the nineteenth century one major way of looking at catharsis was to take it as a medical term transferred to poetic criticism. Cleansing (kenosis) in the Hippocratic writings denotes the entire removal of healthy but surplus humours: Catharsis is the removal of the afflictions or excesses (" ta lupounta") and the like of qualitatively alien matter (But cher 253). This doctrine of imbalance of vital forces later on called humours, as the primary cause of disease, is of purely Indian origin. As demonstrated by Filliozat, thesciencewas well formulated in India as early as the Atharva Veda and travelled t o Greece through Persia). According to the Hippocratic theory, an imbalance among the elements of air , bile (of two kinds) and phlegm causes each and every disease. The cure lying in subduing the overswollen element and restoring the balance between the four elements. Besides this well-stated medicinal doctrine, there was also the practice of curing madness through musical catharsis.

The patients were made to listen to certain melodies which made them " fall back into their normal state, as if they had undergone a medical or purgative (cathartic) treatment" (Politics V. viii. 7. 1342 a IS qtd. in Butcher 249). It is further added that not only is catharsis achieved musically but that " those who are liable to pity and fear, and in general, persons of emotional temperament pass through a like experience; ... they all undergo a catharsis of some kind and feel a pleasurable relief' (Butcher 251).

The nature of catharsis described in the Politics should be true for the Poetics, as Aristotle himself has stated that his observations are of a general nature in the former treatise but shall be more detailed in a later work. Therefore, those who presumed that tragic catharsis like musical catharsis restores normally healthy emotional state, were not so wrong. But this rather clinical definition of catharsis does not satisfy the literary theorists. As early as Butcher it was felt there was more to it. " But the word, as taken up by Aristotle into his terminology of art, has probably a further meaning.

It expresses not 6nly a fact ofpsychologyor of pathology, but a principle of art (253). The tragic pity and fear he postulated, " in real life contain a morbid and disturbing I' element ... As the tragic action progresses, the lower forms of emotion are found to have been transmuted into more refined forms" (254). He further postulated that this purification is also a change of the personal emotion to the universal. Purged of the " petty interest of the self' (261) emotion now becomes a representation of the universal, so that the " net result is a noble emotional satisfaction" (267).

It is not difficult to discern that catharsis is equated with aesthetic pleasure in which noble emotional satisfaction is an essential feature, " But whatever may have been the indirect effect of the repeated operation of catharsis, we may confidently say that Aristotle in his definition of tragedy is thinking, not only of any remote result, but of the immediate end of the art, of the Aristotle's Theory of aesthetic function it fulfils" (Butcher 269). Tragedy -Part IJ In my opinion, to raise the balancing function of catharsis to the level of . universalisation is to stretch the concept too far.

CertC,-; rlyt, he restorative function of catharsis may bring relief such as a sick person feels upon recovery. But it is a presumption on the part of Butcher that universalisation takes place because the element purged from the dramatic emotion is that of personal " petty interest of the self' (261). The Aristotelian catharsis, or for that matter the whole tradition of catharsis, by music or Dionysian orgies, has personal cure or satisfaction as its end. Inner restoration, but not the enjoyment of a new aesthetic element, can at best be the purpose of catharsis. The factors of enjoyment, of " oikeia hedone", are ifferent as stated earlier. . Other than regarding it as purgational, there has been another m~jowr ay of interpreting catharsis. The dual concept of purity and impurity which pervaded the physical, moral, religious and spiritual life of the Greeks was the most deepseated factor governing their daily activities. The duality ofpollution(miasma) and purgation (catharsis) was part of the Indo-European belief system. We find that in Greek plays, all tragic action is dependent on acts of transgression such as the murder of a kin, sexual defilement, affronts to deities, and so on.

These acts brought pollution (miasma) upon the protagonist and the people around him. In Greek religion there were prescriptions for expiation of such crimes, just as in India rituals were prescribed for purging of pollution. In tragedies, the very ritual of expiation was often enacted, as in the Oresteia. In most plays, the protagonist was expelled from the community by death or banishment; there was expulsion (kenosis) of the sinner and purification (catharsis) of a given location, city, grove or household. Whereas in some plays, as in the Oresteia, this cycle was shown in ,- itP n. 1, . teness, in other playh it was shown partially. In some other plays as in Hecabe or Women of

Troy, there is only miasma and no katharsis. Looked at in this way, tragedy was a depiction of the cycle of miasma and catharsis. To my mind, the annual enactment of tragedy was to reaffm the miasrnacatharsis duality, which was a major cultural value of ancient Greek society. In all ancient societies the purpose of retelling the myths, particularly on festive occasions, was many-fold; it was to preserve and transmit the stories, to re-state the beliefs they enshrined, and $0 relive the behaviour patterns sanctified by tradition.

The retelling always had a ritual significance even if it took the form of dramatic enactment for the purpose of entertainment. Entertainment and ritual were intertwined in ancient theatre. In this manner, tragedy was a reliving of the pollution-purity cycle by both the actors and the spectators. The community, the protagonist, hisher acts, and the aroused emotions of the audience, all underwent a catharsis. In his analysis, of catharsis, Gerald Else has rightly grasped the spiritual significance that catharsis had for the Greeks, but he restricts the scope of purgation to the acts of the protagonist.

For Else, remorse makes the hero eligible to the spectators' pity, and this pity along with the hero's remorse proves that the act of transgression was actually a pure (cufharos) act. Thus catharsis is the process of proving purity. As Else puts it: The filthiness inheres in a conscious intention to kill a person who is a close kin. An unconscious intention to do so, i. e, in intention to do so without being aware of the kinship as Oedipus did not know that he killed his father would therefore be pure, catharos. But purity must be proved to our satisfaction.

Catharsis would then be the process of proving that the act was pure in that sense. How is such a thing proved ? According to Nicomachean Ethics (3, 2, 11 lob19 and 11 1 la20), by the remorse of the doer, which shows that if he had known the facts he would not have done the deed. In Oedipus, the thing which establishes this to our satisfaction is Oedipus' self blinding. It, then, effects a purification of the tragic deed and so makes Oedipus eligible to our pity. (Else 98) From this interpretation it seems that Else does not believe that catharsis enefits the audience and their emotions in anyway. In his reading of the famous passage , in the Poetics, catharsis is purification of the tragic deed and not of the emotions of the spectators. This goes against all other instances of catharsis as mentioned by Plato and Aristotle. The examples they have givenindicate a change in the mental state of the spectators or music listeners. Besides, it is nowhere indicated by Aristotle that pity in tragedy was aroused for the purpose of regenerating and purifying the sin and the sinner.

He is more concerned with showing how we can feel pity for the protagonist. This feeling in us is more capable of providing catharsis to us rather than just providing that the act of the hero was catharos. If the concept of catharsis is to have any general utility, it must be persumed that the cycle of pollution and purgation (miasma and catharsis) effects an emotional catharsis in the audience as well. A harmonious view of catharsis which combines its spiritual, clinical and aesthetic effects is more in keeping with the unified approach of the ancients.

Biographia Literaria Biographia Literaria was begun by its author as a literaryautobiographybut ended up in discussions about Kant, and Schelling

and Coleridge's perceptive criticism of Wordsworth's poetry and a comprehensive statement on creative imagination which constitutes his most signal contribution to literary criticism and theory. As was his wont, oler ridge has let his awe-inspiringly powerful mind loose on aestheiics, its philosophical foundations and its practical application in an almost desultory manner.

The result is a mine of inexhaustible potential called Biographia Literaria to which critics of all shades of opinion have turned for help and inspiration and very seldom has any one of them been disappointed. Arthur Symons justly described the work as rthe greatest book of English criticism']. Coleridge has sometimes been accused of borrowing from the Germans, particularly from Kant, Sckelli~~angd the Schlegels, but most of his ideas were originally arrived at and, in my case. the system into which these ideas were f; tt~A as the creation of his own great mind.

Coleridge's whole aesthetic - his definition of poetry, his idea of the poet, and h ~ s poetical criticism - revolve around his theory of creative imagination. From this point of view chapters XI11 and XIV of Biographin Liter~rri~alr e most sign~ticant. The statement of the theory of imagination in Biographia Litercrria is preceded by a prolix and, at time, abstruegn"; losophical discourse in the form of certain theses or propositions whose crs is Coleridge's attempt to define Nature and Self.

Nature - the sum of all that is objective - is passive and unconscious while Self or Intelligence the sum of all that is subjective - is vital and conscious. All knowledge is the product of the coalescence of the subject and the object. This coalescence leads to the act of creation, I AM. It is in this state of

self-consciousness that ['object ar. d subject, being and knowledge, are identical'] and the reality of ['the one life in us and abroad'] is experienced and affirmed and chaos is converted into z cosmos. What happens is that the Self or Spirit views itself in all objects which as objects are dead and finite.

Coleridge's theory of creativeymagination is essentially grounded ir, ihis perception. Hence Coleridge's view of the . = lagination approximates to the ~riecvso l Schelling and Kant. Like Coleridge they recognise the interdependence of subject and object as complementary aspects of a single reality. Also they all agree about the self conceived 2s a totality: thought and feeling in their original identity and not as an abstraction. Thomas Steams Eliot (1888-1965) is probably the best known and most influential English poet of the twentieth century. His work as a critic is equally significant. l7. S.

Eliot's critical output was quite diverse; he wrote theoretical piecesas well as stud~eso f particular authors. " Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919) clearly expresses Eliot's concepts about poetry and the importance of tradition. Eliot emphasizes the need forcritical thinking--" criticism is as inevitable as breathing". He feels that it is unfortunate that the word " tradition" is mentioned only with pejorative implications, as when we call some poet " too traditional. " He questions the habit of praising a poet primarily for those elements in his work which are more individual and differentiate him Erom others. ccordingto T. S. Eliot, even the most " individual" parts of a poet's work may be those which are most alive with the influence of his poetic ancestors.

Eliot stresses the objective and intellectual element. The whole of past literature will be " in the bones" of the poet with the true historical sense, " a

feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literiture of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order. " No poet has his complete meaning alone. For proper evaluation, you must set a poet, for contrast and comparison, among the dead poets.

Eliot envisages a dynamic relationship between past and present writers. " The existing monuments form an ideal order amgng themselves, which is modified by the introduction of the new (the really new) work of art among them. " An artist can be judged only by the standards of thepast; this does not mean the standards of dead critics. It means a judgement when two things, the old and the new, are measured by each other. To some extent, this resembles Matthew Arnold's " touchstone" ; the " ideal order" formed by the " existing monuments" provide the standard, a land of touchstone, for evaluation.

As with Arnold's touchstones, Eliot's ideal order is subjective and in need of modification from time to time. T. S. Eliot Eliot laysstresson the artist knowing " the mind of Europe -- the mind of his own country--a mind which he learns in time to be much more important than his own . private mind". But he does not mean pedantic knowledge, he means a consciousness of the past, and some persons have a greater sensitivity to this historical awareness. As Eliot states, with epigrammatic brevity, " Some can absorb knowledge, the more tardy New Criticism must sweat for it. Shakespeare acquired more essential history from Plutarch than ost men could from the whole British Museum.

" Throughout Eliot's poetry and criticism, we find this emphasis on the artist surrendering himself to some larger authority. His later political and religious writings too valorized authority. It is interesting that Eliot always worked within his own cultural space: religion meant Christianity, while literature, cultureand history meant exclusively European literature, culture or history. Tradition, for Eliot, means an awareness of the history of Europe, not as dead facts but as a11 ever-changing yet changeless presence, constantly interacting subconsciously with the individual poet.

He wants the poet to merge hispersonalitywith the tradition. " The progress of the artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality. " He suggests the analogy of the catalyst in a scientific laboratory for this process of depersonalization. The mind of the poet is a medium in which experiences can enter into new combinations. When oxygen and sulphur dioxide are mixed in the presence of a filament of platinum, they form sulphuric acid. This combination takes place only in the presence of platinum, which is the catalyst. But the sulphuric acid shows no trace of platinum, which remains unaffected.

The catalyst facilitates the chemical change, but does not participate in it, and remains unchanged. Eliot compares the mind of the poet to the shred of platinum, which will " digest and transmute the. passions which are its material". Eliot shifts the critical focus from the poet to the poetry, and declares, " Honest criticism and sensitive appreciation are directed not upon the poet but upon the poetry. " Eliot sees the poet's mind as " a receptacle for seizing and stonng up numberless feelings, phrases, images, which

remain there until all the particles which can unite to form a new compound are present together.

He says that concepts like " sublimity", " greatness" or " intensity" of emotion are irrelevant. It is not the greatness of the emotion that matters, but the intensity of the artistic process, the pressure under which the artistic hsion takes place, that is important. In this way he rejects the Romantic emphasis on 'genius' and the exceptional mind. Eliot refutes the idea that poetry is the expression of the personality of the poet. Experiences important for the man may have no place in his poems, and vice-versa. The emotions occasioned by events in the personal life of the poet are not important.

What matters is the emotion transmuted into poetry, the feelings expressed in the poetry. " Emotions which he has never experienced will serve his turn as well as those familiar to him". Eliot says that Wordsworth's formula is wrong. (Iam sure you would remember Wordsworth's comments on poetry in the Preface to the Lyrical Ballads: " Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling: it takes its origins from emotion recollected in tranquility. ") For Eliot, poetryls not recollection of feeling, " it is a new thing resulting from the concentration of a very great number of experiences . . it is a concentration which does not happen consciously or of deliberation. " Eliot believes that " Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape fiom emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality. " For him, the emotion of art is impersonal, and the artist can achieve this impersonality only by cultivating the historical sense, by belng

conscious of the tradition It is now generally believed that Eliot's idea of tradition is rather narrow in two respects.

First, he's talking of simply the poetic tradition and neglects the fact that even the poetic tradition is a complex amalgam of written and oral poetry and the elements that go into them. It was only in later writings that he realised the fact that in ibc making of verse many elements are involved. In his wntlngs on poetic drama he glves evidence of having broadened his scope. Second, Eliot is neglecting other traditions that go into social formations. When he iatrr wrote 'Religion and Literature', he gives more scope to non-poebc elements of tradition. On these considerations one can say that he develops'his ideas on tradition T.

S. Eliot throughout his literarycareer- right up to the time he wrote 'Notes Towards a Definition of Culture' in which traditionis more expansive than in his earlier writings. Dissociation of sensibility is a literary term first used by T. S. Eliot in his essay “ The Metaphysical Poets”[1] It refers to the way in which intellectual thought was separated from the experience of feeling in seventeenth century poetry. Eliot used the term to describe the manner by which the nature and substance of English poetry changed “ between the time of Donne or Lord Herbert of Cherbury and the time of Tennyson and Browning. In this essay, Eliot attempts to define the metaphysical poet and in doing so to determine the metaphysical poet’s era as well as his discernible qualities. “ We may express the difference by the following theory: The poets of the seventeenth century, the successors of the dramatists of the sixteenth, possessed a mechanism of sensibility which could devour any kind of experience. They are simple, artificial, difficult, or

fantastic, as their predecessors were; no less nor more than Dante, Guido Cavalcanti, Guinicelli, or Cino.

In the seventeenth century a dissociation of sensibility set in, from which we have never recovered; and this dissociation, as is natural, was aggravated by the influence of the two most powerful poets of the century, Milton and Dryden. ” Theory of dissociation of sensibility The theory of dissociation of sensibility rests largely upon Eliot’s description of the disparity in style that exists between the metaphysical poets of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century and the poets of the late seventeenth century onward.

In “ The Metaphysical Poets,” [1] Eliot claims that the earlier grouping of poets were “ constantly amalgamating disparate experience” and thus expressing their thoughts through the experience of feeling, while the later poets did not unite their thoughts with their emotive experiences and therefore expressed thought separately from feeling. He explains that the dissociation of sensibility is the reason for the “ difference between the intellectual and the reflective poet. ” The earlier intellectual poet, Eliot writes, “ possessed a mechanism of sensibility which could devour any kind of experience. When the dissociation of sensibility occurred, “[the] poets revolted against the ratiocinative, the descriptive; they thought and felt by fits, unbalanced; they reflected.

” Thus dissociation of sensibility is the point at which and the manner by which this change in poetic method and style occurred; it is defined by Eliot as the loss of sensation united with thought. Eliot uses John Donne’s poetry as the most prominent example of united sensibility and thought. He writes, “[a] thought to Donne was an experience; it modified his sensibility. Eliot’s

apparent appreciation of Donne’s ability to unify intellectual thought and the sensation of feeling demonstrates that he believes dissociation of sensibility to be a hindrance in the progression of poetry. Eliot asserts that despite the progress of refined language, the separation between thought and emotion led to the end of an era of poetry that was “ more mature” and that would “ wear better” than the poetry that followed. Deconstruction Deconstruction has been variously presentehs a philosophical position, a political or intellectual stance or just simply as a strategy of reading.

As students of literature and literary theory, we should be interested in its power as a mode of reading; therefore most of the points about Deconstruction in this Block will be made through instances of reading literature and philosophy. Let us begin here with a simple reading of Derrida describing a general strategy of Deconstruction: Every philosophical argument is structured in terms of oppositions and in this " traditional philosophical opposition we have not a peaceful co-existence of facing terms but a violent hierarchy.

One of the terms dominates the other (axiologically, logically etc.), occupies the commanding position. To deconstruct the opposition is above all, at a particular moment to reverse the hierarchy". Deconstruction, Derrida implies, looks upon a text as inherently riddled with hierarchical oppositions. A deconstructive reading uncovers not only these hierarchical oppositions but also shows that the superior term in the opposition can be seen as inferior. When we put together some other strategies of Deconstruction outlined in Derrida's writings, a working definition begins to emerge. To deconstruct a discourse is to show how it undermines the philosophy it

asserts, or the hierarchical opposition on which it relies, by identifying in the text and then dismantling the rhetorical operations that produce the supposed ground of argument, the key concept or premise.

" This explanation by Jonathan Culler is comprehensive. So, let us treat it as a companion to the description by Derrida cited above in order to advance our working idea of Deconstruction. Broadly speaking Derrida and Culler are making these points:

- ' Deconstruction is a " searching out" or dismantling operation conducted on a discourse to show: . How the discourse itself undermines the argument (philosophy) it asserts.
- One way of doing it is to see how the argument is structured/, that is investigate its rhetorical status or argumentative strategy. As Derrida argues, this struchkis often the product of a hierarchy in which two opposed terms are presented as superior and inferior. Deconstruction then pulls the carpet from below the superior by showing the limited basis of its superiority and thus reverses the hierarchy, making the superior, inferior.
- This reversed hierarchy is again open to the same deconstructive operadon.

In a way, Deconstruction is a permanent act of destabilization. . So, Deconstruction points to a fallacy not in. the way the first or second hierarchy is constructed but in the very process of creating hierarchies in human thought (which as I have stated earlier, is indispensable to most if not all human arguments or thought.). Deconstruction does not lead us from a faulty to a correct way of thinking I or writing. Rather it shows us the

limitations of human thought operating through I language even while harboring the same limitations itself.

Every deconstructive operation relies on the same principle it sets out to deconstruct and is thus open to deconstruction itself. Yet, Deconstruction is not simply about reversing hierarchieMough it is one of the I things a deconstructive analysis achieves. Fundamentally, it is a way of understanding the structure of a discourse, locating its controlling centre and identifying the unfounded assumptions on which it relies to function as a discourse. It may be compared to a probing operation that uncovers fault lines in a discourse, which may include ideological assumptions and suppositions .