CONCLUSION

An effort has been made in the previous chapters, to show how great the contribution of the American writers of the twenties was in the development of the Short Story. Of course, where the renaissance of the American Short Story is concerned the contribution of Hawthorne, Melville, Stephen Crane, Henry James, Mark Twain and others cannot be denied. All these writers tried to evolve a new American style, relying on American settings, using the vernacular language and a broad rough humour. But the nineteen twenties are considered to be the most crucial and exciting period of the development of the American Short Story. And it was with the publication of Sherwood Anderson’s *Winesburg, Ohio* that this period began. Anderson explored the true American subject matter in his stories by breaking away from the European tradition and evolving a tradition which was innately American.
The new shape and form that the Short Story acquired was described as a revolt against earlier artistic practices, but for many critics this was actually a moral revolt. It was an attack upon the supposedly stifling moral conventionality of the earlier society and the earlier literature. Hence, four years after the publication of Winesburg, Ohio Edward O'Brien said of Sherwood Anderson that:

(The technical revolt) is only a sign of a much more profound revolt in him against a dull conformity which custom has staled, a conformity based upon the principles of leveling down, rather than leveling up, a conformity of negation rather than of healthy growth.1

With the success of Winesburg, Ohio, a whole cluster of brilliant writers emerged in the field of the Short Story. They were all influenced by Anderson's idea of a looser form and technique.

and the lucidity and simplicity of his language. Anderson also freed a generation of writers from the obsession of plot. He insisted that there is neither any pattern nor rational order in the Short Story just as there is no pattern or rational order in the experiences of life. The Short Story according to him should be very flexible and subject to continued changes. Anderson evolved a style which is simple and colloquial, a style peculiar to the American environment. He used a language which had the power to convey feelings as directly as they are conveyed in a lyric. In his best stories, Anderson used the oral narration as a strategy and gave a new direction to the later Short Story writers. Anderson's technique of oral narration helped them to realize that simple and colloquial language is more natural and effective. It freed them from the rigidity of plot with the result that the American Short Story of the twenties has become flexible enough to suit any temperament or any situation.
A study of his stories show that he considered isolation as an ineradicable human condition. In fact, a sense of alienation and frustration pervades all the stories of Anderson. In stories like "I Want to Know Why", Anderson dealt with a theme common to many American writers, the initiation of a boy into experience.

As pointed out earlier, Anderson chalked out a new path for many writers including Hemingway and Faulkner in subject matter as well as narrative technique. Hemingway and Faulkner are considered 'two prize pupils' of Anderson. Of course, they added new perspectives and dimensions to the Short Story taking it still further to achieve heights of excellence. All the three together along with Fitzgerald and Miss Porter represent a cross section of the Short Story writers of the twenties. Like Anderson, Hemingway and Faulkner, Fitzgerald and Miss Porter also
created a public image of themselves as representative Short Story writers of their times.

Fitzgerald symbolised the Jazz Age - a way of life that flared over a decade and vanished. Fitzgerald spoke the language of that Age in a rare way in his stories. In fact the Jazz Age and the 'lost generation' were both results of a shattered idealism. The members of the lost generation are marked by a serious, if not incessant, desire for a new creed by which to live. On the contrary, the members of the Jazz Age share an ebullient disregard for seriousness of any kind. However, along with the glamour and splendour of this Age, one can also easily mark a sense of gloom, loneliness and alienation. In his stories, Fitzgerald depicts these tragic undertones of the Age.

The connection between Sherwood Anderson and F. Scott Fitzgerald resides not so much in style as in attitude towards society. Both writers
deal with outsiders who yearn to belong. Anderson's characters find themselves alienated from the community, because of some oddness or guilt. Fitzgerald's heroes and heroines also yearn acceptance, not like Anderson's in the provincial workaday world, but in the world of wealth and fashion. In contrast to Anderson's private stories, Fitzgerald's were public, reflecting the life of the city, families, friends and crowds, a world of vitality and excitement. His characters are bright and active and they reflect the flippant mood of the Jazz Age.

However, eventually, as in Anderson, the illusions of his protagonists crumble, their hopes fail, and they turn to alcohol or self-pity. Like Anderson, Fitzgerald also depicted the poignancy of the wasted life very well, partly because his style was simultaneously gorgeous and stirring and partly because his heroes and heroines were young, attractive and careless. However, Fitzgerald was never affected by the 'false values and frivolous lives' delineated in his stories. According to Nathan Gluck,
What gives a kind of power and weight to Fitzgerald’s stories is that he was never really taken in by the false values and frivolous lives he described so brilliantly. And he never forgot that he was an outsider in that glittering world.2

In “The Rich Boy”, it is as if Fitzgerald himself is speaking when he says:

Let me tell you about the very rich. They are different from you and me. They possess and enjoy easily, and it does something to them, makes them soft where we are hard and cynical where we are truthful — They are different.3

“The Rich Boy” reveals Fitzgerald’s attitude towards the very rich with its mixture of distrust, admiration and above all curiosity about how their minds work. Angon Hunter’s central trait, in the story, is the sense of superiority that he feeds by captivating others. It makes him willing to help or

destroy others, almost in the same gesture. However, this sense of superiority keeps him from surrendering anything of himself.

In fact, the main subject matter of Fitzgerald's stories is "the rich", their difference from the rest of us, and the meaning of that difference. The search for wealth is an "American dream" that all the magic of the world can be had for money. But in the final analysis, his stories suggest that to be "rich" is to refuse responsibility, to deny fate, to try (as in the terrible scene towards the close of "The Diamond as Big as the Ritz") to bribe God. There is implicit in such a life a doom as absolute as its splendour.

Like the writers of the twenties, Fitzgerald also depicted the theme of loneliness and isolation in his stories. In "Babylon Revisited", the protagonist Charlie Wales returns to Paris after the 'boom' is over. He has 'lost a lot
in the crash'. But even more he has lost every-
thing he wanted in the boom. His wife dies par-
tly as a result of his mindlessness. His small
daughter has been adopted by his wife's relations.
Now, some years later, a reformed man, he has come
back to Babylon to claim his child. But he is
defeated in the attempt and becomes lonely and
alienated. The story ends:

He would come back some day; --- but he
wanted his child, and nothing was much
good now, beside that fact. He wasn't
young any more, with a lot of nice
thoughts and dreams to have by himself.
He was absolutely sure Helen wouldn't
have wanted him to be so alone.4

Some of Fitzgerald's characters reflect the
great 'American success drive' too. Dexter, a
grocer's son in "Winter Dreams" becomes a great
business figure. Anderson's George Willard also
leaves Winesburg because of his ambition for a
career. Dexter's ambition to become a fabulously

4. Ibid., "Babylon Revisited", P. 322.
successful business man is typical of the social attitudes prevalent in the period. He has a desire to possess things and impress people. Most of the story, however, is more directly concerned with Dexter's relationship to a rich girl named Judy Jones. More than anything else, it is she who is the source and focus of his ambition. His "winter dreams" of success centre upon her. She is the embodiment of the glittering things that he would like to possess. But his relationship with her turns stormy. His feelings towards her is a mixture of attraction and resentment. He wins her with ease, but she throws him over as easily. When he tries to break away by becoming engaged to another girl, she intervenes and wins him back. Yet, she will not have him permanently. At the end of the story, several years later, he hears that she is married to another man. Her hold over man is shocking to him and makes him realize for the first time the loss of his youth. Dexter knows that Judy Jones is no good for him, but this...
knowledge cannot help him. Dexter is ambitious. He is in search of happiness and success in life. He becomes successful materially, but in the final analysis, he becomes a victim of isolation and alienation. The story offers a revealing summary of Fitzgerald's feelings about love, money and social position. Man search for happiness and his ultimate sense of isolation and alienation - these themes are typical of the stories of twenties.

The intention in "May Day" is to reveal the state of American society during the nineteen twenties. It was the time when America was emerging from a great war, into a spring time of excitement and hope. This was also the time when Fitzgerald, besides looking for a job, was drinking too much. In the story, he has projected his sense of failure into the character of Gordon Sterret. The story catches a memorable day and its mood, with all its associations of youth and merriment along with the illusion that youth lasts for ever.
"The Sensible Thing" is not simply the story of a man too poor to win the girl he loved. It is also not merely a story of a poor man who went off to make a fortune and came back to claim his girl. The story is a particular instance of the general effect of the social aspect of the self on the private feelings:

She was something desirable and rare that (George O'Kolley) had fought for and made his own - but never again an intangible whisper in the dusk or on the breeze of night. — 5

In Fitzgerald's stories and in his understanding of his own life, this effect almost always takes the form of 'the effect of money, or the lack of it, on love'.

Like Anderson and Hemingway, Fitzgerald also believed in simplicity of language and elasticity of form so far as the Short Story was concerned.

5. Ibid., "The Sensible Thing", P. 104.
He was also, like Anderson, against the rigidity of plot. Some of his stories like "May Day" and "The Rich Boy" are quite lengthy, like those of Faulkner's. But what he imbibed more from Anderson seems to be 'the Voice of America' that is heard in the simple syntax and rhythm. Lionel Trilling describes the voice of Fitzgerald's short stories as:

--- showing the tenderness toward human desire that modifies a true firmness of moral judgment --- (this voice) cannot properly be exemplified by quotation because it is continuous and cumulative.6

Like Anderson he has also exposed the corruption and hypocrisy of Industrial America through his stories. A Fitzgerald hero is always in search of 'romantic wonder'. But eventually, he is doomed to frustration and loneliness. On the one hand, Fitzgerald's protagonist is enchanted by the wealth and comforts. On the other hand

he is repelled by them. Through a delicate and exact imagery, he was able to extend this attitude of simultaneous 'enchantment' and 'repulsion' over the whole of American civilization that he knew. "The Ice Palace", "Magnetism", "The Bridal Party", "Absolution" and numerous other stories bear testimony to Fitzgerald as a great writer of the American short story of the twenties.

Although he was from the Midwest, Fitzgerald was by nature an Easterner. In his stories he suggests his weariness with the West by continually talking about the East - about New York city, the Yale club, and the Ritz. Like Anderson, Fitzgerald too focuses his attention on the world of adolescents. Their major issues are with status symbols and love entanglements. However, unlike Anderson, their tragedies are often trivial and temporary. Like Sherwood Anderson, Fitzgerald also helped to pave the way for the southern literary renaissance with the result that
young talents like Katherine Anne Porter and others came forward to write short stories on their own region.

As a true representative of her Age, Miss Porter writes about a society that is haunted from within and threatened from without. She is an experimental writer focusing on primitive civilization in order to understand modern civilization and life in general. She drew upon the South and Mexico in her first short stories.

In going to Mexico and writing about it in her first short story "Maria Concepcion", Porter became an expatriate writer with a difference. Like most of the writers of the twenties, she also reacted against the advanced civilizations of Europe and America, and their hollow sophistication. She sought deeper and more universal values in a primitive culture like Mexico. She studied the simplicity of the natives, and their "passion
for individual expression without hypocrisy”. Like Anderson, she was also against the plotted short story and formula. Her attack on plot is quite straightforward:

Now listen carefully: except in emergencies, when you are trying to manufacture a quick trick and make some easy money, you don’t really need a plot.7

As a student of Henry James, she respected “form” and “discipline”. She realized that the Short Story allowed one to cope with violence and disorder in the world.

Porter dealt with a few universal themes like: good, evil, betrayal, self-deception, justice and order. As in Anderson, it is the psychology of human relations which interests Porter most. Each of her stories is an attempt to elucidate some particular problem or mystery in man’s behaviour. Many of her stories deal with the failure

of love or hope or fortitude. She also deals with the theme of initiation and isolation in her stories. Like Anderson, she probed the psychology of her characters, lifted her stories to lyric and symbolic levels.

Porter's treatment of a primitive culture and primitive emotions is forcefully and effectively presented in a story like "Maria Concepcion". In some ways, the proud heroine reminds one of the imposing gallery of Greek heroines, like Clytemnestra, Medea, and Antigone. Like the female protagonist in Anderson's "Death in the Woods", Maria endures trials with patience and in silence. But unlike Anderson's women characters, she is not ready to accept defeat. Maria's husband Juan has run off with fifteen-year-old, Maria Rosa, who later bears him a child. Maria Concepcion takes justice into her own hands and kills the girl with a butcher's knife, the same knife she uses to kill chickens for the market place.
She brings up Maria Rosa's child as her own. She begins a new life. Meanwhile, the community accepts her action, and even defends her against the authorities of law and order. While Juan is punished for his sin, by having to return to labour for an archaeologist in a "buried city", Maria finds happiness with her new child.

Porter has woven a complexity of issues and emotions into the foreground and the background of this story. Elementary themes like the power of curse, revenge, sin, violence, fate etc. have been transformed by Porter into contemporary terms to highlight a paradox: good can come out of an 'evil' action.

Almost from the beginning, Porter exhibits her versatility and maturity as a Short Story writer. She takes the basic theme of "Maria Concepcion" - betrayal and justice - and reintroduces them in an advanced culture, the middle-class
world of the American South. The brooding and primitive violence and disorder of "Maria Concepcion" are replaced by a sophisticated comic satire on pride and vanity, fidelity and infidelity in "The Tilting of Granny Weatherall". Here, Porter probes with psychological insight an old matriarch's nagging complaint that has hounded her for her entire life. She is nearly eighty when she expires. She was once jilted by her bridegroom.

Porter's subtle use of the dimensions of time (past, present and future), her representation of inner and outer reality, and the constant drift between dream and waking - all show that beneath the story and the old woman's frustrations are universal concerns, the need for a strong will and strong family ties to endure misfortune.

Like Anderson, Miss Porter's pervasive theme in her stories is the senseless destruction of the individual due to the destructive elements in the so-called civilized society. For instance, in "The Downward Path to Wisdom", the private
world is that of a four year old boy and the destructive elements he encounters are represented by the incomprehensible behaviour of the adults. In another story "Flowering Judas", Laura who has devoted herself wholeheartedly to the revolutionary movement in Mexico suddenly discovers that she is a traitor to herself as well as to the ranks of the oppressed, and that she must identify herself with Judas rather than with any liberator of mankind. According to Harry John Mooney,

(The story) conveys a mood rather than tells a story; but the mood itself leads to a climax of self-revelation, when the girl, Laura, suddenly sees through the maze of intrigue in which she has been caught.8

The story "Rope" illustrates how a minor difference of opinion can develop into a quarrel which reveals all the cracks in a marriage. The young

couple in "Rope" hardly realize the meaning of their charges and counter charges, for they are completely caught up in the mechanism of their quarrel. But all throughout, the sickness of their marriage manifests itself in their inadvertent accusations. In "He", we have the story of a mother whose whole life lies in her feeble-minded son, and whose final tragedy comes to her when she is forced to put him in the country home. Mrs. Whipple is not to be blamed for the fact that her son is a mentally retarded boy. But she is altogether committed to him. Throughout the story, the son is referred to only by capitalized personal pronouns, may be he is entirely dependent upon her. The pathetic ending of the story is implicit from the beginning. Life for him, and for his mother, cannot have a happy outcome, especially given the added stress of the Whipple's desperate poverty. But the real significance of Mrs. Whipple's life lies in her effort to make a life for her son, little though she can help. Mrs. Whipple's concern for her son more or less resembles that of Elizabeth Willard's concern for her
Each of the six stories of The Leaning Tower is a brilliant evocation of the childhood of Miranda, who lives in the quiet, responsive atmosphere of innocence. The Miranda stories deal with Miranda’s initiation into the adult world. In these stories, Miranda tries to find her way in a world far different from the seemingly stable universe of Grandmother Shea. Each story varies in length from five pages to twenty-four and by piecing the six together we get a unified picture of the people and the time. Miss Porter’s method of communicating her material is reminiscent of Anderson’s Winesburg, Ohio. Like Winesburg, Ohio, The Leaning Tower is a cycle of stories having several unifying elements like a single background, a prevailing tone and a central character, Miranda. Every story is self-contained too. Like the stories in Winesburg, Ohio, these stories can also be read as a unit knit together. They can also be separated without loss of effect.
Two stories "The Fig Tree" and "The Greve" are also worth mentioning. In the "Fig Tree" Miranda's problem is one of defining her perception and the story significantly begins with Aunt Nannie's attempt to fit Miranda into clothes the adults think are the proper ones. There is an element of compulsion, and the difference between what Miranda wants to wear and what the adults think she should wear is obvious. For instance, she did not want a bonnet as it was very hot and she wanted a hat. Yet she had to wear a bonnet. This apparently trivial event draws the reader's attention to the difference between the adult world and Miranda's. The adults either do not recognize her world, or, even if they do so, think that it is not important enough for them to concern themselves with it. But the adult world, in which Miranda does not actively participate impinges upon hers, and this is inexplicable to her. Like the protagonist in Anderson's "I Want to Know Why", she is also curious to know the world of adults.
"The Grave" deals with a young brother and sister on a Texas farm. Their grand-mother has dominated the family. Her husband had died in the neighbouring state of Louisiana, but she had removed his body to Texas. Later, when her Texas farm was sold, and with it the small family cemetery, she had once more moved her husband's body and those of the other members of the family, to a plot in the big new public cemetery. One day the children Paul and Miranda went out for rabbit hunting. They reached the cemetery and while playing in the empty grave of their grandfather, Paul found a ring and Miranda a dove-shaped screw head from the coffin. The children soon make an exchange of their treasures. In fact, the children were horrified at the sight of the graves. Then they fled the cemetery. They continued their hunting expedition. They squabbled about their shooting rights. Paul claimed the right to shoot first if they saw a rabbit or dove and Miranda asked idly if she could fire first if they saw a snake. Then they saw a rabbit and Paul killed it. They found in the dead body of the rabbit unborn rabbits,
each tiny thing enveloped in a "scarlet veil". Miranda instinctively knew the process of death. Paul told Miranda not to speak about the hunt to any one. He did not want his father to think he was introducing Miranda to things she should not know.

Miranda, true to her newfound knowledge did not tell any one and finally put the incident into the grave of her mind. The meaning of life and fertility and of her own body began to take shape in the little girl's mind as she saw the tiny creatures just taken from their mother's womb.

Almost twenty years later Miranda sees clearly the implications of this almost forgotten incident. Miranda has learned that life is doomed to death. But one's reaction to this knowledge is important. At first Miranda was horrified when she remembered the grave and the rabbit. Her reaction to death was quite different from that of
the grandmother who was possessive, who moved her husband's body to a different burial ground.

Like the other stories of the twenties, "The Grave" is also about growing up and going through a kind of initiation into the mysteries of adult life. Miranda learns about birth and her own destiny as a woman. And she learns these things suddenly unexpectedly, in circumstances that connect birth with death.

As in Anderson, Miss Porter is also concerned with the portrayal of the terrible failure of the life of man in the western world. She seems to imply that:

the order of the Western world is based on the primacy of reason and so an unconscious acceptance of the basic irrationality of life is not possible for "western man". So irrational impulses constantly threaten order.9

So, man's continuing struggle to order life is seen by Miss Porter as a struggle between the rational and the irrational aspects of human nature.

In her stories, Miss Porter also used the technique of inference, which was very common with the American Short Stories of the twenties. The cause of a frustrated love affair is never directly mentioned in Miss Porter's stories. In general, she seems to be explaining it as the result of a character's inability to square his idea of love with that of his social or moral obligations. The heroine of Miss Porter's "Theft" avoids love because of feelings of guilt about possession in general; the heroine in "Flowering Judas" fears it. Her fear is obviously tied up with guilty feelings about the abandonment of her religious and humanitarian responsibilities. The heroine of Anderson's "Seeds" rejects love because of out dated ideas, she has inherited from a puritan ancestry ideas that choke
her existence. Krebs in Hemingway’s “Soldiers Home” rejects it because, traumatized by his war experiences, he dreads the complexity of all relationships. It can be assumed that most inhibitions of this kind are reflections of guilt feelings. The source for such uneasiness is hardly indicated by any of these writers. It lies in the depths of the unconscious and it is left to the inference of the reader.

In the American short stories of the twenties, love is an experience to be avoided rather than pursued for, love in these stories mostly leads to frustration since it is egocentric, and self-seeking. The desire for love outside marriage may lead to a series of adulteries, as with Anderson’s Elizabeth Willard. In Miss Porter’s "The Cracked Looking Glass", Rosaleen O’Toole suppresses her desire for a younger lover and forlornly turns to her old husband for emotional support. Many other examples can be quoted to show that love in the stories
of the twenties is consistently a source of misery. The protagonist is almost frustrated in his need for love. It is remarkable that all these writers have depicted their views on love negatively; that is, as stated earlier, the importance of love is emphasized indirectly through its absence or perversion.

It can be seen that much of the same complex of material was developed earlier by such leading short story writers as Chekhov, Joyce and Katherine Mansfield. The society depicted in their stories is much like the one depicted in the American stories of the twenties, especially with respect to its internal disintegration. The characters of these stories are also emotionally isolated. For example, the old, defeated woman in Katherine Mansfield's story "Life of Ma Parker" is a picture of emotional isolation. In his story "The Duel", Chekhov attacks Tolstoy's argument in *The Kreutzer Sonata*.
that the ideal of Christian love is incompatible with sexual love. Like the American short story writers of the twenties, Chekhov also believed that mere physical love will not lead to happiness and contentment. In short, love means much the same kind of thing to the characters in these stories as it means to those of Anderson, Hemingway, Faulkner and others.

It is said that the stories in Joyce's *Dubliners* most nearly anticipate the stories of the American twenties. It was Joyce who used the 'epiphany' for the first time in his stories. Harry Levin describes an 'epiphany' succinctly:

--- amid the most encumbered circumstances it suddenly happens that the veil is lifted, the 'burthen of the mystery laid bare, and the ultimate secret of things made manifest'.

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It is this 'epiphany' or moment of revelation that one notices in many of the American Short Stories of the twenties. In the case of Anderson it may be a moment of complete frustration and grotesqueness. Wingfield in "Hands", Dr. Parcival in "The Philosopher", Alice Hindman in "Adventure" face this terrible moment. In fact, almost all the stories of Anderson deal with this subject. In Hemingway, it may be a moment of defiance. The story of a veteran bullfighter Manuel Garcia ("The Un-defeated") is a good example. He represents Hemingway's dictum that a man can be destroyed, but cannot be defeated. On the other hand, in Faulkner, it may be a moment of acceptance and resignation. In Faulkner's story "Red Leaves" one finds the inevitable acceptance and resignation on the part of the Negro body-servant. These moments of revelation are a unique feature of the American Short Story of the twenties.
One of the most important technical developments displayed by these writers seems to be the skillful use of inference. The reader expects that certain things will take place. But these things do not take place within the compass of the story. Therefore, the reader has to infer the resolution for himself. He must evaluate the character and he may have to infer what has actually happened in the story. Many of these writers leave significant elements of character, thought or feeling to inference.

How the reader is led to make inferences is apt to vary. It seems that the writers expect their readers to be 'moderately' familiar with the kinds of moral and psychological ideas prevalent in that period. For example, the reader must "know enough" not to take literally George's assertion in Anderson's "Nobody Knows", that he is satisfied by his sexual initiation. Similarly, the reader is expected to know something about
the "force of unconscious motivation" to understand the behaviour of Alice in Anderson's "Adventure". Again, the reader must also know enough elementary psychology to realize that the symbols in Laura's dream in Miss Porter's "Flowering Judas", or the memories recalled by Granny Weatherall are the expressions of feelings.

In order to enable the reader to determine what the important omissions are, the writers sometimes adopt the device of juxtaposition of related elements without an explicit indication of that relationship. In Hemingway's story "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife", the writer has juxtaposed the scene with the wife and the scene with the Indian. This juxtaposition of two scenes makes clear the nature of the doctor's anger. It also raises an expectation that this anger will erupt in some kind of violence. But this does not occur. Thus the reader infers that
under the present situation, no relief for his feelings will occur. His failure to assert himself against his wife's blunt refusal gives a further possibility: he is afraid of her. Since, there seem to be no other possibility, the reader infers that she is the primary reason for his inability to relieve his feelings. The doctor immediately decides to go for a walk. This again makes the reader infer that this conflict is not a new thing in his life.

The reader makes inferences because things are left out. In Anderson's "Hands" one is not sure if the affection shown by Adolf Myers, the school teacher to the boys was a homosexual relation or the genuine love of a teacher for his boys. Of course, his behaviour was interpreted as one of homosexuality by the society with the result that he was driven away from the Pennsylvania town in the night. But Anderson does not directly say that the teacher was a homosexual. He simply states:
Adolph Myers was meant by nature to be a teacher of youth. He was one of those rare, little understood men who rule by a power so gentle that it passes as a lovable weakness. In their feeling for the boys under their charge such men are not unlike the finer sort of women in their love of men.11

In Hemingway's "The Killers", Nick and George discover with horror that Ole is going to be killed by gangsters. When Nick goes to Ole, he discovers that Ole has turned his face to the wall, that he has yielded to absolute despair. Ole declines Nick's offer of help. He says that nothing can be done; it will do no good to call the police. Like Nick, the reader is also puzzled about the reaction of Ole. The question is, why does Ole stop trying to run away from his murderers? Will he be killed by the gangsters? The writer leaves all these to the inference of the reader. Perhaps, Ole is a victim of a flaw inherent in his society, the victim of a problem.

belonging to the community as a whole that makes it impossible to protect him from a possible murder. However, the writer does not come to any conclusion. Numerous such instances can be cited to show how common the technique of inference was among the writers of the twenties.

In order to achieve the desired effect, these writers employed both dramatic and narrative methods. The great advantage of the dramatic method as has been mentioned already, is the vividness of the illusion it creates. This method also gives pleasure by putting the reader to work. Hemingway has used this method more than any other short story writers of the period. Here, the audience witnesses directly the things being depicted. There is a strange sense of immediacy that one feels as one reads the story. Hemingway's "The Killer" is a good example. Here the narrator reports only what can be seen and heard at different stages. The result is that the story reads very much like a little play. This method also
arouses the reader's sense of curiosity. The reader feels a more dramatic effect and a greater vividness. He is compelled to exercise his intellectual faculties to grasp meanings. The reader must also exercise his intuitive faculties and his ability to respond to suggestions of emotions. He may, indeed, never be able to tell all the story. Yet he may still respond to it as a moving story. Such a narrative method has the advantage of enabling the author to cover material rapidly and to present scenes of a subtle or intricate nature.

Many of these stories contain dramatic portions, passages or scenes in which the narrator becomes a dramatist and quotes directly the things the characters said. At certain points the writer uses the techniques of drama to enhance the effectiveness of his story and at other points he sacrifices these to the advantages of narrative. His biggest technical problem always is how best
to exploit the advantages of both the methods for his own purposes.

One also notices that the sensations or perceptions used in these stories are embodied in metaphors or symbols. Sometimes, they are perceived by the characters. A passage from Miss Porter's "Flowering Judas" goes like this:

Braggioni catches her glance solidly as if he had been waiting for it — and sings with tremendous emphasis, weighing his words, — over his lavender collar, crushed upon a purple neck tie held by a diamond hoop, — over the tops of his glossy yellow shoes Braggioni swells with ominous ripeness, his mauve silk hose stretched taut, his ankles bound with the stout leather thongs of his shoes.12

The basic inference to be drawn from his passage is the disgust and fear that Laura feels in Braggioni's presence. To a great extent

this depends on the metaphors used in presenting many of the details. But, as A.M. Wright has aptly pointed out, these metaphors are a part of Laura's perception. She actually feels, how he "catches her glance" and sees him "swelling with ominous ripeness". According to him:

The reader infers the revulsion and fear not from what the metaphors describe, but from the perception of the metaphors themselves.13

Wright also mentions the difference between this and the more conventional use of metaphor. According to him, the conventional metaphor is merely a device used by the narrator to describe a feeling already felt. On the contrary, here the metaphor is a part of the experience of the protagonist. To quote Wright again:

The observed parallelism or symbolism here does not merely express but rather forms feeling as do the sensations recorded in Hemingway's "Big Two Hearted River". The dramatic element is two-fold! We must infer both the metaphorical or symbolical significance that the character has perceived and the feeling or thought that the perception evokes.14

"Flowering Judas" concludes with Laura's dream. Here again Laura sees her predicament in a metaphor - the images of a dream. The reader is required to infer the meaning of the dream. He must also infer what it means to Laura. Often the 'perceived metaphor' is a real event that the protagonist observes or experiences. Its perception is an important part of the action itself. The same method is adopted in stories like Hemingway's: "In Another Country" and "An Alpine Idyll". For example in the story "An Alpine Idyll" the reader has to infer the relations

that exist between the two parts of the story, each of which describes an experience without any direct relation to the other. This has been called a "thematic relationship". We also infer that the two experiences must be similar or parallel. They are meaningful to the hero, because he sees in the experience of the peasant, a parallel to his own actual or potential case. This parallel is not mentioned in the story. As in Laura's dream, the reader has to infer both what the parallel is and what it means to the narrator. Thus both the discovery and the narrator's feeling about it are presented in a fully dramatic way that depends completely on the inferences. The episode of the Janitress in Miss Porter's story "Theft" also has the same technique.

Similar methods are employed by Andersen also. The naked woman in "The Strength of God" and "Respectability", or the horse's skull at the end of "The Man Who Became a Woman" are examples.
Hemingway used the same method in "In Another Country", "The End of Something", "The Cat In The Rain" and "The Hills Like White Elephants". Fitzgerald also used this method in his "Ice Palace".

These techniques for delineating thought and feeling are important landmarks in the development of the Short Story. As pointed out earlier the techniques are well suited for the peculiar mental states in which the writers of the twenties were most interested.

There are efforts by contemporary writers to depart from patterns that the writers of the twenties did so much to establish. But it seems that for most of them, the chief area of experimentation is in subject matter rather than in form or technique. The art propelled by Anderson is applied to new groups of characters and to new kinds of problems and issues. However,
the basic issues are still those inherent in a disintegrated society.

Two of the most representative and admired short story writers of the Post War period were John Cheever and John Updike. Both dealt with the manners, morals and domestic affairs of economically comfortable, but emotionally troubled people. Cheever and Updike reflect the styles and concerns of writers in the New York and New England areas, the traditional geographical bases for major American writers. But the mid twentieth century saw the emergence of a remarkable group of southern writers, many of them women. They seem to have been greatly influenced by the short story writers of the twenties especially in their portrayal of violent emotions.

The writings of Flannery O'Connor is to perhaps closest Faulkner's Gothic sensibility
Both use bizarre, often terrifying characters and situations to probe psychological problems. Most of her characters are maimed either physically or emotionally. Sometimes they also resemble the "grotesques" of Anderson. However, these characters are more capable of spiritual transformation than the so-called normal characters who judge so disparagingly. This could be because of the latter's capacity for great suffering.

Eudora Welty is yet another Southern writer who deserves special mention. She tried to explore the world of extended families belonging to semirural communities. O'Connor and Welty had their roots in the deep south - the rural areas of central Georgia and central Mississippi, respectively.

Writers like James T. Farrel, John O'Hara, J.D. Salinger, Herbert Gold Carson Mc Callers
are other modern American Short Story writers who have tried to experiment with new kinds of formal principles. The dominant notes sounded by these writers are precisely irony and understatement. Their characters seem to be largely unattached either to place or family. If there is a family, it usually includes only husband and wife or on rare occasions a child. In these stories, the extended clan of several generations, rooted in history and location, has disappeared.

In spite of all the differences, these writers have tended to stick to the art propelled by Anderson. At the most they have tried to refine and extend the development of the Short Story of the twenties, as Hemingway and Faulkner extended and developed Anderson's. The distinctive objectivity of treatment displayed by Anderson and others has been carried to such extremes by writers like James T. Farrel and John O'Hara, that some later writers such as John Cheever, Peter Taylor
and others have reacted with a bold effort to reinstate the narrator's personality in their stories. Even these writers, however, have not abandoned the techniques of dramatic inference, elasticity and lyricism, which in the past, have been used by many to explore subject matter of increasing psychological complexity. It is quite obvious that the tradition so powerfully established by Anderson, Hemingway and Faulkner has been maintained by their successors.

Of course, one cannot, by any means, define the nature of the modern Short Story thoroughly by describing the stories of the twenties. However, the stories show clearly the distinctive and universal qualities that have dominated and given a modern character to the art of the Short Story writing. From the beginning to the end of the twenties, the Short Story was extraordinarily productive. Although the popular stories, slick entertainments, and formula plots still flourished,
the new Short Story was gradually coming to the forefront. Experimental magazines in Europe and America, with their modern views of art and reality, helped to create the climate for highly individual "formless" or "pointless" stories. By drawing upon other art forms these writers succeeded in making the Short Story into an art form. The writers became more adept in style and technique. They depicted life more realistically. They became bolder in their themes, exploiting controversial subjects and moral and ethical issues which traditionally were the monopoly of the novel.

The American short story writers of the twenties found their richest source in the regional and the provincial. Miss Porter claimed that all true art is provincial in the most realistic sense. Flannery O'Connor also has stated that the best American fiction has always been regional. Another important source was the city and its life.
The new writers of the decade, in viewing both the worlds, were in a better position to study closely the local and the private. They could draw deeper meanings from them. Together, they reflected the tragic conflict of the age - the rise of material progress and the spiritual wants and needs of democratic man. The American Short Story of the twenties did not receive recognition in its own time. But it left an impressive legacy of experimentation, and diversity, to the future generations of writers and readers. The writers of the twenties themselves shaped the Short Story of their time through experimentation and adaptation. As already seen, among these writers, Sherwood Anderson is the pioneer and his contribution to the development of the modern Short Story is immense. If it had not been for Anderson, the Short Story in America would not have achieved the artistic heights it has achieved today.