CHAPTER - V

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Every country and its literature has its mythology and the mythology of all groups take shape around certain common themes: they all attempt to explain creation, divinity, and religion; attempt to probe the meaning of existence and death; attempt for natural phenomena; and chronicle the adventures of racial heroes.¹ A Myth represents a projection of social and cultural designs upward onto a super human level that sanctions and stabilises the secular ideology. It differs from legends because it comprises of less historical background and more supernatural elements. A myth differs from a fable in that it is less concerned with moral didacticism.

During the neo-classical period, myth was considered a synonym for error but today the tendency is to see myth as a dramatic or narrative rendering of people’s perception of the profoundest truths. Various modern writers have emphasised on the necessity of myth as a material with which an artist works and have attempted to give a new frame of meaning through their personal perceptions of the old myths. Notable among such myth makers are William Blake, W.B.Yeats, Ezra Pound, T.S.Eliot, James Joyce, Wallace Stevens and Hart Crane.

Myth in its traditional sense is an anonymous, non-literary, essentially religious formulation of the cosmic view of a people, who approach its formulations not as representations of truth but as truth itself.² Thanks to the achievement of great thinkers like Sigmund Freud, Carl Gustav Jung, Alfred Adler, Otto Rank, Wilhelm Stekel and others, now the symbolism of mythology has a psychological significance. The nature of dreams and myths is similar that both are symptomatic of the dynamics
of the human psyche. As Joseph Cambell convincingly states in his book, ‘The Hero with a Thousand Faces’, the wonder tales which appear to describe the lives of great heroes, the powers of Gods and Goddesses, the spirit of the dead ancestors give symbolic expression to the unconscious desires, fears and tensions that underlie the conscious patterns of human behaviour.

Mythology in other words, is psychology misread as biography history and cosmology. The modern psychologists can translate it to its proper denotations and thus rescue for the contemporary world a rich and eloquent document of the profoundest truth of human character.3

Campbell comments how indispensable myth is in modern life because it represents the collective unconscious.

The latest incarnation of Oedipus, the continued romance of beauty and the Beast, stand this afternoon on the corner of forty second street and Fifth Avenue, waiting for the traffic light to change.4

Thomas Mann in his speech titled ‘Freud and the future’ argues that mythical interest is as native to psycho-analysis as the psychological interest is to all creative writing. “It’s penetration into the childhood of the individual soul is at the same time a penetration into the childhood of mankind, into the primitive and the mythical”.5

Freud maintained that the artist like a neurotic, withdraws from an unsatisfying reality into the world of imagination, but, unlike the neurotic, he knows how to find a way back from it and once more to get a firm foothold in reality. His creations, works of art, are the imaginary satisfaction of unconscious wishes just as dreams are. But they differ from the social, narcissitic products of dreaming in that they are calculated to arouse sympathetic interest in other people and are able to invoke and to satisfy the same unconscious wishful impulses in them too.
The creative artists have depicted through their use of mythological subject matter the collective unconscious and the archetypal patterns. According to C.G. Jung, the region which is very close to the area of personal unconsciousness is the sphere of collective unconsciousness in which there is nothing personal or individual. This collective unconsciousness has two layers, one that deals with our emotions, the other one that affects our primitive drives. Archetype is a term brought into literary criticism from the psychology of Carl Gustav Jung, who holds that in every individual’s unconscious lies a collective unconscious of the human race— the blocked off memory of our racial past, even of our pre-human experiences. This unconscious racial memory creates ‘primordial images’ shaped by the repeated experience of our ancestors as expressed in myths, legends, dreams, fantasies and literature. T.S. Eliot says, “The prelogical mentality persists in civilized man, but becomes available only to or through the poet”. The primordial image that taps this ‘prelogical mentality’ is called the archetype.6

In a work of art, the symbols which remain in unconscious come into light. The artist,

speaks in primordial images, speaks as with a thousand tongues, he grips and overpowers and at the same time, he elevates that which he treats out of individual and transitory into the sphere of eternal, he exalts the personal lot to the lot of man and there with he releases in us too all those helpful forces that have ever enabled humanity to rescue itself from what ever distress and to live through the longest might.7

The subject matter of the archetypal images is similar in all the cultures. The mythologies, fairytales and traditions express it. In the mythological stories of Prometheus, Hercules and Paradise Lost, the same psychic process has worked. Archetype is akin to Plato’s conception of idea. The contribution of Sir James Frazer and C.G. Jung for a better understanding of mythology is monumental.
Frazer, the Scottish anthropologist, in his work the ‘Golden Bough’ made a significant study of magic and religion, attempting to trace the prehistoric beginnings of numerous myths. Jane Harrison, F.M. Cornford, Gilbert Murray and few others analysed the ritual conflicts that were found in the works of Homer and Greek tragedians. The works of these writers are of great academic value as they have immediate impact on the imaginative use of myth by James Joyce and others.

C.G. Jung maintained that “the civilized man preserves unconsciously those prehistoric areas of knowledge which he articulated obliquely in myth”. The creative imagination of D.H. Lawrance was strongly influenced by Frazer and Jung. Lawrance explored the unknown and obscure regions of unconsciousness in his novels, and presented the problems of human relationships with revaluations of sex. His theory of ‘blood consciousness’ is close to the theory propounded by Jung in that the sophisticated man in the modern industrialised world should respond affirmatively to the elemental forces. Lawrance propounds his own ideas of unconscious in ‘Psychoanalysis and Unconscious’ and ‘Fantasia of the Unconscious’. He differs from Freud as he observes:

Now this is going too far. We are bound to admit that an element of sex enters into all human activity. But so does an element of greed, and of many other things. We are bound to admit that into all human relationships, particularly adult human relationships a large element of sex enters. We are thankful that Freud has insisted on this... All is not sex and sexual motive is not to be attributed to all human activities.

D.H. Lawrance depicts the unconscious in most of his novels. He makes use of symbols to paint it. This unconscious is dark and mysterious. The Blood consciousness depicted in his novels show that his characters which were guided by this were happy and get fulfilment in their lives. C.G. Jung’s Classification of man,
his archetypal patterns and collective unconsciousness have found their way in some of his novels. Like D.H. Lawrance, the Jungians regarded that the ancient mythologies and culture contain in them the collective unconscious, the heritage of human experience which is immortal. They regarded

Myth not as the dream of the inhibited individual person but as protoplastic pattern of the race which, so far as the individual repeats it, bespeaks not illness but his natural participation in the collective unconsciousness.\(^\text{10}\)

James Joyce’s ‘Ulysses’ and ‘Finnegan’s wake’ both bear the impact of Jung’s collective unconscious. Joyce was well aware of Jung and his philosophy that traced the root of our inhibitions and complexes to the collective unconsciousness. The myths are like dreams. The old mythologies of a culture or a race contain that collective unconsciousness of man in them. Hence Jung held the old myths to be very important.

Joyce’s ‘Ulysses’ introduces Greek mythology in it. ‘Ulysses’ has been paralleled with Homer’s ‘Odyssey’ because nearly all the phases in Odysseus’ return journey have their counterpart in ‘Ulysses’. Leopold Bloom is Odysseus and Molly Bloom is Penelope. Bloom is the representation of the collective unconsciousness. In ‘Finnegan’s’ Wake’ the dream described has been juxtaposed with myth. This novel represents personal as well as racial guilt in a dream language. Earwicker is the Krishna, the Buddha, and the Mohammad, and can be identified with other heroes of the world. He is at the same time a common man of Dublin. This novel does not confine itself to one particular time but refers to all time and thus justifies Joyce’s use of the Hindu, Christian, Islamic, Egyptian and Irish mythologies. Words and phrases from other languages have been used in this novel. Joyce has used a new concept of
collective unconsciousness also in ‘Finnegan’s Wake’ where he links it directly to mythology. Earwicker and Anna Livia Plurabella are the mythological characters. Earwicker is an archetypal man and Anna Livia Plurabella is an archetypal woman. More over, Joyce was familiar with the philosophy of Vico, an Italian philosopher. Hence he combined Jung’s collective unconscious with Giamttista Vico’s use of myth and legendary heroes. Vico remarked that the lives of heroes represent the aspirations of men.

... By Archetype I mean a coherent pattern of beliefs and feelings so widely shared at a level beneath consciousness that there exists no abstract vocabulary for representing it, and so “sacred” that unexamined, irrational restraints inhibit any explicit analysis. Such a complex finds a formula or pattern story, which serves both to embody it, and, at first at least to conceal its full implications. Later, the secret may be revealed, the archetype “analysed” or “allegorically” interpreted according to the language of the day.\(^\text{11}\)

So remarks Leslie Fiedler. The characters of the mythologies most often remain unexamined because mythology is directly related to religion. Religion is understood as conciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and of human lives. But according to Jung the importance of mythology is very great because the symbols of mythology conceal with in them the problems of human race and thus represent the collective unconscious. The motives and symbols in mythology are archetypes and they represent instinctive reactions. According to Jung, “Archetypes are self portraits of the instincts in the psyche as psychological processes transform into pictures as primal pattern of human behaviour.”\(^\text{12}\)

The language of the unconscious is a picture language and the archetypes appear in the symbolic form of pictures. The language of the unconscious expresses
itself in various figures of speech. Hence mythology becomes an inseparable aspect of every culture with its archetypes representing and vocalising the collective unconscious. Through folklores and fairytales the achievements of these archetypes get passed on from one generation to the next. The stories become so commonly popular amongst the members of the race that to dissociate oneself from this myth consciousness proves to be very difficult. Each age expends the literary material available in its mythology to articulate its ideas and philosophy. As appropriately observed by Leslie Fiedler,

Unwittingly, we are possessed in childhood by these characters and their indiscriminated meaning, and it is difficult for us to dissociate them without a sense of belief. What – these house hold figures clues to our subtlest passions! ... But of course, we do not have to be conscious of what possesses us; in every generation of our own writers the archetype reappears, refracted, half understood but there.  

An archetype represents the psychic inheritance. Jung called the contents of the collective unconscious dominance, imagos, mythological or primordial images and a few other names. The collective unconscious is a reservoir of human experience as a species, a kind of knowledge every human is born with. Yet, individuals are not directly conscious of it, nor can they ever be. But this knowledge thus influences all our experiences and behaviours most especially the emotional ones, but human beings know about it only indirectly by looking at those influences. Hence an archetype has an unlearned tendency to experience things in a certain way.

There are some experiences which show the effects of collective unconscious more clearly than others. The experiences of love at first sight of 'deja vu' (the feeling of having been in a place before) and the immediate recognition of certain symbols and meanings of certain myths, could all be understood as the sudden conjunction of
our outer reality with the inner reality of the collective unconscious. More sublime and grander examples are the creative experiences shared by artists and musicians all over the world and in all times, or the spiritual experiences of the mystics of all religions, or the parallels in dreams, fantasies, mythologies, fairy tales and literature. Jung was sure that we are all born with the knowledge of such experiences. An archetype thus acts as an organising principle on the things we see or do. It has no form of its own and it works the way that instincts work in Freud’s theory. The archetype is like a black hole in space and one can feel its presence by how it draws matter and light to itself.

Jung said that there is no fixed number of archetypes which one could simply list or memorise. They overlap and easily melt into each other as needed, and their logic is not the usual kind. Besides Mother, there are other family archetypes. Obviously there is Father who is often symbolised by a guide or an authority figure. There is also the archetype family which represents the idea of blood relationship and ties that run deeper than those based on conscious reasons. The Christ child celebrated at Christmas and Krishna are the manifestations of Child archetype. The child archetype often blends with other archetypes to form the Child – God or the Child – Hero.

Mahabharata and Ramayana, the Indian epics have been the perennial reservoirs of rich literary themes. The first version of Mahabharata was just a ballad of the epic battle of Kurushetra. Episodes and anecdotes were added to it down the ages by various persons to make it into the present version. The inseparable version of mythology and religion has made a few ascribe divine origin to Mahabharata and they
object the theory that several Vyasaas together shaped the Mahabharata. The term Vyasa means an editor, a compiler. Bhima of Mahabharata and Hanuman of Ramayana are the two epic characters venerated all over India and at all times for their physical power and their intellectual greatness. It was only in 1947 that the world came to know of the translation of Mahabharata by Ganguli, a work that retained the splendour of the original, Vyasa’s Mahabarata. As M.T states, “the Bhima of Mahabharata is human, archetypal, a classic example of a man with human weaknesses and strengths”\textsuperscript{14}.

M.T has always attempted to analyse the psychology of a second born in his works. Govindan Kutty of ‘Asuravithu’ and Sethu of ‘Kaalam’ have undergone innumerable emotional implosions whenever they did not receive appreciation and acknowledgement from their family and from the society. Want of appreciation has left them demoralised and emotionally crippled. M.T helped his readers read the minds of these characters as if they were open books. As Alfred Adler states, children born with organic defect or born in impoverished condition are the target of ridicule, derision and pity. When they look at others and compare their lot with others, they feel discouraged. Such children with a sense of inferiority remain maladjusted. Some of them try to overcome it with determination. A neglected child, which a second born invariably mistakes itself to be one, gets a wrong perception of the situations in life. A second born experiences inadequacy of love, affection, appreciation and approval. When he encounters difficult situations in life, he lacks confidence to face it squarely and most likely he is bound to exaggerate the difficulties. Adler further states that, every one of us suffers from a feeling of inferiority in one way or the other. If there is
any cause of inferiority, it will cause tension. Sometimes the person deludes himself into the sense of superiority without having any cause for it.

The inferiority complex appears before a problem for which an individual is not properly adapted or equipped and expresses his conviction that he is unable to solve it. From this definition, we can see that anger can be as much an expression of an inferiority complex as tears or apologies. As inferiority feelings always produce tension, there will always be a compensatory movement towards a feeling of superiority; but it will no longer be directed towards solving the problem.15

In this context, K. Sachithanandan makes an appropriate observation that,

‘Second Turn’ is, at least on the surface, a departure from his (M.T.’s) usual manner as here the theme comes not from his village society but from the Mahabharata. But the structure of feelings here is no different from is earlier works... Bhima’s experience here is one of neglect that leads seething indignation as in many of M.T’s characters in his earlier narratives... caught in the solitary moments of their encounter with the self which was seldom at home in a hostile world and often motivated by an impotent rage against an exploitative system or yearning for revenge the very realization of which also revealed its futility.16

Appunni of Naalukettu, Govindankutty of Asuravithu, Sethu of Kaalam and Vimala of Manju, all share some what the same structure of feeling. Bhima of Randamoozham is also cast in the same mould where the language of M.T is lyrical with a touch of classical gravity.

Randamoozham, which was published in December 1984, saw its Fourteenth impression in January 2002. It is one of the most widely read novels of M.T. It did invite unfavourable criticism stating that M.T has done an injustice to the national epic by bringing Bhima and other characters down from their epic heights and treating them like commoners in ordinary domestic contexts. But P.K. Ravindranath who translated Randamoozham as ‘Second Turn’ into English states that:
M.T is of course the chronicler par excellence of the crumbling Nair Tharawads (Households) of Northern Kerala, historically one of the most written-about themes in Malayalam fiction right from O. Chandu Menon’s ‘Indulekha’ (1889) down to the present day. But ‘Second Turn’ stands many an issue at stake here on its head as it were by subtly, unobtrusively, subliminally even, calling attention to the possible linkages between the story of his own community or village society and that of the larger – than – life characters of the epic.17

The title of the novel ‘Randamoozham’ implies a peculiar ambiguity suggesting that the first turn has already been taken and the protagonist is destined to accept the second turn with no choice. Bhima is the second born of the Pandavas and “is always already defeated – by virtue of his ‘belatedness’ as a second born who is condemned to wait his turn”18. Though he has been responsible for various victories of the Pandavas, never has his contribution been accepted or applauded. Bhima, the second born has always taken this predicament as a personal tragedy deprived of his legitimate share of fame and name. The Mahabharata of Vyasa has hidden in its textual folds dark silent spaces that have provided M.T with a literary scope for translating the silence of Bhima.

Bhima has always been perceived as all body and no wit.

To wrest this huge mass of body out of the epic tradition, endowing him with a raging mind and a tormented spirit and ultimately rereading the whole of Mahabharata through his angle of vision19 is the achievement of M.T. The whole novel revolves round Bhima giving him special significance by compelling him to be vocal about his emotional experiences. Bhima is portrayed as a one conscious of his physicality, invariably trying in vain to project his existence as an emotional being. He is found precariously poised between body and spirit, attempting aggressively to demolish his image as a dim witted warrior. M.T
'demythifies' and demystifies Bhima making him emote like an ordinary man longing for recognition.

It becomes evident as one travels through the world of the Mahabharata that Bhima is just not a character with a double chin, protruding stomach and a huge mace, but one to whom his strength was both a curse and a burden. A staunch warrior, who did not need to hide his passions, hopes and disappointments, a simple man, who was not bound by philosophy or Aryan laws. His purity of character is evident in several places in his relation with Draupadi,\textsuperscript{20} says M.T Vasudevan Nair in his introduction to ‘Randamoozham’.

Henry James considered that “the art of fiction does not begin until the novelist thinks of his story as a matter to be shown, to be exhibited that it will tell itself”.\textsuperscript{21} M.T’s narrative technique follows James’ diction close at the heels by allowing the protagonist Bhima to think aloud the thoughts that trouble and torment him. M.T uses the Stream of Consciousness technique with direct interior monologue as well as indirect interior monologue in this novel. Bhima’s speech directly and dramatically exhibits events and conversations, records the feelings of both faithful and unfaithful fraternal beings, talks about them and sums them up. The narrative technique of M.T demands the reader to participate in the production of the text’s meaning so that the text shapes the reader. M.T attempts to present a concept of Bhima’s psychic life through his narrative technique in Randamoozham.

James Joyce maintains an objective distance in ‘Ulysses’ while showing,

the level of man’s day dreams and mental delusions, the smallness of man, the great disparity between his ideas and his actualities and the prosaicness of most of the feelings he considers special... the odyssey pattern is a means of equating the heroic and the ordinary, and internal monologue is a means of equating the trivial and the profound... only within Stream of Consciousness could the necessary objectivity be attained for making it all convincingly realistic.\textsuperscript{22}
M.T also maintains an artistic objectivity throughout *Randamoozham* by allowing Bhima to do the talking. Though he has taken the subject matter of the novel from Vyasa’s *Mahabharata*, M.T has taken ample care not to deviate from the original. He has a very valid reason for looking at the story from Bhima’s point of view also. As he states:

I have not changed the framework of the story put together by the first Vyasa, Krishnadwaipayana. The basis for the liberties I have taken is his silence in some portions. I have read between his lines and expanded on his pregnant silences... Dhritarashtra says that the single reason he could not sleep was because Bhima was on the opposite side. The leader, who won the war, but did not get anything. For that very reason, I adopted Bhima’s point of view. For me, Bhima occupies the central position in *Mahabharata*... Bhima was a man who has no expectations of another world and its blessings. It was because of that Bhima took an oath in the gambling hall. In the war, it was not Arjuna or Karna who exhibited the greatest bravery, but Bhima. It was Bhima who killed the Kauravas in direct confrontation. He who kills the enemy is the victor. According to the prevalent law of the land Bhima was entitled to the Kingdom.23

*‘Randamoozham’* opens in first person narrative with Arjuna as the speaker. The City of Dwaraka has been devoured by the raging sea. The Pandavas could only stand helpless, watching with increased agony at nature in her most disastrous mood. The mighty warriors, as the Pandavas have always been acknowledged by their countrymen could only remain mute witness for the ruthless havoc played by the ravenous waves of the sea. Everything about the ambiance is ominous. Krishna is dead leaving Arjuna alone and aghast. All the members of his family have perished. Only the Pandavas and their royal queen Draupadi are left to suffer their inescapable destiny. They are bound to perish in the most painful way by being helpless observers of death around. Draupadi along with the Pandavas take up their final journey, journey unto death. Their country is shrouded with gloom and Bhima stands listening
to the silence of his barren kingdom as if it were singing a suppressed dirge. It is at
this moment that Draupadi falls down. None of the Pandavas but Bhima slow down
and step to attend to her. Yudhishtira, the eldest speaks lightly of his own royal
spouse and advises Bhima to abandon her. Arjuna for whom Draupadi has had her
fondest love, ignores Bhima and continues with the journey. Nakula and Sahadeva,
Bhima’s younger brothers also ignore Bhima’s plea by muttering that there is no time
to wait for any one. Bhima is shocked and saddened by the inhuman attitude of the
other Pandavas. He has always held Draupadi close to his heart though he was well
aware that Draupadi had never cared to either receive his love completely or
reciprocate adequately. Yet Bhima has always loved her. He has even wished that
sometime she may openly accept him. At least while she was at the threshold of
death, she could have accepted Bhima. But the disappointment on not seeing
Yudhishtira and Arjuna is visible even in her unseeing eyes. Till the end she had
never said what Bhima had wanted her to say, always wanted to hear her saying.
With this heavy prologue the novel commences allowing Bhima the archetype for a
rapid retrospection of his ‘was’ and ‘is’.

Bhima is the archetype of the second born or the middle child. Through the
title of the novel Randamoozham meaning second turn (which has been translated into
English as ‘Second Turn’ by P.K.Ravindranath), M.T rereads the whole of
Mahabharata through his angle of vision. Bhima, the blockhead and a dim–witted
warrior is endowed with a raging mind and tormented spirit. By virtue of his
‘belatedness’, he is condemned to wait as a second born. Bhima is presented to the
reader in totality as the novelist steers the story clear of all kinds of spiritualist traps. "At times one hears Bhima talking about the possible ways in which he would be read and talked about by posterity."24

Bhima chooses to relive his past when he attempts to recollect it. His direct interior monologues not only allow the readers to travel along with him into the deeper frontiers of his psyche but also allow Bhima himself to objectively analyse and evaluate his emotional life. Henry James has often insisted on dramatising. Instead of telling, he had always encouraged showing because showing is supposedly the direct presentation of events and conversations, where the narrator seems to disappear and the reader is left to draw his own conclusions on what he sees and hears. Bhima in Randamoozham shows and sometimes tells. While telling, he mediates the presentation and instead of directly and dramatically exhibiting events and conversations, he talks about them and sums them up. M.T uses the narrative tool of Stream of Consciousness to its optimum advantage thereby compelling Bhimasena the archetype second born, reveal and review the complex psyche of the ‘second born’.

Bhima’s narration commences with his description of the journey to Hastinapur from Shatashringa. After the death of Pandu, Kunti his royal queen takes her five sons and returns to the country and the court life. Bhima learns a lot about the royal history of how his father instead of reigning proudly over his kingdom went on a hunting expedition to the forest along with his Mother and Aunt and stayed in the forest for full six years. Bhima vividly recollects the occasion of their formal entry into the capital city and thereby into the grand court life. The conches are blown and the drums rolled and people began collecting in clusters to get a glimpse of the five
princes and their royal mother at the gates of the palace. Even during the festivities, Bhima found that his elder brother Yudhishtira was the object of attraction and appreciation. His younger brother, valiant Arjuna was received with awe and respect. His kid brothers, Nakula and Sahadeva were the objects of endearment. He felt that he alone was laughed at by his kith and kin.

Someone pushed me in front “The second Pandava born by the blessings of Vayu. He is destined to become very strong, this Bhimasena.

I raised my head and looked to see if Duryodhana, my uncle’s son, heard what was said, if he were still among the women. All of them were laughing. Could it be that people did not believe what was said? Were they laughing at the boy born to become a very strong man?²⁴

Bhima has always been made conscious of his big built that almost gave him an uncouth and awkward bearing as a youngster. He was pleased to see Duryodhana who looked bigger than him and wore jewels befitting a prince. Duryodhana and Bhima were born on the same day and even on their very first meeting Duryodhana did not hesitate to express his displeasure and hatred on receiving the Pandavas at Hastinapur. Bhima came to know that there were stories about his birth. The night he was born in the forest there was hurricane at Hastinapur and vultures and wild fowls had shrieked. Wild animals that came into the palace courtyard snorted. He was destined to ruin the family. Some who looked into his horoscope said that this prediction was applicable to Duryodhana also.

Yudhishtira who was just one year older than Bhima was the one who would be the king later. Hence he smiled only to the extent necessary, accepted the gifts and sat with a stern expression. People, who came to see the Pandavas, always remembered to see Bhima, for a specific reason.
Before they left, after seeing Arjuna who was to become an ace archer, they remembered me, who at birth had slipped, fallen on hard rocks smashing them to pieces and rolled off unhurt. Everyone looked at this wonder kid. Pretending to fondle me at close quarters, some tried to test my strength...I felt uneasy with shame. Compared to other children, was my build so different?  

Bhima had always been a lover of food. His hunger was even a matter of both surprise and sneer. He has been called Vrikodara meaning ‘wolf-bellied’ Young Bhima who had never tasted rich food in the forest found it something new that, at the royal palace food could come in so many forms and taste. In the forests when one was hungry anything that could fill the stomach was food. In the palace, “the servers who offered more helpings of dishes, smiled. I pretended not to notice. Yudhishtira looked angry as if all this did not befit princes.” (Randamoozham. p.15) On the first night at the palace, Bhima thought of his Father’s death as he lay down. All the five sons of Pandu performed funeral rites but Bhima had a doubt. “But according to what the sages have said, was it my father who has died? It was the God of the wind that I, who was destined to grow into a strong man, should revere as my father. He has no death”. (Randamoozham. pp.15-16).

M.T even at a very early stage of the novel, when Bhima is just a five year old boy makes him vocal enough to express the three most important nagging aspects of his life. Firstly, his visible embarrassment over his different body built; secondly, Yudhishtira’s deliberate belittling of his behaviour; and thirdly, the perennial doubt regarding his biological father. Through the course of the novel, Bhima faces emotional problems due to his doubts regarding these three unanswered queries. On many occasions his stature had been the target of crude fun and public comments. Equally innumerable were the occasions when Yudhishtira as the first born had snubbed Bhima as ‘mandha’ meaning ‘idiot’. Till the end Bhima had been acutely
conscious of the need to identify his father who, he was sure cannot be the Lord of the wind. M.T repeatedly draws the attention of the readers to these disturbing questions that control the emotional balance of Bhima. As a second born, he had never received his share of legitimate appreciation and applause. As a second born, his suggestions, on the domestic as well as political front, had never been heeded to. Though the Pandavas and their physical well being was directly related to the physical strength and mental agility of Bhima, no one, including Kunti their royal mother, had ever acknowledged openly the gratitude Bhima deserved. Bhima hence had been a loner emotionally. His emotional implosions started as early as when he was a five year old.

‘Randamoozham’ is certainly a psychological novel where M.T has explored a new realm of experience and revealed the amazing depths and fluidity of Bhima’s consciousness. He uses the Stream of Consciousness technique to study the inner life, temperament, moods, fantasies, associative memories, momentary observations, dreams and subconscious thoughts of the well known epic character, Bhimasena of Mahabharata. M.T deliberately annihilates the chronological order of time by not abiding to a calendar or a clock. Plot, action, character and thoughts are submerged in the Stream of Consciousness.

Bhima, the second born, dreamt that an elephant, which had run amok came charging at him shaking his tusks. He was blocked on his way by a sentry with an axe and Bhima felt that the sentry’s face resembled that of Duryodhana. M.T presents the five year old little boy praying frantically to his divine father “Oh, God, who reigns in hurricanes, here I am, your five–year old son”. (Randamoozham, p.29). The days of Bhima’s youth in Hastinapur were busy and eventful. He had lots of servants to keep him company. He attended the Veda school in the morning. The Pandava princes
were given training in the use of weapons along with their cousins. When Bhima had no lessons he would go to the elephants stable to meet an old man whom any elephant will obey. The old man allowed Bhima to enter the elephant enclosure with him and taught him many things about elephant behaviour and how to handle an elephant. During one such occasion, Bhima mistook a boy who had accompanied his cousins Duryodhana and Dusshasana for his elder brother Yudhishtira. Later when he came to know that he was not Yudhishtira but Karna, Bhima was astounded by the strange similarity. Bhima had already picked up unhealthy rivalry with his cousins who were keen on provoking him. Many times his cousins had called him names like Vrikodara, the gluttonous Wolf and Mandha, the blockhead. On such contexts, Bhima had never spared them without serious physical assaults. But invariably his mother and elder brother Yudhishtira believed the faulty version of his cousins and reprimanded him.

Bhima never failed to repeatedly request the favour of his divine father even while attempting to get mastery over the use of weapons. Yudhishtira was for chariot warfare, Arjuna for archery. No body specified any warfare for Bhima. Invariably he was left alone. In the evenings during on such occasions, he would think of the God of wind to protect him. Most often Bhima’s voice will be filled with the agony of being left alone.

I meditated on Vayu, who patrolled the area.
Do you hear my prayers, my Lord, in that unknown distance?
A thousand ripples rose in the river. A soft wind that blends in from some far off place, ruffled my hair. Unseen hands wet with tiny water drops embraced me. Some one whispered in my ears, I listen, I listen. (Randamoozham, p.37).
Bhima could vividly recollect the day they went for hunting when they did not have lessons. Lessons in hunting too were a part of young Kshatriya’s education. The first kill meant much. The trip to the woods was also to familiarise the princes with the jungle and the movement of animals. Suddenly Bhima heard a cry from the camp opposite. When he reached the spot he found a huge deer that had fallen and Arjuna was standing nearby accepting felicitations from everyone with a big broad grin. He was then ten years old and Bhima was eleven. Bhima took great pride in Arjuna’s feat and Yudhishtira said that Arjuna must offer thanks to Gods for the first kill.

During the return journey, Bhima was challenged by a wild boar and he killed it with his three-arms-length spear. It was a narrow escape and when he pulled the spear out of the boar, a gush of blood splattered on his body. Yudhishtira did not congratulate him as he had done Arjuna. Instead he said in all seriousness, “Idiot, what stupidity have you committed? Mother shouldn’t know” (*Randamoozham*, p.40).

There was no celebration or shouting as there should have been when a Kshatriya killed his first animal, nor did his elder brother mention anything about appeasing the gods or making any offering. But Bhima was fully conscious of his courage even though to his brother he might have appeared stupid. He might have appeared to be a simpleton to the Kouravas too, but he was certainly growing strong.

M.T often draws the attention of the reader to the working of Bhima’s mind. Yudhishtira, the Prince Crown to the throne along with other elders frequently underestimated the intelligence of Bhima. On one occasion, Bhima felt an overwhelming sense of compassion for his hostile cousin, Duryodhana. When Duryodhana invited
Bhima to taste liquor, Bhima declined the offer by stating that he was too young for intoxicants. It was then that Duryodhana lauded Bhima for his bravery in killing the wild boar. Heart in hearts, Bhima was immensely hurt that no one inside the palace had even mentioned the killing of the boar. He had not heard a word of praise. The elders had offered prayers for the first animal that Arjuna had shot. Grand father Bheeshma had even presented him with an arrow with golden wings. Duryodhana, who Bhima had considered a rival, was the only one to praise him. He said in the tone of an adult:

You became a man the day you felled the wild boar with a spear... The first animal that a man fells, the first enemy he kills and the first woman he takes will ever be remembered by him.

Along with the words of solace and praise, Duryodhana uttered words of provocation and scorn. He laughed at the story that went with the parentage of the Pandavas.

"Yudhishtira from Dharma, Bhima from Vayu, Arjuna from Indra! As Uncle Soubala says, you are fools. Didn’t your mother think of some other good story to narrate?"
I stiffened. The meaning of what he said seeped in slowly. My throat dried up with anger...
"In order to hide the identity of the father, the children were conveniently conceived in the forest. The poor people would believe anything said by the sages. But, do you have to repeat that to me, Vrikodara?" As I rose, Duryodhana’s laughter boomed: “The son of Vayu, The strong man.”

(Randamoozham. p.47)

Bhima loathed his cousin for his guts and gumption.

M.T. is undoubtedly the most complex and original genius in the domain of modern Malayalam fiction who combines symbolism, Stream of Consciousness, the interior monologue, the collective unconsciousness, the unabated agony of being a
second born and the mythological story. He maintains the fluidity of language to suit his narrative style. He presents in *Randamoozham* the selected moments of importance and renders them from within the feelings, emotions, apprehensions and doubts and the intellectual life of Bhima, who is more emotional and more intelligent than any other character in Mahabharata. *Randamoozham* is a complete break from the entire historical tradition of Malayalam fiction. There is no unfamiliar plot, no suspense and no promise made to contain the curiosity of the reader. The story of Mahabharata is one of the most widely read and cannot offer anything new to the reader which he had not already known. But the remarkable achievement of M.T. is in the creation of the fluidity, the most characteristic feature of the Stream of Consciousness fiction and which is also the fundamental attribute of a work of art. Bhima’s speech is the most delicate, sensitive and lyrical of all the speeches of the characters of *Randamoozham*.

Bhima became increasingly conscious of his appearance as he grew into adulthood. Unconsciously he found himself comparing his appearance to that of his brothers. Arjuna had grown taller. As he grew up, his complexion took on a tinge of blue. He stood out in a group and anyone would give him a second look. Nakula and Sahadeva were the handsome ones. Nakula was a trifle too proud of his good looks. On the other hand, even though Bhima’s body had developed and looked manly, he did not have a mustache like Arjuna. He had only four or five sprouts of golden hair on his lower chin. When his body grew larger, his neck looked smaller. He did not give much thought to the clothes or ornaments he would wear. He had no illusions that a string of flowers or a necklace would make him handsome. Even on the day when the Princes were exhibiting their skills, Bhima did not evoke any expectation
either amongst his kith and kin or in the minds of his teacher, Drona. In the arena, Bhima surprised everyone with his skill in archery. All his arrows hit their target, impressing his spectators who applauded his performance loudly. Even before he could exhibit his speed and skill in archery, his teacher Drona shouted at him to show the use of maces. He called Bhima, a blockhead and warned him that time was running out. Bhima was compelled to go for a duel with Duryodhana, and he was happy to defeat his cousin in an arena filled with enthusiastic spectators. Duryodhana deliberately provoked him and invited him for a serious fight. “Blockhead, the spectators should not be disappointed.” (*Randamoozham*. p.60). In the duel Bhima was the victor. His cousin had become weaker and slower when Bhima was thinking of the victory stand. His mace hungered for the moment when it would deal the fatal blow on his cousin. It clung to his hand like a live thing. But at that juncture, his teachers stopped him saying it was more than enough.

Arjuna was summoned next to exhibit his skill in archery. Karna who challenged Arjuna was put down stating that Kshatriya princes do not engage in contests with people of unequal status. Bhima too insulted Karna as a low-born. Duryodhana demanded Bhima if he could say decidedly that the graceful Karna was a low born. He argued that no one asked for the origin of the brave or the rivers. Then moving towards Bhima he said, “No one enquires about the secret of how the eunuch Pandu had children” (*Randamoozham*.p.65), Bhima heard later that his mother had fainted during the exhibition and wondered whether what Duryodhana said about his parentage was audible to his mother in the women’s enclosure.
As the novel develops, the reader finds Bhima becoming increasingly and disturbingly conscious of his dubious parentage. He was no longer able to appease his own mind that put forth logical and pertinent question that shook the very roots of his faith that he was Vayu Putra, the son of God of Wind. His mind, at the threshold of adulthood refused to accept the stories about the birth of the Pandavas. The doubt looming large, throwing upon him a shroud of fear and doubt made Bhima more and more withdrawn and aloof.

Instead of going to the Palace, I walked slowly to the banks of the Ganga. After the evening prayers, I stood listening to the soft murmurs of the river. The wind came up treading on the tides... I felt the evenings I had spent on these lonely shores as a child, to pickup his message intended for my ears was now far too distant. The God of Tornados, Dharma and Indra must have always heard Duryodhana's insulting words. I wondered why none of our fathers had expressed any protest. The whirl wind did not howl. The clouds did not thunder. I walked through the darkness comforting myself that the Gods must have figured out some other time to wreak their vengeance.

(Randamoozham. pp. 55-66).

M.T allows his protagonist Bhima to be highly vocal, and the rapidity with which Bhima's thoughts tumble upon one another, yet without losing coherence and logic surprise the reader. This uncontrollable rush of thought has been well explained by William James thus:

The rush of thought is so head long that it almost always brings us at the conclusions before we can arrest it or if our purpose is nimble enough and we do arrest it, it ceases forth with to be itself.²⁷

M.T's narrative method in Randamoozham is a method of a running reverie, a silent soliloquy, the mind in the process of thinking with its tangled fragments of mental association. M.T blends realism, symbolism and psychology and perceives the truth that lays hidden in the silence of his character. A new dimension brings in a new
perspective allowing him to fuse tradition and experiment. M.T’s use of interior monologue enables the reader to enter the inner life of Bhima straight away. Bhima’s psyche, as typical of human psyche, is not a simple entity functioning logically and rationally in a predictable manner. It is a vast fluid, even vaporous mass. As J.W. Beach observes:

The human soul has, for the most part, no identity at all, but is a kind of dreaming welter of sensations and reactions, so instantaneous and spontaneous that we never become conscious of them. In many aspects the soul is not individualised as belonging to this or that. But is a mere jet of the vitality common to our race or sex or social group. Our consciousness, which is a small part of the soul, does not proceed logically or coherently except at certain times and for certain periods under the pressure of some urgent practical need.

Bhima’s physical strength and mental courage combined with Vidura’s political acumen and Kunti’s womanly shrewdness, all combine to save the Pandava princes from the treacherous conspiracy of the Kauravas. They escape from the palace built of wax. Duryodhana had deliberately gifted his cousins; the Pandavas with the magnificent palace made of wood, wax and clarified butter. His plan was to kill them in a fire accident. The whole family of the Pandavas made a miraculous escape and it was Bhima who physically transported them to a place of safety. He carried his brothers and mother on his shoulders without showing even the slightest sign of exhaustion. No body ever openly acknowledged their indebtedness to Bhima for having saved their lives.

While collecting water for his exhausted brothers and weary mother, Bhima came upon a young aboriginal girl, Hidimbi. Bhima took her for his wife much against his elder brother Yudhishtira’s protests. Yudhishtira was asservative that the girl was the devil who goes about in human form during the day and wanders at night as
an invisible witch hungering for human flesh. Bhima killed Hidimbi’s mighty brother who proved to be an equal to Bhima in physical strength. Bhima knew that he had slain his first enemy. He was filled with a strange happiness. “Bhimasena’s first fight unto death. I am Bhimasena, the all powerful son of Vayu, the God of Storms. I wanted to shout so that the entire forest could hear me.” (Randamoozham. p. 87).

Bhima’s mother accepted Hidimbi for her first daughter-in-law. Yudhishtira alone warned Bhima not to sleep with her at night as she may know black-magic. He insisted on Bhima staying with his brothers.

Bhima’s valour was put to test at the village of Ekachakra when his mother promised the Brahmins who lived there to send her son to save them from the cruel giant Baka. Yudhishtira was visibly perturbed by his mother’s promise and may be it was the only occasion when he openly acknowledged that their very survival was in the hands of Bhima. He was upset that his mother had made a rash promise. He said, “What a stupid thing you have said! We all sleep peacefully safe in the shadow of Bhimasena’s strength. Don’t you know that, mother?” (Randamoozham. p.92) Yudhishtira also acknowledged that when ever he thought of measures to establish their claim to the throne, it was always Bhima’s strength that he saw as a support. Bhima was greatly pleased to hear words of praise from a brother who had addressed him only as a blockhead so long. “I thanked my brother in my heart that he had spoken the truth that all the four persons lived under the protection of my arm” (Randamoozham. p.92).

Bhima had been demonstrative in his love for his brothers and mother. His compassion for them had even been whole hearted and full fledged. Never had he ever carried spite or venom against Yudhishtira nor had spoken anything disrespectful
to him. Ironically, Yudhishtira had looked at Bhima only as his personal body guard who would stake his life to protect the lives of his family members. Bhima had been a dim witted big made person for his own family members. M.T draws to surface the noble feature of Bhima's character - readiness to show unconditional love. Bhima is not insensitive to words of insult, but the nobility of his character had never allowed him to retort those who had consciously wounded him. M.T offers many episodes to highlight this praiseworthy trait of Bhima. Bhima's grief regarding his unsure parentage, his uncouth bearing which never failed to invite comments of sarcasm, and his being a second born had never corrupted his love and respect for his elder brother and adoration for the younger ones. Though he had failed often to fathom the motives behind his mother's actions, he had never disobeyed her in any context. His immense patience with his brothers had invariably been interpreted as stupidity.

Bhima's character rises to supreme heights when he fiercely argued against the sharing of Draupadi as the wife of all the Pandavas. His conscience had never allowed him to look at Draupadi as a mere lifeless article, won in an archery contest. He never tried to hide his revulsion and shock when his mother insisted on all her five sons sharing Draupadi. She even convinced that the priests also approved of polyandry. More than his mother's words, what shocked Bhima were Yudhishtira's words in all seriousness. "What a wrong thing Mother said. Even if they were only casual words, it was a Mother's command. Righteousness demands that we should not violate it." (Randamoozham. pp.106-107). Bhima did not fail to observe that Draupadi was unhappy with this unusual arrangement.

Bhima's revulsion grew manifold when he saw at close quarters Yudhishtira's unholy lust to claim Draupadi under the pretext of fulfilling Mother's words.
Yudhishtira appeared urgent in silencing Bhima, who he was sure would not stand by anything that went against his conscience. Yudhishtira justified polyandry by quoting many examples from the lives of Sages.

M.T through Bhima, articulates the anguish of an average contemporary man, the anguish that invariably goes unheeded.

"What advise?" My voice was harsh. "Draupadi is for Arjuna. If you insist on polyandry, you may join him. You must determine his views too—he who has won through his skill and bravery. Then Draupadi—oh, we never bother about the likes and the dislikes of women"... I tired not to get excited. My brother clung to the flimsy point about what Mother has said. However learned he might be in the scriptures, I thought how contemptible he was.

Brother got up with a sigh. If he argued, sometimes the dull younger brother would also find appropriate words. Perhaps he understood that. He walked away quietly.

I did not intend to leave him alone.

"Stop."

I caught up with him.

"Leave me out. There is a girl waiting for me in the forest who carries my seed. Even though she is not qualified to live with the Kuru clan, she is all I want. Then leave out the twins, who are not ready for marriage yet". (Randamoozham. p.109)

Bhima was profoundly disturbed when his mother at supper told him that she had asked the brothers to share the alms, only after she knew it was Draupadi. He found his mother to be too enigmatic a woman for him to comprehend completely.

M.T’s portrayal of Bhima presents him as a man capable of superlative sensitivity. Being a great observer of the various aspects of human behaviour, M.T has created his Bhima with tremendous capacity for acute observation. When it was decided that Draupadi would spend a year with each of the Pandavas, a law was laid down that nobody should go to the house where the couple stayed. If any Pandava happened to enter the house by accident, he had to go on a pilgrimage for a year as
punishment. Arjuna once had to undergo this punishment and during this absence, the Pandavas came to know of his marriage with Chithrangada and Uloopi. Arjuna had also asked his mother's permission to marry Krishna's sister, Subadra. Bhima on many occasions found Draupadi trying to suppress her grief due to Arjuna's absence silently. Even when his turn arrived to live with Draupadi, Bhima was never sure if Draupadi was with him whole heartedly. He felt emotionally exploited when ever she compelled him to narrate at length his valour in vanquishing his enemies. Bhima had never appealed to her physically like Arjuna. It appeared to him that she had to listen to stories of his heroic feat to make him physically desirable for the Pandava queen. Even when she was with him, he felt she was not his in totality. She had always reserved her heart for Arjuna.

Bhima had passionate love for Draupadi though he had, as a prince of the Kuru clan, been loyal to both his wives, Hidimbi and Balandhara. Yet he had not failed to fulfil even the petty errands that Draupadi had wanted him to do. His passion for Draupadi was as intense as his argument that Draupadi, though the wife of all the Pandavas, honestly belongs to Arjuna. He had never missed to record her love for Arjuna, her conqueror.

M.T. calls his creation, Bhima of Randamoozham, archetypal. The characters that control Bhima's life are Kunti and Draupadi. This staunch warrior had no need to hide his flaming passions, high hopes and painful disappointments. M.T presents Bhima as a simple man, who was not bound by any philosophy or Aryan laws. His purity of character is evident in several places in his relationship with Draupadi. Bhima willingly ventured to undertake several hardships just in response to Draupadi's plea to fetch the rare flower, Sougandhikam, which she fancied.
On securing it, he never attempted to win her favour. To his disappointment, he even found that Draupadi had forgotten everything about the flower. Yudhishtira admonished Bhima for his recklessness. Repeatedly, Bhima is presented as a silent admirer and an ardent lover of Draupadi for whom her every desire was worthy of his life.

Bhima had been a loner not because he enjoyed it, but because he could not escape it. He had never sought to establish too close a relationship with anybody. Even with Krishna, he kept his distance. His compassion and spontaneous love had always been unrequited.

Bhima was ashamed of Yudhishtira’s intoxication for gambling. He had an aversion for the game for he had a premonition that it may lead his elder brother to take disastrous and irreversible decisions. When Yudhishtira lost Bhima in the game, all he could do was to accept the actions of his elder brother with his head bowed. After all, he was a second born. But Bhima was beyond himself when Draupadi was lost in the gamble. He, who had never shuddered at blood or death, was stunned when Draupadi was dragged by her loose hair amidst the crowd in the court like a sacrificial cow to the altar. Holding her clothes from slipping, Draupadi looked all around. Bhima was enraged by the shameful treatment inflicted upon Draupadi in the court. His furious words in this context did not just represent his impotent anger and anguish but they represented the fury of the whole of human race handed down from one generation to the other. Bhima became the spokesman against the violation of human rights.
"We have to endure it for the righteous Yudhishtira, for his word is supreme, we are all slaves!" Then I stepped in front, and looking at Yudhishtira continued "There are prostitutes in the streets of the gamblers. Even those squanderers would not pawn their women". Unable to control my anger, I said, "Before I do something Sahadeva, bring some fire. Let me scorch my hand. I can only punish myself now".

Bhima's rage broke all barriers when Dushasana attempted to disrobe Draupadi:

An inarticulate sound escaped me as I leaned forward. Dushasana looked at me without letting go his hold. He probably feared that I would attack ignoring all rules.
I shouted, so that the audience and the entire palace could hear, "I swear in the hearing of all those gathered here. One day if I do not kill this man, tear his chest and drink his blood, I am not Bhimasena. I care nothing for the so called grace of heaven earned by my forefathers".

(Randamoozham. p.149)

Yudhishtira's lust for gambling proved disastrous by depriving the Pandavas their country. They were subjected to fourteen years of banishment from their Kingdom and one year life incognito. The Pandavas suffered unspeakable humiliations and were often at the mercy of Bhima's physical might. These years were long and testing for the Pandavas and their determination to take vengeance. Their stay at Virada proved that Bhima's strength was really a curse. Bhima worked as a cook in the kitchen of the king of Virada. Draupadi became one of the companions of the queen and called herself Malini. Yudhishtira called himself Kangan and became a servant to the king and entertained the king through gambling. Arjuna became Brihannala and decided to teach the princes Uttara music and dance.

Danger to Draupadi came in the form of the queen's brother Keechaka who strayed lecherously towards her. Keechaka's unbecoming behaviour tormented Draupadi to that extent that Bhima had no other choice but to kill him. He suggested that Draupadi should invite Keechaka for a private meeting at the dance hall where
Bhima can take upon him and put him to death. Keechaka was strong. He was stronger than the warriors Bhima had met. Though Keechaka’s death spread like wild fire, many did not believe that he was killed by a Gandharva.

This incident is yet another evidence to prove Bhima’s unfailing love for Draupadi. Unlike his other brothers, he had always reacted violently and vehemently when ever Draupadi’s honour was at stake. Never had he given a second thought to his physical safety on such occasions. He never even cared whether Draupadi repaid his love with hers. None of the other mighty Pandavas had ever come to Draupadi’s rescue when he was in dire need of physical safety and mental comfort. But strange and unfortunate is also the truth that though Draupadi was fully aware of her indebtedness to Bhima, never held him close to her heart. Many times Bhima had declined to own her body because her mind was preoccupied with the thoughts of Arjuna. As he said, “I didn’t need her cold body when her mind was filled with dreams of Arjuna”. (Randamoozham. p.179)

The Kurushetra war became inevitable. Krishna failed to bring about peace through his assignment as an envoy. War was what the Pandavas and the Kauravas earnestly wished for. It was decisive in more than one sense. Bhima’s sons, Ghatotkacha Sutasoma, Sarvada and others arrived to help him in the crucial war. This is one of the rarest situations when Bhima indulges himself in an objective retrospection of his past relationship with women. The arrival of the handsome strong youth, Sarvada reminds Bhima of his marriage with Balandhara. As he stood watching Sarvada, he felt ashamed of the ignoble attitude the warrior princes had for his various marital relationships. The young sons of Bhima had arrived to fight the war, though they were too young for it. Bhima had never given a second thought to
Balandhara after he left her. But she had arrived with a dutiful son. Bhima had abandoned her so long “like a leftover from a way side temple (Randamoozham. p.228). Though the teachers of Bhima’s childhood had instructed him that relationships and sentiments should never weaken a Kshatriya, yet Bhima was filled with shame and guilt. Women who come into the Kaurava clan had to be extremely tolerant.

Bhima became more and more critical about the reasons for the inevitable war.

The king who had pawned a women and another who had accepted this wager were now ranged against each other in war. I reflected angrily that women for us were ornaments to be pledged or food packets for journeys.

My uneasiness increased as I thought about it as did my self-contempt. (Randamoozham. p.229).

M.T presents Bhima as a loyal husband and father, who was embarrassed and guilt ridden because his role as a Kaurava prince had never allowed him to demonstrate his care and compassion in the domestic front. Bhima frequently pondered with guilt how he never had a chance to exhibit his paternal love for his young sons who had come to help him in the war front. He held Abhimanyu, Arjuna’s son close to his heart and his death came as a brutal blow. He stood alone in the stillness of dark and for the first time, he felt the pain at the death of a dear one. The smiling eyes and the sweet voice of Abhimanyu haunted him for a long time.

But Bhima’s kith and kin who cried their heart out at the death of Abhimanyu were unperturbed on hearing Ghatotkacha’s death. When Bhima learnt of his son’s death in the hands of Karna, he was in need of support and solace from his brothers. Yudhishtira expressed his sorrow at the death of the first child born to the Pandavas. But Krishna advised the Pandavas’ camp that they should not bemoan at the death of
Bhima’s son because Karna exhausted the ultimate weapon he had for Arjuna on Ghatotkacha, thereby saving Arjuna. So it was a moment of celebration and jubilation and not mourning. Krishna even went to an extent of summoning the minstrels and musicians and ordering for revelry. Krishna continued his argument that even if Ghatotkacha was Bhima’s son, he was a *Rakshas* and like all *Rakshas*, a hater of rituals and an enemy of the Brahmins. Had he not been killed by Kama, Krishna himself would have killed him. It was doubly good that he was dead. Then Krishna laughingly added, “It was not for nothing that I sent him against Karna, saying that he was the only hope” (*Randamoozham*. p.252).

Bhima was profoundly hurt by the attitude of his fraternity. Krishna who exhibited great sorrow at the death of Abhimanyu had uttered words of utmost indifference at the death of Bhima’s son. Krishna even personally acknowledged that he used Ghatotkacha to save Arjuna. Bhima found it difficult to understand any logic in his relationship with his bothers. Not only did he receive a callous treatment from his people but also did his son receive the same treatment just because he was Bhima’s son.

I stood alone in the dark... The tents and the camps fell silent. Soldiers rested their heads on chariots and elephant backs. I kept on walking... I saw his corpse, a cluster of darkness stranded, denied a chance to retreat. The weapon stuck out of his chest. A vulture perched on it, casting covetous eyes on the body below. A pyre need not be prepared for a forester who has no heroic heaven to go... I turned round and walked. (*Randamoozham*. pp.252-253).

One aspect about Bhima’s personality that never fails to surprise the reader is his immense courage that keeps his emotions under effective control. He who had always been the first in voicing his emotional and physical support to his family members when ever he found them in distress, has never shown any mercy to himself,
there by indulging in self pity. As a true warrior, he always received very little emotional anchorage from his family members. Through *Randamoozham* M.T projects Bhima not as an epic hero of an ancient Sanskrit classic, but as an average individual who is baffled beyond words at his own ironic predicament, a willing victim of emotional exploitations.

Bhima killed Dushasana in a bare handed fight. He killed him brutally and tore him apart like a bark being torn from a fresh wood. He bathed in Dushasana’s blood. He felt that by killing the Kauravas he had just begun the feast of revenge. Earlier that day, Bhima stood as a mute witness when Yudhishtira blamed Arjuna for failing to kill Karna. Words of Yudhishtira infuriated Arjuna who cried out that the Kurushetra war would come to an instant end if only he chopped away Yudhishtira’s head. As a second born, Bhima had always kept silent though on many occasions he had seen Yudhishtira go wrong. Never has he openly expressed his displeasure or dissatisfaction with the unreasonable stands taken by his elder brother. M.T through angry Arjuna brings out the striking contrast between the two Pandava princes, Bhima and Arjuna.

Arjuna continued to abuse Yudhishtira “This coward who avoids all wars! There is only one thing he knows. Gambling with dice- the profession of the low born! What right has he to be the King? A coward who has no right even to share Draupadi’s bed” Krishna who tried to stop this quarrel was told by Arjuna, “If brother Bhima who fights a thousands people single handed, says I am a coward, I can bear it. What right does this man have? This curse on the Pandavas must end today”. (*Randamoozham*. P.258).
The Kurushetra war was going to a close after much of bloodshed. Duryodhana was the only Kaurava prince left alive. Yudhishtira proclaimed to Duryodhana that he could choose any of the Pandavas for a single combat with any weapon he may choose. He would be the king if he won. Duryodhana accepted the condition though Krishna was filled with anger because of Yudhishtira's idiotic proposal. Once again it was Bhima, the second born, who volunteered to shoulder the consequence of his elder brother's want of diplomacy.

Bhima during the combat consciously recollected the truth that Duryodhana was the enemy who had made him into a tough warrior. Bhima also visualized the treacheries of his enemy one by one and in the process, he felt the strength of several wild horses swelling the roots of his arms, bones and nerves. Bhima heard Yudhishtira's cry demanding him to stop the combat and declare that he had won. But Bhima wouldn't give up so easily. Bhima hit the thighs of Duryodhana the well proportioned male- on which he had beat a rhythm as he watched Draupadi being disrobed - with his mace and Duryodhana fell. Balarama murmured it was unrighteous. This comment confused Bhima and he said, "I still don't understand anything about righteousness and sin. My own people stared at me the winner, as if I were an enemy." (Randamoozham. p.266). This had been the fate of Bhima many times. He had never been a victor even after winning the war.

After the war the Pandavas discarded their headgear and upper garments to pray for the souls of the dead. It was then that Kunti their mother asked them to remember a particular name, that of their eldest brother Karna. She disclosed the secret how Karna was her first born when she was a maiden and how she discarded him in the river fearing disgrace. The embarrassed Pandavas, except Bhima, cursed
their mother silently and privately. Karna’s death haunted Arjuna and Yudhishthira condemned his mother as “the women responsible for all the destruction.” Arjuna and Nakula cursed her too. But Bhima could not curse her nor did he have a mind to pardon her. He remembered the life of his mother and her personal miseries that followed her even after her marriage. Hence he could not curse his mother.

“Let Bhimasena rule the country” said Yudhishthira as he was thoroughly disillusioned with the outcome of the war. The country was filled with widows and Yudhishthira could not bring himself to happily accept the crown. Hence he decided that Bhima should rule the country. If was by the hand of Bhima that the Kauravas died. According to the Kshatriya code, the throne is for the one who wins the war. All the Pandavas accepted Yudhishthira’s decision, but Bhima alone borrowed time to think.

The Wolf boy to become the king of Hastinapur! I felt like laughing. None of those who would crack jokes were alive… There were not many friends of mine of be invited.

M.T has exploited the coronation episode to lay bare the ugly avarice hidden in the heart of all those who were supposed to be Bhima’s dear ones. Draupadi approached Bhima privately and bowed her head respectfully which was unusual. She had come to know if she would ever get a chance of becoming the queen if Yudhishthira were to abandon the crown. She was sure that Balandhara would be the queen if Bhima became the king. She wept and said, “Perhaps Panchali was born to remain a palace maid for ever”. Draupadi was cruelly selfish and her lust for the throne let her incapable of recollecting the incidents where Bhima has staked his life to fulfil her least desires. Vidura and Kunti visited Bhima requesting him to relinquish the crown which he had not yet worn. His uncle Vidura said that the citizens of
Hastinapur were waiting for the great day when upright Yudhishtira would become their king. He was the one, born to rule them. His mother said that Yudhishtira alone should become the king. Bhima unaccustomed to statecraft and scriptural laws is unfit to be the king. Hence he must firmly decline the offer and compel his elder brother to become the king.

Avarice and greed are ugly emotions, but human race had never given them up for their ugliness. Deep in the hearts of even close kith and kin, these emotions do lay dormant and only the really strong and courageous can face them with mental poise. Bhima in this sense was blessed with superior moral strength!

I observed silence for some time, to control the upsurge of emotions within me. Then I laughed.
First Draupadi, and now another woman, my Mother, "Me, King? The blockhead to be the King of Hastinapur? Incredible." I laughed louder.
"My elder bother's joke. He would always narrate his jokes to me. A dimwit for a King!"
My smile spread to Vidura's face. He sighed with relief. When they left, I sat on my bed overcome with emotion. I forgot to laugh.
I was the King who had ruled Hastinapur for just a fleeting moment before abdicating the throne.
Later I laughed in the darkness of night. The strong should not weep.
(Randamoozham. p.277).

The coronation was an austere affair as the wealth of Hastinapur had been exhausted on account of the war. Bhima was seated on a throne next to the King. That was the place of the second man, the yuvraj. Draupadi was on the seat for the royal consort. She was dressed in glittering silk. She was supremely satisfied with no recollection of her dead sons to bother her. Bhima stood watching all this and ruminated that the lessons a Kshatriya had to learn were endless.
The seniors like Dhritarashtra, Ghandhari and Vidura decided to leave for the forest. Along with the aged couple and their uncle, their mother also decided to leave them. The Pandavas could not convince her to return. Yudhishtira took Bhima along, when he heard that their uncle Vidura was dying. After his death, Yudhishtira with a conflict on his gaunt face revealed that Vidura was his real father. Bhima stood astounded by another one of his mother’s secrets. The legal code of the Kauravas was beyond his comprehension. He wondered about his real father.

Bhima knew he could never get peace of mind if he were not to know the truth about his father. He could no longer satisfy himself with the answer that he was vayu putra. Bhima now learnt from his mother directly that Karna was born to Sutha, her father’s charioteer. She bore Yudhishtira to Vidura because he was a scholar. According to Kunti, even otherwise, “Wives, for Kshatriyas are mere chattel to receive their seed”. Then she needed a strong man for a son, a man strong like the Wind God, a man of might. Bhima was on the verge of explosion as his mother was getting ready to answer his ever nagging question.

“Who was that?”
As if startled by my voice, Mother raised hers. Red flames of anger spread over her face. She murmured, “He came out of the forest. Like a giant unfettered. I did not know his name”
I did not know when mother left and when darkness descended and began spreading over the emptiness of the forest.
I pricked up my ears waiting with great eagerness for a message even as a strong wind let loose by God Vayu hit the tree tops. The wind laughed aloud in my ears. (Randamoozham. p.284).

With the time for the last march having arrived, Bhima now took leave of every one. He wondered whether the grand children and great grand children of generations to come will sit around a fire place and sing the songs of Kurukshetra.
He also wondered how the future will reckon him. It may smile at his figure with his big abdomen and big mouth or the children of posterity may shrink at the hideous figure, its head in the sky, feet on earth and with the strength of ten thousand elephants.

Bhima at the close of the novel is in the present with Draupadi lying motionless on the ground. His journey to Heaven was waiting for him, Heaven without hunger and sweat where flowers don't fade, the world for those who are not subject to passions. But was a second throne waiting for Bhima even there? Did he aspire to sit there? Has he sublimated worldly desires? He was sure that he had not conquered his emotions.

Bhima who thought the middle aged Draupadi still beautiful has not conquered emotions. In sharing a woman, no Kshatriya was ever selfish. But I was selfish, like a forester shaking the forest with his angry roar, when I had to share my woman. (Ramdamoozham. p. 286).

Bhimasena is seen walking along the forest land below with firm unflaltering feet.

The present century is very appropriately called “the mythological age” by the German novelist Hermann Brech, a view corroborated by the preoccupations of many poets and critics of the recent decades. As John J. White in the mythology in the Modern Novel points out, a modern novelist may simply retell an acknowledged myth, may use it as means of literary allusion to add significance to a theme or situation, may consciously or unconsciously use it as a structural element or even create a new myth.
No community, either sophisticated or primitive, can ignore myth because myth survives even below the margin of consciousness and will continue to do so until the community perishes. Leslie Fiedler observes that the intuited in mythos are the Archetypes. Accepting Jung’s theory Fiedler observes that the Archetypes are archaic and persisting clusters of image and emotion which define what is most permanent in the human predicament. The unconscious mind is the fountain head of poetic subjects. The word lies not only beyond all languages but also behind the symbolic idioms of dreams. Myths serve as the “mediator between the community and the individual, the person and his fate, the given and the achieved”.

Every age is controlled and conditioned by its various peculiar needs and each generation attempts to exploit its mythology of the past to suit its personal needs. Mahabharata and Ramayana have been rendered as many versions and each version carries the signature of not only the creator, but also the generation he represented. Treatment of the Mahabharatha has been as varied as the imagination of its individual creators. The socio-psychological requirement of each period had a definite say in the selection of the point of view chosen by the writer. The rich and varied nature of the epic, Mahabharata has ever been a great reservoir supplying perennial themes to the creative artists of each age. Twentieth century had the most appropriate social climate for the birth of psychological novels. New techniques in narration, served as appropriate tools in digging deep into the enigmatic aspects of human psyche. M.T’s Randamoozham is necessarily a twentieth century novel because Freud and Jung had made it clear that no human experience is new. The conscious insists on originality but the unconscious is the outcome of collective identity. Bhima of Mahabharata as seen in 'Randamoozham' is a contemporary man, thoroughly demystified and
demythified. From the inexhaustible source of mythology, M.T has taken out Bhima and has made him speak the tongue of the modern man.

Bhima of mythology could not have found a more suitable time and a more appropriate climate than the twentieth century to vocalise his passions and emotions, apprehensions and aspirations that were left in hibernation, deep in his heart. The contemporary man can readily empathise with Bhima of 'Randamoozham' because he can easily identify himself with Bhima. The psychological and the domestic pressures under which a second born in a family struggles find a counterpart in the predicament of Bhima. Bhima the uncouth, the dim witted, clown and a clumsy warrior, has been replaced by Bhima the passionate, loyal, strong, stocky built and sensitive individual in Randamoozham by M.T.

As critic, Prof. M.R. Chandrasekharan rightly observes, M.T has not attempted to downsize any of the characters of Mahabharata in his Randamoozham. He has rather attempted successfully to right-size them, giving them realistic role so that Bhima automatically appears greater and more magnificent than the others.31

The relevance of Randamoozham in the present context is due to the treatment of mythology. As a very popular epic, Mahabharata does not have any thing new to give reader as extra information. But Randamoozham has been hailed as 'Kudallor Bharatam' by contemporary literary critics like V.K.N. The village Kudallor is the birth place of M.T. and he himself on various occasions has accepted Bhima as an Archetype and through his novel convincingly projects him as an Archetype of various aspects. He represents the collective unconscious of the 'second born' who are sharp, sensitive but silenced by social pressures. Bhima has been blessed and
cursed with an extraordinarily brilliant mind of deep perceptions. Most often his mental agility is ahead of others, as superior as his physical alertness. His greatness is not due to the body bulk or its strength, but is due to the efficiency with which he could use the physical might to support his quick brain. But being a second born, he is expected not to overtake Yudhishtira. Only a quick-witted can convincingly pretend as a dim-witted. Bhima of *Randamoozham* has a penetrative vision that capacitates him to read the mind of men and women around him as if they were open books. On many occasions he finds them easily predictable.

M.T’s profound knowledge in the various revolutionary theories regarding human psychology has enabled him doubtlessly to perceive in Bhima tremendous scope for artistic exploration. M.T’s mastery over the use of the technique of the Stream of Consciousness gave him an added advantage. “Every writer who attempts to create anything on the basis of myth must add or subtract or alter”, observes Gilbert Highet in his work “Mythology in the Modern novel”. M.T alters Vyasa’s Mahabharata by creating a more appropriate conclusion to his *Randamoozham* with a powerful portrayal of Bhima’s psychology. Book XVII of Vyasa’s Mahabharata pictures the Pandavas as they leave the Kingdom to Parikshit. According to Vyasa, the Pandavas are dressed like ascetics and are accompanied by Draupadi as they move about the country heading for Mount Meru. They all die except Yudhishtira who refuses to enter heaven if it will not accept his brothers and his dog which was actually God Dharma in disguise. Book XVIII of Mahabharatha narrates how Yudhishtira sees Duryodhana seated on a throne in Heaven and the Pandavas in torment. Shocked, he insists on joining the Pandavas. Since this was actually an
illusion created to test Yudhishtira’s steadfastness, the God Indra takes Yudhishtira to Heaven.

But M.T concludes *Randamoozham* in a different way, where Bhima does not go with his brothers and Draupadi in search of a heavenly abode. His mind reminds him that he has not conquered two powerful emotions – love and lust for revenge. Throughout his life he had never been a Kshatriya when these two emotions were at stake. He still felt the presence of a passionate dark woman wandering in the dense forests and he could also sense the presence of Aswathama, the butcher of the Pandava children, lurking in the darkness of the forest, his head wounded. With both of them around, he could never conquer his emotions and was not entitled to the second throne in heaven. Bhima of *Randamoozham* decided to walk down the path that leads to forest instead of following the path that leads to Mahameru mountains where a divine chariot must have been waiting to receive the Pandavas.

M.T involves in a technical experimentation by using Direct Interior Monologue, Indirect Interior Monologue, Omniscient Description and Soliloquy in *Randamoozham*, the Stream of Consciousness novel. Through Interior Monologue, M.T represents the psychic content and process at various levels of conscious control representing the consciousness of Bhima. M.T. renders an expression of Bhima’s most intimate thoughts that lie nearest the unconscious and hence the content of the psyche represents unuttered speech in its inchoate state.

Only an artist who is endowed with immense insight into the human psyche can attempt to fathom the meaning of the unspoken words of men and women. Silenced words are the symbols of the silenced worlds that are within the most
sensitive souls. M.T while attempting to translate the pregnant silence that prevailed in between the speeches of Vyasa's characters in Mahabharatha, has in reality empowered Bhima, the archetype to articulate the unspoken and unspeakable agonies of an emotionally abandoned second born. The Western tool of using myth as a narrative technique to represent the collective unconscious has been exploited by M.T commendably resulting in a masterpiece that won him the 'Jnana Pith'.
NOTES


2 Ibid. 318.


4 Ibid. 4.


18 Ibid. X
19 Ibid. X
20 Ibid. XVIII
26 Ibid. 15.
30 Leslie Fiedler. “In the Beginning was the word”, Collected *Essays of Leslie Fiedler.* (New York: Stain and Day. 1971). 520.