CHAPTER V

NIGHT ON BALD MOUNTAIN

The role of the academician in shaping the nation is very vital. They have to lead people from the front. Their obligations and the after effect, if they deviate from fulfilling their responsibilities are analysed in detail in this chapter with reference to Patrick White’s *Night on Bald Mountain*.

It is a play in three acts. Patrick White has set the scene of action for this play on a bald mountain. The phrase bald mountain symbolically indicates that the writer’s concentration is on the negative side of life. The mountain is barren and without much vegetation. A person’s thoughts and feelings create his attitude. The sort and frequency of the mental and emotional vibrations that one transmits from his mind create the atmosphere around him. The atmosphere determines the point of view and the attitude the others will have on a particular person. If it is positive, one can look forward to growth. The scenario in which the present play is set is a barren mountain. Growth and vegetation is the symbol of development. But, here the reader may anticipate lack of growth, development and progress.

Man’s life on this earth is unimaginable without nature. The human beings live in the realm of nature. We are constantly surrounded by it and interact with it. The intimate parts of nature in relation to man are all those
things that are alive. But on the bald and barren mountain, the life and existence of the human beings have symbolic and deeper significance. The people who are living in such a milieu must be so strong and competent enough to manage their life there; or out of their hatred towards mankind they might have come to this mountain as a refugee. Another possibility is that the evil elements of the society, who wanted to hurt mankind, might have selected this place as their hideout. Further analysis of the play, clears the shrouds of assumptions that wrap the original traits of the characters involved in the play.

Miss. Quodling is one of the important characters in the play. “She is a large old woman made larger by all she is wearing on a chilly morning.” (N.B.M 1.1.269). This indicates her ability to protect herself from the afflictions of nature. She had gum boots and a man’s hat. This symbolically affirms her independent nature. She was not a woman, who was dependent on man. In fact, she had in herself the traits of a man that was expected by a woman. She had a large leathery brown face. This illustrates, the kind of exposure she had with nature. She was not like any other woman who was satisfied with comfortable indoor life. She reared goats and lived all alone by herself in the bald mountain. She came to this place because she had no other go. She was not comfortable with mankind. She found solace and comfort in the bald mountain. She tells, “I came, because I couldn’t help it.” (N.B.M. 1.1. 272)
Actually, as her title ‘Miss’ indicates Quodling was unmarried and did not involve herself in family life. No one ever survived in this bald mountain. But, Miss Quodling was the one who had been living in the mountain for a long time. She found a kind of affinity and oneness with the mountain. She was unmarried and did not reproduce. She was leading a barren life. The reason given by her for the ability to adapt to the situations available in the bald mountain was, “Only the barren can understand the barren” (N.B.M 1.1. 272). This was one of the reasons stated by her and there was also another reason.

Before coming to the bald mountain, she might have led a life like other people in the country. She would have had many bitter experiences with mankind. As a result, she might have come to this bald mountain as a refugee. Human beings make promises to be broken. But, here the bald mountain had nothing to promise. Miss. Quodling was ready to trust the mountain, the silence accompanied with it and the goats rather than the human being. At times, she was attracted by the sound and fury of life but, the bruises that she had received from it had given her the competency to withstand the allurement. In her words:

I’ve lived here so long, I’ve forgotten now. (pause) I don’t go down … (pointing behind her) …. not down there… thought I watch the lights…at night…that glitter too much to be trusted. In the end, you can’t trust anythun but goats and silence. Oh, yes, I know now! I’ve
seen the mountain from a distance, too ... moisture glist’nun that never
betrays ... because it doesn’t promise nothun... ((N.B.M 1.1. 272)

At present the bald mountain and goats were Miss. Quodling’s world.
She was very much accustomed and acquainted with the goats. She substituted
goats for her human relationship. She conversed with them casually as people
do among themselves. In the opening scene, Quodling was seen conversing
with the goats. She warned them to avoid their misbehaviours like placing the
foot in the milk can. She appreciated Dolores as the wisest among the goats
and called him as her darling. She was not happy with one of the goat’s heavy
udder, which trailed all over the ground and looked ugly. She cautioned the he-
goat Samson, that it was not his time to have a go at the does. If he was lucky,
he could have the visiting ladies only. She advised Jessica, another goat, to be
careful with Samson, as she was already carrying. Her stomach appeared to be
too big and it could be a triplet. Thus, Miss. Quodling restrained Samson’s
sexlife. When the does made unusual sounds, she asked them to be patient as
she had to take care of herself also. She disliked goats with horns. Therefore,
she curtailed the growth of their horns with caustic sticks. These actions have
symbolical significance with the main plot. Like Miss. Quodling, Professor
Sword also restrained his instincts. As she locked up the goats and fenced
them, Sword kept his wife Miriam locked up in a room.
The conversation that Miss. Quodling had with the goats illustrated the kind of relationship, she had with them. They were her family and friends. She tried to teach them the rules and regulations. She taught them how to be self-controlled and to overcome the natural instinct. She actually had this kind of experience with the society. She had to conform to the dictum and convention of the society. However, she could not be natural and had bitter experiences. So, now she was in the bald mountain. After becoming superior over the goats, she tried to impose the same rules and made them to restrain their natural instinct. May Brit Akerholt in her book *Patrick White* rightly pointed out:

The goats are Miss. Quodling’s companions, her family, her whole life and they are her possessions, her substitute for marriage and friendship. She acknowledges their individuality, yet is trying to mould them, and in making them conform to their human life, as she tries to conform to their animality, she restrains their freedom and natural instincts, as much as the society from which she escaped restrained hers. (109)

Miss Quodling never regretted or yearned to be with mankind. When Stella talked about the new born babies, she told that she had never gone nap at the human beings.

Professor Sword is one of the leading characters in the play. He was a man in late fifties. He had been working in the department of English in an
Australian University. His wife Miriam Sword was about forty-five years old. Her face lacked colour and warmth. Her ravaged face exhibited a glimpse of beauty. Her eyes were very vague and dull. Her hair and the dress were untidy. She suffered from nervousness. Professor Sword wanted to keep her wife locked in, so he came to the lonely house that was available in the bald mountain. Actually, this house was built by a man Mr. Abercorn, whom Miss. Quodling called as ‘a nut’. The place, where Miss. Quodling and the Swords lived, had a striking contrast with each other. The Swords were living in a fenced house. But, Quodling moved around in a wild, free nature. The barrenness of the mountain symbolically represented the unfavourable atmosphere of the Swords’ residence. The Swords were not only imprisoned physically inside the house but, they were also the prisoners of false ideas.

Another important character in the play was Stella Summerhayes. She was about thirty, fresh and beautiful. Miss Quodling said that there was something like a sound apple about her. She was hired as a nurse to take care of Mrs. Sword. She was excited to see the house and the bald mountain. She wanted to have a glance at the bald mountain and came to the place of Miss. Quodling. Stella was soft, fragile and innocent and did not have much of worldly experience. She could not lead a down to earth existence like Miss. Quodling. So far, she had been with her father and for the first time she had come out of the house. It was pure bliss for her to watch the natural
sceneries in and around the bald mountain. She was delighted to see, what the new born had been doing in Miss. Quodling’s sheep pen. Similarly, she expressed her liking for babies. Stella said that she liked not the new born ones, but slightly older than the new borns that too washed and powdered. It was comparatively difficult to take care of the new born babies. This highlights one of her characteristic traits. She could not even bear a little pain and she preferred only the comfort zone. Miss Quodling rightly pointed out: “You’re good. You’re kind. You’re good as a sound apple. But somebody’s gunna cut inter you, as sure as sure.” (N.B.M 1.1..275)

Stella was not a good judge. She did not have a good understanding about herself too. On the contrary, Miss. Quodling was clever in judging things. Stella considered herself as strong and tough. But, Miss Quodling rightly pointed out that some people were not as strong as they had been thinking about themselves. Actually, Stella had lost her mother at an early age. Her father had brought her up. She had great admiration for her father. He was a cabinet maker. She very proudly claimed that nobody was so great a craftsman as her father. At present, she had come out to see the world. At the same time, Stella said to Miss. Quodling that she had not come too far away. If something undesirable happened to her father, Stella wanted to be in a reachable distance. At this, Miss Quodling reiterated that as claimed by her Stella was not tough. She was soft and innocent. While discussing about the
age of Stella’s father, a comparison was made with Professor Sword. Stella said her father was a bit older than Professor Sword. Intentionally or unintentionally, this comparison was made. Unconsciously a fatherly image was created in the mind of Stella about Professor Sword at this point. Miss. Quodling advised her to be careful with the slippery edges of the bald mountain. Stella, so far, depended on her father. Even after coming out, she frequently quoted her father. May Brit Akerholt said in *Patrick White* that:

While she thinks her father is helpless without her, their separation illustrates Stella’s dependence on his understanding and knowledge through the references and quotations which emphasize her own lack of confidence and inner strength. Thus Mr. Summerhaye’s absence becomes a significant factor in the development of Stella’s character and in her relationships with others. (104)

Stella was very much impressed with the silence that prevailed in and around the bald mountain. She felt very happy to have a walk and to find out interesting places surrounded by orchids. Miss. Quodling warned Stella to be careful about her path on such walks. In the bald mountain, mist fall was common. She promised Stella to show many better places and praised her to be honest. She claimed that she knew many interesting places that were not known to professor Sword. At the same time, Miss. Quodling was not happy
with Stella’s honesty, because she was too honest. And as a result, she was not fit to be amongst human beings. Miss. Quodling proved to be very apt in her comments. On the other hand, Stella lacked the insight of Miss. Quodling. If Stella had taken the advice of Miss. Quodling, a tragedy might have been averted.

Miss. Quodling: … perhaps too honest to be around amongst human beings.

Stella: I’m steel, you know, in any emergency.

Miss. Quodling: (laughing) I said you was simple! – Steel don’t cut with human beings. Not when they come over all soft and woozy. Steel gets blunted then… or cracks. (Pause) … (N.B.M 11.279)

Not only with Stella, but also with reference to the people living in the house – professor Sword, Mrs. Sword, the servant maid Mrs. Sibley and Denis Craig – Miss Quodling had a very good understanding. Denis was working as a lecturer in the Department of English and was professor Sword’s assistant. Miss. Quodling was very wise in her remarks about him. Actually, professor Sword needed an audience. For this purpose, he kept Denis Craig with him. Stella assessed professor Sword as very silent. But, Miss. Quodling aptly replied that he was not so. He was suppressing his feelings. Once his pent up emotions were released, it would be very difficult to manage.
Stella discussed for a long time with Miss. Quodling. She was at the point of departing. At this moment, Denis Craig came to fetch Stella. Stella felt extremely happy to hear that her patient Mrs. Sword was in need of her. Stella came to work for the first time. She had impressed her patient and the patient was in need of her. This gave her a great satisfaction and confidence. On the way home, Denis and Stella discussed with each other. Stella was not in a position to acknowledge Denis’s romantic advances and proposals. She had never seen a face closely and was frightened to see Denis’s. She was worried about her father and gave due respect to the values taught by him. Her father’s influence was so much on her that it unconsciously gave her constant warnings and guidance. As a result, she could not respond in her own individual way to the problems she met in her life. At a point, Denis commented that, “Then your father’s the spoiler of all time!” (N.B.M 1.2. 283) His comment proved to be true. May Brit Akerholt in *Patrick White* also rightly pointed out that:

Her understanding is based on her father’s philosophy and matched by her own simplicity. Stella is incapable of living her own life after the standards she admires in her father. Ironically, her dependence on him prevents her from full knowledge of her own problems. (122)

Professor Sword and Miriam were not in good terms with each other. Their married life was not a successful one. Professor Sword worked in the
department of English. He received many literary works like poetry, drama, prose and novel for evaluation. The professor was not at all happy with them. He found all of them as a mediocre piece of writing. He was fed up with the themes dealt with by the writers. He said:

Sword (snorting): The same welter of words… the same bodies interlocked… the same search for God and self. Oh, I don’t read the stuff, of course, but my nose can detect the authentic stench. (N.B.M 1.3. 288)

He accused most of the writers as being licentious. Denis, at a point, referred that he could send up Shakespeare himself, if he had picked bits out of their context.

Professor Sword was at ease to find fault with others. Most of the characters in the play found fault with him. In the opening scene Miss. Quodling warned Stella about him. Miss. Quodling commented that he was a stuck up man, “It’s full of self-importance”. The point was further substantiated by Denis in the second scene of the first act. His comment was “Sword is a jealous man … The creative daemon won’t let him alone… and he brings forth dry ..(kicking at the ground)...sticks!” (283). He was jealous not only of his fellow writers, but also of his wife. This was the reason for the bitterness in their marriage life. In one of her discussion with Stella, Miriam
questioned her whether she liked Denis or not. She also enquired whether she knew the reason for having Denis in their home. Miriam said that she did not think her husband liked him. He hated everyone, everybody but himself. He was in need of someone to tell the sufferings that he had undergone at the hand of Miriam.

As correctly pointed out by Miriam, when professor Sword and Denis were at the table, he discussed the negative traits of his wife with Denis. During their discussion, Denis pointed out that Miriam had intellectual interests. Sword immediately corrected him saying it was not interest, just a desire. He said she lacked intellectual abilities. He commented that she just had intuitions and she lacked rational thinking. Miriam was in her room with Stella. She very rightly said that by now, Sword would have been commenting on her to Denis. Sword very bluntly stated that Miriam had delusions about her family and actually she was a daughter of a pawn broker. In fact, Miriam was a descendant of a reputed family. One of her ancestors had the reputation of saving a French King’s life and got a moss agate ring as an accolade from the king. As time went by, they became less important and during Miriam’s generation, they became pretty poor. Professor Sword did not consider these points but highlighted only the negative aspect.
At the time of their marriage, Miriam had been beautiful. He asked Denis whether he could believe the point that Miriam was beautiful at the time of marriage. He made the matter worse by further discussing their personal affairs with Denis. He remarked that Miriam was too sensual and the early years she made him to dance to her wishes. Denis defended that being sensual was not a sin and it was natural. Sword replied that sensuality must be within reason. And, where the reason begins or ends was a big question to be answered. Sword very clearly stated that the answer from Miriam for this question would surely be misleading.

Professor Sword did not respond to Miriam’s normal physical needs. He himself was not in a position to set a code of conduct. Denis says that, “Old Sword’s religious, you know…or tries to be. He finds it a bit of a struggle, I guess.” (N.B.M.1.2.283) He not only restrained his natural feelings, but also forced his wife to do so. In Act I, scene iii, Professor Sword planned to take Stella and Denis Craig for a ride in his car. He came to inform this to Stella and Miriam. Stella hesitated but, Miriam advised her to go. When they were left alone, Miriam seized his hand and kissed and almost devoured it. He submitted for a moment and then withdrew it as though repelled. Miriam says, “(Looking at him fiercely) It was the first time you’ve let me touch you in I don’t know how many years. How did I suddenly become less disgusting?” (N.B.M.1.2.299) He wanted to repress the sexual feelings that caused him
anxiety. Repression in psychology is a well-known defense mechanism. Repression acts to keep information out of conscious awareness. However, these memories do not just disappear; they continue to influence one’s behaviour. May Brit Akerholt rightly pointed out in *Patrick White* as:

All the characters are involved in curbing or changing nature; their own human nature, and that of others. The destructive forces operate through restraint and imposition, and doom ‘natural’ relationships to sterility and failure. (107)

There was nothing illegal with reference to Miriam’s sexual advances towards her husband. After all, they were husband and wife and it was nothing wrong to quench their sexual appetite. Professor Sword thought it was wrong and curbed his natural feelings and also made Miriam to do so. As a result, their marriage life was a failure. Not only that, it had its own evil effect in both of them. Presently, the effect was obvious with regard to Miriam. She was psychologically upset and became an invalid. She was in need of medical assistance.

In order to let reality slip from her memory, Miriam was in the practice of taking alcohol. Professor Sword strongly disapproved of this. He tried his best to eradicate all the means by which she could get a bottle of drink. He locked her inside the house. He also informed the shopkeepers to ignore his
wife’s request for a drink. She became an addict to alcohol just to forget the mental torments she had been receiving from her husband. Miss Quodling, while discussing with Stella in the opening scene, commented that Miriam was a “dyed-in-the-wool dipso”. When professor Sword took Stella and Denis Craig for a ride in his car, Miriam got an opportunity to try her luck with a bottle of drink. Immediately after Sword started his car, she made a call to Mr. Cantwell, the shopkeeper and requested for whisky. In the beginning, Mr. Cantwell hesitated. But, Miriam convinced him by promising to offer him her moss agate ring. She also informed that the Professor was not at home and urged him to bring six bottles immediately. But, the professor had left the housemaid, Mrs. Sibley, to take care of Miriam. Luck favoured Miriam. One of Miss Quodling’s bucks broke in and was in their garden destroying the flowers. She sent Mrs. Sibley to bring Miss Quodling to control and take back her goat. She very cleverly sent Mrs. Sibley by the short cut way. This enabled her to welcome Mr. Cantwell without her knowledge.

Mr. Cantwell had brought the requested quantity of whisky. He very well understood the background and status of Miriam. While handing her a carton of drink, he commented that it would be her funeral. Immediately after delivering the things, the next question he asked was where the ring was. Mr. Cantwell was fascinated to have a wonderful ring like that. He did not care about the suffering soul. He never worried what might happen to Miriam, if she
consumed alcohol. On the other hand, his concentration was on the ring. Thus, he indulged in the sin of doing commerce without morality. Patrick White satirically portrayed the materialistic attitude of the present day Australians. People like Mr. Cantwell never worried about human values. But, they were greedy and never bothered about the way they earned money. On the other side, Miriam never felt sentimental about losing her traditional moss agate ring. It was handed down generation after generation as her family inheritance. But, she was ready to allure the merchant with her precious and inestimable ring. People like Miriam who were addicted to alcohol were prepared to do anything to fulfill their needs. They were not sentimental and were ready to disrespect the traditional family values. Patrick White was very much angry against the Australians of these types. May Brit Akerholt has rightly stated in *Patrick White* that:

Mr. Cantwell trades whisky to an alcoholic for a dream, Miriam trades a family heirloom, a sign of tradition and stability, for a brief moment of escape. The readiness of both to bribe and be bribed reflects a general sense of demoralization, a corruption embedded in society as a whole. (106)

Miss. Quodling came to take back her strayed goat. She thought of paying respect to Miriam and so came to meet her. In a minute, she identified
that Miriam had consumed alcohol. Miriam invited the goat woman for a drink. She too accepted. Both of them had a drink and discussed their past. Miriam was very much jealous about Miss Quodling’s freedom. She replied that she had not been free all through her life. She was also a prisoner as a young girl. Miss Quodling recalled the afflictions that she had undergone in the hands of her auntie, when she was young. During those days, young boys would come to her house. But, Miss Quodling never involved in the act love and marriage. Both the women agreed with each other as regard to the point, “You can enjoy lookun at a handsome man. But not to keep…” (314).

Once upon a time, Miss. Quodling had the chance of meeting a young boy in the train. They just exchanged glances, but never spoke. After many years slipped by, she had been imagining how the boy’s voice would have been if he had spoken. Thus, all through her life Miss. Quodling never mingled with men and did not have the opportunity of experiencing the family life. On the contrary, Miriam involved herself in the family life and had a thorough experience. Out of her experience, she very confidently replied that the boy’s voice would have been very cold. She commented that they could not rely on any man. In a drunken state, she explained her plight. Her God, Professor Sword, had a gothic soul and he always prayed for salvation from devils of flesh. He considered Miriam as the obstacle in the process of this salvation. He did not realize the responsibility of a husband. Before taking a decision, he
should have considered the state of mind of his wife. Miriam had not yet drunk life to the lees. She was still expecting much from life. But, Professor Sword restrained his natural feelings and forced to restrain his wife’s also. He considered these kinds of feelings as evil and he prayed for salvation from this devil.

Both the women, thus, shared their suffering and ideas with each other. Miriam was enclosed within the four walls and was suffering at the hands of Sword. Miss. Quodling also suffered, when she was young, but now, she was free. In spite of her suffering, Miriam had a thorough experience with mankind. But, the goat woman moved away from men and matters and was living a free life, in seclusion. She lacked the sort of experience that Miriam had with human beings. A woman’s happy life can be determined by the fusion of Miriam’s experience and Miss. Quodling’s sense of freedom. Both together will form a composite whole. May Brit Akerholt has rightly pointed out in *Patrick White* that:

Miriam’s buried emotions are invaded by her past, and the goat woman’s mountainous freedom by her past. Each has lived “behind holland” which shut out light and life. Auntie’s duster and horsehair sofa are as dry and passionless as Sword’s spirit, and Miss. Quodling’s youth behind blinds was as spiritless and apathetic as Miriam’s present invalid
existence behind the curtains of her bedroom. But more important than common references is that their roles, like their lines, complement each other to the point where they merge and the two characters become two halves of one powerful figure. (114)

After Miss. Quodling’s departure, Mrs. Sibley came in and noticed the difference in the behaviour of Miriam. She realized that Miriam was drunk. She was afraid of the consequences. She had to face the brunt of the music, when professor Sword arrived. Hence, she decided to quit and made a phone call to her daughter, to come and take her away from the bald mountain. She had decided to protest and quit the job, if professor started his vituperation. She was a woman, who did not have courage to face life. She just existed in the world. Here, it is interesting to have a comparative analysis with the goat woman. Miss. Quodling has a tremendous will power. She never cares about anybody else. She never worries about living alone in the end of the world. She single handedly tackles the challenges that she faces in the bald mountain. Before this woman, Mrs. Sibley is just a creature. May Brit Akerholt has rightly pointed out that:

… she represents the continuation of those who are incapable of experiencing life beyond the confines of tangible reality. Thus the housekeeper provides a contrast to the goat keeper who is a survivor
because of her ability to experience life and conquer and transcend its experience. (101)

Miss. Quodling commented Stella as a fine, good and a sound apple. As it took time, Denis came to fetch Stella. Now Miss. Quodling added that Stella was a very honest girl and informed him to take care of her. Of course, as rightly pointed out by Miss. Quodling Stella was beautiful and sound like an apple and was also very honest and straightforward. She was free from vices. Stella came out of her home for the first time. She still depended on her father. As opposed to Miss Quodling, she lacked wide experience. Professionally, as a nurse also she was immature. She could not fulfill her obligations successfully. Miriam was a neurotic and a drunkard. No one could guess, in what kind of act she would indulge herself in. Stella was appointed as a nurse to take care of her. Being a nurse to a patient like Miriam, Stella must be on her vigil. But, frequently impressed by the beauty of the bald mountain, in an adventurous spirit, she went for a walk. This was not appropriate on Stella’s part. To make matters worse, she accepted the invitation of Sword for a ride around the city. In the beginning, she hesitated. But, when forced by Sword and Miriam, she yielded. She was not as strong and tough as she thought about herself. She could not foresee the consequences. As she was inexperienced and immature, she could not carry out her responsibilities as a nurse properly. Not only in her profession, but also in her relationship with other people, she could not judge
things properly and act according to her individual free will. She depended on her father for most of her attitude and opinion. J.R. Dyce in Patrick White as Playwright rightly pointed out that:

Certainly, whole-day trips away from the house, even when urged to go by the head of the house and the patient herself, in the circumstances, must be considered unprofessional. Apparently she has had little experience with neurotics, such as Miriam, for she easily falls into traps that are set for her. (125)

After a day’s ride they came back to see Miriam in a drunken state. Now, Stella acted very composedly. When she realized that Miriam had drunk, she tried to relieve the effect of liquor by giving her medicine and tried to calm her down. She entertained Miriam by telling her childhood experience. She narrated to her that when she was a child, she used to wear her mother’s dress and danced and acted to entertain her father. Later, they decided to stop the show as the dress was her mother’s. Her father did not want to abuse his wife. Thus, whenever Stella talked about her father, she highlighted his virtues.

When Sword came to know that Miriam had been drunk, he got enraged. He could not digest that his wife had deceived him. He shouted at Miriam for her act. Stella asserted her rights at this point and warned Sword to leave her and her patient alone. She was doing the treatment and counseling in her own
way. Miriam did not receive all his shouting calmly. She also responded. She said Sword could not imagine the glorious experience the liquor provided her. This could not be done or provided by Professor Sword. She never bothered about the vituperation of Professor Sword. Actually, Stella depended on the drink to forget the harsh reality. The alcohol was like the mist. The mists covered the earth surface and when they dispersed, they exhibited the landscape beneath. Similarly, alcohol provided a cover and forgetfulness for Miriam only for a short period of time. But, after the effect was over, she was once again exposed to the painful truth.

In Act III, professor Sword, Denis and Stella were at the table. Denis and Sword discussed some literary personalities like Henry James and Trollope. As the topic was irrelevant, Stella could not involve herself in the discussion. Sword said that her wife Miriam was interested in Henry James’ writing. Inspired by his writing, Miriam even wrote a novelette. But, it was destroyed. Professor Sword did not stop disturbing Miriam’s happiness in the family life alone. He never allowed his wife to outsmart him. He was jealous about his wife’s literary talents also. Sword criticized and made satirical remarks about Miriam’s novelette. This was the reason why Miriam had destroyed her literary work. J.R. Dyce has rightly pointed out in his *Patrick White as Playwright* that:
She, Miriam, the intuitive, has diverted the mainstream of her life into bursts of neurotic alcoholism in lieu of the literary expression to which she has been drawn; her husband’s ridicule has been enough to put a stop to that. (108)

Stella decided to leave, as she had to write a letter. Sword was not happy to leave Stella. He asked “Does this mean we ought to say goodnight?” (N.B.M.3.1.330). In psychological terms, Sword belonged to the type of thinking personality. Thinking type of characters analyses things rationally. Sword arrived at a general understanding that one should give importance to mind and not to the senses. He tried to suppress and overcome his sensual feelings. He was afraid of its consequences. Through this attitude, he destroyed Miriam’s interest in life. He never worried or thought about the destruction that he had wrecked upon his wife. He even commented very bitterly against her wife. He compared Stella with her wife and said to Denis that, “(To Denis) A sober girl. (Pause) At her age, Miriam was twirling half the night. She seemed to attract the more racekty type of physicist … and fourth year students who like to dance.” (N.B.M 3.1.331.) Actually, he was jealous of his wife. On the other hand, his wife belonged to the intuitive type of personality. She found an outlet in drinks. She became an addict to drink in order to forget the reality. May Brit Akerholt has rightly pointed out in her *Patrick White* as:
Through his attitudes to the flesh the Professor destroys his wife’s zest for life; through professional jealousy he stifles her literary talent, but she kills it by taking refuge in hedonistic pleasures. However, the couple also represent two forms of intellect, mind and intuition, who fusion is as important to fulfillment as co-operation of spirit and body... (117)

Professor Sword’s henceforth attitude towards flesh and senses took a pivotal turn after seeing Stella. He wanted to impress her and gain her attention. The two people on his way, as a hindrance, were Denis Craig and Miriam. Denis Craig brought Stella after her morning walk and discussion with Miss. Quodling. Professor Sword saw both of them walking together and climbing up the mountain. He asked Denis to go ahead to pacify and inform Mrs. Sibley about their arrival and took the opportunity to be with Stella. Again, he devised a plot to be with Stella. He proposed a plan of taking Denis and Stella with him for a ride. Thus, he made himself to be away from Miriam. In Act III, when they were at tables, Stella left early to write a letter. Sword could not stifle his disappointment.

On the other side of the picture, Stella’s attitude towards Professor Sword was entirely different. While explaining the features of her father to Miss Quodling, she compared her father’s age with that of Professor Sword’s. After a day’s ride Sword and Stella had a discussion. Stella told that she was
going to write a letter, describing the experience she had, during the day’s drive. Sword praised her excessive affection for her father. He expressed his desire to know about her father and would like to visualize him. Stella replied that professor Sword reminded a little of her father. Thus, in her mind professor Sword resembled a father figure for her. Stella had had a good opinion of Sword till then. But, when Sword realized that his wife was drunk, he got emotional, and Stella was shocked to see the professor enraged to a great extent. She was also shocked to hear the way Sword quarreled with his wife.

Stella wrote a letter to her father. She regretted that she was missing him a lot. She described the experience she had in her day’s ride. She also wrote about her patient Miriam Sword. She described her as interesting and at the same time very pathetic. She remarked that Professor Sword was passionate, arrogant and violent at times. At the same time, she could not dismiss him because she pitied him. She wrote that Sword reminded her a little of her father. She immediately disagreed with her own statement and said that he was not really like her father. Stella’s role model was her father. She considered her father as pure and gentle. He was her constant source of inspiration and guidance. She developed her own personality from her father’s. Hence, she could not compare professor Sword with her father. She had an opportunity to experience professor Sword’s bad mouth. On the contrary, she considered her father as very kind even when he warned or judged. So, she loved her father.
very much and for Professor Sword she had just respect. Stella accepted her father’s value and she had not created any on her own. Though she was in her thirties, she was not free from father fixation. Stella was in this psychological state of mind. At this stage, Professor Sword was attracted towards Stella. His ideas about senses and sensuality were at stake.

Professor Sword was immersed in the thoughts of Stella. Sword considered Stella as having the quality of purity. He recollected that he was very much moved to see the girl stroking the lyre-bird’s feathers, when they had gone for a ride. He tried to impress the girl by his driving on the way to and from their tour. But, his age had an effect on him. So, he could not drive back. He again attempted to impress her by taking a plunge in the gully. He tried to check his thoughts by coming to a conclusion that a woman was one of the messier varieties of fruit. He was in his study table. He tried to tidy up the things. But, he felt dejected over the process and he could not complete his work. The process of tidying up his study table has symbolical references. Similar to his untidy table, Sword’s mind was also untidy and was roused by unwanted desires. He contemplated that instead of tidying up the table, if he could tidy up his untidy mind, something could be accomplished. He tried but he could not.
Denis Craig came to his room. He watched the moon in the sky. It appeared to be lopsided. Miriam too noticed the same thing. She also identified that the moon looked more lopsided. The lopsided moon had symbolical significance. It foretold something undesirable going to take place. May Brit Akerholt has rightly pointed out in *Patrick White* that:

As the passion escalate in the house and Sword struggles with his growing lust for Stella, Denis and Miriam comment on the ill shape of the moon, “most poignant when she’s most lopsided” (Denis, p.334); “the moon never looked more lopsided. Oh, Lord, I never felt emptier.” (Miriam, p.337). White is here subtly emphasizing how the forces of nature relate to humankind. (107)

Before going to bed on the way Professor Sword went to Miriam’s room. Miriam was all dressed up in her white ball dress, which Sword liked most. Sword was shocked to see his wife’s behaviour. He discussed with his wife about the novelette. He told that he had so far not passed any comments about her literary work. Now, he considered that her novelette had some slight literary merit. She very bluntly remarked that she had already destroyed her work. In her neurotic state, Miriam was dressed up in an eccentric way in the midnight. On seeing this, Sword might have sympathized with her and would have praised her work. Another reason was also there for Sword praising
Miriam’s work. So far, Sword had not treated Miriam’s love and feeling with due respect. He wanted himself to be in an elevated state. Now, Sword himself had come down. He could not control his feeling for the nurse, Stella. In order to hide his guilt, or may be with the aim of giving a consolatory prize, his jealous mind had allowed him to praise her literary merits.

Sword after reaching his room, uttered his prayer. He expressed his dilemma to the God almighty. He questioned whether it was a sin to love purity of innocence, honesty and goodness. At the same time, he worried that his sense of love should not submit itself to sensuality. He prayed to God that, “May the spirit never accept the flesh?” (N.B.M.3.1.339.)

After saying his prayer Sword went and knocked at Stella’s room. Stella was shocked to hear the knocking, in the middle of the night. She thought there was something wrong with Miriam. Actually, she had a dream and in that Miriam lost her way and was very much in need of Stella’s help. Stella could not believe Professor Sword’s visit. Sword claimed that Miriam did not need help and at present it was he who needed it most. His wife used to tell that she was not sick and it was only Sword who was sick. He conceded that his wife was right and he was sick at the moment. He needed Stella’s care and attention at the moment. Being with her, in itself would completely cure his disease. He sat down and placed his head against her thigh and enjoyed her warmth. Stella
replied that she was not in the position to fulfill Sword’s expectation. Unconsciously, she touched his hair out of sympathy. Only when Sword questioned why she had touched his hair, she understood that she had done that. She came out of the trance like moment and advised Sword to get up from the floor. A man like him should not behave like that. Stella told him that in her letter to her father, she could not make clear description about the professor. She claimed that he was too cruel and too fine at the same time. She said that she hated to look at his mouth, when he was enraged and scolded his wife like anything, when Miriam was in a drunken state. Before completing the sentence, Sword kissed her in her mouth. Stella immediately jumped up disturbed. She told that during certain moments, he reminded her of her father. Actually, he was not like her father, because her father was honest and professor Sword was not so. Sword tried to seduce her. Stella avoided his advancements and got enraged and shouted at him to get out. Sword pleaded to love and consider him. Sword reminded her that she had touched her hair and called her Hugo, as her wife used to call him. He asked what interrupted her, whether it was her father. Stella shouted that her father was pure and honest. She loved and respected her father. Stella turned away and was holding her hands in the temple and cried, “My father! My dearest father”. Sword felt ashamed and came out of Stella’s room. He approached Miriam’s room and
called her. He did not receive any response. Stella ruminated that the house was dirty and pathetically addressed her father.

Professor Sword was a married man. He considered that giving a vent to one’s own sexual feeling was a sin. So, he stifled his sexual instinct. In this process, he made his wife also suffer. In the words of May Brit Akerholt in *Patrick White*, “Samson’s sexlife is restrained; Miss Quodling keeps her animals fenced and their horns burnt, just as Sword keeps Miriam in her room and his own instincts and passions buried within himself.” (109). On the contrary, if he had respected his and his wife’s feeling and had led a normal family life, he would have been in a safer side. His pent up emotions waited in him for a long time for an outlet. As he stifled his instinct, his feelings got perverted and resulted in the seduction of Stella. May Brit Akerholt has rightly pointed out in her book *Patrick White* as:

Miriam Sword, a former beauty, is now an ‘invalid’, a “dyed-in-the-wool dipso” (p 275), locked away by her husband who himself is hiding from his dried-up intellect and suppressed physical drives. Through suppression of instincts, physical and spiritual, they destroy life in themselves and in the people around them. (100)

Patrick White attempted the genre tragedy in *Night on Bald Mountain*. A tragic play adhering to all the rules and regulations of a classical tragedy is
difficult to find in the 20th Century. Here, White did not follow the classical rules and at the same time, he did not take much of deviation. He made alterations to suit the modern day need. In Night on Bald Mountain, White discussed the action that took place within twenty-four hours time. With reference to the place of action there was not much of deviation. It took place either in the house of the Bald Mountain or in Miss. Quodling’s shack. With regard to the plot, the Quodling’s and the Sword’s interrelate with one another to form a harmonious whole. Actually, Miss. Quodling had left the humanity and had been living in the bald mountain among her goats. She was neither interested nor regretted over the relationship with human beings. At the same time, then and there, she satisfied her wishes to be with human by secretly having a look at the post box of the Swords or by stealing their fence post for fire. On the other hand, Miriam was happy to spend the time with Miss. Quodling and they enjoyed the drink. When Miriam left her home in the final scene, Sword approached Miss. Quodling for help.

As far as the tragic hero is concerned, in the present century, it was not possible to make a king or queen as the hero or heroine for the play. A character in a situation that produces equal tragic effect is suitable for a hero. White has followed the model of Shakespeare, in connection with comic relief. In Night on Bald Mountain in the seduction scene the plot reached the climax and unraveling of the plot is imminent. The audience would be very eager and
in a state of suspense to know the next stage of action. In Act III, scene ii, two hikers were seen in the bald mountain. Miss. Quodling was in search of her strayed goat Jessica. The hikers met her and asked for directions to reach the look out. Miss. Quodling explained to them that it was not a tourist spot and there was no look out in the bald mountain. In spite of that, she directed them to walk a few distance to reach a place, which would be more or less equal to a look out. She proudly claimed that she knew each and every place in the bald mountain. This scene is almost synonymous to the porter scene in *Macbeth* or grave diggers’ scene in *Hamlet*. After the seduction scene, the hiker scene provided a short of relaxation.

The audience would have been expecting the results of Stella and the professor. On the contrary in Act III, scene ii, Miriam was introduced. She came out of the house to Miss. Quodling’s place. Miss. Quodling was shocked to see Miriam all dressed up, at an early hour, in her place. With the intension of being with someone Miriam had come out. Miss. Quodling now was not interested to search Jessica. She wanted to take care of Miriam and so took Miriam to her place. Miss. Quodling enjoyed the beauty of the morning sunrise in the bald mountain. She recalled her first day experience that she had in the mountain. In beginning, she was afraid to be here and, later on, she got used to it. The light of the sun at an early time in the morning appeared like a rhinestone necklace over the bald mountain. She admired the beauty and
Miriam also acknowledged. As Miriam was physically weak, she took her into her place to be seated near the fire place. Miss. Quodling advised Miriam to enjoy the warm fire and relax. She asked Miriam not to have any black thoughts.

On the other side, Stella had come out of the house in the morning sun. She came across an apple tree and recalled the words of Miss. Quodling. The bald mountain contained “little runty played out apples”. She appreciated the peace that prevailed in the bald mountain. She exclaimed that if it wasn’t and left the sentence incomplete. She was about to say that if the professor had not misbehaved with her, she would enjoy the nature in the bald mountain with complete peace of mind. But now, she was in a disturbed state. She cried brokenly “My own father!”.

Miss. Quodling tended her goats and warned Dolores to act in a disciplined way. At this time, Sword came in search of his wife. Miss. Quodling ignored Sword’s call and continued to be busy with her work. He pleaded her to have mercy on him and requested her to say the whereabouts of Miriam. But, Miss. Quodling replied in negative. She criticized professor Sword for ill-treating his wife. She very clearly told that even if he had married a woman with the characters of his own mother and Virgin Mary, Sword could not keep up with her. In the mean time, one of the hikers came back. He
explained to Miss. Quodling, what he had seen. He saw a woman falling from the top of the mountain. Professor Sword on hearing this got anxious. He thought it might be Miriam. Now Miss. Quodling told him that just a few minutes back, she was sitting inside her room near by the fire place. Miss. Quodling went inside to confirm that Miriam was there in her house. In the mean time, Denis Craig came and enquired whether he found her. He simply used the pronoun her and it was ambiguous for whom the pronoun stood for.

When he came to know that someone fell from the mountain, he asked whether it was Stella. Sword was shocked to hear this. He was so far thinking that it was Miriam. But, when Denis said that it might be Stella, Sword realized the other possibility. Any way, he concluded whether it was Stella or Miriam the cause was because of him only.

When Miriam came out of Quodling’s shack, Denis hurried towards the foot of the mountain to see Stella. Miriam enquired what had happened to Stella. Miss. Quodling said that she threw herself over, from the mountain. Miriam could not control her grief. She lamented that Stella was the only one, on whom, she had hope. Stella was the one, who had an understanding of her. At this, Sword told that it was he, who was the reason for Stella’s suicide. But, Miriam remarked that it was not so and both of them were the reason for Stella’s death.
Stella actually compared Professor Sword with her father. She considered him to be a father figure. She realized a few shortcomings in him. These actually were the differences, she considered between her father and professor Sword. The behaviour of Sword in the seduction scene had deeply hurt her. She felt that in equating Professor Sword to her father was the first mistake, she had done. And, such a fatherly figure misbehaved with her. She considered that she had actually degraded the values of her father. She felt guilty that she had indulged herself in the act of incest. In the words of May Brit Akerholt in *Patrick White*:

> Confronted with her own self, she escapes from life into death rather than facing and dealing with the implications of her father-love and its Oedipal overtones. Her jump is instigated by the physical sullying of the mental concept which is her love for her father and society’s interpretation of her sacred bond as one of sordid unnaturalness results in a tormented belief that her father is being contaminated through her.

(122-123)

In a tragedy, the relationship between the audience and the main character is very intense. The audiences have to feel one with the main character and have pity for his sufferings. Of course, the death of Stella provokes our sympathy. But, the quality of being oneness with her was lacking. Technically the qualities
that ought to be in a tragedy are missing. As described by Miss. Quodling in the first scene, she was innocent, pure and soft like an apple. But someone is going to cut into her. Such a pure soul was forced to commit suicide. It really arouses our pity. As in the words of May Brit Akerholt in *Patrick White*:

Deaths are sad events but not necessarily tragic in Greek or conventional tragedy terms. There is, for instance, no ‘peripeteia’, or recognition, in the Aristotelian sense before Stella’s death; she is sacrificed pawn who, unaware of this aspect of her part in the conflict, goes over the cliff in a distraught frame of mind. Her death is tragic, in a wide and popular sense of the term, because it is a waste of young life. (104-105)

Stella thus became a victim of forces stronger than her. Her death paved way for other characters to realize themselves and their faults. So far, Sword thought that love was a source or agent of evil, harm, distress, and ruin. After meeting Stella, he had a clear understanding of love and the way he had treated his wife. On the other hand, Miriam also realized her own part, for the ruin of their married life. Hence in the end, Sword claimed that he had killed Stella Summerhayes. Miriam added that it was not he alone but both of them were responsible for her death and they were destroyers. So far, they had destroyed the happiness of their personal life. Now they had ruined the life of Stella. May Brit Akerholt has rightly pointed out in her book *Patrick White* that: “But she is
a catalyst, not a cause. Just as her fatal leap is instigated but not caused by the
Swords and their private conflict, their self-realization is only initiated by
Stella’s presence.” (121)

Finally, the Swords left for their home with the aim of trying once again.
The title for the play Night on Bald Mountain might have been derived from
Moussorgsky’s tone poem Night on Bald Mountain. Actually, Moussorgsky
composed the poem based on Nicolai Gogol’s story “Saint John’s Eve”. In the
story there was a mountain, which was haunted by witches. The people who
traveled across the mountain would be caught in the witches’ spell. The spell
would have an effect on them the whole day and night. The next day they
would be free from the influence of the witches and would become normal.
Similarly, in White’s Night on Bald Mountain also there was a spell. But, in the
spell bound night the innocent Stella lost her life. The Swords were like
travelers affected by the spell. But at dawn, like the travelers they were
relieved from the spell and became normal. They went together to their home.
But, they were not so confident. They promised themselves that they must try
again, even if they failed again.

Miss Quodling, towards the end, lamented over the death of Stella. She
felt very sad at the early demise of Stella. She recalled how she had warned
her. She claimed that her warning had almost become true. She felt that in the
end, everyone would leave and there would be none except the goats and herself among them. She alone knew all that were available in the bald mountain. She would keep on advising the goats to move this way and that way. She would guide them to avoid the pitfalls. When she was so soliloquizing, she was horrified to see Dolores which was trying to leap and ultimately, it fell down and died. She concluded that then there was something that knew more, something that got us all in the end, through heart. Now, she realized that there was some supreme force over her.

Miss. Quodling, so far, considered that she knew all in the bald mountain. In the opening scene, Stella said that Professor Sword had shown her the orchids. Miss. Quodling claimed that she knew orchids in the bald mountain better than the professor or anybody else. She very proudly claimed to the hikers that nobody knew the bald mountain better than her. She added that she never got lost in the bald mountain. She knew every nook and corner in the bald mountain, like her own hand. She very arrogantly claimed that people would tell that she was the mountain. Further, she told that she was the crown in the bald mountain. She became humble and was made to realize the superior force, when the objects of her love, her darling Dolores had a fatal leap. May Brit Akerholt in *Patrick White* rightly pointed out that:
Dolores’s leap seems to be a mocking answer to Miss. Quodling’s sin of hubris. The goat woman challenges, like Oedipus, the power of the gods, the forces of nature, and her rise to heights of megalomania is her downfall. The “original wombat of Bald Mountain” (p.274) is finally brought to humility through recognition of her own humanity in the realization that she cannot by isolating herself, become insulated against human emotions:... (112)

So far, Miss. Quodling was misled with the concept that she was all powerful and unconquerable. She believed that there was an inborn power in herself, in the bald mountain and ultimately in life. Hence, at the end, she could overcome the difficulty and was confident enough to face life, in spite of defeat. She says, “… The silence will breed again...in peace...a world of goats...perhaps even men!”. (N.B.M.3.3.356). The Swords were also misled in the course of their life. But, there was no positive quality within them. In the end, they moved towards their home without much of confidence. May Brit Akerholt has very rightly remarked in *Patrick White* that:

Miss. Quodling is happily deluded as to her invincibility as the ruler of mountain and goats, but there is a tragic dimension suggested in the greatness of ideas embodied in her character. Her belief in an inherent strength, or force, within herself and in life itself, ensures survival in the
face of defeat. In contrast, the Swords are unhappy in their life of delusion. At the end of the play they represent survival without hope. 

(105)

The fall of Dolores and Stella took place within a short period of time. But, there was a striking contrast between the both. Stella wanted to conform to the social norms, rules and regulations. She felt that she had deviated from the norms and was in the wrong end. She felt that she had offended her father and acted against the standard code of conduct. As a punishment for not sticking to the rules, she committed suicide by falling from the cliff. But, Dolores’ leap was something different. So far, Dolores was restrained and was under control. It did not want to follow the established norms and code of conduct. It rebelled and fell from the mountain. The Dolores leap is significant in two ways. It made Miss. Quodling to realize the power above her. At the same time, animalistic instinct, if not controlled might result in tragedy of one’s own life. If it went on unchecked, it might ruin other’s life also as Professor Sword had ruined the life of Stella. May Brit Akerholt in Patrick White observed that:

The two deaths, animal and human, are not a result of each other or of similar circumstances. Their falls over the cliff have sacrificial overtones, but while Stella succumbs to her own as society’s confined
view of life, Dolores rebels against human bonds; she has tasted freedom and her leap is an expression of that freedom. (103)

Denis Craig exclaimed that “if Stella Summerhayes is dead…. How shall we believe … in life?” (N.B.M.3.3.353) Denis was a lecturer in the department of professor Sword’s. Actually, he came to Professor’s house for intellectual and creative inspiration and guidance. But, he found that the source was not satisfactory. Denis, so far, played only the role of an audience for professor Sword. He had a fascination towards Stella. Before the seduction scene, he went to Stella’s room. Stella lacked worldly experience and could not take decision on her own. She depended on her father for everything. Hence, she could not very clearly express her affinity towards Denis. On the other hand, if Stella had been very frank and open with Denis, the tragedy would have been averted. If they had started loving each other, professor Sword’s intrusion might have been avoided. May Brit Akerholt has very rightly mentioned in Patrick White that:

Denis’s relationship with Stella is the least important part of his role. As a potential saving agent through his capacity for love, he is a weakness in the plot because there is no dramatic development linked with his character in such terms. His visit to Stella’s room at night only hints at the possibility of a normal, happy relationship; Stella is beginning to
trust and respond to him he is willing to wait. This suggestion of a change in Stella serves no purpose as its significance stops at this point.

(119)

Stella’s response to Denis’ advance was childish. In spite of being thirty years old, she could not judge Denis properly. She could not understand his love. She thought Denis was guilty of sexual passion. She was innocent, at the same time, she lacked inner strength. She could not understand other people’s problem. She was a nurse by profession. She had to guide people. But, actually she could not solve her own problems and thus she was a failure.

Sword was educated and belonged to the teaching community. Patrick White selected the academic background for Sword intentionally. White was not satisfied with the academicians and their attitude towards life. He would like to highlight the point that professors like Sword abound in the universities of Australia. As an academician, he was jealous for fame and name. He never allowed others to outsmart him. Whenever he was in his study table, he indulged himself in the act of finding fault with others work. We saw him involving in the process of destroying other people’s work. The young and budding writers would prosper, only if they were recognized, encouraged and motivated. The senior professor like Sword has a pivotal role to play. He should be a constant source of motivation and energy for the blooming writers.
like Denis Craig. Besides being a literary personality, he was a teacher by profession. A teacher is one who could inspire a lot of students and juniors. He should be a role model and an ideal for them. He should be their well-wisher and a sincere friend. But on the contrary, we only find negative comments about professor Sword from his junior Denis Craig. He commented that “Sword is a jealous man”(283). Instead of constructive qualities, only destructive elements abound in him. May Brit Akerholt in *Patrick White* observed that:

Hugo Sword, a man of letters, is the main exponent of the destructive division between mind and body. In creating close links between Sword’s physical and spiritual barrenness and his professional status, White is making a comment on the state of Australian academia. But while the professor’s private conflicts are of major importance to the development of action and characterization, the rather damning suggestion that Australian academic life produces stunted and Gothic souls like the Professor remains a basis for the play’s conflict rather than the integrated part of it. (116)

Not only in his profession, but also in the society he failed to keep up his obligations. As a husband, he should be a model for others. He should have exhibited a striking contrast in the way of treating his wife and fulfilling his family responsibilities. As a member of the elite society, he should be just in
his manner and should not lose his self-control. He should respect the feelings and ego of others and should try to understand and resolve their difficulties with grace, while keeping himself calm and composed. He should be able to smile in the face of bitter criticism and should not feel ashamed or humiliated to accept his mistakes wholeheartedly. But, these characteristic traits were lacking in professor Sword.

If not a model for virtues, at least he should have remained dormant. To make matters worse, he was attracted physically to a girl, who was more or less at the age of his daughter. He exhibited all his strategies to control his passion for his wife. But, when it came to the extra marital life, he failed miserable. He could not keep his instincts under control. His irresponsible action led Stella’s life to a tragedy. Professor Sword was himself in a psychologically unbalanced state of mind. The students who come to the University for their graduation will be like Stella. They will be inexperienced and innocent. At each stage, the students will face a conflict that serves as a turning point to their development. When the conflict is resolved successfully, the student will be able to develop the psychosocial quality associated with that particular stage of development. Instead of resolving their problems, if professors like Sword instigated, the future of the younger generation will be at stake.
This is the state of the Australian academicians. There are no noble qualities that ought to be in them. Patrick White deplores this state of affair and satirically makes an attack on them in *Night on Bald Mountain*. Thus through the play, White makes an appeal to the Australians academicians to realize themselves, their responsibilities and the role they have to play in producing a strong younger generation for their country’s successful future.