CONCLUSION
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Critical and theoretical interest in "Fantasy" has developed considerably over recent decades. "Fantasy" has become the centre of a sizeable body of critical writing. This is particularly the case since the appearance of Tzvetan Todorov's seminal study *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* (1973). Many of the post-1970 commentators have felt a need to respond in some way to Todorov's trail-blazing book. Some have endeavoured to develop or modify his ideas on "fantasy". Others have taken issue, by polemicising with or rejecting him. Hence in the first chapter I have tried to look at a number of contributions to the critical debate over the genre of "fantasy". I have attempted to assess the current state of the argument, hoping to draw a degree of classification by drawing certain distinctions, or by suggesting amendments to definitions and genre categories.

Giving a central place to Todorov's definition, I have tried to take into account a number of the studies made on the topic of "fantasy". Hence much of chapter I is, to a great extent, something of a mosaic of linked quotations or structured heteroglossia.

Before analysing some of Kipling's stories in the light of the definition of "fantasy" as given in the first chapter, I have tried to analyse some of the famous fantasies written by Poe, Tolstoy, Hawthorne, Stockton, Henry James, Maupassant, Oscar Wilde, H.G. Wells and Stevenson in the second chapter. The same has been done to
highlight the fact that Kipling is more prolific and versatile writer than any one of them. In fact, the most striking feature of Kipling's fantasies is their wide range. Subjects of most diverse kind are handled with ease and intimacy. He compels our imagination to accompany him from arid villages in Afghanistan to the rich downs of Sussex, from the plains of India to the wildest of Atlantic seas, from Arctic ice to the sweltering African forests. He can reveal the shocking depths of humanity, show it at its most tender and compassionate or flash to us a queer vision of an archangelic world. He can take the readers back to the ancient Roman times, even to pre-history periods and forward to the year 2065. His variety is indeed astonishing.

I have not tried to show through this thesis that Kipling wrote only fantasies. I have rather selected a few stories from the entire work of Rudyard Kipling, in which fantasy plays an important role, though these stories find place in the same volume with other tales which are characterized by stark realism. Examining these tales in the light of the definition of "fantasy" as given by Todorov, Tolkien, Rabkin and others, I have endeavoured to stress the point that these tales are much more than mere fantasies. Fantasy, in fact, is a tool which Kipling uses to expound some of his favourite ideas. Naturally his tales can be interpreted in several allegorical and symbolical ways. I have, therefore, tried to unravel their deeper significance in some cases.
Kipling's ghost stories form a class by themselves. Ghosts in these stories need not be treated as titillating puzzles because Kipling did not treat them like that; they are the symbols of some deep spiritual crisis. Kipling uses ghosts as means of producing certain effects, to aid in the development of his main theme. Most of these ghost stories are written against Indian background. Hence they have the verisimilitude of chronicles, the chronicles of an epoch of British administration in India, infused with the imagination of a great writer of fiction. His greatest achievement, however, has been to bring the separate worlds and dimensions into confrontation and set up a creative tension between them. The contrasted worlds may be those of East and West, or more generally, the world of commonsense rationality as opposed to the underworld of spirituality and magic. Though mysterious and ghostly forces come into play in these ghost stories, yet Kipling does not commit himself clearly to any final decision about the real and hallucinatory quality of the vision. This simple trick which has become a standard practice for fantasy writers who followed him was something new in the 1880's; it seemed a change from the certainties of a Poe or a Mrs Radcliffe, or the uncertainties of a Maturin or Monk Lewis. Moreover, these tales are highly symbolical. Hence an attempt has been made to show that Kipling's ghost stories are much more than mere excursions into the world of the unknown and unseen beings.
Kipling's animal fantasies, however, brought him more acclaim than his ghost fantasies. *Just So Stories* is Kipling's admirable achievement; he has written legends of a new kind in this book. In these days, we hear of continual worship of old legends, but not of the making of new, which would be the real worship of legends. In the *Jungle Books*, the best seller among his books, Kipling has elaborated a new, powerful and lasting myth of a human child Mowgli who lives with a pack of wolves in the jungle. Mowgli tales are remarkable for the fable of the man-child who became the master of the jungle but who could not resolve the dilemma of his ambivalent life, the apparatus of Indian animal lore, and the strange ethical concept called the Law of the Jungle. Like their original, Aesop's fables or the Jataka tales which Kipling knew so well, they impress themselves on the mind of the readers at more than one level. In fact, Kipling found animal fantasy to be a congenial form at all stages of his writing life. Other animal fantasies like "The Bull that Thought", "The Mother Hive", "Below the Mill Dam" and "A Walking Delegate" are also making statements of importance to Kipling in an ingenious and depersonalized way.

Through his historical fantasies, Kipling has given the English a new appreciation of their own history. He has continued thereby the work of sympathetic understanding begun by Sir Walter Scott. *Puck of Pooks Hill* and *Rewards and Fairies* are in fact the most embroidered productions of Kipling's most elaborate period. Kipling's genius for words
has been stimulated by the discovery of the English earth
and sea; he spreads on the rich grassiness of the English
country, the dense fogginess of the English coast, the
layers upon layers of tradition that cause the English
character seem to him deep rooted, deep coloured and deeply
meaningful. He has applied all his delicacy and strength to
get the mother country into prose. He has brought back to
life the Normans, the Saxons and the Elizabethans, the great
cathedral builders and sailors and divines in his historical
fantasies. But he writes about these stories: "Since the
tales had to be read by children, before people realized
that they were meant for grown ups... I worked the material
in three or four overlaid tints and textures, which might or
might not reveal themselves according to the shifting light
of sex, youth and experience." Hence an effort has been
made to bring to light "the three or four overlaid tints and
textures" that Kipling hinted at in _Something of Myself._

Kipling, as his scientific fantasies reveal, was an
exponent of new technology; he brought to perfection the
literary use of the language of the specialised industrial
world. He must have been the principal artisan in the
creation of that peculiar modern genre in which the readers
are made to see comedy or tragedy through the medium of
technical vocabulary or professional slang. Kipling found
new rhythms, new colours and textures of words for
scientific things which had not been yet brought into
literature. It is impossible for a reader to go through
Kipling's scientific stories without marvelling at the
author's mastery. How he has caught the very look and feel of the materials that go to make bridges, the tempo of the trains and ships, the relation of the Scotch engineer to the patched up machines of his ship remains a mystery. The writer who put on record all these things must be an original and accomplished artist. Some critics, however, have criticised these scientific tales for their technical details. In fact, the use of excessive technicalities in his scientific tales concerning steam engines, ships, bridges, wireless, telescopes or airships should not blind us to the fact that Kipling is using these inventions as symbols of something else. His scientific stories too, like his ghost, animal and historical stories, ultimately turn out to be rich allegories with many layers of meanings.

It is obvious that Kipling uses animals, ghosts, fairies, machinery and so on to communicate some of his intimate convictions about life. In the short survey of Kipling's stories, in the light of the definition of fantasy, explained in the first chapter, I have endeavoured to show that Kipling's stories can be read not only by children for amusement and entertainment, but also by the grown ups who may discover more meanings than meet the eye for their education and edification. These stories, in my opinion, carry more than one meaning and they can be interpreted differently by perceptive readers. I trust that I have succeeded to some extent in proving the point which I made in the Introduction to show that many of Kipling's stories belong to the realm of the fantastic, of course,
with several layers of meanings. I am, however, conscious of my limitations as a student of vast English literature and I can't claim to have done full justice to the subject of my discussion. Here and there I might have faulted, but on the whole, I have enjoyed the assignment. I hope that my honest attempt to throw some light on the meaning of Kipling's fantastic stories will not have gone in vain. I conclude my thesis with J.H. Millar's words:

"To frame a concise yet exhaustive judgement upon Kipling is impossible, so various are his gifts, so rich his endowment. A glowing imagination, an inexhaustible invention, a profound knowledge of the human heart - these are three of his choicest possessions. Yet how inadequately does so bald a statement sum up the rich profusion of his talents! How beggarly and feeble seem the resources of language to do justice to his great achievements!"