CHAPTER I

PROBLEMS OF POETIC DRAMA
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I

Poetic drama is a distinct genre. It is a "moment" in literature, combining temporal "movement" with spatial "aspect" or "feature". In other words, poetic drama combines the sense of space with the sense of time, generated by the poetic and dramatic elements. Though in themselves space and time are "simple and primitive functions", in poetic drama they appear as "intellectual constructions of great complexity" because they acquire cultural, historical, and for that matter, human proportions.

While space and time acquire these human proportions, they pose to the dramatic poet problems, termed as the problems of poetic drama. These problems pertain to form and theme which, when resolved, become "subject-matter" and "truth-content." The illumination of subject-matter and the exploration of truth-content form one process because "truth-content is the more relevant, the more inconspicuously and intimately it is bound up with its subject-matter." In this lies

2. Benedetto Croce, Aesthetic (6th impression), New York 1960 P.5

Walter Benjamin has applied these categories to creative writing in general. Thus they are as much applicable to poetic drama which is a distinct creative genre.
the uniqueness of poetic drama in which "its concrete elements (plot, agency, scene, speech, gesture) continuously exhibit in their internal relationships those qualities of mutual coherence and illumination required of the words of a poem."

A poem may be taken to communicate its theme through such textural and structural elements as words, phrases, images and stanzas. These elements form "unity in multeity," which is not just an organic unit in which opposite and discordant qualities lose their identities. It is a whole wherein it is possible to separate different elements from one another and thus to evaluate them, though they together determine the value of a poem. Similarly, in poetic drama the elements of form and theme form a whole and show their full import through each other and in each other's context only.

The problems of theme pertain to (a) milieu and ethos, (b) wholeness of leitmotifs, (c) world-vision, (d) perspective, and (e) aura and those of form to (a) myth, (b) symbolism, (c) imagery, (d) verse, and (e) diction. These problems can be related to those discussed by Aristotle and Hegel about tragedy. In their discussion they fail to maintain a dialectical unity between these two types of problems.

1. Denis Donoghue, The Third Voice, Princeton 1957 P.7
In their reflections upon the uniqueness of tragedy, Aristotle excludes the problems of theme, and Hegel largely ignores the problems of form. The above division is responsive to the Aristotellean and the Hegelian reflections; but it also seeks to explore the ontological identity of poetic drama in the context of its history.

The problems of (a); i.e., milieu and ethos and of (b), i.e., wholeness of leitmotives are inter-related. The wholeness of leitmotives illuminates the reality of milieu and ethos as subject-matter. Leitmotiv, here is not just linear as in music. It is multilinear or multidimensional and the reality of milieu and ethos, while changing into the wholeness of leitmotives, acquires the form of human trends which through their conflicts and contradictions characterize its humanity.

Leitmotiv is thus not a static condition but is a process. The dramatic poet perceives it permeated with praxis, showing itself as human beings in whom the tendencies of the homo faber tend to remain inseparable from the qualities of homo sapiens. When they tend to separate, they do so with a purpose, i.e., to show disjunction inherent in reality itself. These human beings act and their actions are events which have "the inside" and "the outside" as their essential aspects. By "the outside of an event" is meant "everything belonging to it which can be described in terms of bodies and their movements ..... and by "the inside of an event" is meant that "which
can only be described in terms of thought." These two aspects of
an event cannot be separated from each other though in the praxis
of a human being there may be emphasis upon one aspect or the other.
They create each other's context but they cannot be reduced to each
other. When this reduction tends to occur, it denotes the active
or contemplative attitude of man, active if the inside reduces
itself to the outside and contemplative if the outside reduces
itself to the inside.

Praxis is a nexus of thought and action which are
proportionate to each other in conformity with the nature of man.
It is a complex of thoughts and actions. The inner and outer
aspects of this complex vary in the frame of history. For example,
in ancient Greece it tended to be unilinear and denoted the thought
and action of the hero alone. As a result the Greek drama of those
times imitates action that is "serious, complete, and of a certain
magnitude." In Renaissance when class divisions became more
complex, action could be taken — as in Shakespeare's play —
as a whole one by analogy only. It does not have the literal and

"The inside" and "the outside" of an event are
equally important though subsequently Collingwood
under Croce's excessive influence tends to negate
the validity of the outside of it. Collingwood
remarks that "all history is the history of
thought". It echoes Croce's view in History
(p.25) that "spirit itself is history."

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rational unity of the single, logical and causally connected chain of events or story. In modern times this reality has not only grown complex still but has also broken into exterior and interior aspects. Almost imperatively action in modern drama has become analogous to "paratactic sequences" exterior in Brecht, and interior in Pirandello.

Since dramatic action is a complex of several actions having exterior and interior aspects, the dramatic pattern includes collision as well as movement, movement to and away from collision and collision centralising and dispersing movement. Due to this dialectical relation between the two, the past collides through the present with the future. The past, present and future of the dramatic pattern can be of any age because in every age there have been past and future of the present. Similarly collision and movement can be overwhelmingly exterior and interior in varying degrees. Collision can occur anywhere in the dramatic movement, it need not occur only in the middle of it. All these variations, however, depend upon the nature of reality that is illuminated as subject-matter in poetic drama.

While changing milieu and ethos into leitmotivs, the

dramatic poet supersedes the classical and the romantic modes of perceiving reality. The classical mode is determined by the imitation of human action which, as a simulacrum is forced to represent "three dimensions by two." The romantic mode aims at imitating "something inside the artist himself", thereby making the action "both intuitive and introspective" and helping its development from a vision which is "personal and subjective." In the modern age, the dramatic poet synthesises these two modes. Now he regards no action to be a pure act in Nietzsche's and Gentile's sense, but regards every action to be impure in the sense that it is accompanied by consciousness and reflection. Similarly, he does not conform to the affirmations of philosophers like Aquinas, Leibnitz and Croce that thought by simple extension becomes action, or that the more thoughtful one is the more active will be by nature, or that only thought is the essential form of action. Also he is disinclined to regard action as above thought as do many religious-minded people who take thought as an adage of action.

Perception of reality through praxis is not the prerogative of a Marxist, because praxis is the central core of the philosophy of immanence which aims at the "identity of philosophy with history." As Gramsci has pointed out praxis makes concrete the view that "the

philosophy of an historical epoch is ... nothing other than the history of that epoch." Holding to "the historicisation of philosophy and its identification with concrete history", it affirms that "every truth believed to be eternal and absolute has had practical origins". In one sentence it can be held to denote that "philosophy is history in action, that is, life itself."

Marxism, being the most important moment in the philosophy of immanence, purifies praxis of "all its metaphysical apparatus and brings it on to the terrain of history." In itself it is in "its popular phase" where its "materialist conception is close to the people, to commonsense." Being thus in its popular phase, Marxism does not explain the nexus of structure and superstructures with that subtlety and sensitiveness as may completely supersede the idealistic conception of it. Evidently its terrain is economic and political, in particular, while that of praxis is the whole of history, the whole of life. Holding to the historical form of immanence, praxis offers "most consistent rejection of any form of transcendence." In his own way Walter Benjamin has affirmed the


Clearly Gramsci does not use "the philosophy of immanence" or "praxis", of which it is the philosophy, as jargon for Marxism. He distinguishes between the two though he does not want that this distinction should perpetuate itself. He wants the two to become identical so that there may develop philosophy that may be total, concrete and historical. This is evident from the fact that on pages 450 and 454 he develops etymological and epistemological importance of the word "immanence" which seems to him to be far profounder than a similar importance of the word "materialism". Related to it is his inherent conviction that concrete life is not explained as fully by materialist dialectics as it is explained by historical immanence. Dialectics tends to make the picture of life schematic and materialism explains it at the level of structure or commonsense. Only historical immanence explains it as nexus of structure and superstructures, i.e., at the level of philosophy.
significance of historical immanence in the perception of reality. He has averred that in the final analysis "the range of life must be determined by history", and there is far greater validity "in comprehending all of natural life through the more encompassing life of history."

The nexus of thought and action is consummated through language which mediates between the two. Language contains "spontaneous philosophy" and constitutes a "totality of determined notions and concepts and not just words devoid of content." So in reality perceived as praxis there prevails a tension between thought, action and word; and man thinks, tries to manifest his thought in action and articulate it through language. Thus language helps thought in becoming concrete through action, and action in developing depth-dimension of thought. In this way it not only illuminates the spatial aspect of action but also explores the temporal nature of thought.

Praxis, or the nexus of thought and action, moulds reality into three broad terrains comprising individual's relationships with (a) himself (b) other men and (c) the natural world. These relationships are, in other words, with self, society and nature. They mould reality in two ways: they make it social and human because man can realise himself only through these relationships, and they impart

historical significance to the temporal duration of life. Their inter-relationship makes the dramatic pattern spatial, temporal or spatio-temporal because the matrix of these relationships with nature, self and society is the past, the present and the future, respectively.

In ancient Greece man's relationship with nature determined the reality of the human situation. The relationships with self and society did enter into this determination but only tangentially. Obviously this reality centred on the past, thus this reality became the subject-matter in ancient Greek drama. Time condensing itself into space here, makes sense of space more important than sense of time. Thus time appears as quantum; in a single sequence of time, the past impinges itself upon the present making it eternal and general instead of concrete and historical. Tending to accquise into a static equilibrium, Greek drama reflects symmetry, balance and proportion and becomes analogous to architectural, sculptural and pictorial patterns.

In Renaissance, man's relationships with self and society synchronised so as to estrange the human situation from the vortex of nature. The present and the future pervaded the human situation so overwhelmingly then that the sense of time became more important than the sense of space, individualities displaced collectivities and situations changed into events. So in Shakespearean drama time is more important than space. In order to project itself as more temporal than spatial, it makes use of such temporal modes as intention, memory, indirection and anticipation. Through comparison, irony, contrast and other devices, it advances from "incipient beginnings to ...
In modern times, these relationships have not only become more complex and contradictory but have also acquired new dimensions and proportions. Man's relationship with nature has, for example, become one with the productive system. Thus reification has come to occupy a central place in this relationship; and estrangement and deracination, the mental and social consequences of reification, have come to characterise man's relationships with self and society. Both spatially and temporally reality seems to be going beyond the aesthetic grasp of the dramatic poet. So the modern dramatic poet is inclined to isolate one relationship from the others and mould it into subject-matter. No wonder the modern poetic drama is more a product of "partial perspectives" than modern drama in general.

Human reality which is thus illuminated in poetic drama is a nexus of structure and superstructures. The structural terrain denotes social reality while the superstructural growth expresses emotional, intellectual, imaginative and spiritual aspects. When human reality is illuminated, the process starts from the terrain of social reality from which human reality draws sustenance. In fact great drama (for that matter poetic drama because all great drama is essentially

1. Tom F. Driver, *Sense of History in the Greek and Shakespearean Drama* New York 1960 P.104
poetic drama) has always done this. In ancient Greek drama, the process of this illumination starts from the autochthonous level of human existence because autochthony then formed the concrete terrain of human life. In Shakespearean drama, this level is of hegemony which, having become bereft of all aspects of growth, has descended to the most autochthonous level. In the dramas of Brecht and Lorca, this level is determined by a hiatus between autochthony and hegemony. As a result, Lorca's female characters suffer terribly at the hands of autochthony and Brecht's characters undergo deep deracination at the hands of hegemony. Yerma, for example, experiences "a violent anxiety she dies just as she was in final agony before." Similarly, Mother Courage has to capitulate her "profound motherliness" to "trade" which is "like an ambiguous force inside her, realistic and non-realistic at the same time."

Human reality can become great subject-matter only if it is pervaded with them growing from the world-vision of the dramatic poet. Characteristics of world-vision are:

(a) It is simultaneously an idea and a feeling.

(b) It contains the contrasts between the general and the particular, and the universal and the individual.


2. Roland Barthes, 'Seven Photo Models of Mother Courage', TDR, Fall 1967 PP.47,55
(c) It is a progression towards ever deeper meanings.

(d) It is the nodal point from which secondary ideas and feelings develop.

World-vision can become comprehensive and whole if it has roots in collective consciousness which is a complex of human tendencies, thoughts and feelings. In no way should this complex be confused with "the collective unconscious" made popular by depth-psychology because collective consciousness is a concrete reality while the collective unconscious is only a possibility liable to become reality only if collective consciousness divests itself of its historical dimensions. But historically and concretely, this metamorphosis is impossible though metahistorically and metaphysically it may be deemed as possible. Even Jung has admitted in a moment of concrete reflection that "in itself the Collective Unconscious cannot be said to exist at all; that is to say that it is nothing but a possibility." At the next moment, nevertheless, the metahistorical and metaphysical core of vision overpowers his reflection and leads him to change this possibility into that "which, in fact from primordial times has been handed down to us in the definite form of mnemic images." This accretion is untenable because the instincts which are regarded as mnemic now have become so after a distinctive

1. C.G. Jung, Contributions to Analytical Psychology, New York 1928 P.246
transformation and are a considerable advance on the subhuman instincts.

The collective consciousness is an abstract for folklore which is a vortex of human tendencies generated on the terrain of social reality. Folklore is universal because it communicates the experiences, thoughts and feelings of the generic personality. As Bela Bartok has discovered folklore and folk music are invariably identical with "the peasantlore and village music." Nevertheless, the folk-soul articulating folklore is not some homogenous entity transcending the limits of history, but is only "a personification of the functional unity that connects the various manifestations of a community .... it is at most a consciousness or indefinite feeling of belonging together." Correlative with the folk-soul is its "psychological primitiveness" that manifests itself not merely in its lack of prudishness but also in the episodic and rhapsodic manner of expression and by the incoherence of its concepts and images." Thus folklore is on the one hand universal, appealing to the collective mind, and on the other hand episodic and rhapsodic, lacking the subtlety and sensitiveness of the individual mind.

All these aspects of folklore are reflected by commonsense which is fragmentary, incoherent and inconsequential on the one hand and anthropomorphic and anthropocentric on the other. As Antonio Gramsci has pointed out, "It is not a single unique conception,

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identical in time and space,* Like folklore in general, it is developing all the time though its development is invariably neophobe and contradictory. All the same, "commonsense is the folklore of philosophy" and being half way between folklore and philosophy it creates "the folklore of the future". So commonsense is not "something rigid and immobile but is continually transforming itself with scientific ideas and philosophic opinions which have entered ordinary life."

The dramatic poet roots his world-vision in this complex of folklore and commonsense and then nourishes it with so much subtlety and sensitiveness of his own mind that it becomes capable of exploring the human trends of his time. These roots impart significance to the theme as well as the form of poetic drama. The theme becomes significant in the sense that only thus does it come into possession of the universality of human tendencies. on the one hand, and the sensitiveness and subtlety of their growth. on the other. Thus, the theme changes into truth-content that is subjective and objective at the same time, its objectivity having all the depth of its subjectivity, and its subjectivity having all the amplitude of its objectivity.

These roots are highly significant for form as well because they do not let the dramatic poet become a votary of tradition as Yeats was in the archetypal and metahistorical way, and Eliot was in a religious and metaphysical way. Instead it shows to him that "the process of historical development is a unity in time through which the present contains the whole of the past and in the present is realised that part

of the past which is essential —— with no residue of any unknowable representing the true essence." He also learns that "the past which is lost, i.e., not transmitted dialectically in the historical process was in itself of no import, casual or contingent dross, chronicle and not history, a superficial and negligible episode in the last analysis."

This dialectical or immanent type of historical consciousness commits the dramatic poet to the affirmation that "art follows reality". Naturally, he becomes averse to the tendency of Aristotle and the Aristotelians to regard form as sacrosanct. He regards its significance as purely historical upholding that "reality alters...new springs from the old but that is just what makes it new." This commitment makes the dramatic poet extremely conscious of form without in any way changing him into a formalist. He advances, thereby, to new formal innovations taking them not from the point of view of artistic contingency but from that of artistic necessity. Basically he upholds the view that to be a formalist is not only to be exclusively concerned with form for its own sake, but it is also to impose old form on a new subject-matter.

Subject-matter and truth-content become intimately and inconspicuously bound together only if the world-vision of the dramatic poet possesses immanent and historical perspective which is a prerequisite


2. Bertolt Brecht, Brecht on Theatre (translated by John Willet),New York 1964 PP.29, 110
for gaining the aesthetic possession of reality. In the classical phase it is mimetic and ordering because through the objects imitated and the medium and manner of imitation, it communicates the mimesis of reality. The mimetic principle or the reference of a work to the subject-matter which it imitates, is primary even in Aristotle's critical system even if it is primum interparum. In its romantic phase, perspective is intuitive and introspective, similar to the Secondary Imagination of Coleridge which "dissolves, diffuses, dissipates in order to recreate; or even when the process is rendered impossible, yet still at all events it struggles to idealise and unify." Only in the immanent and historical phase is perspective fully creative tending both to illuminate and explore reality which does not exist in and for itself, but only in historical relationship with the men who, by mediating with it, give significance to it, and by changing it, create it.

When the perspective is immanent but not historical, it becomes a complex of philosophical categories. For its communication, it makes use of "remembered event" in place of "lived event" little knowing that "a lived event is finite, concluded on the level of experience" while "a remembered event is infinite, a possible key to everything that will follow it." This transposition makes the dramatic pattern allegorical, and allegory being "empty-handed" owes its "very existence to the non-existence of that which allegory purposes to represent."

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2. S.T. Coleridge, Biographia Literaria (edited by J.S. Shaw Cross) Oxford 1907 P.202
The dramatic poet affirms both the immanence and the historicity of his perspective. To substantiate his affirmation he not only perceives what is actual but also conceives what is possible. To create a nexus between the actual and the possible, he changes the immanent and historical perspective into immanent/historical and makes it the essential principle of his creative process. To enable his creative process to flourish thus, he prevents it from assuming either linear or circular proportions. In the linear perspective "as each new stage is reached, the past appears to be left behind, the former things have passed away, and a straight line appears to be the inevitable symbol." In the circular perspective "there is the urge to return into itself and to join the end to the beginning."

Both these perspectives are single and partial. No wonder romantic poetic drama, which is in a way the analogue of linear perspective, takes the presumed totality of notions as the actual totality of life. Naturally, it fails to strike roots in dramatic moment that may expand into dramatic movement. Dramatic movement is, in fact, its matrix where its characters become symbolical, articulating themselves through lyrical and reflective poetry, that has not much to do with dramatic poetry.

When the linear perspective, from being temporally progressive, becomes temporally ingressive, the symbolical drama of Yeats, etc. comes into existence. Its pattern is overwhelmingly spatial, and only reluctantly allows time in its most spatialised form to pervade it.

1. Cullmann, Oscar, Christ and Time, Philadelphia 1950 P.17

The linear and cyclical perspectives denote only dominant tendencies in the respective spheres because as John Marsh in The Fullness of Time (pp.174-182) makes clear no people think in purely linear or cyclical terms.
Naturally, its characters become hieroglyphic gestures oscillating between such contraries as motion and stillness, and expansion and contraction. This type of drama is lyrical in articulation and symbolical in form, thus tending to become a play-in-miniature.

Religious drama is analogous to the circular perspective in which transcendence is substituted for immanence. Bereft of the outside of the event, it becomes a counterpoint of space and time with time tending to lose its aura into space. Its characters become two-dimensional and their articulation, trying to become neutral, actually becomes naturalistic. In this context T.S. Eliot's plays can be taken as representative because with the exception of Murder in the Cathedral, they end up as naturalistic plays written in verse.

As the circular perspective reduces itself to a point, it shows itself through existentialist drama. Due to its insistence on a particular point, the existentialist pattern is inclined to become pointillistic. It generalises the present so as to identify it with the whole of flux. Thus time loses its historical character and becomes heterogenous, the heterogeneity of which expresses itself through the homogeneity of space only. The characters of this drama become alienated, and to articulate their alienated selves, they make use of phenomenological description. Such description fails to acquire poetic proportions. As is evident, Sartre and Camus could not become dramatic poets though they delved deep in angst and alienation.

When the circular perspective reduces itself to a point, it ends up as the drama of the Absurd in which the dramatic pattern is actually pointillistic and the characters are hardly living human beings.
At the most they are alive in a non-world in which they are attracted neither to dramatic moment nor to historical movement. Their main function is to elucidate their ontological farcicality for the elucidation of which they indulge in action which loses "so much of its independence" that it itself becomes "a form of passivity". Even where action is "deadly strenuous or actually deadly", it assumes "the character of futile action or inaction." Similarly "the circular movement" in it gives "the impression of being stationary, time appears to be standing still, and becomes (in analogy to Hegel's bad infinity) a bad eternity." Naturally this dramatic pattern is inherently incapable of assuming poetic-dramatic proportions.

In poetic drama the immanent/historical perspective is thus the essential requirement. Its pattern is neither linear nor circular; it is relatively spiral for the substantiation of which it simultaneously assumes amplitude in space and depth in time. So its aura, which in the words of Walter Benjamin, goes with its irreproducible "uniqueness", is implicit in this tendency of it.

The aura of poetic drama is distinct from that of the epic on the one hand, and of the novel on the other. The aura of the epic assumes only depth because it shows itself as a tale expressing through its "great simple outlines" wisdom which is "the epic side of truth". The aura of the novel lies in amplitude because "to write a novel", as again Benjamin has observed, "means to carry the incommensurable to extremes.

1. Gunther Anders 'Being without Time; On Becket's 'Play Waiting for Godot' included in Samuel Becket (edited by Martin Esslin), New Jersey 1965, PP. 143, 146
in the representation of human reality." Tending towards amplitude and depth, poetic drama tries to illuminate human reality at the same time when it tries to explore the wisdom of humanity. In this two-levelled tendency lies its aura or its irreproducible uniqueness.

II

The aura of poetic drama remains latent so long as it is not made manifest by myth, symbolism, imagery, verse and diction which are the essential aspects of its form. Myth has neither the archetypal importance that Jung has imparted to it and nor the morphological importance that Cassirer has attributed to it. According to Jung myth is the fundamental expression of human reality and nature: "it is something solid and yet mobile, substantial and yet not static." Because of its capacity for transformation, its importance transcends the boundaries of time and space and cannot be fully grasped because it emerges through archetypes from the Collective Unconscious itself. Ernst Cassirer regards myth as one of the six symbolic forms, its specific morphology being that "things which come into contact with one another in a mythical sense — whether this contact is taken as a spatial or temporal contiguity or as a similarity, however remote, or as a membership in the same class or species — have fundamentally ceased to be a multiplicity: they have acquired a substantial unity."

2. Jung & Kerenyi, Introduction to a Science of Mythology, London 1951
3. Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Yale translation 1953-1957

Correlative with the archetypal and morphological view of myth is the structuralist view of Claude Levi-Strauss who in Structural Anthropology regards myth as being in binary opposition with history. Here also myth acquires eternal proportions but through binary opposition as in Jung and Cassirer it acquires the same proportions by making history its derivative and collateral dimension.
In Jung as well as in Cassirer, myth acquires eternal proportions; in the former by making history its derivative and in the latter by making it its collateral dimension. With these eternal proportions myth has been used with justification in the poetic plays of T.S. Eliot and W.B. Yeats, respectively. However in the immanent historical pattern, myth cannot have eternal proportions. There it has historical proportions because by vanishing into history it imparts to the dramatic pattern special qualities of coherence and universality. This is because myth developed in prehistoric times to order and organize human wisdom acquired through human senses. Naturally myth has tendency to impart eternal proportions to man's relationship with nature which in those times was the singular mode of organizing and defining human life. Jung makes this stage of human life as the terrain of myth. With the passage of time, man's relationship with self accrued to the above relationship. As a result, human life became complex, but it was still within the organizing and defining power of myth. Cassirer's concept of myth arises from this stage of human life.

Since the immanent-historical pattern grapples with all the three relationships, it appropriates space and time in a way different from that which myth adopts for this purpose. Myth appropriates space in a magical way. Regarding the whole of space as life-space in a metaspatial way, it lets no more space accrue from man's relationship with nature, self and society. This appropriation of space is unlike the scientific appropriation wherein it has unlimited vastness to be socialized
and humanized through man's threefold relationships. Similarly, time in scientific appropriation means "the transformation of the horizontal internal into the vertical, the successive into the simultaneous." Here horizontal interval refers to non-human time and its transformation into the vertical signifies human time, the humanisation of which is consummated by man in history. As a result of the vertical proportion, time changes into the irreversible growth of past-present-future while otherwise it remains only a chronological duration. Observing no historical proportion, myth regards time as absolute simultaneity beyond change and growth of every type.

On the contrary, the immanent-historical pattern takes time as an irreversible growth of past-present-future and observes historical proportions in it. Here space and time are no doubt life-space and life-time but they keep on developing more and more of space as well as of time. They do not regard history as anathema but take it as the mode through which non-social and non-human space is socialized and humanised and chronological time is brought into interaction with vertical time. Due to its historical substance, the immanent-historical pattern takes poetic drama away from the ritual maintaining that "Theatre may be said to be derived from ritual, but that is only to say that it becomes theatre once the two have separated; what it brought over from the mysteries was not its former ritual function but purely and simply the pleasure that accompanied..."

1. Thomas Mann, Doctor Faustus, New York 1960 PP.73-74
2. Bertolt Brecht Brecht on Theatre (translated by John Willet), New York 1964 P.181
As against it, myth takes drama to the ritual holding that "the secret longing and ultimate ambition of all theatre is to return to the bosom of the ritual out of which — in both the pagan and the Christian world — it sprang."

The anti-ritualistic stance of poetic drama makes its subject-matter contract into its truth-content and its truth-content expand into its subject-matter. This is a single process of two aspects, the second of which is consummated by symbols because they are capable of linking the general with the specific, the eternal with the accidental and the infinite with the finite. Such notation as they have, helps in developing a nexus between depth and amplitude, aspects of myth and reality, respectively, as myth vanishes into reality.

In poetic drama symbols manifest themselves through all the aspects of the leitmotif, i.e., character, situation and experience. Usually a character in poetic drama is a symbol when symbolical importance overrides historical importance. When this transition takes place, its semiology — gesture or gesticulation — becomes more important than its personality. Minor characters undergo this transition more readily because they contribute to the human elaboration of major characters. Their substance divests itself of its concreteness and their function becomes an aspect of the protagonists themselves. Teresias in Oedipus, The Rex and the Fool in King Lear can be called characters becoming symbols.

The above distinction is valid for dramatic situations and

1. Thomas Mann Last Essays, New York 1957 P.200
experiences as well because they together form the modality of human existence. Such situations and experiences as directly determine the outcome of dramatic collision do not become symbolical though they may evince symbolical importance. The others can become so, i.e., their symbolical importance can override their dramatic concreteness. Such symbols are the storm-scene in King Lear, and the coming of Bernam Wood to the castle in Macbeth. Similar examples are found in abundance in Oedipus at Colonus, Hamlet, Faust and The House of Bernarda Alba.

The use of symbols does not necessarily make poetic drama symbolistic like the plays of Maeterlinck. In fact, there is great difference between the symbolic and symbolistic stylisation. While the symbolical stylisation is exfoliative, the symbolistic is coalescive and tends to dissolve the concrete and comprehensive human substance into something abstract and musical. To ward off this dissolution, symbols should be used in poetic drama only as modes for linking depth and amplitude. Only thus can musicalisation and abstraction be avoided.

This avoidance does not imply that a musical rhythm should not pervade poetic drama. Musical rhythm does not reduce poetic drama to the level of operatic libretto — the level at which Wagner's drama is in which *verse is not written verse but, as it were, exhortations from music, needing to be complemented by gesture, music and picture and existing as poetry when all these work together.* What the musical rhythm essentially does for poetic drama is to create from "a bias of

music, internal structure and communicative energy the expressive mode of which has otherwise poetic and verbal predominance." So musical rhythm is not univ-structured or multi-structured symphony, but is gestic music of ideas that imparts such tonal associations to words as are strictly subsidiary to their meaning and accentuate only their meaning-importance.

Besides musical rhythm performs a supplementary function of bringing dramatic impulse or polyphonic objectivity near to lyrical impulse or harmonic subjectivity. This is because music is the most subjective art and every creation in the field of music has a distinct likeness with the spiritual make up of the creator. T.S.Eliot, in a way, affirms this significance of music for the dramatic poet when he observes, "A dramatic poet cannot create characters of the greatest intensity unless his personages, in their reciprocal action and behaviour in their story, are somehow dramatising, but in obvious form, an action or struggle for harmony in the soul of the poet."

Whatever symbolism does in respect of depth, imagery does in respect of amplitude, making amplitude proximate to depth. All types of images perform this function, their potentiality being dependent upon the reality that can be suffused into them. Simile, for example, is least potent for this function. It is primary in mature and being the product of fancy is the most superficial of them all. As against it, metaphor is the most potent of all because it is the product of the imagination and stands for a notation, a perception of life and a pattern of experience.

Metaphor becomes a symbol when it acquires "a clearly indicated focal
point of meaning as well as surrounding penumbra of association and
implication." Then its power to illuminate reality becomes subservient
to its power to explore truth. This has to be so because as metaphor changes
into symbol, imagination changes into vision that tends to substitute
universal pattern for historical pattern.

These images pervade the dramatic dialogues of the characters. If the characters are vivid personalities, their image-patterns tend
to be different. For example, Iago has an obsession to destroy the
uniqueness of others, to actualise which he employs static and stilted
images. On the other hand, Othello believes in the uniqueness of the
persons involved with him. Correspondingly, he employs opulent images
which cannot at all be contained in parallelistic, consonantal and
antithetical stylisation. Thus the contrast that prevails between Iago
and Othello is reflected in their images. Iago's images refer to the
slimy and mundane spheres of life while those of Othello evoke the vastness
of the all-enfolding heavens and the tempestuousness of the multitudinous
seas. Similar contrasts can be drawn between the images of Lear and his
daughters and Hamlet and his adversaries.

Sometimes, poetic drama may have a singularly predominant
image-pattern and different characters may apprehend it differently. This
method is viable indeed and its use has resulted in extremely lyrical
plays. The most outstanding of them are Lorca's Blood Wedding, Yerma and
The House of Bernarda Alba. In Blood Wedding, blood is the matrix of the

singularly predominant image-pattern; warm blood is shed when somebody is murdered, carnivorous blood rages when the libido is excited, and lacerating blood mixes with the earth when men and animals toil in the fields. Different characters apprehend this image-pattern differently: The Mother is horrified at the mention of blood, the Bridegroom takes this mention indifferently, and Leonardo is infatuated with its libidinous power. But for all this, Lorca fails to create as much verisimilitude as Shakespeare, for example, creates when he makes different characters conform to different image-pattern.

Whether multiple or singular, the image-pattern usually shows itself in these ways: as dominant imagery, as stream imagery and as intermittent imagery. The dominant image has associative value like the symbol, but unlike it, evinces no multiplicity of meanings. Being dependent upon equation, comparison, concept and idea, the dominant image contains dramatic continuity and discontinuity into one dramatic moment. Thus it functions like the symbol, but only in an accessory way.

The stream imagery is a cluster of images working through repetition and reiteration. The cluster reflects parallelism and contrast or both attributes at the same time. As T.R. Henn has observed, the function of stream imagery is three-fold: "to emphasise the time-scale of dramatic action, to draw attention to the purposive duality in the structure of the play, and under certain circumstances to set up a secondary or inductive current in the dynamism of the play." In other words, stream imagery deepens the rhythm of continuity, preventing shallow and superficial development. Animal imagery in King Lear, disease imagery in Hamlet and

blood imagery in _Macbeth_ perform this function with great dexterity.

The intermittent image is the opposite of the stream image. It accentuates the role of dramatic discontinuity and establishes its import through its own context, imparting a sense of immediacy to the articulation of the characters and maintaining a subtle and delicate balance between embellishment and communication. In fact, stream image and intermittent image are centripetally and centrifugally related to the dominant image, and their triadic inter-relationship has a lot to do in determining the dramatic pattern.

Symbols and images work in and through language that needs be capable of communicating their poetic potential in a concrete and comprehensive way. Poetic potential is not confined only to poetry, it can subsist in prose as well, and there is a lot of it in the prose plays of Lorca and Synge. For example, in _The House of Bernarda Alba_, poetic prose acquires burning intensity by entangling itself in a texture of symbols and images. Synge acquires the same end in a different way. Instead of working out his theme through a profusion of symbols and images, he concentrates upon the stark universality of human feelings and, through the use of stark prose, imparts deep poetic potential to the dramatic pattern. In _Riders to the Sea_ this device is at its best when Maurya becomes an image of subaltern humanity face to face with a hostile universe. The words, she then utters to challenge the Ocean, almost exhaust the possibilities of poetic prose in drama.

Nevertheless, for all its poetic potential, prose fails to communicate amplitude and depth simultaneously. It can delve into one at a time because the import of the word in it contracts into itself rather
than expand into the whole pattern. On the other hand, language in verse can delve into both at the same time because the word here exhibits both centripetal and centrifugal import. So the language of verse is "integral language" and poetic drama is contained "in language." The aura of integral language lies in the fact that words used are "in natural control of experienced life" and with the passage of time more and more of it tends to come in their "communicative grasp." It is not "a fixed universal language" as Aristotle seems to regard it from the hegemonic perspective and Wordsworth from the subaltern one. Instead, it is dynamic because it is "transformed together with the transformation of the whole of civilisation, through the flowering into culture of new classes, through the hegemony exercised by one national language on others." As a communicative necessity, it "continues to use metaphorically the words of preceding cultures and civilisations."

1. Roland Barthes, 'Science versus Literature' The T.L.S. September 2, 1967 PP. 898, 897
   Aristotle has a fixed universal notion of language in mind when he recommends for tragedy diction "lofty and raised above the commonplace" (Poetics XXII(i). Wordsworth also wrestles with a similar notion when he finds the ideal in the language uttered by "the earlier poets" who wrote naturally and as men, the best instance of which in prose is found in the "simple and unelaborated expressions" of men living close to nature. (Wordsworth's Literary Criticism, PP. 41, 44)
4. Ibid PP. 451-452
   Gramsci finds the finest example of such a language in the Italian of The Divine Comedy which emerged from the Florentine dialect because "the flowering of the communes developed the vernaculars, and the intellectual hegemony of Florence produced a united vernacular, a noble vernacular" (P. 131).
Even when at its most poetic, prose fails to put poetic drama in integral language. Consequently, "in order to be poetic in prose", the dramatic poet has to be "so consistently poetic that his scope is very much limited." For example, in theme, characterisation and presentation Synge's plays are overwhelmingly limited. Their locale is the wild life of the Irish countryside, their themes revolve round Man's primeval antagonism towards Nature and their characters tend to be elemental because the complexity of their passions is reduced to essential simplicity. When Synge tries to avoid this simplification, he succeeds only intermittently. In Deirdre of Sorrows he tries to graft the ancient Irish myth on to the European tradition. As a result, the play does become formally complex, but it loses all its essential unity.

The integral quality of language can be best evoked through verse because it is rhythmical and has the potency to organise into one intensive whole the scattered periodicities of the human personality. Verse provides so full a scope to the visual, the auditory and the tactile images that its mediation has always been regarded as indispensable for poetic drama. For this reason, the medium of poetic drama has to be verse.

This verse has certain essential aspects or characteristics which Denis Donoghue has explained as under:

"The essential characteristics of dramatic verse would seem to be that the language is generative, answering to a pressure forward (which is in the movements imitated) towards the fulfilment of the play's theoretic form; that

it is continuously agile in miming the speaker's movements of the psyche; that it compels primary attention to the mind speaking rather than to the language being spoken; and that its sharpest focus is directed on the minutiae of changing relationships within the play."

In other words dramatic verse is not meditative. It is "shifting, syncopated, gestic." Thus, instead of being "verse in song" it is "verse in speech" though verse may partake of both at the same time to a relative extent. Its dynamic nature does not make verse less poetic because it remains as much responsive to poetic syntax, imagery or symbolism as epical or narrative poetry is. All the same, it cannot be poetic all the time, but that does no harm to the poetic drama because the poetic level is inseparable from the non-poetic level. So the communicative range of verse extends from "the low mimetic mode" to "high mimetic mode" with archetypal and ritualistic modes absorbed in it. Due to the diversity of its communicative range, the verse justifies itself dramatically and poetically at the same time.

The superiority of verse does not altogether banish prose from poetic drama, though prose is to occur very sparingly indeed. In fact for dramatis personae ranging from non-characters to anti-characters prose

2. Bertolt Brecht, Brecht on Theatre (translated by John Willet), New York 1964 P.115
is unavoidable medium of expression. For example, Shaw's and Becket's characters can speak only in prose even when they become a part and parcel of the design of poetic drama. Being homo economicus, Shaw's characters are ratiocinative machines and the rationalising aspect of their words accords with the mechanical momentum of their psyches. Similarly Becket's characters (anti-characters essentially in their nature) are "owners of deteriorating minds", and anti-poeticity in prose is what suits their non-living but alive selves. This is imperative even though plays with anti-characters may be unique for their parallel or contrasting relationship with extremely poetic plays. For example, Waiting for Godot has several overtones of the dance-dramas of Yeats but in spite of them or because of them (those overtones being essentially parodic) Becket's characters remain subjected to "atrophying metamorphoses." The same conclusion is likely to emerge if Endgame is studied as a parody of Purgatory. All the same, these characters could not have employed verse; only prose could have been their essential medium, and through prose they have established their parodic uniqueness.

The above conclusion is imperative because non-characters tend to reproduce from within what Adorno would like to call, "the pathogenesis of social totality" over which "the curse of lonely individuation" lurks rather continuously. The more the non-character becomes self-centred, the more it becomes an anti-character. It articulates itself in prose as long as its self is partial and in antipoetic prose as it becomes

2. T.W. Adorno, 'Sociology and Psychology' Sociologist Digest, October, 1968, P.41
amnesiac and subject to the callousness of the world into which it is thrown. Nevertheless, this prose does not dissipate the aura of poetic drama, rather it becomes an integral part of its unique design.

III

Such poetic drama can best be enacted in the dialectical theatre which is "a miniature in history" and which makes theatrical whatever may be "metatheatrical" in poetic drama. This theatre is qualitatively different from the epic theatre: the epical proportion in it is perspectival while in the epic theatre it is only aesthetic-formal. So the atmospheric ambience of the epic theatre becomes immanent/historical in the dialectical theatre. Its estrangement-effects supersede the alienation-effects of its predecessor which, when exercised, impart uniqueness to incidents and characters through their gestic occurrences and movements.

Obviously, the dialectical theatre is opposed to the naturalistic theatre which, by confining itself to theatrical verisimilitude, reduces reality to its appearance and dissipates its wholeness. It is opposed to the formalist theatre as well which seeks to annihilate the wholeness of reality by divesting it of its appearance. In pursuit of it, it seeks to destroy the concreteness of dramatic poetry through the fantasy of

2. Lionel Abel, Metatheatre, New York 1963 P.59

The author holds the view that metatheatrical element — the world is a stage and life is a drama — is discernible in drama in general. On account of the ever-increasing differentiation of life it has become more pronounced in modern drama. Even Brecht fails to get rid of it in spite of the fact that he uses startling theatrical surrogates in keeping with his view of the epic theatre.
theatre poetry. For example, Wagner's theatre is an ensemble of music, speech, painting and gesture. Not acknowledging its primacy over theatre poetry, it reduces dramatic poetry to a cumulation of musical, gestural and pictorial exhortations. Similarly, Craig regards theatre as a marionette of line, colour and music. To dissolve human life into a linear and musical arrangement, he substitutes "the symbol of the thing" or the pattern the thing evokes in his mind "for the pattern of the thing" or the concreteness that establishes the uniqueness of the thing. Thus his theatre also becomes a cumulation of exhortations whispered by the remoteness and the vastness of the stage-properties. Like Craig, Appia also resorts to the use of such chiarascuro as misty envelopments dissolving silhouettes and vaporous distances. He enveleope them tightly in music and light: music expressing "the inner reality underlying all phenomena" and light revealing most expressively "the eternally fluctuating appearance of a phenomenal world." In this Appia also minimises the effect of dramatic poetry by transfiguring theatre poetry. Again the very purpose of dramatic poetry is altogether defeated.

The dialectical theatre does make use of theatre poetry but keeps it strictly subordinate to dramatic poetry. It makes use of music and colour as well, not by keeping them as stage-properties in the exterior but by making them the essence of poetic drama in the interior. To fulfil its objective, the dialectical theatre authentically observes the "social movement, the historical pulsation" without which it "does not have the

right to call itself theatre."

The aesthetic experience provided by this theatre is of creative mood which encourages the audience to transform the world as it is into a world in a process of becoming and creating. Thus liberated from the multiplicity of things, the audience feel one with the power to create anew. This creative mood supersedes the antithesis that prevails between the Aristotelian Catharsis and the romantic alienation. Being thus a supersession of the classical and the romantic type of theatrical experience, it separates the minds of men from what is commonplace, banal and sentimental and unites them with what is permanent, concrete and universal. This causes in their minds the superior elaboration of the structure into the superstructures or the social into the human which affords them knowledge and delight at the same time. The substance of knowledge is the pessimism of intellect as of delight is the optimism of the will. Pessimism of intellect relates the mind to the present with background of the past, while the optimism of the will relates it to the present with foreground of the future. Thus the nexus of knowledge and delight makes the mind aware of time in a historical way. Naturally it comprises a theatrical experience that is "more intricate, richer in communication, more contradictory and more productive of results." When poetic drama has achieved all this, it has illuminated reality, explored truth and resolved problems which are posed on the creative and theatrical terrains.

2. Bertolt Brecht, Brecht on Theatre (edited by John Willet), New York 1964 P.181