(a) Rudiments of Poetic Process:
(b) Louis Dudek's Contribution to the study of Poetic Process:

Poetic process has been a topic of interest to the eastern as well as western literary theorists. This chapter serves as a background to the poetic process of Louis Dudek. Here, eastern and western theories are presented and wherever they coalesce a comparison between them is presented. Thus, a literary background is created against which Dudek’s poetic process is studied.

1. The Two Levels of Poetic Process:

The Vedas are the origin of Indian poetic thought, when the ‘Suktas’ of the Vedas were being composed, the composers, attention was drawn towards the attraction, influence and the experience inherent in them. From this point onwards the beginning of the Indian poetic thought is marked. The Vedic poets were faced with two basic considerations- 1. What is the origin of poetry? and 2. What are the elements which make poetry appealing to heart? In general, the Vedic poets believed in the two levels of poetry- 1. Sukshma 2. Sthula. “At the Sukshma level, poetry is not composed, it is merely perceived. At the Sthula level it gains a form. The Vedic poets call the Sukshma level perception and the Sthula as description. At the Sukshma level the poet does not make
any efforts whereas at the Sthula level poetry is consciously composed. The two levels are beautifully presented in an analogy by the Vedic poets. At the Sukshma level poetry springs out of the poet as naturally as rain drops from a cloud" (Rigveda 7/94/1)¹ and on the other hand “at the Sthula level poetry is crafted as a chariot by a carpenter or woven as a cloth by a weaver”. (Rigveda 5/19/15).²

The concept of poetic perception at the Sukshma level which the Vedic poets laid down, the English romantic poets expressed it centuries later. According to Keats poetry comes as naturally to a poet as leaves to a tree, Wordsworth defined poetry as a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings. Coleridge went upto the extent of saying that he had not composed ‘Kubla Khan’ but had perceived it. When the Vedic poets believed that they had not composed but PERCEIVED the Vedic Suktas they implied that at the very core of poetic creation there is not conscious effort on the part of heart or feelings. In short, the beginning of poetry is spontaneous. The gist of the Vedic poetic theory is that poetry is created out of ‘perception’ and ‘description’. Indian scholars like R. Tripathi believe that Croce’s Expressionism considers only the first stage i.e. the Sukshma stage and hence it is incomplete. Later on Abhinavgupta and Mahim Bhatt too supported the Vedic poetic thought and upheld that perception and description are complementary to each other in poetic process. With the passage of time from the first aspect laid down by the Vedic poets the concept of poetic genus was born and from the
second the concept of poetic ornamentation and ‘Vakrokti’ was born.

The levels of Poetic creation in Vedic Poetic Thought

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sukshma level</th>
<th>Vak</th>
<th>Sthula level</th>
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<td>Perception</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>Natural, spontaneous, unconscious process</td>
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[Vakrokti irony]

The Vedic poets gave us the dichotomy of Perception and Description but they bridged it with an important element ‘Vak’. It is an element which is in between the two levels and is linked with both. From the Sukshma level it derives feeling and inspiration, and from the Sthula level it gains a form. Its meaning and expression depend on Vak. Its manifestation is word. Word is inherent with meaning. Vak by itself can be considered as double layered. One layer comprises feelings and the other expression and meaning.

Sukshma  Vak  Sthula
Word
Feeling
Expression, Meaning
Due to the presence of 'Vak' human beings are able to perceive and define the animate and the inanimate. Vak manifests itself in a meaningful word. It is the ability to experience and express. Vak has reference to the creative function of the Greek term Logos. This creative function in the Indian aesthetics consists both in the capacity of the word to create things and in its capacity to reveal their true nature. The creative function of the word expressed, thus, the basic movements of reality 'involution' and 'evolution' ('nivriti' and 'pravritri'). The reality of sense perception is never the last and final reality in Indian philosophy. True reality belongs to the transcendental order which can be seen only by the poet or the seer, word is not merely a set of physical sounds which is to represent certain objects, ideas and perceptions- but it is a force, a 'shakti' with the power of expressing the truth and giving us a vision of it. The word is meaningful as it is linked with the uncreated idea, the unmanifest which is incomprehensible and never exhausted by the heard sounds of words we use. The words that are spoken or heard are only a partial manifestation of the eternal reality. Thus, the word expresses as well as indicates. Words act as pointers to truth, Vak is therefore word with meaning.

In the Vedas the basic inspiration of poetry is Vak. It is the basic form of word which resides in man as 'Samskara'. Without Vak no element of nature can be described, Without Vak everything is without existence. Vak, therefore, is the
creator of world. Word is the manifestation of Vak. The consciousness of meaning in word is Vak. Word, therefore cannot be without Vak. It is inherent in the subconscious, due to which there is 'Sankalpa' in the heart and then it expresses itself in the form of 'Voice'. The external aspect of the world arouses the poet's sensibility and this sensibility expresses itself in the form of voice and recreates the same aspect. The aspect of Vak which arouses the poetic sensibility is called 'genius' (pratibha) the poetic utterance. Voice expresses itself in poetry in three stages. At the first stage it resides in the 'atman' of the creator. Having been refined by the heart and also illumined by it, it reaches the third stage where the poet exalts it as the truth.

2. Mimetic Element:

By the attainment of truth, it is meant that the poet recreates another world parallel to the physical world. All the elements of the physical world do not get attested in the poet's world. Poetic truth therefore is different from the truth of the physical world. It cannot be tested and tried by ordinary, practical wisdom. It is created by the poetic vision, hopes and aspiration of the creator. It is the poet's own world. His voice, therefore, cannot be false. The elements of the physical world do not always get manifested in poetry. But if a poet has a broad vision then the presentation of the physical world will be as broad. Due to his broad vision the poet acquaints the reader with past and the future. This concept has been dealt with at length in western criticism also.
Plato propounds the theory that "art is essentially an imitation of the aspects of the universe. It was perhaps the most primitive aesthetic theory. It first appeared in Plato's 'dialogues'. The arts of painting, poetry, music, dancing and sculpture and 'all imitations'."³

Plato's theory is best exemplified in the famous passage in tenth book of the Republic. In discussing the nature of art, Socrates makes the point that there are three beds; the idea which is the essence of the bed, and it is made by God; and the bed made by the carpenter; and the bed found in a painting. How shall we describe the painter in this third bed?

"I think, he said, that we may fairly designate him as the imitator of that which the others make.
Good, I said; then you call him who is third in the descent from nature an imitator?
Certainly, he said.
And the tragic poet is an imitator, and therefore, like all other imitators, he is thrice removed from the king and from the truth?
That appears to be so."⁴

According to this mimetic theory the influence of poetry on its auditors is bad because it represents appearances rather than truth; and nourishes their feelings rather than their reason.
Following Plato, Aristotle too calls the poet an imitator, who imitates one of three objects: (1) Things as they were/are, (2) Things as they are said or thought to be; or (3) things as they ought to be. In other words what is past or present what is commonly believed and what is ideal. Imitation generates pleasure. Moreover, according to Aristotle poetry is not removed from reality. On the contrary it reveals truths of a permanent and universal kind. It foresees things and events. It reveals what may happen according to the law of probability or necessity. The end of poetry is to delight. Teaching is a happy co-incident.

Horace pays attention to poetic process in his Ars Poetica. By implication he too, like Plato and Aristotle, considers poetry to be an imitation. And he further advises that the poet should take his models from ‘life’ and ‘customs’. He then goes a step further and opines that poetry is not an exact imitation of life. The poet mixes fancy with fact. But the fiction composed to please should be very near the truth. Thus, Horace is very much like Aristotle who had recognized the poet’s right to imitate life not in the manner of history but in his own creative way, allowing for that purpose even a judicious resort to the believable false in preference to the unbelievable true. And he considers it to be a happy blend if poetry can both delight as well as instruct.

Dryden too, like Aristotle, believes poetry to be and imitation and it renders delight.
Addison dealt with the element of imagination in the creative process in detail. He considers imagination to be dependent on the sense of sight.

"It is this sense which furnishes the imagination with its ideas, so that by the pleasures of the imagination or fancy (which I shall use promiscuously) I here mean such as arise from visible objects, either when we have them actually in our view, or when we call up their ideas into our minds by paintings, statues, descriptions, or any the like occasion."  

The pleasures of imagination are of two kinds- direct and indirect. Direct pleasure occurs when the object is before our eyes and the indirect or secondary pleasure occurs when we remembers the object or in other words when the subject is not before our eyes but is called up in our memory. Wordsworth’s theory of poetry with its two fold definition consisting spontaneous overflow of feelings and their recollection in tranquility comes close to this thought. Imagination is aroused more by the extraordinary than only the ordinary.

According to Dr. Johnson- Poetry imitates life and its function is to give pleasure by instruction. Through particular, poetry describes the universal.

Wordsworth gives two much discussed statements about poetic process. On one hand, he defines good poetry as the
spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling, and on the other he
talks of a selection of language really used by men, with metre
imposed on it, can a sudden rush of emotion allow time for
these poetic formalities? Instead of explaining this anomaly,
Wordsworth modifies the statement as- ‘emotions recollected
in tranquility’. He discerned that poetry ‘is the final product’
of the ‘unforced’ overflow of powerful feelings. His own
poetry was composed accordingly. He said, a spectacle stored
in his memory and then recalled in his tranquil moments and
then embodied in a poem. The process can be summarized as
perception- Recollection contemplation- Expression. Had no
emotion been aroused in the beginning there would have been
no recollection of it in tranquility and hence no expression of
it in poetry. By emphasizing spontaneity in poetry.
Wordsworth did not exclude workmanship or craftsmanship.
Wordsworth didn’t trust the first thoughts. Second thoughts
are best. He paid attention to readers response. The readers
experience the same feelings of the poet. For T.S. Eliot: Poem
and poet are two separate entities. A poem is great not because
the poet has put his personality in it but because he has a mind
in which varied feelings are fused into each other in new
combinations. His mind is only a medium and remains
unaffected.

“..... the more perfect the artist the more completely separate
in him will be the man who suffers and the mind which
creates.... impressions and experience which are important
for the man may take no place in the poetry, and those which
become important in the poetry may play quite a negligible part in the man, the personality" .... Therefore "poetry is not a turning loose of emotion but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality .... The emotion of art is impersonal." 7

‘Objective correlative’ is used by Eliot to explain how emotion is best expressed in poetry. It cannot directly be transmitted from the mind of the poet to the mind of the reader. It turns itself into something concrete- a picture of a person, place or thing suggestive of it- to evoke the same emotion in the reader. The emotion is embodied in an object. This object is the objective correlative of the emotion to be transmitted.

3. Poetic Transformation:

Like Valmiki, Bhavabhuti too considers- Vak as the most important creative agent. Due to Vak the poet is able to see the unseen and know the unknown. Bhavabhuti brings in another important aspect of poetic process by pointing out the creative conflict that occurs in the poets heart before the spontaneous utterance. According to W.B. Yeats when we quarrel with others, rhetorics is born but when we quarrel with ourselves, poetry is born. The reason for this intra-personal conflict is the transformation of the poet’s experience into poetry- “Words that have become deeds” as Frost says. The poet transforms the physical world into art/poetry. This process of transformation is the poetic process, which is very
complex, causing tension and conflict in the poet. Perhaps Kalidasa has expressed this conflict more than the others among the ancient Indian theorists and Muktibodh in the contemporary group.

4. Ideal Beauty:

During the poetic process the poet has an ideal standard of beauty within him which inspires him into creation. Before creation he assembles all that is needed for creation and this has been accumulating within him in the form of ‘samskara’, which the poet re-arranges during the creative process. He adds beauty to objects of the physical world and thus in the world of art the physical world is presented as beautiful.

5. Poet’s Absorption:

Kalidasa brings in a very subtle point of creative process. In his play ‘Shakuntala’ he presents king Dushyanta painting a portrait of Shakuntala. He is not satisfied with his picture. It appears to be incomplete as he has yet to paint the background without which the anguish of Dushyanta will not be fully expressed. Moreover, the picture does not conform to the image of Shakuntala which is imprinted on his mental scape. The important reason for finding the picture incomplete is that Dushyanta is not able to concentrate and absorb himself fully with his subject as he is anguished. The picture does not fully express what Dushyanta had been experiencing. His creative tools and devices fail him. Kalidasa wants to hint that in the career of every artist comes such a crisis when his art
seems to fail him. The crisis can be overcome only by total concentration like in a state of ‘samadhi’. When an artist does not absorb himself fully with his subject matter, then an incomplete art follows. Total identification has to be experienced. Here one is reminded of Keats’ concept of Negative capability, according to which, “a poet’s character has no identity of its own. A true poet is gifted with a capacity to subdue his own personality. He should be able to project himself into others’ identities and actively participate in all types of experiences of life- fair or foul. This poetical gift of self-annihilation which enables an artist to accept the opposites does not allow the poet to remain egocentric. He totally submerges his personality with that of the object of inspiration. Negative capability is defined precisely as a state in which we have no ‘self identity and are continually informing and filling some other body.”

Keats laid emphasis on contemplation and concentration for being capable of feeling and thinking deeply about things without involving himself. Keats’ poetical character is “that kind of being which is continually born out of non-being, which finds itself by losing itself in the unity of the whole”.

Keats’ definition of ‘poetical character’ is undoubtedly similar to that of William Hazlitt’s. Hazlitt was his contemporary and Keats ideas in late 1817 and 1818 are highly inspired by his lectures on “Shakespeare and Milton” at the Surrey Institute, in early 1818. Hazlitt defined the unique quality of Shakespeare as follows:
“The striking peculiarity of Shakespeare’s mind was its generic quality, its power of communication with all other minds—so that it contained a universe of thought and feeling within itself, and had no one peculiar bias—His genius shown equally on the evil and on the good, on the wise and the foolish, the monarch and the beggar. The poet may be said, for the time, to identify himself with the character he wishes to represent, and to pass from one to another, like the same soul successively animating different bodies. By an art like that of the ventriloquist, he throws his imagination out of himself, and makes every word appear to proceed from the mouth of the person in whose name it is given... one might suppose that he had stood by at the time, and overheard what passed.”

Hazlitt’s definition of the Shakespearean character is probably the main inspiration behind Keats’ ‘Negative Capability’ and ‘Poetical Character’. But it would be wrong so say that Keats borrowed his ideas from Hazlitt’s lectures. He had expressed much the same ideas several months earlier in his letter of 22nd November 1817. He wrote to Bailey:

“I must say of one thing that has pressed upon me lately and increased my Humility an capacity for submission and that is this truth—Men of genius are great as certain ethereal chemicals operating on the mass of neutral intellect—but they have not any individuality, and determined character.”

There are various instances in Kalidasa where he mentions the
need of self surrender, total absorption, concentration on the part of the poet.

One of the contemporaries of Kalidasa- Vamana also strongly recognized the contribution of concentration in the poetic process. Poetry is born in tranquility and concentration. All discordant considerations are discarded when the poet is in a concentrated state of mind and the experiences poetic process. One is again reminded of Keats’ concept of imagination when all the discordant elements are discarded and the poet perceives pure beauty which is akin to truth. According to Rudrat the ancient Indian thinker, poetry gains spontaneity due to the concentrated state of mind.

6. Genius:

As the Indian aesthetic thought developed, scholars started concentrating on the element of genius in poetic creation. Vamana had called genius as the seed of poetry. Just as a sapling is born out of a seed, poetry is born out of genius. It is natural for a sapling to be born out of a seed. Similarly, genius arouses instincts which are responsible for poetic creation. Kuntaka, too emphasizes on the role of genius in poetic creation. Kuntaka’s belief has later on upheld by Keats when he said that poetry should come as naturally to the poet as leaves on a tree. Kuntaka further elaborates on the role of genius. It first excites the poetic feelings of a poet which are in a crude and unreformed state like an uncut gem. Later, it performs its second task of chiseling and refining those
feelings and embodies them in words and sentences. Thus, beauty and grace is added to poetry by genius. Genius in its first task is unconscious and in its second step it’s a conscious process. Here Wordsworth’s poetic theory becomes relevant. Without specifying the role of genius Wordsworth defines poetry in two ways—‘Spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling’ here he is talking of the first role of ‘Pratibha’ and when he says ‘poetry is emotions recollected in tranquility’- he talks of the second step- the conscious one when the poet recollects, re-arranges and re-shapes his feelings in a consciously carved pattern.

Genius manifests itself differently in different poets. It is unlimited in capacity. Bhattatot, Anandverdhan and Kuntaka all emphasize on the limitless capacity of genius. It is forever renewed, it is inexhaustible. Based on this observation, Kuntaka mentions two types of poetic activity- one is when genius recognizes the inherent minute elements of the object of inspiration and the second is the poetic voice which creates this beautiful world. In the first instance Genius perceives the minute inherent element whereas in the second it concentrates on its external appearance.

Rajshekhara calls genius as the ‘divine eye’ (Saraswat Chakshu) of the poet. Poet with his genius perceives those elements which even Lord Indra with his thousand eyes cannot perceive. Rajshekhara’s this view is akin to what Shelley thinks of the poets. A poet is a legislator and a prophet. “For
he not only beholds intensely the present things ought to be ordered, but he beholds the future in the present, and his thoughts are the germs of the flower and the fruit of lasted time."¹² The poet is endowed with a distinguished vision. This thought has been with us since Vedic times. The ‘divine eye’ is the endowment of an integrated mind or is the concentration of mind. It is the state of ‘Samadhi’.

Mahim Bhatt too opines like Rajshekhara that during the process of creation the poet is engaged in looking for words and meaning in congruence to the emotion of Rasa of the heart. The awareness which erupts at that time is genius (pratibha). Hemchandra in his book ‘Kavyavivek’ (p.6380) calls it as self-illumined, uncovered consciousness and ‘determined wisdom’.

In the creative function of genius, all the scholars referred to above recognize the following elements-
1) Sudden awareness/inspiration
2) Renewed sensibility
3) Concentration
4) Consciousness

Abhinavagupta placed poetic- genius, on a philosophical pedestal and called ‘Sarvatmika Samvit’- the all pervasive spirit which is inherent in every living being. This is the origin of all worldly objects and it is manifested in poetic genius which creates poetry. This concept of Abhinavagupta is close to the concept of Vak- “Vageva Vishwa Bhuvanani jagye”- Vak is the origin of universe. Thus, Indian aesthetics
on poetic process begins with the concept of Vak which is present in its minutest form in a universal consciousness and in its mass form in the spoken word- ‘shabda’. Poetic thought thus begins with Vak and ends in Vak which the Vedic poets had propounded.

During the poetic process the poet faces a practical problem i.e. how to express his experience and emotions in ‘Vani’ (voice) and ‘Artha’ (meaning). He finds his wisdom inadequate to express his vast experiences fully, But even then the poet craves to express himself. The question now is how does this world of experiences take birth in the poet? As the Vedic poets had propounded that on looking at the physical mass of things he forms their images on his mental scape along with which a number of ‘Samskaras’ are born within him due to his relation with his milieu and literature. From this inner world of his the poet picks the brightest and the most beautiful gems and strings them together.

Thus, what Kalidasa had termed ‘Anyathakaran’ (distancing/impersonalizing) works at two levels. The first level is when the poet goes on forming an inner world based on the worldly elements, ideas, samskaras and traditions. At the second level this world again gets distanced. It adopts a new form in the garb of words and meaning. At the first level the external world gets internalized and at the second level this internal world gets externalized. This concept of two way adaptation in poetry and by poetry, which was often hinted at
by Kalidasa, was first mentioned by an anonymous Prakrit poet whose verse is quoted by the poetic scholar Anandavardhan.

"Atthatthie vi tahsanthie va hia-ammi ja nivesei
Atyavisese sa jai vikadkavigoera vani."\(^{13}\)

Due to poet’s creation things are re-created. Their unknown and unseen aspects are revealed before us. Thus poetry gives an adapted version of this world. Valmiki and Kalidasa propounded this theory in greater detail than Mammat as the latter doesnot talk of this process of adaptation in philosophical depth.

7. Genius of Imagination:

Genius is considered supernatural because it is connected with the innermost, unknown and minute recesses of human mind where the seed of poetic creation are present. Rigveda mentions the flow of poetry from this unknown source:

"Patango Vacham manasa bibharti tam
gandharvoovadd garbhant Tem Dyotamanam
swarya manesham ritsya pade kavayo nipant."\(^{14}\)

Poetic voice resides in a passive sate in the soul of in the minute recesses of human consciousness, from there it moves to the minute level/recesses of human heart and from there to the conscious mind. In short the poetic voice travels from passivity to activity, from the unconscious to the conscious state of mind.
According to Coleridge also, creativity depends upon mental consciousness which is related to soul. Imagination is the strength of soul with the help of which the post expresses himself. Imagination is the bridge between heart and the physical world. Mind and matter- eternal and mortal- seer and knowledge get united into one by imagination, Eternal, which is present in the mortal, acquires a physical form.

From the Indian point of view Genius comprehends all these levels of creative process. Although Genius is more comprehensive than imagination as it is treated in the Western thought but a detailed analysis of imagination by Coleridge makes it equivalent to Genius. To show its magnitude he described its twofold nature- primary and secondary. Primary imagination is basically perception of the physical world in part as well as in full. It is an involuntary activity of the mind. It’s an unconscious reduction of the physical world to a shape and size and thus perception becomes possible. The primary imagination is governed only by one faculty that of perception. The secondary imagination is an active process, much stronger than the primary. It is a ‘shaping and a modifying power’. From its plastic stress objects are fashioned in its own likeness. It is a recreative power. It recreates the perceived objects in its own likeness. They are presented not as what they are but as the creative mind conceives them to be. The secondary imagination is a composite faculty of the soul, comprising perception, intellect, will and emotions. In
this process the mind and the external world act and react on each other. Mind becomes matter, matter becomes mind, ideal becomes real, real becomes ideal, external becomes internal and internal becomes external. Thus, secondary imagination is a combinatory power- it first combines the various faculties of the creator and then unifies the creator with the created. The creator and the objects of his perception are not adequate for generating poetic truth only by themselves. They are complementary to each other. Only their unification with each other will bring out the poetic truth. The primary and secondary imaginations are not radically different from each other. The difference between them is one of the degree of activity and therefore creativity, Wordsworth’s theory of imagination too is similar to Coleridge’s.

Another dichotomy that Coleridge presents in his critical theory is the one between imagination and fancy. “Imagination, according to Coleridge, is a creative power whereas fancy is a combinatory one. All the elements of perception remain distinguishable, they are only offered in new combinations. Fancy is the arbitrary bringing together of things that lie remove and forming them into a unity”. It is ‘the faculty of bringing together images dissimilar in the main by some one point or more or likeness. Fancy is akin to talent which is acquired, as imagination is akin to genius which is inborn. Wordsworth’s concept of fancy is also the same. Fancy is like a salad bowl, all the items are mixed together but they retain their individuality, retain their original properties, but in
imagination as in compound, all the things are ‘dissolved, diffused and dissipated’ into a new substance altogether. According to Coleridge imagination does not imitate, it recreates It is his this thought which brings imagination equal to genius. Genius has a philosophical genesis. Richards gives a psychological basis of poetic/creative process. He examines the working of human mind. “It’s a system of impulses”.16 In simple language an impulse is roughly the mind’s response to a stimulus. The creative process continues and culminates in an act of creation.

In between stimulus and action, there are multifarious responses, each pressing the other to act in a way suited to it. The mind experiences a poise only when they organize to follow a common course. With each new stimulus the impulses get disturbed and have to organize themselves to meet the new situation and culminate into a creative action. There are occasions when the impulses once stirred donot reach a state of poise and hence the mind remains in a disturbed state. To achieve poise some impulses have to be sacrificed and some allowed to be active. The ideal mental state is when all the impulses are satisfied to the full but as this is seldom possible, the maximum satisfaction of the maximum number of impulses with minimum frustration to the rest, can be aimed at. There are moments in one’s life when his impulses respond to a stimulus in such an organized way that the mind experiences an immensely satisfying experience. Poetry is a reflection of this uniquely ordered state of mind. From such an analysis, it
appears that the poet does not consciously embody any thought in his work. He is merely guided by his impulses and is happy to reflect them in his work. A reader should not go to the poet for seeking ‘what he says’ but only to participate and share in his experience, the harmonious play of his impulses. This is what poetry is. But to probe into the mind of the poet is a difficult task. In other words what goes on in the mind of the poet is difficult to investigate.

"Much that goes to produce a poem is, of course, unconscious. Very likely the unconscious processes are more important than the conscious, but even if we knew for more than we do about how the mind works, the attempt to display the inner working of the artist’s mind by the evidence of his work alone must be subject to the gravest dangers" says I.A. Richards in his Principles, of criticism.

When Richards talks of the stimuli generating impulses, one naturally sees a connection of the poetic sub-conscious with the external world where the stimuli reside and by which poet’s heart is stirred, and the poet perceives the external world. What the poet perceives depends on his interests and attitudes. The world appears as one wants to see it and thus is what makes perception a unique phenomenon in the case of every individual. A table is seen not only according to the angle that we look at it at a particular time but also from the point of view that we want to see it. Richard’s pre-occupation with selective nature of perception is consistently present in
his works. His aesthetics leans heavily on this view of perception. No artist can perfectly imitate a natural object because one’s perception is selective. This is the reason why we perceive an object in a painting in a different way than when we perceive the same object in nature. Works of art offer newer avenues of perception which were never noticed before. The charm of seeing a work of art lies in the fact that we see an object in the way in which an artist perceives it. This aspect of creative/poetic process involves an individual, subjective and partial perception of the external world by the poet and also his offering a novel approach to a mundane object. The artist enables us to perceive things from the poet’s point of view then perfect communication takes place. Usually critics have been pre-occupied with creative process at the deep level of the mind which is hidden at the subconscious level. I.A. Richards, strikingly enough, is concerned with poetic process on the surface level i.e. the written word. He realizes that a poet might consider the communication of his experience to the readers as an insignificant aspect of the poet process.

“When asked, he is more likely than not to reply that communication is an irrelevant or at best a minor issue, and that what he is making is something which is beautiful in itself, or satisfying to him personally, or something expressive of his emotions, or of himself, something personal and individual. That other people are going to study it, and to receive experiences from it may seem to him a merely
accidental, inessential circumstance.... But this conscious neglect of communication does not in the least diminish the importance of the communicative aspect.\textsuperscript{17}

Communication is an integral part of the poetic process according to Richards. Poet’s experience has to be accorded well in the work. This can be tested if the work arouses the same experience in the reader which the poet had felt. Communication of an experience is imperative even if a poet is not conscious of it. It is because of his belief in the aspect of communication that Richards gives immense importance to the kind of language the poet uses.

"We may either use words for the sake of the references they promote, or we may use them for the sake of the attitudes and emotions which they ensue."\textsuperscript{18}

(By ‘attitudes’ Richards means ‘tendency to action’, the trend of impulses in a particular direction).

The former is the way science uses words and the latter as poetry/literature does. The scientific use of words is referential, the poetic use of words is emotive. While science makes statements, poetry makes ‘pseudo-statements’.\textsuperscript{19} To evoke an experience in the audience he makes a pseudo statement without caring the literal meaning of words or for their logical sequence.
"Poetry speaks not to the mind but to the impulses; and its speech, literal or unliteral, logical or illogical, is faithful to its experience to the extent to which it induces a like experience in others."\(^{20}\)

Communication has been considered the penultimate stage. The ultimate one being arousal of the same feelings in the reader what begins with the artist ends with the reader.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{External world} & \rightarrow \text{artist} & \rightarrow \text{Reader} \\
\text{External} & \rightarrow \text{Internal} & \rightarrow \text{externalized} \\
\text{Internalized} & \\
\text{perception} & \rightarrow \text{fancy} \\
\text{imagination} & \rightarrow \text{expression} \\
\text{(Internal)} & \rightarrow \text{Outer flow}
\end{align*}
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8. **Natural Genius, Inspiration and Grace:**

Addison gave thought and consideration to the element of genius. He distinguished between ‘the natural genius’ and the genius who is made. In one there is an inborn quality, in the other the acquired. With one, excellence is an unconscious, spontaneous faculty and with the other it is conscious, developed by following rules and discipline of art. To the first group belong Homer, Pindar, the old testament Poets and Shakespeare and to the second class of geniuses belong Plato, Virgil and Milton. The authors with natural genius produce works of sublimity, impetuosity and heightened imagination. They work under a divine inspiration.
"And very early, inspiration—whether regarded as a celestial or mundane form of madness—was said to be either the constant accompaniment or the actual equivalent of the ingenium with which a poet is endowed by nature". A similar idea is expressed by Aristotle—that poetry demands a man with a special gift for it, or else one with a touch of madness in him. This union of nature and genius was anticipated by Spencer in his ‘October’ in Shepherd’s Calendar. According to him “poetry is no art, but a divine gift and heavenly instinct not to begotten by labour and learning, but adorned with both; and poured into the writer by a certain enthousiasmos and celestial inspiration”. Pope contributes to Addison’s theory and he also considers Shakespeare as an original and inspired poet.

**Poetic Inspiration** : Critics ascribe the following qualities which characterize inspiration. (a) The composition is sudden and spontaneous. (b) The composition is ‘involuntary’ and ‘automatic’. It is not controlled/directed by the will of the poet. (c) The poet undergoes two types of feeling. Sometimes the initial state is painful, followed by a blissful state of relief. (d) The finished product is away from the creator.

**Poetic Grace** : Neo-classic criticism acknowledged another attribute of invention—‘grace’ which is not only beyond the scope of art but even of critical understanding. It is considered a quality descending from heaven and hence it can never be
attained by efforts or rule. This concept had been anticipated in the ancient times. It the Italian Renaissance it was known as ‘la grazia’ and in the Elizabethan England it was termed as ‘felicity’. Later Dryden developed an elaborate poetic logic around this term/concept. By the interpretation of Father Bouhours, this concept acquired heavenly grace. This stage of poetic process belongs to the surface structure expression and works between the writer and the reader.

Closer to the time and practice of Louis Dudek are eminent critics like Muktibodh, Croce and Stephen Spender have shown important dimensions to the study of the theory of poetic process. It is attempted here to give an analysis of their theory.

**Muktibodh**

1. According to Muktibodh poetic process undergoes a change according to the poetic intention of the poet.

2. It is not easy for the poet to use/master words/language suitably expressive of his poetic intentions, and emotions. During the poetic process the poet becomes conscious of his own feelings and emotions. S/he starts comparing these feelings with the meanings inherent in words. During this comparative process he becomes conscious as which feelings he wishes to express through which words and images. It is essential for the poet to find linguistic equivalence to his poetic feelings. Self
consciousness (of poetic feelings) facilitates linguistic equivalence of emotional states. Without an awareness of the self a poet cannot develop his her personal/individual poetic style.

It is generally seen that a poet expresses a few feelings only, as if they are his constant feelings. These feelings and their expression, through continuous exercise, become as a unit and emerge as conditioned reflexes.

With this analysis we reach the inside of the poetic process. A poet spends a long time in myriad poetic experimentations in order to explore his poetic self. The exploration reaches a successful culmination when he experiences his own basic poetic feeling/sensation/intention. Without the consciousness of the self no poet can attain individuality.

3. After this step of self awareness comes the next step of rejection and selection. Poet becomes critical and rejects certain images and certain words and select some. If these censors are not appropriate then the poem becomes weak. Besides this, another important activity concurs-i.e. of editing of poet’s feelings, without which their native genius will overpower them and render their poetry rough and unchiselled.
4. During the process of editing of feelings, the poet realizes that a new element has come into being which s/he did not intend to include in poetry or of which s/he was not aware in the beginning.

5. On reaching the second stage the poet has mastered things- 1. edited his/her feelings and 2 found a framework for his/her expression. Both these aspects are integrated (experience and expression). With continuous efforts involved in the poetic process, this combination becomes fool proof. This is called conditioning. Later on this condition becomes detrimental to their poetic process.

6. From here onwards begins the third stage of the poetic process provided the poet is still in the process of development. The poet feels that what s/he understood to be self-realization, actually was merely an awareness of their basic feelings and reactions. They now realize that their ‘Bhava Jeevan’ cannot be limited to their own personal feelings. Moreover, their own old limited feelings have lost their force. But the problem is that their old framework of expression of old feelings has conditioned them so keenly that it is difficult to rise above them. Even if they want to express a new feeling the old conditioning doesn’t allow them to do so. There is a tug of war between the old and the new.
But most of the poets do not reach this stage. They do not realize the detrimental effect of conditioned literary reflexes and go on churning out, mechanically, the monotonous kind of poetry. The poetic spirit dies, only the poetic mechanics live.

It is natural for a poet to have conditioned literary reflexes but he has to combat this tendency and rise above it only then it can be hoped that the poet is able to explore new grounds. In this process of self struggle not only conditioned literary responses are the main obstacles, but there are others too. The poet always considers himself as a beginners and finds himself unsupported in his creative process, on one hand the reality forces itself to be expressed but on the other hand CLR prevent this birth by reducing the self confidence of the poet. The more keen the element of self-examination the more s/he will be able to struggle against CLR. The more honest the poet is towards the new experience the easier it would be for him/her to find their way for the new expression, creative process is basically an exploration and ‘grahan’. During the course of expression the poet is able to make a discovery. Muktibodh explains this process with an analogy. One is walking on a vast land, on unknown paths in a dark light with only a small feeble lamp in the hand. The lamp is inadequate to light up the whole path all at once in the beginning. It can shed its light only on a small part of the path. As one walks on the path, it will be revealed part by part, step by step. The pedestrian doesn’t know before hand what the lamp will illumine. S/he depends only on the feeble lamp to find their
way. To walk on this path is to see the part being lit up only part by part, that too slowly and one step by another. The duet cannot predict which way the path will turn and what s/he will have to encounter on the way. What is important for the poet is to go on moving on this path. This is their exploration. Many run away from the middle of the path. No poet can pre-determine his/her creative process. They cannot pre-plan their movements or reactions. If at all the process is predetermined it cannot be followed. It proceeds with the help of only some basic impulses. These impulses alone, like the lamp, guide them on their unknown path.

What is this path? It is the internalization of the external world. What is made internal is blended with his/her own qualities, personal reactions/perception of the world. When the poet has created something, their creation is basically a recreation of the world- that world which is the sum total of their own and the external world.

**Poet’s relation with external world**

Since the internal world of the poet is basically the internalization of the external world only, the poets have to be concerned with the happenings around them. A poet is a poet by not merely a poetic process but he has to see the expansion of his poetic self in the real world and he has to develop the capacity to be one with the great ideals of humanity in general. That is why poetry is not a limited education or culture but it is a comprehensive emotional and rational
culture - that culture, that refinement, which one has to find in the (real) world around us.

The internalization of the external is a psychological process. If it is done with a perverse mind its impact can be seen on the literary product too. And hence self-control and self-purification is important for the poet for an exact and correct internalization of the external.

**Croce**

The important features of poetic process, according to Croce, are-

1. IMPRESSIONS
2. EXPRESSION OR SPIRITUAL AESTHETIC SYNTHESIS
3. HEDONISTIC ACCOMPANIMENT OR AESTHETIC PLEASURE
4. TRANSLATION OF THE AESTHETIC FACT INTO PHYSICAL PHENOMENON Sound, Tone, Movements, Colours etc.)

1. By **IMPRESSIONS**, CROCE means natural and spontaneous experiences. Experiences are not perceptions because in perception there is a re-established imagination of real existence. Perceptions can be false but impressions cannot be true or false; they can be complete or incomplete.

Croce does not deny that impressions are connected with real life and self knowledge flows from them. But he also says that in process of gaining self knowledge these expressions
change so much that their very existence is nullified. Thus, an artist’s creative process is not a practical activity. It is merely an imaginary state (VYANJANA) of self-illumination. And in this sense we can call all art an illusion. Illusion is not opposite to truth. Illusion and ‘Truth’ are intimately related because complete illusion does not exist. An artist is above belief and non-belief, species etc.

2. EXPRESSION: The second stage of expression is the most aesthetically satisfying and real, because aesthetic facts are themselves an expression. By form, he means pre-established co-ordination of emotion and image which naturally is real or beautiful. Croce believes that emotion without image and image without emotion are non-existent.

3. HEDONISTIC ACCOMPANIMENT: The hedonistic or aesthetic pleasure is the climax of self-illumination. The creator achieves the desirable and is able to separate the beautiful from the ugly.

4. TRANSLATION OF THE AESTHETIC FACT INTO PHYSICAL PHENOMENON: This does not mean that a creation or art becomes a physical object. Croce is against its physical or concrete nature, because concrete things of the world are unreal, whereas art is a source of eternal truth and heavenly joy. Croce upholds that whether art is a physical commodity from judicial point of view, and whether the physical frame work of art possible- are two separate questions.
Physical framework becomes possible, when we scan its prosodic features instead of concentrating on its meaning. This is Croce’s most controversial statement.

**Spender**

According to Spender, Poetic process involves five stages- (i) Concentration (ii) Inspiration (iii) Memory (iv) Faith and (v) Song.

**Concentration** means that a writer is very much conscious about the development of his thoughts, or what can enter as an idea in his mind. This stage involves what is in the mind of the writer and what can possibly enter into it. Sometimes it is hard for the writer to balance concentration and intention. By intention he means the ability to use the idea in a work of art. At the time of composing a single poem, the poet has outlines of about ten poems right before him, out of which he selects one and rejects all other, or selects part from each to compose a single whole. Thus, there is more rejection than selection. A vision in front of a poet is a must for concentration. At this point, we realize that before composing a poem, the poet has a pre established point of view.

**Inspiration** can be the beginning as well as the end of a poem. In other words, inspiration is the inspiring power of poetry as well as the aim of poetry. One feels it is more important than concentration. Inspiration provides the central
idea. Spender says, that his personal experience regarding inspiration is that it is here where he gets the opening line or a formula, a theory or a word of the poem which may not be very clear at that time. From this he forms many other thoughts for the development of the poem.

**MEMORY :** Imaginative thinking involves memory. A poet never forgets impressions cast on his mind. He can recall them whenever required. According to Spender Memory is a most developed and most sensitive instrument of a poet. Poet’s creative imagination is memory based because he never imagines anything which is not known to him already through experience.

**FAITH :** Spender emphasizes faith as another important factor after memory. Faith, in a sense, is a belief of a poet in the work he produces. Faith is poet’s faith in the poetry he produces and this faith in quite mysterious in it a rapidity. Faith turns abstract into concrete, inanimate into animate.

**SONG :** In the expression aspect of the poetic process, Spender underlines the relevance of the unity of song elements. In this, rhythm, music, harmony, sound and tone are united into a whole. To harmonize the word-music requires a log of practice.

At the end of the creative process, Spender feels a sense of achievement because he feels, he has created something new.
END NOTES

2. Ibid, p. 2.
11. Letters of John Keats, p. 36.


17. Ibid.


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