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Edited by Siraj-ud-Din

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PATER AND THE MYTH OF DIONYSUS

SIRAJ-UD-DIN

I

"We are accustomed to think of Greek religion as the religion of art and beauty, the religion of which the Olympian Zeus and the Athena Polias are the idols, the poems of Homer the sacred books. Thus Cardinal Newman speaks of 'the classical polytheism which was gay and graceful, as was natural in a civilised age'. Yet such a view is only a partial one. In it the eye is fixed on the sharp, bright edge of high Hellenic culture, but loses sight of the sombre world across which it strikes."¹ Thus wrote Walter Pater in 1867. If, from a certain side, it is true that his own thoughts were fixed on "the sharp, bright edge of Hellenic culture", we shall find, nevertheless, that his mind tended to brood from time to time on that other "sombre world" of which he has spoken. Two of his most characteristic imaginative creations, "*Denys l' Auxerrois*", and "*Apollo in Picardy*" dwell with an almost diseased intensity on this aspect of Greek religion; and we can judge from them how strongly Pater's mind was attracted towards certain phases of religious mysticism—the type of emotional religion that brings about a certain kind of physical and mental uplifting, but only at the risk of terrible and unhealthy developments. It is significant, therefore, that two myths that attract Pater are those of Dionysus and of Demeter, both of which were connected with a wild and orgiastic type of mysticism.

The myth of Dionysus had, in fact, much to attract a man of Pater's temperament. In their outer form, the worship and observances connected with Dionysus had a strong romantic appeal. The *Thiasus* with its ecstasies—"that giddy, intoxicating sense of spring—that tingling in the veins, sympathetic with the yearning life of the earth"²; its sights and sounds, "the presence of night, the expectation of morning, the nearness of wild,

1. "The Renaissance", Winckelmann, 210-211.

2. "Greek Studies", 45.

unsophisticated, natural things—the echoes, the coolness, the noise of frightened creatures as they climbed through the darkness, the sunrise seen from the hill-top, the disillusion, the bitterness of satiety, the deep slumber which came with the morning”³; all this is stimulating to the imagination. Then Dionysus is specially the god of the mysteries. With the Orpheans his story stood for the symbol of resurrection, and through them he contributed those elements of enthusiastic faith and hopes of immortality to Greek religion to which it was, in its ordinary phases, a stranger. He was specially the giver of that enthusiasm which even Plato declares to be “the special gift of heaven, and the source of the chiefest blessing among men.”⁴ Finally Dionysus has always been a favourite subject with the artists. His ceremonials are a favourite subject in Greek sculpture, and the *Thiasus* has often been depicted in the plastic arts. “It is from this fantastic scene that the beautiful wind-touched draperies, the rhythm, the heads suddenly thrown back, of many a Pompeian wall-painting and sarcophagus frieze are originally derived; and that melting langour, that perfectly composed lassitude of the fallen Maenad, became a fixed type in the school of grace, the school of Praxiteles.”⁵ The story of Dionysus continued to be a favourite even with the later artists, and many of the finest works of the Renaissance period have this inspiration. Michelangelo has produced a statue of his “which should pass with the critics for a piece of ancient sculpture”⁶ and his marriage with Ariadne has produced two of the greatest of Italian paintings, Titian’s “with greater space of ingathered shore and mountain, and solemn foliage, and fiery animal life;” and Tintoret’s “with profounder luxury of delight in the nearness to each other, and imminent embrace, of glorious bodily presences; and both alike with consummate beauty of physical form.”⁷ Thus from many sides, the legend had a strong appeal for Pater.

3. *Ibid.*, 43.

4. Plato, “Phaedrus”, 244.

5. “Greek Studies”, 47.

6. *Ibid.*, 10.

7. *Ibid.*, 10.

Of the two papers that he has devoted to the subject of Dionysus, the first is a study of the various elements of the myth. Pater’s subject is to show, first, how the various natural impressions that the human mind derives from the *vine* (of which Dionysus is the god or personification) and the various objects connected with it, are combined into a human figure; and then how this human figure, now endowed with a full-blown divine personality, gathers round it, by natural association and mythic growth, those various legends which are connected with the name of Dionysus. The charm of the essay is in its sense of fresh, living contact with the Greek mind, showing the action of a poetical fancy upon impressions of nature, and weaving them into a complex body of human associations. Dionysus is a good instance of the transforming power of the Greek imagination. Starting from primitive tree-worship, the associations of water, coolness, solitude, the free life of the fields, the warm fragrant breeze and the spreading earth, are all combined together in a human figure with his appropriate attendants. Dionysus is the vine, and hence in his form “all the impressions of the vine and its fruit, as the highest type of the life of the green sap, had become incorporate—all the scents and colours of its flower and fruit, and something of its curling foliage; the chances of its growth; the enthusiasm, the easy flow of more choice expression, as its juices mount within one; for the image is eloquent, too, in word, gesture, and glancing of the eyes, which seem to be informed by some soul of the vine within it: as Wordsworth says,

Beauty born of murmuring sound

Shall pass into her face—

so conceive an image into which the beauty, ‘born’ of vine, has passed; and you have the idea of Dionysus, as he appears, entirely fashioned at last by central Greek poetry and art.”⁸ He is nourished by water, so he has the nymphs for his nurses; and those nymphs become the Hyades (or the rainy). He grows in the fields, so his attendants are the Fauns and the Silenii. The reed also grows near, so he becomes the patron of the music of flutes, and through music of prophecy. The plant grows out of the earth, shattering

8. “Greek Studies”, 27-28

the womb of its mother; so he is the son of Semele, herself a personification of the earth.⁹ He is also, in a sense, the offspring of the Dew, so in some legends his mother is Hye, the Dew.¹⁰ His father, the sky, protects him through the cooling clouds, its lower parts. All these dim impressions of the life of the vine are gathered up and united into one figure, and that becomes Dionysus.

Once the human conception was formed the "natural impressions" recede into the background, and we become concerned with the fortunes of a human hero. Pater does not trace the origin of the myth anterior to the play of Euripides, which he takes as his starting-point. The Theban legend is the one "which, out of the entire body of tradition concerning him, was accepted as central by the Athenian imagination"; and in it the story becomes one that has a peculiar intimate appeal to human sympathy. Dionysus, the youngest of the Greek gods, coming perhaps from Phrygia, establishes himself first in the villages, and finally in Athens itself, about the time of Peisistratus.¹² But in town he refines, and the ruddy god of the vineyard becomes a "white, graceful, mournful figure"¹³; and this is type that has been immortalised in art and literature.

But there is another side to Dionysus. As the symbol of vegetation, like Demeter, he has his life partly in the upper and partly in the lower world; he is, like Proserpine, a *Chthonian god*, and "like all children of the earth, has an element of sadness."¹⁴ Thus Pater links up the two elements of the Dionysus myth, the Theban and the Thracian; and it is the wilder, more romantic conception of *Dionysus Zagreus* that he now takes up. This image has had but little effect in Greek art and poetry, but is the centre of the Orphean cult. As Pater says: "In its potential, though unrealised scope, it is perhaps the subtlest dream in Greek religious poetry, and is, at least, part of the comp-

9. See Farnell, "Cults of the Greek States", Vol. V., 94.

10. "Greek Studies", 17, *vide* Suidas.

12. 560. B.C.

13. "Greek Studies", 30.

14. *Ibid.*, 33.

letephysiognomy of Dionysus, as it actually reveals itself to the modern student, after a complete survey."¹⁵

Pater now reminds us that there has been a trace of sorrow about Dionysus all along. Born of a mother who had suffered cruelly at the hands of her own sisters, and who died in giving birth to the child, he is a "sorrowing god" in contrast to the Olympian company who never know sorrow. He is represented in the legend as wandering about the earth, establishing his godhead, in order to vindicate the memory of his mother; and this filial sentiment leads him finally even into Hades in order to bring back Semele.¹⁶ Thus he becomes to some extent the counter-part of Persephone, with whom he is variously connected by legend as brother or son.¹⁷ He is, in the gloomy worship of the north, connected with hunting; and sometimes indentified with wild beasts¹⁸; a hint of which is to be found in the name of one of his bitterest enemies, Lycurgus.¹⁹ Pater connects this aspect of Dionysus with "one of the gloomiest creations of later romance, the were-wolf."²⁰ This is the terrible side of Dionysus, of which we have many legends. There is a tradition of human sacrifices being offered to him.²¹ His votaries ate raw flesh and drank blood at the religious celebrations held in his honour.²²

15. "Greek Studies", 32.

16. Pindar, "Olympian Ode" II, 25, Diodorus Siculus, III, 62, IV, 25.

17. Diodorus Siculus, V, 75. 4.

18. The god was supposed to take the forms of the bull, the lion and the serpent. See Euripides—"Bacchae" Lo. 1017-20 "Appear, O Bacchus, to our eyes as a bull or a serpent with a hundred heads, or take the shape of a lion breathing flame".

19. Lycurgus is the god himself under another aspect, & his pursuit of Dionysus a mere ritual. See Farnell "Cults of Greek State", Vol. V, 103-104 & 98.

20. "Greek Studies", 36-37.

21. Pausanias IX, 8, 2 gives the story of a boy being sacrificed yearly to Dionysus at Potniai.

22. Saint Clement of Alexandria—*Protreptikos pros Hellenas* (Exhortation to the Greeks), Chap. II: "The Bacchoi worship orgiastically the mad Dionysus, celebrating the made service by devouring raw flesh, and they solemnize the distribution of the flesh of the murdered victim, crowning their heads with snakes and raising the cry of *Evvoi*." See also the "Bacchae" (Coleridge's trans) "Ch: happy that votary, when from the hurrying revel rout he sinks to earth, in his holy robe of faun's skin, chasing the goat to drink its blood, a banquet sweet of flesh uncooked, as he hastes to Phrygias' or to Libyas' hills." Coleridge, Vol. II, 92.

There is also the story of the daughters of King Minyas, one of whom offered her own child as a sacrifice to Dionysus. "The three daughters of Minyas devote themselves to his worship; they cast lots, and one of them offers her own tender infant to be torn by the three like a roe."²³ Plutarch speaks of the sacrifice of three Persian captive youths to Dionysus the Devourer before the battle of Salamis.²⁴ He ultimately comes to be regarded as "a new Aidoneus, a hunter of men's souls; and like him to be appeased only by costly sacrifices."

This terrible side of Dionysus was little known in literature, however. The type of him that has passed into art and literature is a fair and delicate youth, with features of an almost feminine softness. The Zagreus myth was the one accepted in the mysteries, and along with much that is terrible and savage, it also expresses some of the noblest ideas to be found among Greek religious conceptions. "If Dionysus, like Persephone, has his gloomy side, like her he has also a peculiar message for a certain number of refined minds seeking, in the later days of Greek religion, such modifications of the old legend as may minister to ethical culture, to the perfecting of the moral nature. A type of second birth, from first to last, he opens in his series of annual changes, for minds on the look-out for it, the hope of a possible analogy, between the resurrection of nature, and something else, as yet unrealised, reserved for human souls; and the beautiful, weeping creature, vexed by the wind, suffering, torn to pieces, and rejuvenescent again at last like a tender shoot of living green out of the hardness and stony

23. "Greek Studies", 37. The story of the Minyades is given in Aelianus, "Varia Historia", 342. When may further conclude from the legends of Orpheus, Pentheus, and the Minyan and Argive women... that there had once been in vogue a Dionysiac ritual in which the human victims were rent asunder and devoured. "Farnell-Cults of the Greek States", V, 167.

24. Plutarch, "Themistocles", XIII, narrates how, when Themistocles was performing the sacrifice for omens, three Persian captives were brought to him. Euphrantides the soothsayer, catching sight of them bade Themistocles sacrifice them to Dionysus Omestes, which he reluctantly did.

25. In the fragment of Heraclitus (Fragment cxxvii. By-water's edition), it is stated; "Hades is the same as Dionysus, the god to whom the made orgies of the wild women are devoted.

darkness of the earth, becomes an emblem or ideal of chastening and purification and of final victory through suffering.²⁶

Thus Pater brings us finally to the Orphean teachings about Dionysus. These Orpheans are "old friends with new faces, though they had, as Plato witnesses,²⁷ their less worthy aspect in certain appeals to vulgar superstitious fears, they seem to have been not without the charm of a real and inward religious beauty, with their neologies, their new readings of old legends, their sense of mystical second meanings as they refined upon themes grown too familiar, and linked, in a sophisticated age, the new to the old. In this respect we may perhaps liken them to the mendicant orders in the Middle Ages with their florid, romantic theology, beyond the bounds of orthodox tradition, giving so much new matter to art and poetry."^{27a} It is through them that these mystical teachings were propagated; and thus an entirely new element entered the Greek religious consciousness.²⁸

Finally Pater gives the story of Zagreus as received among the Orpheans. This story, Pater tells us, he derives from the *Dionysiaca* of Nonnus, which itself has preserved it from some Orphic poems now lost.²⁹ "Son, first, of Zeus, and of Persephone whom Zeus woos, in the form of a serpent—the white, golden-haired child, the best beloved of his father, and destined by him to be the ruler of the world, grows up in secret. But one day, Zeus, departing on a journey in his great fondness for the child, delivered to him his crown and staff, and so left him, shut in a strong tower. Then it came to pass that the jealous Here sent out the Titans against him. They approached the crowned child, and with many sorts of playthings enticed him away,

26. "Greek Studies", 38-39.

27. Plato, "Republic", II, 364-365.

27a. "Greek Studies", 39.

28. "The cardinal doctrine of Orphic religion was... the possibility of attaining divine life... the great contribution of Dionysus to the religion of Greece was the hope of immortality it brought." Miss J.E. Harrison, "Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion", 478. "The Orphic ritual may be credited with two great contributions to religion—the belief in immortality and the idea of personal holiness." Lewis Campbell, "Religion in Greek Literature", 253.

29. Nonnus, "Vionysica", VI, 155-205.

to have him in their power, and then miserably slew him—hacking his body to pieces, as the wind tears the Vine, with the axe *Peleus*, which, like the swords of Roland and Arthur, has its proper name. The fragments of the body they boiled in a great cauldron, and made an impious banquet upon them; afterwards carrying the bones to Apollo, whose rival the young child should have been, thinking to do him service. But Apollo, in great pity for his youngest brother, laid the bones in a grave, within his own holy place. Meanwhile, Here, full of her vengeance, brings to Zeus the heart of the child, which she had snatched, still beating, from the Titans. But Zeus delivered the heart to Semele; and the soul of the child remaining a while in Hades, where Demeter made for it new flesh, was thereafter born of Semele—a second Zagreus—the younger or Theban Dionysus.³⁰

This paper, in itself a mythological rather than a literary study, is important in connection with its sequel "*The Bacchanals of Euripides*" where Pater develops many of these ideas. As here he closes on the mystical Zagreus myth, so in his study of the "Bacchao" he gives an entirely mystical interpretation of the Dionysus of the play. These Orphic ideas, crude and savage in their symbolism, yet recognised as the vehicle of a spiritual philosophy of life, seem to have greatly attracted Pater, and we shall hear more of them when we come to examine his paper on the "Bacchae".³¹

30. "Greek Studies", 40-41. The myth is of a very composite character, and is made up from various fragments of antiquity. Nonnus, whose "Dionysica" Pater quotes, is a very late writer, and his testimony is not of much value; but a full account of the myth, with the authorities for the different elements of it, is given by Sir J. G. Frazer in his "Golden Bough", Vol. VII, 12-14. Also Edwin Rohde in "Psyche" (English translation, 1925) gives the legend with references to authorities in Chap. X, Section 3.

31. For an account of the Orphic teachings, see Rohde, E., "Psyche" (Eng. trans., 1925), Chap. X, Secs. 3, 4 & 5. Also Miss Jane Harrison's "Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion", Chapter X. The main teaching of the Orphics was the immortality and divinity of the soul, and its gradual purification through various incarnations. The final bliss of the soul, according to them, lay in being entirely free from the body.

From the myth of Dionysus, Pater passes on to *The Bacchanals of Euripides*, a drama which he describes as a "a monument as central for the legend of Dionysus as the Homeric Hymn (is) for that of Demeter."¹ We have already considered his interest in the subject, and we shall find that in his examination of the play of Euripides the same point of view continues. He is drawn to it, that is to say, by its romantic and pathetic character; and these are the qualities that he emphasizes in his examination, to the neglect of that realism and serious character drawing for which Euripides is justly famous. But he is attracted even more by its mysticism, and when he comes to consider the "meaning" of the drama, he finds it exclusively in that final impression of horror that comes upon us as we realise the true nature of Dionysus as the great hunter—the mysterious god of Orphean worship whose quarry is the human soul. In order to appreciate Pater's criticism here, it is necessary to remember his exclusive and original way of approach to the play under consideration; otherwise his opinions are bound to appear rather extreme.

Pater strongly held the opinion that Euripides is a "romantic". "Of Euripides, it may be said, that his method in writing his plays is to sacrifice readily almost everything else, so that he may attain the fulness of a single romantic effect."² This is true in a certain sense. Euripides, more than any other Greek dramatist, is fond of strange places, adventurous stories, and thrilling situations. Iphigenia in her remote temple at Tauris and her meeting with Crestes,³ the shipwreck of Menelaus and his escape with Helen,⁴ Andromeda on her lonely rock,⁵ are certainly romantic in appeal. The blind old Oedipus, going out in the wilderness with his young daughter is a figure that stirs the imagination.⁶ *Medea*, with the heroine's enchantments and revenge, *Hippolytus* with its delicate handling of a great and pitiful passion, are of the very essence of romantic

1. "Greek Studies", 43.

2. "Appreciations"—Postscript, 271.

3. Euripides, Iphigenia in Tauris.

4. Euripides, "Helena".

5. *Ibid.*, "Andromeda", a drama which exists only in fragments.

6. *Ibid.*, "The Phoenissae".

stories. In this sense of a suggestion of remote, strange and imaginative possibilities in life and human character, or in Pater's own words, in the addition of curiosity to beauty,⁷ Euripides may be claimed as a "romantic." The *Bacchae* too has such elements in plenty. Pater points out the wild and extravagant as well as the picturesque impressions that go to the making of this play; and he insists upon its strange and romantic character, written as it was amidst a semi-civilised people, who were themselves strongly addicted to the rites which this play celebrates.⁸ Subject and audience alike stimulate the romantic temper, and the tragedy of the *Bacchanals* . . . is almost wholly without the reassuring calm, generally characteristic of the endings of Greek tragedy: is itself excited, troubled, disturbing—a spotted or dappled thing, like the oddly dappled fawn-skins of its own masquerade." This description will readily be granted. Here is a religious drama with continuous miracles and excitements, and a background of wild, fantastic rites. There is, on the one hand, a great mystic exaltation and sense of communion with nature in the songs of the chorus; and on the other hand a horrible and bloody close which leaves one in a curious condition of uncertainty as to the meaning of the whole. There is no one single impression that is final: there is a feeling of religious awe and a feeling of pity and revolt, and these impressions are never reconciled, or worked towards the end into a single harmonious whole, as was the habit with Aeschylus or Sophocles. The "meaning" of the *Bacchae* has has baffled all critics, and its puzzle is exercising their minds to this day. Pater is no doubt thinking of these things, but there are other important aspects of the drama which he neglects.

It was Aristophanes who declared that Euripides made it his business to exhibit "the things which we handle and among which we live,"¹⁰ and from that time onwards Euripides has been justly noted for the reality and truth of his character-drawing. In his fine sense of human nature with its depths and heights, in his open-eyed recognition of evil, and in his utter sincerity

7. "Appreciations", 258.

8. See "Greek Studies", 44-47.

9. *Ibid.*, 47-48.

10. Aristophanes, "The Frogs", 959. "I showed them things of common life, the things we know and see."

Euripides is far removed from the ordinary conception of a romantic. As Professor Gilbert Murray says: "This quality of sincerity is, perhaps, the very first thing that should be pointed out to a reader who is beginning Greek tragedy. Coming in the midst of so much poetical convention it takes a modern reader by surprise; he expected romantic idealism and he finds clear character-drawing . . . The stories are no doubt often miraculous; the characters themselves are often in their origin supernatural. But their psychology is severely true."¹¹ This is, of course, specially true of Euripides. His general attitude is so truthful and rational that we are bound to ask ourselves whether he has a second meaning in his mind, if he presents a drama in which he openly glorifies the commonly believed aspect of religion. Regarding the *Bacchae*, Prof. Verrall says: "The play was not designed only to satisfy the demands of popular belief and poetic piety. No extent work of Euripides is so designed. In several of the most important, . . . double interpretations are imperative, and the critical or sceptical reading by far the more true and vital. And of all his extent works, the *Bacchant* is that which requires such an interpretation not the least but the most, precisely because the face-value is so extravagantly inconsistent with the dramatic principles and practice of the author. It is not too much to say that, if the facts of the piece were really as miraculous as at first they may look, if no other way of explaining them were open, then the play, produced as it was posthumously and without the direct guarantee of Euripides, could not have been accepted then, and should not be accepted now, as his genuine and unadulterated work."¹²

Yet Pater never asks himself these questions. He takes a perfectly straight-forward view of the intentions of the poet; the play is a "palinode" and sincerely meant as a glorification of the religion of the common man. "Writing in old age, he is in that subdued mood, a mood not necessarily sordid, in which . . . accustomed ideas, conformable to a sort of common-sense regarding the unseen, often times regain what they may have lost, in a man's allegiance. It is a sort of madness, he

11. Gilbert Murray, "Euripides" (H.U.L.), 205.

12. Verrall, "The Bacchant of Euripides", 18-19.

begins to think, to differ from the received opinion thereon, not that he is insincere or ironical, but that he tends, in the sum of probabilities, to dwell on their more peaceful side."¹³ This is the view of the older critics which "strikes us now as almost childish its incompetence;"¹⁴ and we have to enquire how Pater comes to hold it.

It is difficult to see in the play a sincere glorification of Dionysus. His sole passion is the desire to dominate, a desire which he is willing to gratify by the most cruel and relentless methods. From the very beginning he strikes an unsympathetic note, and even when he is imprisoned, he does not excite any pity, for he suffers nothing. Towards the end his triumph is ghastly, and the feelings of the audience are clearly against him. If his worship is being seriously recommended, why, one feels inclined to ask, is he made so repulsive to the audience? Nor is this all. There are other signs too of an ironical purpose behind the play. Cadmus, for example, avows such shamelessly cynical reasons for accepting the worship of Dionysus that it is impossible to regard him as a true believer. His only desire is to exploit the myth in the interest of the honour of the family, without any reference to its truth or untruth.¹⁵ Even Tiresias is cold and politic: "The faith we inherited from our fathers, old as time itself, no reasoning shall cast down; no, though it were the subtlest invention of wits refined."¹⁶ He also attributes mere vanity to the new god, though outwardly recognizing his power: "Mark this: though thyself art glad when thousands throng thy gates, and citizens extol the name of Pentheus; he too, I throw, delights in being honoured."¹⁷ The miracles are so gross and preposterous that they entirely miss their aim: Pentheus does not even notice the earthquake and the flame from Semele's tomb. The chorus too are represented as unmitigated fanatics. When the death of Pentheus is announced, they exult so unfeelingly that the messenger feels constrained to rebuke them:

13. See "Greek Studies", 43-44.

14. Gilbert Murray, "Euripides" (H.U.L.), 190.

15. "The Bacchae"—Coleridge's trans., page 97.

16. "The Bacchae"—Coleridge's trans., page 93.

17. *Ibid.*, 97.

"to exult o'er hopeless suffering is sorry conduct, dames."¹⁸ Again, when Agave enters with the head of her son, the messenger turns away in horror and grief, but the chorus gloat over the spectacle with unfeigned delight.¹⁹ In face of all this criticism, it is impossible not to think that the poet has a hidden meaning, some *double-entente* which he wants to convey to the more discerning among his audience. Whatever be the real intention of the play, and the difficulties of interpretation are many, Professor Gilbert Murray does not speak too strongly when he says: "It is no use pretending that this is a moral and sympathetic tale, or that Euripides palliates the atrocity of it, and tries to justify Dionysus. Euripides never palliates things."²⁰

Now let us hear what Pater has to say about these things. He does not see any intention in the play except the obvious one; and his interpretation of the characters too is similarly straightforward. "The blind old prophet Tiresias and the aged King Cadmus, always secretly true to him (Dionysus), have agreed to celebrate the *Thiasus*, and accept his divinity openly."²¹ Pentheus is "like the exaggerated diabolical figures in some of the religious plays and imageries of the Middle Age, he is an impersonation of stupid impiety, one of those whom the gods willing to destroy first infatuate. Alternating between glib unwisdom and coarse mockery, between virulence and a pretence of moral austerity, he understands only the sorriest motives."²² The whole play is to him like a mediaeval mystery: he makes the comparison twice.²³ Dionysus, so far from being repulsive, is in his eyes a positive, pathetic and touching figure. "Dionysus himself speaks the prologue. He is on a journey through the world to find a new religion; and the first motive of the new religion is the vindication of the memory of his mother. In explaining this design Euripides, who seeks always for pathetic effect, tells in few words, touching because simple, the story of Semelehere, and again

18. *Ibid.*, 118.

19. The "Bacchae", Coleridge's trans., 122.

20. Gilbert Murray, "Essays and Addresses", 78.

21. "Greek Studies", 53.

22. "Greek Studies", 54-55.

23. See "Greek Studies", 53 and 56.

still more intensely in the chorus which follows—the merely human sentiment of maternity being not forgotten, even amid the thought of the divine embraces of her fiery bed-fellow. A yearning affection . . . has led him from place to place: everywhere he has had his dances and established his worship; and everywhere his presence has been her justification.”²⁴ In the final scene Pater sees, indeed, “a strange ineffable woe”;²⁵ but he never expresses any feeling that the conduct of the god has been revolting. What is his interpretation then? In this lies the whole secret of Pater’s attitude to the play.

“And now . . . Dionysus himself becomes more and more clearly discernible as the hunter, a wily hunter, and man the prey he hunts for; “Our king is a hunter”, cry the chorus, as they unite in Agave’s triumph and give their sanction to her deed. And as the Bacchanals supplement the chorus, and must be added to it to make the conception of it complete; so in the conception of Dionysus also a certain transference or substitution must be made—much of the horror and sorrow of Agave, of Pentheus, of the whole tragic situation, must be transferred to him, if we wish to realise in the older, profounder, and more complete sense of his nature, that mystical being of Greek tradition to whom all these experiences—his madness, the chase, his imprisonment and death, his peace again—really belong; and to discern which though Euripides’ peculiar treatment of his subject, is part of the curious interest of this play.”²⁶

Pater has all along been considering the play in the light of a mystic drama, a representation of those Orphean mysteries of Dionysus—Zagreus in which the celebrants ate the raw flesh and drank the blood of an animal, or sometimes even of a human victim, the prey being supposed to represent the god himself.²⁷ From this point of view, the whole play may be regarded as a sacred ritual, in which Pentheus himself is a form of Dionysus and his opposition and death a part of the process by which he is to be incorporated

24. “Greek Studies”, 49-50.

25. “Greek Studies”, 67.

26. “Greek Studies”, 64-65.

27. See Farnell, “Cults of the Greek States”, Vol. V, 161-163 and 168-170.

with the god. This is the way in which the Orpheans interpreted it, and Pater is accepting this fantastic but impressive explanation of the legend. “The version of the Pentheus story presented by Oppian preserves an important trait; the Maenads pray that they may not only rend Pentheus, but also devour him;²⁸ and this was no doubt the original intention of the rending in his case as in the others. It is now recognised that Pentheus is, in his original character, no secular hero, a royal enemy of the god, but the god himself, or rather the priest that incarnates the god; hence he is led solemnly through the city in the same female attire that the deity himself occasionally wears, he is hung on a tree and pelted at, and we find the image of Dionysus commonly hung on trees; then follows the dismemberment, and then—we may suspect—either in reality or simulation ‘the sacrificial banquet of men’s flesh’. For a strong corroboration of this theory we should note the important statement of Pausanias²⁹ that the Pythian oracle bade the Thebans honour that tree on which Pentheus was hung ‘as if it were a god’, and that two of the most sacred idols of Dionysus at Corinth were made out of its wood.”³⁰

This allegory, gruesome and repulsive as well as mystical, was bound to appeal to Pater; and we find that it has dominated his imagination to such an extent that he hardly cares to interpret the story in terms of human character. Examining the play rationally, we are bound to see that Euripides is by no means whole-heartedly in favour of the religious views which it ostensibly expresses; and it may even be argued that there is a decidedly ironical purpose behind the outer show of piety.³¹ But this problem does not arise if we give a completely mystical significance to the whole story. In that case the thing becomes a sacred drama and since the king is only a symbolical figure, there is no question of injustice or cruelty. Of course we shall shudder with horror at this terrible ritual, but this is just what Pater considers to be the significance of the drama. “The omophagy and the rending themselves

28. Oppian, “Cynegética” 4, 403.

29. Pausanias, 2 II. 6 (on Kithairon).

30. Farnell, “Cults of the Greek States”, Vol. V, 167-168.

31. The whole point is very ably argued from this side in Prof. Vernall’s “The Bacchantes of Euripides”, Cambridge, 1910.

were often explained by the later mythographers as merely a mimetic commemoration of the actual death that the deity once suffered at the hands of his enemies. But who were his enemies? The Orphic and later Greek theology composed at a time when the true significance of the divine death had fallen into oblivion, brought in the figure of the Titans as the evil and destructive powers. But those who rent and devoured him should be, according to the primitive logic of the ritual, his most ardent votaries and lovers; and the Paris scholiast on Clemens³² is unique in preserving the aboriginal tradition that those who slew Pentheus and Orpheus were the same as those who tore—and, we may add, devoured—Dionysus, namely, his own Maenads who alone would crave such ecstatic communion with the God.”³³

Having examined Pater's approach to the play and the light in which he interprets it, we shall now notice some of the most important artistic features that he brings out. Of course it is no use pitting against Pater's interpretation, which is entirely mystical, a rational examination like that of Prof. Verrall, or a humanist and poetical version like that of Prof. Gilbert Murray.³⁴ We must take Pater on his own ground. As I have shown before, from this point of view the rational examination of characters vanishes, and consequently there is none. But Pater notices the purely artistic value of the characters and scenes of the drama—that is, their romantic aspect; and even though these things would yield a different result if the point of approach is more realistic, they are, nevertheless, less affected by purely intellectual theories. We shall now see how Pater deals with some of these minor interests that arise from the drama.

A great part of Pater's interest in this work is in the beauty of Dionysus himself. He is not thinking altogether of the character in the “*Bacchae*” of Euripides: to him the god has the full significance of the complex figure that we have seen developing through the earlier paper; and this will explain Pater's treatment of him here. “His image, as it detaches itself little by little

32. The Scholium referred to is: Paris, Schol. Clem. Alex. 92 p (Klotz, Vol. 4, 119).

33. Farnell, “Cults of the Greek States”, V, 177.

34. See Gilbert Murray, “Essays and Addresses”—“The *Bacchae*” for a very poetical interpretation.

from the episodes of the play, and is further characterised by the songs of the chorus, has a singular completeness of symbolical effect. The incidents of a fully developed human personality are super-induced on the mystical and abstract essence of that fiery spirit in the following veins of the earth—the aroma of the green world is retained in the fair human body, set forth in all sorts of finer ethical lights and shades—with a wonderful kind of subtlety. In the course of his long progress from land to land, the gold, the flowers, the incense of the East, have attached themselves deeply to him: their effect and expression rest now upon his flesh like the gleaming of that old ambrosial ointment of which Homer speaks as resting over the persons of the gods, and cling to his clothing—the mitre binding the perfumed yellow hair—the long tunic down to the white feet, somewhat womanly, and the fawn-skin, with its rich spots, wrapped about the shoulders. As the door opens to admit him, the scented air of the vine-yards . . . blows through . . . ‘sweet upon the mountains’, the excitement of which he loves so deeply and to which he constantly invited his followers—‘sweet upon the mountains’, and profoundly amorous, his presence embodies all the voluptuous abundance of Asia, its beating sun, its ‘fair-towered cities, full of inhabitants’, which the chorus describe in the luscious vocabulary, with rich Eastern names—Lydia, Persia, Arabia, Felix: he is a sorcerer or enchanter.”³⁵ Here is a picture in the best manner of Pater, delicate, haunting, suggestive. It is in touches like this that some of his best work lies.

His observation of the “coming relief”, the little touches of humour that this play occasionally shows, is also fine. “A humourous little scene, a reflex of the old Dionysiac comedy—of that laughter which was an essential element of the earliest worship of Dionysus—follows the first chorus. The old blind prophet Teiresias, and the aged King Cadmus, always secretly true to him, have agreed to celebrate the *Thiasus*, and accept his divinity openly. The youthful god has nowhere said decisively that he will have none but young men in his sacred dance. But for that purpose they must put on the long tunic, and that spotted skin which only rustics wear, and assume the

35. “Greek Studies”, 50-51.

thyrsus and ivy-crown. Teiresias arrives and is seen knocking at the doors. And then, just as in the medieval mystery, comes the inevitable grotesque, not unwelcome to our poet, who is wont in his plays, perhaps not altogether consciously, to intensify by its relief both the pity and the terror of his conceptions."³⁶ It is doubtful whether Euripides himself meant this as "comic relief", but certainly there is an element here at which the audience might "laugh more or less delicately."³⁷

Pater detects a similar element in the ridiculous toilet of Pentheus as he arrays himself for spying upon the Bacchantes. "Meantime Pentheus has assumed his disguise, and comes forth tricked up with false hair and the dress of a Bacchanal; but still with some misgivings at the thought of going thus attired through the streets of Thebes, and with many laughable readjustments of the unwanted articles of clothing."³⁸ But he realises that the scene is too tragic to be really amusing, and the King is now fast approaching madness. Pater remarks the fine psychology of the poet in depicting this gathering lunacy. "Now he begins to see the sun double, and Thebes with all its towers repeated, while his conductor seems to him transformed into a wild beast; and now and then, we come upon some touches of a curious psychology, so that we might almost seem to be reading a modern poet. As if Euripides had been aware of a not unknown symptom of incipient madness (it is said) in which the patient, losing the sense of resistance, while lifting small objects, imagines himself to be raising enormous weights, Pentheus, as he lifts the *thyrsus*, fancies he could lift Cithaeron with all the Bacchanals upon it. At all this the laughter will of course pass round the theatre; while those who really pierce into the purpose of the poet, shudder, as they see the victim thus grotesquely clad going to his doom, already foreseen in the ominous chant of the chorus—and as it were his grave-clothes, in the dress which makes him ridiculous."³⁹ But even though it may appear amusing to the groundlings, the scene is really horrible; and Pater shows fine judgement in seeing this and pointing out the "relief" that has already been provided, for just before this the chorus have sung one of their finest hymns. "It is

36, 37 & 38. "Greek Studies", 53-54, 54 and 62.
39. "Greek Studies", 62-63.

characteristic of Euripides—part of his fine tact and subtlety—to relieve and justify what seems tedious, or constrained, or merely terrible and grotesque, by suddenly suggested trait of homely pathos, or a glimpse of natural beauty, or a morsel of form or colour seemingly taken directly from picture or sculpture. So here, in this fantastic scene our thoughts are changed in a moment by the singing of the chorus, and diverted for a while to the darkhaired tresses of the wood, the breath of the river-side is upon us; beside it a faun escaped from the hunter's net is flying swiftly in its joy; like it the Maenad rushes along; and we see the little head thrown back upon the neck, in deep aspiration, to drink the dew."⁴⁰

Finally, we have an original and symbolic interpretation of the closing scene in the play. "And at last Agave herself comes upon the stage, holding aloft the head of her son, fixed upon the sharp end of the *thyrsus*, calling upon the women of the chorus to welcome the revel of the Evian god; who, accordingly, admit her into the company, professing themselves her fellow-revellers, the Bacchanals being thus absorbed into the chorus for the rest of the play. For, indeed, all through it, the true, though partly suppressed relation of the chorus to the Bacchanals is this, that the women of the chorus, staid and temperate for the moment, following Dionysus in his alternations, are but the paler sisters of his more wild and gloomy votaries—the true followers of the mystical Dionysus—the real chorus of Zagreus; the idea that their violent proceedings are the result of madness only, sent on them as a punishment for their original rejection of the god, being, as I said, when seen from the deeper motives of the myth, only a "sophism" of Euripides—a piece of rationalism of which he avails himself for the purpose of softening down the tradition of which he has undertaken to be the poet."⁴¹ In other words, Pater would have us understand that all along the poet's conception of Dionysus had really been that of Zagreus;⁴² and that it is for the sake of soften-

40. "Greek Studies", 61-62.

41. "Greek Studies", 63-64.

42. In this connection it may be noted that the name "Zagreus" never actually occurs in "Bacchae". Its first mention in literature is in the fragment of the "Cretans" by Euripides, where it is used as a mystic epithet of the god of the lower world, Dionysus identified with Zeus. See Farnell's "Cults of the Greek States", Vol. V, 129.

ing the terror that he makes the revelation gradual. In this light the absorption of the Bacchantes in the chorus is a symbol of this identification, that Dionysus has taken upon himself the full character of his more terrible counterpart; and the realisation of this fact, according to Pater, ought to be our final impression of the drama.

So we come back finally to the question of the real character of Dionysus. We have seen Pater's view, and how he makes it central for the interpretation of the whole drama. It does not seem to me that this mystical conception was, anyhow, the whole of the impression intended by Euripides himself. That there is some kind of a mystical intention seems almost certain, and part of the fascination of the play is just in this elusive mystery that attaches to its central conception. Pater's suggestion is romantic, but it has against it the life-long rationalism and distrust of enthusiasms that was characteristic of Euripides. Whatever be the interpretation, "we have in the *Bacchae*—it seems to me impossible to deny it—a heartfelt glorification of 'Dionysus'. No doubt it is Dionysus in some private sense of the poet's own; something opposed to 'the world'; some spirit of the wild woods and the sunrise, of inspiration and untrammelled life. The presentation is not constant, however magical the poetry. At one moment we have the Bacchantes raving for revenge, at the next they are uttering the dreams of some gentle and musing philosopher".⁴³ And among all those "*dramatis personae*" that Dionysus is, or can be, to each reader of the "*Bacchae*", perhaps one of the most terrible and suggestive is Pater's "Zagreus".

43. Gilbert Murray, "Euripides" (H.U.L.), 188-189.

PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE

C. A. QADIR

Not all people who talk about the 'philosophy of science' mean the same thing about it. There are at least four different senses which can be identified and discussed separately. First, we may be concerned with the scientist's motive for doing what he does, the impact of his activity on other phases of life and the effect of social conditions on his work. This is the science of science, frequently called the sociology of knowledge or the history of ideas—a useful and fruitful discipline, but not the philosophy of science in its more accepted technical sense. Second, there may be raised ethical questions about the results and achievements of science. In the modern technological world the prestige of a scientist is fastly growing, his role in social affairs as a scientific expert is on the increase, his inventions are posing a threat to world peace. All these things have importance for the common man and he is naturally concerned about them. He is anxious to understand the responsibility of scientists for the threat that their deadly weapons pose to world peace and security. These questions are being hotly discussed by thinkers all over the world. But despite the importance of these topics, they do not constitute, properly speaking, the philosophy of science.

The third and the fourth senses of the phrase are distinguished from the first two because of the fact that the third sense is the one in which philosophy of science has been understood in the past and is being understood at the current moment by a good many philosophers. This is the sense in which philosophy of science means cosmology—a branch of philosophy dealing with the origin, nature and purpose of the universe. It usually takes Reality as a Whole, that is to say, a system of interconnected and interdependent events, very much like an organism and so achieving a purpose, directly or indirectly, either its own or that of a master-mind. If one is an Idealist, one will conceive of Reality as a system of self-

consistent and all-comprehensive ideas and the purpose of the universe to lie in the realization of or at least approximation to that system—technically called the Absolute. If one is a Marxist, one will conceive of Reality in dialectical materialistic terms, taking dialectics as a ladder to reach the goal of class-less society. Again if one is a Darwinist, one will consider the law of evolution as the basic and all-comprehending principle of the universe and attempt to deduce political, social and ethical laws from it, besides providing it a cosmological sense, by making it a model for the interpretation of sensible reality. The fourth and the last meaning of the term 'Philosophy of Science' will become obvious if we consider it a specialised part of analytical philosophy. Long before the analytical philosophers of today drew the attention of the world to the role that a philosophy of science can legitimately perform in the clarification and the elucidation of concepts, Broad, an English philosopher, had stressed two points of view in philosophy—one speculative and the other critical. The speculative view-point is adopted by a cosmologist, while the critical one by an analytical philosopher of science. It is he who takes concepts like cause, time, goodness, truth, reality etc. and makes their sense and implications clear through analysis or their use. As a matter of fact the service that a philosopher of science renders in making concepts clear started with Socrates, if not earlier, in European philosophy. Every philosopher must be concerned with the elucidation of concepts with which he plays his game of philosophy. The concepts of his system are like tools and if they are not sharp or not properly fashioned, that is to say, if they are blunt or inadequate, they can mislead or distort the data instead of performing any useful service. Socrates, as we know, went about asking people as to what they meant by concepts which constituted the warp and woof of their vocation. To a philosopher he asked the meaning of truth, to a poet he asked the meaning of beauty, to a statesman he asked the meaning of state-craft, so on and so forth. This was critical philosophy and Socrates was more a critical philosopher than a speculative one.

But there is one problem which Socrates did not tackle, the reason being that it was not a problem during his days. The sciences were yet in their

infancy, their terminology and language not so distinct as it is today. Galileo once said that mathematics is the only language that Nature understands. He is quite correct, for the trend that modern science has shown in the last few centuries is towards mathematisation. Statistical laws, means, modes and averages and also mathematical equations invade the territory of physical and chemical sciences more often than they did in the past. Not only this, sciences also talk in terms of neutrons, electrons and gene which are not observable entities, but have to be employed as theoretical concepts for interpreting observable data. Because of the highly specialised and technical language of the sciences, the gulf between ordinary language and that of a scientist has enormously widened. It is the business of a philosopher of science to relate the two, to effect so to say a liaison and to formulate the principles by which this liaison can be understood.

As already observed, the philosophy of science was for the ancients an exercise in cosmology, to the moderns it is an exercise in analytical philosophy. Before I proceed to examine the credentials of the analytical philosophers in respect of the philosophy of science, I wish to assess the claims and achievements of the cosmologists.

As a branch of philosophy, Cosmology is concerned with the origin and structure of the universe and as such it is to be distinguished from Metaphysics on the one hand and the philosophy of nature on the other. The former is concerned with the most general features of reality, natural and supernatural, while the latter investigates the basic laws, processes and divisions of the objects of nature. But in the discussions of the cosmologists, it is hard to find these distinctions maintained. The main topics of Cosmology, according to Hegel, are the contingency, necessity, eternity, limitations and formal laws of the world, the freedom of man and the origin of evil, while its method of investigation has been to accept the principles of science or the results of Metaphysics and develop the consequences.

To Cosmology, Christian von Wolff gave a prominent place in his classificatory scheme of the main forms of philosophical knowledge. Since then it has enjoyed wide currency, despite the indictment of Kant who, in his Critique of Pure Reason, regarded the problems of Cosmology to be

intrinsically insoluble. A.E. Taylor thinks that the task of Cosmology is "to consider the meaning and validity of the most universal conceptions by which we seek to understand the nature of individual objects which make up the experienced physical world, extension, succession, space, time, number, magnitude, motion, change, quality and the more complex categories of force, causality, interaction, thing-hood, and so forth". Likewise in Whitehead's *Process and Reality*, whose sub-title is "An Essay in Cosmology", an attempt is made to evolve a system of general ideas "in terms of which every element of our experience be interpreted".

Cosmologies may be attempted from three points of views. They may be conceived of as a priori investigations into the general features of reality, or an analysis of the categories and concepts in terms of which the universe as a whole can be comprehended or that they give us an account of the large-scale properties of the astronomical or the physical world through the observations and findings of the theoretical physicist and the observational astronomer. But whatever the nature of the contents be, all cosmologies raise certain methodological and epistemological problems which a philosopher of science is required to tackle.

Such cosmologies as indulge in a priori investigations of rational nature cannot be free from metaphysical presuppositions and as such can lay no claim to being scientific or factual in import. But strange to say that all cosmologies, irrespective of their subject-matter or methodology, are called "science of science". A science is said to describe facts and to explain its data by means of theories and laws. What does a cosmology describe or explain?

To answer this question, one needs to know what a fact is and what its description or explanation means. Francis Bacon wanted Nature to speak for itself and advised scientists to refrain from making hypotheses in order to interpret the data, vouchsafed by observation or experiment in a particular field of enquiry. It was said that when an ordinary man asserted that the Sun rose in the East, he was not making an observation but drawing an inference from certain observations. In other words he was not describing the facts of Nature, but interpreting them according to his ways of thinking. Thus description requires a faithful presentation of reality, it is purely objective and

can have no truck with hypothesis of any kind. But soon after Bacon, it was realized that the ideal of pure objectivity was impossible of achievement. In elementary sciences, one may be able to describe, without the help of imagination, a few of the simplest kinds of facts but that hypothesis was needed to bind facts together and to make them meaningful. Even at the level of pure description, imagination cannot be entirely ruled out. But it should be understood that the imagination of a scientist is different from that of a poet. While the imagination of a poet creates his phantoms of delight out of nothingness, a scientist's imagination is earth-oriented or earth-bound and that makes all the difference. Thus a scientist does describe, in spite of difficulties in defining what exactly a description is.

A scientist describes facts, but what are facts? Wittgenstein says that a fact is as the case may be and that the world is a totality of facts. I do not think that Wittgenstein has defined a fact by saying that a fact is as the case may be. He has simply suggested a substitute phrase in terms of which a fact can be understood. But the phrase 'as the case may be' is not clearer than the term fact, although it does suggest what it ordinarily stands for. What is 'as the case may be' may relate to observation or to testimony or to experiment or to a deduction. But whatever the fact be and by whatever method it has been gained, the task of a scientist is to seize it in its entirety and to describe it as faithfully and as objectively as it may be humanly possible.

Since Cosmology is a 'science of science,' its facts will be different from the facts of ordinary sciences, and its methodology will also be peculiar to its objective and domain. The purpose of Cosmology is to erect such a framework of concepts and relations that a descriptive order is brought into the world as a whole. As such Cosmology is confined to the description of the salient features of the observed world in terms of such categories as space, time and matter. "Cosmologies run the gamut from simple pictures projected from everyday objects of the primitive society, through the metaphysical constructs of the ideational society, to the sophisticated mathematical models presented by modern science."

It will be obvious from the purpose of the Cosmological enquiry that Cosmology cannot remain content with the description of facts. It must go

beyond facts in its aim to understand the universe as a whole. Surely there are facts pertaining to this or that domain of nature, but it would be preposterous to suppose that there are facts which pertain to the world as a whole. If the world as Wittgenstein supposes is a totality of facts there cannot be facts relating to the world as a whole, though, at any one time, one can say on the basis of facts discovered or established so far that their totality would constitute the world at that particular moment. It seems that a cosmologist borrows facts from other sciences and interprets them in the light of his emotional or intellectual commitments so as to present an over-all picture of the universe. Pictures of this type have been constructed on the basis of the theories of Evolution, Psychoanalysis, Relativity, so on and so forth. Eddington in his book "The Nature of the Physical World" constructed an idealistic Utopian picture of the physical reality through his theory of 'pointer readings'. In cosmologies, therefore, one has to go beyond facts and one is obliged to explain such facts in the light of one's predilections. In the language of Johnson, inferences of this type fail to fulfil what are called the mnemonic conditions, despite the fact that they sometimes do fulfil the constitutive conditions of inference. Consequently cosmologies cannot be put on the footing of descriptive sciences. They do not describe, they seem to explain.

But what do they explain? Explanation, as ordinarily conceived, consists in harmonising facts with facts or facts with laws or laws with laws for the purpose of understanding the phenomena under investigation. In cosmologies we do not harmonise facts with facts, nor do we harmonise facts with laws or laws with laws, as we do in explanatory sciences. The purpose of a cosmology is different. It is not to explain facts as such or to explain laws as such, it is to understand the universe as a whole on the basis of scientific facts or laws. The facts as such or the laws as such have no bearing on the cosmos, they are stretched and their meanings enriched by the emotional commitments of the philosopher. Accordingly no cosmological enquiry can be free from metaphysical pre-suppositions—which presuppositions are overt in some cases and covert in great many cases. Again the premises which a science supplies cannot be regarded as having a logical bearing on

the universe as a whole, for how can facts of a particular nature be construed as having a cosmic meaning? The aim of a scientist is to frame laws on the basis of facts which is not the aim of a cosmologist. A law is a kind of an expectation, it enables us to control and predict facts. Surely this is not the purpose of a cosmologist. He frames no laws on the basis of his borrowed scientific facts. Hence by no stretch of imagination can he be put at par with a descriptive scientist.

It may be said that just as a scientist frames theories to explain facts, so does a cosmologist go beyond facts and offers an explanatory formula of the universe as a whole. In both cases an attempt is made to transcend facts and to offer a formula in terms of which known facts or laws could be explained. In this analogy one fact is ignored, which is, that though a scientist aims at formulating theories to explain facts, a cosmologist does not aim at explaining facts or laws, he aims on the other hand to explain the world as a whole. And while the theories of a scientist can be confirmed or disconfirmed in the light of facts, there is no possibility of a cosmological formula being subjected to confirmation or disconfirmation, since it is inconceivable as to what kind of facts would be relevant to a cosmological explanatory formula.

Another point that can be brought forward in favour of a cosmological formula is that its nature can be compared with that of a scientific hypothesis. Physical sciences accepted the hypothesis of ether because otherwise they could not explain physical facts. Likewise Freud accepted the hypothesis of Unconscious for in its absence he found it impossible to explain facts relating to neuroses, dreams and other forms of abnormalities. In the same manner a cosmologist accepts certain formulas, for in their absence it would be hard to explain the phenomenal world as a whole. Now there is no doubt that in sciences certain hypotheses are accepted with the object of explaining facts of a particular type. For instance, Induction accepted the principles of causation and uniformity of nature, while Deduction accepted the three laws of thought as hypotheses to explain the nature of inference in mathematical and non-mathematical sciences. But I feel that there is a basic difference between the hypotheses of sciences and the so-called hypotheses of cosmo-

logies. For whereas the hypotheses of sciences are coined with the express purpose of explaining facts and can be thrown away when they fail to achieve that object, there is no such facility available in the case of cosmology. The purpose of hypotheses in cosmology is not to explain facts, nor can hypotheses be thrown away by any facts, for it is not supported by facts in the sense in which scientific hypotheses are.

After this discussion of cosmology, I now come to the 'Philosophy of Science' in the fourth sense, in which case it is the product of the modern linguistic philosophy which comprises logical positivism—an earlier phase of linguistic philosophy—and the philosophy of language, the later phase of linguistic philosophy.

The rudiments of the philosophy of science are to be found in Aristotle for he did recognize the logical necessity of establishing general principles. He suggested the method of inductive syllogism through which general principles could be discovered and demonstrated. This term "inductive syllogism" is a little misleading. It suggests that the method to be followed in the case of the establishment of scientific principles is essentially syllogistic in character which is not the case. The qualification 'inductive' before syllogism does help remove this impression to some extent. But when we consider the nature of Induction from Aristotle's standpoint, all sorts of doubts assail us. It is very often said that Aristotle knew of no other form of induction than that of Simple Enumeration, but this is a travesty of facts. Aristotle did recognize the importance of experience for inductive enquiry, but the connection that is perceived to exist between facts of a certain type is an act of intuition. Experience brings certain facts to light and the relation of necessity which is said to bind facts together and so to give rise to generalizations is intellectual. Hence the term 'inductive syllogism' if properly understood would highlight the role of both experience and intuition in generalisation and theory-construction.

In the Topics, Aristotle is concerned with the question 'How do sciences validate their premises?' Though the question is couched in the terminology of Deductive Logic, yet what it really asks us is to discover a procedure or a methodology through which general principles of science could be

validated or justified. The terms 'validation or justification' belong to the terminology of the past and has been eschewed by the modern philosophers of science. But the question raised by Aristotle is certainly important for sciences and the philosophers of science are concerned with it though in a different way. To the Topics, Aristotle discussed Dialectics in contradistinction to Science. Dialectics has no peculiar subject matter; all the sciences submit their principles to its investigations. A Dialectician is not concerned with principles of special application, that is to say, with principles whose application is confined to this or that science; on the other hand his concern is with principles of general application. In this enquiry he will be dealing with the elucidation and clarification of concepts, for without this analysis it would be impossible to proceed logically or methodically. Such common principles as are dealt with by a dialectician are called Topics by Aristotle and he discusses them with reference to his theory of Predicables. His discussion shows his philosophical learnings and has no value for us. But we should recognize our debt to Aristotle and his followers in this respect.

With the rise of empirical sciences and the establishment of Induction as a separate discipline, the philosophy of science got a fillip. People like Bacon, Mill, Herschell, Hume and others helped put the philosophy of science on secure foundations, but it is largely due to the efforts of the Logical Positivists that this branch of philosophy has gained a respectable place in the commonwealth of knowledge. In the hands of the linguistic philosophers, the philosophy of science remained, to a large extent, an exercise in the elucidation of scientific concepts—a continuation of Socratic and Aristotelean tradition, and it also engaged itself with problems of far weightier nature.

As we know Logical Positivism arose with the express purpose of eliminating Metaphysics and putting sciences on a firm foundation. The second part of the programme, that is to say, putting sciences on a firm foundation is a blue print for the Philosophy of Science. In this respect the Logical Positivists presented the theory of Verification which raised a storm of protest from different quarters. It was, therefore, reformulated a number of times to meet the point of view of the critics. Its name was also changed to

confirmability and later on to falsifiability. Its logical status was also questioned and it was pronounced non-sensical by the standards which the Logical Positivists themselves invoked to call non-descriptive sentences as non-sensical.

Despite the defects inherent in the principle of Verifiability, the principle is still important in emphasizing the need of empirical reference in the case of scientific theories. For it is held by the Logical Positivists that if you are pushed backward and backward for the confirmability of a theory, you will have ultimately to take your stand on some fact which can be demonstrated almost by a finger, saying, 'Look there it is'. This is, to say the least, a programme of thorough-going empiricism and has all the difficulties of such a standpoint. It sponsors the correspondence theory of truth and would require the testing of an impression with reference to an objective reality which because of its 'otherness', forever eludes the grasp of consciousness. To avoid this difficulty, some of the Logical Positivists have given up the idea of referring impressions to an outward reality existing independently of human mind and have instead confined themselves to the realm of language thereby aligning themselves with the recent trends in the linguistic philosophy. Carnap saw that the programme of Verifiability as envisaged by the earlier Logical Positivists led them to the doctrine of reducibility which meant that all meaningful sentences, to wit, the sentences of empirical sciences were reducible ultimately to statements of sense-experience. But he found that no amount of sentences about sense-experience could exhaust the sense and the implication of the original sentence. Carnap distinguished two types of sentences—one definitive and the other reductionist. In the case of the former it is possible to translate one symbol into another without any loss of meaning, but not in the case of the latter where no amount of reduction can ever exhaust the meaning of the original symbol. And since the sentences of science, according to Carnap, are not definitive but reductionist, it is never possible to obtain the complete sense of a sentence through reduction-sentences, however numerous they may be.

It may be said that empiricism should be distinguished from reducibility. In principle they can be distinguished but not in practise. In his article on

"Testability and Meaning", Carnap, after a careful analysis of these concepts, concludes that there are four different ways of stating the principles of empiricism. We may require that every synthetic sentence be (1) completely testable, (2) testable, (3) completely confirmable, (4) confirmable. Carnap holds that all four come within the purview of empiricism, though his own preference is towards a more liberal interpretation of confirmability. Thus the requirement that all sentences be definable in terms of observable sentences takes the form of a weaker type of reducibility. Reducibility consequently remains the main pillar of the edifice of Logical Empiricism.

It was said by the earlier Logical Positivists that the language of all factual sciences is ultimately reducible to the language of Physics—a highly technical and a specialised type of language in which Mathematics played the major role. It was claimed that the language of Sociology could be reduced, without a remainder, to the language of Psychology and that likewise the language of Psychology could be completely and thoroughly reduced to the language of Physiology. If the process of reduction is pushed to its logical end, we shall find that the language of Biology is reducible to the language of Chemistry and that finally the language of Chemistry is reducible to the language of Physics. Thus all sciences—particularly the empirical ones—could be reduced to or be definable in terms of the language of Physics. This programme goes by the name of Physicalism. Later, Logical Positivists saw the absurdity of this project, for no amount of sentences from a physical science could ever exhaust the sense and implication of a sentence from other sciences. That is to say, reduction sentences can never define the original sentence. In the language of older logicians the connotation and the denotation of the reduction sentences taken collectively can never be equal to the connotation and denotation of the original sentences. For instance one can never reduce the sentence of "The mob was unruly" to sentences like "A was unruly, B was unruly, C was unruly, so on and so forth," for the simple reason that the collective noun 'mob' cannot be held equivalent to the individuals who may constitute the mob. Likewise the description of an emotion in physiological terms may describe the exterior, that is to say, the outward covering of an inward psychic experience, but cannot

in any way be held to be equal to the emotion in all its poignancy and intensity. For this reason the behaviouristic descriptions of psychological experiences, though good and useful in a way, can never be regarded adequate. The same is true of the reduction of physiological sentences to the biological ones or the reduction of biological sentences to the chemical ones or the reduction of the chemical sentences to the physical ones.

Along with the programme of physicalism was the programme of the unity of sciences. The later programme was in fact a corollary of the first. Unity of Sciences meant the ultimate reduction of the language of all sciences to the language of Physics. Consequently the hypothesis of reducibility led to the Unity of Sciences. It has been said that the only language which nature understands is the language of Mathematics. This was the belief of the 17th century scientists. And this belief has not been given up by the subsequent scientists in spite of the fact that humanities have reared their head, demanding the employment of methods other than Mathematics and in some cases methods contrary to the spirit of Mathematics.

It seems to me that the programme of the unity of sciences is unattainable for the reasons given above. It is not possible to reduce the language of all sciences to the language of Physics. Moreover, there is not one methodology that all sciences can adopt. The methodology of the mathematical and the historical sciences cannot be alike. The mathematically-oriented experimental sciences deal with characteristics or a set of characteristics thereby eliminating thinghood, while the humanistically-oriented historical sciences retain thinghood and the individual. Not only is there a difference in the methodology of the humanistic and non-humanistic sciences, there is a difference between the fields of sciences belonging to the same group. In Psychology there is both a behaviouristic and non-behaviouristic methodology and the adherents of the later methodology far exceed the followers of the earlier one. Thus there is no hope of the unity of sciences on the basis of methodology.

It has been suggested that the programme of the unification of sciences can be effected on another basis and this is called, for want of a better word, the commonwealth of sciences. In the British Commonwealth of Nations

each nation while retaining its own sovereignty surrenders a part of her rights, that is to say, a part of her sovereignty in the interest of a higher purpose which may be the peace and security of the area concerned or its economic development or its territorial integrity. Likewise all sciences can seek fellowship of the commonwealth of sciences thus ensuring collaboration on a wider scale. The sciences shall have to accept a party programme and work together for the achievement of a common purpose. For instance, the behavioural sciences have joined hands and formed a cluster to realize certain specific ends. It is imperative for research that specialisation and collaboration should go hand in hand. This project is sensible and achievable, but it is hardly the one conceived by the Logical Positivists.

Whether the logico-positivistic conception of the philosophy of science boils down to reducibility or to Physicalism or to unity of sciences, one thing is sure, that the terms of empirical sciences are essentially and basically observational. Hence it is a question to be discussed whether science can be expressed in purely observational language and no recourse should be made to covert entities which are not amenable to direct observation and measurement. It is said that a scientist is not prepared to accept the existence of soul unless it is put in a test tube. The statement though uttered in a lighter vein expresses in a significant manner the faith of a scientist in observable reality. But curious to say the ideal of measurement sets limit to the programme of thorough observationalism. According to Hempel, 'A full definition of metrical terms by means of observables is not possible.' Thus there are different layers of words. The task of a philosopher of science is to relate them and to show how they can be related to observation within the idiom of the developed scientific theories.

The nature of a scientific law has also to be investigated. A law has syntactical and semantic features besides the pragmatic ones. The syntactical concern the formal conditions of 'lawlikeness' for sentences, the semantic concern the truth conditions for lawlike sentences, while the pragmatic features are concerned with the instrumental values of the lawlike sentences. There are many philosophers who believe that a law cannot be proved true or false since their confirmability or falsifiability is never possible. Hence laws

may be said to have a pragmatic value, they serve as instruments in the facilitation of inference-inference ticket, as Toulmin has put it : The question is not, "Is it true?" but "When does it hold?" Another notable thing about laws is that they are no longer conceived to be necessary or deterministic. This is due to the quantum theory on which atomic physics is based and in which the laws are demonstrably irreducible to deterministic form.

There are problems about the nature of a theory. A theory should be distinguished from a law. In a law all the non-logical terms are observables, while a theory is a system of laws, all of which need not be empirical. Some of its laws may be theoretical and, therefore, non-observational. Since the theoretical terms are non-observational, their intrusion in the field of science colours the interpretation of the observable. It is claimed by Craig that the non-observable terms of a theory can be replaced by the observables but the attempt has not been a success. On the other hand, the observable ones need the unobservables to make themselves understood. For instance, terms like Psi-functions, electrons, fields, superegoes, the unconscious, etc. are needed to make the observables clear. A theory is a formal system and can be distinguished from its interpretation. The former can be called its calculus, while the latter its model. In practice, however, both the calculus and the model go together.

The above are some of the problems of the modern philosophy of science. Their cursory perusal will show how the nature and the scope of scientific problems is dominated by logico-positivistic notions.

ELIMINATION OF INTEREST FROM THE BANKING SYSTEM

MUHAMMAD MURTUZA KHAN

According to Islam the charging of interest is the most heinous act. No doubt, it leads to many economic, social and moral evils. The Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet have denounced interest in the strongest and most unequivocal terms.

It is, therefore, of great importance for the Muslims all over the world that they should evolve an Interestless Banking System of their own in a determined bid to eliminate all forms of usury and interest from their society.

Islam has allowed profit earned in trade. The Holy Prophet recommended trade as a blessed profession, but trade needs a banking system for its development and expansion. Islam is not against the useful institution of banking, it only insists that banking should be free from interest. Interestless banking may strike as a Utopian scheme to some people. Far from being that, it is quite a practicable proposition, and Muslim economists and financiers in Pakistan and other Muslim countries are already working on the practical details of this scheme. They are of the view that the Islamic system of finance can be developed to any degree of perfection to meet the needs and requirements of the society—the society as modern as it is today and as ultra-modern as it may be tomorrow, because Islam is a universal religion, and its fundamental principles hold good for all times, the past, the present and the future.

Interest in Islam

Islam approves of trade and profits of trade, but takes an extremely serious view of interest, and issues an ultimatum of war from God and His Prophet to those who do not desist from the heinous practice of charging interest. There is no phrase like this used anywhere in the entire world of religious literature. There is no other crime or evil practice which has been denounced with such vehemence. Islam approves of only trade and profits

of trade. Every increase in capital sum, which is generated by trade in all legal forms, is acceptable and every increase of capital sum, which is generated by a money loan in all its various forms, is prohibited by the Quran. It takes a serious view of such an increase which it terms as Riba which it denounces with utmost vehemence. Some people think that the Quran only prohibits charging of interest from a person, but not from an institution like a bank or a government. Therefore, according to them, there is nothing wrong with the present banking system. Now if it is wrong to charge interest on a loan from an individual, it is also wrong to do so from a group of individuals, whether they be in the shape of a bank, or of a government. The practice is equally reprehensible in either case, i.e., all corporate bodies and governments. All corporate bodies and governments ultimately represent a collection of persons. What is prohibited in the case of one person must necessarily be prohibited when its impact spreads to several persons.

Another argument that is advanced by those who try to justify the modern banking system is that the word used in Al-Riba which means the particular variety of usury or interest prevalent in Arabia at the time of the Holy Prophet. The difficulty in accepting this interpretation is that it opens up the door to similar interpretations for Al-Khamar, Al-Zina and Al-Fawahish. For instance, a person may say that Al-Khamar means the particular drink that was prepared at Madina and at the time of the Holy Prophet. Since that drink was prepared from dates since the modern wines are prepared from substance other than dates, their use be regarded as permissible. In fact, this argument was advanced as early as the Abbasid period to find an excuse for the use of grapewine. So we must either regard the prohibition of Al-Riba to extend to all money loans which claim either a fixed price or fixed period percentage for them. This may be at the same time treated as a tentative definition of Al-Riba. In case the definition is unacceptable, then we may have to extend the principle of differentiation in such form which may seek to legalise modern banking practice.

Yet another argument to prove that there is nothing un-Islamic about

the modern banking-system is built on the basis of the verse :

"O ye who believe do not consume riba with continued redoubling"
(*The Quran*, 3 : 130).

The argument is that only such a rate of interest is prohibited which may result in the doubling and redoubling of loan capital. The implication of the argument appears to be that only 100% or above is the prohibited rate and any rate lower than this should not be deemed to be prohibited in Islam. This is easily the least sustainable of all arguments. Every money loan on interest has the tendency of doubling and redoubling of the amount lent. Supposing the rate of interest is 10%, it will take ten years to double it and 20 years to re-double it. If we reduce the rate of interest to 5%, it will take 20 years to double the capital and 40 years to re-double it. The issue then is not contingent on any particular rate of interest, but on the trend of every money loan on interest towards the multiplication of loan capital.

The differentiation between a usury and interest is that the former involves high and the latter low rates. This can be upheld neither by theoretical justification, nor by historical support. There are two fundamental questions which this differentiation is incapable of answering. What is the level at which interest ends and usury begins ?

Supposing usury is made to begin at 20%. It is of course twice as oppressive as 10%, but we have a right to know by what specific technical, moral or any other reason the lower percentage is justifiable while the higher percentage becomes reprehensible.

Why Interest must be eliminated

We underestimate the ills and effect of interest on society and culture. It is like a cancerous growth in the body of society, spreading its roots deep into the very cells of the social organisation.

Social Evils of Interest

1. Interest negates a culture of brotherhood. Human brotherhood and sympathy evaporate, when interest is charged on loans.
2. In the present structure, money assumes the role of master, therefore, abolition of interest is a necessity.

3. It creates a possessing class which need not work.
4. Interest produces selfishness. A society consisting of selfish people cannot be prosperous on everlasting basis, and it cannot be called sound.
5. Interest also affects international relations. Nations suspect other nations on account of interest and their relations are affected thereby. By prohibiting interest, Islam has endeavoured to do away with a hideous form of tyranny and injustice from the human society.

ECONOMIC EVILS OF INTEREST

1. Individual Loans

The poor and the lower middle class people have to fulfil their daily needs and they often find themselves heavily under debt. Their economic condition gradually worsens, because they have to pay back interest in large instalments. It becomes difficult for them to make both ends meet, but they are forced to earn their living by hook or by crook; yet they cannot improve their standard of living, nor can they manage good education for their children. The economy of the country is quite adversely affected by all this.

2. Business Loans

Heavy loans are often taken for investment in business and industry. This also has an adverse effect on the national economy, because the lender is not interested in the borrower's business. He is interested only in the recovery of his interest and loan. The result is that (1) since the lender is not interested in the borrower's business, he often refuses to lend money in the hope of raising his rate of interest; (2) Interest and the rate of interest are the major causes of trade cycles which in turn cause inflation in the country.

3. Domestic Government Loans

The Government is always in need of money. It borrows money from those who can lend, but those who can lend, do so on high rates of interest. Even if the Government needs money for the defence of the country, it borrows on the same high rate of interest. The poor people sacrifice their lives for the defence of their country, while the money-lenders earn huge profits on their loans in the form of interest which is paid from the public funds.

Thus the money-lenders continue fattening themselves on their high rates of interest.

4. Foreign Loans

The Government gets huge loans from other countries for development schemes. These loans have all the drawbacks which other kinds of loans have. But because these loans are very huge and come from foreign countries, they sometime seriously endanger the whole financial and economic fabric of the country. In some cases they could even become the cause of political wars and bloody revolutions.

Islam and Bankers

In the modern economic system interest, and enterprises based on interest, occupy a key position. The whole banking system rests on interest. The modern Muslim is much embarrassed at this idea that Islam does not incorporate a banking system in its economic structure, while the banking system in the world has become the backbone of modern economy. They are still much perplexed when they think that Islam will be a failure in the modern world without the help of a banking system. The exponents of this school of thought have run mad with their excessive enthusiasm and have gone so far as to say that Islam is not against the present type of banking system; and a section of these people has even gone so far as to assert that the interest which the banks pay to the depositors or charge from their debtors is allowed by Islam or at least is not prohibited by Islam.

Islam is not against the banking system. The banking system performs some fundamental, beneficial and essential services. A developed economy cannot achieve its goals without banking. There is also a consensus of opinion among the Muslim economists on the point that without interest a banking system can be organised to discharge the usual functions performed by the modern banking system based on interest. Islam has prohibited usury and interest and has allowed profit in the trade. As trade needs a banking system for its expansion, it is allowed freely, but the banking system should be free of interest.

When we study our present banking structure we find that, except for interest, there is nothing wrong with the functional details of financial

institutions. Indeed we must value the accumulated knowledge gathered through centuries of experience. We take these institutions as they are, but wish that interest must be eliminated.

Substitution of Interest

Interest as a basis of credit is absolutely unworkable either at the level of economic theory or that of religion. The issue is: How are we to run modern credit institutions, when we exclude the basis of their present functioning? No answer is immediately available. No serious attempt has been made to discover an alternative to interest. There are a score of major Muslim states in the world, but none has bothered to set up a commission or even a committee of experts to examine this issue.

Islam prohibits interest but allows profits and partnership. If the banks instead of allowing loans to the industry become its partners, share the loss and profit with it, there is no objection to such a system in Islam. As a matter of fact, it is the only way to coordinate finance and industry in which both have equal share and this alliance between finance and industry will result in a healthier development of finance, trade and commerce on the one hand and a closer relationship on the other. This long felt need of happy cooperation between finance and industry can only be realised fully and effectively under the Islamic system. The mechanism of Islamic banking system is very simple. It is free of interest. To change the existing system into Islamic banking system we have to eliminate the interest and introduce the principle of *Sharakat* (Partnership) where profit and loss will be shared equitably by all the participating parties.

Principle of Muḍārabat

Muḍārabat refers to a commercial enterprise that could be undertaken by the wealth of one and the labour of the other, sharing the profit in an agreed proportion.

In case of loss the worker does not share the loss. The whole money-loss is borne by the money-giver, for if the money of one is lost, the labour of the other is lost. Hence both are losers.

This is how the banks can be run on the basis of Muḍārabat. The profit so gained will be divided into two parts; one going to depositors, and the other to the share-holders who sponsored the bank in the form of dividends. Thus fixed rate of interest will no longer be allowed to exercise its tyranny on industry. When banks will be partners and not mere creditors of industry, they will cooperate much more effectively.

The Share-holders

The subscribers will purchase the shares. They would be issued the share certificates to the effect that they would be share-holders in the bank. Share-holders will share the profit of the bank at the end of the financial year in the form of dividends proportionately. In case of loss, they will be informed accordingly.

The Central Bank

The general functions of the Central Bank can be performed in the following manner:

1. Issue and control of currency can easily be carried out without involving interest.
2. Credit can be provided to its member banks by way of investment instead of providing them loans. The basis of investment can be the same as sharing of profit or loss with the member banks.
3. The control of credit such as bank reserves, open market policy and regulating the bank rate can be done by such means which do not involve the application of interest.

Financial Intermediaries

In the modern times, besides commercial banks, other financial intermediaries, e.g., Insurance Companies, Development Associations and Investment Corporations are also assuming greater and greater importance. These institutions play an important role in accumulating the savings of the people and their investment in specific activities may also help in the flow of credit and in any comprehensive discussion on the monetary policies, these institutions cannot be ignored. Moreover, in an interestless economy the nature and scope of these institutions require a separate deliberation.

Islamic Banks and International Trade

All the International Banking Institutions change interest on their external as well as internal foreign trade transactions and the Islamic Banks have to find out a solution for cooperation in the International Trade without involving themselves in the application of interest.

Financing of Industry

The financing of industry can be done on the partnership basis. The banks can finance the industry concerned on the understanding that the profit as well as the loss of the financed projects will be shared by the banks and the industry. At the end of the financial year the net profit or loss of the operation will be shared in proportion of the investments by the banks and the industry after setting aside the investment and meeting the legitimate expenses.

Banking functions without interest even today

1. Safe custody of articles or any other services provided by the banks on the basis of service charges and without involving interest.
2. Remittance funds from one place to another place are being done without involving interest there on. The banks receive only their commission of service charges for this purpose.
3. The collection of bills and remittance of their proceeds are also being done on the same basis of service charges.
4. The agents purchase or sell immovable property on behalf of their customers.
5. The businessmen are giving expert advice and help in the purchase of machinery, raw materials and other necessary goods.
6. Customers and account-holders are given important financial advice, shares are purchased and sold on their behalf and their capital is invested in business enterprises.

Propensity to Save

Some people think that, as interestfree institutions, banks will not pay any interest, it will affect the propensity to save. The people do not save money just to get some interest by depositing it in a bank. Mostly the savings are deposited in a bank for the following reasons:—

1. As a safeguard for accidental measure,

2. To fulfil the requirements during the old age to avoid unforeseen hardships.
3. For higher education of their children.
4. To leave some inheritance for their heirs.

For the above-mentioned aims, they will not mind if they deposit their savings in an interestfree bank. Propensity to save will, therefore, be not affected. The truth of the fact is that even today most of the account-holders in Pakistan do not open an account with a bank with the objective of earning interest.

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CONRAD AND SHAKESPEARE

RAZI ABEDI

I

In *A Personal Record* Conrad writes of his earliest contact with English literature: 'My first introduction to English imaginative literature,' he notes, 'was "Nicholas Nickleby,"' but correcting himself, after a second thought, he continues: 'I really believe that I am wrong. That book was not my first introduction to English literature. My first acquaintance was (or were) the "Two Gentlemen of Verona," and that in the very MS. of my father's translation.'¹ This was not a casual incident, but an experience that left a very deep impression upon his mind. It comes back to him with a vividness of detail as he writes here, charged with so many associations that it seems to have been a perpetually living experience in his life. It is interesting to study the circumstances connected with this first contact with Shakespeare. The description betrays a strong emotional involvement. He records: 'It was during our exile in Russia, and it may have been less than a year after my mother's death, because I remember myself in the black blouse with a white border of my heavy mourning.'² These memories of exile, the tragedy of which was heightened by his mother's death, have played a very significant part in Conrad's career as a novelist. The themes of exile, revolution, sacrifice for the sake of cherished ideals are the subjects of his novels and stories. In Conrad's mind Shakespeare is associated with these early memories of his life. It will be interesting to describe this experience in his own words:

That afternoon instead of going out to play in the large yard which we shared with our landlord, I had lingered in the room in which my father wrote. What emboldened me to clamber in his chair I am sure I don't

1. Joseph Conrad: *A Personal Record*, p. 141.

2. *Ibid.*

know but a couple of hours afterwards he discovered me kneeling in it with my elbows on the table and my head held in both hands over the MS of loose pages. I was greatly confused, expecting to get into trouble. He stood in the doorway looking at me with some surprise, but the only thing he said after a moment of silence was :

"Read that aloud."

Luckily the page lying before me was not over-blotted with erasures and corrections, and my father's handwriting was otherwise extremely legible. When I got to the end he nodded and I flew out of doors thinking myself lucky to have escaped reproof for that piece of impulsive audacity. I have tried to discover since the reason of this mildness, and I imagine that all unknown to myself I had earned, in my father's mind, the right to some latitude in my relations with his writing table.³

The memory comes back to him with his deep interest in the study of Shakespeare, so deep that he was hardly conscious of his father watching him. He is pleased with his first successful audacity which brought to him a complimentary indulgence of his father in his literary interest. He never forgot how proud he was of his approvingly correct reading of Shakespeare's play at a very early age : "I reflect proudly that I must have read that page of "Two Gentlemen of Verona" tolerably well at the age of eight."⁴ Getting such a strong impression at such a formative age and in a very heightened state of sensibility under the unusual tragic and rather heroic circumstances of life in exile is psychologically significant in a developing genius. Moreover, Apollo was not an ordinary father. He was a national hero, but more than that, particularly to Conrad, he was a literary figure. He had translated foreign authors into Polish. To young Conrad he was a literary authority. According to the author of *The Mirror of Conrad*, Apollo

was not only a politician; he was also a journalist; a journalist in patriotic action : an active volcano in both capacities. In common with other animated spirits among the Poles, his patriotic fervour was cultural as

3. Joseph Conrad : *A Personal Record*, pp. 141—2.

4. *Ibid.*

well as political and, possessing a great love for English and French authors, he desired to make them known among his fellow countrymen. With this object in view, he translated into Polish Shakespeare ("The Two Gentlemen of Verona", 'Othello' and 'As You Like It'), Victor Hugo, Fennimore Cooper, Marryat, and the poems of De Vigny and Heine.⁵

Moreover, it was Apollo's cherished desire to make Conrad a man of letters, not only because of his own literary taste, but as a mark of respect to the memory of his wife, as he wrote to Karzewski :

... Now that she will never return and I too may never come back, and little Conrad would probably have to grow up without me, fulfil your promise. He is all that remains of her on this earth and I want him to be a worthy witness of her to those hearts that will not forget her. And who, better than you, best and most noble of souls, could clothe him in that immaterial raiment ? ... Her heart and soul were so set up upon this child that I cannot leave him, I cannot separate myself from him, unless I feel certain that he will fulfil her hopes ; and to take no steps to that end would be, it seems to me, to be false to my poor wife. (10th June 1865).

Again on 18th September 1865 he writes to Karzewski thanking him, in a very feeling way :

How can I thank you for all your kindness to my poor little orphan. What you have promised him was our dream in the days of our deepest distress and an encouragement for the ominous future Your promise to send me school books and syllabuses fills me with joy. I await its fulfilment with impatience. Sell my writing table to buy these books⁶

Conrad, as he describes himself, later discovered it to be the reason of his father's unexpected mildness to his intruding into his study.⁷

5. E.H. Visiak : *The Mirror of Conrad*, p. 18.

6. Jocelyn Baines : *Joseph Conrad*, p. 18.

7. Joseph Conrad : *A Personal Record*, p. 142.

Thus Conrad's first contact with Shakespeare was one of the most deeply rooted impressions of his life. The practical evidence of it came with his later independent active interest in Shakespeare, as against a chance discovery of his at the age of eight. 'With his first pay he bought a complete Shakespeare in one big volume bound in green, which he read eagerly, supplementing it with John Stuart Mill's "Political Economy."⁸ Conrad describes the event in his own words :

'The next time I met them ("The Two Gentlemen of Verona") was in a five shilling one-volume edition of dramatic works of William Shakespeare, read in Falmouth, at odd moments of the day, to the noisy accompaniment of caulker's mallets driving oakum into the deck-seams of a ship in dry dock. We had run in a sinking condition and with the crew refusing duty after a month of weary battling with the gales of the North Atlantic.⁹

Again the memory is very vivid with the noises and scenes of the sea life so familiar in Conrad's work and which occupy the same important place in his art as revolutions and exiles. He in fact encounters Shakespeare at each significant turn of his life. He is himself very conscious of it and makes no secret of it. Notning can describe his deep involvement in Shakespeare better than his own words :

Books are an integral part of one's life and my Shakespearean associations are with that first year of our bereavement, the last I spent with my father in exile (he sent me away to Poland to my mother's brother directly he could brace himself up for the separation), and with the year of hard gales, the year in which I came nearest to death at sea, first by water and then by fire.¹⁰

Thus his associations with Shakespeare, according to his own account, are bound up with those highly charged moments of life which sharpen the sense of actuality and the mystery of existence through encounter with death. In an already sharpened sensibility of an artist like Conrad's these

8. Jean-Aubry : *The Sea Dreamer*, p. 78.

9. Joseph Conrad : *A Personal Record*, p. 143.

10. *Ibid.*

moments of heightened consciousness work up into a great artistic vision of life, and in the midst of these there always looms, as if inevitably connected with them, the genius of Shakespeare.

II

Literary Affinities

References and allusions to the works of Shakespeare are scattered throughout the novels and stories of Conrad. *Nostramo* has for epigraph the line from Shakespeare : 'So foul a sky clears not without a storm,'¹¹ The green volume of Shakespeare bought by Conrad, as mentioned by Megroz and Jean-Aubry, itself appears in *Lord Jim*. While seeing Jim off in Stein's brigantine Marlow observes him emptying his valise in which process he sees three books :

two small, in dark covers, and a thick green-and-gold volume a half-crown complete Shakespeare. "You read this ?" I asked. "Yes. Best think to cheer up a fellow," he said hastily. I was struck by this appreciation, but there was no time for Shakespearean talk.¹²

Apart from these, various readers have found marked allusions and parallels to the works of Shakespeare in Conrad ; as, for instance, Bernard C. Meyer states in *Joseph Conrad—A Psychological Biography* :

The setting in which De Barral plots to murder his son-in-law contains various allusions to *Othello* (*Chance*, p. 424)¹³

Dr. Bradbrook also sees a parallel between the two works. She writes in her short book on Joseph Conrad :

the unselfconsciousness of Antony is the corollary of his power for sweeping action ; his active life leaves him like Othello with a suppressed capacity for passion, and with Othello's inexperience and trustfulness.¹⁴

She further elaborates her remark in the footnote :

With his beard cut to a point, his swarthy sunburnt complexion, thin nose

11. *King John*, IV, ii. 108.

12. Joseph Conrad : *Lord Jim*, p. 181.

13. B.C. Meyer : *Joseph Conrad—A Psychological Biography*, p. 203.

14. Bradbrook : *Poland's English Genius*, p. 53.

and his lean head there was something African, something Moorish in Captain Antony.¹⁵

Fliesman, in *Conrad's Politics*, on the other hand, discovers an allusion to *King Lear* in *The Secret Agent*:

The death of Velroc brings on the same kind of crescendo of 'nothing' as occurs in 'King Lear': Nothing brings them (the dead) back, neither love nor hate. They can do nothing to you. They are as nothing... now he was of no account in every aspect. He was of less practical account than the clothing on his body, than his over-coat, than his boots—than that lying on the floor. He was nothing. . . that man, who was less than nothing now . . .¹⁶

Dr. Bradbrook finds more than an allusion to *The Tempest* in Conrad's *The Rover*:

The story is lurid, yet it is kept at a delicate remove from the reader, so that the effect is one of airy heroism, of a melodramatic idyll. The temper is that of Shakespeare's final period; from a point beyond his tragedies, Conrad is playing, not frivolously, but elusively, with his own tragic themes.¹⁷

She carries on the theme further to almost an identification of the two works:

The rarified clarity of the writing, the play of humour and pity and affection, is truly Shakespearean. In Conrad's 'Tempest' the Ferdinand and Miranda of his rocky coast are enchanted only by the strange powers in the depths of their own minds: and Peyrol, their Prospero, releases them by the force of his simple vitality.¹⁸

Beside the parallels in particular details, the critics have found general thematic resemblances between the works of Shakespeare and Conrad. Ernest A. Baker, for instance, compares Lord Jim with Hamlet:

'Lord Jim' is Conrad's 'Hamlet', the tragedy of the man of imagination who is so morbidly aware of the possible consequences of doing any-

15. *Ibid.*

16. Fliesman: *Conrad's Politics*, p. 203.

17. Bradbrook: *Poland's English Genius*, p. 71.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 76.

thing at a moment of terrible emergency, that his capacity for decisive action is paralysed, he cannot act at all.¹⁹

All these instances point to the fact that there is some definite relation between the works of Conrad and Shakespeare, and that this relationship is not merely a matter of coincidence. That reader after reader hears echoes of Shakespeare in the novels and stories of Conrad cannot be simply explained away as a matter of accident. But strangely enough, there has not yet been made a serious attempt at a study of Conrad's indebtedness to Shakespeare. Critics like E.A. Baker and Dr. Bradbrook have noticed Conrad's apparent debt to *Hamlet* in *Lord Jim*. This closeness of approach between the two writers, however, may be due partly to a temperamental affinity between them. (Conrad's is a poetical genius, and according to Dr. Bradbrook, he greatly admired the poetry of Shakespeare and Keats.)²⁰ The world of adventure, of political strife, of ambition and meanness of the individuals draws the attention of both. The one regular theme of Conrad—that of imperialism, of colonial exploitation and of domination for the sake of material gain under the cover of civilization—very much brings to the mind the Shakespeare of *The Tempest*. One reason of this affinity may be found in some affinity between the age of Shakespeare and the age of Conrad. The later sixteenth and the early seventeenth centuries and the twentieth century appear to have much in common: T.S. Eliot found the Metaphysical Poets closer to his own age than the Augustans or the Romantics and in the stream of tradition he found the closest link between his own poetry and that of the seventeenth century. Perhaps there was the same kind of sensibility working in both Shakespeare and Conrad.²¹ Or, perhaps, in the wider context of the Jungian concept of racial unconscious, Jim and Hamlet, with Orestes, belong to the same archetype—that of the individual, who with his heroic spirit plays the scapegoat to the treacherous forces of life. Orestes offers

19. E.A. Baker: *History of the English Novel*, p. 39.

20. Bradbrook: *Poland's English Genius*.

21. The difference is not a simple difference of degree between poets. It is something which happened to the mind of England between Donne or Lord Herbert of

(Continued on next page)

his own life in order to bring peace to the house of Agamemnon and relieve it of the ancestral curse. Hamlet proposes to set right the rotten state of Denmark with an assured sense of responsibility of the Prince and the rightful heir to the throne. Jim faces the Court of Enquiry alone while all his companions, including the captain, have fled from the scene. Sartre reinterprets the same theme in the context of the modern world by making his Orestes assume the guilt of the whole society and offer his life for the general atonement in *Les Mouches*.

All these factors perhaps play an important part in the artistic development of Conrad. On the one hand the moderns were rediscovering the Elizabethans for themselves, almost in the same way as the Elizabethans had discovered the Greeks, and were becoming more and more susceptible to their influence (examples of which apart from Eliot and Conrad are Ibsen and Strindberg, and later the French and the American dramatists such as Sartre, Anouilh and O'Neill), on the other hand, the Elizabethans were freshly interpreted in terms of the modern world. In particular, the interpretations of *Hamlet* towards the close of the nineteenth century provide a very interesting study of this new trend, and *Lord Jim* is a very bold and illuminating example of it. Here Conrad recreates artistically the problem of Hamlet in the context of his own experience of the tensions and complexities of the twentieth century. He is studying *Hamlet* as a painter looks at another man's painting.

Cherbury and the time of Tennyson and Browning; it is the difference between the intellectual poet and the reflective poet. Tennyson and Browning are poets, and they think; but they do not feel their thought as immediately as 'odour of a rose'. A thought to Donne was an experience; it modified his sensibility. When a poet's mind is perfectly equipped for its work it is constantly amalgamating disparate experiences; the ordinary man's experience is chaotic, irregular, fragmentary. The latter falls in love, or reads Spinoza, and these two experiences have nothing to do with each other, or with the noise of the typewriter or the smell of cooking; in the mind of the poet these experiences are always forming new wholes. We may express the difference by the following theory: The poets of the seventeenth century, the successors of the dramatists of the sixteenth, possessed a mechanism of sensibility which could devour any kind of experience. They are simple, artificial, difficult and fantastic, as their predecessors were; no less nor more than Dante, Guido, Cavalcanti, Guinicelli, or Cino. In the seventeenth century a dissociation of sensibility set in, from which we have never recovered.

T.S. Eliot: *Selected Essays*: 'The Metaphysical Poets', pp. 287-288.

THE CONCEPT OF PORTRAIT IN INDIA AND THE ORIGIN OF THE ROYAL PORTRAIT OF KING KANISHKA

MUHAMMAD KHALID MAHMUD

In 1911 Pandit Radha Krishna made a startling discovery by finding a five feet four inches high free standing royal portrait sculpture of King Kanishka from the sanctuary of Mat at Mathura (fig. 1).¹ The sculpture is in pink spotted sandstone and can be identified by inscriptions engraved on the robes and cloak which read as follows, "The great King, the King of Kings, the Son of God Kanishka".² This sculpture piece stylistically is distinguished from the rest of the second century A.D. Mathura sculptures. It is extremely linear and angular in conception. Although it is a free standing figure, it is entirely set into the surface of the slab and is frontal in the most rigorous sense of the term. Mathura art, under the Kushans, was conceived in an organic and sensuous way. The contours of the sculptures are not hard and geometric like the King Kanishka piece, but are soft and represent sensitive modelling. Apart from this, Mathura art also denies the rigid law of frontality. Therefore, it is a great controversial problem among art historians and critics to trace the stylistic affinity of the unconventional Indian King Kanishka sculpture piece to any other piece in India or elsewhere in Asia.

In 1952, Schlumberger, a French archaeologist, conducted an excavation at the site of Surk Kotal in Bactria.³ His excavation revealed some sculpture pieces which appear stylistically similar to the King Kanishka sculpture on one hand, and on the other hand with the Parthian Art. Thus in this paper I will try to trace the style, motifs, and aesthetic affinity of the King

1. V.S. Agrawala, *Indian Art*, (Varanasi: India, 1956) p. 249.

2. Roman Ghirshman, *Persian Art*, (France: 1962) p. 396.

Benjamin Rowland, *The Art and Architecture of India*, (England: 1958) p. 86.

John M. Rosenfield, *The Dynastic Arts of the Kushans*, (U.S.A.: 1967) p. 7.

3. Ghirshman, *Op. Cit.*, p. 3.

Kanishka sculpture piece with Surk Kotal and Parthian sculptures. But before I venture to do so, there is another proposed question to be solved. Because the King Kanishka sculpture piece is a royal portrait image, I would like to first discuss the concept of portrait carving as it is particularly understood in India.

The art of portrait carving in India seemed to be in vogue from the time immemorial. The Indus Valley Civilization (3000-1500 B.C.) reveals a number of statues in stone. Many of their shapes and forms undoubtedly appear to create portrait figures.⁴ However, we cannot give any authentic evidence in support of the very concept, because no source of proof of that time is available and the script found has not yet been completely deciphered. In spite of the lack of authentic evidence the human mind cannot resist believing that such organised society would have failed to produce portrait images.

In subsequent periods several images of donors were found to be erected along sides of their donated buildings. These portrait sculptures evidently began to appear since the time that sculptures in stone were produced or perhaps still earlier when perishable materials was used.⁵ From time to time the people of ancient India had been constructing buildings for various purposes (even today the same practice is followed). Some were dedicated for worship, some for charitable purposes, and some were meant for living. On these buildings humane images have appeared both in the state of sculpture in the round or sculpture in relief. These images either were made in the life time of those donors or were carved as posthumous portraits by their successors. It is further proved by some literary sources that there was a practice of setting up the ancestor's images in a building called *devakula* and *pratmagriha*.⁶ Coomaraswamy firmly believes in the notion that probably the image of King Kanishka might be the part of the *devakula* building of Mathura. Similarly, Parkham Yaksha was once identified as the royal portrait of a king of Saisenaga Dynasty.⁷

4. T.G. Arawamuthan, *Portrait Sculpture in South India*, (The Indian Society : 1931) p. IX.

5. *Ibid.*, p. IX.

6. *Ibid.*, p. X.

7. Rowland, *Op. Cit.*, p. 43.

Some of the images, as it appears from literary sources, were meant as an object of a cult and they were worshipped. For example, according to Coomaraswamy, "the statue of Sembianmaha-devi set up by Rajendra-Cola-deva I in A.D. 1020, with provision made for worship and offerings."⁸ In other words, the worship of royal portrait sculpture was another feature of the images. In short, portrait sculpture existed in India from time immemorial as it is evident according to both historical and literary sources.

Now, at this stage, before I delve into the concept of portrait in India I, would like to briefly discuss the concept of portrait as it is generally understood in the Western world so that I can make my point a little more clear.

There are two kinds of portraits. One is in which the artist captures the likeness of his model in a very skilful manner similar to a photographic likeness. He contributes nothing in it except the manifestation of his skill. Thus his work remains shallow and empty. Another type of portrait is where an artist gathers various inner moods of his model. He projects these inner feelings on the outward forms. In this way he expresses the outward forms coupled with psychological truth. In short, he does not only portray the description of a man, but also the truth of his soul. According to Leonardo da Vinci, "A great painter has two principal things to paint : that is man and the contents of his soul."⁹ The first aspect is easy, but the second is difficult. Leonardo further adds, "You shall paint the face in such a way that it will be easy to understand what is going on in the mind, otherwise your art is unworthy of praise."¹⁰ Ordinarily, a painter is not a psychiatrist, therefore it is practically impossible for him to follow the psychology of a mind. So how is he going to paint the contents of the mind of his model? Leonardo gives the solution in these words, "It (the contents of a mind) has to be represented by gestures and movements of the parts of the body, and this is to be learned from the mute, who make each gesture better

8. Arawamuthan, *Op. Cit.*, p. X.

9. Leonardo Da Vinci (Translated by A.P. McMahon), *Treatise on Painting*, (U.S.A. : 1956) p. 104.

10. Jean Alazard, *The Florentine Portrait*, (London : 1948) p. 54.

than any other sort of men."¹¹ Thus the truth of men's soul is in his expressions and gestures. In short we can say a good portrait is that which faithfully portrays the character of an individual:

As When a painter poring on a face
Divinely thro' all hindrance finds the man
Behind it, and so paints him, that his face
the shape and colour of a mind and life
Lives for his children even at its best
And fullest.¹²

At this point a question arises: Can a good painter paint a portrait without interposing or transforming his own personality—the expressions of his life experiences? Obviously, the answer will be in the negative. Two painters cannot paint a thing alike. Therefore, the personal experiences of a painter are bound to show in his work. As a matter of fact, these experiences help in interpreting the mind of a model. In this way a portrait retains not only the character of the model, but also projects the personality of an artist. Therefore, we can say that every artist has a personal approach that can be objective. In the case of the Kanishka sculpture piece the approach is highly objective. The sculpture is static and the movement of light is not dramatic as we see in Baroque sculptures. Thus it is devoid of emotional quality which is one of the main criteria of the subjective artists.

From the previous discussion, the concept of portrait, as understood in the West, becomes clear. Now, let us analyse the same concept from the Indian point of view and see how it applies in relation to the King Kanishka's sculpture piece.

In earlier times art in India was meant for religious purposes. But the religious personalities were not manifested. In short, art during the Maurya period was aniconic. Later under the impact of Mahayana Buddhism the anthropomorphic images (not portraits) were beginning to be produced and this kind of art particularly flourished in the time of the Kushan dynasty. However, in the Maurya period the probability is that some

11. Leonardo, *Op. Cit.*, p. 104.

12. Henry B. Wheatley, *Historical Portraits*, (London: no date) p. 4.

descriptive type of images might have emerged.¹³ But to label them as specific persons is not beyond the shadow of doubt, because Buddhism condemned the concept of personal pride and individuality. It stressed rather that man is a part of divinity which is the basis of his existence and the only source of truth.¹⁴ According to Buddhist concept a king carries merit not because he is a warrior, but because he is a patron of religion and a just ruler, who assimilates the principles of the *Dharma* (faith) with canons of his government. Therefore, the glorification of an individual is out of question and so is the individual portrait. However, a portrait is executed from a different point of view. It does not reflect the features of a particular person, but it does portray the attributed and associated merits of an individual character. According to Coomaraswamy, "The effigies reproduce the details of contemporary costumes, but as representations they are types rather than individualized portraits".¹⁵ For example, Asoka, at Sanchi, is shown cultivating the original Bodhi tree. At Bharhut, on the railing pillars the sculpture of historic ruler Ajatasatra is represented on a stately elephant which is on its way to pay homage to Buddha,¹⁶ and so forth.

The headless King Kanishka effigy might have been carved according to the afore mentioned notions. The geometric figure is wearing Central Asian warrior clothes. It holds a sword and a mace. Therefore, it somewhat conveys and suggests that the figure is of a great warrior. The engraved inscription gives further impetus to the very notion of greatness. Unfortunately, the image is without a head and thereby it restrains us to make any comment on the possible facial expressions. However, a few heads are discovered from the same Mat Sanctuary. If we look at those heads (figs. 2-3), it immediately becomes clear that the heads lack facial or psychological expressions. Therefore, we can assume, though it is full of doubt, that the head of King Kanishka might have been expressionless.

13. Rosenfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 176.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 174.

15. Arawamuthan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 1.

16. Rosenfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 174.

Thus it makes our point a little strong that the King Kanishka image was not meant to suggest a particular person, but to portray the universal or traditional qualities associated with it. In this way the image also falls under the second category of Western art portraiture which suggests the character of an individual rather than only the physical appearance. In order to strengthen my point, I would like to quote Coomaraswamy. He says, "the representation of a man, for example, must really correspond to the idea of the man, but must not look so alike him as to deceive the eye; for the work of art, as regards its forms, is mind-made thing and aims at the mind, but an illusion is no more intelligible than the natural object in mimics."¹⁷

Just for a moment, let us reconsider the same image from another point of view. "In Indian culture no aspect of life is separate from another."¹⁸ In other words the cosmic reality holds all the human activities together. Therefore, the action in life is governed and ordered by religious practice. In order to realize the essence (*Rasa*) of metaphysics or religious compassion the Yoga is exercised. The people who have the ability (artists) transform this compassion in the term of plastic art, which further plays a part of a bridge between a man and God. Thus art and religion in India are not two separate entities. Therefore, there is nothing of secular art in India. In this sense the probability is that the King Kanishka sculpture might have been meant for worship. This was also suggested by Coomaraswamy and the afore mentioned literary sources proving the existence of royal cult in India. If we look back at the engraved inscription of the effigy which reads, "The Great King, the King of Kings, the son of god, Kanishka," the words worth noticing are the "son of god". These words give an implication that probably King Kanishka might have followed the concept of *Devaraja* and wanted his image to be elevated to the level of other god images. If this was the idea, then naturally the physical resemblance of King Kanishka in a god image is out of question. However, there is another possibility that the Kushan family

17. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *Figures of Speech or Figures of Thought*, (London : 1946) p. 17-18.

18. R. Mukerjee, *The Cosmic Art of India*, (Bombay : 1965) p. I.

might have wanted an exclusive gallery of royal portraits and the King Kanishka sculpture might be one of them. Frequently, there are references in ancient Indian literature about the existence of royal galleries, *Pratima Natakam*, a drama ascribed to Bhasa, describes in details a gallery of portrait sculptures of deceased kings of Saketa.¹⁹ This idea cannot easily be rebutted because some other royal images along with the effigy of King Kanishka have been discovered from the Mat Sanctuary. Consequently we can say that whatever the case may be, the stylised image of King Kanishka portrays royal character, which is manifested through its stately gestures.

Now, after going through the possible concept of portrait carving in India, I would like to discuss the stylistic affinity of King Kanishka sculpture piece both with Surk Kotal in Bactria (Central Asia) and Parthian art. Therefore, let us first of all glance at the history of Central Asia, particularly of Bactria.

An area on the northern side of Afghanistan, stretching from the Hindu Kush to the Amu Darya, is known as Bactria. In it there is a site called Surk Kotal. It was excavated in 1952 by Schlumberger and the reports of his findings were published in *Journal Asiatique* in 1952-1954 and 1955.²⁰ Bactria was ruled by the Achaemenid Persians between 6th-4th century B.C.²¹ So naturally, the style and motifs of the Persian rulers fused with the native nomadic style and ultimately resulted into the Scytho-Sakian style. The Persian empire fell before the genius and the power of Alexander. He and his successors remained the masters of this region until they were ejected by the Yueh-Chih tribes, who are now known in history by the name of Kushans.²² The Parthians were the rising nation in Iran by 250 B.C. and were in their full bloom between the second and first century B.C. This

19. Rosenfield, *Op. Cit.*, p. 150.

20. D. Schlumberger, "Le Temple de Surk Kotal en Bactriane," *Journal Asiatique* Vol. CCL, (Paris : 1952) p. 433.

21. Lawrence Binyon, *The Spirit of Man in Asian Art*, (New York : 1965) p. 107.

22. ———, et. al., *Encyclopedia of World Art*, Vol. VIII, (New York : 1963) p. 1040.

dynasty borrowed much from the Hellenistic culture, but at the same time they transmitted Iranian influence into India.²³

So it is clear that before the dawn of Kushans Kingdom (50-241 A.D.) in India the three above stated forces, namely, Achaemenid Persian, Hellenic and Parthian were active in the plains of Central Asia and along the northern fringes of India. Apparently Surk Kotal came under their very spell. The artifacts and sculptures found at the very site show a keen similarity with Parthian art on the one hand and a link with the sculpture of King Kanishka on the other hand. So in this way the effigy of Kanishka demonstrates kinship with the Parthian art. The validity of this statement can be testified by making a stylistic analysis of the sculpture pieces of Mathura, Surk Kotal and Palmyra (a site of Parthian art).

In figure No. 1, the headless effigy of King Kaniska is in rigid, frontal pose. The figure, with its feet at a right angle, stands erect in a monumental state on a small pedestal. The king is holding a sword in his left hand which is fastened on his coat by a rosette of Persian origin. The right hand is resting on a mace. The bottom of the mace represents a fish tail makara of Indian origin.²⁴ The figure is clad with a kind of coat or "choga,"²⁵ which hangs down below its knees to about 5" above the ankles. The width of the coat becomes broader as it falls down towards the knees and makes a triangular shape. Underneath the coat the figure is attired with a shirt (reaching below the knees) which is fastened by a girdle or belt at the waist. The two square plaques of the girdle, decorated with the Persian rosetted motif, are visible, but the rest are hidden under the coat. Except for the coat, the upper part of the figure is naked. Below the skirt the figure is wearing a tight trouser and heavy boots. The boots are tightened with straps around the ankles. The garments of the figure are smooth and simple. The folds of the drapery are suggested by fine, straight and thin serpentine engraved lines. The lines almost make a simple attractive design on the surface of the figure. The weapons and the hands of the figure are rather

23. Binyon, *Op. Cit.*, p. 110.

24. Agrawala, *Op. Cit.*, p. 250.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 249.

elaborately carved compared to the garments. The sword has a kilt at the top and the sheath is decorated (*Alamkara*) with a flower motif similar to one represented at the girdle or belt plaques. Between the legs of the figure an uncarved slab exists as though in an alto-relief. In short, the figure is highly conceptual and is carved in stylised geometrical forms with harsh and sharp edges. However, the Hellenistic rigidity in the style is still traceable. The contours of the figure, with the exception of hands and wapons, are suggested on the surface of the stone by engraved lines. This way it creates an impression of relief work, although the figure is in the round. Further, because of the closed forms of the figure the compactness of the stone is not broken. Both the closed forms and triangular composition have conditioned its rigidity to staticness. The various spaces and forms of the figure do not flow and melt rhythmically into each other. But as a matter of fact each form and space is bounded by sharp edges or rigid lines. Thus the movement is restrained. However, a kind of movement is visible around the stomach. To me it appears as if the figure is "heaving breath" (*Prana*) and one can feel the up and down of the stomach. It appears to be a little contradictory statement in comparison to the other static parts of the figure. Therefore, the stylised forms are clashing with the breath-heaving part. However, the clash does not distract from the compactness and unity of the composition.

The heavily planted figure with the warrior uniform of Central Asian origin, imparts a monumental and kingly effect which is achieved through the stately gestures, i.e., the solid grip of the hand and the confident way of standing. The arms are in an aggressive pose and are assertive in spirit. The hands and feet are oversized and vigorous. Thus a kind of character is manifested. As previously said, the figure is rendered in stylised form; therefore, we can safely say that the physical resemblance was never sought. Thus it proves that in portrait sculptures it is the character (man type) which is desired and not the actual physical appearance.

After going through the iconography of the Mathura figure, now let us compare and contrast its features and characteristics with Surk Kotal and

Parthian sculptures. We can then see just how far the affinity and kinship exist among them.

Figures Nos. 4 & 5 are taken from Surk Kotal. Before I discuss the salient features of these two images in relation to figure No. 1, it would be better to discuss the material of the figures. These two figures have been carved out of a yellowish lime-stone.²⁶ Figure No. 1 is carved out of a red or pink sand-stone. The different materials used at those two sites are quite natural and geographical. Therefore, the differences in substantial appearance of the sculpture pieces would be mostly due to material rather than of style. However, I shall try to prove by the following arguments how several common concepts have been observed by the artists of all those places in question.

Figs. Nos. 4 & 5 are basically frontal in their conception. Fig. No. 4 stands erect on its splay-footed pose, while the weight of the body falls on the oversized feet. This concept is almost identical to fig. No. 1. So it is not difficult to believe that they were in some way connected to each other.

Both figures 1 & 4 are wearing heavy padded boots. These types of boots can still be witnessed in Gilgit²⁷ or in Turkistan.²⁸ In fig. 4 the boots are tightened with a strap around the ankles similar to fig. 1, except that they have roundels which tighten the straps on the inner side of the feet.

Figures 4 & 5 are dressed in coats, but the variety of the coats appears to be different. Fig. 4 wears a kind of summer coat, while the coat of figure 5 looks like a winter one. This is because it appears to be made out of fur.

We see two types of coats at Surk Kotal. Therefore, it will not be incorrect to say that the nature of the coat of fig. 1 is of summer type similar to the type of fig. 4. But to Rowland it appears a bit unnatural to wear a coat like this (of fig. 1) at a warm place like Mathura. Here, I disagree with him, because fig. 1 is dressed in a summer coat rather than a winter coat, a coat which is shown in fig. 5. In the warm climate of Mathura it is possible to

26. B. Rowland, *Ancient Art from Afghanistan*, (U.S.A. : 1966) p. 125.

27. Rowland, *Op. Cit.*, p. 86.

28. Agrawala, *Op. Cit.*, p. 250.

wear a summer coat. Even today people of high rank in India wear coats in the summer season often to show status.

Both the coats of figs. 4 & 5 hang loosely below the knees along the contours of the figures and become wider, as in fig. 1, towards the bottom. Finally, the fall of the coats results in triangular shapes.

The coats in figs. 1, 4 & 5 are wide open at the front, probably for free movement of the legs for horse riding (Central Asian nomads were famous because they were good riders and horse-breeders). The coat of fig. 5 is stitched together at the chest by two large round buttons. These buttons are decorated with the rosette motif similar to the one seen at the sheath, button and belt of fig. 1. Over all, the shape of the coats is reduced into a flat, mostly smooth and geometrical state; almost the same as in fig. 1. However, the edges of the coats of figs. 4 & 5 are not turned back as in fig. 1.

Fig. 4 is wearing baggy and loose trousers (*shalwar*) which are fastened at the ankles by two straps. It is not tightly fixed around the legs as in fig. 1. The fig. is also wearing a kind of shirt which is decorated with a vine of *pipal* leaves. (This motif appears much earlier in India—see Indus Valley seals.) The shirt is fastened at the waist by a loose girdle or belt. Similarly, a girdle fastenes (probably) the shirt at the waist of fig. 5. Though the girdles and shirts are different in nature, the concept is the same as witnessed in figure 1.

The folds in figs. 4 & 5 are suggested by raised relief lines, whereas in fig. 1 they are incised lines. In both cases the approach is primitive and simple.

Fig. No. 4 is linear with hard edged contours and is compressed on a surface of the slab like fig. No. 1. It also gives an impression of a two-dimensional sculpture piece similar to the appearance of fig. 1. Apart from the two-dimensional effect a similar slab of stone exists (as in alto-relief) between the legs as seen in fig. 1. In short, all these three male figures (1, 4, 5) are form concealing. Fig. No. 4 is highly stylised as it is conceived in geometrical forms like fig. 1. The triangular composition creates staticness, rigidity and compactness in figures Nos. 4 & 5. The royal

costumes, the splay-footed pose and the rigidity give them monumental and stately appearance. Therefore, it can be assumed that these are also royal portraits. The proportion and the hieratic symmetry of these figures bring them near to the statue of King Kanishka. However, the soft quality produces a little more musical rhythm in these figures compared to fig No. 1. All the three figures are aesthetically very high.

All the previous stated features show a close correlation of the Mathura effigy to the Surk Kotal images. Now, let us see how the Parthian images come close both in style and shape to the Mathura and Surk Kotal sculpture pieces.

Figure 6 is taken from Palmyra. It is in mutilated stone.²⁹ The figure is attired in Parthian clothes and is presented in a strictly frontal pose, the pose we have witnessed in figs. 1, 4 & 5. In Parthian art the figures are largely dispensed in their frontal poses. The idea of frontality also seems to be in practice in India from a very early time. If we look back at the pillars of Bharhut of above 100 B.C. or at the Parkham and Patna Colossi, we shall find that they are essentially frontal in spirit. Actually, early artists formed this formula which was based upon their experiences, so that their work may become easier.³⁰ But as a matter of fact, the concept of frontality travelled from Iran and Southwest Asia into India. On frontalism in Parthian art, Ghirshman comments in this way: "The widespread adoption of frontality in the first century B.C. and the early centuries of the Christian era was no accident. It now made good for the same reasons, as it had made good some seven centuries before—as a consequence of the appearance on the plateau of a wave of Iranian nomads from outer Iran whose figural art was based on this formula."³¹ The frontalism, which was introduced in Iran long ago by the nomads, was again introduced by the Parthian in Central Asia between 2nd century B.C. and 3rd century A.D. This was prevalent especially at Nisa and Dara. This frontalism was the inherited part of Kushan's Surk Kotal

29. Ghirshman, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 269 and 396.

30. Rowland, *Op. Cit.*, p. 7.

31. Ghirshman, *Op. Cit.*, p. 7.

as being located in Central Asia. Later on, during the Kushan regime the very aspect of frontality glided into Gandhara art in India. However, it could not keep the native Indian traditional art under its spell for long. Eventually, the Western way lost its force under the overwhelming impact of the Indian art. It is only recently that the discovery of fig. No. 1 has created a sensation as being a non-Indian figure existing in the heart of the true Indian art abode, i.e., Mathura.

Figure No. 6 is wearing a kind of shirt and trousers. The trousers are clinging to the contours of the legs, yet are not as tight as in fig. 1. The folds of the trousers form a semi-circular shape, downward in raised lines going down toward the feet. Whereas the folds of fig. 1 are suggested by incised lines and they make an almost semi-circular form which goes inward between the legs, the shirt and trousers are tightened by a thin belt at the waist similar to the concept witnessed in figs. 1 and 4. But the belt of figs. 1 & 4, unlike fig. 6, are made out of square plaques (No. 1) or of roundels (No. 4). The position of the feet in fig. 6 is at right angles, but they are not spread wide apart as in fig. 1. On the whole the figure seems to be conceived in relief and in two-dimensional form, though it is a figure in the round. Basically, fig. 6 is linear and static like figures 1, 4 & 5.

Figure No. 7 is a royal portrait of King Hatra and belongs to 2nd century B.C.³² It closely correlates in all aspects to fig. 6, but there are three very interesting and important points to note. The figure is a royal portrait. It means that the concept of portrait-carving was well in vogue in Parthian art by 2nd century B.C. Therefore, we can safely assume that the Parthians transported the very idea into India through Central Asia. Secondly, the nature of the coat appears to be similar to the coat of fig. 5. It seems as if it is also made out of fur or at least out of some material which is to be used in cold places like Hatra or Surk Kotal in Central Asia. But in comparison to it, figure 8 is dressed in a coat similar in nature to the coat of figures 1 & 4. Thus even in Parthian art we are confronted with the types of coat found in Surk Kotal and India. And lastly, the hands and

32. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

weapons of the figure are a little more elaborately carved similar to figure 1. Otherwise, the figure is static, rigid, linear and is completely narrated on the surface of the stone. The figure also wears a plaque belt and retains an alto-relief like slab between the legs similar to figs. 1, 4 & 6.

Figure 8 has another curious element. Its upper part from abdomen to chest is semi-naked and the sensitive modelling around this area creates an impression of breath-heaving (*Prana*). The concept of *Prana*, generally as it is understood, is followed in India. But after seeing this piece it appears that it is not a hard and fast rule. Actually, the two cultures, i.e., Parthian and Indian, interpenetrated and borrowed from each other. That is how fig. 8 is near to fig. 1 in the concept of breath-heaving.

Fig. 9 is another Parthian piece of art and is taken also from Palmyra. The figure shows a close affinity to fig. 4 of Surk Kotal both in style and in treatment. The shirts of fig. 9 project out in the same way as the garments of figure 4. Both figures are wearing *Shalwars* which recall those of figure 4. But the *Shalwars* of figure 9 are not baggy and wide as we see in fig. 4. Also a slab of stone behind the legs of the figures is visible like the one seen in figures 1, 4 and 7.

The treatment of the folds in Parthian art are coarse, complex and bold, they are not refined and simple like the ones seen in Surk Kotal art. Eventually, the treatment of folds in the Mathura figure becomes much more simple, stylised and primitive.

The above stated facts clearly show that the effigy of King Kanishka is the synthesis of Achaemenid Persian, Hellenistic and Parthian styles. Above all, the Indian native style is reflected in the figure. The sensitive modelling around the stomach brings this piece near to the concept of *Prana*. The aspect of *Prana*, as previously mentioned, is purely Indian. The figure also has a fish-tail *Makra* (marine animal) at its mace. The motif of *Makra* is elaborately and frequently used in India and Southeast Asia, but it rarely manifested in Central Asian art. The frequent representation of this motif does not sanction the assumption of its Indian parentage. But it is a fact that it has been used in India since time immemorial and even the Aryans came to

know the symbol of *Makra* after their arrival in India.³³ Therefore, the *Makra* motif is pre-Greek. But no specific evidence is available in regard to its origin and source. However, we can say that this motif is analogous to Chinese *tao t'ieh* and of Scythian animal style.³⁴ Further, it has no affinity and source in Hellenistic art. Coomaraswamy says, "I see nothing to justify that the *Makra* has a Hellenistic source, beyond the fact that the *Makra* in comparative mythology may be called the analogue of the Greek dolphin; and this only means that each is selected as a symbol in its place as being the most obvious representative of the waters or the ocean and as the king of fish."³⁵ Thus the *Makra* motif, dolphin or *tao t'ieh* appears at different places for their own symbolic values. In India the *Makra* is represented as a water deity, which is the essence (*Rasa*) of life. In other words, a *Makra* at the base of King Kanishka's mace is a symbolic representation of the King's power, who can deprive his victim of *Amrita*—bliss of being. So on the ground of the above stated facts we can legitimately assume that the motif of *Makra* is mainly an Indian form.

The stone used for the King Kanishka sculpture is of Indian origin. Therefore, the sculpture piece must have been carved in India; yet it is immaterial whether it was carved by Indian sculptors or by the nomad artists.

The portrait-carving existed in Indian art as well as in Parthian from a very early time, but it is hard and impossible to make a specific statement about its origin. However, it is clear that the Parthians were much earlier familiar with the concept of royal portraiture compared to the Kushans. Thus we can safely assume that the real germs of the origin of King Kanishka sculpture piece both in its style and concept lies in Parthian art which travelled to India through Bactria in Central Asia. In any case, the sculpture of King Kanishka is not any more an enigma in the history of Indian art. As the Kushans ruled India and Bactria at the same time, the interpenetration and diffusion of the cultures was inevitable, which is manifested in

33. A.K. Coomaraswamy, *Yakṣas II*, (Smithsonian Institution: 1931) p. 11.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 49.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 3 49.

this piece. But unfortunately this new style did not grow and persist for long and it died out with the end of the Kushan dynasty.

In short, we can say that the concept of royal portraiture existed in Parthian art and was borrowed by the Indians, but the concept of portraiture is different in India, as it manifested not only the *rupam* (shape), but the most significant part, that is, the *svarupam*—the intrinsic aspect.

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Fig. No. 1

[70]



Fig. No. 2

[71]



Fig. No. 3

[72]



Fig. No. 4

[73]



Fig. No. 5

[74]



Fig. No. 6

[75]



Fig. No. 7

[76]



Fig. No. 8

[77]



Fig. No. 9

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