

# Art as Fiction: A Study of Poetry as Romantic Fiction

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## ABSTRACT

*This article studies the idea of art being a product of fantasy, or at the most, fiction, which may or may not be rooted in reality. We can look at the artistic paradigm with the analogy of a hand pump, standing on the ground, drawing water from below, and then supplying it over the ground. The writer too is sunk deep into reality and from here he draws water for his own roots. It is not wrong to suggest that a man who stands five feet four inches tall, is actually double his length inside the earth, and a hundred times of it, in the air. The real life of man consists, not of the weight of his bones, or his hemoglobin, but what is not visible. His roots are his traditions and his ancestral heritage. But, what lies beyond his head, the astral heritage is the real heritage to which*

*he belongs. History is made up of the actions of human beings, but all these actions had corresponding ideas in their minds. So, the real workshop for action is the human mind, where thoughts, ideas, ideologies, philosophies hold their sway. The real decisions are taken here, which are later on translated into action, and become the stuff of history. The issue at discussion is: if man lives in his mind, and his ideas, then, all the art he creates comes from the same breeding ground, i.e. fiction, more suitably called, fantasy, and it is tempting to call all art a fictional rendering of ideas, and poetry too, as no more than romanticized fiction.*

**Keywords:** romantic, fiction, Anand, Deleuze, philosophy, imagination

## INTRODUCTION

While referring to catharsis, in 'Poetics', Aristotle points out that catharsis can only be achieved if we see something that is both recognizable and distant. Aristotle argued that literature is more interesting as a means of learning than history, because history deals with specific facts that have happened, and which are contingent, whereas literature, although sometimes based on history, deals with events that could have taken place or ought to have taken place. Aristotle's views here clearly identify the two realms to which history and art belong: one is the real, and the other, is the possible. From this, it can be deduced that literature or any work of art falls into the category of the virtual, or the possible, and, hence, it is fiction, if not pure phantasia. It is not far to realize that artist uses the real only as the starting point. Only the stimuli for any work of art resides in the external world of reality. Every thing else, right from conception to execution, it is the mixing machine which goes on at top speed, regardless of time.

The idea of 'mimesis' also becomes relevant here. 'Mimesis', for Greek authors, refers to the idea of 'simulation' which

again means 'imitation' or copying. Art is a representation of nature, in which nature is not presented, as it is. All that goes into a work of art, which understates the truth, or overstates it, belongs to the realm of phantasy, or fiction. In novels, there is only one event which takes place in real life. Thereafter, the whole novel is a creation of writer's consciousness, embodying his philosophy. All these things exist outside that event, which give it a particular reckoning, and a particular tilt, as well. No meaning can be made out of anything, if it is just perceived in isolation. How can we guide a person to our residence without a reference to the road, and the street, and then the number of the house? Similar is the case with text. Nothing exists by itself. Every thing created leaves behind it an IP address, at which it can be related, correlated, and referred back and forth.

## THE IRREAL:

Art concerns itself with real life, but the life that is presented in art forms is surreal, or it can also be said unreal. It is not unreal, it is not entire phantasia, it has its resemblance with real life, and every work of art, a piece of text, a drama, or a novel, is a world in itself, created inside the

consciousness of the author. Here, what we find is a delicate blend of the real and the unreal, and we come across poetic moments which are often faced in real life by men of a finer conscience, but go unnoticed and unregarded in case of the general run of the people.

Make up on a face is an addition to reality, a fiction. So, is the case with emotions. Some are real, others are simulated. Where the real man lives in this world? Is he allowed to live? We have double faces, and multi-level identities. All these one plus things create a world of phantasy, and are figments of imagination, hence, fiction, and far from the real. Reality is so distressing that it is not easy to swallow. Hence, a lining of salt, which makes it delicious. A little pouring of Italian ..... over the pizza turns it into something highly delicious. Real life is tasteless, and to supply that taste, we need entertainers like films, drama, circuses etc. which supply the salty savour to the dish called life. All this comes from the cold store called fiction, and at the most, romance.

## POETRY AS ROMANTIC FICTION

Poetry is all 'lie' cense. The emotions are real, but the fictional elements is so powerful and overwhelming that it appears to be straight out of the cold storage of fiction. Every word is charmed, every line soaked in magic, it is either over statement, or understatement, when we don't say things, and just suggest, we invoke the cold storage of fiction and let the mind flow into the sea of adventures. What is 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner' if not a straight lift from romantic fiction. 'Kubla Khan' also is all magic, and logic is lost in the coils of opium, somewhere in the consciousness of the poet. Still, these are powerful poems. The natural language of man is, not poetry, but prose. When we turn prose into poetry, it is in itself an 'unreal' activity. And, then, in poetry, what is served is only 'masala', and the central issue is locked somewhere in between the webs of words, not easy to decipher. Thus, poetry is fiction, but a fiction with a difference. In novels, the fiction turns into a world of its own. Short stories also weave their own patterns. In the same way, a work of art also re-creates a magic of its own. All these things belong to

the world of romance, turning poetry into a piece of romantic fiction. The poet is always on the overdrive, and whatever he says is all tall talk. When he talks of rivers and mountains, and from their messages, which only he can decipher, he brings out certain statements. It is all from the realm of fiction, if not phantasy. But, since all this is done with a great charm, and the finished product is fully of life, beauty, charm, and aesthetic pleasure, nobody notices the 'made up' part of reality. A poem is a decorated doll, take off the decorations, and the dullness shows forth. What happens to the burning lights and lamps when the night is over, and the day has broken. The magic leaves them. The charm dries up. And they are no more than a few wicks, burning unceremoniously, in the light of the day, waiting to be blown off any time.

## THE CREATIVE WILL

Art is a portrayal of the empirical reality. It is not reality itself. Something is added to this reality, or subtracted from it, so that it could become visible, and convey what the artist wants to say. The art in itself means something superimposed, something which is not there, and what the artists adds to reality is nothing but fiction. This

extension enables him to say things which the real event could not convey. Moreover, when we look into the creative's mind, it is not difficult to discern a creative will, which adds up the experience and mixes it up with his personal perception of it; so that both the things present a bit which is real and a lot which is fiction. In this way, creativity points towards the fictional elements in the process of creation. All ideas operate in the realm of the virtual, and virtual is in fact in a state of fiction; until they are firmed up in words.

## CONCLUSION

The foregoing discussion on the fictional elements in art, and poetry as romantic fiction project forth an experience which is extensively felt, but rarely accepted. As in a drama, we live in the state called suspension of disbelief. This expression aptly sums up the idea of fiction which goes into the making of poetic and artistic creation. It can also be called by the name of imagination which borders on the unreal, but without which, no artistic or creative event is possible.

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