

CHAPTER V

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU : THE PROSE WRITER

In this chapter an attempt has been made to examine Jawaharlal Nehru as a prose writer of distinction and to show how he differs in this respect from some other notable Indian writers of English prose like Sri Aurobindo, Mulk Raj Anand, and others. For this purpose it is necessary to consider the entire corpus of his works. His prose reflects much literary sensibility. His speeches may be considered as 'oral prose'. They are distinguished for their oratorical qualities such as exuberance, enthusiasm, vehemence, passion and the like depending upon particular situations dealt with. The strength of Jawaharlal, thus, as a man of letters may be considered as one of its important facets that is deeply embedded in his clear linguistic expression suggesting his coherent thoughts. So far as one is involved with Jawaharlal's creativity that rests, either on his prose or on his oratorical disquisition, it may be argued, that he must notice the dominating literary sensibility in them as a subject itself, of an able treatise. Further, it should be made clear that the speeches revealing one's oratory may be broadly categorized as 'oral prose' in the realm of literature, as there is enough scope for incorporation of rhetorical devices in them. An attempt has been made here to illumine the merits of some famous speeches of Jawaharlal along with the prose narratives which reveal him as a writer who could evoke the beauty of his feelings in spontaneous language.

Evidently, Jawaharlal's works justify his expertise in the art of devising and employing the vocabulary to the need of the expression. His use of language enables the reader to visualize the way, and helps in understanding the use of it in myriad styles. As language is the one and only elementary vehicle, and it functions as a carrier of the message of the writer to the reader, it is essential to discuss the rendering of the service offered by language used in any literary work. In this regard, it is equally important to show how far the language as the means of communication has served its purpose as such in the creative oeuvre of Jawaharlal. Thus, the term 'style' needs to be focused to carry on our discourse to interpret the writings and the speeches of Jawaharlal which aptly exhibit his exact awareness of his target audience on varied themes. They, indeed, include, the varied thoughts of Jawaharlal regarding, mainly, his social awareness that gives birth to the illustration of art, culture, literature, politics and the like. Recording his interests as wide as the encyclopaedia, the writings and speeches ensure Jawaharlal's aesthetic inclination. Jawaharlal's works aspire to define and design a novelty in the broad periphery of Indian English literature. Here, the word 'novelty' has been purposefully used to denote the taste of these creative works which enlist a certain 'historical-political' label as against the 'religio-cultural' prose of Jawaharlal's times. From 'history' to 'politics', one may notice the powerful artistic bearings, and though it was earlier present in other writers, too, yet, Jawaharlal's was quite an uncommon trait that definitely places him on a different pedestal. Closely studying his prose, the reader may try to understand why Jawaharlal

should be viewed indubitably a modern prose writer, whose style is well grounded on 'simplicity' which is a distancing one from the prose clothed in heavy diction usually exercised by other writers like Sri Aurobindo.

Precisely, then, Jawaharlal has adopted varied modes of narrative techniques in all his major works. Though *Letters From a Father to His Daughter*, *Glimpses of World History* bear the epistolary method of narration, yet they continue to spread their charm as 'historical prose'. In the process, however, the epistolary style, as applied by Jawaharlal, enlivens history. *An Autobiography*, *The Discovery of India* and many articles published in various magazines and newspapers exhibit that liveliness arising out of his use of language. Even the speeches are found to be vibrant with poetic musings that enthral the reader. Besides, all his works directly or indirectly bear the writer's personal elements requiring us to explore why, after the abundance of subjective factors, it paved the way for the objective mode of narrative. It may, as such, make us consider that as a writer of prose, Jawaharlal initiated a new dimension of prose in Indian English literature. It is to be recalled that the letters included in the *Letters From a Father to His Daughter* and *Glimpses of World History* are media of communication between Jawaharlal and his daughter, Indira, and they are informal and personal. They, in fact, narrate history in its pure and informal form, easily instructing and educating a young learner, who, the father historian believes, should be well versed in the concept of human civilization. The conversational tone

of the letters, as usual, lends a distinctive mark as a novel venture on Jawaharlal's part as a prose writer.

A brief but relevant discussion of the word 'style' must be incorporated to understand the 'syntactic' devices used by Jawaharlal. 'Style', maintains the literary critic, M. H. Abrams [is]:

... the manner of linguistic expression in prose or verse. It is how a speaker or a writer says whatever he says. The characteristic style of a work or a writer may be analysed in terms of its diction, or characteristic choice of words, its sentence structure or syntax; and types of its figurative language, the patterns of its rhythm and its compound sounds, its rhetorical aims and devices...¹

The above observation on 'style' reveals clearly that to know a writer better, one should be equipped with the armoury of literary devices put by him constantly in his creative writings. Hence, in understanding Jawaharlal's prose, some key concepts of literature like 'syntax', 'figurative language', 'rhythm', 'compound sounds' etc., scattered in his writings are to be taken into account. The following excerpt from the *Letters From a Father to His Daughter* rightly shows his use of language that is simple enough to be understood by a girl of thirteen years :

Now you remember that the world was getting cooler and was slowly drying up. As it became cooler the climate changed and many other things changed As the earth changed so also slowly the animals changed, newer types of animals appeared. At first we have only simple sea animals, then complicated sea animals ... (15)

Exhibiting the simplicity of expression, Jawaharlal has demanded a kind of notice from us to observe the language and theme of his works. As a prose writer, he has built up the idea about the formation of the world with the help of easy reference to the 'animal world'. Since the work is meant initially for his daughter, Indira, a teen aged child, Jawaharlal kept it in mind that the narrative should be as simple as to be understood by a young learner. The recurring use of the word 'change', hence, in its past tense also indicates Jawaharlal's method in teaching a child. Thus, simplicity in meaning and style is Jawaharlal's forte as a writer. Besides, in the above description, there is no scope for ambiguity of thought, as the coherent expression lessens its possibility. However, in his *Autobiography and The Discovery Of India*, the language is not used in that way, and it is not devised in such simple form. To quote from *The Discovery of India* :

Which of these two Englands came to India? The England of Shakespeare and Milton, of noble speech and writing and brave deed, of political revolution and the struggle for freedom, of science and technical progress, or the England of the savage penal code of brutal behaviour, of entrenched feudalism and reaction?... (287)

The cited passage illuminates as well as provokes the reader to confront the issue of the impact left by 'the two Englands'-one he considers civilized for having writers like Shakespeare and Milton, while the other considered savage for the practice of 'brutal behaviour'.

Jawaharlal's success, further, may be noticed in, "The two Englands live side by side, influencing each other and cannot be separated..."(288). And it provides us a scope for directing our attention to the fact that encountering England, the Indians as a colonized nation benefited in some other ways: learning to come to terms with the famous authors of that country; and to look at some nefarious practice like 'feudalism'. Thus, for leaving the area to the reader, to probe into the reality behind the existing conditions of India, Jawaharlal may certainly count as a prose writer of extraordinary merit. It is true, that he is neither vague, nor unaccommodating in the delineation of his mind. But the presentation of the narrative art in *Letters from a Father to His Daughter*, and *Glimpses of World History* is easily seen as somewhat different from that of *An Autobiography*, and *The Discovery of India*. The efficiency in manoeuvring the language suggests Jawaharlal as a skilful writer. It is seen that he has applied the language according to the need of the younger learners, in the first two of the just cited works, while in others, he has done so keeping the mature reader in mind. For adoption of this method of narrative art, he may be viewed as a writer of childrens' literature. However, not all the works are of the same quality, since he does not treat the other group of people as learners. Indeed, he wants them to be thoughtful, so that they, too, may present their views on the same topic of discussion adding some new perspective to it.

A writer with penetrating insight, Jawaharlal, obviously takes to quicken the pulse of the reader. He can do it by dint of his manner in

formulation of the language by the urge of expression at various times. As the famous statement of Buffon, 'style is the man'² illuminates the unconstrained connection between the writer and his works, it recommends the line of thought, also propounded by the same writer. Marjorie Boulton, in the same context, has put, "It may also be at least suspected that originality of thought will lead to originality of style"³. Studying the *Autobiography* of Jawaharlal, it is seen that the treatment of the Nationalist Movement of India is done from his own personal point of view and so, the description offered by him to narrate contemporary events is original. Primarily, the inclusion of Jawaharlal's life and activities lends a true picture of his times. To quote from his *Autobiography* :

...My real conflict lay within me, a conflict of ideas, desires and loyalties,...of an inner hunger unsatisfied. I became a battleground where various forces struggled for mastery... That gave me some peace; outer conflict relieved the strain of the inner struggle (208-209).

Jawaharlal's thoughts, as being translated into language, are suggestive of the agonies he undergoes, and all of them have found expression in the fine metaphor of 'a battleground'. Besides, the repeated use of the word 'conflict', intensifies the pattern of his consciousness in the passage. As a nationalist, it is known to all that Jawaharlal had to encounter various humours in life, leading sometime, to disharmony of thought. Since his attempt was to attain peace through 'action', the activities related to the movement engrossed him deeply, and depicting

those experiences, his literary works bring in a certain reality. As he stated in his *Autobiography* :

But there was no peace in my work or my mind, and the responsibility that I had to shoulder often oppressed me greatly. I could not align myself with various parties and groups: I did not even fit in with my closest colleagues...(599).

Grappling with the reality of his existence, Jawaharlal has made an attempt to express the situation he has been in at that particular moment. As such, Jawaharlal's characteristic style lies in his lucidity of language, where there is no enigmatical direction. The 'grace' and 'sensibility' in expression show Jawaharlal's prose as a canon in the literary art. The inherent qualities decide the 'texture' and 'structure' of his prose. Meanwhile, the combination of 'scholarship', 'insight' and 'keen observation' and proper 'analysis' reveals him as a writer of charming prose endowed with vivid and revealing details of life and experiences. About style, Ross Murfin has observed in the work, *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*(1998) as follows :

[Style] Used generally, the way in which a literary work is written, the devices the author uses to express his or her thoughts and convey the work's subject matter...Style, however, is as elusive to define as it is to identify, analyze in a particular work or a group of works.⁴

Murfin, however, has asked the reader, to look at the writer's manner of bringing his thoughts, through various literary devices to justify

a style, which he believes, varies from author to author. The strength of Jawaharlal, the prose writer, obviously springs from his 'originality of thought', which has been considered as an inevitable criterion of any good prose. It is worth while to quote the following passage from *Mahatma Gandhi (1949)* :

Salt suddenly became a mysterious word, a word of power. The salt tax was to be attacked, the salt laws were to be broken. We were bewildered and could not quite fit in a national struggle with common salt...Prices were falling, and the city dwellers welcomed this as a sign of the plenty to come, but the farmer and the tenant saw the prospect with an alarm.(61).

Before focusing on the Salt March, Jawaharlal has looked into the objective of launching a march on salt. The passage, rightly, has recorded his clear thoughts in clear linguistic expression. However, the opinion of Boulton, "...individual style springs from a strong personality..."⁵, reminds us of the same observation of Murfin, who urges us to consider the fact that style differs with the writer. Further, they, as critics, have denoted the association of the underlying meaning of 'personality', with the 'thoughts' of the writer. Moreover, "individuality of style" refers to "individuality of personality and uniqueness of subject matter"⁶, and enables us to think of them as decisive elements of a literary piece. Jawaharlal's consummation as an artist in language may be attributed to his coherent descriptions which stem from the thoughts he believed in. As such, in his skilled hand, there emerges a kind of prose marked by an identity, putting his ideologies regarding art, culture,

politics and humanity at its core. Also, the humanitarian outlook of Jawaharlal makes a significant part of his narrative art, and, at the same time, illumines his personality. Indeed, it engages the reader to do a creative interaction with the texture and structure of the works.

A fine literary sensibility dominates the style of Jawaharlal which is inimitable, and the same shows his rare artistic power of narrating things in a pleasant manner. It delights the reader in understanding the poetic imagination behind that literary sensibility. This elevates his style, making the reader realize his potential as a creative writer. Furthermore, 'clarity of thought', coupled with 'clarity of expression', make Jawaharlal's prose translucent, even after it is laden with emotion. Thus, the prose turns to be 'passionate' in nature. To quote from *The Discovery of India*:

Ajanta takes one back into some distant dream-like and yet very real world. These frescoes were painted by the Buddhist monks...How well those painter-monks must have known the world and the moving drama of life, how lovingly they have painted it, just as they have painted the Bodhisatta in his calm and other worldly majesty...(213)

Closely studying the use of phrases, like 'distant dream -like'; 'very real'; 'moving drama of human life'; 'calm and other worldly majesty' etc. it can be maintained that Jawaharlal's use of vocabulary is indicative of his serenity of outlook. Even the erstwhile events are incapable of subduing his appreciation for the outer world. The clear linguistic expression has been implanted in the idiomatic terms, and "the

command over the English language”, opines Uma Iyenger, in the *Preface to The Essential Writings of Jawaharlal Nehru* (2005), “stemmed from the nature of [Jawaharlal’s] education”⁷. The passage is significant in that it gives a new dimension to his standing as a writer of prose. However, in his attempt to rediscover India, he has evolved a style peculiarly his as noticed in the passage quoted above.

The multi-dimensionality of Jawaharlal’s creative oeuvre lies in its presentation. The wide spectrum : autobiography, history, letters etc. written in the form of prose is attributable to his urge to pursue creativity. In all of them, it is seen that the ‘personal’ elements are interwoven with variegated themes. Yet Jawaharlal must be called an ‘objective’ writer. The term ‘objective’ is to be understood as ‘looking at what is seen and not letting personal feelings come into the picture’⁸ while the ‘subjective’ mode is used to denote some works stated ‘from the point of view of the observer, coloured by personal feelings’⁹. Unquestionably, all the works of Jawaharlal are untainted by his personal feelings and bias. While speaking about his objectivity, it is relevant to look into the following remark in the *Autobiography* :

...I write vaguely and somewhat academically about current events, and try to play the part of a detached onlooker. At least, so long as I am in prison, I try to save myself from coming to grips with the problem of immediate action (594).

The passage is about what it precisely claims to consider Jawaharlal as an ‘objective analyst’, who has not coloured the

descriptions with his feelings. However, letters written to various luminaries by Jawaharlal narrate a different tale as they are highly 'subjective' in nature, and personal views are mainly recorded. Still, it can be safely debated that other works of Jawaharlal strongly set in place the 'objective' interpretation in his attempt to "trace [his] own mental growth" (596) as revealed in his *Autobiography*. It has been seen that the same style permeates *The Discovery of India* also :

...I could separate myself from it and look at it as a thing apart. Sometimes I would steal an hour or two, and forgetting my usual preoccupation to retire into that cloistered chamber of my mind and live, for a while, another life... (68).

The detachment of Jawaharlal, the 'objective' writer, has been echoed in the above passage that projects the aim of the writer. However, it should be mentioned that the metaphorical expression, in a "cloistered chamber of mind", suggests Jawaharlal's state of mind that desires to achieve rest after his long association with the Nationalist Movement of India. The accuracy of description, as noted in the passage, is a remarkable achievement of his standing as a prose writer. His proper use of artistic language shows his poetic sensibility. Narasimhaiah has pertinently commended the works of Jawaharlal in the following words :

... [They] are cast almost always in the form of an enactment, inevitable in one who is not out to prove or disprove a thesis, but is content to concretize his inner tensions or debates without an irritable desire to reach after fact or reason ...no artist shows this desire except at his peril...¹⁰

It may be argued that Jawaharlal is well-versed in the art of giving concrete shape to the inner tension which he suffers. Sometimes, however, Jawaharlal prefers to expand that thought in his writing enabling the reader to comprehend him in the light of that particular expression. In the process, one may again notice the elements of conversation largely employed by Jawaharlal to ease his effort in the context of a specific situation.

The rare artistic sense and natural sequence of Jawaharlal's prose recommend his strength as a writer. The flawless handling of the English language establishes the 'magnetic quality' of his prose. It is to be stated that the literary versatility of Jawaharlal is best demonstrated in the presentation of the 'themes' and 'techniques' of the narratives. It is true that all the prose works of Jawaharlal help to celebrate his distinctive prose style. The following passage in the *Autobiography* bears a lyrical quality :

For a little while the harbour was pleasant, and one could lie down and dream and allow the soothing and enervating charm of the tropics to steal over one...So many memories come back to me of the land and her people; they have been pleasant companions during the long , empty days in prison...(272).

Some other passages like the following cover the diverse range of thoughts :

The main interest of the government in municipal administration is that 'politics' should be kept out. Any resolution of sympathy with the national movement is frowned upon; text-books which might have a nationalist flavour are not permitted in the municipal schools, even pictures of national leaders are not allowed there ...(145).

It is truly Jawaharlal's rationality of attitude that prevails while reflecting upon the contemporary scenario in India. Jawaharlal's observation in the *Glimpses of World History*, too, suggests the same :

You must remember that the contest was not between the Indo-Aryan civilization and the highly civilized Arab. The contest was between civilized but decadent India and the semi-civilised and occasionally nomadic people from Central Asia who had themselves recently been converted to Islam... (157).

Indicative of Jawaharlal's insight into history, the passage takes to recount its course. However, no question regarding his subjective or objective standing arises, as the simple narrative has not demanded any personal comment from the narrator at this point. The sequence of questions added later, however, has not encouraged any "ambivalence of thought"¹¹. A subtle sense of irony is noticed while he speaks of the "East is utterly different" and cannot be judged by ordinary standards. As there is no question of 'real' or 'apparent' meaning, the passage is a fine example of Jawaharlal's prose that is characterized by "clarity of meaning", which is the "supreme virtue in prose for most purposes".¹² It

is supreme in a prose-writer like Jawaharlal. The following excerpt illuminates the point :

... It has always seemed to me very remarkable how eminent foreign journalists, trained in the observation of human nature, go wrong in India. Is it because of the ineradicable impression of their childhood that the East is utterly different and cannot be judged by ordinary standards? Or is it, in the case of Englishmen, the kink of empire that governs their vision and distorts their view? ... (289)

Jawaharlal as a concerned citizen has motivated us to raise our voice to know the truth why even the eminent journalists put their biased opinion regarding the East and the West. Evidently, then, the passage registers the insight of Jawaharlal into the small but crucial issues. His probings into the events like this may be observed as a part of his socialistic goal, and his awareness as a humanist, as such, is suggestive of his social consciousness. K. R. S. Iyenger has critically examined Jawaharlal's literary works which "... breathe the life-giving air of culture and lightly shimmer with a steady glow"¹³. In the opinion of Jawaharlal,

The idea of nationalism is almost as strong today as it was in the past, and in its holy name wars are still fought and millions slaughtered...Only men's ideas continue to be governed by a dogma which has no real meaning.¹⁴

The incorporation of the 'literary' and 'aesthetic' sensibility into his writings marks their success as creative works. It cannot be denied that he has intermingled his timely thought and aesthetic ideas in a

sensible way. Further, it is seen that the aim of Jawaharlal, the prose writer, is to narrate the reality of the society during the freedom movement of India. As such, the vital issue of human predicament has become lively in his description, specially the first hand experiences of the jail life are suggestive of it. In jail, maintains Jawaharlal, "every effort was made to keep us apart from the ordinary non-political convicts, special gaols being as a rule reserved for politicals" (94). The *Autobiography* delineates the true picture of the plight of the 'freedom fighters'. In this sense, Jawaharlal may be described as a realistic writer and for it his writings are analogous in nature.

It is pertinent to record here that with relentless accuracy Jawaharlal has described the events that confronted him squarely. Jawaharlal's perception of the uncommon in the common is a success, though a radical difference in approach to both may be seen as a feature of his prose. The events in the *Autobiography* have direct links with his life where the apt story of the reality has been meticulously explained, but in *The Discovery of India*, the 'reality and myth' have been uncovered to renew the "vitality from age to age" (55). In this work, the direct link between the facts and Jawaharlal is absent, while the influence of the past strengthens his vision. The poetic language as has been noted in Jawaharlal's writings and speeches is commendable. It helps him unravel history. Thus, 'history' turns to 'literature' in Jawaharlal's skilful delineation of the subject itself. Roy F. Nichols' comment, "By the middle of the nineteenth century history was well established as a branch of

literature and its authors..."¹⁵ helps us understand why Jawaharlal's trilogy on history continues to be regarded as literature. Every element of literature like 'passion', 'emotion', 'melodrama', 'tragedy' and 'comedy' has made its way into his narratives.

Inspired by the 'humanism' which developed in England in the eighteenth century, Jawaharlal believed that the essential goodness of man is always necessary for a better society. Earlier, a humanist like Matthew Arnold incorporated 'humanism' as a different tract of existence of the European intellectual thought and it has been seen that prior to the progress of science and before Darwin's Theory of Evolution (1857) came to sweep the rational area, it was believed that there was an eternal conflict between science and religion, between science and the humanities and so on. But Jawaharlal refused to accept these assumptions and advanced his ideas that those issues were not irreconcilable opposites and that a healthy compromise can always be made. As a writer of prose, he did not approve of the stand of those who felt it necessary to choose between the East and the West, the life of contemplation and the life of action, tradition and modernism, nationalism and internationalism and even Gandhism and Marxism. In all these, he advocated a happy blending of the two different sets of values. As an avid reader of several disciplines, namely literature, history, law and natural science, Jawaharlal was an heir not only to all annals of his country from the "Islam Valley Civilization (69-72) [as it is narrated by him in *The Discovery of India*] to the 1940s as he claims, but also to the

best in western thought, as he was profoundly shaped by the intellectual thoughts of the West.

As a humanist, Jawaharlal championed the cause of humanity which for him was the potent instrument to measure society. But his faith in science was not to be lessened thereby. Accordingly, his belief in the dictum, 'man is the measure of all things' strengthened his egalitarian views which were deeply rooted in his scientific approach to the problems of life.

It has been seen that recurrent 'subjects', 'symbols' etc. give Jawaharlal's writings a distinctive flavour. So far as his art of expression is concerned, it must be stated that it is the 'spontaneous' utterance of his soul. That 'spontaneity' stems from his thought which is also a significant side of his 'self examination'. To quote him from the *Autobiography* :

... The idea of my associating myself with the government as a minister was unthinkable for me; indeed it was hateful to me. But I have often yearned, then as well as in later years, for a chance to do some solid, positive, constructive work ... (102).

The passage in spontaneous expression, takes to celebrate Jawaharlal's standing as a statesman.

Emotion and passion are two elements that strictly governed Jawaharlal as a writer. Sometimes his use of 'rhetorical devices' or 'figures of speech' enhances the prose to be more precise and interesting, thus offering an insight into his sensitive mind. As "the most effective

writer of English in India”,¹⁶ Jawaharlal’s utmost concern was to suffuse politics with poetry. It is Jawaharlal who can compare India’s culture as ‘palimpsest’ – a metaphor, taken from the field of geography that denotes layers on which one can see the common ‘traits’ of culture that has been existing through ages. Thus, “hundreds of vivid pictures” (52) of the past related with the ancient glory of India become lively in Jawaharlal’s language. ‘Imagery of Buddha’ preaching sermons at Sarnath, ‘Ashoka’s pillars of stone’ with their inscriptions, ‘Akbar, at Fatehpur Sikri’ slowly unfold the “continuity of a cultural tradition” (52) in *The Discovery of India*. Jawaharlal’s prose style shows an individual whose mind is full of “intellectual and moral quality, free of cliché, emotions; but attractively replete with half-tones, subtleties and diffidences”,¹⁷ opines S. Gopal, the biographer. To these should be added the ‘fluency’ of outpouring emotions in Jawaharlal’s works as there is abundance of elegance and control of phrase, with a wide knowledge of English writing, old and new. The moving descriptions of ‘human predicament’ and the ‘Nationalist Movement’ recorded in the *Autobiography* and *The Discovery of India* respectively suggest his stable expressions that truly define his line of writing.

It has been observed that the theme of Nature has been aesthetically crafted celebrating Nature’s varied moods with sheer luminosity. He has projected nature in her myriad forms which linger in the mind of the reader. The powerful account of the changing of times

with the help of metaphorical language at the beginning of the *Discovery of India* shows his aesthetic inclination :

IT IS MORE THAN TWENTY MONTHS SINCE WE WERE BROUGHT HERE, more than twenty months of my ninth terms of imprisonment. The new moon, a shimmering crescent in the darkening sky, greeted us on our arrival here. The bright fortnight of the waxing moon had begun. Even since then each coming of the new moon has been a reminder to me that another month of my imprisonment is over. So it was over with my last imprisonment which began with the new moon...(15).

The idea of 'fleeting of time' has been conveyed by Jawaharlal with the powerful imagery of the 'moon', built up by the help of heaps of metaphors, in its different 'shapes' and 'sizes'. It is the transformation of time that has been suggested by the imagery of the moon while the choice of diction is almost poetic. This introduces us to the world of Jawaharlal, the prose writer with a 'sensitive' mind. The 'bright fortnight' has been placed against the 'waxing moon', while 'the new moon's 'crescent' shape is the symbol of hope in his mind. The 'moon' not only represents time, but also symbolizes the inner conflict of the writer. It may be argued that the apt description of the variegated forms of the moon commingles with the spirit, that beholds the ups and downs of Jawaharlal. Added to this, the idea of the moon may be considered a symbolic construct of his mind that experiences 'joy' or 'sadness' and it is mirrored in the shape of the moon. The passage is an example of his artistic and poetic expression. His creativity has been asserted here. An

attempt has been made by Jawaharlal to present his own life in metaphorical language. Indeed, the passage records the strong melancholic note of the writer. A similar expression may be noted in another passage :

Time seems to change its nature in prison. The present hardly exists, for there is an absence of feeling and sensation which might separate it from the dead past. Even news of the active, living and dying world outside has a certain dream-like unreality, an immobility and an unchangeableness as of the past... (20).

As a writer, Jawaharlal has focused on 'time', shedding light on the condition of a human being who has to spend a large part of his life inside prison where 'immobility' and 'unchangeableness' cripple him. Thus, the passage is replete with a melancholic expression while the 'absence of feeling and sensation' makes the prisoner's life dull. In this context it can be stated that Jawaharlal has wielded his prose mingling 'reality' and 'imagination'. In his imagination 'time' has been concretized as a "painted picture or a statue in bronze or marble"(20). Direct comparison has been made here, and the use of 'simile' helps the prose writer maintain his uniformity of style.

The prose of Jawaharlal appeals to the reader offering glimpses into his emotional, imaginative and aesthetic nature. His descriptions of the 'Prison Humours' and 'Animals in Prison' rightly exhibit his emotional side. The blending of 'imagination' and 'beauty', with which he speaks of Nature in his works, reminds us of the English romantic

poets like Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, and Byron. His description of Nature is replete with emotion while he is never wholly excised from reality. This is what distinguishes him as a modern writer. The following passage from the *Autobiography* shows that artistic and beautiful expression in lucid prose style :

It was very pleasant in the daytime, and, as the sun rose higher, the growing warmth brought life to the mountains and they seemed to lose their remoteness and become friendly and companionable. But how they change their aspect with the passing of the day! ... (568).

The easy and graceful language employed by Jawaharlal is a rich example of his way of expression as observed in the above passage. The cycle of Nature has been arrested by him in the poetic utterance. Further, the “moaning of the wind” in the “semi-darkness of the moonlight” (564) leaves the wild Nature to her own. In the descriptive passages like the above the reader may experience the beauty of Nature.

Thus, the ‘diction’ and ‘imagery’ are manifestly influenced by the Romantic spirit. A closer scrutiny reveals that as a prose-writer, Jawaharlal uses mellifluous language, particularly in his description of Nature. It is seen that his idea of the ‘time’: past or present, fortifies reminiscence and recreation. This entails self-study in a framework of objectivity, particularly in his account of the emergence of the new face of India. As K. D. Verma has remarked that “people like Tagore, Aurobindo, Gandhi and Nehru and several others had faced a similar

problem of achieving intellectual synthesis”¹⁸ The following passage is a case in point on National Education by Sri Aurobindo:

Nationalist Education, is, next to self-government and along with it, the deepest and most immediate need of the country, and it is a matter of rejoicing for one to whom and earlier effort in that direction gave the first opportunity for identifying himself with the larger life and hope of the nation, to see the idea, for a time submerged, moving so soon towards self-fulfillment...¹⁹

In this passage the expansion of consciousness has been communicated by Sri Aurobindo in his characteristic long sentence. In contrast to the heavy, Victorian nature of Sri Aurobindo’s prose, Jawaharlal’s prose is easy and light. There is no density of words in his narratives. To quote a passage from the *Glimpses of World History* :

There is no visible limit to the advance of science, if it is given the change to advance. Yet it may be that the scientific method of observation is not always applicable to all the varieties of human experience and can not cross the uncharted ocean that surrounds us... (512).

The passage enables us to consider the charm of the prose style that emanates from Jawaharlal’s easy holding of the ‘syntax’. It is seen that the ‘syntax’ here is simple to be understood by an average reader and there is no heavy rhetorical base as it is seen in Sri Aurobindo’s prose. Further, it should be stated that as writers, both of them advocate the progress of human society.

Jawaharlal's continuous self-examination seems to be identical with Mulk Raj Anand's relentless search for truth. The following passage may be cited as an instance in point :

What was the aim I was to set [for] myself in my work? What was my relation to writers, in India and Britain, to my own Indian cultural heritage and to the heritage of Europe, which I had come to acquire? Was I to be a pure artist or would I have to play some part in the political life of the day? ...²⁰

It is to be noted that Jawaharlal's literary acumen flourished after he entered politics. His journey to literature is associated with politics. Deeply rooted in the European intellectual thought, his social and political ideologies are directly traceable to the 'scientific humanism' of Bertrand Russell and 'Fabian Socialism' of George Bernard Shaw. Thus, the most important question in Jawaharlal's works of literature, as one might argue, is his vision of life and humanity at large, which have been mirrored in his speeches also. It cannot be denied that he develops the key of "realism" while he delineates the plight of the "Kisans" of Oudh, Uttar Pradesh in the *Autobiography*. Hence, Jawaharlal may be indisputably labelled as "a humanist and artist in words"²¹ who is deeply involved with socialistic activities. Further, putting in mind the Protagorean idea, "man is the measure of all things", Jawaharlal has tried to rescue the peasants not as an outsider, but as one who has become an active participant in the historical and ideological processes of revolutionary change. He, however, has declared, "I cannot suggest any rapid or magic ways of dealing with the problems of the world..."²².

Nonetheless, he imagines a true picture of a society, wherein the 'co-operating elements' will work together in bringing tolerance.

Significantly, however, the issue of India's political subjugation to Great Britain remained the foremost theme that was echoed in Jawaharlal's rhythmic prose. V. N. Chibber has rightly thrown light on this aspect, "... It is significant to note that [Jawaharlal's] writings take on variegated hues as he was essentially a writer with a purpose".²³ The view of Chibber offers an insight into the 'purpose' of the creative works of Jawaharlal, which, as it has been stated earlier is to depict the newly awakened consciousness of the Indians. This is the picture of a writer who may be termed a "patriot with a pen", who draws the line of growing responsibility and focuses on the social revolution raised by his countrymen. Even then, Jawaharlal's "concise and reason-propelled prose in the face of the realities of life"²⁴ establishes him as a writer of rational ideologies.

The vivid descriptions of natural landscapes, valleys and mountains given by Jawaharlal show him as a pictorial artist. Those superb and sensitive delineations of Nature may remind one of the great Sanskrit poets Kalidasa and Banabhatta, who too, arrested Nature's beauty in their celebrated works of literature. The picturesque setting to the valley of Kashmir is found in the *Unity of India [thus]* :

Like some supremely beautiful women, whose beauty is almost impersonal and above human desire, such was Kashmir in all its

feminine beauty of river and valley and lake of graceful trees...
(223).

Another passage in the same work narrates the sonorous beauty of Kashmir that may serve as an antithesis to the previous one :

... And then another aspect of this magic beauty would come to view as masculine one, of hard mountains and precipices, and snow-capped peaks and glaciers, and cruel and fierce forests rushing down to the valleys below... (223).

Both the passages solemnize the beauty of Nature in different ways: in the first one, Nature has been eulogized in her “feminine beauty” while the latter celebrates her “masculinity”. To be precise, with a sensitive mind, Jawaharlal has established a communion with Nature in her myriad manifestations. Sometimes, his introspection into Nature reflects his own condition at that particular moment in the *Autobiography*:

...The days pass and I count them as they go... I wonder what through there is in the saying that life’s rich gifts follow frustration and cruelty and separation... Gaol encourages introspection... (571).

This is truly striking, as there is the reflective or philosophical notion of Jawaharlal, beautifully expressed in language. Indeed, the issue of ‘humanity’ has been presented in a way that exhibits his sympathy :

... For years and years many of these ‘lifers’ do not see a child or woman, or even animals... like automatons they pass their days,

each exactly like the other, and have few sensations, except one fear.. (219)

The compassionate voice of Jawaharlal as revealed in the *Autobiography* is concerned with the 'lifers' while he describes their condition. Thus, the depiction of reality is a notable aspect of Jawaharlal and in the light of it only he may be viewed as a 'humanist'.

'Sympathy', 'melodrama', 'emotion', 'passion' and the like rule the writings of Jawaharlal. However, the use of humour gives his works a distinctive taste showing his mind. Sometimes, 'humour' and 'pathos' run parallel in the descriptions. His 'agitation for more frequent birthdays' (9) reminds us sharply of the inherent presence of 'humour' followed by 'pathos' in the succeeding sentence in the *Autobiography*, "I did not realize then that a time would come when birthdays would become unpleasant reminders of advancing age"(9). Sometimes, humour has been presented in the form of irony by Jawaharlal. A well-known situation may be considered in this regard. Once Jawaharlal and his companion Gobind Ballabh Pant were shifted from Bareilly District Jail to Dehra Dun Jail at midnight to avoid their contact with any human beings outside. In Jawaharlal's language, "the spontaneous act of courtesy and kindly thought" (346) only reminds us of the use of irony while the inherent objective is to draw our attention to their pathetic condition.

The Chapter, "Prison Humours" (xliv) in the *Autobiography* tells the reader about the experiences one undergoes inside a jail. Some of these create laughter because of their humorous nature while some

others make the reader sad for the 'cruelty' the Indians had to face in the Raj regime. In tune with the critic, Chaman Nahal, "a sense of synthesis"²⁵ in Jawaharlal's creative works may help us to see his attempt to see "life as a whole" and that synthesis has been derived from his knowledge of different areas. As such, he does not consider synthesis to be the outcome of clash, instead he appeals as a writer to adopt the 'synthesis of culture' which is a "continuous upward journey of the mind"²⁶.

About the subject of style of writing Jawaharlal muses like a deconstructionist. The following words in the *Glimpses of World History* explain it :

...When writers write, who do they write for? Every writer must have consciously or subconsciously, an audience in his mind...(7).

The cited passage justifies Jawaharlal as a writer who puts 'the reader' in mind. It may be said that the directness of his language is so compelling that it immediately registers his works as the enactment of the modern era so far as the Indian English literature is concerned.

Thus, setting a link between the concepts of the author and the reader, Jawaharlal, unhesitatingly narrates his idea of culture, which, to him, is the product and prerogative of the select few in a society, he had in Anand Bhawan. Another concept of culture later developed in his mind after his close association with Gandhiji. As a writer, Jawaharlal has

thrown light on these concepts in all his works, sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly. The following opinion of S. Gopal helps us recognize the style of Jawaharlal's works, particularly that of the *Autobiography* :

...What further helped to gain a wide audience for the *Autobiography* was its prose style. It was a clear, fluent book written with tense, nervous elegance and control of phrase, and with a wide knowledge of English writing, old and new. It showed a mind of intellectual and moral quality, free of cliché, emotions; but attractively replete with half tones, subtleties and differences...²⁷

The prose of Jawaharlal has been observed as clear and fluent and it springs from his wide knowledge of English writing. Thus, his works of literature truly edify the "generation of young Indian authors who came to think and write like him"²⁸. The charm of Jawaharlal's creativity lies in his spontaneous, unaffected, flowing, racy, unhindered, ever fresh and enlivening style that invites comparison with the poetry of Wordsworth and Keats. The canonical exercise of Nature found in the Romantic poets and in Jawaharlal appears to be similar, as all of them praise Nature in their own characteristic language enveloped in lyrical imagination. As Narasimhaiah offers his insight :

The way he selects historical material and organises it so as to make a pattern emerge out of it is the same as a painter chooses his colours or a writer his words so as to invite the desired response without the need for personal comment²⁹.

Some of the poetic passages of Jawaharlal invite comparison with the poetry of the romantic poets. To quote Wordsworth :

Once again I see
 These hedgerows, hardly hedgerows, little lines,
 Of sportive wood run wild
 These pastoral farms,
 Green to the very door, and wreaths of smoke,
 Set up, in silence, from among the trees !
 ...
 Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire
 The Hermit sits alone ...³⁰

The quote Jawaharlal from his *Autobiography*,

...The wind was cold and bitter but the sun was warm in the daytime... yet I found a strange satisfaction in these wild and desolate haunts of nature; I was full of energy and a feeling of exaltation... (37)

Both have evoked the beauty of nature in lyrical language in their respective piece of literature. Thus, the poetry of Wordsworth and the poetic description of nature in Jawaharlal's prose are rather alike in texture. As writers, both aspire to derive peace from nature.

To quote from Keats :

Ah, happy, happy boughs! That cannot shed
 Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;

And happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new;³¹

Nature's power to offer sensuous pleasure has been recorded in Keats' poetry as in the above verse, while in Jawaharlal, too, the senses are gratified by his artistic description :

... January has given place to February, and there is the whisper of spring in the air. The bulbul and other birds are again to be seen and heard, and tiny shoots are mysteriously bursting out of the ground and gazing at the strange world... (571).

Expressive phrases : 'whisper of spring', 'blood-red patches', 'peach and plum blossoms' etc. have been well-crafted by Jawaharlal to draw the picture of spring in the above passage. This individuality of style of Jawaharlal is believed to have emanated from his romantic nature. In this sense, though modern, at the same time, he is a romantic writer of graceful prose. Apart from conveying gratification to the senses, Jawaharlal's descriptions soothe a suffering soul as there is much 'humble thought' in his works.

As a prose writer, Jawaharlal draws the reader's attention to the presence of rhythmic or musical quality of his style. Not only his writings are saturated with musicality, but also his speeches resound with it. The following speech may be considered to study that note :

Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full

measure, but very substantially. At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom...³²

The poetic as well as emotional utterance of the orator whose mind has been swept away by the feeling for the newly achieved freedom is impressive. Yet, he is aware of the new resolutions the nation has to fulfill in future. The speech with a clear note of sonorous quality denotes the resolvability that results from a long struggle. The speech places Jawaharlal as the “voice of India”. He has made “a clarion call to the new nation”³³ to take the pledge of dedication not only to India, but also to the larger cause of humanity. It is a fateful moment for us in India, for all Asia and for the world. The following excerpt from Jawaharlal’s speech shows this :

A new star rises, the star of freedom in the East, a new hope comes into being, a vision long cherished materializes... We shall never allow the torch of freedom to be blown-out, however high the wind and stormy the tempest...³⁴

Metaphors like ‘star of freedom’, ‘torch of freedom’ have been willingly employed by Jawaharlal to suggest India’s newly attained identity. To him, the cherished freedom would remain ignited even at the high speed of wind. Again, the artistic oratory of Jawaharlal is expressive of his poetic inclination. It is felt that this discussion would be incomplete if the speech delivered on the death of Mahatma Gandhi would remain unnoticed. The free flow of emotion as in Aristotle’s theory of catharsis may be seen in it :

... the light has gone out of our lives and there is darkness everywhere... For that light represented something more than the immediate present; it represented the living, the eternal truths, reminding us of the right path, drawing us from error, taking this ancient country to freedom ...³⁵

The rich tribute of the nation to Gandhiji has been made in the above speech of Jawaharlal while the same metaphorical expression 'the light has gone' mesmerizes us enabling to visualize Gandhiji as an eternal light. The speech immortalizes Jawaharlal as an orator. Further, although clouded in grief caused by the sudden death of Gandhiji, Jawaharlal's utterances have not lost their characteristic poetic vigour. Instead, it newly paves the way for an orator of artistic language. C. D. Narasimhaiah has hailed Jawaharlal, the orator in the following way: "...it is by such speeches that he fired the imagination of his countrymen..."³⁶ Further, the same critic has praised him as "a winged messenger of freedom"³⁷.

The same poetic exuberance may be observed in the speeches of Edmund Burke,

... For nine long years, session after session, we have been lashed round and round this miserable circle of occasional arguments and temporary expedients. I am sure our heads must turn, and our stomachs nauseate with them. ... Invention is exhausted; reason is fatigued experience has given us judgement; but obstinacy is not yet conquered...³⁸

Since words are often the clue to the man's thoughts various speeches throw much light on the orator's prevailing outlook, as well as on the priority of his objectives. After two years of independence unfurling the National Flag on the Red Fort Jawaharlal delivered his speech,

A nation's work never ends. Men may come and go, generations may pass but the life of a nation goes on... Therefore, it is the duty of everyone, no matter what his politics, to help in the maintenance of peace in the country.³⁹

Both Burke and Jawaharlal have powerfully expressed their thoughts in the above speeches without losing their art of oratorical disquisition.

The foregoing discussion of Jawaharlal as a prose writer reveals that as a writer of prose he is second to none. It is so, because of his artistic, sensitive, graceful and literary expression. As a champion of the cause of humanity and a writer of prose as well, Jawaharlal's charm would always appeal to the reader in the years to come. Besides, the oratory of Jawaharlal will always mesmerize the reader for the artistic and poetic expression.

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