

- INTRODUCTION -

Fantasy has always been an integral part of literature since the beginning of times, and it has had a broad appeal to people of all ages. Fantasy is an operating factor in almost all the forms of literature. Allegory, folk-tales, myth, satire, Gothic fiction, and science fiction are some of the forms in which fantasy plays a dominant role. Similarly, there are a number of writers like Swift, Wells, Orwell, Hudson, Forster, Waugh, Warner, Tolkien, Beresford and so on who use fantasy more than others as their central technique of writing. Fantasy is, on the face of it, an escape from reality, but as writers like Swift, Wells and Orwell have shown, fantasy can be an oblique technique of 'reentering' reality. Aldous Huxley is also one of these writers who use fantasy as criticism of life from an apparently non-realistic stance.

Fantasy is an operating factor in all the works of Huxley. But it operates at its highest level and in a most significant manner in two of his utopias Brave New World, which is actually a dystopia; and Island, which is a genuine utopia. In this dissertation I have

focussed my attention on the nature of Huxleyan fantasy as it operates in his novels, particularly in the two novels mentioned above, and tried to analyse the mode of its operation.

The dissertation has five chapters in it : in Chapter I, I have dealt with the concept of fantasy, and the function of fantasy in literature, and, in particular, the role of fantasy in utopian literature. Chapter-II contains a broad survey of the functioning of fantasy in Huxleyan fiction. Chapter-III focuses its critical attention on Huxley's dystopia, Brave New World, and Chapter-IV on his utopia, Island. In both these chapters I have tried to present as detailed an analysis as possible of the nature and function of fantasy in these two novels. Chapter-V, 'Conclusions', sums up the entire discussion on fantasy in Huxley's fiction, with particular reference to his two major utopias.

