

I n t r o d u c t i o n

In this dissertation I have attempted a stylistic study of two important poems: "Preludes" by T.S.Eliot and "The Windhover" by G.M.Hopkins. I have chosen these two poets' particular works because they are most representative of the modern period and also are known for the bold innovations in the technique of modern poetry.

The hypothesis I have chosen to test is the one put forth by G.N.Leech in his "Literary Criticism and Linguistic Description" in which he tries to show that linguistic statements about a poem would be found to corroborate critical statements that are known to be impressionistic. If this is true, stylistics serves as a bridge between traditional criticism and linguistic analysis. I have tried to follow Leech's model of the analysis of Keat's "Ode to a Nightingale" as closely as possible. His strategy is to cite selected critical statements from most well known critics first. And then to analyse the poem in linguistic terms to arrive at specific linguistic statements independently and see if the results of linguistic analysis yield the same interpretation. He is completely successful in showing that the linguistic statements do corroborate the critical statements.

In my work, I have also done the same. I have picked up critical statements from well known critics and summed up the main points of these statements. In the case of both the poems I discovered that plenty of textual criticism and some linguistic analysis have already been made. So I picked up these and added what little I could to them by way of linguistic analysis. For the sake of convenience of the study I have often had to re-classify and re-label the linguistic statements available in the literature.

Finally it seems to me that most of the significant critical statements are corroborated by linguistic statements. This part of my work is presented in the body of the dissertation in Chapter II.

In Chapter I, I have given a bird's eye view of literary criticism from the earliest times upto the twentieth century. This falls into five sections :

1. Traditional criticism,
2. New Criticism
3. The Linguistic Approach,
4. The Notion of Style
5. Stylistics.

This chapter is intended to serve as a background to the work. In it I have clarified the most important views on modern stylistics and also the model of linguistic analysis.

It must be admitted that the present work is more in the nature of collection, organisation and presentation of existing knowledge. I have only tried to draw some conclusions from the known facts. My own additions by way of linguistic analysis are marginal both because a good deal has already been done and because of my own limitations.

The report of this work is presented following largely the M.L.A. style of presentation. References are provided in the body of the text by mentioning the name of author and the year of publication, and page numbers wherever relevant. Chapterwise references are not provided because there are only two chapters. Instead a consolidated bibliography of all the works referred to in the body of the dissertation together with other relevant works which I have looked at in the course of doing this study is given at the end.