CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

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Anthony Powell is regarded as important novelist of the second generation of British novelists of the present century. The first generation was the generation of modernist novelists. Though this second generation started writing in early 1930s, their major works were produced in 1950s and 1960s. This generation includes Samuel Beckett, Graham Greene, Henry Green, Elizabeth Bowen, C.P.Snow, Ivy Compton-Burnett, Evelyn Waugh, Anthony Powell, Lawrence Durrell, Iris Murdock, William Golding, Doris Lessing, Angus Wilson, Philip Toynbee, Kingsley Amis, O'Brain, John Wain and Joyce Cary. Most of them deviated from Modernism, and did not follow their immediate modernist predecessors. They skipped the immediate influence of their older contemporaries and with few exceptions returned to the narrative manner of the Victorians - C.P.Snow is closer to George Eliot, Galsworthy and Arnold Bennett than he is to James Joyce or D.H. Lawrence. Joyce Cary seems to be following Sterne, Fielding and Dickens; and Graham Greene appears akin to Wilkie Collins, R.L. Stevenson, Rider Haggard and early Conrad. Ivy Compton - Burnett does not trespass this side of 1910, and George Orwell returned to Gissing and Zola for his method. Anthony Powell and C.P.Snow

instead of following James Joyce in presenting experience, they took to heart the practice of Marcel Proust of being discursive about it. Powell is steeped in the nineteenth century European novel. One finds in him traces of Lermontov and Dostoevsky. The modernist novel was the novel of sensibility and subjectivity but C.P.Snow, Anthony Powell, Kingsley Amis and Doris Lessing excluded subjectivity. In common, these writers agree that the experimental novel - especially its treatment of plot - is no longer viable and that retreat is perhaps expedient. In many ways this realization is healthy. Experimentation is always to be encouraged, but it can easily lead to disastrous results, as many of the less successful attempts at " modernity " have demonstrated. The contemporary writer gains directness, he forgoes paradox, irony, density, significance of theme - elements that enabled impressionists and symbolists to go beyond the stated and the defined.

That change, that oscillation, has left us with two different codes about the novel. One coming from the aesthetics of realism, emphasizes plot and character, setting and theme, denouement and discovery. The other comes from the new symbolist aesthetics of what came to be called the Modernist Movement, it emphasized other terms : myth, symbol, abstraction, angle of vision, point of view, stream of consciousness. The Modernist novel began to dispense with

much of the novel's familiar realism and its dense and habitual sense of character and plot, setting and atmosphere, chronological and historical time. It probed deeper into consciousness, individual and collective, looked outward at a world that seemed less a clear material substance than a place of random time and chaotic history, and it pluralized awareness, multiplied perception, ironized narrative and looked directly into its own formal nature as art. It became an art of refined practitioners.

The first three decades of the twentieth century English novel were dominated by the modernists. The late Henry James, Conrad, James Joyce, D.H.Lawrence and Virginia Woolf were the major dominant modernists.The Modernists were concerned with the major problems and major conflicts of their times. The novelists intentions were impressionistic and the fictional world that resulted was varied, many hued, occasionally profound and often exciting. But this heritage of intellectual excitement has not passed on to the later novelists. In the hands of Graham Greene, Elizabeth Bowen, C.P.Snow, George Orwell and Joyce Cary, the novel has generally tended to become restrictive rather than extensive, to bring back traditional character and plot rather than to seek the inexpressible; in brief to return to more self-contained matter while retaining many of the technical developments of the major modernists. The

contemporary novel is no longer " modern "; it has diminished in scale : no writer has the moral urgency of a Conrad, the vitality and all-consuming obsession of a D.H.Lawrence.

There was difference in the situation of modernists and their immediate successors. Modernists were brought up in the late Victorian tradition and where having the memory of the settled civilization but with the first World War the settled civilization shattered. Unlike modernists their successors were brought up in a different situation. They were matured, the formative years of their life, during the Great War and its aftermath. They did not and could not have the sense and experience of a settled civilization. The differences in situation made the modernist aesthetics unavailable to the writers of the second generation. Let us see that the situation brought into being modernism and the modernistic point of view.

By the time Virginia Woolf published Mrs. Dalloway in 1925, the English novel appeared to have come to a simultaneous fruition and dissolution that paralleled that of the liberal society on which it was based. Throughout the nineteenth century the novel had been one of the chief ways through which European society both explored the meaning and affirmed the value of the individual existence in all its

variousness, complexity and difficulty. Lionel Trilling described it as liberalism's chief tenet.[1] With the new century the novel itself became an embodiment of that ideal. The late style of Henry James provided an expression of a more far-ranging liberalism. And with that style what D.H.Lawrence called 'the one bright book of life'[2] achieved a peculiar democratization of spirit. Novelists choose whatever subject matter or prose style they wanted.

The modernists used their new freedom to make an increasingly detailed exploration of their characters' interior lives; an exploration the terms of which differ markedly from those of their predecessors. They used stream of consciousness technique, a new concept of time, a new methodology, new inventions of psychology, myth, abstractions, point of view, symbols, images, metaphors at random; and forsaken conventional plot, character, and linear logic of story and history; and despite its ostensible anti-intellectuality, moved into the realms of psychology, sociology and anthropology.

The nineteenth century novel, George Lukacs writes in The Theory of The Novel, had described 'the adventures of interiority'[3] in terms of 'the antagonistic duality of soul and world,' which creates the self consciousness out of which that interiority grows. In describing that adventure,

Lukacs argues, the novelist must attempt to construct a harmonious relationship between the world of objects and the subjective imagination. Yet while the genre longs for an identity between the soul and world, it remains suspicious of it as well. For the novel's concern is with the life of a 'problematic'[4] individual flayed into a self-consciousness that both damns and distinguishes him or her by the gap between her or his desires and the world's failure to fulfil them, an unhappy 'soul' that 'seeks adventures in order to find its own essence'.[5] Such a quest for, what Lukacs calls, 'the concealed totality of life'[6] must inevitably fail, for the hero learns 'through experience that a mere glimpse of meaning is the highest that life has to offer.'[7] Yet in that failure, the novel 'shows polemically the impossibility of achieving necessary object,'[8] and also provides a potent criticism of the life from which it grows.

For Lukacs, the novel is built upon the irrevocable split between subjective consciousness and the objective world. With Henry James the novel began to deal with 'the adventure of interiority' in a way that subordinated the world to the soul. Virginia Woolf chose to describe what she called 'character in itself'[9] divorced from the external world. She cuts the soul of her characters free from the material world that has so completely absorbed her

predecessors. The soul and the world may in her work remain antagonistic. But there is no duality between them; for the claims of the soul take precedence over those of a world. Then the search for authentic values among the inferior objects offered by the social world, which novel traditionally describes, is no longer necessary, for the soul has in itself became the novel's supreme value, and the world exists only in relation to it.

Roman Jakobson has argued that realistic prose fiction is largely metonymic. 'The realistic author', he argues, 'metonymically digresses from the plot to the atmosphere and from the characters to the setting in space and time',[10] from the part to the whole it suggests, so that the narrative is 'forwarded essentially by contiguity'.[11] A writer moves from one object or scene to the next because they are either spatially or chronologically contiguous and in that movement suggests an entire world. It moves from one of Virginia Woolf's 'gig lamps' to another, without pausing to examine the innumerable atoms in the space between; atoms whose existence one must assume the metonymy implies. Metonymy's expansiveness depends upon deletion-upon the reader's conventional assumption of the presence in the work of what is not actually on the page, of all the details the author has chosen to exclude. Roman Jakobson argues that a different law governs poetry : that of metaphor, which works

not through contiguity but through similarity, through the comparison of apparently dissimilar things. Metaphor allows the mind to juxtapose the disparate fragments of the world and reveals their hidden correspondences; to disrupt that neat progression of 'gig lamps', and explore the nature of what lies hidden between them. Modernism, as Malcolm Bradbury defines it, "relies upon the metaphor, upon the internal stylization of the arts, the distortion of the familiar surface of observed reality, and the disposition of artistic contents according to the logic of metaphor, form or symbol, rather than according to a linear logic taken from story or history".[12] Modernism as an ethos requires two things : first, the artist's imagination or memory of stable, conventional culture; second, that culture's disruption and the artist's consequent awareness of the inadequacy of its artistic conventions to express either the multiplicity or the chaos of contemporary life. Yet in breaking with the past, the modernist nevertheless relies upon it, for it provides the base from which he departs and against which he works.

Malcolm Bradbury's account of modernism as 'the distortion of the familiar' sums up an age in which Virginia Woolf argues, 'all human relations have shifted - those between masters and servants, husbands and wives, parents and children';[13] shifted as a new generation rebelled

against the late Victorian rigidity and began to ask why the given relations of society need be so given; shifted as Freud began to reveal the complexity and irrationality of the human mind, as Nietzsche suggested morality was a construct to hide man's amorality from himself. Yet in moving through that wreckage the modernist, in theory, finds a 'means of overcoming chaos'[14] through an artistic representation and contemplation of that chaos so powerful that one does not feel the lack of an external order, of that familiar 'linear logic taken from story of history'.

David Lodge argues in The Modes of Modern Writing, modernism's reliance upon metaphor extends to the novel. The modernist novel will not be bound by the world as it is, but tries instead to create its own order out of chaos, to construct a meaning for a world. Realism had attempted to enact belief in the linear logic to which Malcolm Bradbury refers. Yet the late Victorians' growing awareness of the mind's operations had helped shatter the belief in the single objective universe that linear logic required, and so modernism attemted to effect 'a complete severance'[15] between art and any externally given belief. The distortions of the modernist novel triumph over the world, announcing its inability to control the mind's free play. The past as both Marcel Proust and Flaukner showed in radically different ways, is not always past, for the mind not only

works in linear fashion, but operates metaphorically as well. It finds correspondences between events far removed in space and time, and in doing so annihilates the distance between them. Modernism uses metaphor to extricate itself from a realism no longer adequate to experience; to give shape from within, not just to one scene or situation, but to the whole universe itself.

Though the form of the novel changed, the nature of its relation to society did not. The realistic novel's attempt to negotiate 'the antagonostic duality of soul and world' is, Lucien Goldmann thinks, homologous to " the internal contradiction between individualism as a universal value produced by bourgeois society and the important and painful limitation that this society itself brought to the possibilities of the development of the individual".[16] Virginia Woolf's insistence upon both the fragmentary nature of experience and the primacy of the individual sensibility has a similarly 'homologous' and contradictory relation to the atomized individualism of the late bourgeois society in which she grew up. Her emphasis on sensibility depends upon the leisure and security born of the long stable prosperity of the nineteenth century Pax Britannica of which she was beneficiary. In her subordination of society to the free play of the individual mind; her novels attempt to cut the characters free from the social conditions that have made

them possible and also deny the antagonistic duality of soul and world that creates the interiority. Virginia Woolf believes in the mind's ability to make the world respond to its desires. This self-confidence of her comes from the fact that she belongs to the generation, she describes in The Leaning Tower :

> "...when the crash came in 1914 ... their past their education, safe behind them, safe within them. They had the memory of a peaceful boyhood, the knowledge of a settled civilization. Even though the war cut into their lives, and ended some of them, they wrote and still write as if the tower were firm beneath them".[17]

Virginia Woolf, nevertheless, had the self-confidence that came from 'the knowledge of settled civilization', to believe that she could make a new structure from those shards.

With the Modernists, the novel as a genre fulfils the promise of the 'adventure of interiority' by transforming that interiority into the world itself. In subordinating the world to the soul, in using metaphor to reveal the 'concealed totality of life', the genre does reach the goal towards which, Lukacs says, the nineteenth century novel strives, it does so only by denying the 'antagonistic

duality of soul and world' upon which the form depends. The modernist novel succeeds by destroying the terms upon which its achievements depend.

The novelists of Powell's generation are on the one hand almost entirely without the modernist's sense of innovation as both an adventure and a necessity, and on the other lack the expansiveness of traditional realism. They neither return to tradition or break with it, and so seem hesitant, constrained by their material. The novel of the novelists of the second generation can not offer the modernist prospect of unifying the world's fragments. The absence of that unification suggests a crucial difference between these novelists and their immediate predecessors. These novelists share a sense of the soul's inability to reshape the world that distinguishes their work from that of the modernist predecessors.

The novelists of the second generation turned to the nineteenth century detached and objective treatment of the world by renouncing the modernist subjectivity because the modernist aesthetics for them was already passé. The questions with which both the British modernists and most of the subsequent criticism of the novel deal are not the central issues for the novelists of the second generation. They do not emphasize the soul, the interior life, at the expense of

the world. Their theme is instead the failure to achieve a satisfactory relationship between individual consciousness and objective reality in a society, and with an art, suspicious of the value, the relevance, and even the existence of the interior life itself in the modern age.

It would be better to approach the second generation through a consideration of two less radical modernists, Ford Madox Ford and E.M.Forster. Both believe in the value of individual experience, yet neither of them treats character 'in itself', as Virginia Woolf demanded the novelist should. To them, character can never be 'in itself', for their subject lies in the conflict between an embattled liberalism and historical events that do not greatly value the individual. These writers know precisely because they deal with some large historical events, how little the individual soul can either resist or ignore the world through which it moves. Their work, in which one finds a liberalism that has not yet pursued its implications to the point of dissolution, suggests why modernism did not destroy the novel. History did not let the novel die, for in reasserting its power over individual lives. It restored the novel's traditional subject, the relation of the soul to the world.

The novelists of the second generation were adolescents during the period of War. Not old enough to fight in the

Great War; but could neither escape the facts of current history, nor rely upon the sense of security created by what Woolf calls the knowledge of a 'settled society'. For after the war, and as a result of its horrors England entered a period in which as Orwell argued in Inside the Whale :

> "... so far as the younger generation was concerned, the official beliefs were dissolving like sand castles... by 1930 the debunking of western civilization had reached its climax and disillusionment was widespread. And many of the values, by which grandfathers of the younger generation lived, could not be now taken seriously".[18]

The writers of Evelyn Waugh's generation must work, Virginia Woolf argues, 'under the influence of change, under the threat of war'[19] or with the memory of one Great War and facing the prospect of another; and under the influence of the Russian Revolution, the first Labour Government in 1923 and the General Strike of 1926; and later, the Depression and the rise of Fascism. So 'the tower of middle-class birth and expensive education,' from which the artist of her own generation had regarded society, began to lean. Like modernist writers, all second generation writers too are acutely tower conscious; conscious of their middle-class birth; of their expensive educations. Such a writer must be

'acutely conscious' of the way in which his background has shaped his vision. He cannot persuade himself that he looks 'at the whole of life', and though conscious of the distortions his position causes, can do nothing about them. He is instead filled with the sense of his own impotence before history, of his inability to control his own circumstances, that seems the exact opposite of the confidence enjoyed by Woolf's own generation.

The problem, the writers of the second generation faced, was how to turn that incapacity into artistic capital. They had to search for a technique that would enable them to use their position upon that tower. For technique, according to Graham Greene, 'is a way of evading the personally impossible, of disguising a deficiency'.[20] The consciousness of what one cannot do is a mark of a good novelist. This suggests the reason why novelists of the second generation did not work in the paths suggested by the modernists. The second generation lacked, what Woolf calls, 'the knowledge of a settled civilization', upon which modernism depended. A society in which 'the official beliefs were dissolving like sand castles' was too unstable for innovation on a large scale. Modernism addressed a different set of historical circumstances from the one these writers faced, and they were in general shrewd enough to realize that they could not treat modernist technique as a sort of

cook book for fiction.

The novelists of the second generation were conscious that they cannot pretend to deal with 'the whole of life', but can only represent one small part of human experience. These writers could not pretend to the social range of D.H.Lawrence who had made the journey from the coal mines to the country houses. The fact that they came from the professional, public school and university - educated class meant that they were subject to the limitations of that class's increasing homogenization, both physical and intellectual, of middle class English life, which denied the young novelists the range of social experience once available to George Eliot in the country side or Dickens in the city. The social range of these novelists shrank, and characters tended to come from a single social group. The writer of this generation had to find a way to deal with the imaginative restrictions of his age and sensibility without falling pray to them. They evolved the technique of novel writing suitable to capture that impotence, without making art itself incomplete. The novelist must build into the work a sense of its own limitations, so that the book suggests what it has excluded and why.

Wyndham Lewis thinks that modern civilization, which has made men into things, requires that a writer should

treat his characters not subjectively through an examination of the interior life, but objectively, through a report of a character's outward appearance and machine-like actions. And the characteristic art of that civilization, Lewis argues in The Wild Body (1927), must of necessity be comic, for one has no choice but to laugh at the sight of 'a thing behaving like a person',[21] the thing to which modern society has reduced 'those to whom things are done'. Such a 'wild body' stumbles about as if it were alive, but actually operates according to a set of complicated mechanical laws, which the artist's 'non - moral'[22] satire must expose; non - moral because it purports not to pass judgement but merely to provide an objective description of the 'rhythmic scheme'[23] by which such bodies operate.

Lewis's conception of the comic is applicable to Powell's and Waugh's art. Wyndham Lewis describes his characters from without, and in doing so implies the soul's impotence before the world. Graham Greene, Henry Green, Powell and Waugh stand between Lewis and Hemingway. They all describe, what Lewis calls 'the shell - shocked'[24] man, but they also suffer from a form of shell - shock themselves. Yet they remain suspicious of the pity that Hemingway evokes. The subjective life and all the emotions that pertain to it have become not just inaccessible but irrelevant.

Levis' modernist confidence enables him to believe that his own 'executive will and intelligence' will allow him to triumph over the world of 'cannon fodder'.[25] His successors have no such faith. They can not summon the modernists' sense of belief in their own powers. The writer who has such sustaining belief feels himself capable of that transcendence, capable of explaining the world; as D.H.Lawrence was by willingness , to assert his mastery over the life his art describes. The early fiction of Waugh's generation is, in contrast, marked by the suspicion of all beliefs. They avoid in their early novels in particular close explorations of their characters' interior lives.

Lukacs in The Historical Novel describes the genre not as an account of the antagonistic duality of soul and world, but as an attempt 'to evoke the totality of the process of social development'.[26] Lukacs thinks that totalization is impossible. Novel must employ a group of 'typical' characters to provide the 'impression of an entire society in movement'.[27] Totalization depends upon the realistic novel's metonymy.

Graham Greene thinks that 'the novelist's career is an effort to illustrate his private world in terms of the public world we all share', an attempt that is itself an effort to negotiate the gap between the soul and the

world.[28] Terry Eagleton describes his version of totalization in similar terms, as a process of extending 'the materials of a directly personal response to the quality of a whole society ... into confidently public and representative terms'.[29].

Graham Greene, Henry Green, Evelyn Waugh and Anthony Powell gave the novel a way to go on by creating an idiom suitable for the social conditions of post-Great War England, that simultaneously attempted to restore, and yet acknowledged the difficulties of maintaining, the novel's traditional function as a mediator between subjective experience and the objective world. In the early years of their careers, they demonstrate irrelevance or even the non-existence of the soul in the world the trenches have left them. Beginning around the start of the Second World War,they attempt through the search for an adequate style to find some means of restoring value to the subjective life; a way of maintaining the importance, the credibility and the sensibility of individual experience in an increasingly depersonalized world. In doing so the novelists attempt to restore the saving power of the imagination.

The structure of their feelings, the structure of the world of their work are homologous with the mental structure of their society.

Anthony Powell's novels provide us with an interesting framework to understand some major concerns of this second generation of novelists. Anthony Powell was born in 1905 in London and was educated in public school at Eton and Oxford. After coming down from Oxford he worked for Duckworth, the publishers. And left Duckworth to become a film script writer, for a short time. He also worked in literary journalism. During the Second World War, he served in the Welch Regiment.

Though Powell's major literary work was produced between 1951 and 1975, he started his novelistic career in early 1930s by publishing Afternoon Men in 1931. In his first novel Afternoon Men Powell established the fictional territory that he continued through out his novelistic career. Afternoon Men describes the world of more or less fashionable London in 1920s, when the traditional social and moral patterns of English life had been badly shaken by the First World War and outrageous behaviour was cultivated for its own shake. It is a world where members of the aristocracy, often slightly eccentric or seedy and never of the first brilliance, associate with writers, artists and musicians, and other less clearly talented, inhabitants of bohemia provides setting and characters of Afternoon Men. In the later volumes of A Dance To The Music of Time, this world has been reinforced by businessmen and - during the

war years - by soldiers.

Much of the matter and method of Afternoon Men is caught in the following exchange between Fotheringham, a struggling, drinkhazed journalist, blindly seeking deeper truths, and William Atwater, the book's hero who so blankly refuses guidance.

> 'I'm not a religious sort of chap. I don't know anything about that sort of thing. But their must be something beyond all this sex business.'
>
> 'Yes'.
>
> 'You think so?'
>
> 'Oh yes. Quite likely. Why not?'
>
> 'But what?'
>
> 'I can't help'.
>
> 'You can't'.

Fotheringham's insight that 'there must be something beyond this sex business' is central to the novel. The novel shows a group of mainly young people at fairly undistinguished level of London society between the wars. Although they do work, the book is preoccupied with their social and sexual lives. In its understated elusive way the novel is asking what place genuine feelings can have in the empty world. The answer to it is none. Atwater's experiences reveal this sobre truth. Atwater finds himself involved with a series of

women. Of these, Susan Nunnery, a beauty, affects him powerfully. More than Atwater, she is very much a part of the rootless, willfully superficial life that he would like to leave. They come together briefly and almost at once she begins to draw away. From the start she is changeable. The relentless trivia of social life may kill any deeper relationship, probably before it starts. In this world emotion is out-lawed in favour of pleasure and excitement, emotion finally becomes impossible. Susan continues to drift from one to another. It is not that she is simply an empty creature incapable of feeling. She has taken a dicision to live on the surface level. Finally, Susan leaves London. Atwater's search for something deeper has failed. Atwater's affair with Lola ends untouched by feeling. No settled sexual relationship is shown in the book.

This is a book of continuously mannered style whose entertaining surface is broken now and then by the brief but clear sight of some enormously importance theme; it is the early form of a method which Powell will follow throughout his literary career. Afternoon Men is satiric, funny, comic, witty, pleasurable and entertaining. It shows the essence of Powell's fictional method.

The world of Powell's second novel Venurberg (1932) is wider and harsher. It is more conventionally plotted novel

than Afternoon Men. Lushington, the hero of Venusberg does get the girl finally, as well as another with whom he occupies the waiting time. Lushington looks for a real emotional experience but does not get it. The novel's happy ending springs out of sad, farcical accident, and amounts to no rhapsody of fulfilment. The book's irony is remarkably complicated, beginning with the basic agonies of those who yearn only for the lover they cannot have. Lushington loves Lucy. But Lucy loves Lushington's friend, Da Costa. He does not love her. The theme of Venusberg is that we are creatures of circumstances.

Bare survival is a theme of Afsternoon Men and Venusberg. From a View to a Death (1933), Powell's third novel, convcerns itself with durability in a more positive, though not exactly more pleasant, sense. Having shown social hierarchies shifting or already flat in the earlier books, Powell here demonstrates stability. Between wars London society has disintegrated in Afternoon Men. European society has been shaken up by the Russian Revolution in Venusberg. From a View to a Death deals with country-house society at a period when class change had not reached out with anything like such force to rural England. Protected stability endured there. Some decline had begun and menace existed, yet menace could be sharply repelled and in From a View to a Death it is. Although sexual relationships are unstable in

this novel, the central propertied marriage and family remain secure, not happy or admirable or cheerful but lasting.

As if to compensate for the sombreness of From a View to a Death, Powell gives a light surface to his next two novels Agents and Patients (1936) and What's Become of Waring (1939). These novels treat segments of English upper middle-class and middle-class life with Powell's familiar wit and precision. Maltravers and Chipchase in Agents and Patients are preoccupied with survival in a rough and anarchic society. Like Zouch, they seek to advance themselves. Cash is the problem and they conspire to lift some from a fool. Money and the need for it press more in Agents and Patients. There are references to the Depression. Motives centre on economics, for a change, not class. Agents and Patients is concerned, beneath its humour and extravagances, with freedom. Blore-Smith has a private income but feels incapable of realising himself. During an early sequence, he watches a street display in which a man tries to escape from fetters, and sees this as a symbol of his own life. ' He that is not free is not an Agent, but a Patient', says the Wesley Sermon. Blore-Smith tries to step out of the bonds of ignorance and inexperience. And during a fine comic scene Blore-Smith does shed his innocence and Wallet at a French brothel. In this novel Powell may mean

that we are all prisoners of our perscnalities and will stay so, regardless of efforts to change.

What's Become of Waring tells a mystery story about an author who conceals his private life and who turns out to have good reasons for his behaviour.

During the 1940s Powell published no more novels but he wrote a life of John Aubrey, the seventeenth century antiquarian and a great collector of gossip and retailer of anecdots, and edited a selection from Aubrey's Brief Lives(1948). The interest in Aubrey is extremely relevant to Powell's later fiction, where the anecdotal method and the fascination with the oddities of human behaviour and character reveal a cast of mind very much akin to Aubrey. Arther Mizener, in an essay on the sequence has remarked, 'the heart of Powell's work is his " Brief Lives"[30]. After the War he turned to novel writing with a spirit to produce a really large work about all things he was interested in.

The work, on which Powell's popularity as one of the major contemporary British novelists of the 1950s rests, is A Dance To The Music Of Time, published between 1951 and 1975. It is like that of Evelyn Waugh's C.P.Snow's and Manning's novel sequences, roman fleuve, running into twelve volumes; built up into four trilogies; each of them covering a different phase in the life of the narrator Jenkins. The

first trilogy Spring comprising A Question Of Upbringing(1951), A Buyer's Market(1952) and The Acceptance World (1955) covers the formative years of Jenkins's adolescence and young manhood. We see him first in the year 1921 at the public school, we follow him to Oxford and then into the fashionable or bohemian London of the late twenties, to a variety of parties and a steadly widening circle of his acquaintances, culminating in his first serious love affair with Jean Duport. The second trilogy Summer comprising At Lady Molly's (1957) Casanova's Chinese Restaurant(1960) and The Kindly Ones (1962), shows us Jenkins's life in the thirties, a period of consolidation, in which he gets married and begins to establish a modest literary reputation against a background that looks increasingly sombre, marked by events such as the suicide of the music critic Maclintick, and the death of Jenkins's Uncle Giles. Fascism is dominating Europe, the Spanish Civil War casts its shadow over English life, and at the end of The Kindly Ones, England is at war again, an event prefigured by the author's memory of the summer of 1914 presented at the beginning of the volume. The third trilogy Autumn, which is made up of The Valley of Bones (1964),The Soldiers' Art (1966) and The Military Philosophers (1968), covers the six years of war and the narrator's military service, first in Welch Regiment and

then with the Intelligence Corps. In this part of the sequence Jenkins continues to make fresh acquaintances, though at nothing like the rate of his early manhood; and because of the war several of his oldest friends disappear. Lady Molly Jeavons, Jenkins's sister-in-law Priscilla and her husband, Chips Lovell, are killed in the bombing of London. Charles Stringham dies as a prisoner of the Japanese and Peter Templer is killed in mysterious circumstances on the secret mission in German-occupied Europe. On the other hand Widmerpool continues to rise in the world. Jenkins becomes a father and we leave him after the Victory Service in St.Paul's in 1945, preparing to return to civilian life.

The last trilogy Winter comprises Books Do furnish a Room (1971), Temporary Kings (1973) and Hearing Secret Harmonies (1975). Number of the dancers decreases in the last phase. Powell evidently wants to insist that the whole work is to be regarded as a dance. So Bernard Bergonzi doubts whether the idea of the 'dance' could adequately sustain the concluding section.[31] Powell's way of treating time has changed noticably in the last trilogy. The first nine volumes cover about a quarter of a centry; from 1921, when Jenkins is a schoolboy, to 1945, when he leaves the army at the end of the second World War. The treatment of the intervening period is leisurely and detailed, a true roman fleuve, flowing steadily on, relating Jenkins's own

growth and development with changes in the social and public worlds he inhabits. The last three volumes cover, again, roughly twenty five years, from 1946 at the beginning of Books Do Furnish a Room to about 1971 at the the end of Hearing Secret Harmonies. Now the treatment is not continuous, but episodic and selective, the three volumes describe events at ten or twelve year intervals. The effect is of a series of separate stills, rather than a steadily unfolding of film.

If many of the original dancers have died, or in other ways disappeared, others take their place; the critic, editor and television personality, Lindsay 'Books-Do-Furnsih-a-Room' Bagshaw; the novelist Ada Leintwardine, later wife to J.G.Quiggin; another novelist, the talented but eccentric, X.Trapnel; the enigmatic American scholar, Russell Gwinnett; the sometime publisher, film producer and motor-racing enthusiast, Louis Glober; the tyrannical young diabolist, Scorpio Murtlock; Powell's inventiveness in matters of character is still apparent and rewarding; the dominant figure in these volumes is the beautiful and demonic Pamela Widmerpool, formerly Pamela Flitton, niece of Charles Stgringham. She is one of the Powell's most impressive embodiments of the will, and is too large a figure for this later phase of the sequence[32].

Some familiar figures remain or reappear after long absences as men and women in their sixties, seventies and eighties. And there is still Widmerpool, whom Powell increasingly presents as the central character of the sequence, whilst showing his ultimate decline.

A Dance To the Music of Time describes satirically the middle-class English society between the Great Wars; the liberated upper-class behaviour and especially sexual behaviour, the world of bohemia and barrack. Bernard Bergonzi writes in The Situation of the Novel that Powell's novel is a great work of social comedy in a central English tradition,[33] but it also conveys the cumulative sense of a shabby and dispirited society.

Powell produced Memoirs - To Keep the Ball Rolling in Four volumes- Infants of the Spring, Messengers of Day, Faces In My Life, The Strangers All Are Gone between 1976 and 1982. It is regarded as a gem among British literary memoirs. He wrote two plays- The Garden God and The Rest I'll Whistle. In 1980s he produced two more novels - Oh, How the Wheel Becomes It!(1983), and The Fisher King (1986).

The present dissertation aims at a critical study of Anthony Powell's first trilogy Spring of the twelve volume novel 'A Dance To The Music Of Time comprising A Question of Upbringing, A Buyer's Market and The Acceptance World

with special reference to Powell's deviation from modernism in matters and manners.