

Sexual Politics in V. S. Naipaul's Guerrillas : A Semiotic Reading

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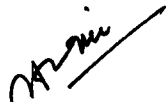
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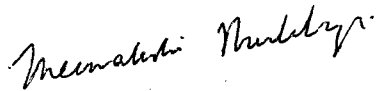
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C E R T I F I C A T E

This dissertation entitled "Sexual Politics in V.S. Naipaul's Guerrillas : A Semiotic Reading" submitted by Nalini Prabhakar, School of Languages, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy is an original work and has not been submitted so far, in part or full, for any other degree or diploma of any university. This may be placed before the examiners for evaluation for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy.


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INTRODUCTION

V.S. Naipaul's Guerrillas first published in 1975, is a powerfully conceived and executed narrative, situated in a crisis ridden tropical island. It is a novel about violation and the central image of violation is sexual; rape and sexual humiliation culminating in murder. The most dominating and arresting element in Guerrillas, is its treatment of sexuality especially male degradations of female sexuality which borders on revulsion and disgust. It is through the sexual act or rather through the violation of it that the symbolic conflicts of black and white, slave and master are acted out. This dissertation, is an endeavour on my part to arrive at a meaningful understanding of the sexual politics that operate in the text. I have tried to emphasise the semiotic design of the text and see how sexual politics is structured into the discourse of the text.

An approach of this nature demands a few preliminary clarifications. Firstly, what do I mean by sexual politics? Since I shall adopt the feminist definition of sexual politics as a historical social reality, then how is this reality accounted for in semiotic theory? Secondly, why is it that I have

preferred the semiotic approach to that of a feminist approach?

Simone De Beauvoir in The Second Sex observes that legislators, priests and philosophers have striven to prove that, "subordinate position of woman is willed in heaven and advantageous on earth."¹ There are innumerable instances throughout history which will substantiate this observation. The Epistles of St. Paul are replete with passages such as, "Neither was the Man created for the woman, but the woman for the Man". (Corinthians 11:9) The Jewish orthodox morning prayer reads thus :

Blessed are thou, oh! Lord our God King of
the Universe
That I was not born a Gentile
That I was not born a slave
That I was not born a woman.

To quote Aristotle on the subject: "The female is a female by virtue of a certain lack of qualities. We should regard the female nature as afflicted with a natural defectiveness." Beauvoir quotes Levi-Strauss, who, following Hegel finds in consciousness itself a fundamental hostility towards every other consciousness. Therefore, every conscious being sets himself as the "essential" as opposed to the Other, the "inessential", the Object. Levi-Strauss further contends that, wars,

festivals, trading treatises and contests among tribes, nations, tend to deprive the concept 'Other' of its absolute sense and manifest its relativity. Beauvoir then questions as to why this reciprocity has not been recognised between the sexes, in that "one of the contrasting terms is set up as the sole essential, denying any relativity in regard to its correlative and defining the latter as pure Otherness."²

Throughout history, women have been reduced to objects for men, pacified into non-personhood and denied subjectivity. This Gender Oppression has resulted due to patriarchal tyranny which brandishes sexuality as its weapon. Patriarchy, which is a social organization, has accorded a superior status to male and an inferior one to female. This according to Kate Millett is political because it involves "power structured relationships, arrangements whereby one group of persons is controlled by another."³ She defines sexual politics as a process whereby the ruling sex imposes and consolidates its power over the subordinate sex. It is not the biological differences between the sexes but the social organization of these differences that perpetuate gender differences. The ruling sex justifies, its domination

by condemning the oppressed to being different and therefore denies it equal status. The rationale that forms the basis of all sexist and racist ideologies is this: "A status of inferiority is inextricably bound to a status of difference."⁴

In the case of women oppression the biological then becomes an ideology that rationalizes the political. Julia Kristeva, has a different approach to the female issue. She does not have a theory of either "femininity" or "femaleness". She has instead a theory of marginality and subversion. The only possible definition of "femininity" in Kristevan terms is, that which is marginalized by "patriarchal symbolic order." One must however realize that Kristeva's approach might be different but the basic premise underlying her theory is no different from the other feminists. Marginality is imposed upon women by virtue of biological and gender differences which ultimately brings us to the question of sexual politics. If we consider Millett's theory of sexual politics, it presupposes a well organized, conscious male conspiracy against female subjectivity. Cora Kaplan however, convincingly argues that Millett ignores the fact that not all misogyny is conscious and that even women may unconsciously

internalize sexist desires and attitudes.⁵ Woman fails to claim subjectivity because often she is well pleased with her role as the other. This is due to the internalizing of a male image of their sexuality as their identity as women. Catherine A Mackinnon writes "woman through male eyes is sex object, that by which man knows himself at once as man and as subject."⁶

Now that I have fairly well established sexual politics (by politics, I do not mean anything more than the social organization of the sexes and the power relations this involves) as a social reality let us now try and relate reality and literature. I have taken reality to include not just the world of material objects but also philosophical, psychological and social realities, which exist independent of literature. At this initial stage, Ann Jefferson and David Robey's definition of literature as : "The author sends a literary text about reality to the reader in language"⁷ is adequate for our purpose. That there is a relationship between the text and reality is quite obvious, but what needs consideration is whether this relationship is direct or indirect, and also how this reality is evoked in a text.

Since my purpose is to concentrate on how a semiotic theory evokes this relationship, it is ideal to begin with Saussure. He argued that the relation between sign and referent is an arbitrary one, therefore any theory of one to one correspondence between sign and referent will be meaningless because then reality is not reflected by language but is produced by it. As a literary text consists solely of language, the relationship between text and reality assumes a totally different dimension. This original insight of Saussure, demystified the Aristotlean conception of art as "mimesis" which was in vogue until early 20th century and has been instrumental in reconstructing a radically different relation between art and reality. Speaking of the novel, Culler reiterates Saussurean thought and says that, in a novel one can most easily study "the semiotic process in its fullest scope: the creation and organization of signs not simply in order to produce meaning but in order to produce a human world charged with meaning."⁸

For the Formalists the literary text was neither a vehicle for ideas nor an expression of social reality. For the study of literary form they completely overlooked the content. Though they did

admit that art had a relation to reality, they claimed that this relation was not the critics concern. Like the Formalist thought, Semiotics is concerned with the form or structure of text, but this is not its sole concern. Semiotics is also concerned with the content of the text, but content as is generated through the structure. Reality therefore is a textual reality, as it is constituted within the text or with reference to other texts. Society and history are then read as structured texts. Fiction undoubtedly arises from the writer's confrontation with the society of his time and is the expression of a historical moment, but this however does not mean that for a critic the point of departure is from the text to the historical moment or vice-versa, but how this historical moment is constituted within the text itself.

Macherey and Balibar in "Literature as an Ideological Form", argue that a text is presented as finished work, expressing either the author's ideology or the spirit of the age, but in itself it is a fictional production of both these things. Ideology and reality enter the text but on transformation into fiction, the text becomes "incomplete, disparate and diffuse from being the outcome of

the conflicting contradictory effect of superimposing real processes, which cannot be abolished in it except in an imaginary way."⁹ Macherey's production theory is built upon Althusser's idea that a text cannot always make the right connections between all the elements of reality. Reality therefore is constituted incoherently in the text, leaving gaps through which a reader can grasp what is hidden from the text. Macherey's production theory considers the writer as one who works a world of signs and codes, the text then is a production not reflection. In this sense one can see a similarity between this theory and a semiotic theory. However, Macherey's theory is established as a Marxist and not a semiotic theory because it considers texts as necessarily incomplete and contradictory, which is crucially connected with ideology.

In Writing Degree Zero, Barthes makes a crucial distinction between language and style. The frame of reference of style, which includes imagery, delivery and vocabulary, is biological or biographical, whereas the frame of reference of language is historical. A language and a style are therefore "blindforces", "objects", but a "mode of writing is a function: it is the relationship

between creation and society, the literary language transformed by its social finality, form considered as a human intention and thus linked to the great crises of History."¹⁰ Barthes suggests that literary texts can only cross-refer to each other. The Barthesian codes are not inherently literary, as they function as part of culture in general. These codes, though they participate in the structuring process of the text, they cannot however be reduced to a structure and in turn the text too cannot be reduced to a structural homology of a code. Reality itself becomes a kind of text constituted by codes. To write about reality, in his scheme, is not to relate world to thing but text to text. Kristeva explains the concept of "Text as an Ideologeme" as, that procedure of semiotics which studies the text as "intertextuality" and considers it as such within (the text) society and history. At different structural levels of each text, ideologeme performs the intertextual function giving it its historical and social co-ordinates. Kristeva proposes an analysis that while dealing with linguistic units is of a translinguistic order. According to her, linguistic units, semiotic units in particular, serve only in establishing different kinds of novelistic

utterances as functions, and one has to therefore study the function that incorporates the utterances within the text. By considering the organization of semiotic sequences, one arrives at a suprasegmental level. In so far as the utterances pertain to this suprasegmental level, they can be linked up within the totality of novelistic production. The ideologeme is that intertextual function whereby functions defined according to the extra-novelistic textual set (Te) assume value within the novelistic textual set (Tn).¹¹ In her discussion of Bakhtin's theory, Kristeva further elucidates her own theory of intertextuality. For Bakhtin, society is not separable from language, because language is the material medium through which people interact in society. He confers the status of minimal structural unit of a text to "word" - word as a dialogue, and then situates the text within history and society, which are seen as texts read by the writer who participates in history by rewriting them. Word therefore links structural models to cultural and historical environment.

Although I have defined sexual politics in feminist terms, I have been hesitant to adopt a pure feminist approach. Feminist criticism of date falls

under three-categories. 1. study of stereotypical "images of women" in literature. 2. A re-examination of existing criticism of female authors. 3. A reformative literary criticism, to establish a non-repressive, value-free, standard for discussing literature. The first and second categories to a vast extent are either content or author oriented and pay little or virtually no attention to the formal structures of a text. The third category however, falls outside the domain of pure feminist criticism and includes the work of french feminist critics, who have preferred to work on problems of textual, linguistic, semiotic or psychoanalytic theory. Taking initiative from french feminist critics, we shall attempt a semiotic analysis of Guerrillas, defining the content (sexual politics) not just as what is said but the way in which it is said. This approach will allow us to deviate not only from content oriented criticism but also from the author-oriented criticism. Semiotics rules out the possibility of explaining a text in terms of a reality or an author external to it. I have already elaborated upon the textual reality, accepted within the semiotic framework.

Barthes's reasons for proclaiming the death of the author should convince us of the necessity of rejecting the notion of the author as the transcendent signified of his-her text.

"To give a text an author is to impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing. Such a conception suits criticism very well, the latter then allotting itself the important task of discovering the Author (or its hypostases: society, history, psyche, liberty) beneath the work. When the Author has been found, the text is "explained", victory to the critic."¹²

The alternative to author-centred criticism for Barthes, is to accept the multiplicity of writing, "where everything is to be disintegrated nothing deciphered."¹³

The first chapter traces the history and development of semiotics as an intellectual discipline, and is essential, to familiarize us, with the general field of semiotics. We shall concentrate on Saussurean linguistics and structural linguistics as theorized by Jakobson and Levi-Strauss. In overlooking the methods of narratology proposed by Propp, Greimas, Bremond, Todorov and Genette and concentrating on Levi-Strauss, it is not my intention to undermine the importance of

their theories. As mentioned earlier my aim in this chapter is to familiarize with the historical evolution of the general field of semiotics and Levi-Strauss is important for us because specific aspects of his theory have shaped the subsequent structuralist concepts. We shall, however refer to some of these narratologists in the discussion of our Barthesian applicational model. This chapter will also introduce the semiotic model we shall employ in the analysis of our text.

In the second chapter we shall analyse our text, Guerrillas at the level of functions and at the level of actions, and in the concluding chapter, we shall deal with the level of narration and the codes through which the various elements of the text are organized.

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CHAPTER - I

Semiotics has indeed come a long way since the time of its founding fathers Saussure and Pierce. It comes to us today in all its many varied forms resisting all attempts to reduce it into a single method. To propose a semiotic research model most appropriate for the analysis of our text, it is essential first, to understand Semiotics in its multifaceted and heterogenous character. Every act of communication is made of signs, and semiotics which is the study of signs deals with those principles underlying the structure of all signs.

Saussure's epoch-making Course in General Linguistics has had a very powerful impact on Semiotic thought. I shall very briefly outline his central positions in this book. Saussure defines language in terms of three different levels of linguistic activity. Firstly, Language systems in general which include the entire human potential for both physical and mental speech. Secondly, Language system and finally speech. Speech or parole is the actualization of the language system in the individual utterances. Since a language system lacks tangible existence, it has to be

constructed from the evidence of individual utterances of moving from parole to Langue.¹ He viewed language as a system of signs, to be studied synchronically, as a complete system at any given point of time and not diachronically in its linguistic development. A sign for him consists of a sound image and a concept- a signifier and a signified. Each sign in the linguistic system has meaning only by virtue of its "difference" from other.

For Saussure the proper domain of a Semio-
logist is the conventional sign system where the relation between the signifier and signified is arbitrary, in other words in this system there does not exist any motivated relation between the form and its meaning.

C.S. Pierce, the American philosopher, defines "Semiosis" as "an action, an influence which is or involves a co-operation of three subjects, such as a sign, its object and its interpretant this trirelative influence not being resolvable into actions between pairs."² He distinguished between three kinds of signs, the Icon, the Index and the Symbol. The Icon represents its object mainly by similarity between

the sign vehicle and the signified. Indexical signs are causally connected with their objects either physically or through contiguity. The symbol is a sign where the relationship between sign vehicle and signified is purely conventional and the linguistic sign falls into this category. Pierce however adds that there is never a thing such as a "pure" icon, index or symbol.

Saussure's dream of a general science of signs - Semiology- found an application in the structuralist theory. Prague school linguist Roman Jakobson in confluence with French anthropologist Levi-Strauss laid the foundation out of which modern French structuralism developed. Since literature uses language and language is one of the features which makes men distinctive, it is therefore natural that the concepts of Structuralism should develop from linguistics and anthropology. However, one must acknowledge the contribution of Hjelmslev to this theory. His observation "Apriori it would seem to be a generally valid thesis, that for every process there is a corresponding system by which the process can be analysed and described by means of a limited number of premises" became one of the axioms of structuralist method.³

Any unit achieves full significance only in relation to the other units of the structure, to which it is integrated. It is necessary to identify the permanent structures into which everything else fits and from which they derive their meaning. These permanent structures were conceived of as located in linguistics and structuralism attempted to apply the linguistic theory to objects and activities other than language. This extension resulted in a profound alteration of perspective in most of the human sciences. The structuralist perspective was that if human action or productions have a meaning there must be an underlying system of distinctions and conventions which makes this meaning possible. It therefore for most part concentrates not on what the signs actually say, but on the underlying set of principles by which these signs are combined into meanings.

Let us now examine the basic premises on which this theory works. Firstly it recognizes two distinctions, - between rule and behaviour and the functional and non-functional which result from the differentiation of langue from parole. Secondly, it believes in the notion of relational identity. Individual units of any system have meaning only by

virtue of their relations to one another. As long as the structure of relations (Parallelism, Opposition, Inversion, Equivalence) between the units is preserved, the individual units are replaceable. Finally, literature can be analysed in structural terms, by the same rules as those applied in analysis of other forms of social or cultural activity. The relationship between literature and language is one of "homology" or parallelism and is organized at every level like language. The analysis of any system requires the specification of the paradigmatic relations (functional contrasts) and syntagmatic relations (possibilities of combination). Structural analysis treasured functional contrasts as a result of which binary oppositions assumed vast importance. Binary opposition was taken to be the fundamental operation of the human mind that which orders the most heterogenous elements and therefore instrumental in the production of meaning. Since, when two things are conceptually opposed to each other, we relate them either by virtue of their similarities or differences, and thus derive meaning from this disjunction.

The Prague school Linguists, Jan Mukarovsky, Felix Vodicka, and Jakobson elaborated the Formalist

ideas but systematized them within the framework of Saussurean linguistics and hence effected the transition from Formalism to Structuralism. All communication for Jakobson involves six elements and he schematizes these elements in the following manner :-

Context

Message

Sender -----Receiver

Contact

Code

4

The message does not carry meaning within itself, but meaning resides in the total act of communication. In the above formulation message refers only to the verbal form. Within the message, there are units which are of structural significance to the act of communication. The dominant function from among these units determines the meaning of any speech event.

Jakobson formulates these functions as in the earlier scheme :

Referential

Poetic

Emotive ----- Conative

Phatic

Metalingual.

5



DISS
M8

0,111,3, N32, 1:2 (S,5)

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These cardinal functions of language have a different hierarchy in the diverse types of messages. The emotive function is stressed when the message is oriented towards the sender, and the conative when directed towards the receiver. The phatic function is emphasized when message refers to the contact and when aimed towards the context itself, the referential function is stressed. The message's orientation to the code itself is metalingual and finally when the message draws attention to itself, its sound pattern, diction and syntax, it fulfils the poetic function. A literary utterance can be distinguished from a non-literary utterance by emphasizing its own formal structure. When any one of the six features of communication loses its simplicity and becomes opaque or multiple, then we sense literariness in an utterance.

Jakobson establishes selection and combination

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as the two fundamental factors which operate on any level of language. Selection is produced on the basis of equivalence, similarity and dissimilarity, synonymy and autonymy, and combination is produced by contiguity.⁶ Equivalence is responsible for the metaphoric pole in language, while contiguity pertains to the metonymic pole. Jakobson claims that in poetry the metaphoric pole is dominant while in prose the metonymic pole prevails.⁷ This does not mean that in poetry the metaphoric and in prose the metonymic, is the only force, it is the dominant force. This becomes clear when Jakobson writes, "In poetic language the poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection onto the axis of combination,"⁸ He also maintains that the deeper dimensions of prose can be grasped only by disclosing all the elements of equivalence and parallelistic patterning. It is only then that the elements perceived in their referential functions - the protagonists, the plot lines, seemingly disparate episodes and images - acquire a new dimension, for in relating them we see in them a system.

Structuralism created a whole new literary science - narratology which began with Levi-Strauss's pioneering study on myth and was continued in the

works of Propp, Greimas, Todorov, Genette, Bremond and Barthes. Levi-Strauss, at this juncture is important because he was the first to analyse non-linguistic data using modern linguistic methods, which was the first step towards an explanation of a total culture, once again conceived as a gigantic language. He went on to analyse the specific systems which would reveal the underlying structures of the societies - kinship, marriage and myths. In analysing the kinship relations he discovered four terms, which are organically linked and are in forms of binary oppositions: 1. Brother/sister 2. Husband/wife 3. Father/son 4. Mother's brother/sister's son.⁹ This classification rests on four terms - brother, sister, father, son- which are linked by two pairs of correlative oppositions in such a way that in each of the two generations, there is always 'a positive relation and a negative one.'¹⁰ This is the fundamental unit of kinship. What is important here is not the terms but the relationship between them. These relations are imposed by the human mind which gives them their soci-cultural character."..... A kinship system exists only in human consciousness, it is an arbitrary system of representation."¹¹ This system once again, like language is arbitrary and systematic, arbitrary because there is no logical relationship between these relations and systematic

because it devices a mechanism by which it coordinates and controls the functions of new groups.

Levi-Strauss's more important contribution to the semiotic method comes from his analysis of myth. Contrary to popular belief, he discerned a complex relationship between myth, language and society. According to him like kinship system, myth also yields itself to the phonemic analysis of its phenomenon and the large number of myths could be reduced to a few recurrent elements. Myth involves language, because it has to be told, yet at the same time it has to be distinguished from it. It certainly incorporates the distinction between language and speech. Within its structure every myth can be seen as deriving from and contributing to the fundamental structure of its system. But it also operates at a higher level than that of language. Myth is always recounted in time, referring to an event that has happened a long time ago, but the specific patterns and structures of events described are timeless. Thus every time a myth is recounted it combines elements from the diachronic as well as the synchronic axes. Further the original myth remains the same and "consists of all its versions".¹²

There is yet another level to the language of myth that exhibits certain properties, which rise above the ordinary linguistic level. In language phonemes combine and produce words, words in turn combine to form sentences. But myth as well as music have only two levels. The smallest unit of music is "Soneme" which is equivalent of phonemes in language, but they, instead of combining to form words, produce something like the sentence in language. In case of myth the level of phonemes is absent. There is only the level of words which directly proceed to that of a sentence. Although the constituent units of myth, resemble that of language, yet they are different from it. The smallest unit of myth is the "gross constituent unit or mytheme"¹³. Each unit reveals a relation in which certain functions are linked with a given subject. These relations in themselves are not important. It is the "bundle of such relations" and it is only as bundles that these relations "can be put to use and combined so as to produce meaning."¹⁴ Thus we see that myth is to be studied like a language and at the same time studied differently as well. It has to be studied like music which involves simultaneous study of both the synchronic and the diachronic aspects. This emphasis accords well with the dual nature of language itself - syntagmatic and paradigmatic - and Jakobson's distinction between the metonymic and metaphoric poles.

We shall now propose an applicational model for our text Guerrillas, through a discussion of Roland Barthe's, "Introduction to Structural Analysis of Narrative" and S/Z. We have already dwelt upon language being a system of relations, and Benveniste adds that these relations are of two kinds, "the relations between elements of the same level are distributional and those between elements of different levels are integrative."¹⁵ The integrative capacity of an element can be made explicit only after defining its relations to other items at the same level. "To understand a narrative" Barthes writes, "is not merely to follow the unfolding of the story, it is also to recognize its construction in "Stories", to project the horizontal concatenations of the narrative 'thread' onto an implicit vertical axis; to read (to listen to) is not merely to move from one word to the next, it is also to move from one level to the next."¹⁶ He proposes three levels of description of the narrative.

1. The level of 'functions' (as in Propp and Bremond).
2. The level of 'actions' (as in Greimas when he talks of characters as actants.)
3. The level of 'narration' (as in Todorov when he talks about discourse).¹⁷

Vladimir Propp's book the Morphology of the Folktale, first published in 1928, attempts at a taxonomy of the folklorist text and follows the linear sequence of elements in the text, as reported by the narrator. His approach is the syntagmatic structural analysis. Propp distinguishes between the variable and constant elements of a tale, and observes that in fairy tales, although the personages vary widely their function remains constant. He understands function as 'an act of a character, defined from the point of view of its significance for the course of the action.'¹⁸

The functions of various personages in the tale are limited and serve as constant elements of the tale, whereas the dramatis personae themselves are variable. Propp from his analysis of hundred tales finds thirty one functions, and no single tale had all the functions. Since the dramatis personae play only a supportive role, Propp eliminates them in his definition of functions. Bremond in his article, "The Logic of Narrative Possibilities" begins with the basic units of narrative. He observes that the basic unit "is still the function, applied as in Propp, to actions and events, which when grouped in sequence, generate the narrative."¹⁹

These functions are grouped together in a triadic structure to form the "elementary sequence." He reduces Propp's thirty one functions, to six functions grouped into three pairs. These are : 1. Deterioration - Improvement 2. Merit - Reward 3. Worthiness- Punishment. He then identifies a hierarchy of these sequences in which the first sequence is, obligatory and the second and third sequences are optional.²⁰ The relation between the functions in this triadic structure is that of logicality and not of consequence as in Propp. In this kind of structure, the sequence is opened by a function and there is a choice at every subsequent stage of development.

Let us now see how this level of functions is adopted in Barthes' structuralist method. In Barthes' scheme of analysis, the first task of the analyst is to break up the narrative into its smallest narrative units. What makes certain segments of the story, units, is their functional nature. Hence the name "functions" can be attributed to these first units. But all the units do not have the same functions. Some units have units on the same level as their correlates and are distributional.

These units which involve "metonymic relata" and correspond to the functionality of "doing", Barthes terms as functions. Some units are integrational and require a change of levels for their saturation. These units which involve "metaphoric relata" and correspond to the functionality of "being", Barthes calls them indices. For the clarification of an indicial notation one must proceed to a higher level, either that of actions or narration. It is possible that several indices may refer to the same signified and one does not necessarily have to pay attention to the order of their occurrence. This paradigmatic nature of the indices makes them semantic units. Indices refer to the "signified" unlike functions which refer to an operation. Functions and indices constitute the two major classes of functions. One can within each of these classes determine two subclasses of narrative units. All units in the class of functions, do not have the same importance, some units, that constitute the hinge points and "inaugurate or conclude an uncertainty,"²¹ are the cardinal functions or nuclei. Other units which merely fill in the narrative space between two cardinal functions and fill in the narrative space between two cardinal functions, and are complementary in nature, in the sense that they set subsidiary notations around one or other nuclei, are the catalyzers. The catalyzers perform

the chronological functionality and are only consecutive units whereas the cardinal functions are both consecutive and consequential. In the other class of functions, the indices, a distinction can be made between indices proper, which refer to the character of a narrative agent, a feeling, an atmosphere or a philosophy and informants which serve to identify, to locate in time and space. Let us, for our convenience formulate the classes and subclasses of the level of functions :-

Functions

	Functions		Indices
Cardinal functions	Catalyzers	Indices	Informants
or			
Nuclei			

Barthes adds that, a unit can at the same time belong to two classes. Another point to be noted here is that catalyzers, indices and informants share a common characteristic; in relation to nuclei, they are expansions.

The nuclei and catalyzers are in a relation of implication where "a catalyzer presupposes a cardinal function to which it can connect but not vice-versa."²² A group of nuclei organized into a basic unit is the sequence (as in Bremond). The nuclei which are in a logical succession and bound by a relation of solidarity, result in a sequence. All the nuclei therefore can be ordered into a certain number of sequences where each sequence is always nameable. The sequence is atonce a minimal and maximal unit- maximal because it constitutes a new unit which can serve as a function in a still larger sequence and minimal because at every stage there is a narrative alternative. These sequences which constitute the level of functions must be integrated with a higher level, for them to draw their meaning and this brings us to the level of actions.

From Propp to Todorov, all the attempts at classification of the character have not yielded any satisfactory formulation. Any reported action is unintelligible without the presence of a character/actant, and the difficulty arises because structuralists have been reluctant to define agents of actions in terms of psychological essence as "person". They have preferred to use the term "participant". Propp reduced characters to a simple typology based on unity of actions attributed to

them by the narrative-Donor of a magical agent, Helper, Villian etc. Bremond sees characters, even secondary characters as agents of sequences of actions. He further adds that where two characters are involved in a sequence, then the sequence comprises of two perspectives, for example, what is fraud for one, is gullibility for other, Every character is the hero of his own sequence. Todorov adopted a method whereby he analyses the major relationships in which the characters engage. He classified the "predicates" of characters "what is said of them".

Greimas classified the characters not according to what they are, but according to what they do and therefore calls the characters "actants". Greimas based his theory on the fundamental distinction between the "apparent level" and the "immanent level" of narration. The immanent level constitutes the common structural basis of all narratives and consists of semic features or "semes" which are the product of binarily opposed principles such as, man/woman, day/night, etc. These binarily opposed principles underpin the "fundamental grammar". This level is prior to the apparent level of the narrative. The apparent level has a relation of equivalence with the immanent

level and underpins the "surface grammar."

This surface grammar is characterized by its anthropomorphic nature. A narrative proceeds by the conversion of the fundamental grammar to the surface grammar. This conversion is represented by the formula: "NU = F(A)",²³ where "NU" is the narrative utterance and its equivalent is the grouping together of a Functions ("F") and the subject of the function, Actant ("A"). The actant therefore participates in a sphere of actions which are classifiable and typical. He means by actions, not the acts but the major articulations of praxis, the three main semantic axes-communication, desire and ordeal. He proposes an actantial model with a matrix of six actants ordered in a paradigmatic structure- subject/object, Donor/receiver, helper/opponent- and within this structure actants can be mobilized according to rules of multiplication, substitution and replacement. A single character can occupy different actantial positions. By identifying the agents, and by seeing how they participate in the major articulations of the praxis, we identify the privileged class of actants from among the innumerable other characters present in the narrative. By considering the position the actants occupy in the actantial model, we begin to comprehend the subject/subjects, of the narrative.

What is common in all the conceptions of character we have dealt with, is the definition of character according to participation in a sphere of actions, which is why this level is called the level of actions and not characters. Here the word actions is not to be understood in the sense of the "trifling acts which form the tissue of the first level, but in that of the major articulations of praxis (desire, communication, struggle)."²⁴ Characters as units of actional level find their intelligibility only if integrated with the level of Narration.

"Narrative as object," Barthes observes "is the point of a communication."²⁵ For every narrative there is a donor and a receiver. He further observes that there has been much deliberation on the author of a narrative, without much consideration of whether the author is really the narrator. Regarding the donor of the narrative, there exist three conceptions. Firstly, that a narrative issues from a person, the author, and it is the expression of this author, who is nevertheless external to it. Secondly, that a narrative is a story told by an apparently impersonal, omniscient narrator, who does not identify with any character, yet knows exactly what is going on within each and every character. The third conception

maintains that the narrator should limit the narrative only to what the characters can observe or know. Each character in turn should be the sender of the narrative. According to Barthes, all these conceptions treat the narrator and characters as real 'living people' and confine the narrative to its referential level. He points out that the narrator and characters are "paper beings", the author and the narrator not being co-extensive in any way. The signs of the narrator are immanent to the narrative and therefore readily available for semiological analysis. It is however wrong to conclude that these signs are at the disposal of the author. Any view which considers the author as the possessor of narrative signs, has to rest on the assumption that the author is a "full subject" and the narrative the "instrument expression of that fullness. This assumption is unacceptable to structural analysis because who speaks (in the narrative) is not who writes (in real life) and who writes is not who he is".²⁶

Barthes recognizes two kinds of narration, personal and apersonal. The dominant mode of narration determines the structure. There are however fictions in which none of these modes are dominant, so to say, because in such instances the

modes alternate rapidly. The personal and apersonal modes are not determined by the use of 'I' and 'he'. The method adopted, requires us to "rewrite the narrative (or the passage) from "He" to 'I'. So long as the rewriting entails no alteration of the discourse other than this change of the grammatical pronouns, we can be sure that we are dealing with apersonal system".²⁷ The signs of narrativity which reintegrate functions and actions, and signify the ~~narrator~~/donor or addressee/reader, in the narrative communication, constitutes the level of narration.

Barthes' S/Z marks the beginning of the poststructuralist era and there is a perceptible shift from his earlier classical structuralist stance. Terry Eagleton writes, that this shift away from structuralism "has been in part, to use the terms of the French linguist Benveniste, a move from 'Language' to 'Discourse'. Language is speech or writing viewed 'objectively' as a chain of signs without a subject. 'Discourse' means language grasped as 'utterance', as involving speaking and writing subjects and therefore also, at least potentially, readers or listeners."²³ In S/Z, a book length analysis of Balzac's Sarrasine, Barthes questions the structuralist approach of reducing individual texts to a copy of

linguistic structures. He instead privileges the writing of a text, and sees it neither as a structure nor as a copy of structure but as a practice. His concepts of 'play' and 'practice' replace the static image of literary text with that of a dynamic open one. He totally rejects the notions of system and homology since texts are not seen as systems and consequently analogies with linguistic structures do not apply. He however emphasises the primary of language and asserts the notion of signifier. Although in "Introduction to the structural analysis of narrative", Barthes makes claims of homology between language and narrative, "a narrative is a long sentence, just as every constative sentence is, in a way, the rough outline of a short narrative"²⁹, the model he constructs is not susceptible to strict linguistic categories. The basic units of narrative, the functions and indices are defined and differentiated not in terms of any prior linguistic analogies found for them but in terms of their narrative effect. It is only then that the linguistic analogies of metonymy and metaphor, are related to the functions and indices respectively.

Barthes makes a distinction between the 'lisible' and 'scriptible' text. The positive value here is the scriptible because in this typology the the emphasis is on production rather than reproduction

or representation. A scriptible text requires the reader to contribute in the production and writing of the text, "to function himself to gain access to the magic of the signifier, to the pleasure of writing."³⁰ It is a process wherein there is structuration but no structure, production but no product. In S/Z Barthes works his way through the text on the basis of totally arbitrary units of reading which he calls 'lexies'. A lexie is a minimal unit of reading which has a specific function. These lexies do not correspond to any structure, they are what the reader judges as an indentifiable unit- a phrase, a sentence or a couple of sentences. He then interprets these lexies, according to *in five signifying systems which he calls codes.* the ways they generate meanings. [^]The five codes create "a kind of network a topos through which the entire text passes, (or rather in passing becomes text)"³¹. One must recognize that there is nothing literary about these codes, as they function as a part of culture in general, These codes are shared by the author and reader and their role in the text is what makes it a text. Codes cannot be reduced to a structure and are thus different from the models of poetics. The text therefore cannot be reduced to the structural homology of a code. In our discussion of 'Introduction to Structural Analysis of Narrative' we have seen that Barthes identifies three levels of

description, that of functions, actions and narration. To avoid confusion resulting from dual terminology, we should refer to the level of lexies as the level of functions. The level of lexies or functions, then is the level of our primary contact with the text which would then be integrated with the higher levels of the text.

The most important contribution of Barthes, is his identification of the five codes, through which the reader organizes the various elements of the text. These five codes are the Proairetic, hermeneutic, connotative, symbolic and the cultural codes.

The proa-retic code or code of Actions governs the reader's construction of the plot. It governs the reader's recognition of dynamic predicates whose sequential distribution is crucial to the narrative. Where Todorov looks only for major actions or plots, Barthes sees all actions as codable even the most trivial ones. In practice however, he applies a few principles of selection.

The hermeneutic code or code of puzzles involves a logic of enigma and solution. This code consists of all units whose function is to

"articulate in various ways a question, its response and the variety of chance events which can either formulate the question or delay its answer, or even constitute an enigma and lead to its solution."³²

The desire to know the answers to questions raised by the text acts as a great structuring force. The different ways of keeping the question alive without revealing its solution include, equivocation, snares and partial answers.

The semic code or connotative code helps the reader to accumulate certain connotations of other words and phrases and thereby thematise the text. By recognising a "common nucleus" of connotations in a text, we locate the theme. For example, if a cluster of connotations cling to a particular proper noun, this character then, can be associated with certain attributes. Connotations assume a lot of importance for Barthes, since they hint at a partially concealed insinuating message and thereby acquire a higher level of signification.

The symbolic code is based on the formal device of antithesis, which means that meaning comes from some initial binary opposition or differentiation. If the text presents two items which suggest

opposition then a whole space of substitution and variation is opened to the reader. The symbolic reading of any work moves towards its origins, the hidden unity that underpins all phenomenon. This code occupies a very privileged position in Barthes code system.

The cultural code is constituted by references of the text to things already 'known' and codified by a culture. This code by its very general nature forfeits its claim to any specific application. This generality was pointed out by Barthes himself: "of course all codes are cultural."³³

We shall now proceed with the analysis of our text, Guerrillas, first at the level of functions and actions and then deal with the level of narration and the codes through which the various elements of the text are organized. In the course of our analysis, we shall see how sexual politics are structured into the discourse of the text.

*

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CHAPTER - II

Guerrillas* is a heavily indicial narrative. This narrative abounds in psychological and physical indices concerning the characters, data regarding their identity, notations of atmosphere both of feelings and place. This is evident from the determination of the first units, the cardinal Nuclei and Indices of this narrative discourse. The Cardinal Nuclei in this narrative are functional, only in so far as they establish a basic narrative thread and in being the points of departure from where the indices can come into full play. Therefore, the level of functions in this narrative, owing to the importance of the indices- can find saturation only at the two higher levels. To list the indices here would be quite redundant, since we shall be dealing with them and their connotations in our analysis of the text at the levels of actions and narration.

We shall, to begin with, identify the cardinal nuclei and order them chronologically and group them into sequences for our convenience.

* All textual quotes are from V.S. Naipaul, Guerrillas Harmonds worth: Penguin, 1984. The text will be referred to as 'G'.

GROUP - A

1. Jimmy is deported from England because he is found guilty of rape and indecent assault.
2. a) Roche and Jane meet in London
b) Roche accepts the public relations job offered by Sablich- leaves London and comes to the island.
3. Jane joins Roche on the Island.
4. a) The Americans (men from the bauxite company) who are Jane's co-passengers escort her through the immigration.
b) She does not get her passport stamped.
5. a) Jane, at the airport, sees Roche through the eyes of the Americans - "Indistinguishable in dress and posture from the taxi drivers and the freelance porters" (G: 46)
b) At the moment of arrival, She realizes that she has made a wrong decision.
6. a) Jane and Roche drive down to Thrushcross Grange.
b) Jane meets Jimmy.
c) Jimmy begins to rub the fur on the arms of his chair gently.

- d) Jane notices the gesture and strokes the fur on her own chair.
7. a) Jimmy rings Jane and asks her to meet him at Prince Albert Hotel.
- b) Jane meets Jimmy at the hotel.
 - c) They proceed to Thrushcross Grange.
 - d) They make love.
8. Jimmy's affair with Jane upsets Bryant.
9. a) Stephens is killed.
- b) Jimmy walks around the town carrying the dead body of Stephens,
 - c) Initiating the riots.
10. a) Stephen's mother refuses Jimmy entry into the house.
- b) Jimmy fades out of the picture.
11. a) The helicopters with American markings arrive
- b) Riots are brought under control.
 - c) Jimmy, at Thrushcross Grange, fearfully awaits his death.
12. a) Roche gives an interview on the radio for the programme 'Encounter'.

- b) He characterises Thrushcross Grange as a
hide-out for criminal gangs.
13. Bryant is waiting outside Jimmy's house to
kill him.
14. a) Jane comes to Thrushcross Grange to meet
Jimmy.
b) She is raped by Jimmy.
c) Jimmy and Bryant kill her.
15. a) Roche comes to Thrushcross Grange.
b) Roche sees Jane's lighter in Mannie's hand
and comes to know of Jane's murder.
c) He rings up Harry and tells him that Jane has
left him.
d) He destroys her passport and other papers.

GROUP - B

1. Sexual violation and punishment
2. Union and separation
3. Reunion
4. Official, Non-arrival
5. Onset of Dis illusionment
6. Desire
7. Consummation of desire

8. Jealousy
9. Crisis
10. Failure
11. Crisis Resolved
12. Desertion
13. Revenge
14. Sexual Violation and murder
15. Betrayal

This chronological sequencing does not strictly adhere to the chronology of the text. The first six sequences comes to us in the order 6,1,3,4,5,2 and the rest of the sequences adhere to the order of the text. But, at this stage, this aspect of the narrative is not important. It will be discussed later, while dealing with the level of narration. The naming of sequences has enabled us to identify the major articulations of the praxis: Listed in group B.

Each one of these sequences involves one or more than one character. Our next step is to identify these privileged characters or actants, privileged because they participate in the major articulations of our narrative. We shall then isolate those indices whose connotations disclose

whose connotations disclose some information about the characters, their interrelationships and help us to understand their actions. There are four principal actants in Guerrillas, namely Jane, Jimmy, Roche and Bryant. Although Stephens is a very important character and perhaps the most important in the sense that the major action in the narrative revolves around him he is not a proper actant. His presence in the narrative is restricted only to the thoughts of the other actants, mainly Bryant. It is his death that brings about the crucial action and in an indirect way is responsible for all subsequent actions.

We shall now deal with the indices which cluster around particular proper nouns, thereby ascertaining the attributes associated with each of them. Jane is a British national, twentynine years of age, white and highly conscious of her whiteness in terms of race. When Bryant calls her sister she does not respond. She responds, only when Bryant addresses her as 'white Lady'. We learn that she is very careful about her body-her complexion, teeth, hair and alert to changes in fashion. With the sole exception of the dress made of sack cloth, she is seen throughout

the novel in clothes that accentuate her body-
"Flowered blouse through which her brassiere could
be seen, tight trousers that modelled her stomach,
groin and cleft ..." (G:14). Her movements - walking,
drinking, eating are described as clumsy. Let us
now consider those indices which throw some light
on her personality and help us in understanding
her actions. Jane, we learn, had married young when
she was eighteen to a rising politician twice her
age. She had been attracted by his 'beauty and
eminence". He had masturbated on their wedding
night and this early violation had shaped her
response to men. She had taken a divorce after two
years and then had a procession of lovers. The
violation that had started with her marriage
continued, her sense of being violated deepening
with every successive affair. Before, Roche, her lover
had been a left-wing journalist- a man with a
beautiful body, whose "insincerities and ambitions"
had made her indifferent to him. The last time
they had met, she had refused him in bed and was
slapped by him. In the bathroom where she had
locked herself up, she had realized that she
was aroused. Roche describes her as a "sea
anemone --- rooted and secure and indifferent
to what it attracted" (G:22), and later as a person
with out memory, consistency or coherence. The

failure of every affair seems to provide her with tools of distress and violation, which she uses effectively to enter into another affair. She finds her work with the publishing firm in London "awful" and the firm "ghastly". As she adventures in life from one man to another, in an endless succession, her mind gets deposited with "unrelated ideas" she picks up from her various lovers.

Jane's identity then is in terms of men, she looks for men who are both good looking and socially eminent. Her relationships are basically sexual. She thinks of men as "candidates" who can offer her a "little delirium". She is complicit in the violation of her body and uses her sense of violation to attract men. Her lovers are her violators and she is the violated. They are the subjects and she is their object.

Let us now analyse her humanitarian concerns. Her favourite topics of conversation are, the contempt with which West Indian bus conductors are treated in London, the shallowness of her women friends and the horror of shanty towns. Her concern is just limited to conversations. She likes to be heard as being concerned, but essentially she is not concerned. She is rooted to her privileged status, privilege that issues out

of her basic social and economic security. She describes the boys at the Grange as "moronic" looking, and all that she is conscious of is the shit in the field. She refers to the people in shanty towns as "black little animals ferreting about in the rubbish dump" (G:100). Her language certainly expresses disgust, but it is the disgust felt not out of concern but a lack of it. She however stops seeing these sights because she does not have an audience who will listen to her occasional outbursts. She decides to leave the island, but this decision is in a way premeditated. She comes with a return ticket, which implies that she does not come with an intention of being a part of that "place where the future of the world is being shaped" (G:50), but merely to indulge her urge for another adventure.

James Ahmed mostly referred to as Jimmy, is the "High Command" of the agricultural commune, Thrushcross Grange. He was born as he himself says "in the backroom of a Chinese grocery" (G:23) and is half negro and half chinese. In his first appearance in the narrative he is naked from waist up. To Jane, Jimmy conveys an impression of physical neatness "smooth and tight from waist to shoes". (G:16)

His eyes are small, black and according to Jane, "blank". Harry calls him a succubus. Earlier in London a rich white woman had been managing him in a big house near Wimbledon. The photographs of Jimmy with celebrities indicate that Jimmy had enjoyed a certain amount of celebrity status in London. All this had come to an end when he was deported from England, on charges of rape. At this moment of crisis, he was let down even by his wife, and Jimmy feels that in London he was made a "play boy".

The Grange's communique states that "All revolutions begin with the land--- men must claim their portion of the earth in brotherhood and harmony. In this spirit we came an intrepid band to virgin forest, it is the life style and philosophy of Thrushcross Grange". (G:17) The signboards of the Grange read "For the Land and Revolution". However, the indices relating to the Grange reveal a contradiction between the professed philosophy and the life style. Thrushcross Grange is not a "virgin forest" but an abandoned plantation, impoverished and desolate with no sign of cultivation. The "intrepid band" consists of a handful of slum boys, lost and disillusioned, who have no place to go, and probably have no idea about any kind of revolution. The boys who had "ideas".

like Stephens, had already left the place. Finally revolution is being nurtured as it were, with the help of finances and food supplies from various white capitalist firms. Even the sign boards are put up by these companies. A picture of Jimmy gradually evolves - it is not of a man committed to revolution, but a man to whom, revolution is totally meaningless. Meredith's assessment of Jimmy is accurate, Jimmy is a misfit in the set up of the commune because he has been offered work which keeps him buried in the bush. Working on land and that too in adverse circumstances requires a special kind of commitment which Jimmy lacks. He is what he says he is " a friend of every capitalist in the country" (G:27), not working towards revolution, but acting as an effective buffer between the capitalists and revolution.

A poster with a pen drawing of Jimmy reads "I am no body's slave or stallion. I am a warrior and a Torch bearer" (G;17). He may not be a slave in the strict sense of the word, but his feeling of inferiority stemming from his acute, almost painful consciousness of his race, (of being a "Chinee Hakwai") gives him a slavish mentality. There are several instances where Jimmy refers to himself as a Chinee Hakwai, as though his identity was irrevocably made

made in that back-room of Chinese grocery where he was born. In itself this does not mean much but when coupled with other indices, these references assume a different connotation- a negative connotation. The name of the commune Thrushcross Grange has literal overtones with that other Thrushcross Grange in Emily Bronte's Wuthering Heights. The significance of the name deepens when Jimmy in his novel makes a connection between Heathcliff and himself regarding his origins - "your mother was an Indian Princess and your father was the emperor of China" (F:62). His house has English furniture, and the book shelves are filled with English books. He is convinced that England teaches a person how to live. The hotel Prince Albert, although it had not retained its past glory, still suggested privilege to Jimmy because it had once been banned to black people. These indices reveal Jimmy's aspirations to be white. Another aspect of this aspiration is his desire to be recognised by whites and his fictional writing which is more autobiographical than fictional expresses this desire.

The protagonist of his novel, Clarissa's image of Jimmy is of a man of attainments wasting his life with good for-nothing natives who 'shit' every where including the path, like 'animals', and who live in

"poky little shacks". He is a 'saviour' to the common people, carrying their burden. He is like a 'prince' helping these blacks who are 'shiftless'. These people will parade on the streets and offer him the 'crown'. He inspires fear in the government and also the rich 'white' firms. All the big shots, local and foreign, hang on to his every word. He is all the time revolving great thoughts and projects in his head. Clarissa has to look into ^{his} eyes to 'understand the meaning of hate' (G:40). Peter's touch now repels her ... People who have seen her with Jimmy at the hotel know that she is 'rotten meat' and she must therefore throw herself at his 'mercy' because 'he is the only man who can turn this hate into love'.(G: 89)

Jimmy's fictional exercise always ends on the same note. Clarissa is either about to be raped or has been raped on a beach and when she is dying of thirst she is revived by the water he brings in his cupped hands. This part of the story is a literal recounting with just a change of name of an incident Jimmy had heard in the school. A white girl had been raped at the beach by a gang and when she had fainted one of the men had got her water using his cupped hands. For Jimmy the most moving part of the

story was "the cupped hands offering water and the grateful eyes remembering terror" (G:65). Towards the end of one of these writing sessions Jimmy is aroused.

If we consider Jimmy's act of writing as male fantasy committed to paper then a few of Jimmy's innermost thoughts become evident to us. He wishes to be the 'Saviour' of those masses who disgust him, because they can offer him the Crown. A sure sign of being recognized by whites would be when a white woman (Clarissa) owing to her obsession with Jimmy would find a white-man's (Peter) touch repugnant. He wishes the white woman to throw herself at his mercy thereby according him a status of superiority. Jimmy's letter to Marjorie is his admission that she (white-woman) is his 'maker'. Her sexual acceptance of him had made him a man and when she let him down she made him feel like 'dirt again, good only for dirt'. (G:228). Jimmy's anger at being a Chinese Hakwai is unresolved even at a time when he is awaiting his death. After Jane is murdered, Jimmy enters a 'timeless void' and is 'disembodied'. In his vision he sees a Sudanese prostitute who addresses him and says 'Nigger give me a dollar' (G:224). In a state of mind when he does not know who or what he is, his secret is betrayed, the word 'Nigger' recalling him to himself.

Jimmy's homosexual relationship with Bryant- the black physically deformed boy- is initially surprising but is no longer so when we understand Jimmy's motivation for it. Jimmy feels the need for Bryant's body in certain moods, moods when he feels empathy with Bryant- When he feels lost, loveless, and rejected and sees Bryant as a symbol of all that is lost, loveless and rejected. At such time he feels Bryant's body, the concealed 'manhood' in him as though to feel secure about his own manhood. There is a certain amount of tenderness that Jimmy exhibits towards Bryant. It is a tenderness that issues out of pride, of having revealed to Bryant, the boy who felt he was dirt, his beauty.

Peter Roche is a white South African in his mid forties under medium height, almost thin, sad faced, with sunken cheeks and deep lines running from his nose to mouth. In South Africa he had been arrested, imprisoned and tortured for his anti-government guerrilla activities, and later exiled. His book recording his experiences in South Africa had earned him considerable recognition in London. With out enjoying this recognition we learn that he had abruptly left for a remote island in Carribean to work in a firm called Sablich. This firm was

founded on profits made in slave trade. From this point on several latter indices direct our attention to the contradictions in Roche. He had come to the island not out of committment towards a cause but because he had been threatened with dire consequences in London if he did not leave.

He takes up this job out of sheer desperation. He thinks that the idea of an agricultural commune is anti-historical and that this idea would not succeed, but he is neverthe-less instrumental in the realization of this idea in the form of Thrush-cross Grange. He is aware of the fact that his job with Sablich is meaningless, because he is an employee without any specific function. His ordeal of suffering in South Africa becomes suspect, when he admits to Jane that he had always accepted "authority". The book that he writes harbours no anger, no bitterness, towards his prosecutors. It is, as if, as Meredith points out, he had transgressed and therefore punished for it, which implies his acceptance of authority. He has no political dogma and no vision of a world made good. Here comes the crucial question, why does he go through what he does in South Africa? One reason could be to prove himself a man. Two indices when seen in the light

of the statement that Roche had always been afraid of pain, support this. Firstly, he suffers nightmares that his coitus is being removed. Secondly, he wishes for enormous sexual powers. A second more possible reason would be his torture, the infliction of pain, a means of mitigating the guilt he feels on account of the crimes perpetrated by his race. He walks into this "particular trap" because he has been "landed with a side" (G:208).

Bryant is one of the few boys who had remained behind at Thrushcross Grange after Stephens had left. His face is narrow and twisted on one side, and the eye on this side of his face is half closed and he wears his hair in pigtails. Bryant had stayed behind not because he liked being there but because he had no place to go. He is one of those slum boys "spawned by the city, casually conceived and --- gradually abandoned". (G:34) After Stephens left, Bryant did not like the Grange because all those that remained behind were like him- lost, with no place to go. Bryant has a lot of respect for Jimmy, but what he feels for Stephens is something totally different- it almost borders on love. Stephens had made Grange a happy place for Bryant and according to Bryant,

Stephens had ideas and talked a lot. Stephens presence gave Bryant courage and a sense of security. Bryant has his own dreams, dreams of being loved, of being readmitted to the house and to the people in the house. He has visions of himself as Sidney Poitier- "the laughing man, the tender Joker" (G: 36), a black with no scars of racist victimisation.

These four characters we have been dealing with have one thing in common- they all are lost and disillusioned. Jane is trying to find meaning through her affairs with men, but is conscious of being violated, of always "yielding and yielding". Roche at the age of forty five wishes that his life had taken another turn. His one regret is that he has built his whole life on "sand". Jimmy and Bryant are bitter about what they are and dream of their better selves, Jimmy through his writing and Bryant by watching Sidney Poitier's films.

In the light of our understanding of the characters, let us now analyse the sequences. The first three sequences merely establish the circumstances which have occasioned the arrival of the principal characters on the island. Jimmy's deportation denotes two things which are of consequence, his feeling of being wronged and let down due to his

non-acceptance in England and he has a record for sexual abuse, rape. For Roche the acceptance of a job with Sablich is the only way of escaping the death threat issued in London. Jane comes to the Island because of Roche whom she considers a "doer". On her arrival at the airport, Jane is escorted through the immigration by the bauxite men. She does not get her passport stamped. There is no official record of her arrival on to the Island. This also indicates that she is willing to take favour from men, even those men who are such casual acquaintances as the Americans who spend most of the journey reading pornographic books. Within such a short period of acquaintance she even begins to think of one of them as a "candidate".

Jane being what she is, it is not at all difficult to understand her initial interest in Roche and her subsequent indifference towards him. Jane when she meets Roche in London, is aware of his travails in South Africa. In him she visualizes the great extent of human possibility. She thinks of him as a "doer", and believes that this "doer" instinct has led him to the island to work for a cause. Her disillusionment commences from the day of her arrival, when the Americans she travels with

fail to recognize Roche. Earlier, where his ordinary appearance had pleased her, at the airport she sees him as indistinguishable from the porters and taxi-drivers. Her feeling of having made the wrong decision deepens when she realizes that on the Ridge and on the island itself, Roche is a nobody, a refugee almost, who had nowhere to go. Within four months of her stay on the island, Jane and Roche begin to sleep apart. She is repelled by his passivity and his smile, satyr like, holds for her, nothing but cheap sarcasm and frustration. She concludes that despite everything he has gone through he is quite ordinary. So, from the role of a comfortor, Roche becomes the violator.

It is not very difficult to understand either, the mutual desire that is established between Jane and Jimmy on their first meeting. For Jane who is thoroughly bored with her life with Roche, who is not what she had thought he was, an affair with Jimmy would offer a "little delirium". She is not at all averse to his looks and once she is aware of being courted, Jimmy becomes a "candidate". Her irritation gets converted to coyness. For Jimmy, who harbours anger at being made a "playboy" in London, joked with and abandoned at the time of crisis, Jane's status as a white and from London is a good

enough reason for him to want her. Even before he has seen her he had decided to impress her. His neatly arranged house, his appearance (the upper part of his body exposed) are indications of this. There is also, this other thing with Jimmy-by entering a territory (white woman) that is forbidden for blacks, he can atleast for sometime lose his identity as a "Chinee hakwai". Jimmy begins to rub the fur on the chair, a gesture of seduction and Jane knowing the gesture for what it is, responds. A sexual desire is established between the two.

Jimmy rings up Jane and when asked how she is, she replies "hot and harassed" with a definite sexual undertone. He asks her to meet him at Prince Albert. He tries to conceal his real motive by inventing a lie about having a meeting with the lions at Prince Albert. His professed intention in meeting her is to return the dollax she had given Bryant. He hires a big chaufferred car for the occasion. The fabricated meeting with the Lions and the hired car reveal again a desire to impress. They meet at the hotel and then proceed to Jimmy's house, where they make love or rather fail miserably at it. Let us analyse this first sexual

encounter and their subsequent reactions to it. Jane and Jimmy enter the house, he puts his hands on her shoulders and she 'fixes' her mouth on his. She goes into the bedroom and undresses in swift movements with great expertise. Jane slaps his attempts at foreplay and without seeming to respond says "love, love" and when she repeats the same words again, he "shrinks" and ejaculates prematurely. The experience is dissatisfying to both of them. Jane becomes remote but does not mock him. He is filled with hate for her. For Jane, it seems as though, Jimmy's presence figures, nowhere in her "little delirium". It begins with Jimmy but somewhere during the drive, this delirium becomes independent of Jimmy. To Jane, Jimmy in his mao-shirt, (which he does not remove even during the act) looks like "one of the children of shanty towns, who wore vests alone, their exposed little penises like spigots". (G:79). Despite all this, Jane is aroused. It seems as if Jane exercises no control over her delirium and her sexual arousal. This idea is further reinforced by the incident that follows. On her way back from the Grange, Jane's point of focus is the chauffeur's neck - "the black roll of almost hairless flesh --- and a subsidiary roll above". (G:76) When the driver

leaves, after reaching her home she is "wet between her legs". (G:84) Jimmy during the whole act is hardly aware of her breasts as breasts, but only as flesh. For him her kiss is "insipid" and meaningless. He concludes that Jane had developed the "bad temper and the manners of a prostitute" (G:81). The bedroom has become a violated room because of the stained bedsheet and he is reluctant to enter it. This experience leaves Jane with a feeling that she has been playing with fire and Jimmy with a longing for Bryant's "warm flesh and relieving mouth and tongue" (G:82) Jane tells Roche and understandably so that there had been nothing more than a kiss between her and Jimmy and describes it as "It was awful. That moustache, those wet blubber lips, liver coloured lips, pink on the inside"(G:162)

Bryant reacts vehemently to Jimmy's affair with Jane. All his anger and fury is concentrated in the two words "white rat", an obvious reference to Jane. Bryant screams, when Jimmy tries to touch him in an attempt to pacify him, "I will kill you, if you touch me Jimmy"(G:90). This threat coming on the heels of "I see the white rat today" (G:90) is an indication of Bryant's jealousy. Jimmy's affair with the 'white rat' amounts to betrayal of

the trust reposed in him by Bryant. Since Jane is the bone of contention between them, Jimmy promises to give her to Bryant. But this idea has taken shape in Jimmy's head even before Bryant voices his displeasure. In his novel, the narrator Clarissa, who at times easily merges with Jane, is being chased by boys with pigtailed like Bryant, who have intentions of raping her. At this early stage in the narrative, Jimmy is already contemplating on sexually abusing Jane.

Roche suspects that Stephens is in serious trouble, but is reluctant to get involved. Roche and Jane however, stop over at Thrush-Cross Grange, on their way back from Harry's beach house, to enquire about Stephens. Jimmy's house is in a state of disarray, with unwashed dishes, old clothes strewn all over the place. There is an odour of distemper, and a general atmosphere of disuse. Bryant informs them that Stephens has been killed in an early morning encounter with the police. Bryant is genuinely grieved, the intensity of which shows in his eyes, red with weeping. His refusal to go and see Stephens is a refusal to come to terms with Stephens death. On hearing this news Roche decides to go to Stephens home. His main concern is to

convince them that he is in no way responsible for Stephen's death. Roche's attempt to clear himself of any suspicion that Stephen's people might have, is thwarted by the riots that result directly from Stephens' death. We learn of Jimmy's role in initiating and precipitating the crisis only through the informations exchanged between the people on the Ridge. We learn that Jimmy walked around the town with Stephen's body, exciting the mobs into unleashing their fury. A state of emergency is declared. Jimmy's victory is however, short lived. Stephens mother refuses him entry into her house and Jimmy suddenly loses his position as the leader. From his initial image of the popular leader he fades out of the scene. To sum up this incident in Jimmy's words:

" I could have burned this place down to the ground, until that dead boy's mother refused to have me in her house and those crazy black people started shouting for Israel and Africa and I was a lost man". (G:229)

The helicopters with American markings arrive on the island and the riots are brought under control. Jimmy is back at the same place from where he had started, his house on Thrushcross Grange. His role in the riots, however, makes him a refugee in his own house. He is awaiting death as a punishment for

having instigated the riots. Roche's interview on the radio drives, as it were, the final nail into Jimmy's coffin, when he brands Thrush-cross Grange as a hide-out for criminal gangs. Roche's statement amounts to desertion, desertion at a time when the ship is sinking. Roche, as we have already observed, is instrumental in concretizing the idea of the commune and is closely associated with its functioning. At any other point in the narrative, this public statement coming from Roche would have been proof of his honesty and integrity. But this statement, voiced as it is, at a point when Jimmy is completely washed out and the commune on the verge of becoming defunct, is an act of betrayal on the part of Roche. Roche has provided the government with a very good reason to kill Jimmy. Apart from the government, there is also Bryant, who is waiting outside Jimmy's house with a cutlass to settle scores with him. According to Jimmy, Bryant has become "mad with grief". He holds Jimmy responsible for Stephens' death. Bryant's reaction is not unpredictable. Although Stephens had left the Grange, Bryant felt confident and secure with the knowledge that Stephens was alive. The death of Stephens is in a sense Bryant's own death, a reversion to the old feeling of self hatred and insecurity.

Jane goes to Thrush cross Grange. She is raped by Jimmy after which she is offered to Bryant by Jimmy to be murdered. Of all the sequences in the narrative, this sequence is perhaps the most complex one. What makes it complex is Jane's totally uncharacteristic behaviour. Jane hates Jimmy's house. She finds it 'horrible'. The first sexual experience with Jimmy is anything but satisfying to her. She has a distinct feeling that she has been "playing with fire". She is also aware of the fact that in London, Jimmy had been involved in a case of rape and sexual assault. She had during the period of riots, decided on two things, firstly to leave the island as soon as possible and secondly to live alone in future. In the light of all these indices, her decision to visit Jimmy at Thrushcross Grange and alone at that, is puzzling to say the least. She has always felt a certain amount of guilt as is evident from her outbursts regarding the treatment meted out to the Blacks and coloured races in London by the whites. There is, however, no evidence that she is affected by this guilt. But in Jimmy's case this guilt, elsewhere passive, pricks her into action. Let us reconsider all her actions, verbal and physical since her first sexual encounter with Jimmy.

Though the first sexual act ends in a fiasco, owing to Jimmy's "strength leaking out of him" (G:80) Jane does not mock him. What would have in another man resulted in her indifference, provokes a sense of revulsion in her. She is not indifferent to Jimmy. She is stubbornly curious about the identity of his wife. When she is in Jimmy's house with Roche on the Sunday when Jimmy is not there she begins to feel disgust again and a fear of impending crisis. The only words she repeats over and over again are "let's go home". During the time of the riots when she is almost a prisoner in the house, estranged from Roche, this self-enforced silence effects a change in her. She realizes, as if for the first time, that she has always been alone. With this realization of the inevitable loneliness, she comes to a new understanding of herself and resolves to live alone in future. This resolution comforts her. It is this understanding that makes her react vehemently to Roche's interview. She tells Roche "you've turned him into a playboy. You've left him out there for Meridith and others to kill him ... you are getting out though"(G:220).

She goes to Thrush cross Grange to meet Jimmy, not out of sympathy but out of a sense of empathy, a shared sense of the solitary and the violated. Her

concern for another person, probably for the first time is genuine, not like in the earlier instances where it was merely a verbal act. In the ultimate analysis, however, one can read Jane's gesture merely as sympathetic words conveyed by a person who is cradled in security and has nothing to lose. But, at the same time, this gesture means much more than it conveys and this is evident from Jane's whole attitude. We shall now analyse this meeting between Jane and Jimmy and see how it is different from the first meeting. There is no indication that Jimmy has asked Jane to meet him. We know that they have had a conversation on the telephone. After his initial surprise at seeing her, his question "Well, Jane, what can I do for you?" (G: 223) leads us to believe that Jane has come of her own accord. Their conversation is slightly strained but not at all impersonal. Jane enquires if she can do anything for him. Jimmy is obsessed with the fact that she is leaving. Twice he repeats his belief that she came to see him because she was leaving "And now you've leaving" and "you've caused me so much pain" (G:234). He keeps making references to her lighter, her necklace, her eyes. This conversation conveys an impression of two lovers parting with much regret and

not of two people meeting for the third time. Where the first sexual act had been mechanical now it appears as if each moment is being savoured. He kisses her lightly and the second time spits into her mouth. She responds with the words "That was lovely". When he begins to lift her, She stands up on her own and "casually like old lovers walked into the bedroom" (G:236). They undress without haste and unlike the previous time she takes off her blouse and he, his mao-shirt. Jane is on the unmade bed "sighing and smiling at him". She begins to 'wail', 'shout', and 'shriek' when subjected to anal intercourse. Her face is red with tears, but here comes the crucial indice, "She was oddly calm" (G:238). To interpret this incident by characterizing Jane as a masochist, on the basis of an earlier experience in London, where Jane is slapped and is aroused, is to oversimplify the matter.

But after such a painful experience why is Jane calm? Jane's calmness is a result of being at peace with her conscience. The guilt she feels is the guilt of ^{being a} white, by virtue of which she is complicit with Roche in Jimmy's betrayal. The act of offering her body to Jimmy and accepting the abuse inflicted on it, is her way, the only way

she knows, of erasing this guilt. This gesture of offering her body is therefore symbolic. Her body here assumes only a secondary importance, what the body symbolizes is of primary importance.

Roche and Jane consciously pay a price for being "landed with a side "- Roche by being tortured in a South African jail and Jane by being brutally raped. All through the act of abuse, to the point when Jane is murdered, Jimmy seems to be in a pathological state of mind. After subjecting Jane to humiliation he tells her very "softly", "you are rotten meat". His eyes are "very bright" and appear "sightless". His every move is calculated. He takes her to the hut where Bryant is waiting, on the assurance that Roche is coming for her. As if in a refrain he repeats again and again the same words he had said to her earlier. "So you are leaving us Jane". He then orders Bryant to kill the "rat". When he feels Jane's body failing Jimmy becomes desolate. He feels disembodied and lost in time. When he sees Jane's eyes closed, he realizes that, his dream of seeing love come to her frightened eyes, on his offering water with his cupped hands, will remain unfulfilled.

The image of Jimmy that evolves is of a man who is gradually losing his sense of identity,

acting out of a pathological compulsion. The state of his mind is like the state of his house - totally disordered.

Apparently the murder is engineered by Jimmy for the sake of Bryant. Bryant armed with a cutlass poses no real threat to Jimmy's life. We have observed earlier that Jimmy feels a kind of tenderness towards Bryant. He understads Bryant's trauma and cannot bring himself to kill him. Jimmy intends to kill Jane, Bryant's role in the murder is a mere formality. Out of his total brute power, Jimmy donates some to Bryant, to repair the breach in their relationship. Jane represents every thing that Jimmy always aspired for. She is white, economically secure and is free. In her rape and murder, Jimmy's pent-up frustration and anger find a release. This respite however is only short lived. The sudanese prostitute reminds him of his identity as a "nigger".

Roche sees Jane's lighter with Mannie. He knows that Jane has been murdered, but this information does not evoke any response from him. The only thought in his mind is his personal safety. Roche goes out of his way to suppress the news of

Jane's murder. He informs Harry that Jane has left him. He destroys her papers. When Jimmy on the telephone asks Roche to see him, he tells him that he and Jane are leaving. It is Roche's assurance to Jimmy that he has overlooked Jane's murder. Roche and Jimmy share two basic problems, firstly of insecurity and secondly of being failures. Jane's decision to leave Roche and the island affects Roche. His hatred for her intensifies with her growing indifference. During the period of riots they hardly talk to each other. The violated look in Jane's eyes, when she is talking to Harry, angers him and when he brings his face close to her, she sees a face of "pure hatred". Roche is rocked out of his passivity into verbal violence when Jane informs him of her affair with Jimmy, drawing satisfaction out of the words picturing her sexual degradation. Roche treats her murder with the same indifference with which he treats Jimmy's impending doom. Roche can go to London and forget about Jimmy and in the same way can pretend to be ignorant of her murder and forget about her too.

This analysis at the level of actions is by

no means exhaustive. We have dealt with the major articulations of the praxis and the privileged set of actants, and in the process have overlooked certain less significant articulations and characters that exist in the text and contribute to the flow of the narrative. Since our main concern is the structuration of sexual politics, a microscopic analysis is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

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CHAPTER - 3

In the previous chapter we have seen how certain indices when integrated with characters help our understanding of their participation in the major articulations of the praxis. We shall deal here with the signs of narrativity in Guerrillas which re-integrate functions and actions in the narrative communication and with the dominant codes that operate in the text.

The donor of the narrative in Guerrillas is the Ommiscient narrator and the focus of the narrative is organised around the characters, their actions, surroundings, inter-relationships. The narrator's voice is not manifest all through the narrative. Most of the time, in Guerrillas, the characters are the senders of the narrative. The point of view is perpetually shifting from one character to the other. It is evident from the abundance of indicial notations in the text that this is a psychological narrative. This novel therefore, exhibits a successful combination of the personal and apersonal narrative modes. In our analysis at the actantial level we have seen how the characters emerge in their totality not merely

from their acts of locution, but also from states of mind, intentions, character traits and the impressions one character creates in the minds of other characters. We know Jane on the basis of her speech, her actions, her feelings of insecurity and violation, her sexual promiscuity, and her image in the thoughts of Roche and Jimmy. Let us see how this combination is effected in the text by taking the example of Jane.

This whole narrative is apparently a personal as all the characters are referred to in the third person, and the narrative episodes are also written in third person. But if we rewrite the narrative from He to I, we find that the true instance of the dialogues of the characters and of certain episodes is first person i.e. personal. It is quite obvious that the dialogues are in the personal mode as the narrative is always in first person 'I'. Jane said "I see you have a duplicating machine".(G:16) Certain thoughts filtered through the minds of the characters are personal. 'Roche laughed and Jane saw his molars: widely spaced, black at the roots, the gums high: like a glimpse of the skull' (G:13). Jane's character evolves from the point of view of other characters.

Roche's point of view : "The sea anemone he thought: waving its strands at the bottom of the ocean. Rooted and secure, and indifferent to what it attracted. The dragon-lady, infinitely casual, infinitely unconsciously calculating, so indifferent to the body, so apparently willing to abuse it, and yet so careful of the body, so careful of complexion and teeth and hair." (G: 22)

Jimmy's point view :-

"Through the open bathroom door Jimmy saw the yellow candle wick spread hanging over the low tiled wall of shower area, untidily tossed, wet, The starved woman had many lovers, nevertheless; She was as inexperienced as a girl, yet she was spoilt; and; without knowing it, she had developed the bad temper, and manners of prostitute, one of those prostitutes who after defeat and degradation celebrate a triumph revenging themselves on the maid of a brothel -hotel, creating work for that creature, the low punishing the lower. So cool she looked now; so triumphant. He was full of hate for her" (G:81).

The above two narrative instances are personal. But Jane's description, however, is apersonal. She is the third person 'she' here. The narrator's voice contributes to our understanding of Jane's character:

"It was in this darkness, the louvres closed to keep out insects, that Jane awoke in her own room every day, and recaptured for a moment something of the mystery of her arrival" (G:44).

" And the surprise, disappointment almost, which showed on their faces when, leaving customs hall, they saw Roche, under medium

height, without a jacket and slenderer than he had appeared in London, almost thin, leaning against an iron rail, indistinguishable in dress and posture from the taxi-drivers and the freelance porters amongst whom he appeared to be lounging and at the exit gate, this disappointment, this abrupt coolness of the Americans, communicated itself to Jane and almost became her own response to the meeting" (G: 45-6).

"She was adrift, enervated, her dissatisfactions vague now centring on the world, now on men" (G: 48).

The above three instances evidence the narrator's voice because they are in third person proper. They cannot be rewritten by substituting the personal pronoun 'I' without altering the discourse. This is also because of the usage of the past tense. A verb in the past tense eliminates the present of the speaker, making it impersonal. The voice of the narrator is narrating the story that has happened and employs past tense. But in the course of the narration, however, personal modes of point of view, dialogues are employed which are always in the present because the characters are participating in the story at that moment. They are at certain points the senders of the narrative but not the "donors".

The purpose behind this exercise was to see how the personal and apersonal modes of narration

combine and work towards a re-integration of functions with actions. Let us, now, shift our attention to the other narrative devices operating in Guerrillas. We shall concentrate on these devices: disruption of chronology, the temporal element, the use of letters and fictional writings, repetitions and frequency. We had, very briefly, noted in our earlier chapter the slight disruption in the chronological ordering of the sequences in Guerrillas. This narrative device of disruption helps in the organisation of the text according to the importance of the episodes. These sequences, Jimmy's deportation, Jane and Roche's union in London and their subsequent arrival at the island-should logically constitute the beginning of Guerrillas. But this is not so. The text begins instead at a time when Roche, Jane and Jimmy are already settled in the island. It starts with Roche's and Jane's visit to Thrushcross Grange. The purpose of this disruption now becomes clear. The first chapter introduces all the main characters - Jimmy, Jane, Roche and Bryant. It also introduces the principal foci of the novel- race and sex. A strict adherence to the chronological order would have deprived the text of this initial manifestation of its thematic concerns.

In this narrative there is a strict adherence to the temporal element. We know that Roche has been on the island for exactly nine months, and he and Jane have known each other for as many months, Jane has been on the island for four months, her date of birth is the seventeenth of July 1943, and finally the riots occur over a duration of five days, Sunday to Friday. This preciseness of time, devices to give an effect of reality because time belongs to the referent. It refers to the characters who utter in time and this tends to reinforce the presence of the episodes as real. We shall, however, ignore this invitation, because it will again lead us to that particular trap of relating the text to empirical reality by these reality effects. We shall consider time in this narrative as a structural category, as an element which serves as one of the many functions of the semiotic system of our text. It has a reality, but only within the discourse as something that spaces the episodes within the text itself. Jane is twenty-nine years of age and this fact informs that she is quite young. We gather that she had taken a divorce when she was twenty and that she had a succession of lovers subsequent to it. This is an indice of sexual promiscuity. Within a period of

nine months, infact less than that, i.e. from the time she had arrived on the island four months back, her initial attraction to Roche has changed to disillusionment. In relation to the duration of the riots, within five days, a very short time indeed, Jimmy experiences a swift reversal of fortunes, the instigator of the riots, the leader of the people has become a refugee in his own house awaiting his death.

The two letters Jimmy writes, one to Roy and the other to Marjorie, and the excerpts from his novel are of structural as well as thematic significance. The letters maintain the continuity of the narrative and at the same time provide an internal focus on Jimmy. The letter to Roy gives us a glimpse into Jimmy's thoughts, his unhappiness, almost despair, with his life at the Grange, his bitterness at being let down during the time of crisis in London and his perception of the contradictions in Roche. The letter to Marjorie is an important informant of the actions during and subsequent to the riots. Previous to this letter the information about the riots and Jimmy's role in it, we learn, either from conversations between Jane, Roche, and Harry, who are not present at the scene and whose information is based on rumours

or from the reports in the newspapers and on the radio. This letter informs us of the actual reasons for Jimmy's failure during the riots"..... last week I could have burned this place down to the ground, until that dead boy's mother refused to have me in the house and those crazy black people started shouting for Israel and Africa, and I was a lost man....." (G:229) . From this letter we also gather that Bryant is waiting outside Jimmy's house with a cutlass to kill him. Jimmy's soft pornographic novel is an important indice, It throws light on Jimmy's frustrations, fears, fantasies and helps us to understand his actions. This device of narrative (Jimmy's) within a narrative (Guerrillas) strictly speaking is a structural break in the unity of the narrative. Thematically it draws attention to a break down in the totality of the character, Jimmy. He gets a vicarious pleasure from his part tender part violent sexual fantasies, "He was enervated, sick with excitement. He could feel that his pants were wet" (G:64) indicating a person who no longer coincides with himself.

There are a few image forming words or group of words attached to the main characters which are repeated very often. These images by virtue

of their emphasis, given by repeated reference, gain in importance. This narrative device of repetition then begins to connote much more at the interpretative level. Jimmy at regular intervals refers to himself as a "Chinee Hakwai", the local term for Chinese nigger. He also makes it a point to specify that he was born in the backroom of a Chinese grocery. It is a factual statement that connotes much more. The word "nigger", a derogatory term for 'negro' attaches a negative value to it. From these constant references we perceive Jimmy as someone who is painfully conscious of his race and social standing. His spirit of bravado urges him to proclaim it to people, but what comes through is his feeling of inferiority, as though his whole identity were subsumed within this image of a Chinese nigger. The recurrent images of Roche as a Satyr, Jane as a sea anemone, Jimmy as a succubus and Byrant as a medusa, are interwoven within the text functioning as indices, to characterise. The actions of the characters tend to substantiate this characterization.

The device of frequency includes two kinds of techniques firstly, when the same incident is repeated a number of times and secondly, when a similar incident occurs a number of times. Both

these techniques are skillfully employed in Guerrillas, and highlight the main thematic concern of the text- sexual violation. A story which Jimmy has supposedly heard at school is repeated thrice in the narrative, twice by the narrator with reference to Jimmy and once by Jimmy in his novel. This is an incident of a white woman who was gang raped at a beach by a gang of blacks. The most moving part of this story for Jimmy, we learn is the part where one of the blacks, on seeing her faint had fetched water from a nearby creek for her, with his cupped hands. In Jimmy's novel, Clarissa is the intended object of sexual assault, but the subject varies between a gang of 'louts' and a boy like Bryant, but what is important here is that the one who brings her water, is always Jimmy. When Jane is murdered after being raped by Jimmy, he has this vision again of a girl bleeding, accepting water from his cupped hands. Despite the slight variation in Jimmy's version of the incident we recognise the incident as being the same in all three instances.

Strictly speaking, this is not a real incident, by real, I mean that which occurs in the

narrative. Even within the narrative, this incident has a reality only for Jimmy, a psychological reality and limited to the level of fantasy. It is nonetheless very important because it introduces us to Jimmy's pet obsession. Rape as real incident occurs twice in Guerrillas, and both the times, the assaulter is Jimmy. He is deported from London because of this act of sexual violation and towards the end of the narrative, before murdering her, he sexually abuses her.

The three dominant codes which operate in Guerrillas are the hermenentic, connotative and symbolic codes. The proaretic code has already been dealt with at the level of functions.

Hermeneutic Code : The narrative, Guerrillas, poses some questions, most of which are answered by the text itself, sometimes in a diffused way, as in the instance of Jane's last visit to Thrushcross Grange. There are however, a few questions which remain elusive even at the end of the narrative. The title of the text "Guerrillas" poses an enigma. The television, radio and the newspapers talk of guerrillas, and Jane a couple of times voices her feeling that Thrushcross Grange could be a convenient hide out for guerrillas. But in

the text as such there are no guerrillas unless one considers Roche, who is a disillusioned ex-guerrilla. The acts of violence are committed by local criminal gangs and not by the guerrillas, as the media believes. The narrative points towards the possibility of a guerrilla in Stephens. but towards the end, even this possibility is eliminated. There are no guerrillas in the conventional sense of the word. If one goes by Jimmy's definition "when everyone wants to fight, there is nothing to fight for, each man fights his own little war, each man is a Guerrilla", (G:87) then every single character can be considered a guerrilla. There is also some sense of mystery attached to Jimmy. His rise, from the back room of a Chinese grocery to a celebrity in London, is un-explained. We know that Jimmy has a wife and two children, but there is not much information about them. Jane's curiosity keeps the engima of Jimmy alive throughout the narrative.

His celebrity status in London, his image as a family man serve a very important purpose. They set up a sharp contrast with his life on the Grange and highlight his state of loneliness. Stephens, who is introduced right in the first chapter and constantly referred to,

by his very absence poses an enigma. His absence is a strong structuring force, because the action in the narrative hinges upon his absence.

Connotative Code: Most of the items of physical description - people and place - at a very superficial level denote a referential illusion, but begin to connote much more if integrated with thematic and symbolic codes. From various physical descriptions of the characters, one theme emerges - that of revulsion with human body. There is hardly a character, who is spared of such physical description:

Of Jane: "He saw the white of her belly and the tan of her legs. She had very little hair on the groin; perhaps she shaved; and the cleft was like a dumb stupid mouth" (G:78).

"Against the rest of her the red aged skin below her neck looked like a rash; the little folds of flesh in her shaved armpits were wet" (G: 237)

Of Roche: "Roche laughed and Jane saw his molars: widely spaced, black at the roots the gums high like a glimpse of the skull".(G:13)

Of Jimmy: "And now only in his Maoshirt and looking absurdly like one of the children of the shanty towns who wore vests alone, their exposed little penises like little spigots.." (G: 79).

Of Bryant: "His face was oddly narrow, and twisted on one side as though he had been damaged at birth. The eye on the twisted

side was half closed; the bumps on his forehead and his cheek bones were prominent and shining. His hair was done in pigtails; a medusa's head' (G:18)

of Stephens: "Little Stephens with the funny blob of a pimply nose....(G:34)

Even very minor characters are described similarly, Mrs. Stephens body is described as "Slack Swollen, worn out" (G:111), and Meredith's face as that of a "frogs", the drivers neck as "on his neck half hidden by his shirt collar, was a thick roll of black flesh with scattered springs of hair; a blue light from the twisted windscreen fell on his bare fat arms" (G:73). These descriptions of characters keep recurring throughout the narrative. There are certain expressions used by Jimmy "rotten meat" "dirty cunt" with reference to Jane, which reinforce this revulsion.

The descriptions of the island complement this connotation of revulsion. It would be impossible to quote all descriptions here. We shall mention just a few descriptions. The houses in the city are described as "rows of unpainted boxes of concrete and corrugated iron.... the clothes hanging like rags from black yard lines" (G:9). The house at Thrushcross Grange is described as a "long concrete hut" with corrugated

iron roof, old dusty furniture and clothes hanging on nails. When Roche is in Mrs Stephens house, the smell of "chicken dung" and "dust" thickens his saliva "nauseously".

The connotative code of frustration operates prominently in the text. This frustration stems from a basic sense of insecurity that the characters have. Jimmy and Bryant feel insecure because of their race consciousness, Roche because of his exiled state. Although Jane is the only one who enjoys social and economic security, her insecurity lies in her identity as a woman. She therefore tries to seek her identity through men. One important indice relating to the place, which is of a different nature from these indices, but equally important to the narrative is the "pink haze of bauxite" that envelopes the whole island. We know that the owners of all the bauxite companies on the island are the Americans. The Americans dominate not only the economy of the Island but also its government. It is the helicopters with American markings that finally manage to suppress the riots. At the level of actions we have already elaborated on how certain indicial notations, cluster around a character and assume a connotative value; we shall therefore not deal with the connota-

tions operating at the actantial level as it would be a mere repetition.

Symbolic Code:- The device of antithesis or binary opposition acts as an effective structuring force. All the important notations in the narrative are organised on the principle of binarism. The black and white opposition in terms of race, figures prominently in the characterisation. This opposition is of primary importance to the narrative because the dominant image of sexual violation is acted out, through the symbolic conflicts of black/white (Jimmy/Jane). Although Jimmy is half negro and half Chinese, I have deliberately classified him under black, because, as we have already seen, his feelings of insecurity and frustration are due to his identity as a "nigger". This black/white opposition is structured around the fundamental opposition of man/woman and introduces the theme of marginality. Jane dominates in the first sexual act, because she is a white and this accords her superiority over Jimmy, who is black. Jimmy is marginalized because of his black identity. In the second sexual act the roles are reversed. Jimmy is the master, and subjects Jane to sexual abuse. Here Jane is marginalised because she is a woman. Jane is raped not merely because

she is a woman, but because she is a white woman. That she could be raped and murdered, is definitely due to her powerlessness as a woman. Gender and race then in close confluence play a very important role.

Although Jane is a major character and occupies the bulk of the narrative, she is not at all important. She is non-existent and this non-existence is linked to her womanhood. It is her femininity that gets her past the immigration and it is this femininity that makes her a victim of rape and murder. She is dispensable- Jimmy can kill her and get away with it and Roche can abandon her by ignoring her death. Her marginalisation is complete.

There also exists an opposition between the island and the major characters. The sun-scorched, drought-stricken improvised landscape finds a parallel in the characters who are equally improvised- emotionally and spiritually. Finally, Jimmy's commune Thrushcross Grange is opposed to the Ridge, where Roche and Jane live. The Ridge spells luxury, security and class, and Thrushcross Grange with its

dusty furniture, dirty clothes on nails and shit in the fields is a sorry contrast to it.

Although the cultural code pervades the whole narrative, in the form of reggae music and seances of fanatic christians, it is not very important for us because it merely serves to locate the narrative in the caribbean and provides an atmosphere for it.

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POST SCRIPT

Now that we have come to the end of our analysis, let us review the work we have done and see how far we have been successful in our endeavour of studying the structuration of sexual politics in the discourse of Guerrillas. At the actantial level, we have seen how the social institutions of patriarchy and racism have a bearing upon the aspect of sexual violation. Jane is without an identity and therefore seeks her identity through affairs with men. The indifference to her murder within the discourse, establishes her non-existence. (Jimmy whose subjectivity suffers injury because of his non-white racist identity subjects Jane to sexual humiliation and murder to convince himself of his subjectivity.) At the narrational level we have seen how certain narrative devices reinforce male degradations of female sexuality. The codes have enabled us to identify certain organising principles at work in the text.

The Barthesian model that we have adopted in the analysis of our text, is not a very rigorous model. Although Barthes explains in detail the

process of the determination of first units and their integration at the two higher levels of action and narration, we find in its application that it is mostly arbitrary. The levels of description are conceived in a broad scope providing the reader with much freedom for interpretation. This model necessitates a very close reading of the text and this probably is one of its greatest advantages. We must however confess that a thematic study such as ours has limited the application of Barthesian model in its totality. As elsewhere mentioned we have dealt with catalyzers and informants only in passing and have not studied their contribution to the structure of the text as such.

We must also mention here that a study of sexual politics in Guerrillas will be much more meaningful as well as desirable if studied in a wider perspective taking into consideration all the novels of V.S. Naipaul.

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