

## Preface

In its widest possible sense, however, a man's self is the sum total of all that he can call his, not only his body and his psychic powers, but his clothes and his house, his wife and children, his ancestors and friends, his reputation and works, his lands and horses, and yacht and bank account.

William James: *The Principles of Psychology*: 1950

In man creature and creator are united: in man there is not only matter, shred, excess, clay, mire, folly, chaos; but there is also the creator, the sculptor, the hardness of the hammer, the divinity of the spectator...

Nietzsche: *The Philosophy of Nietzsche*: 1954

He was single-hearted in his aim, and to pursue it he was willing to sacrifice not only himself- many can do that- but others. He had a vision.

Somerset Maugham: *The Moon and Sixpence*: 1944

To be cut-off from life and action, in one or another, is necessary as a preparation for the vision.

Frank Kermode: *Romantic Image*: 1971

When I first made my acquaintance of W.B. Yeats as a poet, I found myself mystified by the various facets of his poetic sensibilities. I would have most probably beaten a hasty retreat had it not been for the brilliant analyses to which Yeats's poetry was subjected by Professor Benoy Kr. Banerjee, who fortunately happened to be my teacher at the University of North Bengal. It is to him that I owe my renewed interest in Yeats's poetry.

The writings of Yeats have an immortal attraction and are 'chewed and digested' by readers even today. Yeats was essentially an esoteric, idiosyncratic poet who was at times obscure, for sometimes the form, the manner of writing, the language, and the imagery may have a private meaning for the poet, yet convey another aspect of experience to another. This is the joy of Yeats, for even when he is obscure he is compelling. Half the joy of poetry comes in discovery, and the other half comes in the experience or emotional response. We read Yeats to enjoy, to experience, to share and to discover his poetic vision. He speaks to us across the years- and, remarkably, more clearly and passionately as an old man than when he was young. Yeats is the master of the unusual, the paradoxical, the mystical, and the unknown: his great virtue is that his poetic vision embraces 'all from top to toe'.

Hazards are many for a poet to achieve completely the realization of the dream that obsesses him. But Yeats, harassed incessantly by his struggle with theme and technique, managed, perhaps less than others to express the vision that he saw with his mind's eye. To use the hackneyed phrase, he found himself in *The Tower* phase. He had achieved what he wanted. His life was complete. He had made a world with the wholeness of his poetic vision, braying the 'mortar' with youth and fellowship, peace and worldly hopes:

Yeats takes certain feelings of conviction attached to his vision for the thoughts which he supposes his vision to symbolize. (Richards: qtd. in Currie: 1992:14)

This is my area of interest, and my dissertation aims at exploring the poetic vision of W.B. Yeats.

To me, 'Making' suggests the act of doing something with one's hands. Obviously it entails more than 'doing': doing must be the final outcome of an amalgamation of many faculties interacting with one another and determining the final form of the thing made. Books on primary and secondary sources are of immense help to formulate my basic idea. In the course of doing the dissertation, I have not hesitated to quote extensively from Yeats's other works and from the poets and critics of repute, since I am convinced that this will help to present an integral view of the subject. Some of the ideas from the data collected on the Internet have been of much help. I have acknowledged my debts to them by citing them. I have also prepared a bibliography following the instructions of the M.L.A. Handbook.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to supervisor Dr. Benoy Kr. Banerjee, Professor at the University of North Bengal, for his inspiration, guidance, constant encouragement, solicitation and extremely constructive suggestions. He spent immense time and labour not only over the dissertation but in a detailed review of the critical areas of my thesis: the dissertation has gained substantiality as a result. This might never have been written and submitted, but for his love and support. I also take this opportunity to express my warm gratitude to Mrs. Banerjee, my aunt, and Ranju who always egged on to pursue my object. I acknowledge my debt to all my teachers belonging to the Department of English, the University of North Bengal for their inspiration.

In course of my study I got enormous help from the M/S Atlantic Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, the National Library, Kolkata, the British Council Library, Kolkata, Books Way, Kolkata, the North Bengal University Library, and the State Library, Cooch Behar. They provided and coped with my mad demand for offbeat books.

I owe my debt of gratitude to my parents for all their love, encouragement and blessings. I am also grateful to my in-laws for their support and generosity. Finally, I owe the greatest debt of gratitude to my wife, Ranjita, and our little kid, Sarthak, for love, support and just putting up with it all. I am deeply grateful to her all for the sacrifice she has made in typing the whole dissertation. Thank I must my colleagues, especially Niupamda, Debuda and others for their constant inspiration.