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The Confessional Novel: Its Form, Aesthetics and Themes (Guilt, Immersion and Surfacing)

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Abstract

This paper begins by offering a comparison between religion and psychoanalysis in terms of offering methods of cleansing and purging dark human emotions and acute feelings of violence and guilt. It moves on to offer a brief history and the origins of the genre of the confessional novel and also theorizes on the form and the specific aesthetics of this genre. The form of the confessional novel is fragmented as it emanates from a disturbed, disintegrated psyche. The paper offers a brief analysis of a few significant confessional novels. It finally discusses how the self of the protagonist can undergo a transformation and can evolve and emerge in the presence of a non-judgmental listener/reader.

Keywords

Self; Violation; Guilt; Fragmentation; Transformation; and Emergence.



I have had the fantasy of a prisoner in a dungeon, tapping out day after day a Morse code message, “Does anybody hear me? Is anybody there?” And finally one day he hears some faint tappings which spell out “yes”. By that one simple response he is released from his loneliness; he has become a human being again. There are many, many people living in private dungeons today, people who give no evidence of it whatsoever on the outside, where you have to listen very sharply to hear the faint messages from the dungeon. (C. R. Rogers 10)

In the *Old Testament* the Lord said to Moses, “. . . say to the people of Israel, when a man or woman commits any of the sins that men commit by breaking faith with the Lord, and that person is guilty, he shall confess his sin which he has committed” (Num. V, 6). Confession or acknowledgement of sinfulness is regarded by most religious groups as a necessary condition for obtaining divine forgiveness. The mission of the prophets was to awaken in the people a sense of sinfulness and a desire to acknowledge their guilt both personal and collective. The avowal of guilt became the normal preparation for the expiation of sin. Religious confession is motivated by guilt. It is prompted in order that men may be cleansed of their unrighteousness. From the very beginning, it had to be made to a priest, to another. This is significant, for it is only after another has heard that the act of confession becomes complete and liberating. Psychologically, too, the logic of confession is convincing.

Confessional, in Roman Catholic churches, is a box, cabinet or stall in which the priest sits to hear the confession of the penitents. It is usually a wooden structure, with a compartment extended through a door or curtain in which the priest sits, and on sides there are compartments for the penitents. These compartments are separated from the priest’s by a partition with a latticed opening for the penitent to speak through, and contain a step on which he kneels. By this arrangement the priest is hidden, the penitent may or may

not be visible to others. Amazingly Sigmund Freud in the twentieth century devised a similar arrangement in his psycho-analytical model where the client reclined on a couch and the analyst analyzed him. Freud sat on the head of the couch, out of the client's view, and urged the client to talk freely about the past. The couch technique was designed to make the client comfortable and uninhibited before the analyst. Like the penitent of the past, the client of today is encouraged to speak out, to loosen the restraints on the unconscious and eventually to abandon self-defeating defences so that the ego could then be free to devote itself to more constructive pursuits. As Freud, succinctly put it, "Where id was, there shall ego be" (Bootzin and Acocella 489). Thus, according to Freud, the proper treatment for a pent-up client was to coax the unconscious impulse out into consciousness so that the client could at last confront it. Once confronted and worked through, this material would lose its power to terrorize the ego. According to a psychologist Page:

There is a striking similarity between psychoanalysis and the basic tenets of many religions. According to psychoanalysis, man is by nature bad and must be educated to be good. There is the usual conflict of the good, or the super-ego, and the evil, or the Id, with the Ego torn between them. The evils remain the same-lust, or the libido; self love, or narcissism; and hate, or aggression. The psychoanalyst is the high priest, the ancient interpreter of dreams. Finally, salvation is obtained through ritualistic confession, or catharsis. (Page 193)

Thus the basis of religious confession was very sound psychologically and very essential. Confession, today, is a necessary part of psychotherapy. It is in the process of a confession that the confessor comes to terms with his shadow, and eventually learns to discriminate the self from the shadow and the persona in Jungian terms. Confession helps an individual to re-encounter the hidden self. Thus the element of self-surprise is invariably there. It is through

the act of confession that the confessor faces her conflicts and learns to resolve them. Further she learns to recognize and develop the hidden potentialities which so far have lain buried.

Confession, though initially it was a verbal religious act, gradually entered the secular world. It was then that confessions in the written form began to appear. In the beginning the saints alone wrote their confessions. Though their confessions they brought their ideas and doctrines to the fore. Hence confession served a double purpose. The scholar saint purged himself through writing his confession as well as used it as a medium to preach and transform others. Holding himself as a mirror, he served as a reflector, so that others while reading his confession could see the 'beam in their own eye' and recognize, and change their course of life. With the passing of time, confession writing became a common and secular act. Autobiographies in the form of confession were written. These autobiographical confessions were supposedly true to life and talked about real life incidents and situations. It is from here that gradually confession as a literary genre began. Confession in literature is basically that of a fictitious character. Though the motivation behind both a literary confession and a real life confession is the same yet they differ in certain respects. In all confessions, be they literary or real-life, it becomes difficult to measure the degree of credibility.

A confessional novel is an answer to the basic predicament of a man who cannot find an 'image of God' amid the chaos which surrounds him; of a man who cannot look forward to some future life, and so must confront, his present existence in all its dark and terrifying forms. The seeds of the confessional novel as a genre lie in the work of St Augustine. The author of the *Confessions* shows an acute sensitivity to the problems and conflicts of a person's inner self as well as a broad consciousness of evil. Because of his intense concern with self, St. Augustine lays the foundations of modern existentialism in his *confessions*. Though the sense of tension and frustration, of the unanswered

questions, remains, and he is unable to resolve his conflicts yet he makes way for formulating the enduring existential question. Being a Christian theologian committed to the justification of God's cosmos he cannot answer this existential question. Through his *Confessions* he approaches many of the paradoxes and problems which continue to dominate the struggles of human beings both with their existence and with God. He gives expression to some very important inherent contradictions which signify that God is manifold. The *Confessions* thus are the revelation of St. Augustine's search. And it is precisely because his search is the search of every person that his discovery can be a universal discovery.

As Journals became popular and more diarists began to write with an intention to publish, the confessional form was eventually employed in non-religious works. Rousseau's *Confessions* were followed in the nineteenth century by numerous confessions by the romantics, such as Musset and Chateaubriand in France and De Quincey in England. It was only in Russia, however, where such writers as Gogol, Lermontov and Turgenev experimented with first-person narration and various new techniques that confessional writings began to focus on more intricate problems. In the preface to *A Hero of Our Time*, Lermontov emphasizes the separation of the author from the hero-a distinction which is important for all first-person narration and particularly for the confessional novel.

Almost all confessions reveal a deeply personal awareness of evil which eventually leads to self examination. Kurtz in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* dies with the realization of horror on his lips. Encountering the evil that he has in him, he realizes the dark, evil, mysterious side of man. This prompts in Marlow a re-assessment of his entire life.

The confession of Johannes Vig in Martin A. Hansen's *The Liar* is expressed as a realization of his unauthentic self. He recognizes that if he cannot grow, he can fight because "When you reach the limits of

meaninglessness, you find that all is a battleground, where two forces fight, and there isn't any no man's land." (Hansen 59). His contribution to the battle consists in not taking Rigmor, the woman he loves, from her husband, but receiving into his house a pregnant and unwanted barmaid. The pain of thwarted love confirms his faith: "I know God's presence only when he strikes me hard" (Hansen 108), he claims. And this recognition of God's presence constitutes his rebirth. Through the confession he is able to re-assess his life and actions. He is guilty of allowing Niels to die, to drown. When Oluf and Niels went to sea, Vig was so absorbed in his thoughts that he completely forgot Niels, forgot to stop him and he eventually died. The guilt over his indifference lay heavy on him. It is after the confession that he improves upon his life and by a kind gesture is able to look forward to the future.

Sartre in *Nausea* talks about the basic predicaments of life. Antoine Roquentin, the narrator suddenly realizes that his life has been a waste. In utter despair of meaninglessness he becomes aware of nausea which eventually becomes a metaphor for his life. Gradually as the confession progresses, he discovers some basic existential precepts and realizes how everything is autonomous in itself. He now is able to see things as they are and not as he wants them to be. Further he becomes aware that existence first of all means the consciousness of the fact that "Je Suis" ("I am") and it is only after this realization that he can blend a meaning to life. He was in love with Anny, but now neither loves the other. Roquentin finds this hard to accept but is glad that Anny did not love anyone after him. It is in a moment of realization that consciousness dawns on him, and he suddenly realizes that she is having her orgasm and he is no more to her than if he had never met her: She has suddenly emptied herself of him. It is now that he learns to see Anny as someone outside him, as someone different and realizes his basic aloneness. Anny in her moment of orgasm has completely emptied herself of him and of all other consciousness; similarly all other consciousnesses in the world too are

empty of him. His vanity is overpowered and he sees himself for what he is, alone but complete in himself. The only real thing left in him is some existence which can feel it existing. His realization of being, of existing, helps him to continue living and the confession ends as a beginning for Roquentin who after the realization may begin again and blend essence to his life.

In almost every novel of Dostoyevsky, certain sections resemble a confession. However, his *Notes from Underground* is the classic text of the genre. The moment of 'painful consciousness' arrives in the second half of the nineteenth century, when Dostoyevsky takes his hero underground, where the light of revelation cannot enter and forces him to seek his primary causes in the depth of his own being. The enslavement of the free spirit is rejected and the underground man rejects optimism and rationalism. The metaphysical side of St. Augustine's vision is brought forth. Once the spirit of existential revolt enters the world, a person is left to find the meaning of life within oneself: this, in turn, demands a new mode of self examination. Nikolai Gogol was among the first to recognize the fictional possibilities of an ordinary person, the petty official or clerk whose personal pains are compounded by an overwhelming sense of anonymity and humiliation. This theme of humiliation became central to almost all confessional heroes.

Thus "The confessional novel presents a hero at some point in his life, examining his past as well as his innermost thoughts, in an effort to achieve some form of perception" (Axthalam 8). The confessional protagonist often introduces himself to the reader at the outset. Taken together, such self introductions provide a vivid image of this type of hero. "I am a sick man," declares the underground man, "I am a spiteful man, I am an unattractive man" (Dostoyevsky 90). In Sartre's *Nausea*, the hero's journal begins; "Something has happened to me, I can't doubt it anymore. It came as an illness does" (Sartre 13). In the opening lines of *Herzog*, Herzog wonders if he is out of his mind. Thus all these heroes are torn by the irrational and incoherent. The

confessional hero thus is lost and disillusioned and now is searching for a meaning. He experiences deep internal pain, not anger, at his condition. His suffering originates not in the chaos of the world but in the chaos within the self, and for him the only possible order or value must be found in self-understanding. The hero's confession generally takes place in a cell, an underground hole, or in an alienated, isolated place. He often is a victim of a social system which has forced him to be what he is. Society in the case of the confessional hero is responsible to a large extent for his disturbed state. The hero tells his story to another character in a setting reminiscent of the religious confession.

Whatever the external forces upon him, he ultimately looks inward, suspending the course of external events while he probes his past and considers his existence. . . . Temporal order ceases to define the course of his confession, as time is manipulated or suspended while the hero considers events from various periods in his past. (Axthalm 10)

The confession generally comes out raw, hot and lava-like. It is immediate and hence, necessitates the hero to burst out. Most confessions are in the form of free associations. Golding's hero Sammy Mountjoy describes time as "a memory, a sense of shuffle fold and coil, of that day nearer than this because more important" (Golding 88). This concept leads to an important principle in all confessions-the principle of selection. Apparently like a stream of consciousness novel or the internal monologue a confessional novel is not merely a random flow of thought processes: "The hero confronts certain events because they are most important to him, others because they are forced into his mind by external forces, and still others because of compulsions which he himself cannot fully understand. The selective process is that of the hero, not of the author" (Axthalm 11). All confessional heroes serve as a mirror symbol, this is primarily achieved to express the confessional hero's relation with others

in terms of self-discovery. “Irony serves as a controlling factor in the confessional novel; it maintains the author’s detachment from his hero and also gives the hero a weapon with which to destroy any romantic notions which might lure him away from the central purpose of his confession” (Axthalm 11). Finally the basic pursuit of all confession-protagonists is toward perception, lucidity and self-understanding. Perception rather than purgation is the goal. “I am writing for myself alone” asserts the hero, as he probes deeper into his soul. Uncovering elements of pain, humiliation, and guilt, the protagonist of the confessional genre continues his quest as “. . . his suffering increases, hoping at last to find some perception of the truth that lies at the center of his existence. Only in this can be complete what the underground man calls his ‘corrective punishment’” (Axthalm 11).

The confession as a genre as already stated began with St. Augustine’s *Confessions* and includes work like Rousseau’s *Confessions*, Kierkegaard’s *The Diary of a Seducer*, Dostoyevsky’s *Notes from Underground* and “The Meek One”, Saul Below’s *Herzog*, Philip Roth’s *Portnoy’s Complaint*, Nabokov’s *Lolita*, Emants’ *A Posthumous Confession*, Golding’s *Free Fall*, Andre Gide’s *The Immoralist*, Camus’s *The Fall*, John Fowles’ *The Collector*, Intizar Hussain’s “The City of Sorrow”, Mahmudzaffar’s “Jawanmardi” and Mahasweta Devi’s “Kunti and the Nishadin” to name a few. Besides these there are many novels and stories which may not belong to the genre of confession but contain within them deep confessional dimensions like Flaubert’s *The Legend of St Julian the Hospitaller*, J.M. Coetzee’s *Disgrace*, Toni Morrison’s *The Bluest Eye*, Khaled Hosseini’s *The Kite Runner*, Manto’s “Thanda Gosh” and Krishan Chander’s “Kaloo Bangi”. Largely secular, a confessional novel presents an abnormal, deviant, psychopathic individual whose tale alienates and revolts the ‘normal’ reader but also stirs her at some deeper, more anarchic level. The act of confession implies a desire for self-purgation and clarification yet it also moves towards transforming one’s past into something creative, a work of art. The

hero's life is usually a waste, but all of this waste is shaped into an aesthetic product.

The entire rationalist creed that a person acts for one's own best interests is attacked in *Notes from Underground*. Here, Dostoyevsky provides a prescription for the genre of modern confessional novel. He employs the confessional form of the French Romantics and his Russian predecessors like Gogol, Lermontov, and Turgenev, but he intensifies it and turns it inward; his central character is concerned not with exposition but with self-discovery and what he terms 'corrective punishment'. "Where are the primary causes on which I am to build?" The underground man asks, "Where are my foundations?" (Dostoyevsky 133). His answers can be found only through a sincere and single-proposed self-analysis. The narrator of the confession has lived an underground life both on the mental and on the social plane. As it is very difficult to confess and reveal layer after layer of untruths regarding one'sself, the very act of confession becomes a self inflicted punishment. It is an act of courage, too, for it takes tremendous courage to face upto one's own self, to what one truly is. By making a public confession the narrator unloads himself. He realizes and acknowledges that depravity is his normal nature and since he cannot help but be deprave, he might as well confess the same. By making the reader conscious of his mistakes, the underground man hopes to extinguish the evil in him and then learn to love and accept the otherness of another. Thus the narrator creates an implied listener. The confession is an attempt to reach out by breaking out of his shell, his mousehole which is a metaphor for his inner inhibited self.

The narrative of the *Notes from Underground* lacks a proper form. There is not a single episode which can be called the central episode. This is because in every confession, the protagonist is the pivot, and around the protagonist, events and incidents revolve and become secondary. Since the narrator is the center and he is writing in a disturbed state of mind, the novella comes out in a

shaken form. The narrative offers us surface truths but behind these lie the essence of the confession. The text lacks a sense of finis as well: For the underground man till the end goes but the author finally puts a stop to him. Thus there is no end to the confession as such. In terms of its form, the text is palimpsest and projects from underneath several faces, each face trying to conceal and hide another.

Camus's *The Fall* is a very powerful study in dealing with the vanity and self-love that humans indulge in. It is this self love, argues Jean-Baptiste Clamence that prevents a human from experiencing or understanding the pain of another. The novella reveals shocking truths which are basic to human nature. It makes an attempt to shatter the cozy, complacent self-image of humans and endeavors to reveal the manipulative self-leading thoughts. All roads lead to the self, is the theme of *The Fall*. Jean Baptiste lives a life of self admiration until the consciousness dawns on him and he is able to recognize his real self. It is now that he stands self-condemned. In the process of introspection the protagonist encounters the nothingness surrounding him. His life now undergoes a metamorphosis.

Jean Baptiste's condition is very close to that of Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner". The desire is to meet people, pick them up, make friends, confess, and finally make them accomplices in his deeds. He confesses that he has always considered himself superior; has never recognized an equal. Considering himself more intelligent, sensitive, skillful, an incomparable driver, a better lover, he found nothing but superiorities in himself. The narrator realizes that whenever he was concerned about others, it was only out of pure condescension. To gain credit he would help, so that he could elevate himself in self-esteem and in the esteem of others. He is conscious that modesty helped him to shine, humility to conquer and virtue to oppress. He surprises himself and finds it difficult to acknowledge or reconcile with this newly discovered self. Life becomes less easy for him. And he begins to unlearn what he had never

learned and yet knew so well- how to live. Realizing that he is not at all acquainted with his own self, in humility he makes an attempt at gradually knowing himself. In every relationship be it of love or friendship, others have been important as long as they have been related to him. Outside himself, others have never been allowed an identity. The consciousness dawns on him, that the greatest of all crimes is that of an indifferent attitude towards everything but the self and everyone is guilty of it. Apathy thus underlies human nature. He hasn't killed anyone, but questions whether he has not allowed deserving creatures to die; and maybe he is ready to do so again. The text here turns Biblical as it makes all humans responsible for those living around and for everyone's welfare. He begins to practice the profession of a 'judge-penitent.' Judging and condemning one and all.

The Fall begins with an intertextual epigram from Lermontov which reflects the motivation behind the confession. Just as *A Hero of Our Times* is not an individual portrait but is an aggregate of the vices of the whole generation in their fullest expression, similarly *The Fall* is not one man's confession but the confession of the entire human race. Each person testifies to the crime of all others is the message of *The Fall*. Jean Baptiste holds his life as a mirror so that others might glance into his life and thereby see a projection of their own selves. The intention is to make them conscious that they themselves are no different. As the confession comes to an end it leaves behind a message that the world goes on and people die; we complacently sit, self-contemplating, hands on hands, with an inert passivity, negating, denying, not recognizing the human lives existing beside us, we enjoy our 'little ease'.

In Andre Gide's *The Immoralist*, after experiencing a state of death in life, Michel's life is transformed and he begins to love life. His thirst for life is so strong, that in the process of living, he completely neglects his dying wife and allows her to die who in a way owes her sickness to him; for it is in the process of nursing Michel who had contracted tuberculosis with complete devotion,

that Marceline, his most devoted wife in turn contracts tuberculosis and dies. This propels an intense need in Michel to confess his guilt to his friends. The protagonist undertakes an inner journey in the process of confessing his guilt. He confesses how rapidly he has changed in the past three years. He, the moralist finally becomes the immoralist, a reject, a homosexual, an atheist. The text brings forth the issue of choices and upholds the view that in life it is always either/or. As Michel takes a long time to decide his sexual orientation, he destroys the life of his wife. *The Immoralist* is against irresponsible choices; once taken there is no going back on a step. It is critical of Michel in that Michel oversteps his right in destroying Marceline. In what respect can one dissociate the lives closely associated with oneself? The text explores this question. Besides, *The Immoralist* is a plea for legalizing and recognizing homosexuality.

The principle of refraction followed in the narrative raises the issue of reliability. There is no way for the reader to distinguish between the past as seen now in the present and the past as it existed, between Michel's confession and the friend's version. Also, the first person point of view is by definition prone to distortion and exaggeration.

Mahmudzaffar's "Jawanmardi", raises similar issues when the protagonist compels his sick wife who really loves and longs for him to bear a baby to prove that he is a man. As his wife eventually dies in the process of delivering, with the head of the baby stuck between her legs, the entire edifice on which his life is based crumbles and he realizes what his life and the western education of which he was so proud has been. The smile on the face of his dead wife haunts him as he perceives her mocking his pseudo progressive existence. While in England he had written romantic letters to his sick wife igniting the fire of love and hence of life in her, on his return he had changed and had began to ignore her. It was when his friends began to doubt his virility that he claimed his wife, only to impregnate her, with complete awareness that

she may die in the process. Her death impels a reworking of his life as he moans and confesses what he has done.

John Fowle's *The Collector* is a criticism of self-centered, solipsist fantasy. Besides the text undertakes the issue of class and highlights the social system and situation which marginalizes millions as if they do not matter. *The Collector*, though on the surface level, is Clegg's confession; it is essentially the confession of an author and finally the text as literature confesses its non-originality. In this the text offers several faces and several levels of confession. The text operates at two dimensions: Fredrik Clegg kidnaps Miranda Grey and thus reduces her to an aesthetic object denying her a human dimension. He believes that he deeply loves her, till she falls severely ill and for fear of being caught by the police, he allows her to die. It is after her death that he discovers her diary and realizes the anguish that she lived in, in living a life of captivity as his prisoner. This propels his confession, as he faces her reality as against his fantasy that Miranda was very happy with him. Though as a person he still does not change, as he is compelled from within to plot another kidnap and imprison a new girl yet somewhere deep down he is completely shaken. In a similar manner, this extremely self-conscious novel suggests that the author imprisons characters in form and sacrifices their contingency for the sake of form. Miranda Grey's struggle in *The Collector* is her struggle for freedom, for contingency, for being what she is and what she wants to be as against what Fredrick Clegg has destined her to be. The text is anti-art which for the sake of art devalues the humanness of the characters and like a monster drives their lives. Fredrik Clegg becomes the metaphor of all those authors who like tyrants deny freedom to their characters. Miranda Grey's death in the end is significant for it denotes the sacrifice of human freedom to plot. It is the victory of a manipulative, well-planned world where every action of an individual is pre-conditioned and determined by a system which dehumanizes.

Finally *The Collector* is against all forms of plotting, against all contrived existence, against all fantasy. The purpose behind the confession is to make the reader aware that possessive relationships lead to death, that love is not holding but allowing the loved one to grow and allowing him or her space. The confession thus is a door to the suppressed realities and gradually removes layer after layer of untruth until the 'Lights fuse' and the reader encounters the dark naked truth.

Intizar Hussain's short story "The City of Sorrow" is written in a confessional mode. There is a deep sense of urgency in the protagonists to narrate their stories, however fragmentary and disrupted they are. As all confessions, the "City of Sorrow" also operates through the invocation of the implied listener who eventually is implicated within the narrative. The story thus becomes a collective confession, as the three protagonists confess the manner in which they participated in the riots precipitated by the partition of the Indian sub-continent and the way in which they violated humanity. As the narrative proceeds, the feeling of guilt in the three men intensifies, and reaches a crescendo as they begin to resonate with each other. They eventually become the catalysts of change for each other, as by revealing the beam in their own eye, they make visible the mote in the eye of the other. In the process, the tales of their deeds inversely become transformative as they move towards deeper spiritual realizations.

The novel of confession basically is introspective, it takes an inward journey; and after exploring the within, it endeavors to reach the external and finally helps the protagonists to branch out and seek a meaning in their otherwise meaningless existence. Besides it serves as a mirror symbol and prompts others to confess, in turn realizing the darkness within.

According to an Indian Legend, a pearl is formed in the oyster-shell only when a specific raindrop, 'Swati bud' falls into it at a special configuration of the stars. Until such a moment, even

though the oyster-shell dwells in the ocean and is sustained and nourished by the immense body of water, it remains 'thirsty', yearning for that drop that would transform it into a pearl.

The human journey too is a preparation for a similar moment; to make ourselves empty of salt water so that a 'pearl' may be formed. If we are unprepared, the rain would fall many a time, but it would all go to waste. (Kumar 1)

The confessional hero metaphorically speaking makes an attempt to dive, explore and finally transform his worthless existence into a 'Swati bud'. There are several moments of realization, they come as flashes, and before the consciousness becomes aware of these moments, they pass. To live is to be guilty. And from day to day guilt feelings gradually accumulate but are brushed aside. A certain stage comes, when it is no more possible to neglect the overwhelming guilt. The moment is of tantalization, the moment when the unconscious struggles to emerge into awareness, and finally asserts itself. A person is forced to encounter the bare, naked truth about oneself. It is after this moment of self-awareness, that the possibility of confession can arise. All of a sudden the entire life lived is transformed into one massive question. All that has been significant loses importance and the only essential thing left existing is the immediate demand for a reassessment of one's life. As Kabir writes:

It is to oneself

That all seekers

Go for pilgrimage (*The Vision of Kabir*, Sakhi-XIII)

It is at such a moment, that one feels alienated, an outsider, a stranger. One's perception about one's self undergoes a transformation as the intense accumulated pain is no longer endurable. The mask, the persona is forced to give itself away. The need is to find another, to confess, to acknowledge and recognize what one astonishingly is.

I would like to conclude the argument with the statement that all confessional heroes move out, to seek, in quest and this quest is prompted with the awareness:

. . . I too am unconscious, unaware . . . asleep to the realms that lie outside me, inside me. . . . We do not understand. . . . the movement of our own hands, the sound of our foot-steps elude us. Can we wake up . . . can we see . . . what lies before us . . . behind the clouds? . . . (Kumar 1).

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