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I have in mind such thinkers as the Canadian Naomi Klein, India's Arundhati Roy, who pleads for a different way of seeing, your British George Monbiot and Mark Curtis, Australia's John Pilger, America's Noam Chomsky, the American Nobel Prize winner Joseph Stiglitz, and the Franco-American Susan George of World Social Forum at Porto Alegre. You have read all of these fine writers, Mr. Mundy?".... "From their varying perspectives, each of these eminent writers tells me the same story. The corporate octopus is stifling the natural growth of humanity. It spreads tyranny, poverty and economic serfdom. It defies the simplest laws of ecology. Warfare is the extension of corporate power by other means.

(le Carré, *Friends* 276-77)

The British writer John le Carré (David John Moore Cornwell; b. 1931), is the author of twenty-three novels till date, all but one of which, namely *The Naïve and Sentimental Lover* (1971), involves espionage. Le Carré's fiction has generated a variety of critical responses across the world in the form of journalistic reviews, critical articles and book length studies. Critics have noted influence of major writers like Joseph Conrad, Grahame Greene and E.M. Forster on his fiction. Although le Carré's work continues to be viewed through such frames as "popular literature" or "genre fiction" and its sub-*genre* "spy fiction," all of which are perceived to have ephemeral appeal, most commentators have tended to agree that his novels manage to raise complex and fundamental questions about the human condition. Another factor that has been often cited as inhibiting a proper appraisal of le Carré's fiction is that his books have been global "bestsellers," which automatically appears to suggest formulaic writing. However, there are commentators who would claim for le Carré a major place among the leading global intellectuals. This current study is being undertaken to determine the locus and relevance of le Carré's fiction in the context of contemporary literature in English.

The principal objective of this thesis is to examine how literary texts critique power structures by looking at the intertwined histories of ideology and resistance with a view to adopting and employing the leads in a study of the post-Cold War novels of John le Carré.

This thesis contends that out of the twenty-three novels written by John le Carré till date, the last twelve, written after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, may be considered as his “post-Cold War novels”. The post-Cold War set may therefore be seen to consist of *The Russia House* (1989), and *The Secret Pilgrim* (1990). *The Night Manager* (1993), *Our Game* (1995), *The Tailor of Panama* (1996), *Single and Single* (1999), *The Constant Gardener* (2001), *Absolute Friends* (2003), *The Mission Song* (2006), *A Most Wanted Man* (2008), *Our Kind of Traitor* (2010) and *A Delicate Truth* (2013). Of these, the eleven novels from *The Russia House* (1989) to *Our Kind of Traitor* (2010) will be the primary focus of the present study.

This thesis further argues that in the post-Cold War novels, John le Carré seems to register transparent modes of resistance to ideologies and ideological apparatuses that not only stand for hegemonic and exclusivist views of the world but also use force to protect and sustain themselves.

The idea that literature that sells well does not mean well has been challenged not only by writers who sell well, but also by critical theorists who do not support the high-brow/ low-brow divide, and condescendingly drawn equivalence between pop and pulp. For, they suggest, writing successful books is not necessarily surrendering to the market forces. Rather, it can be seen as a way to maneuver and manipulate market forces it accepting a world view that is alien to them. Second, this thesis shows a fractured relationship between the bestselling author and the market that makes his work available as a consumer product. Third, the idea that an author is a public figure who defends national and civilizational interests is not without its problems. In fact, intellectuals by nature resist falling into a pattern. To the extent that writing is an ‘intellectual’ activity, we cannot deny the writer the space for disengaging from social agenda and public pursuits of happiness, and progress. In effect, the writer, even at the moment of passionate engagement with writing, keeps for himself/herself the right to distance, in the same way as the philosopher’s right to truth. Writing is essentially an act of self recovery as well as self discovery. Any writer, whether of allegorical texts on spiritual regeneration, or of blatantly manipulative trickster stories, negotiates with layers of reality that he/she considers important.

It is not necessary that these layers are available or in conformity with—or, conversely, in visible opposition to—social structures, social systems, and literary history. Engaged writing is engaged in a dual sense: one, at the level of engaging with the self created by the world, and, two, at the level of the world created by the self. Having entered the world, the author has to be responsible for the world created as well. In other words, one is looking at an author who is neither engaged in activism, nor unwilling to take on the forces that do not allow him/her to create selves and live in worlds created by selves. Now to say that a writer's integrity is determined by the money his books fetch is to ignore this aspect of the writer's engagement. Writing is like living, where one does not dissociate the body from the spirit. Instead, one finds out ways to address the needs of the body away from the needs of the spirit, that is, to ensure that the separation is not a divide, but a way of surviving, in body and in spirit. Similarly, the writer's relationship to society is not to be defined in exclusivist terms, either as commitment without entertainment, or vice versa.

To be able to entertain is to engage in a way of difference with the world this time. This is a world that one creates and in the process of creating, one learns to despair in. To talk about the writer's commitment is to recognize what Keats once famously called "negative capability." A writer like le Carré, this thesis argues, creates several counters of conflicting selves, working in tandem with worlds and world views that do not meet expected ends. Heroes, unlikely possibilities in le Carré's work, emerge from unexpected scenes and events, pressing for reconceptualizing heroism and valour. That ordinary men and women show civilizational mores for what they are, is not only important to understand what le Carré is against, but also, what he is for. Though he does not say it anywhere as a slogan or as a motto, le Carré's primary commitment is to humanity. It is also important to underscore the point that values cynically described as clichés, are dear to le Carré and the men and women who die defending them in his novels.

It is not incidental that le Carré offers a critical view of the intellectuals in the public place, crediting them with keeping the most difficult dreams of the world alive, and yet, censuring them for jumping off the boat at the first available opportunity. That he can appreciate dissent as well as decoration—whatever little that there may be for the writer when there is no money—is important, though he chooses for himself the

status of a writer forever at war with the world. It is pertinent to note that le Carré mentions Arundhati Roy and Noam Chomsky almost in the same breath, for it indicates how little he cares for political correctness or otherwise when it comes to human beings getting killed. Often he sees the insurgent as an individual historically wronged, even as people around him see the person as somebody who has been criminally apprehended. In this context, le Carré sets out to do several things that destabilize the formulaic conventions of spy fiction as a genre. More importantly, however, this thesis looks at these departures not as generic reflections, but in terms of their importance as challenges to different ideological apparatuses—both ISAs and RSAs, to cite Althusser—of modernity represented by the European nation state and the market civilization it perpetuates. This thesis also attributes many of the asymmetries of resistance that cause havoc in the world—typically seen as a bipolar phenomenon, depending on who speaks and for whom—to a collusion between modernity and the market, conveniently available in globalization.

What is important is le Carré's studied distance from any ideological oppositional stance that is likely to get institutionalized and defeat the very purpose of standing up in dissent. Le Carré has been emphatic in suggesting that modes of resistance can also be appropriated by the state, and, by implication, by the corporate world. For, the dissenting intellectual is more vulnerable and open to temptations of crossing over. The examples are prophetically made available by George Orwell's allegorical accounts of collusions between Communism and, paradoxically enough, capitalism, on the one hand, and imperialism and humanism on the other. The dark portends of totalitarianism in Orwell's writing is available in contemporary forms of capitalism and imperialism. The real danger lies not in the occurrence of the systems and structures of oppression, but in the fact that they often disguise themselves as ameliorative modes of production of wealth, knowledge, and values. The war for democracy that is endlessly advertised and consumed in the contemporary world is a necessary warning of the friendly forms of totalitarian regimes that can drive deeper, more fatal blows than the barbarian empires of yore. One more point that needs to be recalled here briefly is le Carré's stand on the dissenting intellectual in the public sphere. Dimitry in *Absolute Friends* is a case in point. For, ironically enough, some of the finest things about human freedom and dignity have been attributed to the likes of Dimitry, though exposed eventually for what they are. Le Carré's figuration of dissent

is strengthened not by its finality, but by its unexpected filiations. To the extent that freedom is an essential condition of life and living, it cannot be divorced from the topical and the specific. Le Carré senses a danger in formatting universal templates for human freedom because he sees, with fairly considerable evidence in contemporary history, of these templates translating into destructive and violative impositions of one kind of world view on unsuspecting people and cultures. While he accepts that freedom is non-negotiable, he is loath towards intellectualizing and theorizing freedom as a universal package, or, more particularly, as a western invention.

His post-Cold war novels pursue a relentless critique of monocultural ideologies both in theory and practice, and offer well articulated counters with which to test what he considers false, hyperbolic and hypocritical foundational theses on freedom, dignity, heroism, civilization, and savagery. To intellectualize, in the sense in which Dimitry intellectualizes knowledge is to forfeit the right to think again. To this extent, one is perhaps entitled to believe that le Carré's purported anti-intellectualism is a mode of resistance that serves him, well, for the time being.

As we have seen so far, le Carré's praxis of resistance cannot be separated from what can be called a politics of resistance. On the one hand we see the legitimacy of a plethora of resistance ideologies, played out across tracks as far away from each other as Tihar and Guantanamo, from Chechnya to Panama. The point to note here is that le Carré globalizes his settings primarily to oppose globalization, which also takes care of the inadequacy of the so called tourist gaze, or what Denning creatively puts as the "licence to look" (Denning 102). The depth of research that goes into explaining contradictions in development models which gave birth to insurgency and created large scale displacement of people from their familiar surroundings may superficially agree with the range and power of colonial ethnography. However, the accent on the point of view of the subaltern—without necessarily prioritizing it; for, that would make an institution out of the subaltern—creates a sense of inclusiveness in understanding national histories and recognizing the imagined nature of nationalist projects. To le Carré, international research, muscles into knowledge systems and reduces them into shop-window exhibits. To the extent that universities and institutions collaborate with commercial houses in carrying out research—whether for more efficient metal parts for spacecraft, or, more convenient injections for HIV-

AIDS—is also a clear indication that knowledge is increasingly devoted to profit than welfare. Once cash, not curiosity, becomes the driving force of institutionalized education, there is no scope for freedom of thinking, and of choosing. This, to le Carré, is a greater danger than open battles between countries and communities for resources in the contemporary world.

The thinking human being must, perforce, be a watchful human being. This is where le Carré self-consciously uses his own predicament as a writer of spy fiction, who uses a watcher—for that is what a spy is—to guard the interests of countries, nations, races, cultures. Interestingly enough, the spy, a surveyor of truth, metamorphoses into a purveyor of truth. This is where the history of spy fiction—not necessarily the history of the genre in the West—has to be reconfigured as a story of ethical stands against injustice and oppression, irrespective of the cost and consequences.

One of the earliest spies, one recalls here, is Hanuman in the *Ramayana*. His journey to Lanka, once the mythological apparatus is seen in its context, is a spy's journey into an evil and powerful kingdom. One also recalls Satan's espionage in Paradise, to check for himself what chances he had against God, in case he decided to take revenge against God. Once we distinguish the history of spy fiction from the history of espionage itself, we may find more ethical spies than spy fiction reports.

Le Carré, in a way, looks at the spy not as an ideological apparatus of perceived superiority or justice, as the genre of spy fiction provides for, but as an ethical instance. It is another matter that generic conventions and formulaic successes have robotized the spy figure that can be produced, consumed and circulated in a world that prefers universal templates to specific instances of freedom, justice, morality, etc. It is natural for le Carré's spies are as protean as his spy narratives. They defy prototypes by simultaneously projecting themselves as plebian as well as privileged, when one least expects them to be so, indicates le Carré's refusal to fall into a pattern. For, submitting to a pattern indicates that one has surrendered to forces of mechanical production and other allied forms of corporate terror.

Objectives:

This thesis proposes to examine the post-Cold War novels of John le Carré in order to trace what appears to be a resistance to ideology. Given that the novels written between 1993 and 2010 increasingly invest in writing-as-resistance, this project seeks to study the forms of ideology being resisted as well as the various modes of resistance manifest in these novels. It is felt that this project would lead to a more transparent appraisal of both John le Carré's fiction and vision, thereby helping us to understand his unique position among contemporary British writers.

Hypothesis and Contentions:

The lack of unanimity among commentators regarding the exact classification of his le Carré's novels is evident in the fact that John L. Cobbs cites *The Russia House* (1989), as a possible beginning of the post-Cold War phase (Cobbs 184), whereas Jost Hendersmann suggests *The Secret Pilgrim* (1990). This thesis builds on and adds to the division of Cold War / post-Cold War novels by John le Carré suggested by Cobbs and Hendersmann, and contends that such a division may be based chronologically on the basis of one historic event—the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, rather than the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The Cold War spy novels would thus include *Call for the Dead* (1961), *A Murder of Quality* (1962), *The Spy who Came in from the Cold* (1963), *The Looking-Glass War* (1965), *A Small Town in Germany* (1968), *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* (1974), *The Honourable Schoolboy* (1977), *Smiley's People* (1980), *The Little Drummer Girl* (1983), and *A Perfect Spy* (1986). It would perhaps be necessary to point out that le Carré's sixth novel, *The Naïve and Sentimental Lover* (1971), is not considered in this catalogue of spy novels on account of its non-generic (see Beene), provenance. Conversely, the post-Cold War group would consist of *The Russia House* (1989), and *The Secret Pilgrim* (1990). *The Night Manager* (1993), *Our Game* (1995), *The Tailor of Panama* (1996), *Single and Single* (1999), *The Constant Gardener* (2001), *Absolute Friends* (2003), *The Mission Song* (2006), *A Most Wanted Man* (2008), *Our Kind of Traitor* (2010), and *A Delicate Truth* (2013).

This thesis contends further that le Carré's eleventh novel, *The Secret Pilgrim*, in which the Cold War spymaster George Smiley makes his final appearance, marks,

as it were, a thematic *telos*. In the Cold War novels the focus is on exploring the betrayal and bad faith inherent in espionage. The post-Cold war novels are marked by a thematic shift towards love, commitment, and human decency. The possibility of redemption through fidelity in personal relationships becomes the dominant theme in the novels written after 1986. A further, stylistic shift may be discerned in a consistent sacrifice of technical finesse and complex characterization in the interest of highlighting particular issues of humanitarian concern strategically selected from neglected margins of the Euro-American consciousness.

In his last twelve novels from *The Russia House* (1993) to *A Delicate Truth* (2013), le Carré addresses such crucial events of recent history as international gun-running originating in the capitalist West; the disintegration of the Soviet Union and its attendant hazards; Globalization and the perils of free market enterprise; neo-imperialist alliances; the war in Iraq; corporate adventurism in contemporary Africa, the pervasiveness of surveillance, compromised sovereignty, and the anxieties of the post-9/11 world.

Significantly, against each of these backdrops can be seen operating le Carré's underlying desire to intervene positively through what le Carré considers the "literature of involvement" (Crutchley 6). It is in this context that we can view his writings as strategic acts of 'resistance'. This thesis argues that writing may be seen as a form of resistance in terms set forth by Noam Chomsky, who includes creating "an atmosphere of concern and outrage" as a necessary precursor to activism (Chomsky 368). In the novels of John le Carré writing may be seen operating both as the condition and consequence of resistance to specific forms of ideology, including race, ethnicity, the nation-state and allegiance.

This thesis examines how Le Carré's ideological commitment, and his increasingly strident sympathy for the "other"—frequently the victim of oppression and injustice— while seemingly aligning him with the Orwellian tradition of the dissenting intellectual, has also served to separate him from other writers of spy fiction and to transform him from a *genre* writer into a leading voice of conscience in an increasingly violent world.

This thesis argues that for le Carré, this recognition has been inextricably linked with his consistent and multi-layered resistance—through his writing—to geopolitical, cultural and intellectual registers in his environment. This thesis identifies at least three dimensions to his resistance. The first is his political-ideological resistance to the neo-imperialistic Anglo- American alliance. Second, there is a generic resistance to the conventionally imperialistic ideology embedded in the spy fiction *genre*. Implicit in this resistance of ideology is also a cultural/representational resistance to the conventions of the very *genre* which has established and sustained le Carré the writer. Besides, utilizing the resources of popular fiction to create global opinion, le Carré extends his resistance to another set of consumers: the burgeoning global market for ‘American’ cultural values.

All these forms of resistance complicate, and have been complicated by, le Carré’s locus, given that he appears to be is an Englishman, a dissident, and remains a commercially and socially successful member of a system he criticizes and resists. What may be seen to validate his position is a clear and consistent pattern of resistance to ideology that effectively links the post-Cold War novels to the earlier group.

In fact, le Carré’s writing-as-resistance seems to have prompted his readers to view him more as a member of an elite group of intellectuals than a *genre* writer. That he is clubbed together with Noam Chomsky and the late Harold Pinter, writers known for their principled resistance to American hegemony/hegemonic tendencies and unbridled globalization, cannot be overlooked.

Review of literature:

Till date, critical writings on le Carré’s fiction have concentrated on four major areas: (a) biographical studies; (b) analysis of the spy novel as a *genre*; (c) the ideological underpinnings of the spy novel; and (d) the ethical-political exigencies of spying as reflected in le Carré’s writings.

Some of the significant contributions to biographical criticism have been made by Homberger (1986), Beene (1992), and Cobbs (1998). Genre studies of the spy novel and le Carré’s position have been done by Panek (1981), Sauerberg (1984), and

Atkins (1984) and Britton (2005). The ideological bases of the *genre* have been explored by Denning (1987), Thompson (1993) and Hindersmann (2002). among others. Of those who have analyzed the ethics and politics of spy fiction *vis-a vis* le Carré are Monaghan (1985), Barley (1986), Wolf (1987), Bold (1988), Aronoff (1999), Horn (2013) and Goodman (2016).

Research on and analysis of le Carré's fiction have so far concentrated by and large on his early novels; those dealing directly with the events of the "Cold War" prior to the dismantling of the Soviet Union. No book length study of le Carré's works has been published since 2004. However, there have been significant reviews and articles written in prominent British and American journals, besides numerous newspapers reviews available online.

1.4 Methodologies/ approach(es) applied:

This project proposes to adopt an eclectic methodology, combining elements of Marxist and Postcolonial criticism with close critical reading of the texts.

1.5 Chapter Plan:

An introductory Preface seeks to provide a brief overview of the objective and structure of the thesis. Chapter 1, titled "Ideology and Resistance: Frames for Reading Spy Fiction," deals with some of the key theoretical concepts employed in the thesis, including 'ideology,' 'resistance,' 'nation' and 'Empire' and their theoretical implications. Chapter 2, titled "The Great Game: Spies and Spy Fiction from Kipling to le Carré," would chronologically evaluate the reception of global spy fiction to situate le Carré in a larger context. It would further seek to analyze the spy novel as an ideological apparatus, while examining the structure of the spy novel, its genre conventions, and possible instances of resistance to the norm. Chapter 3, titled "The Circus and the Globe: Against the Grain in the Cold War Novels," studies le Carré's Cold War novels in the light of the resistance of ideology, particularly centered round a) nation, b) modernity, and c) genre. Chapter 4, titled "After the Circus: Against the Grain in the Post Cold-War Novels," takes up a detailed exploration of clusters of post-Cold War Novels which evince resistance, opposition or subversion of ideology, specifically a) modernity, b)

capitalism/globalization, c) nationalism and d) genre. In conclusion, the thesis seeks to trace the modes of resistance employed by John le Carré, explicitly checking for consistencies and deviations in the formulation, while attempting to reevaluate the place of popular fiction in the history of resistance, and thereby situate John le Carré's fiction within the rubric of contemporary fiction in English.

The project would help in re-orienting and re-evaluating accepted notions regarding popular fiction by distinguishing between popular fiction as an industrial product and as a mode of political resistance that seeks to change and create global opinion. It will demonstrate the role of popular fiction in not only creating and sustaining mass culture, but also in resisting it. The thesis would illustrate the interdisciplinary dialogue between Cultural Studies and Modern Fiction Studies.

II

George Orwell once said that we either write for the hero or the victim. You could translate that in modern terms into the difference between the literature of escapism and the literature of involvement.-- John le Carré. (Crutchley "Fictional" 6-9)

It is possible to see a logical connection between Orwell's declaration regarding his motivation for writing on the one hand, and the thematic and ideological orientation of le Carré's novels of the post-Cold war period on the other. Le Carré's familiarity with Orwell's work, as revealed in a 1966 interview with Leigh Crutchley of *The Listener* seems to support the view that he has followed Orwell in grounding his later novels on human problems that seem to require urgent solutions. While this might appear too radical a re-reading of an author best known for writing genre fiction, a proper understanding of le Carré's late works might serve to reevaluate common assumptions regarding the role of genre fiction or popular fiction as well.

That there has been a shift of thematic interest in le Carré's novels after the end of the Cold War has been indicated by several commentators, although the exact implications of this shift have been variously interpreted. While some have discerned the pattern of listless individuals gravitating towards a participatory approach to the

word's problems (Bradford 111) others have observed le Carré's engagement with the evils of corporate capitalism (Hoffman 238). American reviewers, in particular have noted a strong anti-American bias in le Carré's post-Cold War novels (Kakutani "Reality" N. p.; Jones "Enigmatic" N. p.). Much of this commentary is grounded on complaints regarding the loss of nuance and complexity in both plot construction and characterization (Kakutani "Translator" N. p.) and a tendency blend fiction with polemics (Walden "Tinker"). Conversely, there is also a proclivity among some commentators to apologize for le Carré at many levels, including his pronounced criticism of his American policy. Steven Poole, for instance, while reviewing *Absolute Friends*, suggests that the implausibility of le Carré's plotting in the book is exceeded by the bizarre quality of contemporary American foreign policy (Poole "Spies"). Terence Rafferty, on the other hand, perceptively points out le Carré's empathy with misfits and dreamers in his fiction (Rafferty "One"). Myron Aronoff insists that le Carré's apparent ambiguity is rooted in his fragmented personality, and that his attitude indicates a balanced skepticism with deeply internalized liberal sentiments (Aronoff 203). While all these perspectives may seem to generally tally with the specific discussion of le Carré's novels undertaken so far, they do not seem to consider the crucial issue of reception, beyond a token acknowledgement that his novels have frequently become bestsellers. Aronoff does seem to approach the matter somewhat in his assertion that le Carré contributes to the civic education of his readers by making them better informed about moral issues (Aronoff 207).

It is possible to argue that the complaint over le Carré's conflation of spy fiction and polemic have arisen because reviewers in the West find it difficult to reconcile with the author's disregard for the horizon of expectations they happen to bring along in reading what is perceived to be a John le Carré spy thriller. In fact the corpus of le Carré's Cold War fiction may be seen to have created a genre in itself, which in turn has now been resisted, subverted and modified subtly by the author to suit his reoriented priorities.

Something else that needs to be examined is how le Carré's shift has been received outside of his 'normal' cultural space in the West. An allied question would relate to the reaction of non-western readers to the changed priorities of the post-Cold war novels. These are crucial questions which need to be addressed *because* le Carré's

novels are bestsellers, and because they command a massive readership across the globe. This is in spite of the fact that the didacticism of the post-Cold War novels, which has been derided by some, and justified by others, can hardly be expected to have a stable reception either across cultural spaces or over a period of time. Supriya Chaudhuri, reviewing *Absolute Friends* in India labels le Carré a classic and one of the most important witnesses to our historical time (Chaudhuri “Classic”). Emad Aysha, writing from Egypt, confesses to belittling the allegories in novel initially, only to realize their relevance and credibility after coming across rabidly anti-Islamic literature (Aysha “Absolute” N.p.). However, it is in Aysha’s final affirmation that “we all need some re-educating and le Carré is the one to point the way” that we begin to see the validity of le Carré’s new strategy in the post-Cold War novels. What he seems to be doing is utilizing the resources of a bestselling genre to create an alternate climate of opinion on a global scale.

The rationale for such a strategy may be discerned in the very first of his post-Cold War novels, *The Russia House*, where the two central characters, Barley and Goethe, moot the idea of a global community committed to the ideal of decent conduct, willing to transcend the ideologies of race and nation in the interest of justice for those located at the margins of Western consciousness. This, in effect, is the constituency le Carré may be seen foregrounding, representing and addressing in his post-Cold War novels. Le Carré’s early academic interest in German Romanticism makes it possible to understand the significance of the name Goethe as the European “voice of international humanism” (Cobbs 187). The fact that this idea resurfaces in the subsequent novel *Absolute Friends* in the guise of the Counter-University helps to underscore the centrality of this concept to his ethical vision. In fact, both le Carré’s purpose and strategy appear to resemble what Cornel West describes as the “cultural politics of difference.” West explains this phrase as:

distinct articulations of talented (and usually privileged) contributors to culture who desire to align themselves with demoralized, demobilized, depoliticized and disorganized people in order empower and enable social action and, if possible, to enlist collective insurgency for the expansion of freedom, democracy and individuality. (West 216)

That le Carré’s personal engagement with this “cultural politics of difference” has been facilitated by the inherent popularity of the genre he chooses to employ is all too

clear. It is possible to infer from the discussion of le Carre's novels in the previous chapters, that a distinct ideological shift is discernible between le Carré's Cold War novels to his post Cold War novels. This shift can be said to involve on the one hand a fundamental re-orientation of the author's moral political vision, and on the other, a consequent re-alignment of his creative intent and artistic technique. These are issues which require consideration before a proper assessment of le Carré place in literature can be made.

Aronoff's reference to le Carré's fragmented personality may have resonances beyond their intended meaning, particularly in the light of the writer's own admission in an early interview with Alan Watson:

I've never felt I belong anywhere. I've been very lucky in that respect. I've had a very rich life up to now...I've come from a lot of places and none, and I've seen a lot of institutions and a lot of things. I've led a lot of lives in an odd way. I don't feel that I belong to any of them (Watson "Violent" 14).

What is significant in this fashioning of identity is the imagination of non-belonging as being essentially empowering, a lucky break. The individual who belongs nowhere, marginal to every discourse, is free to belong everywhere. It is possible to consider the post-Cold War novels of le Carré as a strategic continuation of his lifelong attempt at self fashioning. The urge towards the self fashioning may be seen in several of le Carré's most vividly drawn characters: Aldo Cassidy in *The Naïve and The Sentimental Lover*, Magnus Pym in *The Perfect Spy*, Ted Mundy in *Absolute Friends*, among others. Several commentators have recognized the kinship between these characters and the author himself (Aronoff 230; Cobbs 5-6); Le Carré may be understood as being engaged in crafting of an identity for himself, both as an individual and as a writer.

As one of the most recognized names of contemporary fiction in English, le Carré has been noted for assiduously maintaining his distance from the literary salons of London. As a resident Englishman paying "a truly gruesome mountain of tax," he has resisted the easy temptation of becoming a tax refugee and yet has chosen to make his home not in London, but in "the toe of the Cornish peninsula, Land's End indeed, where the island peters out into the Atlantic..." (Cameron "Schoolmaster" 19). The choice of a pseudonym 'le Carré' that suggests a vaguely Norman/French lineage

(Cobbs 4) rather than specifically Anglo Saxon, the fact that though he writes in English, his range of literary motifs and allusions are predominantly drawn from German literature—Goethe, Schiller and Grimmelhausen—all appear to suggest a concerted resistance to a stable racial-cultural identity in favour of one that remains perpetually marginal to every discourse..

The implication of this consistent distancing of the self from political cultural centre and resistance to a specifically “English” identity, when considered in the light of the evidence of his recent fiction, seems to lead to the conclusion that they constitute a rigorous interrogation the categories of “ethnicity” and “identity” What le Carré appears to interrogate includes the notion that the dominant group within a nation state should escape the category of “ethnicity,” and indeed that for the others “identity” should constitute an inescapable trap. It is towards this end that that he may be seen to posit an alternative category endowed with both voluntary agency and ethical judgment: the category “marginality.” When we view this in this context of the new themes of his post-Cold War novels, we begin also to understand the logic behind the reorientation of priorities and the resistance to ideology that these novels evince.

The anti-heroic Smiley figure constituted the first sign of resistance to the generic conception of the Cold war spy. The insistence on Smiley’s deductive abilities points to a parodic reorientation of the focus of spying away from action and excitement towards patient ratiocination. However, le Carré’s post-Cold War novels have added a range of new elements which resist and subvert not only the Bond figure, but even the Cold War spy of his own novels. Thus Smiley and Peter Guillam, despite their occasional doubts, nevertheless serve their institutions and enjoy the narrative empathy because of their eventual acceptance of the ideology of nation and the national interest. Both Leiser and Leamas follow instructions and perish in the bargain, although the act of defiance does come to Leamas at the very end. Those who betray the “nation,” as Haydon and Magnus Pym do, fall outside the pale of the narrative sympathy. In sharp contrast, in the post-Cold war novels, the rejection of the ideology of nation becomes a signifier of ethical validation, as characters like Barley Blair, Larry Pettifer and Ted Mundy attest. In a different way, Pettifer and Jonathan

Pine are also action oriented spy figures, and are defined in contrast to the contemplative spies like Cranmer and Goodhew.

The frequent and destabilizing encroachment of uncomfortable realities into the world of le Carré's novels constitute another aspect of his resistance to and transgression of the basic assumptions of spy fiction