

A Trilogy for the Age of Disillusion: Critical Reading of Dr. Jernail Singh Anand's Post Truth Trilogy

(A Combined Literary Review of Book I: *Conversations with the Infinite*, Book II: *Beyond the Boundaries of Thought*, and Book III: *At the Threshold of Wisdom*)

¹Manminder Singh Anand

¹Assistant Professor of English, DAV College, Sector 10, Chandigarh

ABSTRACT

This combined literary review reads Dr. Jernail S. Anand's Post Truth Trilogy—*Conversations with the Infinite*, *Beyond the Boundaries of Thought*, and *At The Threshold of Wisdom*—as a connected philosophical and literary inquiry into truth, uncertainty, thought and wisdom. Rather than treating the three books as isolated works, the review considers their movement from questioning inherited certainties, through the destabilisation of thought, towards an ethics of attentive and responsible living. Book I opens a conversation with the Infinite and questions borrowed truths; Book II places thought itself under scrutiny in a world crowded by competing claims to truth; and Book III moves towards wisdom understood not as a fixed system but as a way of living and acting. The review also examines Anand's distinctive use of dialogue, paradox, fractured language, silence, recurring images and his concepts of Bio-Text and Post Truthism. The trilogy is situated in conversation with Indian philosophical traditions as well as thinkers such as Tagore, Krishnamurti, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Hartmut Rosa, Edward Said and Martha Nussbaum. Its significance lies in its attempt to bring spiritual inquiry, ethical reflection and contemporary anxieties about knowledge into a single literary framework. The review argues that the three books are best understood as three movements of one sustained inquiry: conversation, ordeal and threshold.

Keywords: *post-truth, uncertainty, Indian English literature, philosophical writing, wisdom, Bio-Text, Post Truthism, literary ethics*

INTRODUCTION

I. The Architecture of a Philosophical Edifice

Trilogies are rarely accidental. When a writer returns repeatedly to the same central question, the recurrence often indicates that the question itself has not been exhausted. Dr. Jernail Singh Anand's Post Truth Trilogy—*Conversations with the Infinite*, *Beyond the Boundaries of Thought*, and *At The Threshold of Wisdom*—may be read in this sense. The three books do not tell a conventional continuous story; rather, they trace a movement of consciousness. The subject is the modern individual confronted by uncertainty, informational excess, competing truths and the weakening of inherited certainties.

"Post Truth" is now a familiar expression. Oxford Languages selected "post-truth" as its Word of the Year in 2016, and the term has since become associated with a public culture in which emotional appeal may exercise greater influence than verifiable fact. Anand approaches the condition from a broader philosophical perspective. For him, post-truth is not simply a political or media phenomenon but an epistemological and existential disturbance. The individual is surrounded by information and yet remains uncertain about meaning, value and purpose.

The three books can consequently be understood as three stations of an intellectual and spiritual journey: invitation, ordeal and threshold. The movement is not strictly linear. Images, questions and ideas recur across the trilogy, each time from a somewhat different perspective. The tree, for instance, appears as metaphor, argument and finally as an image of responsible action. The structure is therefore spiral rather than simply linear: the same questions return, but with an altered depth.

II. Book I: Conversations with the Infinite — The Summons

Book I functions as the summons to inquiry. Its dialogic form creates a conversation between the seeker and the Infinite, but the Infinite does not provide easy consolation. Instead, it repeatedly questions the seeker's assumptions. The question, "Why do you seek me outside when your own breath is rented?" (Anand, *Conversations* 27), shifts spiritual inquiry from an external search towards an awareness of mortality and embodiment. The image of rented breath suggests that human existence is temporary and that certainty about ownership, identity and permanence is itself fragile.

The statement "The sky is a manuscript erased every night" (Anand, *Conversations* 44) similarly brings together transience and renewal. The image becomes particularly significant when placed beside Anand's observation that "Google cannot locate your soul, though it knows your search history." The contrast is between technological knowledge and inward knowledge: the former can accumulate information, while the latter concerns questions that cannot be reduced to searchable data.

Book I rests broadly on three related movements. The first is the questioning of borrowed truths. Anand is sceptical of truths accepted merely because they have been inherited from institutions, traditions or established authorities. The second is the loneliness of seeing. To question inherited certainty is also to risk standing apart from the crowd. "The crowd is a shelter for cowards," the Infinite says. "Come alone if you must come" (Anand, *Conversations* 91). The third is paradox as method. The Infinite is not presented as an answer that closes inquiry; it becomes a question that continues to grow.

The density of the book is therefore part of its method. It does not encourage a hurried reading. Its aphoristic and dialogic passages invite the reader to pause, question and respond. The book consequently establishes the first movement of the trilogy: before wisdom can be approached, inherited certainty must first be examined.

III. Book II: Beyond the Boundaries of Thought — The Ordeal

If Book I is the summons, Book II constitutes the ordeal. Here Anand turns his questioning towards thought itself. The book can be imagined as a philosophical kachehri in which different voices present their claims: the Poet speaks, the Scientist objects, the Priest invokes scripture, while Silence remains present as a possibility beyond argument. This dialogic structure creates a productive tension between competing modes of knowledge.

The central concern is not that truth has disappeared but that the modern subject encounters too many competing claims to truth. One source declares that the earth is burning; another offers an alternative explanation; both may present data. The resulting condition is not simply ignorance but epistemological fatigue. In this context, Anand's statement, "Think until thought collapses, then watch what is left" (Anand, *Boundaries* 63), becomes central to the book's philosophical movement.

The related assertion, "A belief is a house. Truth is the storm" (Anand, *Boundaries* 64), captures the instability that Anand associates with fixed belief. A belief can provide shelter,

but it can also become restrictive when it is mistaken for absolute truth. The book therefore does not merely reject thought; rather, it questions the tendency of thought to turn its provisional conclusions into permanent certainties.

The language of Book II reinforces this uncertainty. White space, fractured expression, untranslated Punjabi words and Sanskrit phrases interrupt the smooth progression of conventional exposition. “The mirror broke,” Anand writes, “because it tried to hold too many faces” (Anand, *Boundaries* 112). The image may be read as a representation of a fragmented subject confronted by multiple identities, interpretations and truths. In this sense, the formal characteristics of the book participate in its philosophical argument.

The book may appear excessively sceptical to some readers, but its negativity is purposeful. The dismantling of inadequate foundations prepares the movement towards Book III. Without the ordeal of questioning, the arrival of wisdom would risk becoming another form of consolation.

IV. Book III: At The Threshold of Wisdom — The Arrival That Is Not an End

Book III is quieter in tone. After the questioning of Book I and the destabilisation of Book II, it moves towards a more contemplative understanding of wisdom. Yet the title itself is important: a threshold is not the same as a destination. One may stand at a threshold without claiming to possess what lies beyond it. Wisdom, for Anand, is therefore less a system to be acquired than a posture involving attention without attachment, compassion without performance and action without the compulsion to be right.

The tone of the third book may be understood in relation to Edward Said’s idea of late style: a movement towards greater sparseness and independence from established conventions. Anand’s later philosophical voice appears less interested in supplying final answers than in refining the quality of the questions themselves. The Infinite no longer functions only as an interrogating presence; the seeker increasingly learns to listen.

The key idea is “creative living.” When established authorities cannot be accepted without examination—not the state, the market, inherited ideology or even one’s own earlier opinions—the individual must assume responsibility for the manner in which life is lived. Creativity here is not restricted to artistic production. It becomes an ethical practice.

Anand writes: “To plant a tree when the climate is collapsing is not hope. It is wisdom. Hope expects. Wisdom acts” (Anand, *Threshold* 78). The distinction is significant because it shifts the trilogy from epistemological questioning towards ethical responsibility. Wisdom is not passive withdrawal from a troubled world; it is action undertaken without the guarantee of certainty. The related statement, “The temple you build of certainties will fall. The threshold you stand on will hold” (Anand, *Threshold* 103), continues the trilogy’s suspicion of rigid systems.

Book III therefore does not necessarily abandon the critical energy of Book II. Rather, it redirects it. The warrior has not simply retired; the nature of the struggle has changed. The emphasis moves from defeating competing certainties to cultivating forms of life that can remain responsible in conditions of uncertainty.

Anand’s treatment of death also belongs to this movement. “Death is not the opposite of life,” he writes. “Fear is. Death is just the last question” (Anand, *Threshold* 141). The statement brings the trilogy back to one of its foundational concerns: the limits of human certainty. Death cannot be solved as a problem; it has to be encountered. The reference to the *sthita-*

prajña of the Gita consequently becomes significant, since steadiness rather than absolute knowledge becomes the desired condition.

V. The Trilogy as a Whole: Form, Language, and Lineage

Read together, the three books constitute a philosophical-literary movement from invitation through ordeal to threshold. Their relationship may be compared, cautiously, with other traditions of spiritual and philosophical writing in which questioning, negation and transformation form successive stages. The trilogy, however, remains rooted in the contemporary moment. Its Infinite has encountered the digital world; its seeker lives amid search histories, competing information and accelerated communication.

Language is central to this project. Anand does not simply reproduce a standardised literary English; his English carries the cultural and philosophical resonances of Punjab and India. His concepts of Bio-Text and Logos Text provide a vocabulary for this distinction. Bio-Text is presented as language that breathes, while Logos Text is associated with argumentative and conceptual discourse. Anand's concern is not to reject reason altogether but to suggest that language must remain connected to lived experience.

The intellectual lineage of the trilogy is correspondingly wide. Upanishadic thought, the Bhagavad Gita, Rumi, Nietzsche, Krishnamurti and Heidegger can all be seen as relevant interlocutors, while contemporary thinkers such as Hartmut Rosa and Byung-Chul Han provide ways of thinking about acceleration, exhaustion and modern subjectivity. Yet the value of these connections lies not simply in identifying similarities but in observing how Anand relocates philosophical questions within a contemporary Indian literary context.

The recurring images of the tree, storm and mirror contribute to the unity of the trilogy. Their repetition can be understood as a form of ritual return: the reader encounters familiar images, but their significance changes as the argument develops. In this respect, the trilogy's form supports its larger philosophical claim that wisdom is not a final possession but an ongoing practice of questioning.

VI. Place in Contemporary Literature

Where might Anand's trilogy be located within contemporary literature? It is difficult to assign it to a single category. It participates in Indian English literary writing, philosophical literature, spiritual reflection and contemporary responses to the crisis of certainty. Its sustained metaphysical interest distinguishes it from much contemporary writing that concentrates primarily on history, identity or the self.

Anand can be placed in conversation with Sri Aurobindo, Nissim Ezekiel at his philosophical moments, A. K. Ramanujan and Ananta Kumar Giri, while international parallels may be drawn with writers and thinkers concerned with alienation, acceleration and ethical responsibility. Such comparisons, however, are most useful when they illuminate specific features of Anand's work rather than simply establish a lineage.

The trilogy's completion is itself significant in an age increasingly shaped by fragmented forms of reading. The three books provide a beginning, middle and threshold, and therefore retain a sense of formal continuity. Their larger achievement lies in bringing philosophical questioning back into sustained literary form.

VII. Critiques and Questions

A combined review should also acknowledge the questions raised by the trilogy. One possible concern is its seriousness. The trilogy rarely retreats into irony, and in an age

accustomed to ironic distance, this earnestness can appear unusual. Yet such earnestness may itself be understood as a deliberate response to the uncertainty of the present.

A second question concerns readership. The books are intellectually dense and assume familiarity with philosophical and spiritual traditions. Their difficulty may restrict accessibility for some readers, although the same density is also part of their distinctive appeal.

The most important question, however, concerns the idea of Post Truthism itself. If Anand cautions against rigid systems and inherited certainties, can Post Truthism become another system? The trilogy seems aware of this danger. Book III's concept of the threshold provides one possible answer: wisdom remains a threshold rather than a temple. If it becomes another rigid structure, it would contradict the very principle from which the trilogy begins.

This tension is productive rather than merely problematic. It suggests that Anand's Post Truthism may be understood less as a doctrine and more as an ethical orientation: a commitment to live and act without claiming absolute possession of truth.

VIII. A Compass for the Unmapped

The Post Truth Trilogy is not intended as a simple consolation for a troubled age. It is better understood as a literary-philosophical compass. Its movement is from conversation, through the destabilisation of thought, towards a threshold where wisdom begins. For literature, it restores the question of what it means to be human when inherited answers no longer appear sufficient. For philosophy, it turns abstract questions towards lived experience. For the reader, it offers an invitation to create a space for reflection within the noise of contemporary life.

The three books are therefore more productively read as one sustained inquiry than as three unrelated works. Their subject is an ancient question—how to live—but their vocabulary belongs to a world of digital information, competing truths, accelerated existence and uncertain authority. Anand's response is not to provide another closed system of certainty. Instead, he asks the reader to remain awake within uncertainty and to transform questioning into responsible action.

In this sense, the trilogy's movement from the Infinite, through the boundaries of thought, to the threshold of wisdom constitutes its principal literary and philosophical achievement. It does not finally tell the reader what to think; it asks the reader to examine how one thinks, how one lives and how one acts when certainty is no longer easily available.

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