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Editorial

The January 2018 issue of GNOSIS had a very warm response from the readers in India and abroad that articles have been flowing in quick succession to fill the folder for this issue even before the deadline of October 31, 2017. The thumping reception of the journal shows the depth of multicultural issues in literature to which critics and readers are attracted. As a journal committed to quality research and writing, we are aware of the need to delink quality from publication cost. Hence, our decision to charge no publication fee from the scholars whose papers will be published in the issues of GNOSIS. At the same time since GNOSIS is a self-financed venture, co-operation and support in the form of subscriptions are solicited from the readers and admirers of English Literature and Language from all over the world. It is my honour and privilege to inform all the well wishers of GNOSIS that GNOSIS has been included in the approved journal list of UGC (University Grants Commission, New Delhi, India) with serial number 48815. On behalf of the entire family of GNOSIS I would like to thank the officials of UGC for recognizing the hard and honest work put in by each and every member of GNOSIS and enlisting it in the approved list of journals. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the Academicians and well wishers of GNOSIS who recommended GNOSIS to be included in the UGC list. There are twenty-three research/critical articles, four poems and a conference report in this issue. Before concluding, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my reverend Associate Editor, Dr. Indira Nityanandam and our esteemed members of the Board of Advisors and Review Editors for their selfless and tiresome efforts in reviewing and assessing the articles very sincerely and giving their valuable remarks to bring out this issue in such a grand manner. I am also grateful to the revered contributors who have made this issue of the Journal a beautiful reality. Wishing all the readers a mental feast. Happy Reading!

Dr. Saikat Banerjee

Editor

A Prophetic Vision of the Past: Allegories of Difference in *The Great Indian Novel* and *Oscar and Lucinda*

Bill Ashcroft

Submitted: 28 November 2017, Accepted: 29 December 2017.

Abstract: There can seem very little, on the surface to link India and Australia. This essay argues that it is the reaction to, and transformations of history that unite these two former colonies. History is one of the primary tools of imperial domination because by instituting a record of the past as European it confirms the dominance of Eurocentrism established by the invention of the world map. When colonial societies are historicized they are brought into history, brought into the discourse of modernity as a function of imperial control – mapped, named, organized, legislated, inscribed. But at the same time they are kept at History's margins, implanting the joint sense of loss and desire. This essay demonstrates the role of literature in transforming the record of the past. Excluded from world history, colonies relied on the role of writers to narrate the story of cultures that had been subsumed into empire. They do this by allegorizing the movement of history in place. *The Great Indian Novel* and *Oscar and Lucinda* offer very different re-conceptions of history based on the culturally disparate functions of myth and chance. Though very different, they are united in their project to reconceive imperial history and thus establish a story outside that history for colonial societies.

Keywords: History, Allegory, Myth, Chance, India, Australia, Empire.

What are the connections between India and Australia in the year 2017? Indeed, what better time to consider the connections between them. Because here, balanced between two millennia, we stand on a boundary erected by European Modernity, a boundary formalised by the Gregorian calendar, a boundary reminding us that time has become universal, and ultimately, a boundary that confronts us with History. It is History, that capital H discourse of European modernity, that supreme regulation of world reality that unites these strange bedfellows, rather than their individual histories. As extensions of British imperial sovereignty over the last couple of centuries they share a relation to history that seems increasingly anachronistic. Relegated to the periphery

of empire, to a practical historylessness, it is not surprising that they should want to put one kind of history behind them. Surely imperialism is dead and gone! Surely the fragility of this over-extended edifice was revealed conclusively at the end of the Second World War!

But the year 2000 reminds us that while we may put the past behind us we cannot do the same with History. History must be faced, it must be engaged, because, if we think that History is simply a past that can be forgotten, we fall into the trap set for us by the teleology of western historical method. Australia and India, like the rest of the world, want to enter history, because, as Ashish Nandy puts it “Historical consciousness now owns the globe.... Though millions of people continue to stay outside history, millions have, since the days of Marx, dutifully migrated to the empire of history to become its loyal subjects” (Nandy 46). When colonial societies are historicized they are brought into history, brought into the discourse of modernity as a function of imperial control – mapped, named, organized, legislated, inscribed. But at the same time they are kept at History’s margins, implanting the joint sense of loss and desire.

The story of the past is critical because it is the story of *what* is real and *how* it is real. We can no more ignore that reality than we can ignore the date. No other discourse has such a power to narrate the future, because, apart from geography, no other discourse has such a claim upon ‘world reality’. History, that relatively recent discourse of European Modernity, so central to Europe’s invention of the world, not only records ‘the past’ but outlines a trajectory that takes in the future. It is precisely that future that seems undermined by a fixation on a colonial past. Does this fixation on the workings of colonial power continue to privilege colonial society? If so, why, then, do writers and creative artists continually re-imagine that history and the consequences of that relationship? It cannot be because a colonial history touches us at our core. Or can it?

Why should a postcolonial analysis be of benefit, and why should it reveal the connections between India and Australia? Materially, no two cultures could seem more different, no two national historical processes so divergent. Yet it is in the power of History itself to bring these societies into being, and in a sense, into the *being of Europe* that brings them together. And here lies the key to the place of postcolonial studies in an era of globalization. First, we cannot understand globalization without understanding the structure of global power

relations that flourishes in the twentieth century as an economic, cultural and political legacy of western imperialism. Second, postcolonial theory, and particularly the example of postcolonial literatures, can provide very clear models for understanding how local communities achieve agency under the pressure of global hegemony. The strategies by which colonized societies have coped with, resisted and consumed the cultural capital presented to them by imperial culture are recapitulated on a global scale in local communities throughout the world. There is still possibly no more powerful discourse of global culture than history, and the ways in which postcolonial societies engage and contest that discourse provide models for the relationship between the local and the global in contemporary cultural life.

The OED gives one definition of history as: “a written narrative constituting a continuous methodical record, in order of time, of important or public events, especially those connected with a particular country, people or individual.” Each one of these elements - its written form; its weddedness to chronological time, its will to truth, its continuity, its teleology, its narrativity, its aspiration to be a scientific record of events; its articulation of what constitutes events of historical value - has been important in the imperial function of history over the last two centuries. History occludes local pasts in various ways, sometimes by nominating the pre-colonial as ‘primitive’ and ‘prehistoric’, sometimes (as in India) by ‘orientalising’ it as exotic, sometimes by overshadowing it with the prestige and status of modern history’s scientific method. In settler colonies the suppression of the local history is more subtle: postcolonial history (other than the officially ‘national’) is regarded as having no value or importance because ‘nothing significant’ has occurred: Australian colonial history is simply an extension of British history. Whatever the particular way in which History dominates the local, it is fictional narrative which provides the most flexible and evocative response, principally because fiction is best able to reproduce the fundamentally allegorical nature of history itself.

The reason literary writing is so efficacious is that “the actual experience of life in a colonial or postcolonial culture has been, and continues to be, ‘written’ by the texts of colonial discourse” (Slemon 1987: 10). The dominant mode of this ‘writing’ has been allegorical, making allegory itself a site of struggle, and a mode of counter-discourse in all forms of colonial society, and, indeed, in our present

'global culture'. The 'great' literary allegories of the English literature canon have been the most influential formulators of what it is to be human and have thus become the particular objects of counter-discourse. Thus, "allegorical writing, and its inherent investment in history provides the postcolonial writer with a means" not only of proposing that history can be "opened up to the transformative power of imaginative revision," but "also of building it into the structuring principle of the fictional work of art" (Slemon 1988: 159). Ultimately, allegory is crucial because history itself is allegorical. Contemporary anti-narrative theories such as quantitative history, cliometric history, theory oriented history and psycho-history are more self-consciously allegorical than traditional narrative histories, but this merely serves to articulate the allegorical nature and function of narrative itself (Kellner 27). Allegory "questions its own authority by inescapably drawing attention to the *will* exerted in its creation" (Smith 113).

The significance of allegory to postcolonial accounts of history is the opportunity it opens up for what Edouard Glissant calls a "prophetic vision of the past" (Glissant 64). Talking about the difficult phenomenon of Caribbean history, the history of a people robbed of a prehistory, taken out of their own history, so to speak, and then denied a reality within early accounts of plantation society, Glissant conceives a history in prophetic terms: a past conflated with the present that the writer must continually strive to capture. "The past," he says "to which we were subjected, which has not yet emerged as history for us, is, however, obsessively present. The duty of the writer is to explore this obsession, to show its relevance in a continuous fashion to the immediate present" (Glissant 64). This prophetic vision, he explains, is neither a nostalgic lament nor a narrative locked into the scientific method of history. It enters the allegory of historical narrative in order to revision the future. A striking example of this, according to Wilson Harris, is the ubiquitous limbo dance found in the carnival life of the West Indies which is an allegory of the slaves' passage from Africa to the Caribbean, a continually and allegorically performed history, prophesying regeneration and renewal. This is a compelling image of a history that functions in the present, that not so much forms a dialectic between memory, future time and the present, as *enacts* the presentness of history.

It is in literary narratives, because they so closely mimic the narrative mode of history, that the allegory of imperial history can be

most effectively contested. It is also in literary narratives that a prophetic vision of the past can be realised. By comparing an odd couple, an Indian and Australian novel, investigating one very small example of a much more widespread process, we discover the extent to which these different societies share strategies of transformation. Literary writing in postcolonial societies exceeds the aesthetic function of canonical works, as the imagination itself tests the political strategies that are critical to various forms of social transformation. The creative arts are crucial to this transformative process because social change must first be imagined before it can be brought into being. When we become bemused by the mean-spiritedness of our politicians and institutions, it is in our power to initiate change by first imagining. Ultimately, the imagination is nothing less than prophetic.

Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* and Peter Carey's *Oscar and Lucinda* demonstrate that writers may write back to imperial history from very different perspectives, in different ways and with very different allegorical modes. Tharoor contests the *universality* of imperial history, while Carey contests its *teleology*. *The Great Indian Novel* retells the story of the breakdown of Empire in India, and the emergence of independence, through the lens of the *Mahabarahta* which forms a counter-discursive frame through which the scientific pretensions of a colonial history may be dismantled. In effect it absorbs and overwhelms the apparently universal history of the nation in a larger mythic framework. *Oscar and Lucinda* balances its prophetic vision on an allegorical journey which depicts the teleological, often visionary, but deeply contradictory progress of European civilization; a journey which is transformed as it progresses. The novel dismantles the teleology of history by revealing this apparently progressive movement hinges on moments of pure chance. The *Mahabarahta* and the settler journey outward and inward present two distinctly different cultural motifs for their allegorical movement. While they share an attack on the allegory of imperial history these two novels engage that allegory in the ways that have been most significant to the cultures from which they emerge. Their allegories employ the difference of their cultural ground as a site of resistance.

Myth and History: *The Great Indian Novel*

The central story in *The Great Indian Novel* is India's move to independence. This novel, the title of which satirises literary pretensions to universal value, is by no means 'canonical' yet it provides a

powerful ‘prophetic vision of the past’ by applying the *Mahabarahta* to the events of India’s colonial history. The story of partition is the narrative in which time and space, history and geography meet. But the truth this novel expresses so well is that every effect of imperial power in South-Asia is at the same time a moment of redefinition of empire. The catastrophic construction of modern India, so consummate a demonstration of the consequences of imperial power, is nevertheless an engagement in which the effects of change work dialectically. And this dialectical relationship is most potently revealed in the use of the English language itself. The process within which the relationship of the colonizer and colonized operates becomes dialogic when the master-tongue is appropriated. The English language is not simply appropriated to describe Indian culture, it is in a subtle way implicated in its construction.

The Great Indian Novel interpolates the discourse of history by means of what might be called a “cultural transparency.” This term alludes to Homi Bhabha’s use of the concept of “negative transparency” to indicate the ambivalence of postcolonial mimicry.

As an articulation of displacement and dislocation, it is now possible to identify ‘the cultural’ as a disposal of power, a negative transparency that comes to be agonistically constructed on the boundary between frame of reference/frame of mind. (Bhabha 122)

The novel overlays the broad outlines of the *Mahabarahta* upon the story of India’s postcolonial history in a way that not only provides a reconceptualisation of events in the context of a dense mythology, but also serves to disrupt the discourse of history itself, projecting it into the future. We can think of it as the overlaying of an allegorical cultural map upon the narrative of official history to effectively ‘reshape’ it. The *Mahabarahta*, or at least its creative co-option in the narrative of modern India, becomes a “positive transparency.” The process of this overlaying provides a ‘timeless’ allegorical framework for the events of India’s move to independence without necessarily discarding historical narrativity. Indeed the contingent and dialectical movement of that narrative is emphasised and by interpolating the *Mahabarata*’s sense of the recurrence of historical events, the power of the imperial/empirical history of India is undermined in a kind of allegorical one-upmanship.

This writer’s India therefore becomes endlessly redefinable.

History, Ganapathi—indeed the world, the universe, and all human life, and so too, every institution under which we live—is in a constant state of evolution. The world and everything in it is being created and re-created even as I speak, each hour, each day, each week, going through the unending process of birth and rebirth which has made us all. India has been born and reborn scores of times, and it will be reborn again. India is for ever; and India is forever being made (Tharoor 245).

It is in the light of this salutary view of the universe that the writer is given a free hand in his intervention into historical truth. The ‘positive transparency’ by which he appropriates the past creates a dialogue between history and culture that illuminates the allegorical function of each.

The process of using the *Mahabharata* as the ‘transparency’ of history has a formidable de-familiarising function. For the non-Indian reader the access to Hindu cosmology occurs in exactly the same way that the Indian readers of the Great Tradition of English literature were expected to absorb the values of Western civilization from their reading. This reversal is a profound reversal of the strategy of reading. *The Great Indian Novel* not only demonstrates the process of the postcolonial interpolation of history, but the kind of ‘resistance’ which can be achieved by an interpolation of the category ‘literature’ itself. The layering of the transparency of Indian cosmology, values, assumptions, world view upon that history via the *Mahabharata* enacts the civilizing mission *in reverse*.

By naming those people who played the major parts in contemporary Indian history according to the names of the *Mahabharata*, history itself is ‘known’ in a different way. By so manifestly exceeding the linear narrative of history, the story of India is known in a way which cannot be confined by History. This power to interpolate a dominant discourse and transform it becomes prophetic. The immense depth and spread of Indian cosmology exists as a kind of ground on which the story of India’s move into independence can be read, a story in which irony and parody are all the stronger when read from the perspective of the timeless Indian myth.

The allegorical mode makes visible that which exists as a hidden function of historical narrativity. Nowhere does allegory seem more appropriate as a mode of history than in the vibrant and irreducible complexity of India. In this novel the transparency of the *Mahabharata*

gives way directly to allegory at the moment of historical crisis: the break-up of India itself. This occurs in the birth of Draupadi, the beautiful symbolic progeny of the union of empire and decolonizing state. Draupadi, the daughter of Dhritarashtra (Nehru), and the Vicerine (Lady Mountbatten), is India herself; beautiful, hybrid, mysterious, “Draupadi was like the flame of a brass lamp in a sacred temple of the people” (309). Her marriage is the allegory of India’s future: “Yes of course. Draupadi had to be married one day. But to tie that boundless spirit to any one man—it would be a crime; it would diminish and confine her, and all of us” (311). In a dream Ved Vyas sees that it is Arjun the perfect, Arjun the hero of mythology who succeeds in winning her. Ironically, India enters the ambivalent realm of modernity by having to marry Arjun’s brothers as well. The dream marriage of Draupadi and Arjun must also include the stolidly political and bureaucratic Yudhishtir, the soldier Bhim, it must include the glib banalities of diplomacy and the agonising dilemmas of administration in the persons of the twins Nakul and Sahadev (321).

Such imperatives exist outside the theatre of official history, but they explain much about the ambivalence of decolonisation. Imperial history, is like a stage on which the universal drama of the Enlightenment is played out:

We tend, Ganapathi, to look back on history as if it were a stage play, with scene building upon scene, our hero moving from one action to the next in his remorseless stride to the climax. Yet life is never like that. If life were a play the noises offstage, and for that matter the sounds of the audience, would drown out the lines of the principal actors. That, of course, would make for a rather poor tale; and so the recounting of history is only the order we artificially impose upon life to permit its lessons to be more clearly understood (109).

History is not a staged play, a theatre played out on the passive stage called ‘India,’ as imperial history might contend, but a story without end. This strikes at the very heart of the teleological perspective of Imperial history because the end of such history is the perfection of the civilizing process

... ‘the end’ was an idea that I suddenly realised meant nothing to me. I did not begin the story in order to end it; the essence of the tale lay in the telling. ‘What happened next?’ I could answer. But ‘what happened in the end?’ I could not even understand....

There is, in short, Ganapathi, no end to the story of life. There are merely pauses. The end is the arbitrary invention of the teller... (163).

But to which story shall we return? (165) he asks later. The story of history is many stories, none of which have an end but all of which continue intersected and overlapping. It is this secret of history that the transparency of the *Mahabharata* can reveal. For India.

History is Krukshetra. The struggle between dharma and adharma is a struggle of our nation, and each of us in it, engages i[t] on every single day of our existence. That struggle, that battle, took place before this election; it will continue after it (391).

In the 'end' there is no end, only the ambivalence of history: the present overlapping the past: "Something had passed whose shadow would always remain, and something had begun that would not endure" (402).

Before I go on to talk about *Oscar and Lucinda* I would like to put it in dialogue with the historical allegory of Ken Macpherson's paper in this volume. This is an interesting story about Australia's development from 'Anglo-Celtic' homogeneity to multi-cultural promise, and I would not disagree with any of the details of that story. But a story, because it is a story hides its contradictions, the medium of its invention, its fictionality. For instance, referring to the 'Anglo-Celtic' homogeneity of Australia is a bit like referring to the Hindu-Muslim homogeneity of India. Issues of class and gender, the history of oppression and hostility and the lingering effects of these are glossed over. Historical narrative must move forward because it is trapped in the illusion that mechanical time is a fact of nature: generalities are its characters, and the historical story becomes an allegory of progress. Ultimately, the story of the nation, the story of a people, because it is a story, because it is locked in the illusion of time, merely continues the founding narrative of empire, the movement of colonial civilization towards a higher goal.

Chance and Historical Purpose: *Oscar and Lucinda*

When we turn to *Oscar and Lucinda* we find a different mode of allegory. Rather than overlaying history with a cosmological map like the *Mahabharata* this novel addresses those aspects of imperial history of most significance to a settler colony: its inexorable teleology; its narrative of civilization; its inscription on the *tabula rasa* of

Australian space. The allegory in *Oscar and Lucinda* is that of the movement of imperial history itself: the classic journey of civilisation into the wild on its historic mission to bring light into the darkness. On the face of it, the novel is an engaging story about a naive religious boy who, following God's will, leaves his father's church and makes his way across the terrifying sea to Australia, where he conceives and executes a fantastic plan to build a glass church and sail it up the Bellinger river as an act of love for Lucinda. But Oscar's journey is an ambivalent subversion of our usual assumptions about the progress of civilisation from Europe to Australia. The allegorical journey not only disrupts the fixity of history but also dismantles the teleology of historical development.

Imperial/empirical history is a story of development towards a particular end. This is one meaning of the term 'historicism.' But its teleological impetus is centripetal, that is, it constantly moves towards the centre, and establishes an order fundamental to imperial discourse—it orders reality. This elaborate story of Oscar's floating church, representing as it does the movement of white society into the unknown, the importation of spiritual solace, the 'gradual amendment' of society, as Lord Acton puts it, the forthright movement towards order, is itself a parody of the allegory of imperial history. Such history is grounded on the imperial *telos* of progress and civilisation, the *telos* of order. The idea of a *telos*—an end or goal to which the transcendent movement of history is directed, is implicated in the idea of the sequential itself. For out of the notions of contiguity and temporal sequence emerges the principle of *cause*, which can, in turn, be seen to be a product of narrative structures once the world is considered as a text.

In *Oscar and Lucinda* the teleology of history is firmly linked to the divine order of things. The titles of the chapters (Ascension Day, After Whitsunday) give the direct sense of a coherent and ordered movement of history. Thus the Church calendar becomes the metaphor for the ordered and *authorised* movement of historical time. But the novel's response to this is to show events unfolding not by moments of synthesis or continuity but by the completely erratic operation of *pure chance*. Chance not only profoundly influences the progression of the story, but is *the* way in which the narrative progresses. Time after time Oscar's and Lucinda's history advances by means of moments of chance, which appear to be the only driving force of progress, and

could be seen as *aporia* which at various points, deconstruct the assumptions of causality and continuity on which (imperial) history is established. The most sustained demonstration of chance in the *Oscar and Lucinda* is gambling itself, which both actually and metaphorically dominates the action. On three important occasions Oscar paradoxically confirms what he takes to be divine guidance by an act of pure chance. Faith itself becomes the ultimate gamble, as he says to Lucinda on board the ship to Australia: "Our whole faith is a wager, Miss Leplastrier ... we bet that there is a God. We bet our life on it" (261). If faith and life are a gamble then one of the greatest gambles is love, as Lucinda demonstrates when she bets her inheritance upon the success of Oscar's journey as a sign of the gamble of her whole life (388-9).

The idea of *telos* is essentially a claim for order in the movement of human affairs and in both novels order is disrupted in various ways. Theophilus, the naturalist, who encourages his son Oscar to classify his buttons is convinced of the link between taxonomy and an ordered creation. But order is not simply disrupted by the novel, its moral claim is turned on its head in the person of the appalling Jefferis, who leads the party on its expedition in manic emulation of the surveyor explorer Major Mitchell. The explorer perfectly embodies the malicious blindness of the 'orderly' incursion of European society into Australia.

... he planned to go about this journey like a trigonometrist, knowing always, exactly, where he was in space....

They would carry axes and they would be razor sharp at all times, for there is nothing a surveyor despises more than a tree that obscures his trig point (437-8).

Through Jefferis the novel interpolates its narrative into the moral universe which Theophilus claims to know and to which imperial ideology claims privileged access. Entering it is to disrupt its polarity.

The novel is thus founded on a fundamental tension: events move forward according to the operation of *pure chance*, yet the narrative recording those events, as 'history,' is symbolized in the journey of the glass church as the purposeful movement of civilization into the wild. This "Extraordinary and Fine" (361), but fundamentally misconceived plan, represents the apparently inexorable project of imperial history. Conceived as an act of love for Lucinda, Oscar's journey is 'captured' by the tyranny of imperial discourse in the person of Jefferis, whose "great obsession in life was that he should be an explorer of unmapped territories" (169). Australia is a place which exists in the unmapped

territory of the imagination. Its open possibility is its greatest attraction, but typically, to Jeffris, it is a wildness to be tamed. Thus the trip is an immensely subtle allegory of the fundamentally empty and deluded narrative enacting and inscribing the empire's vision of progress.

Perhaps more intransigent in debates about the ontological status of history is the question of whether it is truth or fiction. "Truth" and "reality," says Hans Kellner "are, of course, the primary authoritarian weapons of our time, an era characterised by nothing more than the debate over what is true of reality" (Kellner 6). Nothing has more effectively trapped the non-European world into the universalism of history than its will to truth. At the beginning of Adib Khan's *Solitude of Illusions* (1999) the protagonist finds himself in heaven and asks whether stories are told there. For how can perfection accommodate storytelling, which involves lying, trickery and inventiveness? The Enlightenment will-to-truth underlying History is a precise representation of this paradox: the claim upon perfection is made through a form—narrative—that only exists by trickery and invention.

Oscar and Lucinda addresses this paradox of truth, reality and their interpretation by focussing upon its perfect material example - Glass. Glass stands for the contradictory and paradoxical transparency of life, the Promethean possibilities of being. It represents the unity of truth and illusion. It is a "lovely contradictory thing... a thing in disguise, an actor, is not solid at all, but a liquid... in short, a joyous and paradoxical thing, as good a material as any to build a life from" (135).

The contradictory nature of glass is best demonstrated in the Prince Rupert's glass drop, virtually unbreakable except for one weak spot which can blow it apart. Such contradictoriness characterises the civilizing mission, the journey of the glass church up the Bellinger River, for while it is Extraordinary and Fine its effects upon the aboriginal people are much less so:

Glass cuts

We never saw it before

Now it is here amongst us.

It is sacred to the strangers.

Glass cuts.

Glass cuts kangaroo.

Glass cuts bandicoot.

Glass cuts the trees and grasses.

Hurry on strangers.

Hurry on the Kumbaingiri

Leave us, good spirits, go, go (470).

Glass comes represent the paradox of colonial history, the paradox of the distinction between ideology and materiality, between rhetoric and practice. And above all, it can be out of place, which is the significance of the aboriginal song: "It came up the river, its walls like ice emanating light, as fine and elegant as civilisation itself" (490). A luminous metonym of civilisation and its effects: beautiful, dangerous, contradictory, ambivalent, a gamble of love that goes wrong.

The story of Oscar's glass church sailing up the Bellinger River is a *prophetic* vision of the past because it reveals that the myth of civilized progress, of 'development' as a continuous mode of being, though it continues into the postcolonial present, is an illusion. The church is: "Something Extraordinary and Fine" in concept; it is conceived in innocence; it begins as the antithesis of mapping and exploration, proceeding into unmapped territory not to impose order but to embody paradox, to offer praise to the lovely contradictory nature of experience; it is hijacked by the impetus of exploration, discovery and colonisation in the person of the tyrannical Jeffris, becoming a reason for mapping, taken over by that authority to which it is antithetical; it proceeds into the future without regard to any past; it is the great gamble, but the inheritance is squandered. Like the civilizing mission, like progress, the fine idea collapses into a narrative of greed and robbery. Because the allegory depicts the allegorical nature of history itself, it goes beyond 'then' and 'now', projecting into the future its prophetic narrative of aspiration and disillusion by the continued impetus and authority of 'imperial' power.

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Thousands of miles apart, in distance and culture, two postcolonial societies, through two expatriate writers, engage the allegory by which their modern realities have been written. Neither one yearning nostalgically for a lost essence, they nevertheless transform history into prophecy in their own way. For one society, a religious text, one among many, absorbs history into its timeless frame, looks beyond history in two directions to show the ways in which modernity can be transformed. For the other society, a story of entry, invasion, progress,

mirrors the allegory which gave this society being and remains the paradigm of its anxious development. The re-writing of this story transforms history by showing that the destiny towards which that narrative journey of nation was pointing was no more than a matter of pure chance. We need not make essentialist claims about the ways in which each novel reflects the culture of its origin, for the larger point is that each demonstrates both in the deconstruction of history, and the appropriation of a language to do this, something of the agency of the local in its engagement with global culture. This agency is manifested in a thousand different ways as producers of culture resist and transform a global dominance that seems inexorable.

Allegory seems to avoid the hard crust of reality. Fictional narrative seems a long way from the exigencies of the global economy. But looking back is not necessarily backward looking. The realities of India and Australia continue to be written by the allegory of global growth and progress, however proximate their material surfaces. The postcolonial disruption of imperial history demonstrates precisely how a society can counter the discourse by which it continues to be written. Fictional allegories of the past, far from endorsing the prestige of historical method do the opposite, they disrupt the truth claims of that method. It is this disruption that opens the space for prophecy.

Rather than freeze the writer in a prison of protest, allegory allows resistance to transform, in particular to transform the narratives that have 'written' postcolonial reality. Power is productive rather than coercive even if the location of that reproductive power is deferred and provisional, as it might seem when it originates in expatriate writers. But that in itself is a demonstration of the fluid and circulating nature, the transformative character, of resistance. Placing history in the frame of the *Mahabarahta* is itself an allegorical demonstration of the ability of a culture to transform a global discourse while maintaining its difference. Oscar's extraordinary journey up the Bellinger River, by allegorising the historical movement of colonial civilization, demonstrates that the journey continues into the future. It is in this capacity of the fictional text to re-connect time and place, to re-connect what modernity has disconnected, by re-writing the allegory of imperial history itself, that the prophetic vision of the past is most vividly realised.

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Genet's *The Balcony* and Baudrillard: Simulacra, Hyperreality, and Power

Nita N Kumar

**Submitted: 08 December 2017, Revised: 18 December 2017,
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Abstract: “Genet’s *The Balcony* and Baudrillard: Simulacra, Hyperreality, and Power” examines Genet’s play in the light of Baudrillard’s concepts of the Simulacra and Simulation, arguing for a non-oppositional reading of the ideas of image and reality in the play. It demonstrates how Genet in *The Balcony* creates a world in which distinctions between image and reality break down, producing a world of hyperreality. Power in the postmodern world, says Baudrillard, “produces nothing but the signs of its resemblance” (23). In the play, we see the symbols of authority, such as the Bishop, General, Judge, and the Chief of Police, as well as the power of revolution losing their reality and being revealed as simulacra or images.

Keywords: Jean Genet’ *The Balcony*, Jean Baudrillard, Simulacra and Simulation, Hyperreality, Power.

The overarching issue in the interpretation and understanding of Genet’s play *The Balcony* is the relationship between the illusory and the real, the game and the serious. The play constantly challenges us to apprehend the meaning of the events, to distinguish and connect the happenings within Madame Irma’s Balcony with the events outside, assailing us repeatedly by overt and covert attempts to blur and breakdown the boundaries separating the inside from the outside, the mock from the serious, the sign and the referent, the real from the copy. In the early scenes of the play, the customers who playact the roles of the Bishop, the Judge and the General set up oppositions between the *Ideas* of the Bishop, Judge, and General and the various specific renderings or materializations of these ideas. Later in the play, this simple opposition is completely undercut in scenes that nearly fuse the events in the political/social world of the play and the goings-on in the Balcony. Many critical readings of the play, such as Philip Thody’s highly perceptive essay, “*The Balcony*: A Comment on the Modern State,” are based on the idea that the play is “constructed around the contrast between reality and illusion” (149). This essay argues that

Philosophy Matters: Interpretive Communities, Travelogues and Colonialism

T.J. Abraham

Submitted: 17 November 2017, Revised: 13 December 2017, Accepted: 29 December 2017.

Abstract: The paper tries to argue that the travelogues, far more fictive than what one is generally prepared to accept and, yet are fashioned by interpretive communities and ultimately informed by the philosophical ideas with the weight of truth attached to them. However, the ideas of the philosophers, many a time an admixture of truth and prejudice, shape the breeding platform for the justification of colonialism. Hence the real provenance of colonialism should shift towards the European philosophers rather than travelogues as generally believed.

Keywords: Travelogue, Philosophy, Colonialism, Interpretive Communities, Truth.

Travel writing has been the mainstay for those dissatisfied with the mere ‘fictive insubstantiality’ offered by imaginative literary products. Travelogues were privileged for their truth value over their fictional counterpart that dealt in imaginative concoctions. Accordingly, the readers of travelogues who set great store by their objectivity, chose to view imaginative literature, despite all their alleged literary merits, as purveyors of untruth, and hence, at best, only to be tolerated. A tinge of overt or covert condescension towards such mental exercise could be generally detected in the illustrious line of votaries of truth from the Platonic era. However, a more fundamental question addressed here is about the status of truth value ascribed to travelogues, and to see whether they are any less constructed than the avowed fiction or indeed, any writing. It may be seen, instead, that the ‘truth’ of travelogues is the handiwork of interpretive communities. Stanley Fish demonstrates the way meaning is constructed by active interpretive communities in literary works. However, the process of truth construction may be seen as no different in the allegedly objective writings as well.

Travelogues as a genre, subsumes a variety of writings of exploration and adventure, reports of life lived in alien lands and

Negotiating Interpretative Paradigms of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*

David Pecan

**Submitted: 13 December 2017, Revised: 20 December 2017,
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Abstract: The angelic vision depicted in Book 12 of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* (c. 1150 CE) subverts the text's historical, secular, and religious authority, in the service of the author's desire to "hack" the genre of historical chronicle. Discussion of particular scholarship on the text, Flint (1979), Ashe (1985), Curley (1994), Ingledew (1994), Faletra (2000), establishes the interpretative problems and possibilities in the text. Monmouth's *Historia* blends real and manufactured sources, Christian and Pagan prophecy, cause and effect historiography with providential history, and eschatological and epic narrative to challenge the expectations and structure of his historical chronicle.

Keywords: Interpretative problems, Real and manufactured sources, Christian and Pagan prophecy, Cause and effect historiography.

When discussing the Twelfth-century *Historia Regum Britanniae* of Geoffrey of Monmouth, most critics must be content to apply an element of psychological relativism to the chronicles, epics, genealogies, and legends that make up the historical produce of the early world. Yet many of us also assure ourselves that history has a way of bleeding through the lines of detail that make up these narratives, or at the very least, that such tales provide evidence of some cultural nuance that is historically important or illuminating. These ideas are helpful, especially in regard to what they have to say about the nature of myth and history. However, in a modern world that prides itself on the nominal cultivation of certainty and absolute "truth," such notions typically serve as a segue into much more detailed or conflicted discussions that attempt to clarify our understanding or assumptions of the past in relation to the documents which have found their way down the river of time to the present. The problem of negotiating the interpretation of early historical writing, therefore, is not in determining if the past has anything to teach us, but rather that we often have a confusing variety of lessons to choose from.

Apathy, Empathy and Humility: Barbara Kingsolver's *Flight Behaviour* Registers Multiplicity of Responses in the Anthropocene

Ansul Rao

Submitted: 07 November 2017, Revised: 28 December 2017, Accepted: 29 December 2017.

Abstract: The name Anthropocene is widely used to denote the present geological age highlighting the human race's impact as geological agents. Amitav Ghosh in his book *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* addresses the issue of climate change and discusses the failure of present literature in confronting with this urgent matter. This paper examines Barbara Kingsolver's *Flight Behaviour* as an Anthropocene novel and focuses on the trajectories of human responses in the face of a climate calamity. Kingsolver manages to present realistic characters who reflect the conventional attitudes toward the environmental crisis. The intellectual and spiritual growth of her protagonist is a journey from apathy to humility toward the nonhuman world.

Keywords: Anthropocene, Climate Change, Calamity, Apathy, Humility.

The Holocene is staggered, the only world that humans have known is suddenly reeling. I am not describing what will happen if we don't take action, or warning of some future threat. This is the *current* inventory: more thunder, more lightning, less ice. Name a major feature of the earth's surface and you will find massive change. (McKibben5)

Nobel Prize winner Paul J. Crutzen, and Eugene F. Stoermer presented the idea that the current geological age, Holocene, must be considered over and new geological age be called Anthropocene. The advent of the Anthropocene is due to the anthropogenic changes brought upon the earth. Though not officially recognized, the Anthropocene has captured the attention of scientists, environmentalists and writers. In his book *Eaarth: Making a Life on a Tough New Planet*, environmentalist Bill McKibben shows that this

A Study of Construction of Gender in Ketan Mahta's Mirch Masala

Doyel Dutta

**Submitted: 16 December 2017, Revised: 22 December 2017,
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Abstract: Mirch Masala (1986) is a national award winning movie by critically acclaimed director Ketan Mahta. It is based on the tragedy and struggle of women in the rural society under Zamindari System in pre independence age of India. It shows in details the exploitation of needy women by the powerful men and also the helplessness of women before the orthodoxy of society. But the movie also acknowledges the strengths of women and patriarch society's negligence towards it. This paper critically examines the projection of gender issues in the movie.

Keywords: Movie, Gender, Women, Society, Patriarchy.

Indian cinema has a diversified history of projecting gender issues in many different ways. If mainstream cinema has revolved around stereotyping of gender projecting men as symbol of heroism, dominance and power and women as beauty icons, parallel cinema has always tried to focus on ground realities. The struggles of the weaker sex in society have been allotted screen time and space in this discipline. Holding the hands of the directors of parallel cinema portrayal of gender has reached a new height. Many grey areas of society have been revealed to the masses through celluloid by Indian parallel cinema. This paper focuses on one such movie, Ketan Mahta's Mirch Masala. It endeavours to study in details the portrayal of women in the movie. It is a close textual reading of the projection of gender issues on screen with the help of cinematic tools.

Mirch Masala (1986) is a National award winning Hindi Parallel movie by internationally acclaimed director Ketan Mahta. Set in pre independence era in Gujrat, the plot revolves around the exploitation of innocent and illiterate villagers by tax collectors who in local language were called *Subedars* in colonial India. In other words, the feudal *Zamindari* System that was ubiquitous in British Regime (Throval

The Witch Hunt Haunts: Churchill's *Vinegar Tom* as a Critique on the Social Perception of Women as Evil

V. Vijayalaxmi & Geetha Senthil Kumar

**Submitted: 13 December 2017, Revised: 22 December 2017,
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Abstract: The world has traditionally been a male dominated society. The society as a whole along with other women is to be blamed in allowing this condition to continue. It is a question of social perception and not of any man/woman prejudice. The idea that women are to be obedient and subservient to men has been so deeply entrenched in the psyche of human beings for hundreds of years; it is hard to believe that one century of feministic activism could have brought about a significant shift in the perception. Reality checks are to be conducted to determine the actual impact. And, more importantly such reality checks cause positive and productive effects when it allows people to introspect and reexamine their individual perception on looking at women as inferior. Caryl Churchill's *Vinegar Tom* is one such attempt to conduct a reality check on the true social as well as individual perception of seeing evil in women. She is able to accomplish this task dramatically by placing her questions with the backdrop of the Witch Hunt atrocities of the seventeenth century. This paper aims at understanding what, how, and why Churchill raises questions about the contemporary perception of evil in women by staging a historical moment which is now considered as perceivably unacceptable, emotionally revolting, and intellectually barbaric, but may still hidden in the subconscious minds of the so-called modern men.

Keywords: Witch Hunt, Social perception, *Vinegar Tom*, Female prejudice.

The world has traditionally been a male dominated society. The society as a whole along with other women is to be blamed in allowing this condition to continue. It is a question of social perception and not of any man/woman prejudice. Women have always been the silent sufferers down the ages. The modern era brought about an opportunity for women to voice out their problems and fight against oppression. Voices against women oppression and movements supporting the cause of gender equality began to emerge in the twentieth century.

Bond's Bond with Nature: An Eco-critical Study of Selected Works of Ruskin Bond

Ajmal Sameed Syed

**Submitted: 17 December 2017, Revised: 24 December 2017,
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Abstract: Human beings live in the realm of nature; they are constantly surrounded by it and interact with it. Unfortunately, the present day world is a world of advancement, hi-tech technology and unprecedented scientific growth and development. People live fast life which made them to turn a blind eye on ecological degradation. In such a situation writers have a responsibility to create ecological awareness among the common people. Ruskin Bond is one such writer whose works are woven with splendid Himalayas as a backdrop. His view that humans are inseparable from nature pervades throughout his writings. The statement speaks volumes about his close affinity with nature and the positive effects of environment. This paper brings to the fore the humans relationship with nature which is extensively highlighted in Bond's writings.

Keywords: Nature and humans, Bio diversity, Himalayas and beauty, Environment, Preservation.

Introduction

A prolific author, a story teller beloved by children and adults alike, Ruskin Bond is one of the greatest writers of fiction from India. He is an Indian author with British descent who is very popular for his versatile writing and elegant style. Ruskin Bond was born in Kasauli, Himachal Pradesh on 9th May 1934. His father was an Englishman and mother was an Anglo – Indian. He grew up in Jamnagar, Dehradun and Shimla. His career in writing is forty long years and his achievements are many. He has been writing in different genres like novels, short stories, essays, and poetry. He has written more than thirty books for children. Bond has written over 100 short stories and two autobiographies. Bond's first novel is *The Room on the Roof* written in the year 1956. It was written by Bond at the age of seventeen. This maiden venture won him John Llewellyn Rhys prize in 1957. Ruskin Bond received Sahitya Academy Award for English Writings in India

The Woman: Possibilities, Positionality and Voice in Effiong Johnson's *Not Without Bones*, *The Stolen Manuscript* and *Install the Princess*

Monica Udoette

Submitted: 15 December 2017, Revised : 22 December 2017, Accepted: 29 December 2017.

Abstract: This paper discusses the changing dimension of female character portrayal in selected plays of Effiong E. Johnson. It examines three purposively selected texts—*Not Without Bones* (2000), *The Stolen Manuscript* (2001) and *Install the Princess* (2009) in terms of reference to the portrait of womanhood in African society and highlights a fundamental and significant coherence in imaginative thought. The paper establishes variants and divergence in the plays, then it identifies significant feminine voices incorporated in charting the path of social transformation. Through a diversity of strategies deployed and dimensions of opposition to either colonial authority or male supremacy, our submission is that some female characters are positioned and bestowed with endless possibilities to become change agents and forgers of social transformation through a sustained collective effort. Johnson's dramaturgy reinforces radical feminist and modernist orientations in approach yet attains a womanist resolution of communality at the end.

Keywords: Social Transformation, Colonial Authority, Male Supremacy and Effiong Johnson.

Introduction

Nigerian drama like its parent institution—African drama—buds from playwrights expressing the peculiarities of the Nigerian experience and culture. Over time, creative literature has been more of an endeavour at recreating life, exploring glitches and recreating strands of history. This history might be personal, cultural, ethnic, or national and perhaps volunteer possible solutions to social, political, economic issues within the society. According to Adrian Roscoe “literature does not grow or develop in a vacuum, it is given impetus, shape, direction and even area of concern by social, political and economic forces in a particular society” (173). The above submission identifies the social milieu as the ingredient of creative imagination. It is on this premise that writers

Narrating a Nation from Home and Abroad: *The Kite Runner*

Abhimanyu Pandey

**Submitted: 17 November 2017, Revised : 05 December 2017,
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Abstract: The complexity in the narrative of Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* makes it a novel with a difference. It tells us about the masculinities in Afghanistan that come in the way of its being a perfect multicultural society. The family of three males (Baba, Hassan and Amir) becomes an embodiment of how the social system in Afghanistan works. It also depicts American multiculturalism pointing out its limitations. Entering from the national to the transnational domain, we perceive the process of "amalgamation". Amir's "subjectivity" is constituted by his early life's failures; his neurosis leads to his becoming a literary author. We are shown Afghan nationalism and culture from within the country and from outside, as a differently cultured tourist would see it. The novel rises above a merely political novel, absorbing into its corpus the subject of guilt, redemption and human nature itself.

Keywords: Nationalism, Transnationalism, Multiculturalism, Amalgamation, Afghan Social Stratification.

The Kite Runner (2006) is a painful account of a nation in the grips of terror, evacuation and migration. The novel also showcases multiculturalism in a radically new perspective. This paper analyses Khaled Hosseini's narrative art in portraying the pain of leaving one's country and settling in another. It shows how Hosseini keeps a limited eye on the issue of diaspora and is able to maintain the focus on a nationalistic discourse even as he narrates the tragic tale of an Afghan family that needs to escape from Afghanistan at a historic moment of political change and cope with a multicultural setup in America. In Afghanistan the Hazaras are the have-nots that are ever subjugated and oppressed. Hazaras make good servants to the Pashtuns and their women good bedmates to them, if the story of the novel has truth.

The narrator in *The Kite Runner*, Amir, begins by telling us about Afghanistan and how his family reacts to it, in the initial stages of the

Revisiting the Indian Bastille: An Attempt to Analyse Foucault's Pertinence in the Indian Context

Atabi Saha

**Submitted: 11 November 2017, Revised : 02 December 2017,
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Abstract: Edward Said's monumental work, titled *Orientalism* (1978), popularized the segregation of the whole world into two halves—the Orient representing the East, particularly Middle Eastern, Asian and North African societies and the Occident that refers to the West, especially Europe and America. In his work, Said elucidates the natural tendency of the West to consider themselves more developed, rational and thus, more civilized than the static and undeveloped societies of the East and this tendency inculcates in them the need to patronize the latter, to educate and civilize them, which they consider as a divine responsibility entrusted upon themselves. According to this constructed grid, The East is expected to look up to the opinions and judgements of the West as the benchmark, characterized by global validity and thus, forming the standard acceptable route towards civilization. The aim of this paper shall be to challenge this presumption by showing how Western theories miserably fail to account for the issues of the East when applied to analyse controversial areas. The idea shall be to focus primarily on the Cellular Jail and to scrutinize how the Indian jail has proved Foucault's hypothesis inappropriate, replete with loopholes. Sumanta Banerjee's assertion seems quite relevant in this context. He, in his review on Indian Jails, argues, "Indian prisoners have turned Foucault on his head. They may not have heard of the Frenchman, but will laugh at his proposition that prisons were set up to discipline and punish them[...] The jail as an institution[...] may not remain long as a penal settlement in the Foucaultian sense" (5226). This paper, thus, attempts to enlighten the readers about how far Foucault's theory about prison is relevant in the context of the Indian Bastille.

Keywords: Orient, Occident, Foucault, discipline, punish, Cellular Jail.

The hegemony of considering Western literature and philosophy as the hallmark and yardstick of acceptable propositions is nothing

Indian Campus and the Question of Campus-Caste Interface: A Study of Select Indian Campus Novels in English

Krishanu Adhikari

**Submitted: 10 December 2017, Revised: 17 December 2017,
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Abstract: Campus Fiction as a distinct subgenre of fiction rose into prominence in the West during 1950s, which following the words of Raymond Williams can be stated as a kind of emergent cultural form. In a similar vein, Indian academia has also contributed to the ‘palimpsestic’ growth of a similar kind of fiction, written in English on Indian campuses, since 1950s, which has hitherto remained unheeded in the existing body of criticism on Indian English Fiction. Unlike their western counterpart, Indian Campus Novels, since their inception tend to depict a picture of the campus which actively participates in the formation of the constitutive narrative of the ‘political’ in larger socio-political order of post-independence India. This paper would attempt to study Srividya Natarajan’s *No Onions Nor Garlic* (2006) and M. K. Naik’s *Corridors of Knowledge* (2008), so as to probe how these two novels manifest two different discursive traces of approaches, concerning the deep rooted problematics of Indian Caste system in two different Indian university campuses, located in culturally/geographically two different spaces in post-independence India. While Natarajan questions the prevailing Brahminical hegemony in The Chennai University; M.K. Naik on the other hand highlights the slow downfall of Indian academia, due to its over-inclusive nature. Hence the study would draw upon the works of Andre Beteille, Derek Bok, Paulo Freire, the education commission reports, the writings of Ambedkar, Partha Chatterjee, Gopal Guru and SundarSarukkai, in order to address the complex dynamics of the social responsibilities of Indian universities. Thus by bringing into account the institutionalization of caste-based discourses, this paper would finally strive to locate the changing dynamics of campus-caste interface.

Keywords: Campus, ‘Political’, Caste, Academia, Consciousness, Liberation.

Ritualizing “Rust”: A Bioregional Reading of *Kailpodu*

Subarna De

**Submitted: 16 November 2017, Revised : 30 November 2017,
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Abstract: In Coorg, a coffee producing highland that threatens the forest ecosystem in the Western Ghats of India, the native *Kodavas* celebrate a festival worshipping rusted arms and instruments, popularly known as *Kailpodu*. This paper will offer a bioregional understanding of the indigenous ritual of *Kailpodu* and explore how the festival of arms attempts to “yield to rust” and “find beauty in rust”. Arguing that “rust” is both a reinhabitory tool and a cultural metaphor, this paper will explore how “rust” is not corrosive but progressive and a mandate to restore the lost *Kodava* lifeway, a culture which revives from “rust.”

Keywords: *Kodava*, *Kailpodu*, Rust, Bioregionalism, Reinhabitation.

“Rust” is mostly associated with negative connotations of decay and destruction and is often considered as a cultural metaphor representing resistance and collapse. This essay attempts to offer an understanding of “rust” as a cultural metaphor that is not corrosive but progressive. Studying the *Kodava*¹ indigenous ritual of *Kailpodu*² as a celebration of “rust,” the essay will explore how “rust” gradually evolves as a bioregional agent of cultural revival, a reinhabitory tool that helps the *Kodavas* to recollect their indigenous practices and revive their lost nature-culture relationships.

The Gazetteer of Coorg, considered as the most authentic ethnographical and anthropological study till date, described the *Kodava* region of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century as a mountainous land with varieties of flora, fauna and dense bamboo jungles peculiar to the region covering the entire mountain ranges in the form of “extensive forests” from the base to the summit (Richter 16-17). According to the specific locations where the forests were situated, these mixed evergreen and deciduous forests were identified by the *Kodavas* as the hill-forests (male-kádu) and hillock-jungles (kanive-kádu—forests in the ridges between the paddy-fields and hillock) (Richter 17). The *Kodavas* were originally hunter-gatherers with small

Rereading and Blogging: Analysing the Possibilities of 'Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius'

by Jorge Luis Borges

Paban Chakraborty

Submitted: 23 October 2017, Revised: 07 November 2017, Accepted: 13 December 2017.

Abstract: This paper is addressed to the process of the reading in the world of web. Rereading has been seen as only an appendage to reading, a secondary entity, but here the aim is to show the relation between rereading and the blogosphere, Wikis and the new media. With the story I want to show how cyber culture invades into and is approximated in the work of Jorge Luis Borges.

Keywords: Rereading, Blog, Web, Borges, Text, Cyber culture.

1. Introduction

The blog culture has been around for quite a while now. From the position of a supplement it has reached a competitive stance. The new media has moved beyond the internet and relates to the web culture of blogs, wikis and such concepts that are changing the way we view literacy and the production of knowledge. From its inception the ideas have played with the main stream media and sometimes even threatens the existence of other media. Merriam Webster's word of the year for 2004 was Blog. It has gained a collective authority and still blogs and wikis stand for a de-canonised community culture. They never say the final word. Even the definition is ever progressing just like the various types of blogs that are emerging every day. It defies any form of genre classification and advocates a strong counter-culture for the obscure voices. Literary blogs also are nothing but collective works, always progressing through the comments and additions of the reader or rather the rereader. Rereading is a tool that Borges uses for the progression of the text. Since writing is an impossible task, we collaborate with the text in ways that can be called a constructive rereading. But how does this rereading relate to this age of quick access? The principal axes upon which both ideas revolve is the idea of an incomplete text, the final text is always deferred and we as readers are an imperfect lot. Reading/writing delineates authority but the new

Gender Stereotyping, Identity Crisis and Fragile Relationship in Dattani's *Dance like a Man*

Naved Mohammed

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Abstract: Mahesh Dattani is one of the prominent figures in Indian English drama whose plays marked for scathing and piercing skills that he implied in his writings to make direct attacks on the prevailing filthiness and narrowness of contemporary Indian society. Moreover, Dattani used to stage a strong tool to illustrate the societal absurdities, ugliness and, complexity in human relationships. Mostly in his plays preoccupied with the national, social, political and domestic problems. Dattani enthusiastic orientation towards such absurdities can be seen in his own observation: I think there are so many things, tensions, and conflicts that we are dealing with....I am writing these because these issues are inspiring to me. His ability to encapsulate the deep insight and twisted depth of human psychic suffering in his characters had a profound impact on his readers as well audience. *Dance like a man* is one of the plays in which Dattani points out various common problems such as relationship conflicts, ambitions, identity crisis and also flings light on ideological clashes between modern and traditional upholders. The purpose of this study, in this play, is to highlight the problems of an urban middle-class man whose self-esteem and artistic credentials is destroyed by the traditional and ambitious societal upholders. In this research paper, I will focus on the major elements, such as identity crisis, genders problem, ambition and broken relationship that, however, linked the events chronically and occurred throughout the play.

Keywords: Identity crisis, fragile relationship, Ambition, domination, society, drama.

Thematically, I talk about areas where the individual feels exhausted. My plays are about such people who are striving to expand 'this' space. They live on the fringes of the society and are not looking for acceptance, but are struggling to grab as much fringe—space for themselves as they can.(Dattani)

Delineating Agony in Post Godhra Riots: Studying Nandita Das' Firaq

Hari Pratap Tripathi

**Submitted: 10 December 2017, Revised: 22 December 2017,
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Abstract: In my paper I shall make a textual analysis of the film *Firaq* (2008) by Nandita Das. It will be an attempt to explore and bring into light the covert reasons which resulted in the Godhra riots of 2002 between Hindus and Muslims and its aftermath as has been shown in the film. The paper shall try to focus on the ideological leaning of the director and how the film berates any kind of fundamentalism, the imposition of the majoritarian values over the minority and the resulting *fear of the small numbers*, the failure of the state apparatuses in putting a check to the clashes. Further, it will present how violence is politically motivated or sometimes state sanctioned by throwing light on the communal nature of the police administration as has been portrayed in the film.

Keywords: Fundamentalism, Fear of small numbers, State apparatuses and State-sanctioned violence.

The Indian subcontinent has been a witness to violence in the name of religion for centuries. Being a country with diverse cultures and communities it prides in being the cradle to various religions but the followers of these religions because of their extreme and narrow faith often come into conflict with the other religious communities. Since the Partition of the Indian subcontinent into two communal parts (one India and the other Pakistan) in 1947 India has been a witness to several spurts of communal violence that has torn the social and cultural fabric of the country. The Anti-Sikh riots of 1984, The Babri Masjid Demolition (Ayodhya riots) and its after effects of 1992, the Bombay riots of 1992 which were a result of the Ayodhya riots, the 1993 Bombay riots and the Godhra riots of 2002 and its aftermath are some of the major instances of communal violence in independent India. India being a country with a Hindu majority, Muslims are a minority people this often results in the majority people's apparent dominance over the minority resulting in the minorities' feeling of

Modes of Resistance in Bama's Short Story Collection *Harum-scarum Saar and other Stories*

C. Susila

Submitted: 10 December 2017, Revised: 20 December 2017, Accepted: 29 Decemeber 2017.

Abstract: The 20th century has witnessed many genres of writing of which 'Dalit Writing' has emerged as an urgent and pivotal narrative. The Dalit writers have used literature as a medium to communicate their marginalized position in the society and also to resist the dominant. Bama is one such writer who has not only explored the authentic Dalit experiences but has also foregrounded Dalit women's marginality and resistance in her works. This paper proposes to explore the various modes of resistance by Dalit women in different ways based on Bama's short story collection *Harum-scarum Saar and Other Stories*.

Keywords: Dalits, Marginality, and Resistance.

The International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, 2nd edition defines resistance as "something to stand against." (207) The *Online Etymology Dictionary* defines resistance as "an organized covert opposition to an occupying or ruling power." (Web) The word was derived from mid 14th century old French 'resistance' and from late Latin 'resistentia' (Web). The term has recently been introduced into the politics and culture by Edmund Burke in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* where he argued for the necessity of resisting revolutionary progress. Later resistance was associated with identity and identity construction.

Usually resistance will be seen when and where power operates. People who have power try to overpower the weak and powerless. Michael Foucault argued that both power and resistance are inseparable and where there is power, there is resistance and where there is no power, there is no power relation. Thus for Foucault, the concepts of power and resistance are inseparable. Pile and Keith record "resistance stands in implacable opposition to power and resistance is the people fighting back in defence of freedom, democracy and humanity" (5).

Occurring Boundaries: Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* as a Film

Priyakumaran M. & Md. Habib Subhan

**Submitted: 10 December 2017, Revised : 22 December 2017,
Accepted: 29 December 2017.**

Abstract: This paper tends to examine the facets of lapses in 'film adaptation' of *Midnight's Children* (1981) written by Salman Rushdie and the film *Midnight's Children* (2012) directed by Deepa Mehta. While doing so, it investigates the limitations, boundaries and rehabilitates on film adaptation. Besides, it matures the filmic methodology of sound, mise-en-scene and characters in accordance with the story. On adaptation, some governing instruments have to be infused to light up the originality and complete the film meaningfully. So, as a director of the film, Mehta has used all the technicalities to create an enormous effect so as to replicate the original structure of the novel. The profound atmosphere of the adaptation is an art which is reworking on target genre. In *Midnight's children* (2012), the transition has been cleverly handled and also has satisfied the overall expectation of the spectators especially those who have read the novel before watching the film version of the novel. However, the present paper will critically explore the lapses i.e. historical, political, characters, subplot and so on., in order to establish the effectiveness of such adaptation.

Keywords: Film adaptation, filmic narration, filmic plot, mise-en-scene, *Midnight's Children*.

Introduction

Linda Hutcheon's argument on adaptation is a bit like redecorating, as far as possibly it has reduced and reproduced, because T.S. Eliot's words qualify that 'Art never improves, but...the material of art is never quite the same', as like any form of art which can be comprehended, transited and produced until to replicate the wholeness. This trans-generic practice involves in shifting the frame or changing the frame between the genres, and it would parallel the original. The shifting technique consists of trinities of referring, processing and producing, to make transition process.

This argumentation has quietly affixed on Mehta's *Midnight's Children* (2012) has assured and competed with the novel, and it

An Exploitation of the Voice, Archetype: Karna, the Unnoticed Protagonist in Devdutt Pattanaik's *Jaya an Illustrated Retelling of Mahabharata*

Sowmya. T

**Submitted: 08 December 2017, Revised: 21 December 2017,
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Abstract: Mahabharata is the greatest Indian epic, Pattanaik retells it with illustration. Many Indian writers have rewritten Mahabharata, it has inspired writers for centuries. The characters from Mahabharata prevail as a great inspiration to the people of contemporary world. Mahabharata is a history as well as a myth, because it is a story of ancient origin which is believed to be true and which brings out the concept of dharma and adharma. Myth exists everywhere and its purpose is to teach moral lessons and history. It inspires contemporary writers and makes them to rewrite history. Karna, the great archer struggles throughout to achieve his destiny but he is not considered as invigorating at any place. This paper is about Karna's struggle, suffering over the hegemony of the dominant class. He faces many insults all over his life, he stands loyal and genuine to the people who loves and helps him. He raises his voice and fights for his rights, but then he is murdered when he is about to reach his destiny. He is known for his action of death and his promise of giving what people seek from him. He never hesitates to offer what people ask him for. Karna is the unnoticed hero, who has left with great inspiration and admiration among the people of low class.

Keywords: Subaltern, Myth, Hegemony, Elite, Non elite and Archetype.

"Literature is allusive, and seems to radiate from a centre. Literature develops out of, or is preceded by body of myths, legends, folktales, which are transmitted by the earlier classics". (Frye 44)

Literature is the combination of reality and imagination. It mainly focuses on the reality of human life and relates human being through myth. In the contemporary field of literature, Indian writers mostly use mythology in their works. In classical Greek, "Mythos" is referred as any story whether true or invented. According to M.H. Abrams:

Understanding Ideology

Gazala Khan

**Submitted: 10 December 2017, Revised : 24 December 2017,
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Abstract: In last few years, the world has witnessed a remarkable resurgence of ideological movements. The plight of denizens of Kashmir Valley, religious intolerance in India and in the Middle East where Islamic fundamentalism has emerged as a potent force leading to chaos and violence racked the society. In fact, the present state of India tinted with clashing ideologies is creating tension and uncertainties in the cultural ambience. When dealt with the metaphysics of ideology, terms like power, collective consciousness, languages are intensely taken into consideration. Every single term above stated is itself paradoxical or is ironical in nature. The ideology which was seeded in to en route for peaceful and well managed civilization, its resonances has totally flipped over. Although, when one ideology becomes vacuous and fails to bring in the settlement, it is usurped by another in its new form. Collective consciousness give roots to ideology. The paper focuses on better understanding of ideology in epistemological as well as ontological way. Ideology has become primary source of power. Ideologies usually emanate from narratives. Literary theory is the interaction of all the narratives. These narratives becomes canonized in human mind, thus leading to development of analytical capacity of human mind. These narratives get embedded in subconscious and therefore becomes one of the major reason in construction of persuasive symbols. And these symbols become powerful forces in individual existence, that is why, a coherent comprehensive knowledge of ideology becomes pertinent today.

Keywords: Ideology, Civilization and Culture, Collective Consciousness, Narratives, Symbols.

Consider the paradox. In last few years, the world has witnessed a remarkable resurgence of ideological movements. The plight of denizens of Kashmir Valley, religious intolerance in India and in the Middle East where Islamic fundamentalism has emerged as a potent force leading to chaos and violence racked the society. In fact, the

Humanistic Perspectives for Attainment of Learners' Self-Confidence

Imtiyaz M. Shaikh

Submitted: 05 December 2017, Revised : 21 December 2017, Accepted: 29 December 2017.

Abstract: Humanistic approach is an important approach for both the teachers and learners in the teaching-learning process. Learning is not an end in itself; it is the means to progress towards the pinnacle of self-development. Learners learn because they are inwardly driven, and gains motivation from the sense of achievement that having learnt something affords. If the learner feels good about him or herself then that is a positive start. Feeling good about oneself would involve an understanding of one's strengths and weaknesses, and a belief in one's ability to improve. This accords, with the humanistic approach, where education is really about creating a need within the learner or instilling within the learner self-motivation which can assure self-confidence. Humanism would concentrate upon the development of the learner's self-concept. Humanism is all about rewarding oneself. Self-confidence can be related in terms of self-efficacy, an individual's judgment of his or her capabilities to perform given actions up to a satisfactory level. It is largely accepted that a learner-centred methodology to teaching changes the role and domain played by the learners. It is less often pointed out that learner-centred teaching involves a parallel change in the teacher's role. This article focuses at the role of learning analyst which the teacher has to shoulder in a learner-centred methodology, and the responsibilities which this role brings with it for attaining self-confidence in learners. It also focuses on the methodology and techniques to be used for it.

Keywords: Self-confidence, Self-disclosure, Attainment, Humanistic approaches.

Objectives

- To focus on the concept of humanistic approaches.
- To emphasize on steps for attaining self-confidence in learners through humanistic approaches.

Developing Academic Language Proficiency Through General Reading: A Comparison Between Avid Readers and Moderate Readers

M K Senthil Babu & Anu Mary Peter

**Submitted: 17 November 2017, Revised : 02 December 2017,
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Abstract: Defined as a complex exercise of meaning-construction from a given text, reading is a cognitive process that requires an ability to cognize words, acquire fluency and to comprehend meaning (Alderson 2000). As a psycholinguistic process that keeps the brain active, reading is found to be advantageous for cognitive stimulation. Reading stimulates the reader to think creatively and also to organize ideas coherently while writing as well as speaking. Apart from sharpening the reader's analytical thinking skills, reading also enriches their vocabulary. It is also important to note that, reading makes readers more self-directed and autonomous learners by enhancing their critical thinking abilities. In addition, reading provides exposure to a variety of language features such as words, phrases and sentence structures and it eventually ameliorate the reader's reading/writing fluency. The wealth of linguistic knowledge acquired through reading helps readers in analysing textual patterns and improve comprehension capacities. The linguistic competence that is gained through reading thus enhances the reader's self-confidence. Based on the objectives of the reader, reading is classified into pleasure reading and deep reading. In spite of ideological differences, general reading can be considered as a bridge that facilitates academic reading and subsequent development of academic language proficiency. Accordingly, this study aims to confirm that those who read more acquire more language and readers utilize the acquired language in actual performance. In essence, the study affirms that reading results in the incidental acquisition of vocabulary, grammar, and writing skills and that there is a strong relationship between the volume of reading and the language competence of readers.

Keywords: Reading, General reading, Incidental acquisition, Linguistic competence, Writing skills.

Learner Centred Methodologies and Role of Teachers in Private Engineering Colleges in West Bengal

Gautam Banerjee & Ms. Kashmi Mondal

Submitted: 10 December 2017, Revised: 17 December 2017, Accepted: 29 December 2017.

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to explore the learner centred methodology and how far it is applicable in developing the English skills of the students in the private engineering colleges of West Bengal. The theory of learner- centeredness involves the learners own creative aspect as well as his/her problem solving & analytical skills. Moreover it involves the learner's own individualism and his dynamic efforts to master the skills in the target language. The major concern of this paper is why this approach is necessary in the private engineering colleges of West Bengal and what is the role of teachers this context. Therefore the synthesis of the discussion would focus upon what are the factors to be considered absolutely essential while implementing learner centeredness keeping in mind the situation in West Bengal.

Keywords: Learner-centeredness, Problem solving, Analytical skills, Role of teachers.

What is Learner-centred Approach?

Learner centred approach basically refers to the procedures or strategies of learning where the learners enjoy their freedom of learning the language. This approach basically encourages a student to interact, explore, contemplate and reflect on how they are developing their language skills all by themselves. Through this process of interaction, exploration, contemplation and reflection the learners end up mastering the skills of English language. However the role of the teacher here is significant. He/she is not a passive observer but rather plays the role of a facilitator in learning the language i.e, guiding the students as per their academic and professional real life needs and goals.

Lambert and McCombs (1998) believe that the approach is particularly appropriate to the learners of the twenty-first century. The private college engineering students of West Bengal may find this approach as something unique from what they have faced so long.

Vygotsky, L. *Thought and language*. MIT Press, 1986.

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Conference Report

XIV Annual Conference of Rajasthan Association for Studies in English held at CIT, Abu Road on “21st Century British Literature Echoes Futility of Warfare”

Hemendra Chandalia

21st Century British Literature echoes futility of warfare as the wars England had participated in as a junior partner of the United States had caused a great human suffering in England too. This was stated in some of the research papers presented at XIV International Conference of Rajasthan Association for Studies in English hosted by Chartered Institute of Technology, Abu Road. In England nationalism is tied to the idea of supporting state policy as we find in India. Many writers in England have raised their voices in favour of global peace, maintaining of ecological balance despite England's participation in allied forces which attacked many countries in the middle east. The two day conference focused on “Contemporary Trends in English Language and Literature: Exploring post 2000 A.D. Writings.

The conference was inaugurated by Prof. N.P. Kaushik, Vice Chancellor, Rajasthan Technical University, Prof. Z.N. Patil, former Professor University of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad, Prof. Sumanbala, Delhi University, Sk.Kishore Gandhi, Chairman of Gyan Ratan Trust and Tejas Shah, Director, CIT, Abu Road. Prof. N.P. Kaushik, Chief Guest in his address emphasized the importance of English in enhancing the employability of Engineering and management students. The key note speaker Prof. Suman bala talked about the trends of English literatures across the world and said that English Literature has grown immensely outside England and so Commonwealth Literature and New Literature has assumed greater importance. In her hour long address she underlined the latest trends in British, Indian and commonwealth literature. Professor Hemendra Chandalia, Vice President of Rajasthan Association for Studies in English said that the Association has organized fourteen conferences in fourteen years without a break. He spoke on the theme saying that the ideas of transnationality, hybridity, marginality and diaspora are the trends of late twenties and the first two decades of 21st century literature. He said that 21st century literature is a literature without established icons.

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